

Partnership Grants: legacy impacts

The Partnership Grants scheme is the Royal Society's flagship grant for UK schools and colleges working with students aged 5 – 18. It funds up to £3,000 to work in partnership with STEM professionals from academia or industry to run an investigative STEM project.

Whilst the financial support to run the projects and have a STEM partner engaged is an obvious immediate benefit of the grants, from our recent external evaluation we have seen evidence of grant holders benefitting from the scheme for years after the money has been spent.

The following is a summary of some of the key grant legacy areas identified:



1. Increased student enthusiasm and confidence

Head teachers and senior leaders highlighted visible increased confidence in students, and 94% of teachers reported that students became more confident about their STEM ability. 96% reported that students' willingness to get hands-on with STEM subjects, concepts and skills increased. Enthusiasm for STEM was reported as being generated directly by the project and remembered years after, with some reporting this enthusiasm having continuing effects years later.

"The project was run six years ago, and I still meet pupils who took part and that is what they talk about. The impact, in terms of engagement, on the whole school was huge."

2018 Grant holder



2. Career inspiration and aspiration

93% of teachers saw that students gained a greater understanding of STEM career opportunities from their STEM partner and/or the project. Just under half of teachers noticed an increase in students considering a STEM career after experiencing the project, with a few specific examples given of students changing their mind about their education and career choices in the future directly due to the project work.

"The Partnership Grants scheme has left a significant legacy at our school by bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world STEM applications... The collaboration with STEM partners has boosted our students' confidence, encouraging them to pursue STEM-related studies and careers."

2022 Grant holder



3. Embedded changes in curriculum and/or approach

Embedding changes in a school or college's approach, or even formally in its curriculum, was a real legacy identified by school and college staff that would continue to affect future cohorts of students. Many firmly believed that legacies of their project would become embedded, one way or another, in their school or college.

"It has altered our long-term curriculum planning and the hands-on STEM opportunities we provide our pupils."

2019 Grant holder

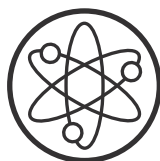


4. Continued use of equipment

Equipment purchased with grant funding often remained in use; sometimes for the same project, sometimes for activities that grew or were inspired by the original project, and sometimes even being loaned to other schools.

“The equipment purchased as part of the project has been incorporated into our curriculums and will be used for many years to come to increase and enhance the practical experiments we can carry out as part of some of our courses.”

2023 Grant holder



5. Creation of clubs, activities and other connections

Some schools and colleges reported the creation or continuation of clubs as a legacy or other ongoing opportunities, including engaging with STEM professionals and the community more, that resulted from the work carried out through the original grant.

“It generated contacts from STEM professionals that I have been able to call upon and use in different contexts for science-based learning in school, enriching the curriculum further.”

2021 Grant holder



6. Enduring teacher confidence

Another informal legacy was teachers confidently continuing to develop practice-based research experiences for their students, either by themselves, with colleagues, or possibly with ongoing partnerships.

“Taking part in the Partnership Grants scheme has inspired an enthusiasm for STEM across the school, with children engaged in scientific enquiry and teachers more confident in delivering hands-on investigations. It has also strengthened our links with local scientists, creating opportunities beyond the classroom.”

2021 Grant holder



Left:

Teacher and STEM partner running a STEM club as part of their grant legacy.

This information is summarised from an external evaluation that surveyed 141 lead teachers, 88 STEM partners, 50 Head teachers/principals/senior management, as well as a select number of in-depth interviews and a review of seven years of post-grant reporting.

If you would like to find out more about the Partnership Grants scheme and how to apply for your own grant, please visit **royalsociety.org/partnership** or contact the Schools Engagement team via **education@royalsociety.org**