



Greater Oregon Science Technology Engineering & Math

Sustainability Plan

November 2025





Organization

Greater Oregon Science Technology Engineering and Math Hub - GO STEM

Setting

Community-based, housed at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande, Oregon

Counties Served

Wallowa | Harney | Grant | Morrow | Union | Baker | Umatilla

Sustainability Pillars

Financial Resilience | Partnership Expansion and Stewardship | Programmatic Innovation and Reach | Community Engagement and Cultural Relevance | Evaluation & Continuous Improvement | Communications & Advocacy | Governance & Accountability

Strategic Foci

Collective Impact is a cross-cutting strategy that strengthens all pillars of the sustainability plan.

Equity is an element considered within the strategies developed to reach our core sustainability goals.

This Sustainability Plan was Developed with Technical Assistance Provided by

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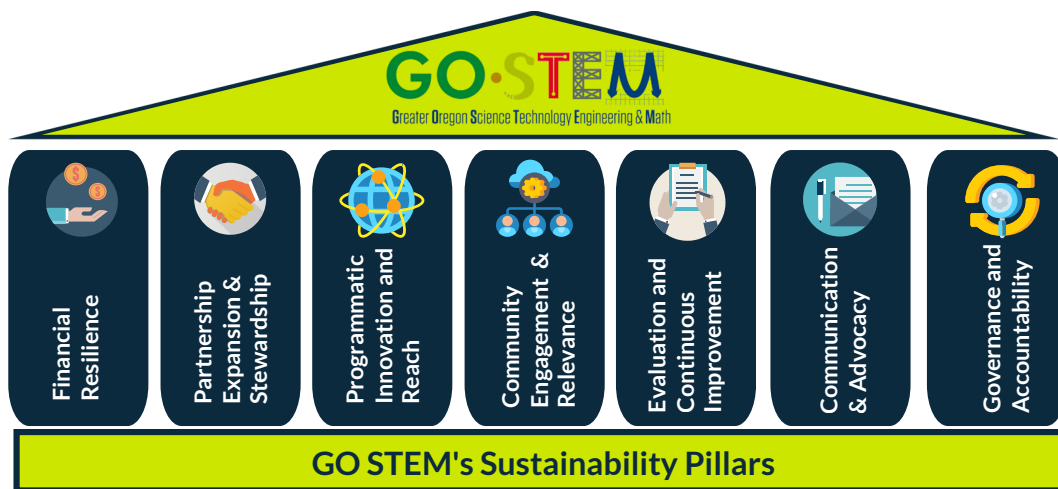
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Executive Summary

The Greater Oregon Science Technology Engineering and Math Hub (GO STEM), housed at Eastern Oregon University, serves seven rural counties across Eastern Oregon with free, equity-centered STEM and Career-Connected Learning (CCL) programming. As a regional catalyst for inclusive STEM ecosystems, GO STEM connects education, workforce, and community partners to build pathways that prepare youth for successful STEM careers and contribute to long-term regional prosperity.

This Sustainability Plan was developed with financial support from Oregon STEM and The Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) aligned with Phase One of the OCF Capacity Grant. Collaborative development included technical assistance from Think WISE Studio with plan alignment for Phase Two of the OCF Capacity Grant. The plan outlines GO STEM's strategic framework for enduring impact. It is grounded in a Theory of Change (ToC) that links inclusive partnerships, financial resilience, programmatic innovation, and culturally responsive governance to the long-term goal of career-ready rural youth and a thriving STEM workforce.

The plan is structured around seven sustainability pillars. Each pillar is further described in individual sections including strategic goals, measurable outcomes, and implementation activities supported by technical assistance. Deliverables range from fundraising infrastructure and co-designed curriculum to equity-centered evaluation tools and regional communications strategies. Collective impact and equity are cross-cutting priorities, ensuring that all actions are community-rooted, data-informed, and designed for shared ownership.



GO STEM recognizes this plan as a living document, one that will evolve in response to shifting community needs, organizational capacity, and external conditions. It is a roadmap for transformation, built on trust, collaboration, and the belief that rural youth deserve access to high-quality STEM opportunities that honor their identities, aspirations, and communities.



Organization Overview

The Greater Oregon Science Technology Engineering and Math Hub - GO STEM - is a collaborative partnership led by an Advisory Board with representatives from seven counties in Eastern Oregon (Wallowa, Harney, Grant, Morrow, Union, Baker, Umatilla). Hosted by Eastern Oregon University, GO STEM provides free STEM programming for youth ages preschool to 20, connecting education, industry, and community to build inclusive STEM pathways for all learners and meet regional workforce needs.

Mission

GO STEM is a regional partnership cultivating a community that values STEM learning, prepares youth for successful STEM careers, and builds pathways and pipelines to meet workforce needs.

Vision

GO STEM works to realize regional prosperity through a thriving STEM workforce and career-ready rural youth.

Values

GO STEM's organizational values reflect the principles that guide our decisions, partnerships, and daily work across Eastern Oregon. Rooted in our mission and vision, these values are foundational to how we show up in community, how we center educational practices, and how we strive to build systems that are responsive, inclusive, and grounded in local context and local knowledge.

As a regional STEM partnership serving rural learners, educators, and community members, we recognize that sustainability is not only about what we do, but how and why we do it. The values we list below serve as our organizational cultural foundation, a compass for our strategy, and a shared commitment to the communities we serve.

Equity, Belonging, and Access: We believe every learner, especially those historically underserved and underrepresented in STEM, deserves access to inclusive, affirming, and high-quality STEM learning experiences. We uphold equity as a foundational principle, ensuring all learners can access, engage with, and benefit from STEM learning.

Representation and Community-Rooted Leadership: We center rural communities as co-leaders in shaping STEM futures, honoring their knowledge, priorities, and leadership. We believe these communities hold relevant insight, ingenuity, and knowledge needed to shape inclusive STEM futures, and that investing in their capacity and visibility is essential to building long-term regional vitality.

Authentic Experiential Learning: We value hands-on, experiential, interdisciplinary STEM learning that connects to real-world challenges and fosters curiosity.

STEM as a Tool for Broader Development: We believe STEM learning should equip and empower all learners, supporting civic engagement, problem-solving, and lifelong curiosity.

Educators as Leaders: We invest in educators as leaders of change, building their capacity to deliver equitable, innovative STEM learning.

Rural Voices and Representation: We elevate rural Eastern Oregon underserved and underrepresented community voices in programs and decision-making, ensuring STEM Learning opportunities reflect and respond to community needs and priorities.

Collaboration: We build cross-sector partnerships to be rooted in trust, shared ownership, and collective responsibility for STEM equity.

Learner-Centered Design and Opportunity: We believe youth learners deserve clear, supported pathways to post-secondary success and a diverse future, including STEM careers built on relevance and access.



Approach to Sustainability Planning

Priority Areas

- Grow the STEM workforce via STEM Awareness, Pipelines, and Pathways.
- Improve educational opportunities via connected STEM systems for education.
- Advance rural viewpoints by communicating rural STEM perspectives, needs, solutions, and opportunities.

Sustainability in STEM education isn't just about securing funding; it's about designing systems that can adapt, endure, and evolve. For regional STEM Hubs like GO STEM, sustainability is a **wicked problem**: complex, context-dependent, and resistant to one-size-fits-all solutions. It's shaped by rural-urban divides, shifting policy landscapes, workforce demands, and the need to center equity in every decision.

These challenges demand more than strategic plans, they require strategic structures. GO STEM embraces the complexity of sustainability planning as a holistic task and by anchoring its work in **collective impact**: a framework that brings diverse constituents together around shared goals, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities. This helps us stay true to **equity as a guiding principle**, shaping every strategic decision and partnership.

Furthermore, in a wicked problem space, **authenticity is non-negotiable**. Sustainability plans must reflect the lived realities of communities, the values of the organization, and the aspirations of those often left out of strategic conversations. What this means for GO STEM is that we do not only aim to develop and deliver impactful programs, we aim to cultivate the conditions for transformation, thinking beyond the grant and funding cycle, toward ecosystem resilience and shared infrastructure.

With this all in mind, GO STEM is committed to sustaining and expanding its role as a trusted provider of STEM and CCL opportunities in rural Eastern Oregon. As a regional STEM Hub, we aim to act as a boundary spanner, bridging sectors, geographies, and lived experiences. Our strategy for a sustainable future is rooted in:



Collective impact structures that align partners across education, workforce, and community, connecting STEM and CCL as part of a broader Learning Landscape of Practice.



Equity as a guiding principle, shaping strategic decisions and partnerships.



Engagement tools and curriculum that honor local context and amplify community voice.

The GO STEM Sustainability Plan presented here builds on these commitments. Next, it outlines our Theory of Change (ToC), the pillars providing the foundation for our sustainability strategy, and aligns resources, partnerships, and organizational practices to ensure continued impact for students, educators, and communities.

This plan is designed to weather fluctuations in state, federal, industry, and foundation funding while responding to the STEM and CCL learning needs of today's rapidly changing digital world. It is a roadmap and a reflection of GO STEM's values, vision, and role as a regional catalyst for equity-driven, future-ready STEM ecosystems.

While this plan represents our best effort to commit to measurable actions that advance our goals, we recognize this needs to remain a living document, one that will evolve in response to shifting community needs, organizational capacity, and external conditions. We will evaluate progress annually, reviewing each deliverable for relevance, feasibility, and alignment. If a deliverable becomes unnecessary or nearly impossible to achieve due to supporting shifts and contextual realities outside of a governing control, we will document the rationale and adjust the plan accordingly to maintain transparency, strategic integrity and clarity of communication with our diverse cadre of partners. This will also support shared understanding, coordinated action, and mutual accountability.



Theory of Change – ToC

This section articulates GO STEM’s Theory of Change (ToC) to pave the strategic foundation for sustainability planning. It clarifies how GO STEM’s activities, partnerships, and investments are expected to lead to long-term outcomes, specifically, a thriving STEM workforce and career-ready rural youth in Eastern Oregon that we aspire for. The ToC also serves as a shared framework for collective impact, guiding alignment, evaluation, and adaptive learning across all organizational pillars. It maps the logical sequence from inputs and activities to short, medium, and long-term outcomes all while making explicit the assumptions and conditions necessary for success.

GO STEM Theory of Change

If GO STEM cultivates inclusive, cross-sector partnerships and invests in financial resilience, programmatic innovation, culturally relevant community engagement, and transparent governance, **then** it will strengthen regional STEM systems through collective impact, expanded reach, continuous improvement, and strategic advocacy, **so that** rural youth across Eastern Oregon have equitable access to high-quality STEM learning, CCL and career pathways, and contribute to a thriving, sustainable STEM workforce.



Table 1 below explicitly demonstrates how our GO STEM ToC aligns with each of the seven sustainability pillars. By visualizing this alignment, we ensure that our strategic planning is coherent, actionable, and measurable. Each pillar represents a core domain of organizational resilience, and the table clarifies how the ToC informs goal-setting, strategy development, and long-term impact. It demonstrates our commitment to collective impact and the strategic bridges between aspiration and implementation, ensuring that our sustainability efforts are grounded in purpose, poised for success or shifts and adaptations as we learn together and with the community.

Table 1. GO STEM 's Theory of Change (ToC) alignment to sustainability pillars/goals.

