# A NEW COORDINATOR'S GUIDE
## to the Oliphant Science Awards

**What is the Oliphant Science Awards?**

The Oliphant Science Awards is an annually held competition for South Australian school students from Reception to Year 12 to develop their interest in science through a science based competition with a range of categories to suit a wide variety of abilities and interests. Learning science encourages students to develop a range of skills such as observation, prediction and communication as well as expanding their knowledge within and between the diverse domains of science. The Oliphant Science Awards provide students with an opportunity to expand their scientific literacy, by showing interest and understanding in the world around them and engaging in discussions about science.

**Why should my School/Students get involved?**

*The Oliphant Science Awards will stimulate students and enable them to;*
❖ Undertake and report on scientific investigations in real life settings.
❖ Explore their interests, skills, talents and creativity.
❖ Develop their science knowledge and understandings.
❖ Show their work to a broader audience.
❖ Motivate them to conceive and complete an independent project.
❖ Involve themselves in scientific and technological discovery and the application of these processes and knowledge to themselves and their world.

*The Oliphant Science Awards also offer several student and whole school prizes, a chance to exhibit your school on a state platform and assist with your staff professional learning with exposure to ideas from the wide range of student work from around the state or direct participation in the judging process.*

**What do I need to do If my School / students want to get involved in the competition?**

*The Oliphant Science Awards are now managed and showcased via a dedicated website www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au. This will have photos and information on past events, event forms, information and downloads for coordinators, students, parents, sponsors and the general public.*

1. **Have a look at the Oliphant Science Awards Website** – download and read the information book and check the Key Event Dates to ensure you're eligible to enter this year's competition
2. **Discuss your school's participation** with your school leaders, fellow staff, interested students and parents.
3. **Register online as your School's Coordinator** for the year's competition (you will need to re-register every year you wish to participate). Unfortunately, only one Coordinator per School can register, however many schools nominate assistant coordinators internally. To register, simply click the big "Register" Tab in the top right corner of the website and complete the registration form online.
4. **Establish the key dates and payment procedure for your school** (please refer to the Key Competition Dates online or in the information book). Think about some of these questions before communicating final plans with students; Are your students going to pay the registration fee to the teacher, coordinator, front office or is the school going to cover all registration fees? (SASTA will only invoice the school directly for all registrations after the close of registration date), When are you going to get the students to hand in the forms - one or two weeks before the Registration closing deadline? Are you going to share your login details with another teacher to assist entering all registrations online, enter them yourself or pay SASTA to enter them on your behalf?
5. **Complete your Project Registrations** – this will need to be completed online or via SASTA (additional fees apply to this option) by Thursday 22$^{nd}$ June 2017. Some amendments will be allowed after this date, however your school will be invoiced for the total number of individual and group registrations as of this date, therefore no additional registrations or refunds can be offered.
6. **Register a Judge from the School** - If you have more than 10 registrations we ask that your school provided at least one judge to assist us with the competition. They will receive a minimum of 3-hour Certificate for their contribution. Judges can register at the Oliphant Science Awards website.

7. **Check your email inbox and school letter box** – after the close of registrations SASTA will contact you with 3-4 packs and several emails with all the information you need for each round of projects, including amendments form, Identification Labels for the students and delivery instructions.
8. **Assist students with finalising projects and set the delivery date and method** – will you deliver all the projects; will you organise a courier or get a fellow staff member or parent to deliver them?
9. **Ensure your Computer Programming & Robotic Entries make a Judging appointment** - unlike the other categories these students need to make a time on the allocated judging day to bring in their project and sit down with our specialised judges to show and discuss this. These appointments are usually 15 minutes in length. Parents and teachers are welcome to attend as spectators only.
10. **Work out how your projects will be collected after the final judging** – projects will need to be collected on Monday 29th August from the open day venue, otherwise SASTA will dispose of any uncollected projects.
11. **Distribute any Presentation Ceremony invites or certificates to students** – SASTA will invite only the prize-winners (1st, 2nd, 3rd & Sponsor Prize winners) to the presentation ceremony. All students registered will receive either a Certificate of Participation (non-winners), a Highly Commended Certificate (outstanding entries) or a Prize Certificate (winners).
12. **Assist by signing the consent form and Follow-up any Scientific Inquiry or Models & Inventions Prize winners** at your school to finalise their free submission for the National Competition - the BHP Billiton Science & Engineering Awards, which has impressive prizes on offer.

## Where can I find out more information or get help?

❖ The Oliphant Science Awards Website (www.oliphantscienceawards.com.au) has all the forms and information for the competition for you.
❖ There are many pictures located in the Past Competitions gallery on the website that can help give you ideas for projects however SASTA cannot provide any further examples or rubrics. The best way to help your students' projects is read the Rules & Criteria for the category they wish to enter and consider becoming a judge in the competition to help give you an inside understanding for future years.
❖ An Oliphant Science Awards Information Session is annually held in Term 2 (subject to demand) – details and bookings will be available online, but this will give coordinators a chance to chat with the organisers and convenors.
❖ If you are still having problems, please contact SASTA via email at office@sasta.asn.au or phone during business hours on 8354 0006

## Final Tips and Suggestions for New Coordinators

❖ Try to get the support and enthusiasm through your school by communicating information about the event and the benefits for students, teachers and the school. At the end of the event, think about having a school certificate celebration at an assembly, a showcase in the library or gym of the projects, a display or have a presentation on the school Open Day or Parent/Teacher Interviews.
❖ Read the information provided from SASTA carefully – not following the key dates, category rules and criteria will be the first step in a project being disregarded as a prize-winner or even disqualified.
❖ Try to find a way to incorporate the competition into your classroom – some schools submit a whole class of different projects all on the topic they are working on in class!
❖ Whole school deliveries and collection of projects always work best – if you or a staff member aren't able to do this, then perhaps see if your school will organise a courier, try asking a parent to help take a few projects and another to collect all of them or suggest to the parents involved that they all contribute a small amount to paying a courier – this will save time, resources and avoid the disappointment of disposed projects for those that have not been collected in time!