

NASA STEM Engagement Council Charter

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The SEC is the agency's governance body accountable for strategic direction, planning, operational integration and oversight, assessment, and stakeholder management of NASA's comprehensive set of STEM engagement functions and activities, toward achieving the agency's vision, mission and goals for STEM engagement.

1.2 The SEC shall ensure a comprehensive strategy and coordinated agency-wide approach to develop and deliver the agency's STEM engagement efforts. This results in benefits to students, educators, educational institutions, and professional organizations while contributing to the development of a highly qualified future STEM workforce and the next generation of explorers with the technical skills needed to continue to advance NASA's mission.

1.3 The SEC is the agency's primary decision-making body on matters of STEM engagement and acts as the authority for the integrated agency STEM engagement portfolio, comprising all investments through programs, projects, activities and products implemented agency-wide. This includes vital, mission-driven contributions from mission directorates and other internal stakeholder organizations. The SEC is empowered to collectively direct NASA STEM engagement policies and investments.

1.4 The SEC is responsible for facilitating an agency-wide coordinated, collective and consensus-driven approach toward achieving the agency's vision, mission, and goals for STEM engagement.

2. APPLICABILITY/SCOPE

2.1 STEM engagement encompasses all of NASA's efforts to attract, engage and educate students and support educators, educational institutions and professional organizations. STEM engagement is comprised of a broad and diverse set of programs, projects, activities and products implemented by HQ functional offices, mission directorates and centers. These efforts collectively contribute to building NASA's future diverse STEM workforce, as well as provide opportunities for students, educators, educational institutions and professional organizations to contribute to NASA's mission.

2.2 Governance described in this charter applies to NASA HQ, mission directorates, functional offices, and NASA Centers. This language applies to the JPL, a Federally Funded Research and Development Center, other contractors, recipients of grants, cooperative agreements, or other agreements only to the extent specified or referenced in the applicable contracts, grants, or agreements. SEC governance entails decisions regarding direction of agency strategy, priorities,

policies, operational integration and oversight of efforts, and for issues requiring high degrees of integration, visibility, and approval. Regardless of position within NASA's organizational structure, SEC members or their officially designated alternates are accountable to the SEC Chair with respect to issues addressed by the Council. SEC members or their designated alternates are also accountable for providing the agency's leadership for STEM engagement and for driving the SEC's guidance and direction, including policies and procedures, within their respective organizations.

3. AUTHORITY

- a. 51 United States Code (U.S.C.) Sections 20112(a)(3) and 20113(a) of The National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.
- b. NPD 1000.0, NASA Governance and Strategic Management Handbook
- c. NPD 1400.1, Documentation and Promulgation of Internal NASA Requirements and Charters

4. GOVERNING COUNCIL AFFILIATION

The SEC reports to the EC. The SEC shall coordinate with the Communications Coordinating Council (CCC) to ensure alignment with the agency vision, mission and goals for public and STEM engagement.

5. FUNCTIONS

The SEC makes and supports decisions affecting the agency STEM engagement strategy, planning, operational oversight, assessment and stakeholder management.

Specifically, the SEC implements the following key functions:

5.1 Strategy

- a. Develops agency STEM engagement strategy.
- b. Recommends agency STEM engagement strategy to the EC and guides implementation.
- c. Approves an annual Integrated STEM Engagement Implementation Plan, including strategies and actions to drive contributions to the agency's vision, mission and goals for STEM engagement.

5.2 Planning

- a. Establishes criteria and priorities for the agency STEM engagement portfolio. Mission directorates and other funding organizations maintain authority over their investments.
- b. Oversees and assesses the annual planning cycle. The annual planning cycle defines the agency STEM engagement portfolio of priority programs, projects, activities and products.
- c. Approves the annual agency STEM engagement portfolio of priority programs, projects, activities and products.
- d. Advises and monitors the development of agency STEM engagement policies and guidance.
- e. Advises on development of STEM engagement communications plans in alignment with agency communications strategy.

