



STEM Innovation Grants: Community STE(A)M

Background

The purpose of the STEM Innovation Grant Program is to award grants that expand the implementation of effective programs related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics, that: (1) propose innovative approaches to STEM-based education; or (2) provide professional development relating to science, technology, engineering and mathematics ([OAR 581-017-0321](#)). STEM Innovation Grants are also specifically established to help close the achievement gap for students who are historically underserved and/or underrepresented in STEM ([OAR 581-017-0327](#)). STEM Innovation Grants are awarded to the [13 Regional STEM Hubs](#) for programming efforts each biennium. For the 23-25 Biennium, projects were submitted via a request for application and all proposed activities aligned to the required grant criteria. This Biennium, STEM Hubs collaborated together to develop their proposed budget allocations and activities and identified four collective areas of alignment across projects, including: Core STEM, Pathways to STEM, Early STEAM, and Community STEM. In addition, STEM Hub Directors and the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) worked together as a network to finalize shared outcome measures for each project.



YOUTH OF ALL AGES ENJOY EXPLORING STEM DURING COMMUNITY DAYS

Community STE(A)M

Purpose: To empower communities! Community STE(A)M activities aim to build access to STE(A)M opportunities for communities, thus empowering them to collectively solve problems. Community STE(A)M works to bring more STE(A)M to expanded learning time and often allows families and community to learn alongside their children, further empowering adults to make connections with their students around STE(A)M.



Alignment with the STEM Education Plan Goals

The Community STE(A)M project is aligned with three of the 2021-25 STEM Education Plan Goals:

- Goal 1: Inspire and empower our students to develop the knowledge, skills, and mindsets necessary to thrive in a rapidly changing, technologically rich, global society.
- Goal 2: Ensure equitable opportunities and access for every student to become a part of an inclusive innovation economy.
- Goals 3: Continuously improve the effectiveness, support, and number of formal and informal P-20 STEM educators.
- Goals 4: Develop a sustainable funding and policy environment for STEM and CTE that provides reliable, seamless, and sufficient support across biennia.

These goals emphasize:

- High quality out-of-school STE(A)M experiences
- Promotion of culturally and linguistically responsive teaching strategies
- STEM-based Professional Development sessions and communities of practices

Community STE(A)M Activities

Strategies employed across the state to strengthen the work in community STE(A)M include:

- Professional Development aligned with culturally-responsive pedagogy and inclusive STE(A)M instructional practices
- Intentional partnerships
- Creation and maintenance of networks
- PreK-12 STE(A)M program delivery