

# Cub Scout STEM FAQ's

**What is Cub Scout STEM?** STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. The STEM initiative was begun back in 2010 as an effort by the Boy Scouts of America to enhance interest in STEM fields.

**What is a Nova Award?** The Nova Awards are a stepping-stone to the Supernova Awards. They integrate many of the existing advancements and include other related activities. There are eleven Nova awards for Cub Scouts-Science Everywhere, Down and Dirty, Nova WILD!, Out of This World, Tech Talk, Cubs Scouts Can Code, 1-2-3 Go!, Up and Away, Fearful Symmetry, Uncovering the Past, and Swing! The Nova awards take the form of a patch that can be worn on the right-hand pocket with additional pins for every subsequent award.

**What is a Supernova Award?** The Supernova awards build from the Nova awards. They seek to challenge the youth who have a greater interest in STEM fields to experiment, understand the outcomes of the experiments, and present their findings. There are two levels of Supernova for Cub Scouts-the Dr. Luis W. Alvarez medal for Wolf and Bear Scouts and the Dr. Charles H. Townes medal for Webelos Scouts.

**Who can earn a Nova Award?** Nova awards can be earned by Wolf and Bear Cub Scouts and all Webelos Scouts. Unfortunately, the National Council has made no provision for either Lions or Tigers to earn Nova Awards.

**Why earn a Nova Award or Supernova Award?** The country is in need of the next generation of inventors, scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and technologists and the Boy Scouts of America is trying to do its part in developing that next generation. Right now, many of the merit badges the Scouts earn do relate to STEM. The Nova and Supernova awards are additional recognition for interest and effort the Scouts already demonstrate in the STEM fields.

**Who helps the Cub Scout complete the STEM Awards?** There are two levels of guidance--one for the Nova Awards and one for the Supernova Awards. For the Nova Awards, the Cub Scout or Webelos works with a Counselor. For the Supernova Awards, the Cub Scout or Webelos works with a Mentor.

**Who can become a Nova Counselor?** Any adult leader can become a Nova Counselor. The adult needs to complete Youth Protection and complete an Adult Application using leadership code "58." The only other requirement is that the leader has an interest and some understanding of the STEM topics. The leader should be able to guide the Scout over several weeks.

**Who can become a Supernova Mentor?** Typically, the Supernova Mentor is someone that is an expert in STEM topics and is capable of guiding the Scout over several months. They also must complete Youth Protection Training and complete an Adult Application. In this case, the leader uses leadership code "52." The Supernova Mentor must also complete an additional Supernova Mentor application and be approved by the Council or District STEM committee. The Supernova Mentor application is very similar to the Merit Badge Counselor Application for Boy Scouts.

Where can I find out more about the Nova Awards and Supernova Awards? The National Boy Scouts of America website has additional information at <http://www.scouting.org/stem/Awards/BoyScouts.aspx>

**Are there any pre-requisites that Scouts need to complete prior to the upcoming Science Everywhere! Nova Award event on Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023?** Yes, for the Science Everywhere! Nova award, the Cub Scouts or Webelos need to have completed their watching or reading requirements (#1) and their Adventure requirements (#2). The Cub Scouts or Webelos need to watch or read (or any combination thereof) about one hour on mathematics or physics then make a list of two questions that they will discuss with the Counselor. For Wolf Scouts, they must complete one of the following Adventures—Digging in the Past or Germs Alive! For Bear Scouts, they must complete one of the following Adventures—A Bear Goes Fishing, Bear Picnic, or Critter Care. For Webelos, they must complete the Earth Rocks! Adventure. There are other options in addition to completing an Adventure, please contact Michael McDowell ([mcdowell.scouters@gmail.com](mailto:mcdowell.scouters@gmail.com)) for information about this alternative. We will be doing the reminder of the requirements at the event.

**What is provided at the upcoming event?** There will be Nova Counselors to guide the Scouts in completing the Science Everywhere! Nova Award. All the supplies necessary to complete requirements #3-5 of the Nova Award will be provided. At the end of the session, a Scout completing all the requirements will receive their Nova Award patch or pin.

**What will we be doing?**

1. Conducting an experiment in Oil Spill Clean-up
2. Hearing from International Bird Rescue
3. Discuss how Science affects everyday Life.

**What is the cost of the event?** The event costs \$25 and covers the Nova Award patch or pin, all the materials for the experiments, and a small snack.

**How do Scouts register for the event?** Registration will be online through the GGAC website and will open January 14, 2023. For any questions, please contact Michael McDowell at [mcdowell.scouters@gmail.com](mailto:mcdowell.scouters@gmail.com).