Sustainability Pillars	Core Goals	Examples of how ToC can guide strategies	ToC Contribution
Financial Resilience	Build and maintain a diversified, resilient funding portfolio.	Aligns funding strategies with long-term impact goals.	Sustains free STEM programs and infrastructure to ensure long-term access and stability.
Partnership Expansion and Stewardship	Expand and steward strategic partnerships across education settings, workforce, industry, and culturally specific organizations.	Clarifies partner roles in achieving shared outcomes.	Builds shared ownership and leverages regional assets to co-create STEM pathways.
Programmatic Innovation and Reach	Expand development and program staff capacity to support long-term growth, reach and curriculum innovation.	Ensures programs are purposefully designed to drive outcomes and are adequately staffed.	Delivers relevant, cross-disciplinary experiences that prepare youth for STEM careers.
Community Engagement and Cultural Relevance	Deepen community engagement and provide cultural relevance.	Centers community voice in defining and achieving outcomes. Integrates culturally responsive design for meaningful learning.	Builds trust and ensures programming reflects and uplifts diverse communities and local knowledge (e.g. tribal, multilingual) as a core asset in STEM learning.
Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	Develop a shared evaluation framework and strengthen evaluation systems.	Tests and tracks progress, assumptions, and adapts strategies to maximize impact, surface equity gaps, measure impact, and support adaptive learning.	Enables evidence-based decision-making, shared learning, and continuous improvement through data and storytelling.
Communications and Advocacy	Build strategic communications and advocacy infrastructure to amplify impact.	Frames messaging around systemic change, equity, and impact. Aligns storytelling with regional priorities.	Builds public will, visibility, and influence for STEM equity and rural innovation and positions GO STEM as a trusted regional voice.
Governance and Accountability	Strengthen shared leadership, inclusive governance, decision-making, and operational systems to support equity-centered growth and long-term resilience.	Aligns leadership, decision-making, and resource allocation with long-term goals and values.	Ensures transparent, inclusive governance that supports strategic alignment, shared ownership, and sustained organizational impact.

The following sections of this proposal move from conceptual alignment to practical execution, translating the ToC and sustainability pillars into actionable strategies. With Phase Two of OCF funding and technical assistance support from OregonSTEM, GO STEM will begin implementing targeted activities and developing concrete resources to advance each pillar's strategic goals. This includes identifying measurable outcomes, building capacity, and producing deliverables that reflect both regional needs and collective impact commitments.

Each pillar is addressed with specificity to ensure that sustainability goals are not just envisioned, but reached over time through built structures, strategies, activities, data, and resources that tell our stories. Please note that for some pillars (Community Engagement and Cultural Relevance, Evaluation and Continuous Improvement, and Governance and Accountability) we considered our ongoing work to be a little more advanced within our GO STEM Hub strengths and implementation than other pillars we seek to improve implementation with support of OCF funds (and other leveraged supports) and this long-term sustainability plan.

Accordingly, as we describe our sustainability pillars below, we follow a template narrative structure for each. We include goals that align with our mission and vision, strategic activities that outline how to achieve these goals, outcomes that describe what success looks like over time, and metrics that track progress and guide adaptation. This structure ensures that sustainability planning for GO STEM is intentional with every action tied to a clear purpose, measurable with progress tracked, equity-centered with disaggregated data and community voice built into decisions, scalable with successful models that can be replicated and expanded, and fundable with outcomes and metrics to strengthen proposals and reporting within fundraising strategies.

By operationalizing these seven pillars in detail, GO STEM moves beyond short-term survival toward long-term resilience and relevance. This framework positions GO STEM to lead regional STEM and CCL efforts with integrity and innovation, build trust and shared ownership across STEM education sectors, adapt to changing educational and workforce landscapes, secure diversified funding and advocacy support, all while we center equity, innovation, and community in our actions. To us, this is not simply a sustainability plan to secure OCF funding support, but a practice we seek to steward and embed in our operational fabric. While the pillars are described in detailed and comprehensive ways below, a summary Logic Model Table is attached to this proposal as an appendix.

Pillar 1: Financial Resilience



PILLAR 1: FINANCIAL RESILIENCE



This pillar ensures that GO STEM has the fiscal infrastructure, diversified funding strategies, and financial planning tools to sustain its mission over time. It includes grant development, donor cultivation, cost-sharing models, and strategic budgeting. Financial resilience is the foundation of sustainability. Without it, even the most visionary programs and partnerships cannot endure.

Core Sustainability Goal

GO STEM will build and maintain a diversified, resilient funding portfolio that ensures continuity and adaptability in delivering STEM and Career-Connected Learning (CCL) opportunities across rural Eastern Oregon. This includes sustaining key staff roles, expanding program flexibility, and securing long-term investments in equity-centered, community-responsive programming, regardless of fluctuations in state and federal funding. A list of current and/or active funding streams, including leveraging work with partner organizations is attached as an appendix to this proposal, giving you an idea of where we have been in our financial resilience journey.

Role of the Theory of Change (ToC)

GO STEM's Theory of Change (ToC) identifies financial resilience as a foundational enabler of its broader mission. The ToC also ensures that financial decisions are not siloed, and they are purposefully aligned with GO STEM's equity commitments and collective impact strategy. It connects funding strategies directly to

- Equitable access to STEM and CCL pathways,
- Durable cross-sector partnerships,
- Adaptive programming that reflects local needs and assets.

Current State Brief



GO STEM has a developed system for fundraising established with the Eastern Oregon University Foundation, which manages a dedicated donation portal for GO STEM. The organization currently relies primarily on state grants, with supplemental support from foundations and industry sponsorships and contributions. FY24 revenue totaled approximately \$2,250,000, with roughly 90% from government grants and 10% from foundations and industry sponsors.

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- EOU Foundation donation page linked to GO STEM website.
- Potential donor database (Google Sheet) - CRM being developed.
- Budget and financial summary dashboard.
- Partnership list and funding portfolio tracking.
- Grants and grant-writing efforts.

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- **Numbers Reached:** The Mobile Maker Lab expansion was made possible through a web of multi-year grant funding and strong fiscal management, reaching over 24,000 students, 9,000 adults/educators, and over 260 individual MML events across seven rural counties since it launched in March 2023.
- **Operational strength:** Collaboration with the EOU Foundation provides professional fiscal oversight and allows GO STEM to process, track, and steward donor funds effectively. Team of 3 trained in searching out, writing/editing, and submitting grants for GO STEM.
- **Previous Grant Success:** Successful at bringing over \$8 million in grant funding to support programs since Fall 2020 when current leadership joined the organization.

ROOM FOR GROWTH

- **CRM System Needed:** Current donor tracking through Google Sheets limits long-term relationship management → risk of losing recurring donors.
- **Dedicated Development Staff:** Without a staff member focused on development, GO STEM risks reactive rather than strategic fundraising → estimated opportunity cost of unrealized grants and sponsorships.
- **Reserve Fund Absence:** Lack of formal reserve fund limits flexibility during grant transitions → moderate program continuity risk.

Readiness to Implement

- **Roles:** Development lead (0.5 FTE) identified as priority hire.
- **Capacity:** Strong fiscal foundation through EOU; leadership team ready to oversee diversification plan.
- **Timeline:** 0.5 FTE Development staff onboard Fall 2025, Initial CRM setup and fundraising toolkit by mid-2026; reserve fund target by FY27.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes

	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
Short-Term 1-2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire and onboard a part-time development (0.5 FTE) position funded through this grant to launch and lead our expanded sustainability plan and efforts. • Finalize a tiered fundraising strategy tailored for individual donors, industry sponsors, and philanthropic organizations. • Utilize the Advisory Board’s diverse expertise for fundraising introductions, donor cultivation, and strategic guidance. Add new key members to the board to support sustainability efforts. • Develop and Launch Fundraising Outreach Toolkit and Priorities. Include impact reports, one-pagers, storytelling materials, and prioritized prospect lists for outreach to potential funders and industry partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased Internal Fundraising Capacity (Development lead hired 0.5 FTE). • Increased Advisory Board Engagement as a strategic resource for backbone support, fundraising and sustainability planning. • A growing list of donors and fundraising relationships.
Intermediate 3-5 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure initial commitments and donations from new funders. Start implementation of donor relations for segmented funders, balancing short-term wins with long-term relationship building. • Establish agreements with strategic partners. Formalize strategic partnerships through MOUs or joint funding proposals. • Leverage new funding to expand program flexibility and staff capacity, especially in underserved rural areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased commitment from new funders: Initial commitments secured from new funders. • Increased funding agreements and supports: strategic partnership agreements formalized. • Growing flexible program delivery and staff capacity.
Long-Term 5 Years +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify revenue streams across public, private, and philanthropic sectors. • Institutionalize fundraising practices through CRM systems, annual campaigns, and board engagement. • Establish a reserve fund with clear policies for use and replenishment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity: Fully funded key staff roles. • A balanced portfolio of revenue streams including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State/federal grants, • Foundation grants, • Industry partnerships, • Individual donor contributions. • An established reserve fund to manage funding fluctuations.

Deliverables / Outputs Accomplished with Technical Assistant in Phase 2

Output	Priority Rank	Description	Rationale
Tiered Fundraising Plan with Prospect Segmentation	5	A structured list of potential funders categorized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with GO STEM’s mission, • Funding capacity and timeline, • Relationship history and readiness. 	Helps prioritize outreach and tailor communications and messaging.
Funder Stewardship Matrix	5	A visual tool mapping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach strategies by funder type, • Relationship goals (e.g., awareness, engagement, commitment), • Timeline and responsible staff. 	Supports strategic sequencing and long-term stewardship.
Refined Outreach Toolkit	3	Target supports like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact report templates with equity metrics, • One-pagers tailored to different funder audiences, • Youth-centered storytelling formats (e.g., illustrated vignettes, video clips). 	Ensures materials are compelling, inclusive, and aligned with collective impact messaging.
Customer Relations Management - CRM System	3	A working platform or combined tools for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection and configuration of a funder/donor management system, • Training for staff on tracking engagement, reporting, and stewardship. 	Builds internal capacity for sustained fundraising.
Board and Staff Fundraising Training Resources	1	Workshops or coaching sessions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity-centered fundraising, • Relationship-building with funders, • Messaging alignment across partners. 	Empowers internal champions and distributes fundraising leadership.
Advisory Board Engagement Plan	1	A guiding document mapping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined roles, • Onboarding process, • Strategic fundraising contributions. 	Support engagement of Board members in fundraising efforts.

We will work to reach all deliverables but understand the amount and type of resources needed to accomplish all. We provide a priority rank should we face limitations and need to prioritize outcomes. Priority Rank: 1= low, 3 = Moderate, 5=High.

Measuring Success

Success in accomplishing our financial resilience goals will be tracked through:

- Hiring and onboarding of development lead: documented by contract and work plan.
- Completion of tiered fundraising strategy: shared with funders and partners.
- Number of new Advisory Board members: onboarded and engaged in support elements of fundraising strategy.
- Launch and use of outreach toolkit: tracked via distribution and engagement metrics.
- Number and value of new funder commitments: tracked quarterly.
- Formalized partnership agreements: documented MOUs or joint proposals.
- Revenue diversification metrics: annual breakdown by source.
- Reserve fund establishment: policy and initial deposit documented.
- Equity indicators: percent of funds supporting underserved communities, disaggregated impact data.

Collective Impact as a Cross-Cutting Strategy

GO STEM's financial resilience efforts are embedded within a collective impact framework, which is pragmatically realized through:

- Culture of peer mentorship and knowledge sharing: GO STEM holds an internal mentorship model system, where fundraising, grant writing, and ideation are learned and developed on the job. This is a collective impact opportunity as there is interest in scaling this peer mentorship model across Oregon's STEM Hub network.
- Advisory Board acts as a strategic resource for backbone support, fundraising and sustainability planning.
- Shared backbone staffing: The development lead will coordinate not just fundraising, but shared messaging and resource alignment across partners.
- Amplified mutually reinforcing activities: Fundraising strategies will be co-developed with partners to support joint initiatives (e.g., regional CCL pathways, youth internships).
- Continuous communication: Outreach materials and impact reports will be co-branded and co-authored with partners to reflect shared goals.
- Augmented Common agendas: Funding priorities will be aligned with regional needs identified through partner engagement and asset mapping. For example, we are already utilizing reports on high need careers in our region to determine our paths forward and potential future funding priorities including the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) Future Ready Oregon documents listing high wage, high skill, and high demand jobs in the Health Care, Manufacturing, and Technology Industries.

An example of our current work in this pillar and leveraging our funding resources is our current partnership with the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI), which has a dedicated paid OMSI staff member traveling with the GO STEM Mobile Maker Lab team in support of curriculum implementation. Furthermore, we partner with Eastern Oregon Workforce Board on youth internships and educator externships, with regional CTE coordinators on CTE programming and career connected learning opportunities across Eastern Oregon school districts, and with Grande Ronde Model Watershed with their Community Science coordinator assigned for shared work between our organizations.

