



STEM Professionals in Schools

How to.... Guide for Industry

About the program

STEM Professionals in Schools is Australia's largest national skilled volunteering program, partnering teachers with STEM professionals to bring real-world experiences into the classroom.

Every partnership is a unique arrangement between the STEM professional and the teacher based on their combined interests and expertise, local context, and student needs.

The program is free and available across Australia.

Different partnership models include:

- mentoring teachers
- site visits or field trips
- career talks and presentations
- hands-on demonstrations
- online engagement
- supporting students for specialist projects.

The program has been independently evaluated on a number of occasions since its inception in 2007. These evaluations found that partnerships are effective in delivering value to a range of stakeholders with clear benefits for teachers, students, and STEM professionals.

The most recent evaluation reported that major benefits identified by STEM professionals include: involvement in STEM education, sharing their STEM knowledge with others, and personal development and networking through interactions with teachers, peers, and students¹.

¹ Evaluation undertaken by Tessellate Communication (2020).

Support and assistance

STEM Professionals in Schools is a national program, with Program Support Officers based around Australia to offer advice and support to partnerships.

We conduct events and webinars to support the sharing of best practice and ongoing development of partnerships. Additionally, a range of resources including planning and evaluating materials, webcast recordings, and curriculum case studies are available on our website to inspire partnership activities.

Who can apply?

STEM Professionals must:

- have a Bachelor degree in a STEM-related field, relevant qualification, or demonstrated experience in a STEM-related discipline
- abide by CSIRO's Child Safe Procedure
- obtain a Working with Children/Vulnerable People Check for their state, and a National Police Certificate.

Teachers must:

- be registered and working in an Australian primary or secondary school
- abide by CSIRO's Child Safe Procedure.

The STEM Professionals in Schools team supports professionals to obtain relevant checks and covers the associated costs.

STEM Professionals in Schools is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

How can the program benefit your organisation?

By encouraging your staff to get involved your organisation is helping to develop the scientific literacy of students and bridging the STEM gap that is a growing concern for future generations.

Organisations who have a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program have been shown to:

- position them as an employer of choice
- support public value outcomes i.e. business reputation²
- encourage professional and personal development
- enrich relationships with clients
- enhance the ability to have a positive impact in the community³.

The CSIRO STEM Professionals in Schools program seeks to make a significant impact by delivering this high-quality STEM program for teachers, students, and the community in order to help create a scientifically literate nation.

How you can support staff involvement?

You can support staff by:

- encouraging staff to get involved and providing time for them to plan and evaluate activities with their participating teacher
- providing opportunities for staff to showcase their partnership stories and provide recognition of their efforts and achievements
- providing opportunities for staff to share experiences and resources with each other
- understanding the expectations of the participants.

When joining a partnership, we expect STEM professionals to commit to:

- making contact with their teacher partner
- working collaboratively with their partner to establish a mutually agreeable plan for STEM learning
- building an ongoing partnership (rather than a one-off visit)
- providing updates to the program team as requested.

On the back page you will find a template with some questions to assist planning for success in your organisation.

How does participation support best practice?

To drive innovation and to meet future job needs, Australia needs an increase in STEM skills.

STEM Professionals in Schools facilitates partnerships by bringing teachers and STEM professionals together to provide mentoring and exposure to learning opportunities in industry, while highlighting STEM career pathways for students.

Volunteering Australia recognise that the internal support and promotion of corporate volunteer programs help staff engage, and emphasises the importance of the volunteer work they undertake. By creating a culture of corporate volunteering⁴, staff feel more motivated to be involved, which enhances employee adoption and can bolster the organisation's reputation within communities.

Based on the guidelines issued by the International Organisation for Standards (ISO)⁵, many organisations see the importance and value in reporting on their CSR, for accountability, transparency, and social awareness in their business practices.

What do we provide?



Support from Program Support Officers

We will create and support partnerships.



Access to schools

We will partner professionals with teachers and support them to obtain WWCC/VP and NPC checks and cover the associated costs.



Access to resources

We will provide professionals with STEM Professional in Schools partnership activity resources.



Access to professional learning

We will provide professionals with webinars and networking events which allow participants to connect, share ideas and learn from other partnerships about activities they have undertaken.

2 <https://www.nibbusinessinfo.co.uk/content/business-benefits-corporate-social-responsibility>

3 <http://cubegroup.com.au/top-5-benefits-of-corporate-social-responsibility/>

4 <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/resources/corporate-volunteering/>

5 https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-319-92651-3_1

Planning for success

This template will help your organisation with early planning to ensure success.

Who will be the main organisation contact?	
How much time will staff be allocated to be involved?	
Can staff work together to develop a network of support?	
What organisational resources are available to support the partnerships?	
Would you like early adopters to become program champions?	
Are there specific schools you would like to connect with through the program? (local school, regional area)	
How could STEM Professionals in Schools support your existing STEM outreach activities?	
Can staff connect to webinars from work? (does your work have security that might limit access)	
Can staff participation be counted towards personal or professional development?	

Next steps

If your organisation is interested in being involved, our Industry Relationship Manager can assist with your enquiry.

For further information on the STEM Professionals in Schools program or to apply to be involved, please visit our website csiro.au/STEM-Professionals-in-Schools

As Australia's national science agency and innovation catalyst, CSIRO is solving the greatest challenges through innovative science and technology.

CSIRO. Unlocking a better future for everyone.

Contact us

1300 363 400
csiro.au/contact
csiro.au

For further information

STEM Professionals in Schools
+61 2 6276 6397
STEMprofessionalsinschools@csiro.au
csiro.au/STEM-Professionals-in-Schools



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

The views expressed here are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment or the Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources.