

Festival Background

Introduction

In 2009, the National Science Foundation (NSF) awarded UC San Diego a \$3 million grant to fund year-round San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering efforts, as well as help seed festivals in other cities. Since then, the San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering (formerly known as the San Diego Science Festival) has become the largest celebration of science and engineering in the Southwest, attracting more than 55,000 community members from across the region.



The Festival takes place for one week in March each year. This weeklong community celebration of science and engineering features more than 35 events across the county, culminating in the all-day, finale: EXPO DAY at PETCO Park, a free event on the final Saturday of the event.

Mission

The mission of The San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering is to engage kids in science and engineering. The Festival serves to raise awareness of the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education and to inspire San Diego's youth to pursue education and careers in these rewarding fields. Through interactive demonstrations, hands-on activities and engaging speakers, the Festival shows students of all social and economic backgrounds that they have the potential to become tomorrow's leading scientists and innovators.

Audience

The Festival reaches out to K-12 students, their families and other community members. Activities are designed for San Diego's diverse student population and span school districts ranging from Oceanside and San Marcos to Poway, El Cajon and Sweetwater. At EXPO DAY, all of the information booths and college access booths, as well as many of the science and engineering exhibit booths, will have Spanish translators.

Events

The Festival partners with hundreds of community businesses and organizations to present events throughout the county during the weeklong Festival, culminating in EXPO DAY at PETCO Park. More than 55,000 kids, parents, scientists, educators and community members are participate in Festival events.

A special feature of the EXPO is the “Ask Me” Booth where scientists and engineers talk with the kids and their families, answering their questions and engaging them in the possibilities of science and engineering. A complete list of Festival events and activities is posted in February each year on our web site, www.sdsciencefestival.com.

History

San Diego County has earned a reputation as a pivotal center of activity in science, biotech, engineering and medicine. However, research has shown that there is a shortage of students entering science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields. The San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering, inspired by international science festivals, was created in 2008 to get kids excited about STEM fields and demonstrate why science and engineering are important in their lives.

Producers and Partners

The San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering is produced by the BIOCOM Institute in partnership with UC San Diego and the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center.

The San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering has been made possible by generous corporate sponsors and individual donors, including Life Technologies, San Diego Padres, Time Warner, Gen-Probe, General Dynamics, Qualcomm, Agilent, Celgene, Cymer, Sapphire Energy Inc., Sequenom Inc., Think Blue – City of San Diego, Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc., American Elements, Cal SOAP, Gilead Sciences, Scripps Health, UC San Diego Extension, BioAtla, Cubic Transportation Systems Inc., CareFusion, EMD Millipore, GE Health Care, Girl Scouts San Diego, Legoland California, Northrop Grumman, Oceanside Photo & Telescope, SeaWorld San Diego, Raytheon, Resmed Inc., UCSD Alumni and UC San Diego Health System.

Community collaborators have included American Chemical Society, Americas Rocket Club, Balboa Park, Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, California Center for Sustainable Energy, California State University San Marcos, Collegiate Confidence, CONNECT, Elsevier, Escondido Police Department, General Atomics, Mad Science of San Diego, Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, RunCoachJason.com, San Diego Miramar College, San Diego River Park Foundation, San Diego State University, Science Applications International Corporation, The Greater San Diego Science & Engineering Fair, The Maritime Alliance, The Scripps Research Institute, UC San Diego Stem Cell Program, UC San Diego Structural Engineering Department, USS Midway Museum, You CAN Do The Rubik’s Cube, San Diego Zoo and Tony Hawk.