Additionally, GO STEM is currently working with the EOU Foundation in a strategic partnership to support our fundraising efforts, including a custom donation page and initial drafts for donation levels. In Phase 2, we will explore CRM models and utilize what is applicable to our fundraising efforts in order to continue building our fundraising infrastructure.

Actionable Example: A joint proposal with a local workforce board and tribal education programs could secure funding for culturally responsive STEM internships, with GO STEM leading coordination and reporting.

Equity and Access as Lenses

Equity and access are embedded throughout this pillar via:

- **Criteria for funder prioritization:** Funders will be evaluated not just on financial capacity, but on alignment with equity goals (e.g., support for rural youth, culturally specific programming).
- **Inclusive storytelling:** Outreach materials will feature diverse voices, including youth from underrepresented communities.
- **Disaggregated data:** Impact reports will include metrics by geography and grade level to ensure transparency and accountability.
- **Partner co-design:** Strategic decisions (e.g., which programs to expand) will be made collaboratively with community partners, centering those closest to the challenge.

Pillar 2: Partnership Expansion and Stewardship



PILLAR 2: PARTNERSHIP EXPANSION AND STEWARDSHIP



GO STEM's impact depends on strong, diverse partnerships across education, workforce, and community sectors. This pillar focuses on cultivating relationships not just for program delivery, but for co-design, shared ownership, and long-term stewardship. Partnerships are the lifeblood of regional STEM ecosystems. Stewardship ensures they are nurtured, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial, not transactional. Phase 2 will allow us to examine this deeply, create tools and resources for partnership development and stewardship, including development of our own definition of what a mutually beneficial partnership entails and the values we uphold to engage with communities for these much needed and impactful relationships.

Core Sustainability Goal

GO STEM will expand and steward strategic partnerships across education settings, workforce and industry partners, community, and culturally specific organizations to grow a resilient, equity-centered STEM and Career-Connected Learning (CCL) landscape of practice in rural Eastern Oregon. These partnerships will be stewards not just for program development and delivery, but for shared ownership, co-design, and leveraging resources for long-term sustainability when and where appropriate.

Role of the Theory of Change (ToC)

GO STEM's Theory of Change identifies partnerships as a critical mechanism for achieving systems-level impact. They are not just means to an end, but an integral part of the collective impact landscape. In this sphere, partnerships are not centered on finite projects but in the relationships themselves. By expanding and deepening mutually beneficial and reciprocal partnerships with diverse partners, GO STEM ensures that

- STEM and CCL pathways reflect local assets and needs,
- Equity is embedded through culturally responsive collaboration and decentralized expertise,
- Resources and responsibilities are leveraged across sectors contributing to a rich landscape of opportunities.

Current State Brief



GO STEM's impact relies on a robust network of partners across education, workforce, and community sectors. The organization currently collaborates with more than 165 partner organizations across Eastern Oregon and the state, including school districts, higher-education institutions, workforce boards, nonprofits, and industry employers. Partnerships are documented in a compiled list and visualized asset-mapping.

Relevant Document Attached:

- **Partnership Plan**

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Regional partnership list/map in development.
- Tiered fundraising strategy connecting partnership tiers to shared outcomes.
- Planning committee structures for Externship Program and Mobile Maker Lab initiatives.
- Annual Advisory Board review of regional partners and emerging needs.

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- **GO STEM as Connector for Region:** GO STEM connects organizations, nonprofits, schools, and industry partners to one another. Much of our partnerships are neighbors who we network with and share information with and from in order to make things happen.
- **Externships as Model of Partnership:** Over the past two years, 33 rural teachers participated in GO STEM externships, visiting 20 organizations and interacting with 50+ industry representatives in natural-resources and manufacturing careers. This initiative exemplifies how partnerships connect classroom learning with real-world career pathways. Each planning committee included representatives from business, industry, and education. This model builds trust and shared ownership among partners.

ROOM FOR GROWTH

- **Asset Mapping Completion:** Comprehensive visual mapping of partners and impact zones is needed to identify service gaps and potential overlaps → risk of missed collaborations and under-served regions.
- **Unified Partnership Protocols:** Need standardized communication and branding guidelines so messaging and partner experience are consistent across GO STEM projects. Without this, partners may receive mixed information or unclear expectations.
- **Mutual Benefit Structures:** Some partnerships are transactional rather than reciprocal. Developing a stewardship framework with defined mutual benefits will deepen engagement and encourage long-term collaboration.

Readiness to Implement

- **Roles:** Executive Leadership Team will lead the development of partnership protocols and stewardship framework.
- **Capacity:** Strong partner base already exists; GO STEM has established trust and reciprocal relationships with key regional actors (e.g., EOU College of Education, OMSI, Eastern Oregon Workforce Board). Additional capacity for data and communications support will enhance alignment.
- **Timeline:** Asset mapping and shared protocols drafted by mid-2026; formal stewardship and recognition plan implemented by FY 2027.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
<p>Short-Term 1-2 Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct, visualize and validate a partnership tapestry by using asset mapping with partner input. • Start Developing and Deploying a Partnership Development and Stewardship Toolkit, including tools, plans & processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deploy structured intake tools to understand partner goals, capacity, and alignment and assure efforts are reciprocal and mutually beneficial and engage partners to their degree of capacity. • Develop stewardship timelines and protocols that include elements such as shared decision-making guidelines, recognition and reward practices, and communication cadence determining the rhythm and frequency of communication, establishing a consistent schedule for how information is exchanged. • Start targeted outreach to underrepresented, underserved and/or emerging partners with an appetite to promote change in this landscape. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of partnership efforts: GO STEM and regional partners share a clearer understanding of the partnership landscape, enabling more strategic engagement and alignment. • Increased engagement and trust: Partner organizations feel seen and valued through the partnership structure and engagement process increasing trust and readiness to collaborate. • A ready stewardship process: GO STEM establishes a foundational, visual, and shareable partner stewardship process and supporting structures improving communications and relationship quality.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
Intermediate 3-5 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalize partnerships through MOUs, shared vision or work plan documents, and by submitting joint proposals. • Leverage regional partner communication channels (e.g., newsletters, events, social media) to amplify GO STEM’s impact stories and funding needs. • Determine niches where GO STEM can co-design programs with partners, especially those serving rural youth and culturally specific communities. • Host periodical convenings and collaborative planning sessions to align priority and build trust with partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased clarity of communications and expectations: GO STEM and partners operate with greater clarity and shared expectations, leading to more effective collaboration and resource alignment. • Shared partner communications resources. • Increased relevance and co-creation: Co-designed programs reflect local needs and shared ownership, increasing relevance and sustainability. • Stronger partnerships: Relationships with culturally specific and rural-serving organizations deepen, resulting in more inclusive and representative programming. • Increased number of partners: New partners start to engage with GO STEM expanding the diversity and reach of the STEM and CCL ecosystem.
Long-Term 5 Years +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on shared-governance structures. Go STEM has an Advisory Board, which includes a Board Chair and Vice Chair. Improve contributions by the advisors via diversity of constituents representative of the field and the areas of impact and that can generate and support co-led initiatives and projects. • Institutionalize stewardship practices through partner feedback loops, annual reviews, and recognition systems. • Support GO STEM and partner’s capacity building through training, shared resources, and joint evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Sector Partners: GO STEM sustains a network of multi-sector partners who are poised to co-lead initiatives, share resources, and governance, hence strengthening regional STEM and CCL infrastructure. • Increased Collective impact and Accountability: Regional initiatives are collaboratively designed and implemented, demonstrating collective impact and shared accountability. • Culturally Embedded Stewardship Practices: practices become embedded in GO STEM’s culture, ensuring long-term partner satisfaction, retention, and adaptive strategy refinement.

Deliverables / Outputs Accomplished with Technical Assistant in Phase 2



Output	Priority Rank	Description	Rationale
Comprehensive Partnership Map	5	Visual and narrative mapping of current and potential partners categorized by sector, geography, equity focus, and strategic alignment.	Identifies key partners, gaps in the system, strengths and challenges within networks.
Stewardship Protocols	5	Templates for communication plans, recognition strategies, and shared decision-making.	Designed to be flexible and responsive to partner needs and shifting contexts.
Partner Convening Toolkit	5	Agendas, facilitation guides, and visual frameworks for collaborative planning sessions.	Supports trust-building and alignment across sectors.
Partnership Starting (Intake) Tool	3	Customizable form or guided conversation tool to consider partner goals, assets, and capacity. Includes equity prompts and readiness to co-design indicators.	Supports strategic engagement with new partners and alignment to goals.
MOUs and Work Plan Templates	3	Co-developed documents that clarify roles, responsibilities, and shared outcomes. Includes equity language and sustainability commitments.	Provide commitment for continued support and baseline for future planning.
Regional Partner Communications Strategy	1	A Plan including visualization of partner channels and development of messaging templates.	Helpful to consider method, approach, frequency, and style of communication (with, to, or for partners).

We will work to reach all deliverables but understand the amount and type of resources needed to accomplish all. We provide a priority rank should we face limitations and need to prioritize outcomes. Priority Rank: 1= low, 3 = Moderate, 5=High.

Measuring Success

Success in accomplishing our partnership goals will be tracked through:

- Updated partnership map (documented and validated with stakeholders).
- Intake tool deployment and analysis (number of partners engaged, themes surfaced).
- Number of formalized partnerships (MOUs, joint work plans).
- Co-designed programs launched (tracked by partner involvement and equity focus).
- Partner feedback metrics (survey results, engagement levels).
- Shared governance structures established (documented roles and meeting records).
- Equity indicators: percent of partnerships with culturally specific orgs, rural-serving partners, and youth-led initiatives.

Collective Impact as a Cross-Cutting Strategy

GO STEM's partnership work is deeply rooted in collective impact, realized through:

- Common agenda setting: Partners co-create goals for STEM and CCL access as appropriate and possible.
- Shared measurement systems: Evaluation tools reflect collective outcomes.
- Mutually reinforcing activities: Partners contribute in ways that reflect their strengths (e.g., schools provide space, employers offer mentorship).
- Continuous communication: Regular convenings, newsletters, and shared platforms keep partners aligned, including shared messaging across sectors.
- Backbone support: GO STEM provides coordination, facilitation, and strategic planning.

As an example of our current practices in this area, the Environmental Education Certificate at Eastern Oregon University's College of Education is the culmination of several years of funding and planning by GO STEM working collaboratively with Oregon State University's Outdoor School, Eastern Oregon University's College of Education, and Carrie Caselton Lowe of RedTwig Education, LLC. to to equip formal and non-formal educators, natural resources professionals, and community leaders with the knowledge and skills to provide engaging and meaningful outdoor learning experiences with youth. The certificate program emphasizes our commitment to meaningful partnerships.

