How to Cite Photos, Graphics, Graphs & Online Images on your Project Display Board

We follow the same rules as ISEF and they are strict about **proper attribution** and about not displaying restricted research materials, so citations must be clear and professional.

Important: Any visual that is not your own work must be cited. This includes:

- Photographs
- Graphics
- Diagrams
- Charts
- Graphs
- Illustrations
- Drawings
- Infographics
- Screenshots

If you did not create it yourself — you must cite it.

1 If YOU Created It

If you:
- Took the photo
- Drew the diagram
- Created the graph using your own data

Then label it clearly:
  Figure 1. Experimental setup. Photo by [Your Name], 2026.
OR
  Figure 2. Results graph created by author using experimental data.

You do not need a full bibliography entry for visuals you created yourself.

2 If YOU Took the Photo

You must:
- Make sure the photo does not show restricted procedures (especially for biomedical projects).
- Label it clearly.

Under the photo on your board:
  Figure 1. Experimental setup. Photo by [Your Name], 2026.

You do **not** need a full bibliography entry for your own photos.

3 If the Image is from the Internet (Photo, Graph, Diagram, Drawing, etc.)

On the Board (under the image)

Keep it simple but readable:

> Figure 2. Plant cell structure (Smith, 2023).

OR

> Figure 2. Plant cell structure. Image from National Geographic.

In Your References Section (Full Citation Required)

We do not mandate APA vs MLA, but you must:

- Be consistent
- Include author (if available)
- Title
- Website
- URL
- Date (if available)

APA example:

> Smith, J. (2023). Plant cell structure. National Geographic. https://www…

4 Creative Commons / Free Image Sites (Unsplash, Pixabay, etc.)

You STILL must cite them.

Under photo:

> Figure 3. Volcano eruption (Brown, 2022).

In references:

> Brown, T. (2022). Volcano eruption [Photograph]. Unsplash. URL

Important Rules

🚫 **You may NOT display:**

- Photos of human subjects unless properly cleared
- Vertebrate animal surgery images
- Hazardous procedures
- Identifiable patient information

Even if approved in paperwork, display rules are separate.

Best Practice for Boards

✔ Number every image (Figure 1, Figure 2…)
✔ Include short source under image
✔ Put full citation in References section
✔ Keep formatting professional and consistent
✔ When in doubt — cite it

Judges notice missing citations immediately — including diagrams and graphs copied from websites.