Opportunities abound for highly-motivated, pre-college, Ohio students with original STEM-related ideas (see chart, following page). The Ohio Academy of Science (OAS) sponsors programs that can propel any student who has a good idea and persistence to see a complex project through to completion. All OAS programs provide out-of-the-classroom, real-world, preparation for future STEM leaders and entrepreneurs. Numerous awards, scholarships, and networking opportunities are available. Students should talk to their teachers or contact the OAS directly. https://www.ohiosci.org

For over seven decades—using the traditional scientific-method based (i.e., science fair) format—Local, District, and State Science Days have allowed hundreds of thousands of Ohio students, grades 5 to 12, to complete independent research projects. Students present their research to expert judges at each level who provide both numerical scores and invaluable feedback to the students. Any grade 9 to 12 participant advancing to an Ohio District Science Day event has the opportunity to be selected to present at the Buckeye Science & Engineering Fair (BSEF). The top BSEF awardees, in turn, qualify for the International Science & Engineering Fair. Any 6th to 8th grade participant at State Science Day may be selected to participate in the Broadcom MASTERS national competition.

The Believe in Ohio Program is a free, comprehensive, curriculum-based, STEM and entrepreneurship program for Ohio high school students. Students compete for substantial scholarships through entrepreneurial and business plans. The program creates a “culture of innovation” and prepares students to compete in a rapidly changing labor market. https://www.ohiosci.org/believe-in-ohio

Every April, for 129 years, The Ohio Academy of Science has held an Annual Meeting—open to all who are interested in attending. An annual call for papers is held in the fall, prior to the year of the April meeting. Pre-college students are encouraged to submit abstracts of the results of their original research. Submissions are peer-reviewed, and acceptable abstracts are published in the April Program Abstracts issue of The Ohio Journal of Science. Those with published abstracts are then expected to present a poster at the Annual Meeting. The top pre-college students who present at the Annual Meeting are recognized as Melvin Scholars, and have the opportunity to represent Ohio at the national-level American Junior Academy of Science (AJAS) annual meeting.

In addition to the above OAS sponsored programs, highly-motivated, pre-college STEM students should also investigate participation in these established and highly-selective programs: the Ohio Science Olympiad (K to 12; https://ohso.osu.edu/), the Regeneron Science Talent Search (rising grade 12; https://www.societyforscience.org/regeneron-sts/), the Ohio Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (grades 9 to 12; https://www.bgsu.edu/nwo/programs/ohio-junior-science-and-humanities-symposium.html), the National Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (grades 9 to 12; https://www.jshs.org/), and the National Youth Science Camp (summer after high school graduation; http://www.nysf.com/w/programs/nycamp/).
Ohio Pre-college Student STEM Opportunities

Opportunity Flowchart

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Fostering curiosity, discovery and innovation to benefit society.

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