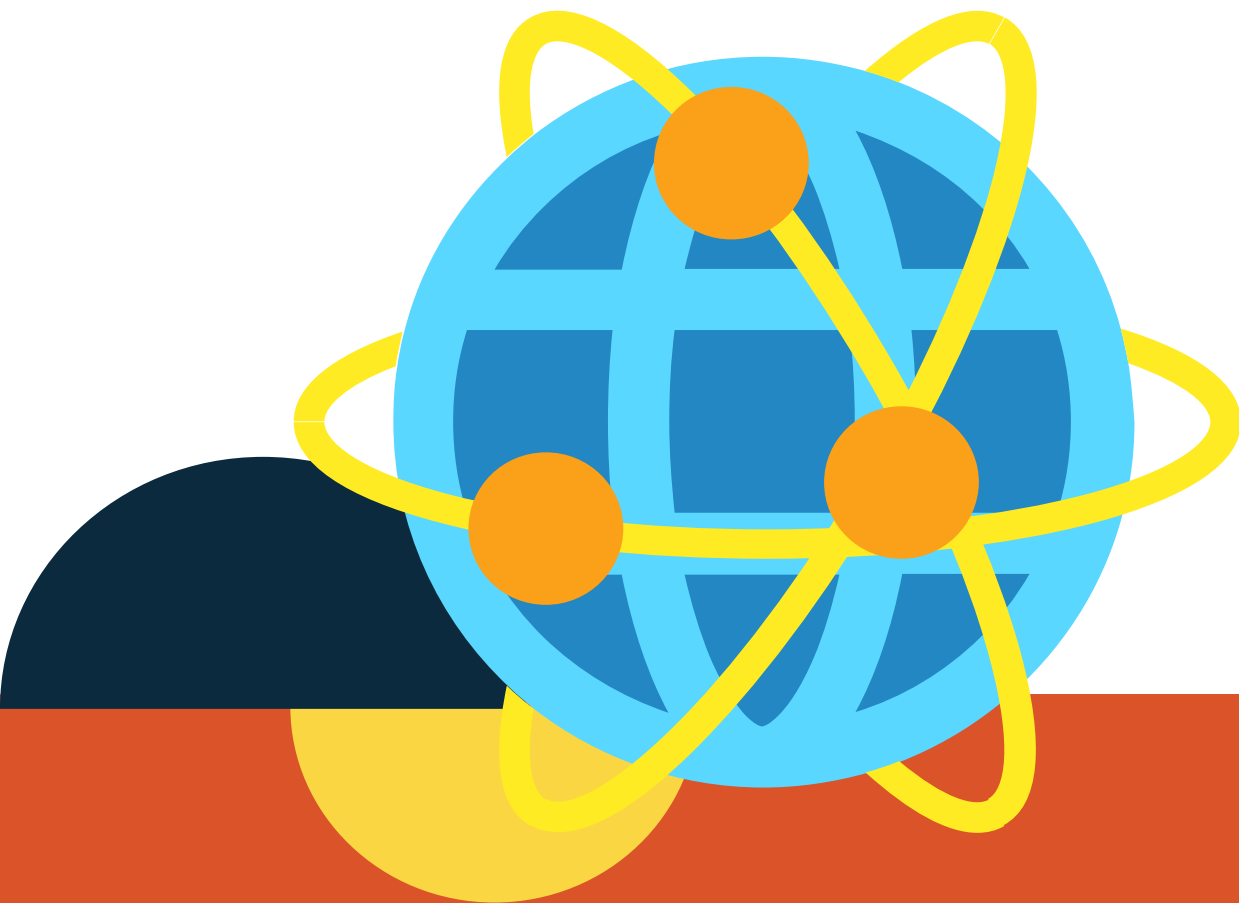
Actionable Example: A regional CCL pathway co-led by GO STEM, a tribal education program, and a local employer could include shared curriculum design, joint funding, and co-branded outreach.

Equity and Access as Lenses

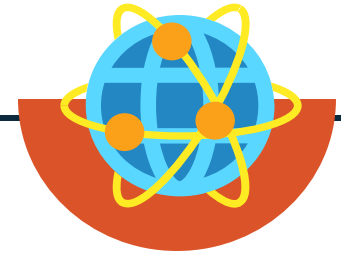
Equity and access are embedded throughout this pillar via:

- Partner prioritization criteria: Outreach and engagement efforts focus on organizations serving historically underserved communities.
- Tools: Designed to surface equity goals, barriers, and culturally specific needs.
- Co-design practices: Programs are built with—not for—partners and communities.
- Feedback loops: Partner input is actively used to refine strategy and programming.

Pillar 3: Programmatic Innovation and Reach



PILLAR 3: PROGRAMMATIC INNOVATION AND REACH



To remain relevant, GO STEM must continuously evolve its programming to reflect emerging STEM careers, digital learning trends, and local workforce needs. This pillar emphasizes future-focused design, technology integration, and responsive formats. Innovation drives engagement, scalability, and alignment with the jobs of tomorrow, especially for rural and underserved learners.

Core Sustainability Goal

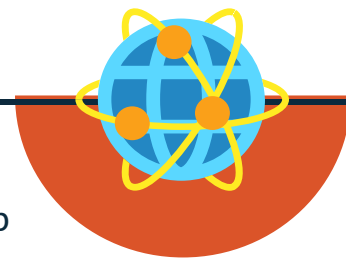
GO STEM will expand its programmatic reach and innovation capacity to ensure that STEM and Career-Connected Learning (CCL) opportunities are also digitally relevant, future-focused, and aligned with emerging workforce needs of an evolving digital world. This includes integrating new technologies as tools and as learning subjects, adaptive delivery models, and career-connected content that prepares learners for the evolving STEM and Ed Tech market, hence being better positioned to bring economic prosperity to their local communities.

Role of the Theory of Change (ToC)

GO STEM's Theory of Change identifies programmatic innovation as a key driver of equitable access and long-term impact. GO STEM ensures that learners in rural Eastern Oregon are not left behind in the digital transformation of education and work by designing programs that

- Reflect current and emerging STEM career pathways,
- Leverage digital tools and flexible formats,
- Build digital literacy and career readiness.

Current State Brief



GO STEM continues to expand innovative, high-impact programming that connects rural students and educators to real-world STEM and Career-Connected Learning (CCL) opportunities. The Mobile Maker Lab (MML) serves as a working proof-of-concept for scalable, mobile STEM learning and is now ready for strategic expansion. In addition, GO STEM's portable planetarium has become one of the most requested resources, offering access to astronomy and earth science experiences that many rural schools would otherwise never receive.

MML engagements March 2023 - September 2025

- **Student engagements: 28,960**
- **Adult/educator engagements: 9,724**
- **Number of events: 280**

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Mobile Maker Lab (MML) – fully operational mobile STEM lab reaching all seven counties.
- StarLab Portable Planetarium – high-demand instructional asset used across districts.
- Program planning database (Google Drive) for curriculum, materials, and logistics.
- Funding support through state, federal, and private foundation grants.

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- **Innovation in Practice:** The Mobile Maker Lab has proven its ability to deliver hands-on, standards-aligned STEM education to rural students across Eastern Oregon. Over multiple program years, it has demonstrated measurable engagement and demand, serving 38,684 learners, educators, and community members.
- **High Utilization and Reputation:** The GO STEM planetarium program exemplifies sustained innovation. Since its launch, it has been booked nearly every week and frequently requested by schools, afterschool programs, and community organizations. This demonstrates community trust, consistent delivery, and alignment with GO STEM's mission to expand access.

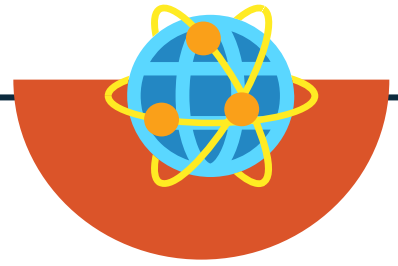
ROOM FOR GROWTH

- **Digital Tools and Access:** Limited capacity to digitize or archive MML and planetarium lessons restricts reach and replication. Without digital access to lesson resources, GO STEM misses opportunities to extend impact to remote learners and educators.
- **Digital Literacy Measurement:** There is not yet a system to measure student gains in digital literacy or workforce readiness. This creates a data gap in demonstrating program outcomes to funders and partners.
- **Youth Voice:** GO STEM currently lacks a youth voice structure to inform and co-design programs, leading to missed opportunities for authentic student voice and program relevance.

Readiness to Implement

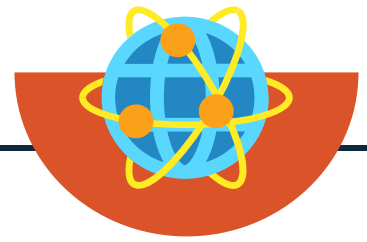
- **Roles:** GO STEM Team will collaborate on digital resource development and youth engagement strategies.
- **Capacity:** GO STEM's team has strong curriculum design and facilitation experience. Expansion will require investment in technology infrastructure and staff time to translate in-person programs into digital formats.
- **Timeline:** Establish a Youth Voice Toolkit in 2026; expand digital curriculum library by FY 2027.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
Short-Term 1-2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase development of new curriculum or programs in emerging STEM fields (e.g., climate tech, agri-tech, data science, AI, robotics). • Integrate more digital tools as tools for learning and/or content subjects (e.g., coding platforms, virtual AI labs, mobile learning). • Train staff and educators in digital facilitation and future-focused pedagogy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners' increased awareness of emerging STEM fields and confidence using (or use of) digital tools. • Educators and partners report improved alignment between programming and current STEM relevance. • GO STEM staff exhibit a growing and enhanced capacity to design and deliver future-focused, digitally integrated programs. • Community partners show increased engagement and ownership in shaping program content and delivery.
Intermediate 3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-create programs with industry and workforce partners to reflect regional job trends. • Leverage technology to offer hybrid and asynchronous learning options. • Document and share models to support replication and scaling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating youth show increased engagement in digitally mediated learning or learning about digital tools by areas or participant demographics as compared to the past. • Technology-enhanced program formats result in higher participation and retention across rural and underserved areas.
Long-Term 5 Years +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalize innovation practices through youth advisory councils, staff professional development, and partner co-leadership. • Embed programs in local systems (e.g., school schedules, workforce pipelines). • Secure funding for sustained innovation through joint proposals and impact storytelling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GO STEM 's increased leadership in offering innovative, future-ready STEM and CCL programming. • Innovation becomes a core organizational practice, with continuous input from youth, industry, and civic partners shaping program evolution.

Deliverables / Outputs Accomplished with Technical Assistant in Phase 2



Output	Priority Rank	Description	Rationale
Industry partnership toolkit	5	Co-designed career-connected modules and mentorship structures.	Support seamless integration and alignment to industry structures for meaningful STEM learning.
Innovation Rubrics	5	Tool to capture implemented criteria; storytelling templates: lessons learned, impact stories, and replication models.	Supports curriculum development, feedback and evaluation for innovative programs.
Digital Program Prototyping	3	Framework and support for design and testing of tech-enhanced formats (e.g., hybrid, asynchronous, mobile).	Supports curriculum development and quality of activities.
Digital Literacy Guide	3	A strategic framework for program alignment to Digital Literacy Principles.	Facilitate embedding digital skills into the STEM curriculum.
Technology Integration Plan	1	Structural supports, tools, resources and recommendations.	Support platforms, connectivity, and user experience.

We will work to reach all deliverables but understand the amount and type of resources needed to accomplish all. We provide a priority rank should we face limitations and need to prioritize outcomes. Priority Rank: 1= low, 3 = Moderate, 5=High.

Measuring Success

Success in accomplishing our innovation goals will be tracked through:

- Youth participation in digital content creation and career exploration (e.g. number of youth engaged in coding, storytelling, or virtual career activities; tracked by program rosters and media artifacts).
- Partner and educator feedback on relevance and engagement (survey results and feedback forms indicating satisfaction and perceived value of programming).
- Expansion into unserved/underserved communities and/or schools aligned with workforce needs (number of new rural or underserved sites reached; documented through partnership records and program delivery logs).
- Technology-enhanced models deployed and evaluated (number of hybrid, asynchronous, or mobile formats launched or updated; evaluation data collected through user experience surveys and usage metrics).
- Equity indicators (% of programs serving rural and underrepresented learners; digital literacy gains tracked through pre/post assessments disaggregated by geography and demographics).

Collective Impact as a Cross-Cutting Strategy

GO STEM's innovation work will be rooted in collective impact, realized through:

- A common agenda setting with partners around future-ready STEM goals.
- Shared measurement systems that track digital literacy, engagement, and career readiness.
- Mutually reinforcing activities: schools provide space and feedback, industry offers mentorship and tech tools, civic organizations support outreach and engagement.
- Continuous communication through convenings, newsletters, and shared platforms.
- Backbone support from GO STEM in coordination, training, and storytelling.

