

2024

# Sponsorship Opportunities

## TECHFEST'S

### STEM NEXT ESSAY COMPETITION



[WWW.TECHFEST.ORG.UK](http://WWW.TECHFEST.ORG.UK)

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TechFest is an Aberdeen-based charity with a mission to provide Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) learning opportunities to young people and the wider community.

With 40 years of experience, TechFest has an enviable record of engagement with schools in the North-East and throughout Scotland. Working closely with schools, colleges, universities, industries and partner organisations, TechFest provides interactive project-based learning opportunities that showcase the diversity of STEM and its accessibility to all ages, races, ethnicities, economic backgrounds, and abilities.

At TechFest, we recognise the huge importance of STEM education, from improving job prospects and fostering innovation and creativity, to understanding the world around us and addressing global challenges. By investing in STEM education, we can help ensure a brighter future for ourselves and generations to come.



[Click here to find out more](#)



# TECHFEST: STEM NEXT

At TechFest, our mission is, and always has been, to encourage STEM learning in children and young people of all ages, abilities and interests.

And with a whole host of activities spanning primary and secondary education, it got us thinking. What's next?

As senior secondary school students think about continuing their education at college or university or entering the world of work, we want to help give them the best possible start - introducing them to skills they'll need on their journey beyond school.

STEM Next bridges the gap between school education and higher education/working environments with industry-linked, project-based learning that positively facilitates their transition.



"I came across a lot of essay competitions, but STEM Next really stood out to me because the topics and the questions we were able to choose from were really interesting. There were things that were so niche which you could go into a lot of details and there were also topics that were very broad that affect every aspect of our life." - student participant.

## A LOOKBACK: THE EVOLUTION OF STEM NEXT

During the Covid 19 pandemic, there was concern that older students were missing out on valuable experiences such as work experience, interview practice and other networking opportunities.

TechFest was approached by schools and asked to develop a digital project that students could work on independently, but incorporate networking or interview elements to prepare them for their next steps into education or the world of work.

As a result, the STEM Next essay competition was launched in 2021. Students were provided with a range of essay topics to choose from and were invited to attend a series of live seminars over the course of the project that covered key aspects of essay writing and research. In addition, each student had to interview at least one industry professional that was linked to their research topic as part of the essay criteria.

STEM Next received fantastic feedback and has continued to grow in popularity since its initial launch. STEM Next is a hugely impactful project and has been established as a key aspect of TechFest's annual programme.

TechFest's STEM Next 2023 Final - available on YouTube. Click on the image below to view.



The promotion of STEM Next 2023 was launched in May so as not to interfere with Higher and Advanced Higher exams.

Due to student demand, STEM Next was opened up to any student aged 16 - 18 years old, with no geographical restraints. As STEM Next is a digital project, it's hugely inclusive and accessible, and we were delighted to have students from round the world taking part.

Throughout summer 2023, the students completed independent research, supported by live webinars and online resources created in collaboration with the University of Aberdeen. These sessions and resources taught pupils the valuable skills they'd need to write a successful essay, including planning, citing references and writing style.

After judges' scoring, pupils and teachers were invited to the virtual STEM Next 2023 final; TechFest produced a presentation for the STEM Next final where the winners of each category were announced. The TechFest team arranged online recording sessions with representatives from each of the sponsor companies as well as the students to produce the content for the final.

Competing students and their families, as well as teachers, volunteers and sponsors were all invited to watch the presentation and celebrate the phenomenal achievements of the students. This digital format allowed each winner to be announced by a sponsor representative and interviewed regardless of geographical location.

Amazon vouchers were awarded to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in each essay category. 1st place received a £200 voucher, 2nd place received £100, and 3rd place received £50.

As well as prize money, all winning essays were published on the STEM Next webpage, and all were eligible to be submitted at the CREST Awards, hosted by the British Science Association (BSA).

## 2023 RESULTS

"This was a fantastic initiative and the essays were very well written considering the age of the students. It was really interesting reading the different styles and takes on the questions posed." - Industry Volunteer.