5.3 Operational Integration and Oversight

- a. Establishes and approves functional working groups as needed to drive implementation of SEC strategic priorities.
- b. Provides collective oversight and coordination of the agency STEM engagement portfolio of programs, projects, activities and products. Mission directorates and other funding organizations maintain authority over their investments.
- c. Provides direction regarding implementation of agency STEM engagement policies, procedures and operations.
- d. Provides guidance and defines strategy for the agency's STEM engagement tools, platforms and capabilities to drive productivity and improve services.
- e. Provides input on STEM engagement plans for priority activities and initiatives entailing a high degree of integration and/or visibility.
- f. Approves major new STEM engagement initiatives that require a high degree of integration and/or visibility.

5.4 Assessment

- a. Establishes and monitors metrics and measures to assess the performance of the agency's STEM engagement portfolio.
- b. Utilizes the results of the annual assessment of the agency's STEM engagement portfolio to guide future STEM engagement planning.

5.5 Stakeholder Management

- a. Defines and approves strategies to most effectively connect with students, educators, educational institutions and professional organizations.
- b. Advises on the cultivation, development and sustainability of strategic partnerships with relevant external organizations.
- c. Advises on effective communication methods and resources used to share information with stakeholders and beneficiaries, and the promotion and coordination of current and planned STEM engagement programs, projects, activities, and products.

6. MEMBERSHIP

6.1 The NASA Associate Administrator (AA) for STEM Engagement serves as the SEC Chair and holds the ultimate decision-making authority for the SEC. The Chair shall be accountable for all requirements under this Charter. In the absence of the AA for STEM Engagement, the Deputy AA for STEM Engagement serves as alternate Chair and signatory. In addition, the Deputy AA for STEM Engagement shall represent the collective interests of the Office of STEM Engagement.

6.2 Membership in the SEC is either as a core SEC member, an extended SEC member, or an ex-officio member. All members shall be Federal employees. SEC core and extended membership shall consist of representatives from internal stakeholder organizations who are the most senior leaders accountable for relevant functions, or those that have a stake in STEM engagement within their organizations. Membership in the SEC is via appointment by each relevant organizational leader or Official-in-Charge. Each SEC member shall designate one alternate, or proxy, who has the authority and knowledge to act on behalf of the organization they represent, and are prepared to use this decision authority on behalf of those whom they represent at the SEC. Continuity and participation of members and their respective roles shall be maintained to ensure stability and the overall effectiveness of the council. The Executive Secretary is a staff function and serves as an ex-officio member of the SEC. Likewise, Office of STEM Engagement program representatives serve as ex-officio members.

6.3 Core members are required to attend all Council meetings. Extended members are invited to participate in Council meetings at the discretion of the Chair, and have the opportunity to provide input on decision packages but do not participate in polls to make decisions. Ex officio members attend all Council meetings, but do not participate in polls to make decisions.

6.4 The Chair may invite non-members who are Federal employees to attend the SEC. The Chair may close meetings to invitees at his/her discretion. The SEC Chair may also create sub-councils, boards or working groups composed entirely of Federal employees as necessary to

conduct the Council's business. These entities, which may include members and non-members, convene, deliberate, report, and disband under direction provided by the SEC Chair.

6.5 The Chair may also invite contractor employees to present relevant topical and/or analytical information to the SEC or its subgroups, and answer questions on and clarify information provided. Such contractor employees shall only attend segments of the meetings where they will provide topical and or analytical information and will not participate in discussions of the board or subgroup. The Chair may also invite contractor employees to provide logistical support, as well as professional facilitation services without expressing substantive views.

6.6 In instances where the SEC is considering decisions that affect STEM engagement programs, projects, activities or products funded by HQ, Mission Directorates or Centers, representation of the relevant core SEC member or other designated or authorized officials shall be present. The decision process requires input from relevant subject matter experts (SME) prior to finalizing a decision package. Decision packages will be consensus-driven, utilizing the decision rule whereby the Chair has final decision authority.

