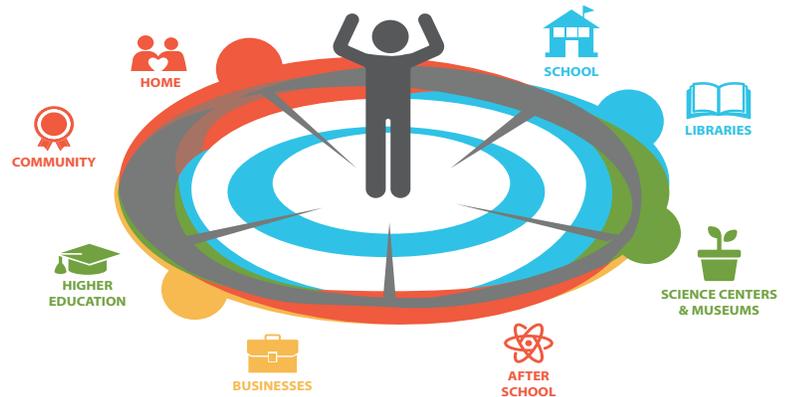


Kansas City's STEM Learning Ecosystem

The STEM Ecosystems initiative is a national effort to engage young people in **science, technology, engineering** and **math** through strong interconnected community networks.

In late 2015, Kansas City was among the first set of communities in the nation to receive an official STEM Learning Ecosystem designation from the STEM Funders Network. KC STEM Alliance serves as the backbone organization, encouraging all parts of the community to actively engage in building KC's STEM learning ecosystem.



What can a STEM Learning Ecosystem accomplish?

- >> Design and connect STEM learning opportunities to reflect the reality of young people's lives: learning not just in school but out-of-school, online, at home and in daily life.
- >> Connect preK-12 STEM learning (both in and out of school) to post-secondary and STEM career opportunities.
- >> Nurture young people's "STEM identity," or self-perception of competence in STEM, by engaging them in challenging, relevant problem-solving on issues they care about, and then publicly recognizing them for their efforts.
- >> Seek out and engage young people historically under-represented in STEM fields and work together to address barriers that hinder participation.
- >> Ensure young people have opportunities to meet and build mentoring relationships with STEM professionals from similar backgrounds who serve as role models. Ensure that young people learn, from an early age, about a range of STEM career possibilities.
- >> Help parents and guardians support their children's STEM success by understanding the pathways to further STEM education and careers and by knowing how to access high quality STEM experiences.
- >> Match STEM learning pathways to the changing needs of STEM higher education and workforce.

OUR VISION

To create a vibrant STEM-literate community that understands and uses science, technology, engineering and math in meaningful ways to improve lives.

OUR MISSION

To ensure access and equity to quality STEM experiences for all.

OUR APPROACH

1. Find and share high quality best practices
2. Decrease duplication of efforts
3. Leverage community assets
4. Build on strengths of partnering organizations

KC

S T E M

Alliance

www.kcstem.org / 816.235.1509 / kcstem@kcstem.org

How the ecosystem works

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The leadership team represents various parts of the ecosystem:

BioNexus KC
Full Employment Council
Kansas City Area Education Research Consortium
Kansas City Kansas Public Schools
Kansas City Public Library
Kansas City Missouri Public Schools
Kansas City Missouri Office of the Mayor
Kansas Enrichment Network
KC Digital Drive
KC Social Innovation Center
KC STEM Alliance
KU Center for STEM Learning
Mid-America Regional Council
PREP-KC
Science City at Union Station
Workforce Partnership

KC STEM Alliance coordinates the leadership team, convenes meetings and communicates what's happening across the STEM learning ecosystem to the community.

GET INVOLVED

Share your information for STEM Connect KC, join a work group and collaborate with others!



FOUNDING PARTNERS



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WORK GROUPS

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

To create a STEM-literate community, families must understand the importance of engaging in STEM activities and know how to find and connect with relevant experiences for their children. This group will work with in-school and out-of-school partners to identify strategies to increase engagement and connect learners with STEM opportunities.

CONTACT: Andrea Ellis,
andreaellis@kclibrary.org

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an often-cited barrier to participation in out-of-school STEM programs, especially among under-served populations. This cross-sector work group is brainstorming and testing potential solutions for teens and young adults.

CONTACT: Marcia Dvorak,
mjdvorak@ku.edu

COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

A surge in STEM programs and opportunities makes it difficult for families to find and connect with programs and for the community to map the STEM education landscape. This group will help roll out new tools and identify future technology needs.

CONTACTS: Callen Zind,
czind@kcstem.org; Aaron Deacon,
adeacon@KCDigitalDrive.org

EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This group will work with in-school and out-of-school providers to align professional development and encourage best-practice STEM learning strategies such as problem-based learning, design thinking and fostering a growth mindset.

CONTACT: Chair TBD (For info:
Ann Zimmerman, zimmermanab@kcstem.org)

COMMON SECTOR COMPETENCY INTEGRATION

KC Rising, a regional economic development initiative, has identified common skills and competencies needed across all sectors of the workforce. Building awareness of these competencies and developing strategies for teachers to integrate them into the classroom will result in a better-prepared workforce for our region.

CONTACT: Sheri Gonzales Warren,
swarren@MARC.org

INDUSTRY-RECOGNIZED CREDENTIALING

Kansas City has a high demand for skilled workers in the life sciences, especially in the field of bioinformatics. To recruit, train and credential workers in life sciences, industry and education partners are working together on pathways and training opportunities. The Life Sciences Regional Advisory Board, working as part of the KC Rising initiative, is leading this work.

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