



National Youth
Science Forum

Rotary
in Australia



Founding
Partner

2025 NYSF YEAR 12 PROGRAM PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

WWW.NYSF.EDU.AU

CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THE NYSF	2
CONTACTING THE NYSF	3
• Code of Conduct	4
BEFORE THE PROGRAM	5
• Checklist	5
• How we communicate with you	6
• Welcome events	7
• Engaging with other NYSFers	8
• Withdrawal and refunds	9
• Travel insurance	9
• NYSF Year 12 Program and other events	9
DURING THE PROGRAM	11
• Program outline	11
• Travel to and from your session	12
• What to bring on session	12
• Suggested packing list	13
• Dress code	14
• Personal belongings	14
• Accommodation	15
• STEM visits and activities	16
• Health and safety information	17
• Medications, first aid and dietaries	18
• NYSF Staff on the program	19
• NYSF Year 12 Program app	19
• Media	20
AFTER THE PROGRAM	22
• Visiting schools and Rotary clubs	22
• NYSF surveys	22
NYSF PARTNERS	22



WELCOME TO THE NYSF



Congratulations on your selection to attend the National Youth Science Forum (NYSF) 2025 Year 12 Program, and welcome to the NYSF community!

We have a network of over 15,000 alumni around Australia and the world that have attended our NYSF Year 12 Program. In 2025 we are celebrating 41 years of NYSF!

This handbook will help you prepare for the NYSF Year 12 Program. It is also a valuable reference for your family members, so please encourage them to read it.

We encourage you to keep up to date with important information by regularly checking NYSF emails and staying active on the NYSF app (details will be advised closer to the start of session).

A central [2025 Information for Participants page](#) on the [NYSF website](#) will be updated with resources throughout the year.



CONTACTING THE NYSF

Email	nysf@nysf.edu.au
Website	www.nysf.edu.au
Postal Address	Leonard Huxley Building 56 Mills Road The Australian National University Acton ACT 2601
Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/NYSFoz
X (formerly Twitter)	@NYSFoz
Instagram	@NYSFoz #nysfoz
LinkedIn	https://www.linkedin.com/school/national-youth-science-forum/ - add us to your 'Education' section to become an NYSF alum!

During January, the NYSF will have duty phones. Contact details will be provided via our communications and the NYSF app. Duty phones are for emergency contact only. Non-urgent enquiries during January should be emailed to nysf@nysf.edu.au.

Duty phones will be available both during and before/after hours. If the phone is not answered, please leave a message and a representative of the NYSF will call you back as soon as they can.



Code of Conduct

We strive to make the NYSF a safe, inclusive community for all participants, staff and volunteers.

For that reason, it's essential that you adhere to the NYSF Codes of Conduct, policies & procedures while participating in NYSF events.

Participants sign their commitment to the NYSF Codes of Conduct as part of the Participant and Parent/Guardian Agreement.

If participants breach the Codes of Conduct, they may have their NYSF experience discontinued and be refused enrolment in future NYSF programs and events.

As part of your attendance at the NYSF Year 12 Program, we also ask specifically that you:

- Do not order food deliveries or groceries. All meals are provided during your stay; you will not need to order extra food or groceries. If there is a dietary problem, please speak to NYSF staff.
- Do not leave the college grounds without express permission of an NYSF corporate staff member.
- Ensure you pack everything you need for the duration of your stay, there are limited opportunities to shop.
- Adhere to the 'own room' policy at night time from 10.30 pm unless otherwise advised.



