



**Virginia Junior Academy of Science
Sponsor's Update
August 2019**

Dear Sponsors:

Welcome back to another school year! Everyone on the VJAS Committee is looking forward to working with you and your students. We welcome Michael Lovrencic as Vice-Chair of the VJAS Committee and Robin Curtis as Associate VJAS Director. There are a few procedural reminders and some significant changes to paper formatting requirements to point out to you. Please take the time to read the VJAS Handbook (<http://vias.org/handbook.html>) for more detailed explanations and guidelines. A chart summarizing the handbook updates has been included at the end of this document for quick reference.

Important Dates

- Membership Fees are due by January 15, 2020.
- VJAS Paper Submission Deadline is Wednesday, February 19, 2020.
- Applications for Special Awards are due by April 30, 2020.
- 2020 Symposium will be May 27-29, 2020 at James Madison University. Due to JMU's summer school schedule, the Symposium will occur Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday with student presentations occurring on Thursday, May 28, 2020.

Paper Formatting

- Printing: Single-sided OR double-sided
- Paper Length: 14 pages (14 pieces of paper printed single-sided or 7 pieces of paper printed double-sided)
- Line Spacing: No less than 1.5 and no greater than 2.0
- Forms may also be printed double-sided

Safety

As you and your students begin your journeys in science please always keep safety at the forefront of any experimental planning. Projects that may seem simple can have very real and very serious safety hazards. Here are a few reminders:

- The SDS for any chemical that students will be using or producing in any experiment should be read prior to experimentation to ensure proper protection is used.
- Projects that require the interaction with human subjects for the purposes of data collection, no matter how small or simple the interaction, require informed consent from every subject.
- The use of devices such as power tools and other 'household' appliances have their own safety concerns that must be addressed.
- Please locate within the designated area of the paper your safety procedures.

Sincerely,

Susan Booth, Director, VJAS, 757-897-3104, director@vias.org

Robin Curtis, Associate Director, VJAS, 804-864-1450, associate-director@vias.org

Se Jeong, VJAS Committee Chair, committee-chair@vias.org

Michael Lovrencic, VJAS Committee Vice-Chair, committee-vice-chair@vias.org

Carolyn Conway, VAS Associate Executive Officer, 804-864-1450, vasoffice@vacadsci.org

VJAS Handbook and Appendices: Summary of Revisions

VJAS Handbook Revisions - Major		
Section	2019	2020
V-B	Informed consent for human projects was unclear	Human subjects – informed consent not needed for observation projects
V-E	Certification statement needed for all strains of bacteria	E-coli K-12 strains exempt from needing certification statement
VI-A-1	15-page limit Line spacing 2.0 Single-sided printing	14-page limit (w/o forms) Line spacing no less than 1.5 and no more than 2.0 Double-sided printing (total document 7 sheets of paper double-sided or 14 sheets of paper single-sided) forms may be double-sided
VII-D		Franklin D. Kizer Fund awards added, and awards updated
IX-C		Clarification to the roles, rules, and duties for student officers
IX-E	General Rules and Policies	General Rules and Code of Conduct – added to indicate expected behavior of students and sponsors and consequences of violating the code of conduct

VJAS Handbook Revisions – Minor

Page 6	Dates to Remember	Updated with 2020 due dates
III-B	Protists not mentioned which lead to category confusion for some projects	Protists added to MCB category
V-B	Confusion as to the size of the informed consent example in the Materials and Methods section	Language revised to indicate an image could be used that takes up less than a whole page
VI-A-4		A statement was added indicating personally identifiable information is not permitted in the paper
VI-D-2	The language for labeling forms was vague	Clarification of paper labeling instructions
VI-G	Media release statement did not mention the host institution	Media release statement was revised to include the academy and the host institution

–Some of the revisions to the appendices are more substantial than simple corrections. Please review.

Appendix A Revisions		
	2019	2020
Paper Checklist		Updated to include line spacing changes, paper length changes, and double-sided printing
Appendix B Revisions		
Individual Membership Application	Only includes one set of lines for parent/guardian	Added a set of lines so that contact information for both parent/guardians is listed
Appendix C Revisions		
Certification Statement Form – Human Subjects	Only one checkbox to indicate informed consent was obtained	A second checkbox was added to alert projects that did not need informed consent due to being observational in nature
Reader’s Evaluation Form	Title line missing Recommendation checkbox present	Title line added back Recommendation checkbox removed
Judge’s Evaluation Form	Title Line missing	Title line added back
Appendix D Revisions		
VEE Checklist		replaced statement in last comments box with, “ <i>By submitting this application, I am agreeing to be considered for all VEE scholarships.</i> ”
Election procedures for Student Officers		9. Expectations: the statement, “ See the VJAS Handbook, section IX-C for further information, rules, and requirements. ” was added for continuity between main handbook and appendix