**501 Students Registered**  
**28 Number of Countries**  
**46 Industry Volunteers**  
**Over 14,500 STEM Next Webpage Hits**

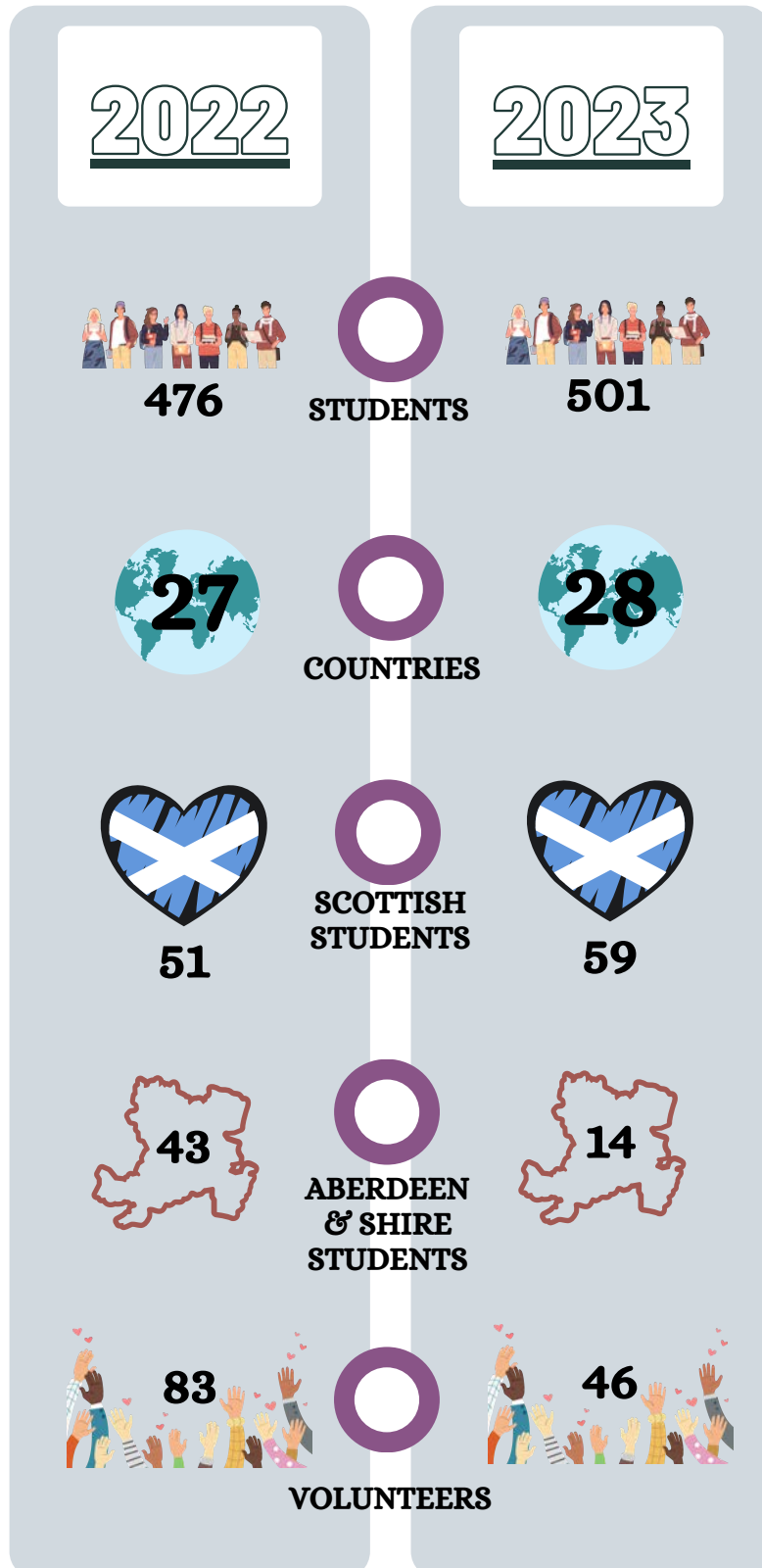
"Thank you very much for this opportunity and the help in writing this essay! It has been great fun to research over the summer." - student participant

"I enjoyed these very interesting essays where it was clear the students had put in a lot of time and effort." - industry volunteer.



