



NUI Galway  
OÉ Gaillimh



Health Research Board

**TMRN**

Trials Methodology Research Network

## Re: Schools Teaching Awareness of Randomised Trials (START)

Dear School Teacher / Principal

You can help your students become the

 **scientists of tomorrow** and the  
 **critical thinkers of today**

Everyday children are faced with **health claims**, some reliable and some not so reliable. But how do we help children see the **fake news** from the credible information. How do we teach our children to develop a critical eye when it comes to all of the information they encounter every day, in particular when it comes to their health? We think we have the answer... and it's a lot of fun!

### "The Need For Critical Thinking Among Children Is Now"

On May 20th every year, the world celebrates International Clinical Trials Day. This event marks the anniversary of the first well-documented clinical trial, which was conducted with sailors in the navy in 1747. Researchers in NUI Galway wish to celebrate this important occasion with the help of the younger members of our community. We invite your 4th, 5th & 6th classes to lead on an exciting project and create their very own trial. Teachers and students are asked to identify a suitable research question they can answer scientifically using the resources provided on the website - [www.STARTcompetition.com](http://www.STARTcompetition.com). The purpose of this competition is to help students become aware of the trial process, and gain insights into the best way to conduct a fair comparison. Pick a simple, easy to answer question, but use the proper steps of a trial to answer it and make sure to have fun!

This project addresses several key aspects of the school curriculum, as outlined below. The best part is that you can report the findings in any way you like, podcast, video, collage or poster, report, it's up to you to be as creative as you like! And the best bit... the top three shortlisted schools will be brought to NUI Galway on Friday, 15th May 2020, for a fun day of workshops and learning. At this event the overall winner will be announced and presented with the HRB-TMRN START Trophy 2020 and we cover all of the costs.

The START competition does not cost anything to enter. Please visit our website [www.STARTcompetition.com](http://www.STARTcompetition.com) for further details and to see previous winning entries.

We look forward to receiving your entry.



**Dr Sandra Galvin**  
Programme Manager HRB-TMRN

Phone: 091 494 493  
[hrb-tmrn@nuigalway.ie](mailto:hrb-tmrn@nuigalway.ie)

 [facebook.com/STARTCompetition](https://facebook.com/STARTCompetition)

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Schools Teaching Awareness of Randomised Trials



# START

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## START COMPETITION 2020

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## Trial Ambassadors

The START competition has the help and support of trial ambassadors, who are PhD students involved in conducting clinical trials. Feel free to contact them by phone or email to discuss any issues you encounter. You can also contact the HRB-TMRN at **091 494 492** or [hrb-tmrn@nuigalway.ie](mailto:hrb-tmrn@nuigalway.ie) to discuss further.

## How this competition can help meet key aspects of the current school's curriculum:

### Maths

Students will need to collect and analyse data in order to see the effects of their intervention. This will mean comparing the results of two groups of participants that are involved to see differences in their effects.

### Science

A clinical trial, like any scientific experiment, requires participants to stick to a defined set of rules and procedures in order to get the best results. The project also teaches children the foundation processes around where evidence for healthcare decisions are made.

### Social, Personal & Health Education (SPHE)

The START competition will help students question the choices they make around their own health and wellbeing and create a sense of personal responsibility for the everyday decisions they make. By working in a team, as a class or as a school, the students will be able to see each other's strengths in delivering such a project.

### English / Irish

The students will be challenged to explain the project to those involved; this may mean younger pupils or family members or the wider community. The final presentation of the project findings will require students to compile the findings in a clear and concise way.

### Visual arts

There are no restrictions in the format for which the findings can be presented. Students are encouraged to be creative and use any format they wish.

### Information & communication technology (ICT)

The project will require research by the students to understand the processes involved. A wide range of online resources will be made available to students. Students can also use technology to present their work.