



Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council
Guidelines for

STEM BEST® Program

Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers

Application Rubric for Returning (Previously awarded School)

Executive Summary: In 5,000 characters or less, provide an overview of the current state (reality) of your previously awarded STEM BEST Program(s) and details pertaining to your new proposal.

Administrator will ensure;

- All appropriate safety rules, regulations and standards of safe conduct and behavior are complied with in the practice and execution of this project if awarded.
- All appropriate licensure, credential, and background check rules, regulations, and standards of professional qualification protocol are complied with in the practice and execution of this project if awarded.
- All transportation-related considerations in order to accommodate all prospective participants in this program have been addressed by the project's leaders.

Question to be evaluated: Program Information 5 points	1.1 In 4,000 characters or less, explain how this proposal expands upon or is unique from the current state of your STEM BEST Program.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
5	Clearly and effectively identifies how the proposal expands upon or is unique from the previously awarded program, with specific examples and justifications. Response is well -organized, clear and logically presented, making it easy to understand the current program and the proposed expansion or uniqueness.
4-3	Clearly and effectively identifies how the proposal expands upon or is unique from the previously awarded program with some general examples and justifications. Response is organized, clear and logically presented , making it easy to understand the current program and the proposed expansion or uniqueness.
2-1	The proposal vaguely or not clearly explains how it expands upon or is unique from the previously awarded program, offering limited examples or less detailed justification . Response is somewhat organized but may be unclear or lack coherence in parts, somewhat difficult to understand the current program and the proposed expansion or uniqueness.
0	Does not identify how the proposal expands upon or is unique from the previously awarded program. Response is disorganized making it difficult to understand the current program and the proposed expansion or uniqueness.

Question to be evaluated: Program Information 10 points	1.2 In 4,000 characters or less, provide the goals and objectives of the proposed program and the action steps being taken to ensure those are met.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
10	The proposal provides a thorough and detailed description of the goals and objectives. Shows a strong alignment of the proposal with the goals and objectives of the STEM BEST Program, showing how it supports or enhances the program's mission. Response is well-organized, clear and logically presented, making it easy to understand the proposed program.
9-7	The proposal provides a detailed description of the goals and objectives. Shows a strong alignment of the proposal with the goals and objectives of the STEM BEST Program, showing how it supports or enhances the program's mission. Response is well-organized, clear and logically presented, making it easy to understand the proposed program.
6-5	Shows strong alignment of the proposal with the goals and/or objectives of the STEM BEST Program yet lacks a comprehensive connection or clear support. Response is somewhat organized yet lacks clarity and cohesion in parts, affecting the overall understanding of the proposed program.
4-3	Shows some alignment of the proposal with the goals and objectives of the STEM BEST Program yet lacks a comprehensive connection or clear support . Response is somewhat organized yet lacks clarity and cohesion in parts, affecting the overall understanding of the proposed program.
2-1	Shows little alignment of the proposal with the goals and objectives of the STEM BEST Program. Response is disorganized or unclear, making it difficult to understand the proposed program.
0	Shows no alignment of the proposal with the goals and objectives of the STEM BEST Program. Response is disorganized or unclear, making it difficult to understand the proposed program.

Question to be evaluated: Student Impact 15points	2. In 4,000 characters or less, identify the underserved groups in your community and describe the strategies for inclusion of these underserved groups in STEM (ethnic/racial minorities, students with disabilities, students of poverty, women in engineering and computational science fields, men in the health, life science and early childhood fields, etc.).
Score	Reason for assigning the score
15-13	Answer identifies a specific group or groups and provides a clear description of why that underserved population is targeted for this program. Response includes identification of barriers to service, and how those barriers will be addressed to support inclusion of the underserved. Identifies and states several specific strategies for recruitment and serving the identified underserved population. Strategies include the voice of the underserved population.
12-10	Answer identifies a specific group or groups and provides a description of that population that is underserved within that district/community. Response includes identification of at least one barrier to service, and how the barrier will be addressed to support inclusion of the underserved. Identifies and states at least one specific strategy for recruitment and serving the identified underserved population. Strategies include the voice of the underserved population.
9-7	Answer identifies a specific group or groups and provides a description of that population that is underserved within that district/community. Response includes identification of at least one barrier to service, and how the barrier will be addressed to support inclusion of the underserved. Identifies and

	states at least one specific strategy for recruitment and serving the identified underserved population. The voice of the underserved population is not included.
6-4	Answer identifies a specific group or groups and provides a description of that population that is underserved within that district/community. Describes general, not targeted, recruitment. The voice of the underserved population is not included.
3-1	Response is not specific to the community served in the proposal. The voice of the underserved is not included.
0	Inclusion is not discussed.

