

Empowering Role Models to Broaden the Notion of STEM

October 22, 2025

IF/THEN®

CHAMPIONS NETWORK

The background is a solid teal color. It is decorated with various abstract geometric elements in a darker teal and a light olive green. These include straight lines, curved lines, and small circular dots. Some lines are horizontal or vertical, while others are curved at 90-degree angles. The dots are placed at the intersections of these lines, creating a network-like pattern. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and technical.

Welcome!

Share in the chat: What is one of your earliest memories with science, technology, engineering, and math?



Agenda

- Introductions
- Network Welcome & Goals
- Network Structure & Activities
- Empowering Role Models to Broaden the Notion of STEM
- Upcoming Network Opportunities



Emily Early
Senior Program Manager



Amanda Sullivan
Senior Researcher



Kata Lucas
Senior Researcher



The vision of the National Girls Collaborative Project is to **support and create STEM experiences that are as diverse as the world we live in.**

NGCP Resources:

- National Webinars
- Monthly Newsletter
- Website featuring research and statistics related to girls and women in STEM
- Partner Projects





Amanda Fisher
Assistant Director of Programs

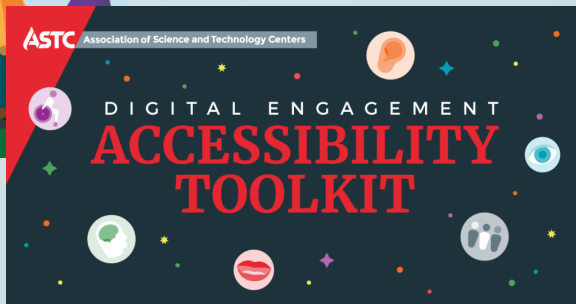


Shannon Sullivan
Senior Manager of Programs

ASTC **creates strategic opportunities, develops intellectual capital, and assembles resources** to support our members in realizing their missions and engaging their communities.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND POLICY MAKING

- Funding opportunities
- Annual conference and convenings
- Professional learning & development





IF/THEN® Champions Network

Goals

Join a growing movement of institutions and individuals **committed to advancing gender equity within STEM fields** via the IF/THEN® Collection.

The network goals are to **activate and grow a network** of museums and individual members that will champion gender equity work, support the overall goals of the IF/THEN® initiative, provide mutual support, and act as institutional resources for others.



The **IF/THEN® Collection** is the largest free resource of its kind dedicated to increasing access to authentic and relatable images of real women in STEM.

The Collection is part of the [IF/THEN®](#) Initiative, a national effort sponsored by [Lyda Hill Philanthropies®](#) to inspire young girls to pursue STEM careers while creating a culture shift in how the world perceives women in STEM.



Membership Levels

Individual



For **educators, exhibit developers, and others** who support the IF/THEN® initiative but may not be housed within an organization or who have not yet obtained an organizational commitment.

Individual members do not need to belong to an ASTC member organization or be in the United States to join.

Organizational



For **ASTC member organizations** in the US, including museums, science centers, and allied members.

Organizational members are required to complete the organizational commitment form. This is a high-level commitment that acknowledges the specific requirements that accompany organizational membership.



Member Activities

Webinars & Meetups

- Webinars: Oct 2025, more in 2026!
- Virtual meetups: More in 2026!

Suite of Resources

- IF/THEN® Collection, Project Library, Gender Equity Toolkit
- Media Toolkit
- LinkedIn Group

