ADVANCING
Science and STEM Learning...
The Future Depends on It.

ASSOCIATION OF SCIENCE-TECHNOLOGY CENTERS
“I have no special talents, I am just passionately curious.”

*Albert Einstein*
ASTC—Get to Know Us...

Each year over 90 million wide-eyed, inquisitive visitors are amazed, challenged, educated, and transformed by learning experiences in nearly 650 ASTC member institutions in close to 50 countries worldwide.

Founded in 1973, The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) is a global organization providing collective voice, professional support, and programming opportunities for science centers, museums, and related institutions, whose innovative approaches to science learning inspire people of all ages about the wonders and the meaning of science in their lives.

ASTC works with these widely diverse institutions to help put the “wow” in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education with mind-blowing, hands-on, interactive exhibits, participatory experiences, and outreach programs that advance STEM learning in new and innovative ways.

...and Join Us in Our Mission.
The ASTC Member Community:
Widely Diverse, Uniformly Committed!

ASTC brings together, in one large community, the collective wisdom, creativity, innovation, and skill sets of diverse institutions, hailing from the very largest cities to the smallest towns around the globe.

ASTC serves:
Science Museums
Science Centers
Natural History Museums
Zoos
Aquariums
Botanical Gardens
Planetariums
Children's Museums
Universities
Research Labs and Corporations

Rochester Museum and Science Center,
Rochester, NY
Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN

International Centre for Life, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK

Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Denver, CO
What makes science centers and museums so important?

**Igniting Long-Term Interest in STEM**

Where else but in science centers and museums can you partake of STEM knowledge, have fun in a creative environment, and learn problem solving and analytical thinking skills to serve you for a lifetime?

Science centers and museums are uniquely positioned to raise awareness, understanding, and interest levels in science and the other STEM disciplines. They know how to provide life-long learning and stimulation to learners of all ages.

The fields of STEM come to life through informal learning outside of the classroom, creating a passion for curiosity and risk-taking...skills that will be essential to face the challenges of a 21st century workforce.

Most scientists first became interested in the field by the time they were 11 years old and many claim that informal science experiences at an early age helped them decide on their chosen career path.

**Where Play and Academics Come Together**

Science centers and museums know how to put pizzazz into science education. Using discovery, fun, excitement, and hands-on learning, they lead visitors toward understanding complex scientific principles and ideas.

Most young people consider science too daunting a subject (if not too boring and too dry!) and are amazed that they can learn easily within a museum environment. In fact, attitudes towards science are formed primarily during out-of-school time in early adolescence.
**Fostering Strong Science Teachers**

Often working with local school districts, 90% of ASTC members offer workshops, webinars, conferences, and full-fledged courses to increase teachers’ knowledge of science content and to provide them with the tools to use informal science programs and exhibits to enhance science learning.

**Learning and Exploration for a Lifetime**

With the first wave of baby boomers now looking at the next phase of life, science centers are expanding their engagement with older audiences. In the U.S. alone, ten thousand baby boomers turn 65 every day and by 2030, 25% of the U.S. population will exceed retirement age.

Workshops, exhibitions, online learning programs, lecture series, volunteer opportunities, and travel adventures all lend themselves to older, more mature audiences.

**Global Solutions to Local Problems**

Science centers and museums are preparing a new generation of responsible global citizens who will be able to address the problems that will face our world over the next century. From air and water pollution to endangered species to human health and nutrition—these challenges demand global solutions that reach beyond geopolitical borders.

Science centers and museums provide expertise in bringing the international science community and the public together. They offer a platform for people of all ages and backgrounds to explore, understand, and relate to recent scientific findings that affect the planet.
ASTC in Action...

Strengthening the Foundation and Building the Future Infrastructure for This Vibrant (and Valued) Field!

Networking Opportunities and Professional Support

■ ASTC provides continuing and specialized professional education programs and communities of practice initiatives for members and the field at large.

■ ASTC hosts an annual conference, the premier professional development opportunity for the global science center field, for 1,700+ member and sponsor attendees.

■ ASTC publishes award-winning newsletters, magazines, and blogs to encourage dialogue and communication among members, sponsors, and the science center community.

■ ASTC offers professional tools to the field, including websites, webinars, and online forums such as ExhibitFiles.org for sharing ideas and researching topics unique to our members (e.g., “Where can I find an exhibit that explains the human genome?”).

Global Scope and Reach

■ ASTC serves as the voice of the worldwide science center and museum field at global gatherings.

■ ASTC works closely with the UN, UNESCO, and other organizations to create new platforms where informed citizens and other international organizations work together to support evidence-based decision making about the global challenges facing our planet.

■ ASTC helps develop and grow the international science center field by assisting in capacity building projects around the world. Projects have included organizations in Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Korea, South Africa, Argentina, China, and more.

