



“Seal of Approval” for Non-Council Activities

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Genesis of the Committee

Iowa has seen a small, but powerful, uptick in community-powered, STEM-related organizations and events *not affiliated* with official STEM initiatives. These well-intended, purposeful organizations range from Organic pop-up tech events, like Startup Weekend, to more Established organizations, like Boy Scouts of America and 4H Clubs, and are seen as powerful catalysts in fostering greater inclusion, visibility, and sustainability of core STEM ideas.

The Problem

As a brand leader in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, unofficial STEM organizations and events have naturally turned to the official Council for guidance and assistance. This has created exciting but unexpected challenges for the Council and official STEM resources, including but not limited to: sponsorship requests, communication distribution, venue assistance, brand affiliation, and grant assistance.

The Solution: Seal of Approval program

The committee recommends a standardized protocol to quickly—but rigorously—field, authorize, and support events or organizations that demonstrate focus, community engagement, critical-thinking, and integral values that align with STEM’s existing brand and mission.

Criteria for Endorsement and Review Process

The STEM Council needs a tool to compare the applying Non-Official STEM Organization or Event to the Council’s core values on college and career readiness, community unification, and diversification of the STEM talent pipeline.

To help the Council and potential applicants measure the value of a shared relationship, provide a definitive yet inclusive scope of community, and determine the extent to which official STEM involvement would be appropriate, this committee has outlined the following criteria:

- **Design:** the level to which the structure and agenda of the Organization or Event is designed specifically to foster collaboration, reasoning, and problem-based learning and execution
- **Participation and exposure:** the level to which an the Organization or Event encultures, activates or engages a community
- **Inquiry:** the level to which the Organization or Event fosters key principles of STEM inquiry and thinking, like problem-solving and scientific methodology
- **Focus:** the level to which the Organization or Event specifically includes Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
- **Integrity:** the level to which the Organization or Event, group, and its leaders embody the Council’s values on character, community, and diversity

Forms

Application form ([link](#))

Tell us a bit about the history, mission, and logistics of your organization or event •

Note: applying events or organizations

Environment & Design: •

How is the structure and/or agenda of the Organization or Event designed specifically to "foster collaboration, reasoning, and problem-based learning and execution?"

Focus: •

How does your Organization or Event embed "Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math?"

Inclusion and Visibility: •

How does your Organization or Event help "enculture, activate or engage the Iowa community?"

Inquiry: •

How does your Organization or Event "foster key principles of STEM inquiry and thinking, like problem solving and scientific methodology?"

To help us better support you, what are you hoping to achieve from the Seal of Approval? •

Hosted online or distributed through email, this form will solicit the information needed to determine the eligibility of an Event or Organization.

Rubric form ([link](#))

Environment & Design: •

the level to which the structure and agenda of the Organization or Event is designed specifically to "foster collaboration, reasoning, and problem-based learning and execution"

1 2 3 4 5

Agenda or structure offers little room or capacity for fundamental components of STEM learning

Agenda or structure offers environment necessary for STEM ideas and principles

Focus: •

the degree to which the Organization or Event "specifically" includes Science, Technology, Engineering and Math

1 2 3 4 5

Program has no direct affiliation with a STEM Field or Occupation

Program has strong connection to a STEM Field or Occupation

Inclusion and Visibility: •

the level to which an the Organization or Event encultures, activates or engages a community

1 2 3 4 5

Little to no potential to engage community (exclusive)

Powerful tool in fostering inclusion

Inquiry: •

the level to which the Organization or Event fosters key principles of STEM inquiry and thinking, like problem-solving and scientific methodology

1 2 3 4 5

Little to no potential to engage community

Powerful tool in fostering participation and visibility of STEM ideas in community

Integrity:

the level to which the Organization or Event, group, and its leaders embody the Council's values on character, community, and diversity

1 2 3 4 5

Does NOT align Aligns

A selection committee will score each response 1 through 5. Initially, a minimum score will be needed to earn approval. This benchmark score is being tested