

# Optimizing your Virtual Experience



The Tech  
Interactive

## About our Virtual Programs

Why book a virtual experience with The Tech Interactive?

- Our programs present real-world scenarios that promote problem-solving, collaboration, and innovation. Your learners will have so much fun that they don't even realize they're also learning critical STEM skills!
- The virtual format means that schools from all over the country can take advantage of our connections to Silicon Valley's high tech industry and top universities.
- All our programs are NGSS-aligned, while also emphasizing the 4Cs.



But we think the educators and students who've experienced these programs have said it best:

*"The Tech Virtual labs saved me — this is my third lab experience this year. My students were incredibly satisfied with the content as well as the presenters. Thank you so very much!"*

— Carla Miller, Grade 3 teacher

*"I really wish our remote learning could have looked like this all year long. You and the team really made it easy and it was so wonderful to see the scholars' roller coasters and using the vocab!"*

— Carol Hill, Grade 4 teacher

*"I really appreciated that both instructors were so good at giving positive feedback to the students no matter what they had 'created'!...I was very happy with the program, the instructors, and the opportunity for my students to experience this design challenge. I would recommend it for sure!"*

— Lisa Dabel, Grade 5 teacher

*"Thank you so much, Dr. Brantley, for talking to us about your research! It was really interesting to see concepts we've learned in class be applied to a real-world scenario!"*

— Ava, AP Bio student



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## Global Soundscapes

Immerse yourself in the amazing sounds of our planet! This interactive multimedia experience takes you on an ear-opening journey into the science of sound and the emerging field of soundscape ecology.

Your learners will embark on a mission to investigate the dramatic soundscapes of Costa Rica's rainforests and hone their skills as soundscape ecologists. Participants will:

- Learn about the tools that scientists use to record and analyze sounds.
- Explore basic acoustics through interactive activities and incredible slow-motion footage.
- Discover what soundscapes tell us about the health of our planet.



## Book a Biologist

In this FREE virtual experience for Bay Area middle and high schools, an expert guest speaker will engage with your middle or high school students for 45-60 minutes. We offer two types of sessions:

- **“Meet a scientist”**: This session is informal and conversational. The Biologist will give a 5-10 minute presentation about who they are, including a bit about their personal history, path into science, current work, and career goals. The rest of the session will be an open Q&A from students.
- **Research presentation**: In this type of session, the Biologist will give a 20-minute presentation about their current work and studies, giving students a sneak peek into cutting-edge research. The rest of the session will be an open Q&A from students.

The biologists are volunteer graduate students and postdoctoral fellows from Stanford, primarily from the Genetics Department, who are interested in engaging with youth about science. Please note that as sessions are dependent on Biologist availability, we are not able to accommodate all special requests.

What do we ask in return for you engaging with this free program? Easy! Just fill out a survey afterward to help us guide the program's direction for the future. Priority will be given to underserved schools.



# Virtual Program Pricing and Availability

	Global Soundscapes	Book a Biologist
<b>Title I school pricing*</b>	Fee waived; \$50 refundable deposit required	Free
<b>Non-Title I school pricing</b>	\$140	Free
<b>Availability</b>	Sept. 20, 2022- June 9, 2023 M-F, 9 a.m., 11 a.m., and 1 p.m. Pacific	Oct. 1, 2022 - June 3, 2023 Times will vary depending on Biologist availability.
<b>Booking form</b>	<a href="https://thetech.org/virtual-student-programming">thetech.org/virtual-student-programming</a>	<a href="https://thetech.org/bookabiologist">thetech.org/bookabiologist</a>

\*Your school is considered Title I if 40% or more of your students meet the federal requirements to receive free or reduced-price school lunches.



# Checklist for a Successful Virtual Global Soundscapes

We look forward to your participation! Below are preparation steps that will help you get the most from your virtual Global Soundscapes.

## At least two months prior to your desired date:

- Choose several days and times for your virtual program in case your first choice is not available.
- Submit your request via our online application. A Group Reservations Specialist will follow up within five (5) business days to confirm details and accept payment.

## Three weeks before your virtual program:

- Review pre-visit activities, which will be emailed to you.
- Make sure you have paid for your experience.

## One week before your virtual program:

- Know how your classroom technology should be set up:
  - The Tech Educator will be showing a short film and stopping occasionally to ask questions. The educator should be able to hear your students when they respond to questions.

## On the day of your virtual program:

- Please join your Zoom session 5 minutes early to have a quick prep chat with our instructor (this should be private and not shared with your students).
- Ensure that your students are ready to start on time, as we are unable to extend our virtual sessions beyond our scheduled end time.

## After your virtual program:

- Debrief with your class.
  - How was the experience?
  - What were the students' favorite parts? Why?
  - What are three things the students learned?
- Review post-visit activities we shared if you attended a Science Lab.
- Complete post-lab survey emailed to you by The Tech.
- Consider writing a class thank you note, especially if you participated in Book a Biologist. Our scientists are volunteering their time, and they appreciate hearing back from students!

# Virtual Lab Reservation Policies

- Virtual Global Soundscapes requests must be made via our online application. A Group Reservations Specialist will follow up within five (5) days to confirm details and accept payment.
- If your school is Title I, please see policies on page 9 for information on special pricing.
- Deposits (\$50 per lab) are required at the time of reservation confirmation. Please have a method of payment ready. See acceptable forms of payment below.
- Virtual program reservations are required at least three (3) weeks in advance.

