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STEM Learning Ecosystems Selects St. Louis Region to Join National Initiative and Receive Support to Build Regional Partnerships Focused on STEM Education Pathways

STEM Funders Network to support St. Louis STEM Ecosystem in collaborations that impact youth from birth through college/career and engage students during and after school

(San Diego, CA – May 25, 2017) – The St. Louis region has just been selected to join the STEM Learning Ecosystems national initiative to make a significant impact on STEM education and workforce development. As announced at the U.S. News STEM Solutions National Leadership Conference today, St. Louis is one of 17 regional Ecosystems added to the national Initiative, which now encompasses 54 communities.

In just two years, the national STEM Learning Ecosystems Initiative has become a thriving network of hundreds of organizations and thousands of individuals, joined in regional partnerships with the objective of collaborating in new and creative ways to increase equity and quality in STEM learning outcomes for all youth.

“It’s so important to consider the entire continuum of education,” said STEM Learning Ecosystem co-chairs Gerald Solomon, Executive Director, Samueli Foundation, and Ron Ottinger, Director of STEM Next. “The growing Community of Practice shares ideas and best practices for innovative learning that will benefit students’ individual development and prepare them for the demands of the 21st century workforce.”

The St. Louis Regional STEM Learning Ecosystem was selected to be one of 17 incoming ecosystem communities because of a demonstrated commitment to cross-sector collaborations in schools and beyond the classroom—in afterschool and summer programs, at home, with local business and industry partners, and in science centers, libraries and other places both virtual and physical. As STEM Ecosystems evolve, students will be able to connect what is learned in and out of school with real-world opportunities.

“St. Louis is working toward an economic renaissance by capitalizing on its strengths in science and innovation. It is imperative that jobs and opportunities in these sectors are accessible in an



equitable way to individuals across the St. Louis region,” said Ben Johnson, Vice President, Programs at BioSTL, which facilitated St. Louis’ alignment around the Ecosystems Initiative. “STEM Ecosystems provides technical assistance and infrastructure support so that we can harness and link existing STEM programs in St. Louis and tailor quality STEM learning opportunities to our specific regional needs while leveraging the experience of similar alliances across the country.”

The St. Louis Regional STEM Learning Ecosystem is a collaborative consortium committed to equitable access to high-quality STEM learning for all students in the St. Louis metro region. With a youth-centered focus and a commitment to transparency, information sharing, data-driven decision making, and continuous improvement, the St. Louis STEM Ecosystem will advance regional STEM collaboration beyond networking and cooperation toward a common vision and agenda, shared planning and measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, and continuous communication that deepens students’ engagement with STEM and prepares them to live and thrive in a globally connected, technology-driven world.

St. Louis’ pursuit of the national STEM Ecosystems designation is a next step in the evolution of STEM-related networking and collaboration that has increased in the region in recent years, especially as related to equitable access. Early plans for the St. Louis Ecosystem include opening dialogue with those who wish to participate and help shape the vision of how a comprehensive, equitable STEM Ecosystem in St. Louis would develop. Two half-day design studios will set a table for open and inclusive participation of STEM-interested organizations and individuals – from large, well-known entities to small groups working in neighborhoods and schools throughout the entire region. By engaging a large, diverse group, the design studios will help to set key priorities around focus areas that include: 1) Building a Regional Culture of STEM Learning, 2) Enhancing In-Class STEM Education, 3) Ensuring In-Class Learning is Aligned with Quality and Accessible Out-of-Class STEM experiences, and 4) Linking STEM Learning with College and Career Opportunities.

Initial participants from St. Louis include: BioSTL, Engineering Center of St. Louis, Harris-Stowe State University, James S. McDonnell Family Foundation, Missouri Math and Science Coalition (Missouri Chamber of Commerce), National Society of Black Engineers – St. Louis, Parents as Teachers, SCOPE National, Saint Louis University, STEMPact, St. Louis Agency on Training and Employment (SLATE), St. Louis Community College, St. Louis Science Center, St. Louis Student Robotics Association, and Washington University Institute for School Partnership. The St. Louis Ecosystem is actively seeking to expand participation to ensure a broad, diverse set of stakeholders are shaping the initiative and engaging communities across the region. Interested organizations and individuals can connect with the Ecosystem here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/9WoQ0009qofhGC3n1> or contact Ben Johnson at BioSTL at bjohnson@biostl.org.



The following ecosystem communities were selected to become part of the national STEM Learning Ecosystem:

- **Arizona:** Flagstaff STEM Learning Ecosystem
- **California:** Region 5 STEAM in Expanded Learning Ecosystem (San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Monterey Counties)
- **Louisiana:** Baton Rouge STEM Learning Network
- **Massachusetts:** Cape Cod Regional STEM Network
- **Michigan:** Michigan STEM Partnership / Southeast Michigan STEM Alliance
- **Missouri:** St. Louis Regional STEM Learning Ecosystem
- **New Jersey:** Delran STEM Ecosystem Alliance (Burlington County)
- **New Jersey:** Newark STEAM Coalition
- **New York:** WNY STEM (Western New York State)
- **New York:** North Country STEM Network (seven counties of Northern New York State)
- **Ohio:** Belmont County Ohio STEM Initiative
- **Ohio:** STEM Works East Central Ohio
- **Oklahoma:** Mayes County STEM Alliance
- **Pennsylvania:** Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery STEM Learning Ecosystem
- **Washington:** The Washington STEM Network
- **Wisconsin:** Greater Green Bay STEM Network
- **Canada:** Symbiosis, British Columbia, Canada

Learn more about the national initiative at stemecosystems.org. Address specific questions to info@stemecosystems.org. Join online conversations on Twitter [@STEMecosystems](https://twitter.com/STEMecosystems) and [@STEMSTL](https://twitter.com/STEMSTL) with hashtag #STEMecosystems and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/STEMecosystems).

About the STEM Funders Network: The STEM Funders Network brings together grantmakers working in STEM to learn from one another, leverage their collective resources and collaborate on high-impact projects they could not undertake alone. The vision of the STEM Funders Network is that all students should have equal opportunity to engage in high-quality STEM learning experiences that will enhance their ability to succeed in a STEM career or other chosen path. See <http://www.stemfundersnetwork.org>

STEM Ecosystems funding and local supporting members of the STEM Funders Network include: [Amgen Foundation](#), [Broadcom Foundation](#), [Burroughs Wellcome Fund](#), [Carnegie Corporation of New York](#), [KDK-Harman Foundation](#), [Motorola Solutions Foundation](#), [Overdeck Family Foundation](#), [Pinkerton Foundation](#), [Samueli Foundation](#), [Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation](#), [Simons Foundation](#), [Steinman Foundation](#), [STEM Next \(Supported by the Noyce Foundation\)](#), and [Tiger Woods Foundation](#).

For more information, please contact info@stemecosystems.org.