## STEM NEXT

2022- 2023 COMPARISON



# STEM NEXT 2024

We would be delighted to bring STEM Next back for 2024, and are looking for sponsorship to continue the development and delivery of this essay competition.

Based on the feedback we received, students were happy with the essay categories and so we propose to keep the same essay categories for 2024:

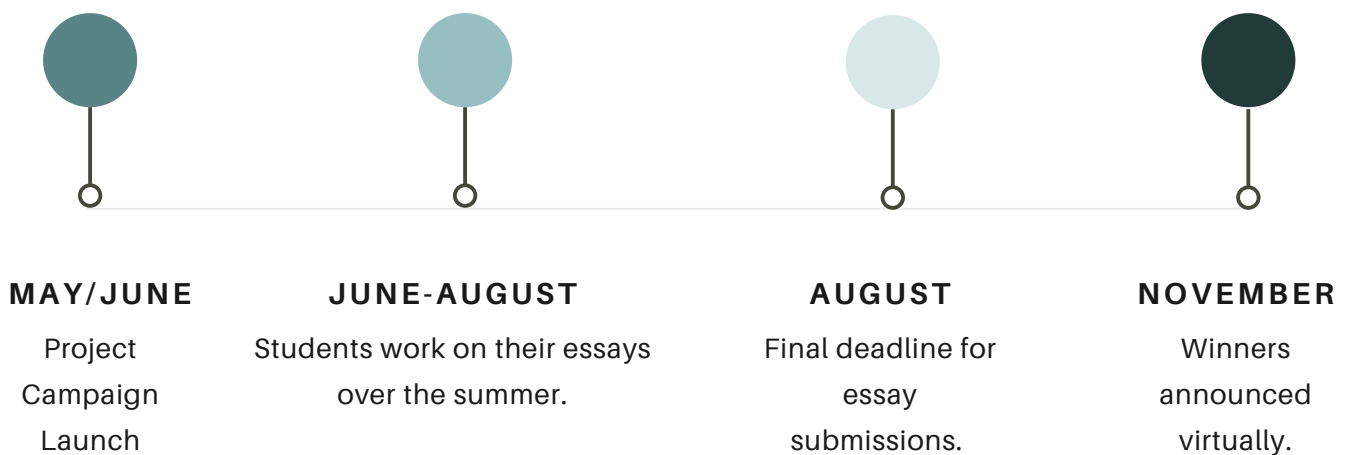
- Energy in Action
- Chemistry and Biological Sciences
- Medicine and Veterinary Science

With these topics available, STEM Next mirrors the identified industries of growth in the UK, providing a platform for students to consider more educational and career opportunities within these flourishing sectors.

We hope to build on the pool of industry volunteers through new networks to support each of these categories.

Winning essays will continue to be published on the STEM Next webpage and all students who participate in the competition will be eligible to apply for the relevant CREST Awards.

## TIMELINE FOR STEM NEXT 2024



# CONSIDERATIONS

## SCHOOLS

Since its introduction in 2020, STEM Next has always been shaped by student and teacher feedback. This relates to the logistics of the programme and its content.

Over the past three years, we have aimed to broaden the essay topics beyond the energy industry to cater to all sorts of interests and introduce more career path options.

We also understand how important it is that the pupils learn transferable skills that they can utilise in their future studies and careers, e.g. research, critical analysis, communication. These elements are woven into the project itself, but we also continue to produce easily-accessible resources that teach and reinforce these skills. Our online tutorials and Q&A sessions focus on these skills rather than the subject matter of each pupil's essay.

To acquire the information they need for their essay, pupils must interview at least one industry representative. This is a great experience for the students and helps develop interview and networking skills.

## THE INDUSTRY

As with any TechFest programme, we work closely with our industry sponsors to ensure that students and teachers learn about topics that are most relevant to each industry, what it is going through and its plans for the future.

With this in mind, we encourage our industry sponsors to influence and direct the potential essay titles that students can choose from. We also work with sponsors to ensure all learning resources remain inclusive of the considerations within their industry and give sponsor representatives the opportunity to be interviewed to support the next generation in their learning.



## INTERESTED IN SUPPORTING US?

Each year we seek to raise enough money to finance all our events, plus staffing and development costs. We, therefore, welcome sponsorship for all of our projects.