BEFORE THE PROGRAM

Checklist

CHECKLIST	TASK
Ongoing	Check your email - we regularly send out emails to keep you up to date with important information related to the NYSF Year 12 Program. We will include your parents/guardians in any email communications as well.
Ongoing	Keep your contact details, health and dietary information up to date, informing NYSF of any changes by emailing nysf@nysf.edu.au .
May - October 2024	If you are not self-funding, agree on payment of fees with a Rotary Club or other sponsors. Invoices are sent directly to you and your family. You and your family are responsible for obtaining reimbursement from a Rotary Club or other sponsors.
By 1 October 2024	Complete your program registration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept your offer • Complete the Participant & Parent/Guardian Program Agreement, which is available electronically once you accept your offer. • Have your parent/guardian complete the Participant & Parent/Guardian Program Agreement, which will be emailed to them directly.
15 October 2024	Fee due date - Invoices will be sent to you once you complete your Participant and Parent/Guardian Agreement. Please ensure your fee is paid in full by 15 October 2024 to keep your place in the program.
October - December 2024	In some areas of Australia there are NYSF Welcome Events where you can meet other participants in your local area. These events are run by Rotary clubs, more information about these events will be emailed to you in due course by the NYSF. If you can't make a Welcome Event in person or there is not one in your local area, don't worry as there will also be an online NYSF Orientation later in the year.
10 November 2024	Late Withdrawal Deadline - refunds are generally not available for withdrawals from the Program after this date. Please refer to your Participant and Parent/Guardian Agreement for withdrawal terms and conditions.
December 2024	Download the NYSF app - this is where you can view the program schedule, find out about events, find your NYSF Buddy and chat with fellow NYSFers.

How we communicate with you

All critical information related to the NYSF Year 12 Program will be sent via email to you and your parent/guardian if you are under 18. Please do not rely on NYSF social media or any other communication platform as your only source of information.

The NYSF will communicate with you primarily by email leading up to and after the NYSF Year 12 Program. Please ensure that the email address you give us is not a school address and that it and the mobile number you provided in your application are correct. Contact the NYSF at programs@nysf.edu.au if you need to update these details.

You should check your email at least once every 2-3 days in the lead-up to January.

Closer to January, participants can communicate with each other via an officially endorsed platform that we will announce soon.

Please do not set up or use alternate social media group chats during the NYSF Year 12 Program, as the NYSF team is unable to monitor any unofficial groups or chats.

We carefully monitor all of our official social media channels for any inappropriate behaviour.

If you have a question or problem, the best way to get in touch with NYSF Staff is by emailing programs@nysf.edu.au. Please do not use social media channels to message NYSF staff.



Welcome Events

Welcome Events are generally held in October/November, on a date organised by local Rotary Districts.

At this event, you can meet NYSF volunteers from Rotary, other participants from your area, and NYSF alumni.

You'll learn about the NYSF, and you and your parents can ask questions about the general experience.

Our top priority is the health and safety of all our staff, participants and volunteers. If you are unwell, you should not attend an in-person event.

You will be advised if you can bring a guest (such as your parent/guardian, science teacher, or sibling). We ask that attendees dress professionally and follow all directions provided by the organiser to keep all attendees safe and well.

Can't attend a Welcome Event?

While Welcome Events are recommended, they are not mandatory. We understand that it's not possible for all participants to attend an event in their Rotary District and indeed that not all Rotary Clubs are able to run an event due to other voluntary commitments.

If you're not able to attend a Welcome Event organised by Rotary or there isn't one close to you, rest assured that the NYSF sends lots of official program updates and holds an online Orientation in November/December.



Engaging with other NYSFers

Before the 2025 NYSF Year 12 Program, you'll be in contact with:

Your NYSF Buddy

You will be assigned a buddy, who will be another participant in the same NYSF Year 12 session. The purpose of the buddy system is so you can get to know someone with a similar passion for STEM before the NYSF program starts.