Question to be evaluated: STEM Curriculum 5 points	3.1 In 4,000 characters or less, describe how you will create and implement employment-driven opportunities that are multidisciplinary and involving community partners in the development of personalized learning to prepare students for future work based learning experiences, incorporating cross curricular standards and including college and career programs of many levels and types.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
5	Proposal describes the resources that will be used and/or explored for development and implementation of the STEM BEST Program. Concept used will have evidence of hands-on authentic learning opportunities versus a traditional sit and get. STEM BEST program activities position adults as facilitators much more often than as lecturers. Clear evidence that curriculum developed aligns with standards and industry needs.
4-3	Proposal describes the resources that will be used and/or explored for development and implementation of the STEM BEST Program. Concept used will have some evidence of hands-on authentic learning opportunities versus a traditional sit and get. STEM BEST program activities position adults as facilitators much more often than as lecturers. Some evidence that curriculum developed aligns with standards and industry needs.
2-1	Resources used and/or explored for development and implementation of the STEM BEST Program need additional detail. Lacking evidence of hands-on authentic learning opportunities, or clear evidence of traditional sit and get approach to learning. Alignment to standards lacks important detail.
0	Resources not described in enough detail to evaluate. Clear evidence of traditional sit and get approach to learning. No alignment to standards.
Question to be evaluated: STEM Curriculum 5 points	3.2 In 4,000 characters or less, provide evidence of alignment of planned curriculum and activities to your District's goals and improvement plans.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
5	The proposal clearly states how STEM BEST Program will align with School and/or District goals. The proposal articulates how the STEM BEST Program would meet the goals and articulates specific goals to be achieved.
4-3	The proposal states how STEM BEST Program will align with School and/or District goals. The proposal articulates how the STEM BEST Program would meet goals.
2-1	The proposal only states school/district goals but not how the STEM BEST Program would meet them. Or, the proposal only states the STEM BEST Program goals and does not connect them to School and/or District goals.
0	Evidence of alignment to district goals is not provided.
Question to be evaluated: Community Partnerships 10 points	4.1 Identify your STEM BEST community partner(s), including contact information, if the entity is a new or returning partner and provide a description on how each partner contributes to meaningful roles—such as mentoring, internships, instruction, or resource sharing. Refer to these diagrams linked here for examples of how a single partner may fulfill multiple roles or how several partners may contribute different supports. Proposals are not expected to cover all areas, but strong submissions will demonstrate deep, sustained engagement that aligns with the STEM BEST model and emphasizes quality over quantity.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
10	One or more partners are identified with complete contact information. The combination of partners fills most or all of the STEM BEST "roles" (e.g., mentoring, internships, instruction,