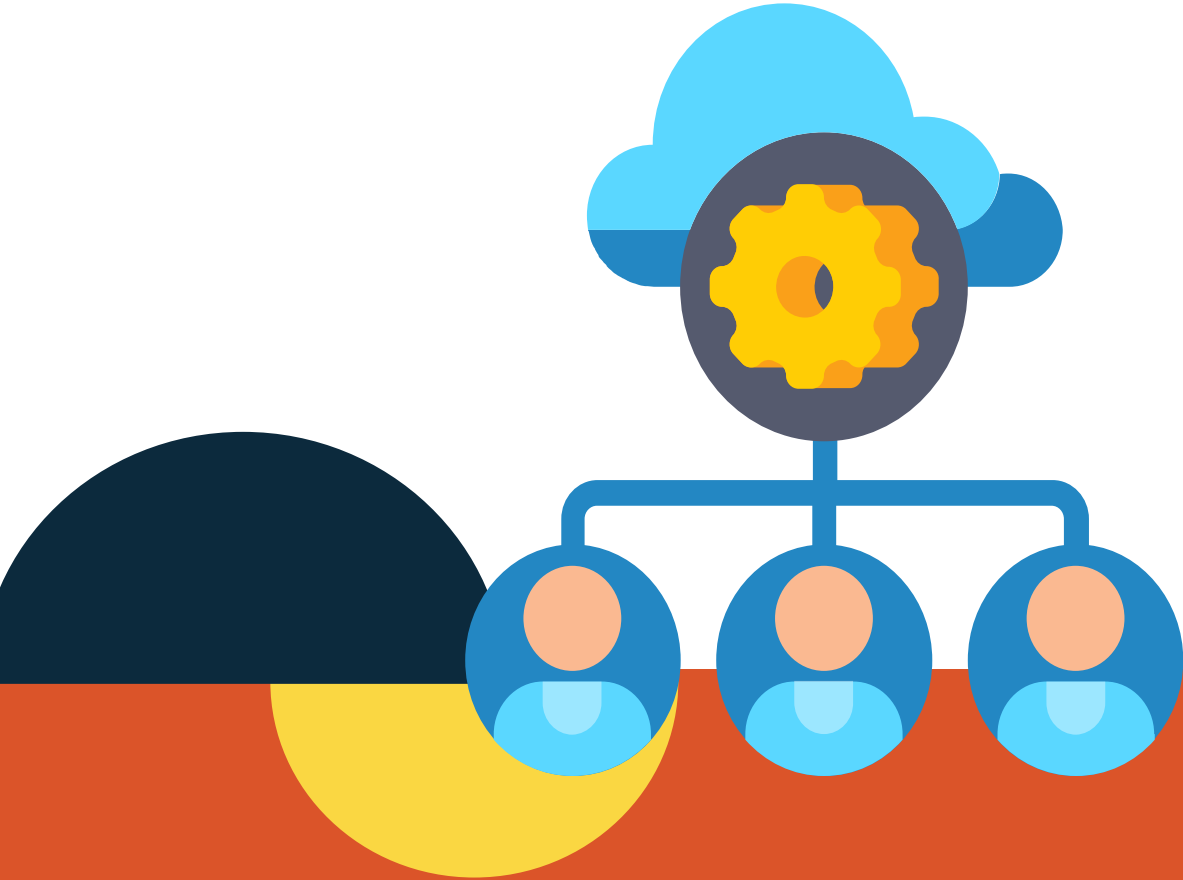
Actionable Example: A mobile STEM lab co-designed with a rural school district, local employers, and a civic youth council could deliver career-connected, tech-enhanced experiences tailored to local workforce trends.

Equity and Access as Lenses

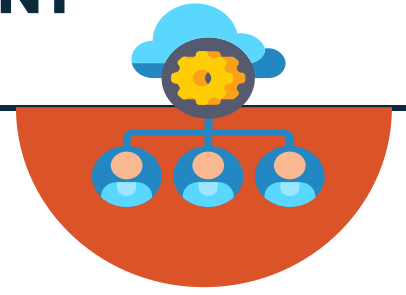
We strive to embed equity and access in this pillar via

- Youth-centered design that provides access and skill building for careers of the future allowing them to be competitive for high paying jobs,
- Culturally responsive partnerships with BIPOC, immigrant, and tribal organizations,
- Flexible delivery models that overcome barriers to digital access.

Pillar 4: Community Engagement and Cultural Relevance



PILLAR 4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURAL RELEVANCE



GO STEM's commitment to equity requires programming that reflects the lived experiences, cultural identities, and emotional needs of learners. This pillar centers youth and community voice, arts integration, Social-Emotional Learning, and culturally grounded approaches. Programs that resonate with learners are more likely to be sustained, replicated, and transformative.

Core Sustainability Goal

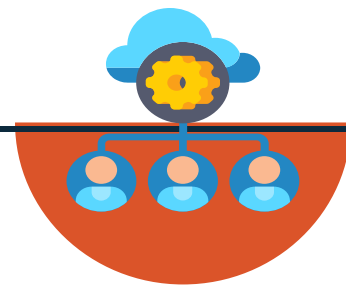
GO STEM will continue to deepen community engagement and work to provide cultural relevance by centering learner and community voice, integrating disciplines like arts and social-emotional learning (SEL) into STEM programming, and honoring culturally specific ways of knowing. Programs can be co-created with youth and community partners in ways to celebrate and reflect local knowledge, identities and values.

Role of the Theory of Change (ToC)

GO STEM's Theory of Change positions community engagement and cultural relevance as essential to equitable STEM access. We build trust through co-creation, storytelling, and inclusive collaboration. In doing so, we work to ensure programming is not only accessible, but meaningful, place-based, and transformative. We strive to listen to and amplify youth and community voices by designing programs that

- Consider cultural identities,
- Include SEL integration whenever possible,
- Make programs relevant through creative expression.

Current State Brief



GO STEM’s community engagement strategy centers on connecting STEM learning to the cultural, social, and environmental contexts of Eastern Oregon. The organization actively collaborates with schools, libraries, fairs, and community events to ensure access for families and youth who might not otherwise experience hands-on STEM learning. Social media, newsletters, and advisory board participation help amplify community voices and highlight local successes. GO STEM advisory board members represent different community and industry sectors, ensuring that programming decisions are guided by local needs and values.

148 Community Events from March 2023 - September 2025

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Social media outreach (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) for community visibility and engagement.
- Participation in local events (e.g., libraries, Round-Up, community fairs, and festivals).
- Advisory Board includes community members and rural representatives.
- Partnerships with organizations like Grande Ronde Model Watershed and OMSI to connect STEM with local ecosystems and livelihoods.

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- **Community Presence:** GO STEM maintains strong community visibility through its participation in local events and programming across all seven counties. These activities demonstrate the organization’s commitment to meeting communities where they are and making STEM accessible to all learners.
- **Collaborative, Place-Based Partnerships:** Projects such as the Grande Ronde Model Watershed Community Science Project highlight GO STEM’s ability to integrate Indigenous knowledge and local environmental science, creating authentic and culturally responsive STEM experiences for youth.

Relevant Document Attached:
Advisory Board Roster as of October 2025

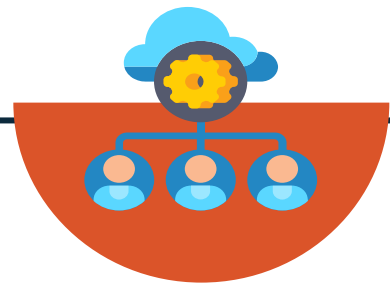
ROOM FOR GROWTH

- **Cultural Relevance and Diverse Partnerships:** GO STEM needs to expand collaboration with culturally specific organizations and partners that represent the diversity of Eastern Oregon communities, ensuring programming reflects all voices and experiences.
- **Co-Design with Youth:** While programs are responsive to community needs, there is an opportunity to include student voice more intentionally in the design phase to ensure youth ownership and deeper engagement.
- **Research Collaboration:** There is untapped potential to integrate formal research and evaluation alongside program delivery. Expanding collaboration with higher education faculty and community-based researchers could enhance broader impacts and visibility.

Readiness to Implement

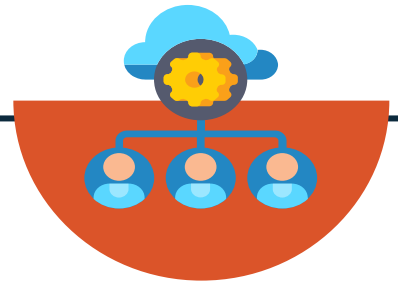
- **Roles:** Executive Leadership Team will co-develop a framework for community and cultural engagement, focusing on authentic partnerships and youth participation.
- **Capacity:** Strong community relationships and an established regional reputation provide a foundation for expanding culturally responsive practices and youth input. Collaborations with EOU and tribal or culturally specific partners will enhance both reach and authenticity.
- **Timeline:** Develop and publish GO STEM’s community engagement definition and partnership framework by FY 2027.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



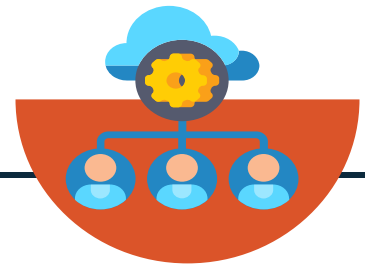
	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
Short-Term 1-2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate youth and community input into program components using visual frameworks and storytelling. Grow arts-integrated STEM programs. Embed SEL into the curriculum using CASEL-aligned frameworks and trauma-informed practices. Develop and disseminate an internal definition of community engagement and what it means to the organization as aligned to its values, mission and vision. Identify GO STEM program spaces as research platforms for Broader Impacts (BI) work: Pave space for community engaged scholars and researchers in higher education institutions (especially EOU) to become collaborators and utilize GO STEM programs spaces as research platforms to advance knowledge of STEM learning and impact (Broader Impacts Work with Researchers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth and community members express increased sense of belonging and agency through co-designed programming. Positive feedback and increased interest in arts-integrated and SEL-infused STEM experiences that resonate with diverse learners. Programs increasingly reflect local needs and cultural contexts. GO STEM community engagement definition becomes an integral part of thinking about opportunity development aligned with GO STEM mission and values. Increased researcher engagement: Higher education collaborators begin engaging GO STEM spaces as platforms for community-based STEM research.
Intermediate 3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand reach into underserved communities through culturally responsive partnerships. Co-create programs with culturally specific organizations that reflect local culture, youth interests, and emotional needs. Celebrate community knowledge through exhibitions, showcases, and youth-led media. Formalize research partnerships and shared learning agendas with higher education institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs demonstrate increased engagement and retention among historically underserved learners. Community partners take on co-leadership roles in program design and delivery. Increased participation: GO STEM expands reach into culturally specific and rural communities through trusted relationships and responsive formats. Research partnerships with institutions like the host EOU and others across the state generate new insights into STEM learning and broader impacts spaces where researchers and educators collaborate.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
<p>Long-Term 5 Years +</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalize cultural relevance practices through youth councils, partner co-leads, and staff professional development. • Embed programs in community systems (e.g., school calendars, civic events). • Secure funding for sustained engagement through joint proposals and impact storytelling. • Position GO STEM as a regional hub for community-engaged STEM scholarship and practitioner-researcher collaboration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing recognition: GO STEM is recognized as a regional leader in culturally responsive STEM education. • Programs demonstrated sustainability through embedded delivery in schools, workforce systems, and partner organizations. • Cultural relevance and community voice are institutionalized across programming and planning processes. • GO STEM serves as a hub, a landscape of practice platform, for community-engaged scholarship and practitioner-researcher collaboration in STEM education.

Deliverables / Outputs Accomplished with Technical Assistant in Phase 2



Output	Priority Rank	Description	Rationale
SEL Integration Framework	5	Guidelines, tools and resources for embedding SEL into STEM curriculum using CASEL-aligned strategies.	Facilitates curriculum design using SEL as a lens to develop activities.
Arts Integration STEAM Framework:	5	Resources: Guidelines, curriculum samples and facilitation guides for creative STEAM formats (e.g. Successful Case Recipe Cards).	Facilitates arts integration by offering clear pathways with recommendations, making it actionable.
Partner co-design toolkit	3	Visual frameworks and tools for collaborative planning with community partners.	It elevates community voices, making STEM learning meaningful and relevant.
Culturally Responsive Evaluation Tools:	3	Data collection tools (Surveys, Interview, Focus Groups protocols and/or other feedback formats) tailored for diverse communities.	Identifies impact, challenges and gaps for decision making.
Community Engagement Protocols	3	Tools guiding type, length, degree of engaged work with schools, industry, and civic organizations.	Help define community engagement and brings forth levels of engagement in alignment to community capacity and need to co-create.
Researcher Collaboration Framework	1	Tools, templates and guidance for inviting and supporting community-engaged researchers in GO STEM spaces to co-create programs and curriculum relevant to Eastern Oregon communities.	Results in STEM learning that is evidence-based and augments Broader Impacts.
Youth Voice Integration Toolkit	1	Tools for supporting and guiding youth voice integration in program design and implementation.	Aids facilitation, storytelling, and youth voice integration into program curriculum, as well as youth advising recruitment (where applicable).