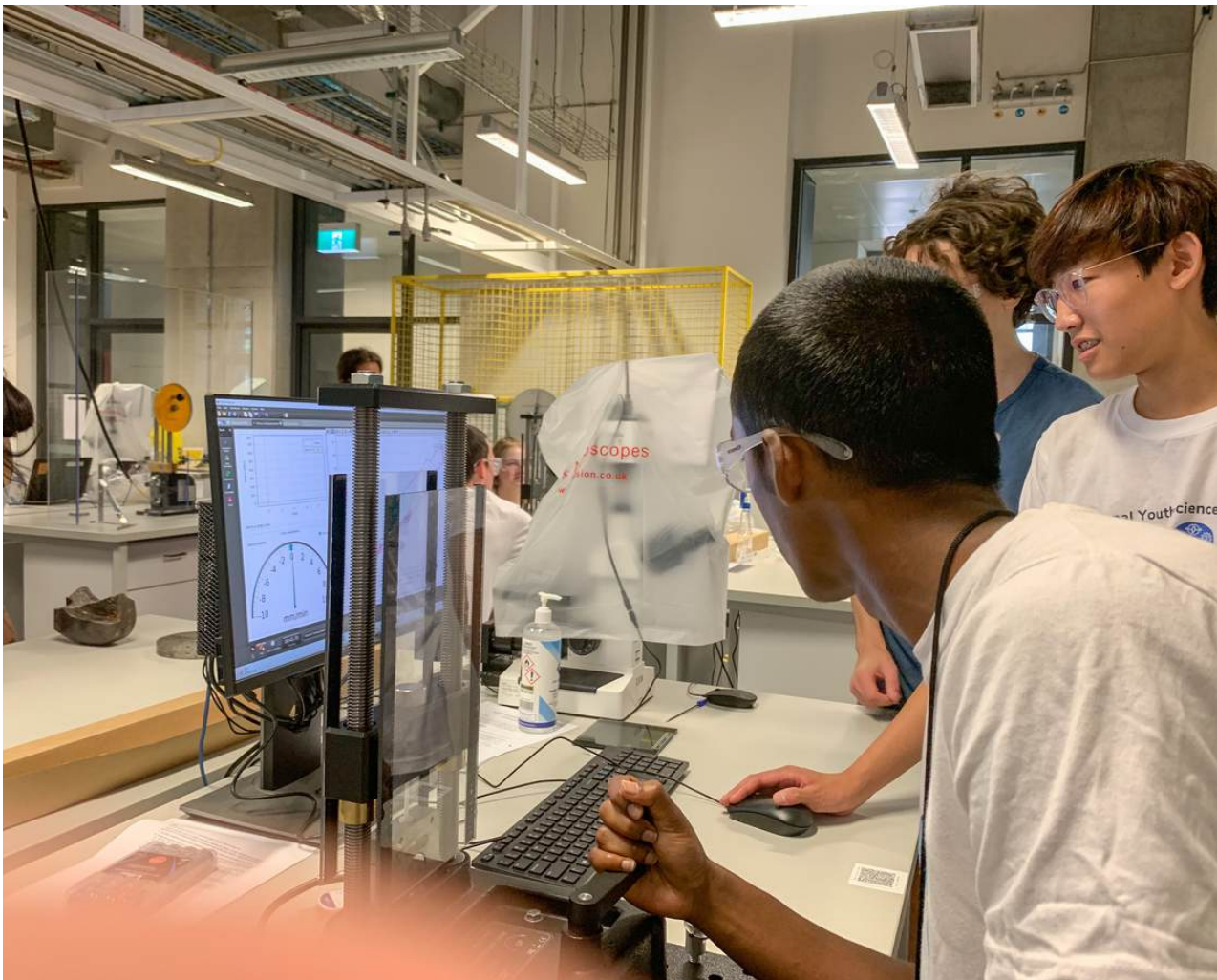
You will support each other on the program by checking in and making sure your buddy is with you when they are meant to be.

You can find your buddy on the digital event platform!

Your group Student Staff Volunteer

You'll be assigned a floor group for the NYSF Year 12 Program. These groups will form the basis of your social interactions during the program and will be supported by Student Staff volunteers or "Staffies", who will organise group catch-ups throughout the program.

Your Floor Group Staffies will reach out to you in December via the event platform.



Travel insurance

NYSF recommends that families consider taking out a personal travel insurance policy before paying the program fee and booking any required travel. Policies such as [this policy offered by Chubb](#) may cover costs incurred if you have to withdraw from the program, depart from the program early due to illness or injury, or need to change your travel plans.

Withdrawals and refunds

If something unforeseeable happens which prevents you from attending the 2025 NYSF Year 12 Program, please contact the NYSF immediately to discuss the matter.

Be sure to also consult with your Rotary Club or other sponsors if they are contributing to your program fee.

If you are supported by a Rotary Club, and you choose to withdraw from the NYSF, your Rotary Club will likely expect its contribution returned.

Please refer to your NYSF Participant and Parent/Guardian Agreement for detailed information regarding withdrawals and refunds.



NYSF Year 12 Program and other events

You may have been selected for other programs, such as the Australian Science Olympiad Summer School or the National Mathematics Summer School.

Some of these programs may overlap with the scheduled NYSF Year 12 Program, and you may need to make a decision about which program you wish to attend.

Please read the refund policy in the Parent/Guardian agreement.





