



**CONTACT:**

Alyssa Briggs, 330.402.1016, [alyssabriggs@tiesteach.org](mailto:alyssabriggs@tiesteach.org)

Dr. Angela Hemingway, 208.332.1726, [angela.hemingway@STEM.idaho.gov](mailto:angela.hemingway@STEM.idaho.gov)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Idaho STEM Ecosystem joins global STEM ecosystem initiative**

CLEVELAND (Oct. 23, 2019) — The STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice, [SLECoP](#), today announced it has selected Idaho STEM Ecosystem to join the global movement of leaders devoted to dramatic improvement in how students learn.

The Idaho STEM Ecosystem is a community of localized partners, programs, and other resources the Idaho STEM Action Center has been charged with sustaining and growing to advance science, technology, engineering, and math fluency and workforce development. It was selected in a highly competitive process to become a member of SLECoP, a network of global ecosystems working to build meaningful connections among community partners to prepare students for the opportunities and challenges of the future.

With the addition of Idaho STEM Ecosystem, SLECoP now numbers 89 communities working across the globe to improve STEM opportunities for all.

“We are excited that Idaho STEM Ecosystem was chosen to join the STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice,” Dr. Angela Hemingway, Idaho STEM Action Center executive director and leader of the Idaho STEM Ecosystem, said. “We look forward to learning best practices for mobilizing entire communities to work to enhance STEM opportunities for the State of Idaho.”

In addition to Idaho STEM Ecosystem, other ecosystems selected to join SLECoP are Arkansas STEM Ecosystem serving the entire state of Arkansas; Berks STEM Connection of Berks County, Pa.; and the NEPA STEM Ecosystem serving Northeastern Pennsylvania.

About 60 different communities expressed interest in joining cohort six, but only five were admitted now. Ecosystems can apply again for admission in early spring 2020.

“This was an incredibly competitive process, and we were only able to admit ecosystems that would be capable of making immediate contributions to our thriving community of practice,” Jan Morrison, president and founding partner of TIES, the organization that operates SLECoP, said. “The ecosystems that we selected now have pulled together diverse partners who no longer accept the status quo in education. They want to see all students access high quality STEM education that will prepare them for life and work in the next century.”

– more –

The Idaho STEM Ecosystem plans to focus on equity and access to STEM education and has lined up a series of partners to collaborate, including the Idaho STEM Action Center, Idaho National Labs, the Micron Foundation, University of Idaho, Boise State University, the Idaho Out-of-School Network, the Idaho Commission for Libraries, the Idaho Workforce Development Council, the Discovery Center of Idaho, the Idaho Diversity Network, the Idaho State Department of Education and the Idaho Division of Career-Technical Education.

The STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice is a global initiative of innovators who know that thriving communities are built through collaboration and a willingness to reimagine education and provide opportunities to those commonly neglected.

SLECoP now includes ecosystems from 40 states in the United States as well as Kenya, Israel, Mexico and Canada.

A December 2018 report by the Federal Office of Science and Technology Policy that's intended to help guide STEM policy and implementation across the country listed forming STEM ecosystems as the number-one priority.

“We are starting to see a deeper appreciation for the ecosystem approach to STEM education. We are thrilled to be leading this critical work,” Morrison said, explaining that SLECoP and the University of Pittsburgh recently were awarded a \$10 million grant from the National Science Foundation to develop pre-college STEM programs and an accreditation system.

SLECoP was built on the fundamental belief that learning happens everywhere, not just in traditional classrooms. Consequently, ecosystems are made up of partners representing K-12 public and private education, business and industry, after-school providers, nonprofits, STEM-rich institutions, government and philanthropy.

Ecosystem partners work for shared goals of improved STEM opportunities for all. Ecosystems also recognize the importance of identifying needed skills for an economy yet to be conceived and lobbying for informed policies to meet 21st century needs.

SLECoP offers the architecture and support for the ecosystems to connect to one another, learn and share best practices.

Numerous funders and partners support SLECoP, including Amgen Foundation, Broadcom Foundation, Burroughs Wellcome Fund, Carnegie Corporation of New York, Cleveland Foundation, DigitalC, Fowler Family Foundation, Huntington Bank, Nord Family Foundation, Nordson, Overdeck Family Foundation, Qualcomm Foundation, Samueli Foundation, STEM Funders Network, Steinman Foundation, STEM Next Opportunity Fund, TGR Foundation, The Charles and Lynn Schusterman Foundation, The Steinman Foundation, and numerous local/regional foundations supporting local and regional STEM ecosystems.

Other partners are offering additional support, including UBTECH, Girls Who Code, ASM, LEGO Education, Tallo, Pitsco Education, Woz Education, Nepris, Smart Gurlz and Vernier.

Learn more about the national initiative at [stemecosystems.org](http://stemecosystems.org). Address specific questions to [info@stemecosystems.org](mailto:info@stemecosystems.org). Join online conversations on Twitter [@STEMecosystems](https://twitter.com/STEMecosystems) and [#STEMecosystems](https://twitter.com/STEMecosystems) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/STEMecosystems), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/STEMecosystems), and [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/STEMecosystems).

#### **ABOUT THE IDAHO STEM ACTION CENTER**

The Idaho STEM Action Center was created in 2015 because Idaho citizens are not entering the STEM pipeline fast enough to meet current and future Idaho workforce needs. Its goals are to coordinate and facilitate implementation of STEM programs, align education and workforce needs, and increase awareness of STEM throughout Idaho. The organization is working with industry, government, educators, and students to develop new resources and support high-quality teacher professional-development opportunities to foster a STEM-educated workforce that ensures Idaho's continued economic prosperity. Visit [STEM.Idaho.gov](http://STEM.Idaho.gov) for more information.

###