We will work to reach all deliverables but understand the amount and type of resources needed to accomplish all. We provide a priority rank should we face limitations and need to prioritize outcomes. Priority Rank: 1= low, 3 = Moderate, 5=High.

Measuring Success

Success in accomplishing our community engagement goals will be tracked through:

- Youth and community members engaged in co-design (documented participation in planning sessions, advisory roles, and storytelling activities when and where appropriate).
- Arts-integrated and SEL-infused programs piloted (number and diversity of creative STEM formats launched; tracked by program logs and participant feedback).
- Partner feedback on cultural relevance and trust (survey results and qualitative input from schools, industry, and civic organizations).
- Retention and engagement metrics among underserved groups (attendance, completion rates, and satisfaction scores disaggregated by geography and demographics).
- Community partner engagement metrics (number of active collaborations contributing to program design and delivery; documented through MOUs and meeting records).
- Equity indicators (percentage of programs co-created with culturally specific orgs; disaggregated impact data showing increased access and relevance for underrepresented youth).
- Internal definition of community engagement developed and disseminated (documented definition and usage across planning, communications, and partner onboarding).
- Higher education collaborations initiated or continued (number of research partnerships formed; documented use of GO STEM spaces for community-engaged STEM research).
- Community partner engagement metrics (number of active collaborations with schools, industry, and civic organizations contributing to program design and delivery).

Collective Impact as a Cross-Cutting Strategy

GO STEM's community engagement fosters collective impact by:

- Developing a common agenda setting with youth, educators, and community/civic leaders whenever possible.
- Mutually reinforcing activities that are co-implemented (e.g. schools provide space and feedback, industry offers mentorship and resources, civic organizations support outreach and cultural alignment).
- Offering continuous communication that celebrates the contributions, talents and participation of all collaborative partners through storytelling, convenings, and feedback loops.
- Establishing a backbone support from GO STEM in coordination, training, and shared messaging.

An example of GO STEM successful work in this area is The Grande Ronde Watershed Community Science Project as one of GO STEM's sponsored projects including a participant driven science research program that engages youth in monitoring the Qapqápnim Wéele / Grande Ronde watershed and integrates Indigenous ways of knowing with western science practices.

Furthermore, youth and schools developed the Mobile Maker Lab design, built it, and are in the process of refining version two.

Actionable Example: A youth-led showcase co-hosted by GO STEM, a local school district, and a civic arts council could highlight STEM projects that integrate cultural storytelling and emotional reflection.

Equity and Access as Lenses

Equity and access are embedded throughout this pillar via:

- Youth-centered design that reflects the identities, interests, and emotional realities of rural and underrepresented youth.
- Culturally responsive partnerships with BIPOC, immigrant, and tribal organizations and/or communities.
- Flexible delivery models that overcome barriers like transportation and connectivity.
- Disaggregated evaluation to identify gaps and adapt programming accordingly.

Pillar 5: Evaluation and Continuous Improvement



PILLAR 5: EVALUATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



Sustainability requires evidence of outcomes and systemic change. This pillar builds the infrastructure for evaluation, shared measurement, and adaptive learning. Through evaluation and feedback, GO STEM learns, improves, and demonstrates value to funders, partners, and served communities.

Core Sustainability Goal

GO STEM will strengthen the current set of evaluation tools to measure impact, surface equity gaps, and support continuous improvement through data, reflection, and storytelling. While all STEM Hubs respond to statewide common evaluation tools, GO STEM will develop and adapt additional tools and practices that are authentic to its regional context and aligned with its sustainability goals. Evaluation will be designed to reflect community priorities, elevate youth and partner voice, and support adaptive learning across programs, partnerships, and systems.

Role of the Theory of Change (ToC)

Evaluation is a critical mechanism for learning, accountability and changing adaptations to improve impact. GO STEM ToC emphasizes this by

- Utilizing shared measurement across partners,
- Using disaggregated data as well as participatory and culturally responsive evaluation practices to surface equity gaps,
- Reporting with rich story-driven impact including the what's, why's, when's, where's, and how's of success and how challenges,
- Facilitating feedback loops to refine strategies and adjust offered programs,
- Conducting communications that align with equity priorities and amplify rural STEM voices, challenges, and successes.

Current State Brief



GO STEM actively uses evaluation to assess program impact, inform decision-making, and refine implementation across its seven-county service area. We utilize both statewide STEM Hub evaluation tools and internally developed systems to track participation, access, and outcomes. GO STEM created a comprehensive Evaluation Tool List which serves as a foundation for future improvement. The team is increasingly incorporating feedback from educators and partners, but recognizes a need for deeper, more systematic equity-centered evaluation practices that reflect community voice and lived experience.

GO STEM Hub's 2025 CIP findings:

- 7-county reach - Strong geographic equity
- Weak racial/cultural focus
- Low youth/community input in decisions
- Partners mostly educators; few community reps
- Visits often one-time due to distance limits

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Evaluation Tool List.
- Standardized statewide STEM Hub evaluation surveys.
- Internal Google Forms and partner feedback surveys.
- Data compiled through participation records, educator reports, and program tracking.
- Annual review of outcomes shared with partners and funders.

ROOM FOR GROWTH

- **Equity Gaps:** GO STEM needs to systematically surface and analyze equity gaps in access, engagement, and outcomes to ensure all learners and educators are being served fairly.
- **Equity-Centered Tools:** The organization needs to review and adapt its existing evaluation instruments to ensure they reflect culturally responsive and equity-centered frameworks.
- **Qualitative Measures:** Current evaluation tools are heavily quantitative. Expanding qualitative methods will better capture student, teacher, and administrator perspectives and reveal program impact beyond numbers.

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- **Data-Driven Refinement:** GO STEM uses evaluation data to improve programs such as the Mobile Maker Lab and the Educator Externship Program, identifying gaps in regional access and adjusting programming accordingly. This commitment to data-informed iteration ensures that offerings remain relevant and equitable.
- **Collaborative Evaluation Culture:** Staff and partners demonstrate a willingness to engage in reflection and feedback. The development of the Evaluation Tool List and analysis through this sustainability planning marks a major step toward unifying evaluation systems across all GO STEM programs.

Readiness to Implement

- **Roles:** Executive Leadership Team will co-develop enhanced evaluation protocols and facilitate data-sharing and reflection sessions with partners.
- **Capacity:** The team has established foundational tools and clear data collection routines, positioning GO STEM well to embed deeper evaluation practices. Additional support in qualitative data collection and analysis will be key for next-phase development.
- **Timeline:** Pilot qualitative evaluation tools in 2026; publish the first annual Equity and Impact Report with disaggregated data and partner stories by FY 2027.

Relevant Document Attached: Evaluation Tool List

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes

	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
<p>Short-Term 1-2 Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing Oregon STEM and statewide STEM Hub evaluation tools for alignment with GO STEM’s sustainability goals and storytelling priorities. • Develop and adopt additional equity-centered evaluation tools unique to GO STEM where and if needed. • Customize shared tools for data collection (e.g., surveys, rubrics, feedback forms). • Collect and share impact data (stories) and testimonials from students, educators, communities, and partners. Use qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups) to surface lived experiences and barriers. • Develop annual impact reports and distribute widely to donors, partners, and community members in formats adequate to the specific audiences. Use impact data and narratives to support advocacy, fundraising, and planning. • Implement equity-centered rubrics to assess program design and delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased clarity on how existing evaluation tools align with its sustainability goals, enabling more intentional data use and storytelling. • Increased application of shared evaluation: Staff and partners begin applying a shared equity-centered evaluation framework, resulting in more consistent and values-aligned data practices. • Increased partner trust and engagement: Partners receive clear, accessible impact communications, increasing trust and engagement. • Increased storytelling: Early data and stories begin to shape internal understanding of impact and equity gaps.
<p>Intermediate 3-5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze disaggregated and qualitative data to identify trends, gaps, and promising practices. • Facilitate learning sessions with partners to interpret findings and co-design adaptations. • Conduct geospatial mapping to identify underserved regions and infrastructure gaps. • Launch equity assessment of organizational practices and partnership structures as self-evaluation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased programs’ responsiveness: Evaluation findings lead to more responsive program design and partnership strategies that better reflect community needs. • Increased target efforts: Equity gaps in access, engagement, and outcomes are more visible, prompting targeted adaptations and resource allocation. • Increased shared ownership among partners: Partners actively participate in interpreting data and co-creating solutions, fostering shared ownership and continuous learning. • Strengthened GO STEM’s regional identity: Rural STEM success stories and community narratives strengthen GO STEM’s regional identity and partnership buy-in.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
<p>Long-Term 5+ Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalize adopted evaluation and storytelling practices across all programs and initiatives. • Build capacity for participatory and/or community-led evaluation opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing recognition: GO STEM is recognized and highlighted for the ability to use data and storytelling to drive equity-centered improvement and innovation. • Model evaluation: Evaluation and communications practices contribute to sustained funding, policy influence, and strategic alignment across sectors. • Increased accountability: Data-informed decision-making becomes embedded across all programs and partnerships, supporting long-term accountability and growth. • Strengthened leadership and contribution to scholarship: Community-engaged evaluation generates new insights into STEM learning and equity, contributing to broader field knowledge and regional leadership.

Deliverables / Outputs Accomplished with Technical Assistant in Phase 2



Output	Priority Rank	Description	Rationale
Evaluation Toolbox Analysis	5	Review of existing tools and recommendations for adaptations and/or new tools (e.g. self-assessments) in alignment with sustainability goals.	Supports continuous improvement and provides accountability towards reaching goals, priorities, and inclusive evaluation.
Improved and Customizable Data Collection Tools	5	Surveys, interviews, focus groups and observation protocols, rubrics, and feedback forms tailored for diverse audiences.	Supports inclusive evaluation.
Training Modules	3	Staff and partner training materials focused on data literacy, reflection, and storytelling integration.	Builds capacity and assures quality of evaluation methods and tools.
Impact Storytelling Templates	3	Formats for collecting and sharing testimonials and success stories in qualitative ways.	Demonstrate why's and how's of impact and communicate more than numbers.
Localized Storytelling Campaign Guide	3	Strategies for elevating rural voices and aligning with equity priorities tailored for diverse communities.	Increases impact visibility and builds trust.
Annual Impact Report Toolkit	1	Report template, asset design and dissemination plans for different audiences.	Aids communication with funders, partners, and increases impact visibility.
Learning Session/Member Checking	1	Facilitation guides and visual frameworks for partner reflection on data.	Verifies data and result interpretation, builds trust and integrates voices.

We will work to reach all deliverables but understand the amount and type of resources needed to accomplish all. We provide a priority rank should we face limitations and need to prioritize outcomes. Priority Rank: 1= low, 3 = Moderate, 5=High.

Measuring Success

Success in accomplishing our evaluation goals will be tracked through:

- Evaluation framework adopted and used across programs (documented frame and usage logs).
- Tool review completed and adaptations proposed (alignment report, implementation plan, number and types of tools).
- Data collection tools deployed (number and format of tools; number of programs and partners using shared tools).
- Testimonials and success stories collected and shared (number and diversity of stories published; partner engagement metrics).
- Annual impact report developed and distributed (report completion and distribution records; feedback from recipients).
- Disaggregated and qualitative data analyzed (reports showing trends by geography, demographics, and lived experience themes - contextual differences and realities of communities served).
- Storytelling campaigns implemented (number of campaigns launched; reach and engagement metrics).
- Equity-centered learning sessions held (number of sessions; documented adaptations and partner feedback).
- Self-assessments conducted and acted upon (findings and documented adaptations).
- Evaluation and communications embedded in planning and reporting (presence in strategic documents, funding proposals, and partner MOUs).