Sponsorship provides an excellent opportunity to invest in the future of our local community, directly benefiting hundreds of young people throughout the area and across Scotland.

By supporting TechFest activities, you are encouraging the interest of young people in STEM and supporting long-term future recruitment for your sector.

## SPONSORING STEM NEXT

As a sponsor of STEM Next, you will be acknowledged in several ways to help raise your profile and contribute to your corporate social responsibility strategy.

Where appropriate, sponsoring a TechFest event, activity or workshop also has the potential to provide your staff with personal development opportunities through volunteering as well as networking opportunities with your industry peers.

In supporting us, we want to ensure that your sponsorship is tailor-made to suit your company's needs, values and goals. So if you have any suggestions not covered within the benefits listed below, we'd be delighted to consider them.

## SPONSORSHIP BENEFITS

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>Company Visibility</b>	<b>Volunteering Opportunities</b>
Mention in all press releases relating to STEM Next	Company logo included on all marketing materials relating to STEM Next	Invitation to contribute to essay topics
Recognition in TechFest's Annual Review	Company logo included on STEM Next landing page on TechFest website	Invitation to be interviewed by competition participants
Mention in all information and resources sent out to schools	Company brand prominently displayed at all STEM Next events	Invitation to judge essays as part of the assessment panel
		Invitation to nominate sponsor representative to attend and present awards at the STEM Next virtual final



## SPONSORSHIP FEE

- £2,000 + VAT

The fee includes all sponsorship benefits listed above. We will send a sponsorship agreement and invoice to you upon the written agreement of the sponsorship fee.

Previously sponsored by:



We welcome new sponsors to this project and would be delighted to discuss further.

## BESPOKE OPTIONS

At TechFest, we strive to break down any barriers to participation. With this in mind, we are happy to look at alternative ways your company can support STEM Next that fits with your budget and CSR objectives. Contact us through the details at the end of this proposal to discuss your options.

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

Our goal is to have a long-lasting effect on young people's enthusiasm for STEM subjects/topics.

To achieve this, we strive always to be accessible, inclusive, practical and innovative.

- We offer activities and content in a range of formats, both physical and digital
- We support all schools by ensuring activities can be flexible to their needs
- We consult teachers, students, and senior management in the design, development, and delivery phases of our event programme
- We consult with the industry to ensure we are giving young people an accurate representation of that sector
- We address diversity issues by ensuring we represent minority groups
- We ensure that children from the most deprived areas get a fair chance to attend and benefit from our programmes

## NEXT STEPS

When you choose to support STEM Next, we will:

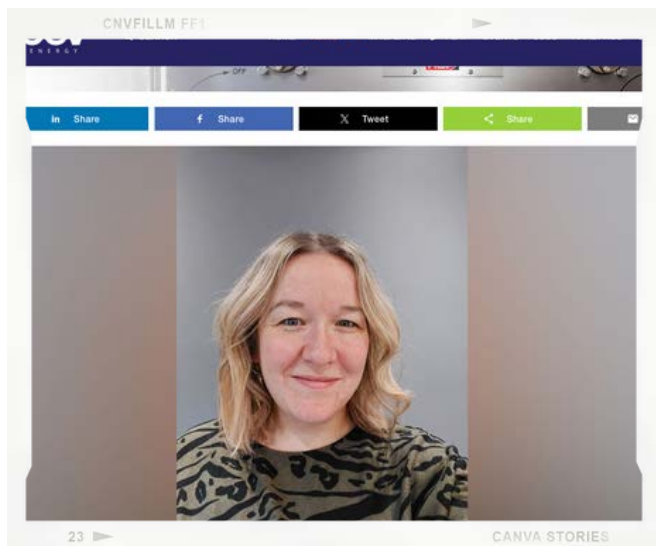
- Have an initial open discussion where you can ask us any questions and submit any ideas
- Send you a sponsorship agreement that includes the confirmed fee and our duties and responsibilities in meeting your expectations
- Ensure we give an accurate representation of your brand by utilising your brand guidelines and assets

As well as the steps above, we will maintain a clear line of communication at all times. It's essential to us that your company remains a part of the programme and we will contact you at various points during the year to share progress.