26

DURING THE PROGRAM

Program outline*

The 2025 NYSF Year 12 Program is incredibly diverse and exciting! Every year, we include many new speakers and events to keep the program highly valuable and rewarding. Here's an early sneak peak at what you'll experience in January*.

2025 NYSF Year 12 Program - example schedule									
	Day 1	Day2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9
MORNING		Opening Event & Keynote	STEM Visit	SciComm	Great Debate	STEM Visit	Careers Day	Specialist Lectures	Students depart
AFTERNOON	Students arrive	STEM Visit	STEM Visit	Cultural Institution Visits	STEM Activity	STEM Visit	Careers Day	Closing Event	
EVENING		Evening activity	Live Cross	Disco/Chill	Activities at College	Evening Activities	Networking Event	Concert	

...and remember, your time at NYSF does not end in January! You become part of the NYSF Connect Alumni Program!

*Program is subject to change. The full program and speakers are only released as the event draws closer - watch your email!



Travel to and from your session

Travel to and from the NYSF Year 12 Program is the responsibility of participants and families. The NYSF will provide shuttle buses from Brisbane International and Canberra Airports, major trains and bus stations to your accommodation. If you choose to drive to your session, please note that there is no parking at the accommodation, and any payment required for parking will be your responsibility. Using your car during your stay is strictly prohibited. The NYSF takes no responsibility for the security of vehicles.

All transport to visits during the Program is organised by the NYSF.

Depending on which session you are allocated to, you will need to arrive and depart on the following dates:

CANBERRA

Arrive: Monday, 6 January 2025

Depart: Tuesday, 14 January 2025

BRISBANE

Arrive: Wednesday, 15 January 2025

Depart: Thursday, 23 January 2025

You should aim to arrive between 12 pm and 5 pm if possible. Your departure time at the end of your session can be anytime between 8 am and 12 pm, but please don't hesitate to get in touch with us if your travel arrangements cannot fit into the timeframes detailed.

Once your place in the program is confirmed, we encourage you to book your travel. Please do not email your travel details. The NYSF team will collect all travel information via an online registration form from participants and families starting in September. Please keep an eye on your emails for further information.

NYSF recommends that families consider taking out a personal travel insurance policy before paying the program fee and booking any required travel. Policies such as [this policy offered by Chubb](#) may cover costs incurred if you have to withdraw from the program, depart from the program early due to illness or injury, or need to change your travel plans.

What to bring on session

Luggage

A packing list is provided. You have access to washing facilities, but we suggest you pack enough to get through a week if possible.

What's provided

On arrival, you will receive an NYSF backpack & t-shirt. Bring along something readily recognisable to tie to the strap of your NYSF bag for identification. It is easy to lose your bag in a pile of identical bags!

All bedding is provided, and towels for showering are also provided, but you might like to bring a spare.

Bring your musical instruments!

If you play a musical instrument, please bring it along, regardless of your ability. Towards the end of the session, a concert is held and all participants are invited to perform, so think about bringing along anything you need to participate.

If you bring a musical instrument that will not fit into your baggage, like a tuba or a cello, then ask the travel company for their advice prior to departure.

Bringing an instrument is optional, and we recommend you consider travel insurance. The NYSF won't pay excess baggage charges to bring instruments and is not responsible for any loss or damage.

Suggested packing list

	Clothes		Toiletries and other items
	Shorts & t-shirts		Toothbrush/toothpaste
	Underwear/socks		Soap, shampoo and conditioner
	Smarter attire for Opening Event		Medications
	Hat with good sun protection		Sanitary items
	Jumper or tracksuit top		Insect repellent
	Long pants (may be required for lab visits Eg. Jeans/track/cargo pants)		Sunscreen/lip balm
	Long sleeved t-shirts (may be required for lab visits)		Tissues
	Sleep wear		Bag for items needing to be washed
	Neat shoes (for formal occasions)		Towel for showering
	Casual shoes, sneakers or runners (closed in shoes)		Water bottle
	Clothes for disco event		
	Bathers/towel		
Other items			
	Mobile phone and charger		Chargers for any other electronics
	Travel tickets		Notepad/pen
	Medicare card or number		Musical instrument/sheet music (optional)
	ATM card		Cash (optional, no more than \$200)
	Photo ID (Driver's licence or Student ID is fine)		
You'll be given an NYSF t-shirt and backpack on arrival			

Pack everything you need! Access to shops is limited during the program and NYSF staff may not be able to provide anything you may have forgotten including medication.