Collective Impact as a Cross-Cutting Strategy

GO STEM evaluation efforts will become more deeply rooted in collective impact by working with the team and partners in ways to

- Set common evaluation agendas,
- Share measurement systems,
- Conduct mutually reinforced activities such as partners contributing to data and stories,
- Deploy continuous communications to the diverse constituents and interested parties,
- Provide a backbone support that facilitates coordination, data synthesis, and strategic tool adaptation.

We list our current evaluation tools as an appendix to this proposal, giving you an idea of the tools adopted generally for all 13 STEM Hubs in the network and the specific tools in place for our programs. A concrete example of GO STEM's undergoing work in continuous improvement is our Mobile Maker Lab, for which we have mapped visited locations allowing us to identify equity gaps and areas we don't travel to as often or rarely. This is also true for our Externships Program allowing us to identify access gaps and needs for teachers.

Actionable Example: A regional learning session co-hosted by GO STEM and a tribal education partner could use disaggregated data and youth testimonials to redesign a STEM pathway that better reflects cultural relevance and emotional engagement. Our now 5 year old 4th grade STEM Kits program offers another example where all public school 4th graders in our region and their educators receive a personal STEM Kit. We collect feedback and evaluation data from use and adjust the curriculum yearly.

Equity and Access as Lenses

Equity and access are embedded throughout this pillar via:

- Disaggregated data analysis and other strategies to surface gaps in access, engagement, and outcomes.
- Qualitative methods that elevate lived experience and emotional resonance.
- Equity-centered rubrics to assess program design and delivery.
- Community and youth participation in evaluation design and interpretation.
- Feedback loops that inform strategy, programming, and communications.

Pillar 6: Communications and Advocacy



PILLAR 6: COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY



Visibility, trust, and influence depend on strategic communications. This pillar ensures that GO STEM's impact is amplified through program and partner stories, coordinated messaging, and media engagement. If no one hears the story in multiple ways (quantitatively and qualitatively), the work risks being undervalued or simply not visible. Advocacy ensures GO STEM's voice shapes policy and public perception.

Core Sustainability Goal

GO STEM will build a strategic communications and advocacy infrastructure to amplify impact, engage partners, and elevate youth and community voices. Communications will be used to build trust, attract resources, and position GO STEM as a regional leader in equity-centered STEM and Career-Connected Learning (CCL). Advocacy efforts will align with local and statewide priorities to advance inclusive STEM access and systems change.

Role of the Theory of Change (ToC)

Communications and advocacy are essential for visibility, trust, and influence. GO STEM's Theory of Change emphasizes

- Storytelling as a tool for engagement and systems-level change,
- Community and partner voices as central to public narratives,
- Strategic alignment across platforms and audiences,
- Communications as a shared responsibility across the network,
- Advocacy that reflects community priorities and equity goals.

Current State Brief



GO STEM has built a strong foundation for communications and outreach through its online platforms, regional visibility, and storytelling efforts that highlight the impact of its programs. We have a growing presence through social media, newsletters, and website, sharing updates, success stories, and opportunities across its seven-county service area. However, the team currently lacks the capacity to execute a unified, data-informed communications plan that integrates advocacy, branding, and strategic audience engagement.

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Active social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn).
- Monthly newsletters highlighting regional STEM events and program updates.
- GO STEM website featuring program information, resources, and partner highlights.
- Shared Google Drive for storing media assets and outreach materials.
- Draft communications strategy under development.

ROOM FOR GROWTH

- **Team Capacity:** GO STEM's communications and advocacy efforts are limited by staff capacity, preventing consistent execution of a robust communications plan. Without dedicated personnel, content creation, analytics tracking, and outreach remain reactive rather than strategic.
- **Unified Brand Voice and Messaging:** A consistent visual and narrative identity across all programs and platforms will strengthen public understanding of GO STEM's mission and enhance funder confidence.
- **Strategic Advocacy Plan:** A comprehensive advocacy strategy that aligns messaging with policy, funding, and regional STEM priorities is needed to position GO STEM as a visible leader in statewide conversations on STEM and Career-Connected Learning.

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- **Community Visibility:** GO STEM's regular social media posts, newsletters, and community highlights effectively showcase program successes such as the Mobile Maker Lab, Educator Externships, and regional student showcases. These communications reinforce GO STEM's reputation as a leader in equitable, rural STEM education.
- **Authentic Storytelling:** The organization's storytelling reflects real student and educator experiences, strengthening trust with partners and funders. By featuring local schools, teachers, and youth, GO STEM models transparent, community-rooted communication.

Readiness to Implement

- **Roles:** Communications and Development leads will co-design a strategic communications and advocacy plan, supported by the Program Director for content collection and storytelling coordination.
- **Capacity:** Existing tools and communication channels provide a strong foundation for growth. The team is well-positioned to expand once additional capacity and structure are in place.
- **Timeline:** Finalize and launch comprehensive communications and advocacy plan by FY 2026; develop brand identity toolkit and conduct staff communications training by FY 2027.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
Short-Term 1-2 Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a strategic communications and advocacy plan. Align messaging with equity priorities (e.g., rural students, low-income families, girls in STEM, students of color). • Refine key messages and visual identity to reflect GO STEM’s values and equity priorities. • Implement localized storytelling campaigns highlighting rural STEM success stories. • Engage community and partners in storytelling and content creation. • Share impact data and testimonials from students, educators, and partners collected via evaluation. • Align messaging with sustainability and equity priorities where appropriate (e.g., rural students, low-income families, girls in STEM, students of color). • Design and/or launch initial outreach campaigns (e.g., newsletters, social media, community events). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GO STEM’s communications become more strategic and aligned with its mission and equity values, resulting in clearer, more consistent messaging across platforms. • Community and partner contributions enhance the authenticity and cultural relevance of public-facing content, increasing resonance with diverse audiences. • Partners demonstrate improved understanding of GO STEM’s role, impact, and priorities, leading to stronger engagement and trust. • Advocacy messages begin to reflect regional STEM needs and community voice, laying the groundwork for future policy influence.
Intermediate 3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build media relationships and regional visibility through coordinated outreach. • Create content libraries and storytelling templates for partners and staff. • Train staff and partners in strategic messaging and advocacy techniques. • Develop advocacy materials that reflect community needs and regional STEM priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GO STEM’s increased visibility leads to expanded partnerships, greater media presence, and stronger interest from funders and policymakers. • Partner and community narratives begin to shape how STEM is understood and valued in the region, influencing program design and public discourse. • Communications efforts contribute to increased support for GO STEM initiatives, including funding, volunteerism, and policy alignment.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
<p>Long-Term 5+ Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalize communications and storytelling practices across all GO STEM programs. • Use public narratives to influence policy and resource distribution. • Sustain community and partner voice as central to public messaging and strategic planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and storytelling are fully integrated across programs and partnerships, reinforcing a shared identity rooted in equity and community voice. • Advocacy messaging begins to influence local and regional decision-making around inclusive STEM access and investment. Sustained advocacy efforts influence policy shifts and resource commitments that support long-term, equity-centered STEM access. • Partner and community voices become naturally embedded in GO STEM’s public messaging and strategic influence, shaping narratives and decisions at multiple levels.

Deliverables / Outputs Accomplished with Technical Assistant in Phase 2



Output	Priority Rank	Description	Rationale
Strategic Communications and Advocacy Plan	5	Documents, templates and resources to facilitate target communications.	Ensures alignment with GO STEM's mission, values, and sustainability goals, and delivers information with cohesion.
Branding Identity Toolkit	5	Templates for visual identity, key messages, and audience alignment.	Ensure professional communication with a visible and recognizable brand and messaging.
Content Creation Templates	5	Formats for newsletters, social media, partner spotlights, and impact stories.	Help consistent storytelling and support staff with communications responsibilities.
Youth Storytelling Framework	3	Guides and tools for recruiting, training, and supporting youth contributions to curricular activities and impact communications.	Makes youth voices visible, supports meaningful learning, and builds trust within partnerships.
Advocacy Materials Development Guide	3	Templates, messaging tools, and resources aligned with regional STEM policy priorities.	Aid community engagement, public perception and policy-related actions.
Media Engagement Toolkit	1	Press release templates, media contact lists, and outreach strategies.	appropriate use of media platforms, including social media platforms, with correct intended audience and aligned
Communications Training Modules	1	Workshops, training materials and publication guides for staff and partners.	Aids consistent and powerful storytelling, messaging, and advocacy.

We will work to reach all deliverables but understand the amount and type of resources needed to accomplish all. We provide a priority rank should we face limitations and need to prioritize outcomes. Priority Rank: 1= low, 3 = Moderate, 5=High.

Measuring Success

Success in accomplishing our evaluation goals will be tracked through:

- Communications and advocacy plan developed and implemented (documented strategy and usage across platforms).
- Community and partner voices featured in public messaging (number and diversity of stories published; contributor engagement metrics).
- Outreach metrics tracked (newsletter rates, subscribers, social media engagement, event attendance).
- Partner understanding and engagement increased (tracked in evaluation tool results - e.g surveys, interviews, focus groups - and qualitative feedback from partners and community members).
- Storytelling campaigns launched (number of campaigns; reach and resonance with target audiences).
- Advocacy materials developed and used (presence in proposals, public statements, and policy briefings).
- Communications embedded across programs and partnerships (integration in planning, evaluation, and reporting documents).
- Equity-centered messaging sustained (content analysis showing alignment with equity priorities and community voice).
- Website engagement metrics.

Collective Impact as a Cross-Cutting Strategy

GO STEM's communications and advocacy work strengthens collective impact by building a shared narrative infrastructure. A system of storytelling, messaging, and public engagement that reflects the values, voices, and priorities of the regional STEM ecosystem and the partnerships it holds. Rather than just coordinating data or activities, this pillar ensures that:

- Partners speak with a unified voice about equity, innovation, and community-rooted STEM learning.
- Youth and community stories are elevated across sectors, shaping how STEM is understood and valued.
- Messaging is co-developed and co-owned where appropriate, reinforcing trust and shared identity.
- Advocacy efforts are synchronized, amplifying regional priorities in policy and funding conversations.
- Public narratives reflect collective goals, helping partners see themselves as part of a larger movement.

An example of work we already conduct in this pillar is our newsletter. We send out a newsletter about once a month and are in the midst of a new social media campaign launch. We are currently engaging in professional development on social media management to develop expertise for implementation. We attend community events frequently and a more structured outreach campaign would ensure we get the word out across seven counties more fully.

Actionable Example: A regional media campaign featuring student-led STEM projects, co-developed by GO STEM, local schools, and workforce partners, could simultaneously support recruitment, funding, and policy advocacy, while reinforcing a shared vision for inclusive STEM futures.

Equity and Access as Lenses

GO STEM's communications and advocacy work advances equity by ensuring that who speaks, what is said, and how it's shared reflects the lived experiences, cultural identities, and priorities of historically underserved communities. In this pillar, equity and access are embedded via:

- **Narrative representation:** Youth, community, and culturally specific partners shape public messaging, ensuring that communications reflect diverse voices and values—not just institutional perspectives.
- **Culturally responsive storytelling:** Stories are crafted with attention to language, format, and emotional resonance, making STEM visible and relevant to rural learners, students of color, girls in STEM, and/or low-income families.
- **Accessible communication formats:** Outreach materials are designed for multilingual, low-bandwidth, and rural audiences, reducing barriers to engagement and visibility.
- **Strategic amplification:** Equity-centered messages are elevated in media, policy, and funding spaces, helping shift public perception and resource allocation toward inclusive STEM access.
- **Partner and community co-authorship:** Communications are not just about communities, they are created with them, reinforcing agency and shared ownership.

Actionable Example: A bilingual video series featuring rural girls in STEM, co-produced with local educators and communities, could simultaneously support recruitment, advocacy, and cultural pride—while challenging dominant narratives about who belongs in STEM.

