HOW CAN WE TINKER, EXPLORE AND EXPERIMENT OUR WAY TO TOMORROW?

Given our complex and changing world, we need to equip tomorrow’s citizens to meet modern challenges. When young people learn science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), they develop the knowledge and skills needed to tackle problems systematically. STEM helps to build the ability to sift through information, draw reasonable conclusions, make decisions based on evidence and come up with creative solutions.

Just as people need to be immersed in real-world situations to really learn a language, to become fluent in STEM, children and youth need lots of different opportunities to explore and tinker with STEM concepts. Afterschool programming is ideal for providing these kinds of learning opportunities, as it can be flexible and responsive to kids’ interests.

**INNOVATION DRIVES GROWTH**

One job in the high-tech sector leads to four new jobs in local goods and service industries.¹

The supportive, hands-on settings in afterschool programs spark kids’ interest in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), putting us all on a path to greater prosperity.

**AFTERSCHOOL STEM ACTIVATES INNOVATION**

75% of Nobel Prize winners in the sciences say that their passion for science was first sparked in non-school environments.²

Programs that meet in the afternoons, on the weekends or in the summer give young people a chance to play, engage and experiment with new interests.

**PLACE MATTERS – AND POLICY MATTERS**

To create fairness across places, we need every U.S. student to have access to afterschool STEM. While some states have policies that create greater access, other states are lagging behind.

13 states have passed legislation that directly supports afterschool.³
21 states fund afterschool programs.⁴
34 states have an initiative promoting quality in afterschool.⁵

**TO POWER UP STEM LEARNING, WE NEED MORE CHARGING STATIONS**

69% of kids in afterschool programs are getting some form of STEM learning.

But for every child in an afterschool program, two more are waiting to get in.⁶

**AFTERSCHOOL IGNITES BROADER INTEREST IN STEM**

Women make up 48% of the total U.S. workforce but only 24% of the STEM workforce.⁷ To get ready for a STEM-driven future, we need to expand the talent pool in these fields and we can’t afford to leave anyone out.

Hands-on, exploratory experiences are effective ways to turn young people on to new interests. Afterschool STEM can help ignite students’ interest, offering a great way to include groups who might not consider these fields otherwise.

Learn more about powering afterschool STEM at:
www.afterschoolstemhub.org

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² Science and the Steadfast, By Louis P. Hyman and Anne Quinn, 2006
³ American After School Association Report, 2014
⁴ Based on their Afterschool Programs and Consumer Guides: Afterschool Alliance & Lights On: Afterschool, 2011
⁵ Women in STEM: A Gender Gap In Innovation, U.S. Department of Commerce, 2011