



NJ STEM Ecosystems Training Pre-Work SUSTAINABILITY

STEM LEARNING ECOSYSTEM FUNDING MODELS

Every Ecosystem is unique and has generated funding to sustain their regional efforts in different ways. Below you will read a high-level review of different funding models that STEM Learning Ecosystems are executing to advance their work. Please note that many ecosystems are using a combination of these models.

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.). All ecosystems use this model in some capacity. For example:

[Great Lakes Bay Region Alliance](#) received a multi-year grant from the Dow Corning Foundation to implement and scale their successful *Math in the Mail* program.

Pittsburgh's Ecosystem [Remake Learning](#) received grant funding from the Grable Foundation to implement and scale the city-wide, family engagement initiative, *Remake Learning Days*.

[Omaha STEM Ecosystem](#) receives grant funding from two local funders to support general operations, including staffing (the staff member sits at the Omaha Zoo, an ecosystem lead partner).

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. For example:

[Washington STEM](#) assembled a [Board of Directors](#) that contribute annually to the work.

[Colorado Succeeds](#) recruits business leaders and membership-based organizations to serve on a STEM Champion Board, which donates annually to sustain the work.

STEM Champions

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

[Northeast Florida's STEM2 Hub](#) deployed a well-connected, business leader in the region to assemble a corporate board and generate a full budget for the ecosystem's budget.

[Tampa Bay STEM Network](#) enlisted the support of a local hockey team to generate support and greater interest in the region's work.

[Los Angeles STEM Ecosystem](#) leverages relationships with the Chamber of Commerce to build and expand partnerships with local funders and business partners.

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. [Orange County STEM Learning Ecosystem \(OC STEM\)](#) uses this model.

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.

For example, [San Diego STEM Ecosystem](#) adopted the ecosystem model as a means to implement the host organization's strategic plan. When funder meetings are held for the host organization, the ecosystem is presented as a critical means to achieve success.

[Lancaster County STEM Alliance](#) recruited local business partners to support a teacher externship program. This program required in-kind contributions of time, space and materials from local business partners.

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. For example:

[Washington STEM](#) has partnered with local organizations to be a beneficiary of employee giving programs.

[Tulsa Regional STEM Alliance \(TULSA\)](#) hosts annual giving events and openly solicits donations on their general web page.

Fee-for-Service

Some ecosystems have been able to offer and charge for services, including teacher professional development and other programs. For example:

[The NeoStem Ecosystem](#) offers professional development, including Engineering is Elementary and coding workshops, for teachers. NeoSTEM partners deliver the content and have developed a fee-splitting arrangement with participating organizations. Additionally, NeoSTEM developed an autonomous Soap Box Derby car, with curriculum, that will be marketed nationally in 2019, with proceeds supporting the ecosystem and various partners.

[PA SEED STEM Ecosystem](#) just applied to be a professional development partner for their region. If approved, they would be able to charge a fee for professional development services for local districts.

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.