Pillar 7: Governance and Accountability



PILLAR 7: GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY



Behind every sustainable initiative is a strong team and infrastructure. This pillar focuses on internal capacity, leadership development, and systems that support collaboration, transparency, and equity. Sustainability starts with how GO STEM operates and leads from within.

Core Sustainability Goal

GO STEM will build from and strengthen its internal infrastructure, leadership capacity, and governance systems to support strategic alignment, transparent decision-making, and organizational development. Governance reflects the values and priorities of the communities GO STEM serves, ensuring that leadership practices foster collaboration, accountability, and long-term sustainability.

Role of the Theory of Change (ToC)

Governance and accountability are the backbone of sustainable impact. GO STEM's Theory of Change emphasizes

- Leadership that reflects community and youth priorities,
- Systems that support transparency, collaboration, and equity,
- Structures that enable strategic growth, adaptability, and shared ownership,
- Internal practices that reinforce mission alignment and long-term viability.

Current State Brief



GO STEM's governance structure is grounded in transparency, collaboration, and shared leadership. We operate under the fiscal and administrative support of Eastern Oregon University (EOU) and maintain an active Advisory Board composed of education, industry, and community representatives from across the seven-county region. This structure ensures that programs remain community-informed and regionally aligned. GO STEM also maintains strong connections with the EOU College of Education, supporting alignment between university systems and regional STEM initiatives. We recognize the need to formalize internal systems, clarify staff roles, and strengthen onboarding and feedback processes to sustain operational efficiency and accountability.

Advisory Board meeting every 2 months
Relevant Document Attached: Advisory Board Roster as of October 2025

EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Advisory Board roster with representatives from education, industry, and community sectors.
- Partnership with EOU for fiscal oversight and administrative support.
- Connection with EOU College of Education for shared professional learning and student engagement.
- Early-stage governance documentation (bylaws, role descriptions, and meeting protocols in development)

CURRENT STRENGTHS

- **Collaborative Oversight:** GO STEM's Advisory Board and EOU partnership provide a strong foundation of fiscal and organizational accountability. The Board conducts annual evaluations of the Executive Director and provides strategic guidance that reflects community and regional priorities.
- **Inclusive Leadership Practices:** Staff and leadership emphasize transparency and shared decision-making, modeling the collaborative values GO STEM promotes regionally. These practices build trust and a sense of collective ownership among partners and internal team members alike.

ROOM FOR GROWTH

- **Operational Systems Development:** Several systems that support internal communication, project tracking, and reporting are still being built or refined, creating inconsistencies across program teams.
- **New Staff Onboarding and Role Clarity:** As GO STEM expands, there is a need to strengthen onboarding systems and clarify internal decision-making structures to support efficiency and collaboration.
- **Formal Governance Documentation:** Decision-making maps and leadership development frameworks are in progress but not yet fully codified, limiting scalability beyond GO STEM.

Readiness to Implement

- **Roles:** Executive Director and Advisory Board Chair will lead the development of formal governance documentation, while the Program Director and administrative staff refine internal systems and onboarding processes.
- **Capacity:** GO STEM has an engaged Advisory Board and experienced leadership team, ensuring strong readiness to build upon current structures. The partnership with EOU provides administrative stability and fiscal accountability throughout implementation.
- **Timeline:** Develop updated governance map and decision-making framework by mid-2026; finalize onboarding and leadership development systems by FY 2027.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
<p>Short-Term 1-2 Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarify internal roles, priorities, and decision-making structures. • Grow professional development opportunities for staff and leadership. • Periodically review and strengthen governance systems (e.g., advisory board, fiscal oversight, partner engagement). • Align internal operations with sustainability goals and strategic priorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased strategic and operational alignment: GO STEM’s internal operations become more efficient and strategically aligned, as clarified roles and decision-making structures reduce ambiguity and improve coordination, especially for new staff and new partners. • More inclusive leadership practices: Staff and leadership demonstrate increased capacity to lead with inclusivity and purpose, fostering a culture of equity-centered decision-making. • Strengthened governance systems: Result in improved transparency and partner confidence in GO STEM’s leadership and accountability.
<p>Intermediate 3-5 years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build systems for collaborative planning and transparent communication. • Recruit and support diverse leadership reflective of community priorities. • Develop onboarding and leadership development pathways for staff and partners. • Embed equity and mission alignment into organizational policies and workflows. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased collaborative planning and transparency: GO STEM’s internal systems enable more collaborative planning and transparent communication, leading to stronger cross-team execution and strategic coherence. • Larger community representation: Leadership becomes more representative of the communities served, improving responsiveness to regional needs and increasing trust among partners. • Greater clarity of roles and organization cohesion: Staff report greater clarity in their roles and stronger alignment with GO STEM’s mission, contributing to improved morale, retention, and organizational cohesion. • Increased staff recruitment and retention: Staff and partners are retained and expanded as a result of clear governance.

Proposed Activities & Expected Outcomes



	Strategic Activities	Expected Outcomes
<p>Long-Term 5+ Years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutionalize adaptive leadership and equity-centered governance practices. • Sustain organizational learning and innovation through feedback loops and strategic reflection. • Maintain accountability through transparent reporting and inclusive decision-making structures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive leadership and increased resilience: GO STEM functions as a resilient, equity-centered organization with adaptive leadership and governance structures that support long-term sustainability. • Improved organizational practices: It consistently fosters innovation, shared ownership, and accountability across programs and partnerships. • Sustained supports and systems level change: GO STEM’s governance system supports sustained funding, strategic influence on decision making, and supports systems-level change.

Deliverables / Outputs Accomplished with Technical Assistant in Phase 2



Output	Priority Rank	Description	Rationale
Organizational roles and decision-making map	5	Visual framework for internal structure and operational procedures (consider co-create with partners).	Ensure clarity of communications, goals, authority, and accountability measures.
Strategic Planning Templates	5	Documents and tools for collaborative planning, goal setting, and progress tracking.	Brings mission and goals to the forefront of decision-making and helps refine existing strategic plans.
Professional Development Modules	3	Training materials, tools and resources for staff and leadership on inclusive practices and systems change.	Support transformative leadership and shared governance.
Operational Systems Assessment Tool	3	Checklist and tools for aligning internal systems with sustainability goals and equity values.	Results in stronger governance models and practices.
Governance Review Guidelines	1	Templates and guides for assessing and strengthening board and advisory structures.	Results in stronger governance models and practices.
Leadership Recruitment Guidelines	1	Protocols for inclusive hiring, onboarding, and leadership development.	Results in targeted recruitment and retention of talent.

We will work to reach all deliverables but understand the amount and type of resources needed to accomplish all. We provide a priority rank should we face limitations and need to prioritize outcomes. Priority Rank: 1= low, 3 = Moderate, 5=High.

Measuring Success

Success in accomplishing our evaluation goals will be tracked through:

- Internal roles and structures clarified (documented decision-making map and staff feedback, organizational chart with roles and partner engagement).
- Professional development delivered and applied (number of sessions; participant feedback and learning outcomes).
- Governance systems reviewed and strengthened (updated charters, meeting records, and board engagement metrics).
- Collaboration and planning systems adopted (presence in strategic documents and staff workflows).
- Leadership diversity and alignment with community priorities (demographic data and partner feedback).
- Organizational practices embedded across programs (integration in policies, evaluations, and partner agreements).
- Staff and partner confidence in governance and leadership (evaluation tool results and qualitative feedback (e.g. survey or interview).
- Transparency and accountability maintained (documentation of decisions, reporting practices, and partner engagement).

Collective Impact as a Cross-Cutting Strategy

GO STEM's governance and accountability work supports collective impact by building internal systems that enable shared leadership, strategic alignment, and transparent coordination across the regional STEM ecosystem. This pillar ensures that:

- Decision-making structures reflect collective goals and partner input, not just internal priorities.
- Leadership roles are distributed and inclusive, enabling co-ownership of strategy and outcomes.
- Internal systems support cross-sector collaboration, making it easier to align efforts and share resources.
- Governance practices reinforce trust and accountability, strengthening long-term partnerships.

An example of our current development in this domain is the fact that GO STEM's Advisory Board is composed of education and industry professionals, reflecting the population we serve and providing insight and direction for GO STEM efforts. They also conduct yearly evaluations of the Executive Director. Youth and schools developed the Mobile Maker Lab (MML) design, built the first version, and are in the process of refining a second version of the MML.

Another example is our Educator Externship Program, which exposes teachers to jobs and careers within the stewardship and conservation areas via our shared governance model with our partners: Eastern Oregon Workforce Board, Treasure Valley Community College, InterMountain ESD, High Desert Partnership, and Frontier STEM Hub, among other partners.

Actionable Example: A rotating advisory board structure that includes youth, educators, and industry partners could guide GO STEM's strategic planning while modeling inclusive governance and shared ownership.

Equity and Access as Lenses

Equity and access are embedded throughout this pillar via:

- Leadership recruitment and development practices that prioritize representation and lived experience.
- Decision-making structures that include youth, community partners, and culturally specific organizations.
- Internal policies that reflect equity values, including compensation, workload distribution, and professional development access.
- Governance systems that ensure transparency, responsiveness, and accountability to the communities served.
- Feedback mechanisms that allow staff and partners to shape organizational priorities and practices.

Actionable Example: A quarterly leadership reflection session that includes staff, youth advisors, and community partners could surface equity concerns and guide adjustments to internal policies and strategic direction.

Closing Reflection

Sustaining Impact Through Learning, Adaptation, and Partnerships

This sustainability plan represents GO STEM's current best thinking, developed through collaborative reflection, regional input, technical assistance, and a commitment to equity-centered systems change. It outlines a strategic framework for long-term resilience, grounded in the realities of rural Eastern Oregon and informed by the voices of community, educators, and partners. We believe the plan is thoughtful, actionable, and aligned with our mission.

At the same time, we recognize that sustainability is not a static achievement, it is shaped by context, capacity, and continuous learning. Should we move into Phase 2 with the funding support offered by OCF, we do so with clarity about our intentions and recognition of the challenges ahead, as well as the commitment to leverage other funding opportunities and support to help us achieve our sustainability goals.

Limitations and Uncertainty

We are aware that some assumptions in this plan may need to be revisited as conditions shift. There are areas where our internal capacity is still developing, particularly in communications infrastructure and evaluation systems. Not all voices and perspectives have been fully captured here, especially those from communities we are still building trust with.

We anticipate that the implementation of this plan will require ongoing reflection, adaptation, and responsiveness to emerging needs. We do not see these limitations as barriers, but as realities to be navigated with transparency and care. We are committed to surfacing challenges early, engaging partners in problem-solving, and adjusting our strategies as needed.

We recognize this plan as a living document, one that will evolve in response to shifting community needs, organizational capacity, and external conditions. Annual evaluations will guide adjustments, and any changes to deliverables will be transparently documented and communicated to partners. This approach ensures clarity, accountability, and responsiveness across GO STEM's diverse stakeholder network.

Once again, we emphasize that this plan reflects GO STEM's commitment to stewarding sustainable, inclusive systems, not just securing funding. It is a roadmap for transformation, built on trust, collaboration, and the belief that rural youth deserve access to high-quality STEM opportunities that honor their identities, aspirations, and communities.



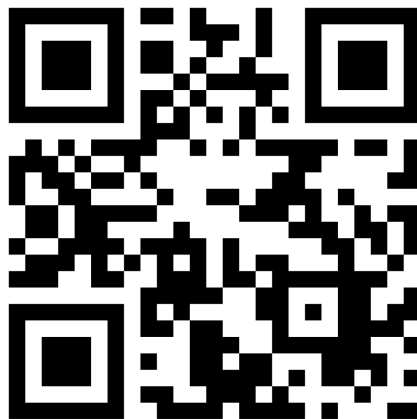
Appendices

1. Organization Chart
2. Logic Model
3. Asset Map
4. Partnership Plan
5. Advisory Board Roster
6. Evaluation Tool List
7. Example Newsletter





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Sustainability Plan

November 2025

