



## Dear future Washington STEM CEO,

A relationship-builder. Chief culture amplifier. Strategist.

That's who we're looking for as our next chief executive officer. Supported by a strong executive team, skilled staff, and committed board, the next CEO will step into an opportunity to help build on our organization's successful track record and current trajectory, taking us to the next level. The CEO will lead with empathy and curiosity, helping to provide our team with clarity, inspiration, vision, and deliver results.

Washington STEM is a statewide education nonprofit helping to make systems work better for students of color, rural students, young women, and students experiencing poverty. We work to close critical gaps in postsecondary readiness, STEM engagement, and credential attainment so that all of Washington's students have the opportunity to embark on family-wage careers that lead to greater economic mobility. In our view, there is a time-sensitive moral imperative to this work and we are looking for someone who feels the same.

Washington STEM is an influential leader that plays a unique role in serving as a strategic, cross-sector, statewide convener. We bring together regional networks and community partners to address educational issues on the ground. We believe communities should own their own data, lead with community voice, and work to co-create local solutions. And we engage in advocacy by educating decision-makers on important issues. We take the lead on (or provide significant support for), state and local policy development, enabling lasting, equitable system-wide change.

Successful candidates will be comfortable serving as the public-facing mission ambassador and relationship-builder-in-chief. They will be able to work across the state and aisle to convene cross-sector partners in ways that help create systems-level solutions that are informed by and work for local communities. They will be a passionate advocate for education and STEM literacy as levers for long-term economic security. They will feel at ease attending community meetings in Yakima or Snohomish with K-12 educators and engaging with legislators and philanthropic partners in the Puget Sound. They will be fundamentally committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and to the ongoing work required to understand and undo institutional racism. They will lead, and mentor, with both their head and heart and know how to strike a balance between the two.

We recognize that no one candidate will have all of the experiences or qualities described in the job description. And we believe that experience can be gained in a variety of ways—professionally, through education, or lived. We're looking for a good and honest person, a skilled leader, thoughtful decision-maker, and someone who is excited to join a fun, committed, and thriving team ready to explore what the future holds.

Might that be you? If so, we'd love to talk to you.

Sincerely,  
Andy, Jenee, Migeo, Yoko  
*Washington STEM Executive Team*



Chief Executive Officer

*Opportunity*



# Chief Executive Officer

## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

By 2030, more than 70% of family-sustaining wage jobs will require education beyond high school in the form of a college degree, an apprenticeship, or a high-demand career credential. Of those, more than 68% will specifically require STEM credentials or STEM literacy. But our systems have not equitably or adequately prepared Washington students to take advantage of these opportunities. Today, only 40% of all students are on track to attain a postsecondary credential. Furthermore, students of color, rural students, girls and young women, and students experiencing poverty still lack access to these pathways—they experience systemic disparities early on and those inequities increase as they move through the education system.

Launched In 2011, Washington STEM envisions a state where race, zip code, income, and gender do not predict educational and career outcomes. They work from cradle to career across Washington with partners in every sector to identify and co-create systems-level solutions that remove barriers to education pathways and create more equitable access to STEM learning.

Washington STEM organizes its work through partnership, direct support, and advocacy:

**Partnership:** Washington STEM engages and supports 10 regional Networks, a STEAM Collective of Puget Sound partners, and other regional advocates across the state to identify issues, to use data and research to inform solutions, and to scale policies and practices. Each Network represents a diverse region, but all Networks strive to provide access to a high-quality STEM education, increased access to high-quality early learning, and better opportunities for postsecondary pathways for all their students.

**Direct Support:** Washington STEM provides targeted community investments, co-created and open-source data and measurement tools, and technical partnership in the form of strategic plan development and implementation, cycles of learning and improvement, and models of scale.

**Advocacy:** Washington STEM identifies and champions transformative policy and agency solutions through educating decision and policy makers at the state level and storytelling focused on equity and systems change.

## GOALS + PROGRAMS

Washington STEM has three primary programmatic areas—Early Learning, K-12 STEM education, and Career Pathways— and they deploy resources through partnership, direct support, and advocacy to drive systemic changes that will benefit students and young adults in their priority populations.

The high-level goals in the current three-year strategic plan are as follows:

- Ensure partners have the tools, data, and funding needed to identify and scale local solutions to root causes of systemic inequities.
- Identify, alongside partners, high-leverage legislative and executive branch policy changes that will enable their work and support a broad coalition of advocates to push for and enact those policies.
- Help build an early learning system, through regional goals and early STEM investments, that will ensure that, by 2030, children entering kindergarten are STEM-ready.
- Support K-12 schools and districts in their capacity to provide relevant and aligned STEM teaching and learning, with specific improvements to STEM infrastructure, STEM teaching workforce, and

rigorous coursework for students.

- Improve and align policies that create education pathways from K-12 to career, leading to high-demand, family-wage jobs, and workforce development in every region of the state.

### **Early Learning**

Early childhood is a period of profound development with [90% of brain development occurring before kindergarten](#). Yet, despite this, access to quality early learning varies dramatically, and many children, particularly those in Washington STEM’s priority populations, are discouraged from future participation in STEM before they even reach kindergarten. The importance of early learning is particularly pronounced in mathematics which can be [predictive of later learning outcome](#). Washington STEM works with early learning leaders and partners across the state to understand and increase access to, and availability of, high-quality child care and culturally-sustaining math supports for adults/parents/guardians and child care providers.