Dress code

As you will likely be attending lab visits during your session, you should ensure that you dress appropriately. In a lab environment, exposed skin can be a risk, so you will need bring long-sleeved clothing, long pants, and enclosed shoes that cover the top of the feet. Sneakers or gym shoes are suitable as long as they have no holes or mesh in them. The NYSF pre-visit information will be sure to let you know what you need for each particular visit. Please read this information carefully because you may not be able to participate if you are inappropriately dressed.

As it may be hot weather on session you should bring sunscreen and a hat. As all activities will be run in line with COVID-safe rules, we recommend you bring a face mask and hand sanitiser. NYSF volunteers will have sunscreen and hand sanitiser but bringing your own will also provide a back-up.

It is important to ensure you are dressed appropriately in smart casual attire for interacting and networking at a professional level.

Personal belongings

Do not carry more cash or valuables than you need to. Bringing your phone if you have one to keep in contact with home and access your online NYSF Year 12 Program. Any items you bring to in-person events are your responsibility.



Accommodation

Your accommodation will be at a university residence at either the Australian National University (for Session A) or the University of Queensland (for Session B). Each room has a bed, wardrobe, desk, sink and chair. On each floor, there are communal toilets and showers. There are also plenty of spaces to socialise.

University residence rooms must be left as they are found. Any damage to or loss of articles, including room keys, will be charged to the NYSF, and this charge will be passed on to you.

Upon arrival, you'll receive a key or pass for your room, which you should always keep on you. Ensure you return your key before you go home, or you may be charged for a replacement. You should always lock your room when you are out and overnight.

For your own safety, do not leave your floor after lights out. If you need something at night, please feel free to see your Floor Staff member or Rotary volunteers.

Meals are provided through the Program and food delivery is not available to participants. We require all dietary requirements early so that we can inform the catering team well in advance and they can prepare healthy, tasty meals for all participants.



STEM visits and activities

In 2025, you will be on session for 9 days. You can express a preference for either Canberra or Brisbane, however, we reserve the right to offer a different location from the one you selected based on room availability.

Visits are allocated based on recognised areas of STEM and every participant is assigned to a 'STEM Cluster' and will rotate through 5 individual STEM visits across the week, in addition to participating in other STEM events, including Specialist Lectures, Careers Day, STEM Speed-Meet, Science Communication and The Great Debate.

As a Program participant, it is anticipated that you will attend all your scheduled visits, unless you are unwell and unable to join. Due to the number of participants in each session, we typically do not permit participants to switch between STEM Clusters.

To give you an idea of what sorts of visits you can expect, we have listed some examples of both Canberra and Brisbane-based visits below. Rest assured that each location has equal access to all areas of STEM. These are just an example.

Brisbane

- Australian Institute for Bioengineering and Nanotechnology
- UQ Centre for Advanced Imaging
- Queensland University of Technology
- Integrated Pathology Learning Centre
- Centre for Microscopy and Microanalysis
- Quantum Optics Lab
- Griffith University

Canberra

- ANU Earth Sciences
- Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics
- ANU Biology
- ANU Chemistry
- ADF Drone Racing
- The Fenner School of the Environment
- Mulligans Flat



Health and safety information

The health and safety of participants, volunteers, and staff is the NYSF's top priority.

You must adhere to any host rules when onsite at a STEM visit or at the program residence. If you don't observe the rules or heed any instructions from our hosts, you may be asked to leave the visit.

We strive to ensure that our participants are safe at all times. Our staff and volunteers are trained in basic first aid and CPR, and our Rotary volunteers will carry first aid kits for dealing with general ailments, such as headaches or cuts and bruises.

You can read our Infectious Disease and Illness Policy and Procedures [here](#). Please note that the NYSF requires participants who are displaying symptoms of an infectious disease or illness to isolate in program accommodation until departure or until symptoms resolve, where departure cannot be easily arranged. We expect participants who become unwell to depart from the program at their earliest convenience, in consultation with their parent/guardian, and having regard for their health and safety. Given this, please consider organising travel insurance to cover costs should you become unwell.



