STEM Funders Network: STEM Learning Ecosystems Initiative Application Technical Assistance Webinar

Tuesday, February 21, 2017
10:00am PT | 11:00am MT | 12:00pm CT | 1:00pm ET
Presenters:

- Ron Ottinger, Executive Director, STEM Next & Co-Chair, STEM Funders Networ
- Julie Stolzer, Director, STEM Learning Ecosystems Initiative
- Michelle Freeman, Program Officer, Samueli Foundation
- Sandy Strunk, Executive Director, Lancaster County STEM Alliance
- Larry Plank, Director of STEM Education, Hillsborough County Public Schools & Tampa Bay STEM Network

Questions and Answers

Recognizing that each Ecosystem is different, what is the range of annual budgets across current ecosystems? What does it cost to operate a STEM Learning Ecosystem?

The participating STEM Learning Ecosystems are very different. There are no two that operate or function alike. In some of the more mature and larger Ecosystems, we see higher budgets due to the scope of their programming and overall wider service or education area across a greater region. In contrast, we see highly functioning but smaller Ecosystems that operate within a slighter budget and footprint. In all Ecosystems we see evidence of shared funding across partners coupled with in-kind support from office space or loaned staff for events to name a few.

Can you talk a little about the Indicators Tool which is mentioned in the Application as one of our participation requirements?

The Indicators Tool is intended to provide each Ecosystem an opportunity to gather and better understand STEM Indicators within their communities. The Ecosystem lead and team collects the data and information and then discusses their findings with the Ecosystem's Technical Assistance Coach. The review takes approximately 60-90 minutes. For the Initiative's part, that data collected helps establish a baseline that is then followed up by the tool again at the end of each programming year. This is intended to demonstrate progress, strengths and opportunity areas. Each Ecosystem completes the Indicators Tool twice a year, baseline and year-end.

Can you talk a little bit more parent-serving organizations? What does it mean in the application when it states "parent-serving organizations?"

We understand that overall STEM outreach to parents is a challenge across many STEM Learning Ecosystems. We felt that it is important to keep parents elevated as part of the conversation and for communities to think about news ways to enhance current parent engagement strategies. In some communities we have seen a strong Parent Teacher Association or Parent Teacher Organizations participate as part of their Ecosystem. Another example are organizations that focus exclusively on parent education, such as PIQE (Parent for Quality Education), a national group that the Orange County STEM Ecosystem is working with on building out a STEM component of their 12-week parent education program.

What is the STEM Leadership Program, as described in the application?

The STEM Funders Network STEM Learning Ecosystems Initiative is currently developing a national leadership program that is being designed to help grow STEM leaders across the country. The program will support a cadre of STEM leaders representing diverse backgrounds by equipping them with skills to work locally and be part of the national STEM dialogue. The program will be rolled out this year.

For more Frequently Asked Questions, visit our [FAQ page](#).