6.7 Instances in which the SEC cannot reach a decision, the issue shall be elevated to the NASA EC.

6.8 Core SEC members, or their designated alternate or pre-arranged proxy, participate in all Council meetings. Their attendance is mandatory. The following officials or organizational representatives serve as SEC core members and attend all SEC meetings:

- a. Associate Administrator for STEM Engagement (SEC Chair)
- b. Deputy Associate Administrator for STEM Engagement (Alternate SEC Chair)
- c. Mission Directorate representatives
- d. Center representatives
- e. Office of Communications representative
- f. Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs representative

6.9 Extended SEC Members participate in SEC meetings. To make most efficient use of extended SEC members' time and to enable effective decision-making, extended member participation in decisional meetings is determined based on agenda topics. Extended members have the opportunity to provide input on all decision packages in advance of decisions, regardless of the topic. The use of extended membership provides flexibility to the Chair to hold executive sessions with the sponsoring organizations (accountable for funding STEM engagement programs, projects, activities, and products) and implementing organizations (accountable for executing STEM engagement programs, projects activities, and products). The following officials or organizational representatives serve as SEC extended members:

- a. Office of the Administrator representative
- b. Office of Chief Technologist representative
- c. Office of Chief Scientist representative
- d. Office of Chief Engineer representative

- e. Chief Financial Officer representative
- f. Office of Human Capital Management representative
- g. Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity representative
- h. Office of the General Counsel representative
- i. Office of Chief Information Officer representative
- j. Office of International and Interagency Relations representative

7. MEETINGS

7.1 The SEC meets monthly, or more frequently at the discretion of the Chair.

7.2 The AA for STEM Engagement shall appoint an Executive Secretary to manage the SEC's activities. The Executive Secretary shall ensure all work is accomplished to facilitate SEC discussion and decision-making. Additionally, the Executive Secretary shall assist the Chair with advance preparation activities, coordinate meeting agendas, facilitate briefing preparation, distribute meeting notes and action items, and ensure that information and materials required for SEC meetings and deliberations is distributed to the members on a timely basis. The Executive Secretary shall ensure that information is also shared with the broader STEM engagement community of practice.

7.3 The Executive Secretary shall distribute a meeting agenda in advance of the meeting, as well as a publish a synopsis of each meeting, including actions and decisions.

8. DURATION

The SEC charter shall be subject to revalidation by the EC per section 9.

9. ASSESSMENT

9.1 The SEC shall assess the effectiveness of NASA's overall STEM engagement portfolio by using the metrics, measures and evaluation criteria as noted in section 5 of this charter. The performance and effectiveness of the SEC shall be assessed annually, including the following considerations:

9.2 Council Operations

- a. Conduct an annual assessment of council staff and member adherence to council charter.
- b. Conduct an annual assessment of council staff and member adherence to Council Operations Guide (to be developed within 90 days of charter approval).

9.3 Council Effectiveness

- c. Strategy: Evaluate the STEM Engagement Strategic Implementation Plan process and results.
- d. Planning: Assess the annual planning process and STEM Engagement portfolio.
- e. Operational Integration and Oversight: Periodically assess the effectiveness of operations, including the performance of functional working groups.

- f. Assessment: Annually assess metrics and measures as defined in sections 5 and 9.
- g. Stakeholder Management: Periodically assess the approach to connect with stakeholders and to build and sustain strategic partnerships.

10. RECORDS

10.1 The Office of STEM Engagement shall be responsible, through the SEC Executive Secretary, for maintaining all records associated with operation of the SEC.

10.2 The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining all records associated with the SEC, including this charter. The Executive Secretary shall publish a meeting agenda, as well as a synopsis, including notes and actions and decisions, for each meeting to a secure agency electronic archive, accessible by the membership.