Bullying and harassment

The NYSF has a strict zero-tolerance policy to bullying and harassment. If at any time, while you're in attendance at any NYSF program, you feel bullied or uncomfortable due to the behaviour of others, contact a member of staff immediately. Our policy applies to all NYSF events. The NYSF Bullying and Harassment policy can be viewed at www.nysf.edu.au/policies.

Child protection

The NYSF is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of all participants and volunteers who participate in our programs. All of our staff and volunteers have undergone working with children checks in the state or territory where they will be working. In addition, we work with our volunteers to educate them on our policies and procedures to ensure that they are the appropriate people to be undertaking these roles.

Our Child Safety policy can be viewed here at www.nysf.edu.au/policies.

If you have any concerns before, during or after the NYSF Year 12 Program, you can contact the NYSF in the first instance by emailing programs@nysf.edu.au.

Any communications regarding any child safety matters will be kept confidential.

MEDICATIONS

If you need to take medication/s during the day, please make sure you bring them.

If you experience severe allergic reactions, asthma, or other conditions that may be triggered during a visit, please ensure you bring any required treatments, such as an EpiPen or inhaler. If you have a Medic Alert bracelet or similar, please wear it.

FIRST AID AND MEDICAL CARE

All staff and volunteers involved with the NYSF Year 12 Program have first aid and CPR training and know where to refer participants who require medical attention.

In most cases, our Rotary volunteers are responsible for providing first aid during the Program. They should be your first stop if you're feeling unwell or need basic first aid. Volunteers and NYSF staff can provide panadol with permission (via your participant/family agreement with NYSF).

The detailed medical information you provide to the NYSF will be shared in confidence with the Rotary and Student Staff volunteers on session for your own safety.

Because your health and safety are our priority, staff will not hesitate to call an ambulance if needed. If an ambulance is required, you will need to meet all the costs. You must also pay for any medication prescribed at the time of collection from a pharmacy. If you require medical care beyond basic first aid provided by NYSF staff or volunteers, the NYSF will inform your parent/guardian.

However, if you are over 16 years old, we will not disclose the nature of your illness or injury without your consent.

DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

If you have any dietary requirements, please make sure they are listed on your NYSF registration details so we can inform the catering team. Your accommodation will have plenty of meal choices, and the catering team will cater for all dietary requirements.

Our STEM hosts do sometimes provide morning or afternoon tea, and we will ensure that your dietary requirements are passed on to them.

You'll have the chance to speak with the NYSF staff or volunteers when you arrive at your session if you need to discuss anything further relating to your dietary requirements.



NYSF Staff on the program

The NYSF will have volunteers and NYSF corporate staff at residential sessions.

Our volunteers include Rotary and Student Staff (NYSF alumni), who ensure visits run according to the schedule, that everyone gets to where they need to go and is safe.

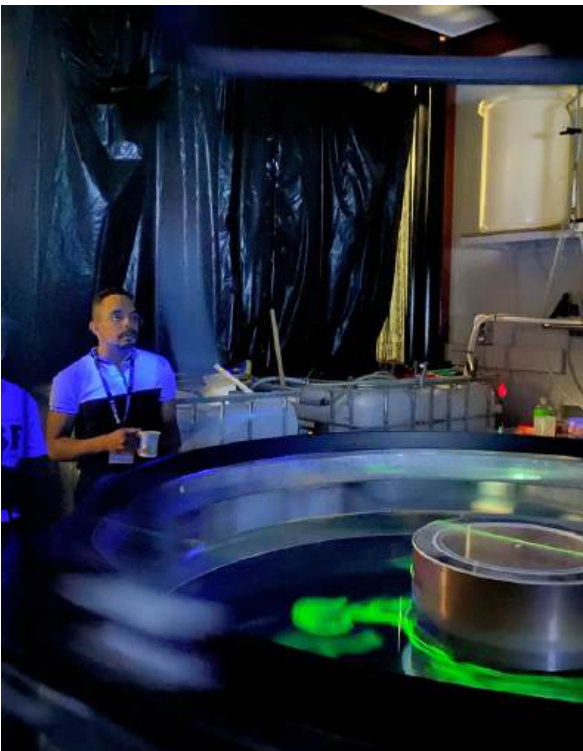
There are many opportunities to socialise during your session. NYSF Student Staff are there to ensure you get the most out of the NYSF Year 12 Program.

