

Raising the Funds



BUILD THE RELATIONSHIPS - LONG BEFORE THE ASK - EVEN WHEN FUNDING IS NOT ATTACHED.

Fundraising is a key factor in maintaining a thriving STEM Learning Ecosystem. This Pressing Issue Conversation features three ecosystems that offer effective and creative ways to raise capital for their community.

Allison Brody of [STEM New Mexico \(STEM-NM\)](#) acknowledges the power of partnerships in securing funding: “We are constantly looking for partnerships and collaborations that we can support, whether or not there is funding attached. Seeing where the energy and interest lies is where we want to be. From the beginning we are clear about our values and mission, which gives us a reputation that we can leverage to secure funding.”



12 MONTHS OF MATH

STEM-NM highlights existing event, 12 Months of Math to showcase different industry sponsors.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS, CHARGED BY A VISION AND MISSION, MAKE FUNDING STREAMS POSSIBLE THAT MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE BEFORE.

“We don’t have a lot of large institutions in our rural community,” says Jeanne Miller, co-lead of the [Carbon Schuylkill and Luzerne Counties Ecosystem](#). “We have had to be very creative with our afterschool program, which is really the heart of our work. Thanks to deep relationships within the community we were able to collect 12 years of longitudinal data. This has supported our CSL Ecosystem to secure more than \$7 million for the next five years. Our impact is directly attributed to the buy-in partners have to our mission. The funding we have been able to secure is reflective of that partnership buy-in to the mission.”



Carbon, Schuylkill and Luzerne STEM Ecosystem has leveraged strong partnerships in the community to excel at longitudinal data collection for their SHINE afterschool program. This has allowed them to attract sustainable grant funding.

DATA THAT ARTICULATES YOUR IMPACT IS IMPORTANT TO SECURE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING.

STEM-NM ecosystem partners collaborated to win an NSF INCLUDES grant, which has expanded their collective impact and measurement work.

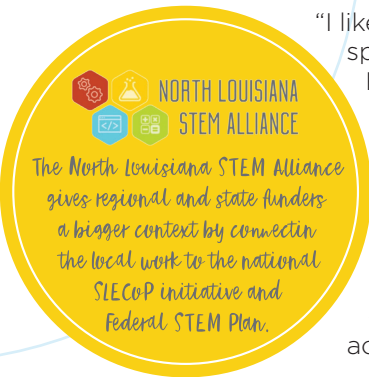


Afterschool programs and career pathways were priorities for the community in the Carbon Schuylkill and Luzerne Counties Ecosystem. Miller recalls, “When we built the afterschool programs to include a focus on STEM careers, we didn’t realize we were building our Ecosystem’s infrastructure. By being able to articulate our success with strong impact data, we communicated effectively with our senators whom have become big champions for us.”

FUNDRAISING MODELS

DON'T WAIT UNTIL THINGS ARE PERFECT TO MAKE YOUR PITCH -BUT YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ARTICULATE YOUR VISION, WORK AND IMPACT.

"I like to send partners and potential funders 'bright spot briefs' and other relevant information," says Heather Kleiner of [North Louisiana STEM Alliance](#). "People remember those things. We have started to see years of partnership cultivation starting to pay-off. Funders and companies want to be a part of the success that we have been able to showcase. Highlight our local work as part of the larger Community of Practice and in connection to Federal STEM Plan has generated a lot of excitement. We highlight the Plan as an urgent call to action that funders understand."



Kleiner also speaks about the importance of keeping your promise. "By keeping our promises to partners, we have been able to repair some relationships that were previously damaged under old leadership." By staying true to their Ecosystem values North Louisiana STEM Alliance promotes sustainable relationships.

FUNDRAISING MODELS OF STEM LEARNING ECOSYSTEMS

Every Ecosystem is unique and has generated funding to sustain their regional efforts in different ways. Many ecosystems are using a combination of the models listed to the right.

PANELISTS

Allison Brody, Director of STEM Education & Workforce Development, Explora, STEM-New Mexico (STEM-NM)

Heather Kleiner, PhD, Sponsored Programs Manager, Sci Port Discovery Center, North Louisiana STEM Alliance

Jeanne Miller, Miller Educational Services, Carbon Schuylkill and Luzerne Counties Ecosystem



Grant Funding Ecosystems apply for state, federal, corporate and foundation grants to support ecosystem initiatives, programs and general operation costs (e.g. staffing, materials, space, etc.).

Boards (Boards as fundraisers) Ecosystems develop Boards that function in a variety of different capacities to help lead the work. As part of their service to the board, members make contributions to the ecosystems.

STEM Champions Several Ecosystems have been successful in identifying a champion for their work. Those champions support fundraising efforts for the region.

Pay - to - Play Ecosystem members contribute a specific amount to support the general operation and overhead costs of the ecosystem. Overhead costs might include staffing, materials, office space, etc.

In-Kind Donations (Internal and External) Ecosystems have received in-kind donations of staff time and space to support the ecosystem. Many organizations have adopted the ecosystem approach to expand strategic plans and strengthen existing efforts.

Individual Giving Ecosystems have been able to leverage contributions from individuals in the community at all levels to support the work. This includes both individual giving campaigns as well as ongoing, open solicitations to the general public.

Fee-for-Service Some ecosystems have been able to offer and charge for services, including teacher professional development and other programs.

Social Enterprise Sell product to generate funds that support the ecosystem.

Pass Through Support Ecosystem receives grant funding to regrant to other organizations. The fiscal agent typically receives a percentage or portion of those grant funds to manage and distribute the funds to regional partners. This fee supports an ecosystem/backbone organization's overhead.

A FULL RECORDING OF THE WEBINAR IS AVAILABLE AT:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-pNR3jJSOnU>

STEM Learning Ecosystem Discussion Series - Pressing Topics

The Fundraising Conversation is the fifth in a series of webinar-based discussions designed to meet the needs of local and regional Ecosystem leaders have identified. Topics of high interest were identified through a survey distributed to Ecosystem leaders. Panelists were selected based on self-assessed expertise and data from the Ecosystems Indicator Tool (EIT).

OTHER WEBINAR TOPICS IN THIS SERIES INCLUDE:

- Communications
- Organization and Governance Structures
- Programs
- Business Connections