

Volunteering for activities as a STEM Ambassador

i STEM Ambassadors can support a wide range of volunteering opportunities or activities with schools and colleges. There are many different types of opportunities offered at a wide range of times, locations and covering different topics. To help you to identify the most appropriate activity or area that you can support, we have detailed below some of the most common queries received from newly recruited STEM Ambassadors.

? How do I find out about STEM Ambassador volunteering opportunities?

We at West Yorkshire STEM (WYSTEM) will provide you with regular e-alerts (usually 1 per month during the school year) highlighting volunteering opportunities in West Yorkshire which you may want to take part in. Occasionally you may also receive specific requests that we think are particularly local for you or focused on your area of expertise.

STEM Learning also sends out a UK-wide quarterly e-alert to all STEM Ambassadors which provide updates on any relevant news relating to the national STEM Ambassador Programme. Occasionally these e-alert also includes opportunities to participate in UK-wide events e.g. BBC Bang Goes the Theory roadshows.

? How often are STEM Ambassadors expected to take part in volunteering opportunities?

All STEM Ambassadors are required to support at least one volunteering opportunity/activity per year. If you'd like to support more than one activity a year, then we'd be delighted to hear this (and we would work with you to ensure that you received information on a wide range of opportunities). If you're interested in developing a sustained link with a local school then speak to us and we'll work out how to support you with this.

Whilst you are welcome to take part in any of the school requests and opportunities we promote, you are not expected to support all the requests you receive. In addition, if your circumstances change and you are no longer able to support the Programme, please let us know and we'll make a note on our records.

? Are we able to organise our own volunteering activities?

Yes. Any activity which is voluntary, aimed at 5-19 year olds and linked to STEM in some way can be recorded on your STEM Ambassadors profile. It can even include a planning or development meeting you might have with a teacher or school at one of our Networking/Forum sessions.

? When do most STEM Ambassador volunteering opportunities take place?

The majority of volunteering opportunities/activities will take place during school hours i.e. between 8am and 4pm, although there are also sometimes weekend and evening opportunities. Many employers are very supportive of their employees supporting STEM Ambassador opportunities/activities, so do speak to your line manager if you are keen to support an opportunity/activity that takes place during work hours.

There are sometimes also opportunities for you to support volunteering opportunities/activities that don't necessarily involve a physical visit to a school. This may be of particular interest to you if it is difficult for you to get time to volunteer during normal working hours. Example activities could include taking part in a Skype interview as part of a school lesson, participating in a webinar, or being the subject of a STEM Ambassador Case Study.

There are a wide range of volunteering opportunities for you to get involved with. These include:

careers speed networking activities i.e. based on a 'speed dating' format, lots of STEM Ambassadors sat at a table then small groups of students come around asking a few questions about their career before moving on to the next Ambassador

participating in one of our **Teacher/Ambassador Networking sessions**

taking part in a **Skype interview** as part of a school lesson

supporting **STEM Clubs** i.e. ongoing extracurricular activity

providing a **careers talk or hands-on activity** relating to your area of expertise or industry

curriculum-linked visits such as giving a talk on green energy, stem cells, nutrition, design, research methods etc

e-mentoring as part of an established e-mentoring scheme



West Yorkshire STEM is part of Research Toolkit Ltd, the STEM Ambassadors Programme and Schools STEM Advisory Network contract-holder for West Yorkshire.

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This information sheet draws upon more detailed material provided on the STEM ambassadors website.