Participating in social events where you can meet, network, have fun and chat about your STEM interests will assist with this.

If at any time you have any non-urgent questions about the NYSF Year 12 Program in general, your schedule or anything else relating to January, please feel free to contact us in the first instance at programs@nysf.edu.au.

NYSF Year 12 Program app

The NYSF Year 12 Program will have a dedicated app that you can install to give you access to the schedule and save your individual visits. The NYSF mobile app helps keep participants and staff up to date on the schedule for each day of the program and chat with fellow NYSFers ahead of the program commencing. You will be advised how you can access the app closer to January.



Media

MEDIA CONSENT

The NYSF Participant and Parent/Guardian Agreement you and your parent/guardian signed includes a photo, website, and media consent section. We encourage you to familiarise yourself with these terms before the NYSF Year 12 Program.

If you agreed to this clause, you have provided consent for NYSF and its partners and supporters to use media content, including photographs, screenshots, quotes/comments, and/or video footage, produced by or taken of you at the NYSF Year 12 Program for educational or promotional purposes in any type of media, including on the NYSF website and other media channels, and on partner websites and media channels.

If you have not agreed to the media clause, please note that NYSF may still capture media content of you during the Year 12 Program, however, it will not be used by the NYSF.

You are welcome to opt in or out of being involved in any media opportunities at any point during your time at the NYSF Year 12 Program.

Please be aware that you cannot take photos or video/film others at the NYSF without their permission or use them for commercial purposes. If you have any media use or consent concerns, please contact the NYSF at programs@nysf.edu.au.

SOCIAL MEDIA

We encourage you to like and follow the NYSF social media channels if you have accounts, and don't already follow us:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NYSFoz>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/nysfoz/>
- Twitter/X: <https://twitter.com/NYSFoz>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/school/national-youth-science-forum/>

Feel free to interact with us online before and during the NYSF Year 12 Program. You can use #NYSFoz to tag your posts, as well as our handles.

Please remember that you have also agreed to use common sense when posting content to social media, follow the NYSF Code of Conduct, and ensure that the content won't damage the reputation of NYSF or affiliated programs.





triazine in
use of
ammrf
Association
of
Molecular
Microbiology
and
Research
Fellowship
Program
The target
protein
is a key
factor in
the
pathogenesis
of
the
disease
and
is
essential
for
the
survival
of
the
organism.

Participant
Name
ID
Date

WEAR THIS SHORT PERIODICALLY
ONLY WE

B	C	N	O	F
Al	Si	P	S	Cl
Ge	As	Se	Br	
In	Sn	Sb	Tl	
Pb	Bi	Po		
At				

AFTER THE PROGRAM

Your experience at the NYSF wasn't only valuable to you - it's also valuable to everyone who helped get you to the NYSF, as well as anyone who attends the NYSF Year 12 Program after you! To share your experiences, we encourage you visit local schools and Rotary Clubs to tell others about your experience and encourage future applicants.

VISITING LOCAL ROTARY CLUBS

Local Rotary Clubs would love to have you visit them as long term supporters of the NYSF. The ideal way to reach out to these clubs would be to offer to be a guest speaker at one of their regular meetings.

VISITING LOCAL SCHOOLS

We encourage you to speak at schools in your local area - certainly your own school, and other schools nearby.

At the end of January, we'll provide you with some promotional material you can use to tell people about the benefits of the NYSF.



NYSF surveys

You will be encouraged to fill out NYSF Surveys after the application and selection period, after any welcome and orientation events, before and after the NYSF Year 12 Program, and one and five years on as a valued NYSF Alum. Through these surveys, you can tell us about your experiences in the NYSF Year 12 Program, including what you expected before you came, what you did and learned, and what your future plans are. There will even be a chance for you to upload some photos to show us your experience!

NYSF also uses our Program App to collect ratings for individual sessions, we encourage you to give us as much feedback as possible. We'll use your responses to help future applicants to the NYSF learn about the program, as well as help us run an even better NYSF Year 12 Program for coming years.

NYSF partners

The NYS partners with a range of corporate, government and university partners. Partnership funding supports various activities and expenses associated with running the NYSF programs. You can visit our website to see more about our partners and the valuable contribution they make to our programs.

[Our Partners](#)



Kat (2012) met her future PhD supervisor at NYSF