## Payment

- Payment in full is required at least three weeks prior to your virtual experience date. The Tech accepts cash, American Express, Visa, MasterCard, Discover and school-issued checks.
- To pre-pay by credit card, call 1-408-294-8324, option 3.
- Mailed check payments must be received within three (3) weeks of your reservation. Make checks out to The Tech Interactive and send with your invoice to:

The Tech Interactive  
ATTN: Group Reservations  
201 South Market Street  
San Jose, CA 95113

## Changing or Canceling Reservations

We understand plans change. If you need to cancel or change the date of your Global Soundscapes session, please call Group Reservations (1-408-294-8324, option 3) as soon as possible to reschedule. Keep in mind that the experience scheduled for your original date may not be available on your new date.

## Refunds

If you cancel your paid virtual program more than three weeks from its scheduled date, we will be able to refund your payment. If you cancel with less than three weeks' notice, we will not be able to refund your payment, and your school may be subject to additional cancellation fees. However, we will be flexible in the case of public health or school district directives. In this instance, we will work with you to reschedule your trip or refund your payment.

## Late Arrivals

If your class will be logging on significantly late on the date of your virtual science lab or Global Soundscapes, please call Group Reservations at 1-408-294-8324, option 3.

We understand that groups may arrive late due to circumstances out of their control. We will do our best to accommodate late arrivals; however, it may not always be possible.



# Checklist for a Successful “Book a Biologist” Session

We look forward to your participation! Below are preparation steps that will help you get the most from Book a Biologist.

## At least 6 weeks prior to your desired date:

- Research and choose which Book a Biologist session works best for your class at [thetech.org/virtual-student-programming](https://thetech.org/virtual-student-programming)
- Submit your request via our online [application](#).
- The program coordinator will follow up within ten business days to introduce you to your Biologist or update you on the status of your request.

## Once you are matched with a Biologist:

- Confirm all scheduling details with your Biologist guest speaker.
- Confirm virtual class setup with your Biologist. If you are creating the link, please ensure that your Biologist will be able to share their slides. Note that some platforms (e.g., Teams) may require troubleshooting ahead of time to ensure a guest can join your classroom effectively.
- If you experience any difficulties communicating with your Biologist, please contact the program coordinator (Abbey Thompson, [athompson@thetech.org](mailto:athompson@thetech.org)).

## One week before your virtual session:

- Have your students review any materials shared by the Biologist, such as videos or articles.
- Have your students prepare questions to ask during the session.

## On the day of your virtual session:

- Please join your virtual conference session 10 minutes early along with the Biologist to ensure there are no technical difficulties.
- Ensure that your students are ready to start on time.
- Give a brief introduction to kick off the session.
- Encourage your students to be active participants. This will help your Biologist authentically connect with them and fine tune the session to fit their interests. We recommend students:
  - Use the chat feature for comments and questions throughout the session.
  - During Q&A, raise their hand to ask questions verbally.
  - Turn their videos on, if they are comfortable doing so.
- Please act as moderator for the session. This may include asking the Biologist follow-up or clarifying questions as needed and keeping track of time.

## After your virtual session:

- Debrief with your class.
  - How was the experience?
  - What were the students’ favorite parts? Why?
  - What are three things the students learned?
- Complete post-session [survey](#).
- Consider writing a class thank you note. Our scientists are volunteering their time, and they appreciate hearing back from students!

# Book a Biologist Reservation Policies

## Advance Reservations Required

Book a Biologist requests must be made via our [online application](#). A member of our staff will follow up within ten (10) days to confirm details.

Book a Biologist reservations are required at least three (3) weeks in advance.

## Changing or Canceling Reservations

We understand plans change. If you need to cancel or reschedule your Book A Biologist speaker, please contact your Biologist directly. If you are having difficulty communicating with your Biologist or have not yet been paired with a speaker, please contact the program coordinator (Abbey Thompson, [athompson@thetech.org](mailto:athompson@thetech.org))

## Late Arrivals

If your class will be logging on late for your Book a Biologist program, please contact your Biologist directly.

We understand that sessions may start late due to circumstances out of your control. Our Biologist will do their best to accommodate you; however, it may not always be possible to extend the session beyond its original end time.

## Title I policies

If your school is designated as Title I (meaning 40% or more of students meet the federal guidelines to receive free or reduced-price lunch), most of our programs are free and subsidies are available to help with other costs. See below for options, or call Group Reservations at 1-408-294-8324, option 3.

### Global Soundscapes

Title I schools may qualify for a scholarship for Global Soundscapes, which covers the entire cost of the virtual experience. To qualify for a Title I scholarship, teachers must implement one of the provided pre-visit and one of the post-visit activities with their class and respond to a follow-up survey from The Tech.

A \$50 deposit per lab is required for Title I schools receiving a virtual program scholarship. The deposit will be refunded the day of your virtual program. If you cancel your lab less than three (3) weeks from the scheduled lab date, including on the day of your scheduled lab, your deposit will not be refunded. Funding is limited — book early!

### Book a Biologist

This program is free for all schools, although priority is given to underserved schools.

## Online Behavior Expectations

### Teacher expectations:

- Teachers are expected to be present in the virtual classroom at all times. Please anticipate logging in 10 minutes prior to the start of the session to have a private conversation with our instructor.
- Log in to your Virtual Lab or Global Soundscapes through the same account you booked your trip with. This will make it easier for our educator to recognize you.
- If a disruptive student is in their home, our Tech instructor may need to mute them using the virtual conference controls available. If the student is in the classroom and being disruptive, we expect the teacher to take care of the situation to ensure an optimal learning experience for the other students.

### Student behavior expectations:

- Be respectful of The Tech instructor who is leading your session.
- Use appropriate language in the chat room if it's made available to you.
- Ask lots of questions and have fun!

# Learning Recovery Funding

Schools may only receive one Title I scholarship per year for our educational programs. However, our field trips and virtual programs all qualify as learning recovery for federal COVID-19 relief funding. If your school has received this funding, we look forward to partnering with you to jumpstart your students' STEM skills recovery!