### **K-12 STEM**

[A strong K-12 STEM](#) experience is a critical component to ensuring young Washingtonians are prepared for multiple viable career pathways of their choice. Core to this work is the Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) program, a partnership with 10 regional alliances that offers leadership and technical assistance to K-12 STEM education leaders. The K-12 portfolio also includes the High School to Postsecondary Project (H2P), a train-the-trainer model that builds capacity within high schools to strengthen direct enrollment in postsecondary education. We are also working with our partners to identify opportunities to bolster the STEM teacher workforce.

### **Career Pathways**

A robust cross-sector career pathways system is key to preparing students for careers that provide family-sustaining wages. Students in strong career pathways are better positioned to access careers that provide the economic security needed to contribute to the vitality of their families, communities, and local economies. There are many pathways to a career (e.g., apprenticeship, 2-year degree, 4-year degree, military service, etc.), and oftentimes opportunities are unique to certain regions. In order to build an equitable system, Washington STEM strives to ensure that career learning opportunities are communicated clearly, easily navigated, inspiring to students, and meet employer needs. A major component of the Career Pathways portfolio is the partnership with Career Connect Washington.

## **OPPORTUNITIES + IDEAL QUALIFICATIONS**

While no one candidate will embody all the qualifications shared below, the ideal candidate will possess many of the following professional and personal abilities, attributes, and experiences:

### **Leadership & Vision**

The next CEO will bring a strong vision for the impact that education, STEM literacy, and postsecondary pathways can have on the trajectory of students’ lives. Galvanizing cross-sector leadership among community, corporate, educational leaders, and policymakers to advance systems change, they will lead implementation of the 2022-2024 strategic plan. The CEO will articulate a clear path forward toward ambitious achievement, leveraging the organization’s first decade of work and charting a clear plan for the next arc in alignment with the strategic plan. They will clearly articulate how institutional racism, structural oppression, and the limited economic mobility that exists in rural communities impact access and achievement in STEM and will ensure equity is woven into the fabric of the organization’s work both internally and externally.

## **External Relations**

The CEO will passionately represent the organization's bold vision and be a strong advocate for education and STEM literacy as a pathway to economic mobility. They will build brand recognition and pathways for partnership and investment by representing the organization externally across education, corporate, public, philanthropic, and social sectors. With a passionate and authentic voice, they will be a strong advocate in state and national conversations regarding postsecondary pathways and STEM education, equity, and career pathways.

## **Organizational Management & Fundraising**

In partnership with the executive team, the CEO will lead and collaborate with a talented staff of 23 and oversee and contribute to an operating budget of \$6.7 million. They will uphold and continue to foster an organizational culture grounded in equity, trust, transparency, accountability, and clear communication. They will lead organizational efforts around developing a cohesive, organizational plan for continuing to advance Washington STEM further down a path toward anti-racist policies and practices. They will be a fearless fundraiser, one willing to proactively seek new funding opportunities and regularly partner with the fundraising team. They will bring a sophisticated approach to managing people through accountability, mentorship, and direct feedback. The CEO will leverage a strong business acumen to drive strategy and execution, maintaining Washington STEM's momentum and ensuring alignment of staff and board around growth targets and goals. The CEO will embrace the strengths, commitment, and passion of the high performing team and build collaboration and synergy toward a shared vision.

## **Board Relations & Governance**

In collaboration with the board chair, the CEO will facilitate board alignment on key decisions and strategic direction. They will partner with the board to create opportunities for engagement, leveraging their diverse personal and professional background, experiences, and relationships to ensure continued growth of Washington STEM. The CEO will support effective board governance, ensuring continued leadership and representation by building a representative stream of new board members that leverages cross-sector and statewide relationships.

## **Network Partnerships**

In support of Washington STEM's Network partners and other key regional partners, the CEO will help identify and build relationships with stakeholders. They will foster frequent and consistent dialogue with relevant constituents to develop strong cross-sector partnerships through trust, respect, and engaging with transparency and equity-focused outcomes. They will embody and actualize an organization-wide commitment to working with and learning from Networks and partners, while co-developing strategies and sustainable funding models that lead toward strong investment and impact in STEM, and that reflect community needs and advance equity.

## **Policy**

The CEO will work with and across Networks and partners to advance a clear policy agenda in the legislature and educational system. During the legislative session, they will meet with legislators and legislative staff, provide testimony when appropriate, and leverage key relationships to guide and deepen the organization's policy influence. During the interim, they will work with and listen to partners across the state as well as agencies and organizations, to inform policy implementation outcomes and to feed into the legislative session goals and agenda. They will support and guide on strategic decisions and approaches to reach each year's policy and advocacy goals.

### Values & Management Style

- Powerful and clear communicator who values transparency and clarity.
- Ability to lead through a DEI lens, holding race and equity at the center of decision making.
- Collaborative leadership style and commitment to building internal leadership.
- Internal management style that fosters mentorship, accountability, respect, mutual learning.
- Transparent decision-maker who invites feedback and solicits information to make timely, data-driven decisions.
- Experience developing and nurturing cross-sector alliances and unifying, managing, and influencing diverse stakeholders toward collective impact.
- Experience effectively engaging a high-profile board of directors, coalition, or steering committee.
- Pressure-tested leader with the ability to make difficult decisions best for the organization.

**TO APPLY:** Please send a cover letter, personal equity statement, and your resume to Jill Nelson, Director of HR & Administration, at [HR@washingtonstem.org](mailto:HR@washingtonstem.org).

The salary range for this position is \$220,000-255,000 and includes a generous comprehensive benefits package. Washington STEM is currently working remotely Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays and in-office Tuesdays/Thursdays. The CEO will be expected to work collaboratively with the team in their Seattle office.