# MEDIA COVERAGE & ONLINE PRESENCE

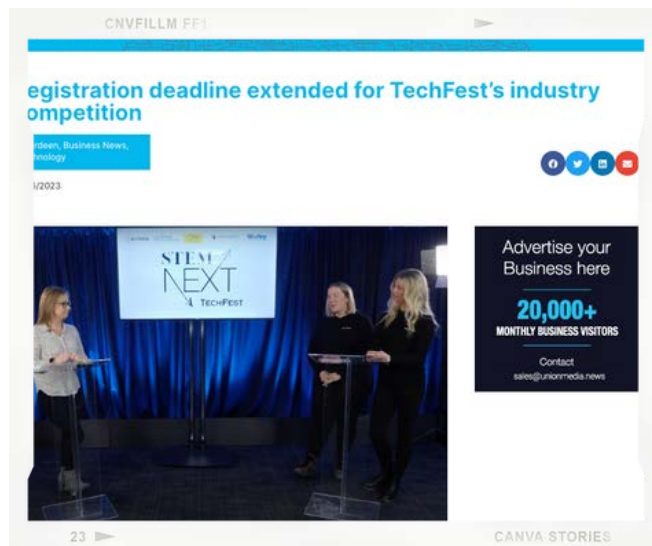
TechFest has been working with The BIG Partnership to ensure that our events are published locally, nationally and on social media. This also ensures that our key messages are communicated clearly to our target audiences, as well as helping us to build further links with the energy industry.

There were several press release issues on STEM Next final.



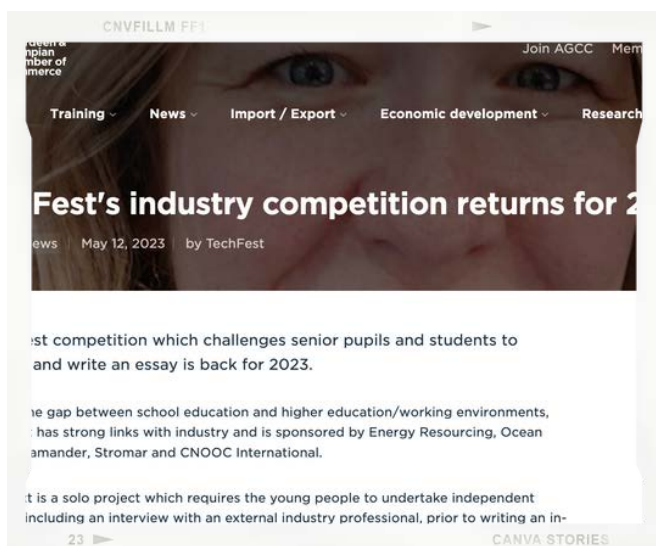
Publications:  
OGV Energy,

Total circulation:  
400,000



Publications:  
Aberdeen Business News & Bulletin

Total circulation:  
104329 & N/A



Publications:  
AGCC

Total circulation:  
15,000



Publications:  
Deadline News

Total circulation:  
189,603

## READY TO HELP US PROMOTE STEM?

If your company would like to be a part of encouraging the interest of young people in STEM, we would love to team up with you to make this happen.

Contact Yashka Smith (Education Manager, TechFest) to find out more:  
[yashkasmith@techfest.org.uk](mailto:yashkasmith@techfest.org.uk)

## THE ORGANISERS

TechFest aims to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to pupils and the wider community throughout Scotland.

They fulfil this aim by developing, organising, and delivering a range of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) activities and events; inspiring, informing and enthusing young people to have an interest in STEM; raising awareness of the application and relevance of STEM subjects; publicising STEM opportunities; and working in partnership with schools, FE colleges, HE establishments, Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Enrichment & Engagement (STEM E&E) providers, industry, business, government both local and national.

Don't forget to follow us on our social media channels for the latest TechFest news and updates.



**[WWW.TECHFEST.ORG.UK](http://WWW.TECHFEST.ORG.UK)**

This sponsorship proposal has been developed in collaboration with local copywriting business, Freshly Ground Copy ([www.freshlygroundcopy.com](http://www.freshlygroundcopy.com))