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Association of Science-Technology Centers and National Girls Collaborative Project Join IF/THEN Initiative to Promote Women in STEM

*Science and Cultural Organizations Unite to
Empower Female STEM Innovators and Next Generation of Pioneers*

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 5, 2019—The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) and the National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP) announced today that they will partner with IF/THEN, an initiative of Lyda Hill Philanthropies supporting women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). [IF/THEN](#), built on the mantra that “if we support a woman in STEM, then she can change the world,” seeks to advance women in STEM by empowering current innovators and inspiring the next generation of female pioneers.

This first-of-its-kind coalition emphasizes that STEM is everywhere, essential to the success of all fields from entertainment to business, and that there is no better time to highlight positive and successful female professional role models to activate a culture shift among young girls and their potential of careers in STEM.

ASTC and NGCP will work with IF/THEN to increase representation of women in STEM fields, make positive representations of women available to informal STEM learning organizations, and inspire and engage young women to pursue STEM courses and careers.

“We’re thrilled to join IF/THEN, Lyda Hill Philanthropies, and NGCP to increase positive images of women in science across science museums and other science-learning institutions, making it easy for ASTC’s museum members to make further progress toward equity in gender representation in their institutions’ exhibits, content, and programs,” said Cristin Dorgelo, ASTC President and CEO. “The vision of IF/THEN and its partner organizations to inspire the next generation of women pioneers in STEM is critical at a time when we need new perspectives and novel solutions to be brought to bear in addressing global challenges and building our shared future.”

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IF/THEN page two

Though women constitute about half of the college-educated workforce in the United States, just a quarter of STEM professionals are female, and a lack of funding and visibility has caused female STEM professionals to receive significantly less credit for their work. This STEM gender gap has impacted perceptions of women in STEM, and trickles down to younger generations.

“We need more women scientists to put their stories out there so girls can see what they can be when they grow up,” said Nicole Small, President of Lyda Hill Philanthropies and Co-Founder of IF/THEN. “To ensure that current female STEM innovators are supported, and girls are exposed to the STEM role models they need, we must join forces toward this common goal. We believe that having diverse perspectives at the table is key to building a more innovative future, and if we work together, we can truly shift the culture to inspire the next generation of female world-changers. That is why we are partnering with ASTC and NGCP.”

“NGCP is thrilled to announce a new grant from IF/THEN to host a new digital asset library that features women scientists on NGCP’s FabFems platform so nonprofits can download content to leverage in their own media, websites, and other publications” said Karen Peterson, NGCP Founder and Chief Executive Officer. “Our members find it difficult to access affordable imagery of women actively engaging in a range of STEM activities. We will be harnessing the power of IF/THEN Ambassadors, capturing persuasive imagery, and curating a new library of freely available resources.”

About the Association of Science-Technology Centers

Founded in 1973, ASTC now represents nearly 700 organizational members that welcome more than 120 million people each year in more than 50 countries around the world. ASTC members include not only science centers and museums, but also nature centers, aquariums, planetariums, zoos, botanical gardens, and natural history and children’s museums, as well as companies, consultants, and other organizations that share an interest in informal science education. Through strategic alliances and global partnerships, ASTC strives to increase awareness of the valuable contributions its members make to their communities and the field of informal STEM learning. To learn more about ASTC and its members, visit www.astc.org.

About National Girls Collaborative

The National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP) is a network of organizations committed to informing and encouraging girls to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Through maximizing access to shared resources and strengthening the capacity of programs, the NGCP seeks to use the leverage of a network and the collaboration of individual girl-serving STEM programs to create the tipping point for gender equity in STEM. NGCP manages the FabFems platform, a database of women STEM role models and mentors, passionate about sparking girls’ interest in STEM, dispelling stereotypes, and expanding girls’ perceptions of their STEM career options. Through these initiatives and resources, the National Girls Collaborative helps move STEM towards greater equity. Learn more about the National Girls Collaborative and its programs at ngcproject.org.

About IF/THEN

IF/THEN is part of Lyda Hill Philanthropies' commitment to fund game-changing advancements in science and nature. IF/THEN seeks to further advance women in STEM by empowering current innovators and inspiring the next generation of pioneers. Rooted in a firm belief that there is no better time to highlight positive and successful female professional role models, IF/THEN is designed to activate a culture shift among young girls to open their eyes to STEM careers by: (1) funding and elevating women in STEM as role models, (2) convening cross-sector partners in entertainment, fashion, sports, business and academia to illuminate the importance of STEM everywhere, and (3) inspiring girls with better portrayals of women in STEM through media and learning experiences to pique their interest in STEM careers. To learn more, visit www.ifthenshecan.org.

About Lyda Hill Philanthropies

Lyda Hill Philanthropies encompasses the charitable giving of founder Lyda Hill and includes her foundation and personal philanthropy. Lyda Hill Philanthropies is committed to funding transformational advances in science and nature, empowering nonprofit organizations, and improving the North Texas and Colorado Springs communities. To learn more about Lyda Hill Philanthropies, please visit lydahillphilanthropies.org.

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