	facilities, etc.). Evidence suggests strong alignment to the STEM BEST goals with deep, integrated, and sustained engagement.
8-9	Partners contribute to multiple meaningful roles (4–6), with solid contact information and indications of active participation . These roles significantly enhance the STEM BEST model and indicate a quality collaboration, even if not every role is filled.
6-7	At least one partner is identified with moderate engagement (2–3 roles such as guest speaking, advising, or equipment sharing). Partnership is appropriate and beneficial, but may be limited in scope, duration, or depth.
4-5	Partner(s) is/are identified, but the value of the collaboration is low or unclear . May only involve one minor role (e.g., occasional speaker), or the roles are described vaguely. Suggests more of a surface-level or early-stage relationship.
2-3	Contact info is included, but there's little to no evidence of meaningful engagement in any specific roles. Contribution is passive, infrequent, or unrelated to the goals of replicating business/industry.
0-1	No contact info provided or the named partner has no defined role or value in the program. Indicates no real partnership exists.
Question to be evaluated: Community Partnerships 5 points	4.2. Please provide a letter of commitment from each identified partner that clearly identifies the commitment and specific role(s) in the STEM BEST® Program. A commitment document from each partner is required.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
5	Community partner(s) has/have acknowledged and approved of the partnership. Approval contains communication providing specific details in how the Community Partner(s) will be providing their support. Community partners contribution matches the language of the applicant. The role of the Community Partner(s) has them engaged in several different ways (refer to partnership graphic).
4	Community partner(s) has/have acknowledged and approved of the partnership. Approval contains communication describing how the Community Partner(s) will be providing their support. Community partners contribution matches the language of the applicant. The role of the Community Partner(s) has them engaged in several different ways (refer to partnership graphic).
3	Community partner(s) has/have acknowledged and approved of the partnership. Approval contains communication describing how the Community Partner(s) will be providing their support, but description lacks detail . Community partners contribution matches the language of the applicant.
2	Community partner(s) has/have acknowledged and approved of the partnership. Approval contains communication describing how the Community Partner(s) will be providing their support, but description lacks detail, or there are minor inconsistencies between partner narrative and application narrative .
1	Community partner(s) has/have acknowledged and approved of the partnership. Communication describing how the Community Partner(s) will be providing their support lacks important detail, and/or there are significant inconsistencies between partner narrative and application narrative .
0	Responses in this section provide evidence of a lack of communication or consent between applicant and community partner .
Question to be evaluated: Professional Development	5. Professional development (PD) must include both business partner support in working with youth as well as educator support in linking industry needs to educational content. To enhance PD, interdisciplinary teams, including business and education professionals, are encouraged. In 4,000 characters or less, describe how your program will meet these professional development expectations.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
10	Applicant has a professional development plan that addresses the needs of engagement of educators as well as community partners to plan and implement the proposal utilizing best practice. Opportunities are listed in detail citing source providing the professional development or specific location intended to visit for exploration.
9-7	Applicant has a professional development plan that addresses the needs of engagement of educators as well as community partners to plan and implement the proposal utilizing best practice. Opportunities described include source(s) providing the professional development and/or list location(s) intended to visit for exploration.

6-5	Applicant has a professional development plan that addresses the needs of engagement of educators as well as community partners to plan and implement the proposal, but there is an imbalance (ex: PD primarily engages educators and leaves community partners out or vice versa) . Opportunities described include source(s) providing the professional development and/or list location(s) intended to visit for exploration.
4-3	Applicant has a professional development plan that addresses the needs of engagement of educators or community partners to plan and implement the proposal. Clear imbalance (ex: PD primarily engages educators and leaves community partners out or vice versa). Opportunities are merely listed as potential source(s) providing the professional development and/or lists of potential location(s) intended to visit for exploration. Or, opportunities for PD rely on a single organization as the source of all training.
2-1	Professional development plan has significant gaps in one of the following: engagement, best practice, or sources.
0	Professional development plan has significant gaps in engagement, best practice, and sources.
Question to be evaluated: Sustainability 10 points	6. In 4,000 characters or less, detail the continuation of the program beyond the grant period including leadership/personnel, financial considerations and space to operate. This should include a plan for: - leadership/personnel, - financial considerations, and - space to operate program.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
10	Applicant accounts for all components of the continuation of the program addressing leadership and personnel requirements, financial considerations and space as well as operating needs in order to sustain efforts. Proposal describes a program that will have sustained efforts beyond the award period versus a project with an end point. If salary is included in the grant request, the narrative includes a well-defined plan to sustain staff beyond the award period.
9-7	Applicant accounts for all components of the continuation of the program addressing leadership and personnel requirements, financial considerations and space as well as operating needs in order to sustain efforts, but one element (leadership, personnel, financial, space, or operating needs) lacks important detail. Proposal describes a program that will have sustained efforts beyond the award period versus a project with an end point. If salary is included in the grant request, the narrative includes a well-defined plan to sustain staff beyond the award period.
6-5	Applicant accounts for all components of the continuation of the program addressing leadership and personnel requirements, financial considerations and space as well as operating needs in order to sustain efforts, but two elements (leadership, personnel, financial, space, or operating needs) lack important detail. Proposal describes a program that will have sustained efforts beyond the award period versus a project with an end point. If salary is included in the grant request, the narrative includes a well-defined plan to sustain staff beyond the award period.
4-3	Applicant accounts for some components of the continuation of the program addressing leadership and personnel requirements, financial considerations and space as well as operating needs in order to sustain efforts, but important elements are not addressed. Proposal describes a program that will have sustained efforts beyond the award period versus a project with an end point. If salary is included in the grant request, the narrative does not include a well-defined plan to sustain staff beyond the award period.
2-1	Applicant accounts for only one component of the continuation of the program (leadership and personnel requirements, financial considerations, space, or operating needs). It is unclear if the proposal describes a program that will have sustained efforts beyond the award period or a project with an end point. If salary is included in the grant request, the narrative does not include a well-defined plan to sustain staff beyond the award period.
0	Sustainability not addressed , or proposal describes a project with an end point and not a program with sustained efforts. If salary is included in the grant request, the narrative does not include a well-defined plan to sustain staff beyond the award period.
Question to be evaluated: Model/Disseminate	7. In 4,000 characters or less, detail possible strategies you'll employ for sharing the model with others (within your own school or district, with other schools and districts, other community partners, etc.) in Iowa.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
5	The proposal identifies and has multiple means of addressing dissemination of information to targeted audiences as well as community engagement.

