Search Begins for 2025 America's Top Young Scientist

3M and Discovery Education open submissions to the 2025 Young Scientist Challenge

ST. PAUL, Minn. and CHARLOTTE, N.C., Jan. 14, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- 3M (@3M) and Discovery Education (@DiscoveryEd) today announced that the 2025 3M Young Scientist Challenge is now open to entries. As the nation's premier middle school science competition, the annual 3M Young Scientist Challenge invites students in grades 5-8 to compete for an exclusive mentorship with a 3M scientist, a $25,000 grand prize, and the chance to earn the title of "America's Top Young Scientist." Competition entries are accepted at YoungScientistLab.com until the deadline on May 1, 2025.

Each year, the 3M Young Scientist Challenge recognizes the grand prize winner, 10 finalists, four honorable mentions, and up to 51 state merit winners – nationwide and in Washington D.C. – who have demonstrated a passion for using science to solve everyday problems and improve the world around them.

"The 3M Young Scientist Challenge has sparked curiosity in countless inventors, innovators, and problem-solvers over the last 18 years, all before they even begin high school," said Torie Clarke, 3M's executive vice president and chief public affairs officer. "I'm proud of 3M's support for this program that helps students get excited about the power of science and technology to address global challenges."

To enter, students in grades 5-8 submit a brief video explaining their original idea to solve an everyday problem using science, which are evaluated for their creativity, scientific knowledge, and communication skills. This year, the 3M Young Scientist Challenge will offer students the opportunity to engage through new entry topics, including robotics, home improvement, automotive, safety, AR/VR, and climate technology.

"The 3M Young Scientist Challenge is a powerful testament to the incredible things that happen when students bring classroom knowledge to real-world problems," said Amy Nakamoto, executive vice president of marketing and strategic alliances at Discovery Education. "This annual challenge elevates students' remarkable creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking skills, showcasing their extraordinary potential to transform the world for the better."

Previous Winners
Previous challenge finalists and 3M scientists have collaborated to create solutions for a wide variety of real-world problems, including cybersecurity, coral reef health, water conservation, food waste, alternative energy sources, energy consumption, air pollution, and transportation efficiency.

The 2024 winner – 14-year-old Sirish Subash from Snellville, Georgia – created Pestiscand, a handheld device designed to detect pesticide residues on produce using a non-destructive method. The innovation employs spectrophotometry, which involves measuring how light of various wavelengths is reflected off the surface of fruits and vegetables. A machine learning model then analyzes this data to determine the presence of pesticides.

Next Steps
In June 2025, 10 finalists will be chosen to participate in an exclusive summer mentorship program during which they will work closely with and learn from a 3M scientist. Each finalist then has the opportunity to compete in the final event at the 3M Innovation Center in St. Paul, Minnesota during an interactive competition comprised of hands-on challenges, presentations, live judging, and more. The grand prize winner will be announced during the final event October 13-14, 2025.

Now in its eighteenth year, the 3M Young Scientist Challenge continues to inspire and challenge middle school students to think creatively and apply the power of STEM to discover real-world solutions. America's Top Young Scientists have given TED Talks, filed patents, founded nonprofits, made the Forbes 30 Under 30 list, and exhibited at the White House Science Fair. These young innovators have also been named TIME Magazine's first Kid of the Year, featured in The New York Times

Magazine, Forbes, and Business Insider, and appeared on national television programs such as Good Morning America, The Kelly Clarkson Show, and more. In addition, a 3M Young Scientist Challenge Alumni Network was formed in fall 2022 and includes more than 100 former challenge finalists and winners who take part in networking opportunities and more.

To learn more about the 3M Young Scientist Challenge, including entry details, and to find supporting resources, visit YoungScientistLab.com.

About 3M

3M (NYSE: MMM) believes science helps create a brighter world for everyone. By unlocking the power of people, ideas and science to reimagine what's possible, our global team uniquely addresses the opportunities and challenges of our customers, communities, and planet. Learn how we're working to improve lives and make what's next at 3M.com/news.

About Discovery Education

Discovery Education is the worldwide edtech leader whose state-of-the-art digital platform supports learning wherever it takes place. Through its award-winning multimedia content, instructional supports, innovative classroom tools, and corporate partnerships, Discovery Education helps educators deliver equitable learning experiences engaging all students and supporting higher academic achievement on a global scale. Discovery Education serves approximately 4.5 million educators and 45 million students worldwide, and its resources are accessed in over 100 countries and territories. Inspired by the global media company Warner Bros. Discovery, Inc. Discovery Education partners with districts, states, and trusted organizations to empower teachers with leading edtech solutions that support the success of all learners. Explore the future of education at www.discoveryeducation.com.

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