A Collective Voice in Public Policy

■ ASTC equips members with an easy-to-use online advocacy tool so that they can be heard on key local, regional, national, and global societal issues that affect not only their institutions, but the communities they serve.
ASTC creates dialogue with policymakers and public officials, gaining the advantage of “strength in numbers.” Through direct interaction with all levels of government, ASTC and the science center field are “at the table” when key decisions are being considered on issues such as STEM, health, energy, and the environment.

Science Center and Museum Services

- ASTC plans, markets, and manages dynamic traveling exhibitions. ASTC has spearheaded over 200 traveling exhibition projects, collaborating with science centers and other organizations worldwide.

- ASTC provides a Passport Program that allows free admission benefits to science center members at more than 340 science institutions worldwide.

- ASTC acts, on request, as matchmaker, facilitator, and project manager between corporate sponsors and its member organizations to ensure satisfying, rewarding, symbiotic, and productive relationships.

- ASTC serves as a catalyst for STEM learning throughout the membership network.

- ASTC works with its members to develop programs and activities addressing the leading science issues impacting society today—energy, health, environment, agriculture, new technologies, etc.

Pipe Dreams. Ontario Science Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Youth Inspired Challenge (YIC)
Promotes innovation, creativity, and work outside the classroom

The Youth Inspired Challenge (YIC) was a result of President Obama and other world leaders’ commitment to strengthen STEM knowledge in kids and to give them the skills they need to be innovators of the future. More than 100 science centers and museums are participating by providing 2,095,000 hours of science enrichment and youth employment, just two years into the program. Over 73,000 children have benefited from this hands-on learning program and every young person involved is provided with the equivalent of nearly four weeks of full school-day instruction.

Learning Labs
Offers teens safe places to “hang out, mess around, and geek out”

Learning Labs help teens explore their personal interests while developing 21st-century skills like critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. Partnering with the Urban Libraries Council, ASTC introduced this innovative program to 13 of its museum members, who provide spaces where kids explore, express, and create using digital media.

When teens follow their passions and collaborate with others they become makers and doers, not just passive consumers. Digital media grabs the attention of young people and inspires them to stretch their talents and interests.

Major funding for Learning Labs is provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Earth Summit Rio +20
International voice for science centers and museums

ASTC was the voice of the worldwide science center and museum field at Earth Summit, Rio+20, in June 2012. Here we advocated the unique role of science centers and museums in educating the public about the complex science of sustainability in various ways:

■ Through the promotion of a declaration on the importance of public engagement with science as part of the UN strategy at a major UNESCO event during the Summit.

■ Through our partnership with the scientific community, discussing new solutions for the planet’s challenges based on scientific evidence at the “Planet under Pressure” conference, which convened in London in March 2012.
ASTC orchestrated 250 simultaneous events for the public connected to the conference worldwide.

ASTC organized 15 “twinning programs” by pairing youth on different continents to compare their local evidence of a changing planet and to discuss global solutions via teleconferencing.

**Girls RISEnet**

Empower, stimulate, and motivate minority girls in science and engineering

Girls RISEnet, a partnership between ASTC, the Miami Science Museum, and SECME, Inc., trains informal science educators to engage minority young women in exploring and pursuing science and engineering careers. More than 500 informal science educators have attended Girls RISEnet workshops. More than 720,000 girls have benefited from this program.

“Today, more than ever, science is emerging as an instrumental factor in decisions affecting stability, security, and improved quality of life for the entire planet. We have a responsibility to fuel that curiosity and to encourage it as a process of life-long learning.”

*Anthony “Bud” Rock, President and CEO, ASTC*
Join Us in Our Mission!

Eight Reasons to Become an ASTC Corporate Partner/Sponsor

1. ASTC members do REALLY cool projects with partners and sponsors. ASTC-member institutions are full of hip, intelligent, creative, and innovative superstars who know how to make science and technology fun and engaging.

2. ASTC members give you full geographical coverage wherever you want—regionally, countrywide, or globally.

3. ASTC, like many innovative companies, is committed to science literacy and hands-on, inquiry-based science learning.

4. ASTC strives to match sponsors with initiatives and members that support your corporate goals and objectives.

5. ASTC keeps administrative overhead low and performance high.

6. ASTC offers worldwide exposure for your company and a rich variety of PR opportunities.

7. ASTC places a high priority on measuring results, so you know the impact and importance of your valuable contributions.

8. ASTC is profoundly appreciative of the help provided by our corporate sponsors. Your support is not just welcome, it is NECESSARY to maintain the levels of excellence that our member organizations exemplify.

Endless Ways to Engage with ASTC:

- Be a catalyst for STEM learning.
- Deliver YOUR message on the importance of science in contemporary life.

Opportunities abound!

Support ASTC’s educational programs; sponsor traveling exhibitions; help promote community dialogues and citizen science projects; partner with ASTC to train educators; become a part of our mini-grants program; or become a sponsor at our Conference.

And much more that we haven’t even imagined yet!
“We look increasingly to science centers to be institutions of education and innovation as well as to serve as ‘wonder places’ where people can meet, share knowledge, and transform the way they look at the world.”

Lidia Brito, Director of the Science Policy and Capacity Building Division, UNESCO