4-3	The proposal identifies and has one to two means of addressing dissemination of information to targeted audiences and for community engagement.
2-1	There is not a clear plan for dissemination of STEM BEST information to audiences within and beyond the community .
0	Strategies for sharing information within the community and beyond is absent .
Question to be evaluated: Evaluation 10 points	8. In 4,000 characters or less, describe how the program will collect observational and qualitative data (e.g., through site visits, classroom observations, administrator and faculty interviews, student and parent focus groups, partner testimonials, etc.) and quantitative data (e.g., grades, test scores, numeric surveys, etc.). Please note that STEM BEST® awardees will be required to provide two years of follow-up reporting to the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
10	The proposal outlines plan for garnering qualitative and quantitative data to assess the Program as a whole as well as outcomes of students and community partners. There is evidence of how the data will be used for Program development and shared with others for the betterment of the Program as a whole.
9-7	The proposal outlines plan for garnering qualitative and quantitative data to assess the Program as a whole as well as outcomes of students and community partners. There is some evidence of how the data will be used for Program development and shared with others for the betterment of the Program as a whole.
6-5	Data gathering plans tell rather than show - proposal describes that qualitative and quantitative data will be gathered and shared, but does lacks important information about who, and how .
4-3	Plans are missing either qualitative or quantitative approaches OR the evidence for how the data will be used will either only benefit the program or only be shared as a part of the reporting requirements and not utilized for programmatic improvement at the state of local level.
2-1	Plans are missing either qualitative or quantitative approaches and there is no evidence for how the data will be used to better the program .
0	Response does not address evaluation strategy .
Question to be evaluated: Budget and Budget Narrative 15 points	9. Budget and Budget Narrative: Describe how your proposal will utilize the STEM BEST® award and meet the 2:1 cost share requirement.
Score	Reason for assigning the score
15-13	Budget for the award and cost-share accounts for expenses that are reasonable, allowable and consistent with the proposal narrative. Budget provided includes detailed description of how costs were determined. There is a clear plan for the utilization of dollars. The budget clearly aligns with what is proposed in the text of the proposal and expenses occur within the STEM BEST award period. Equal detail for grant and cost-share budget provided. (Add example)
12-10	Budget for the award and cost-share accounts for expenses that are reasonable, allowable and consistent with the proposal narrative. Budget provided includes detailed description of how costs were determined. There is a clear plan for the utilization of dollars. The budget appears to be in alignment with what is proposed in the text of the proposal and expenses occur within the STEM BEST award period. Equal detail for grant and cost-share budget provided. There are elements in the budget that are not addressed in the rest of the proposal narrative.
9-7	Budget for the award and cost-share includes enough information to communicate that estimated costs and expenses are reasonable, allowable and consistent, but lacks detail describing how costs are determined . Some elements of the plan for the utilization of dollars are unclear. The expenses identified in the grant request and the cost-share appear to be aligned with what is proposed and fall within the period of performance. Equal detail for grant and cost-share budget provided.
6-4	Budget for the award and cost-share includes enough information to communicate that estimated costs and expenses are allowable, but lacks evidence that costs are reasonable or consistent with the proposal narrative . Elements of the plan for the utilization of grant expenses or cost-share dollars are unclear. The expenses appear to be in alignment with what is proposed and fall within the period of performance.
3-1	Budget for the award and cost-share is unclear and lacking detail, but there is no evidence of expenses outside of the period of performance or not allowed.
0	There is evidence that proposed expenses or cost-share that are outside of the period of performance, or not-allowed (Ex: items already purchased, alcohol)