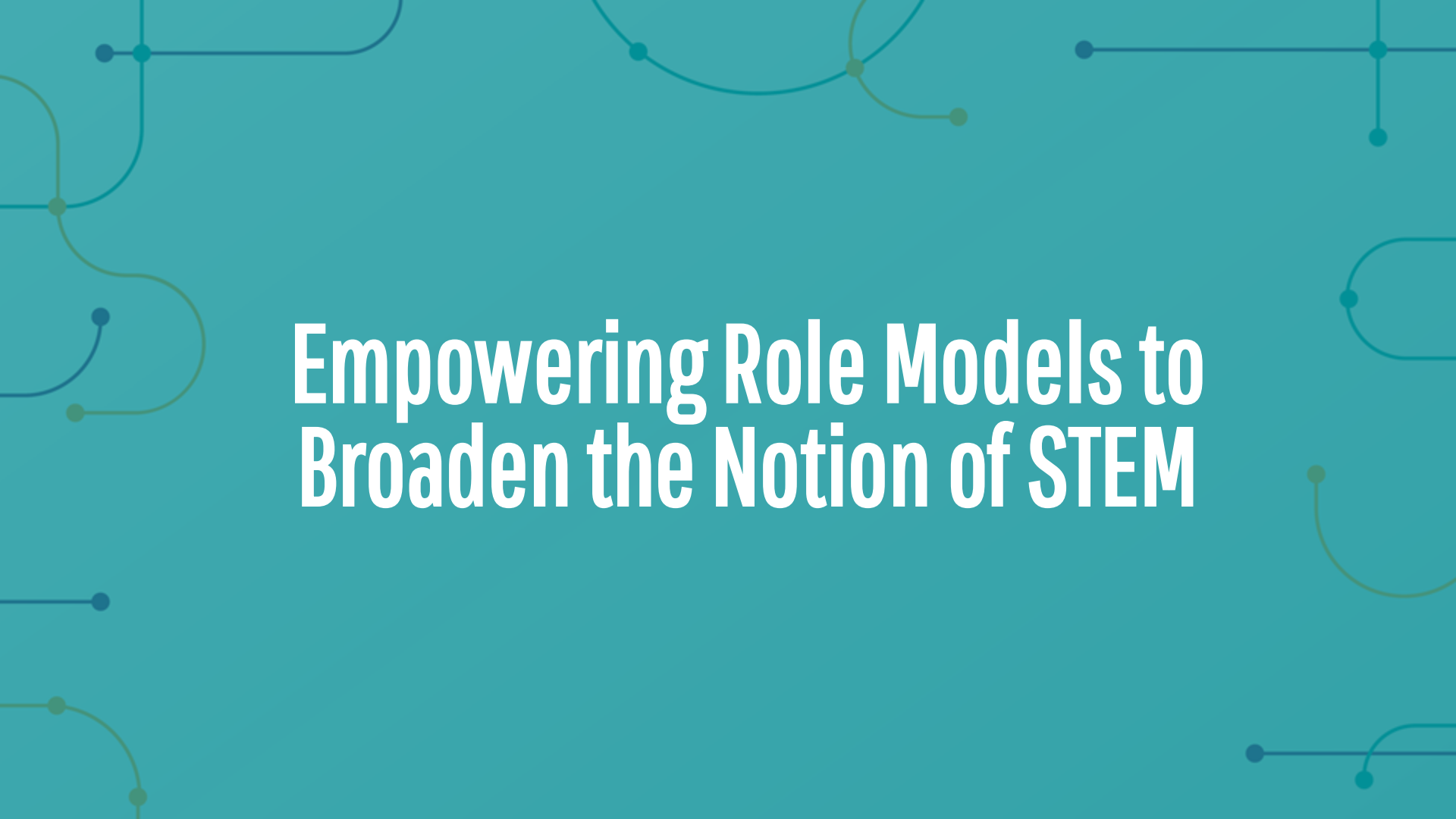
ASTC Annual Conference

- September 6-9, 2025, in San Francisco, CA
- Hosted a session, event, and booth

Email Communications

- Network updates
- IF/THEN® Collection highlights and updates
- Engagement opportunities



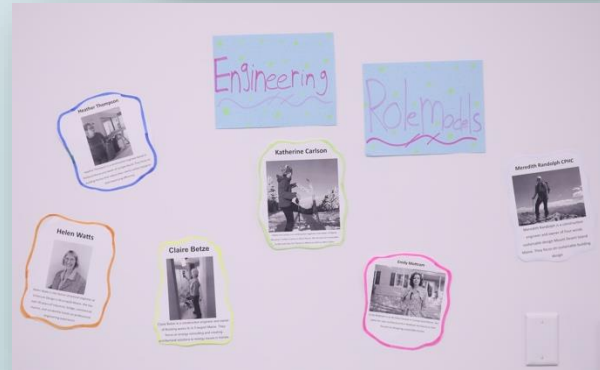


Empowering Role Models to Broaden the Notion of STEM

Role Models

“Individuals who can positively shape a student’s motivation by acting as a successful exemplar”

- STEM professionals
- Staff & volunteers
- Educators
- Peers
- Parents, family members, caregivers



Share other examples in the chat

Why Diverse Role Models?

- Make STEM personally relevant
- Break STEM stereotypes
- Broaden the notion of STEM fields and journeys
- Broaden the idea of who belongs in STEM
- Show how STEM is collaborative and social



What Characteristics will be Impactful?

- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Age
- Geography
- Ability
- Career Level
- Discipline
- STEM Story
- Career Pathway



What role model characteristics will be impactful for the girls you serve?

Share in the chat or use the raise hand feature

Create Girl-Centric Experiences

Get to know girls'

- Identities
- Interests
- Needs
- Experiences
- Prior STEM knowledge

Be mindful of assumptions and stereotypes, including those related to gender, race, class, ability, STEM, and learning.



Make STEM Learning Interactive and Fun

Learn about and with girls through conversation, games, and activities

- Integrate interactive elements to share your STEM story
- Ask girls questions
- Be prepared for a wide variety of questions from girls
- Talk about their work in age-appropriate ways



Share the Personal & Professional Aspects of your Journey

- Early life experiences
- STEM experiences and choices
- Hobbies and interests outside of STEM
- Successes, challenges, and perseverance
- Be mindful of implicit biases



Provides girls with multiple opportunities to connect, breaks STEM stereotypes, and broadens the notion of STEM

Broaden Stereotyped Beliefs

Explicitly

- Foster discussion of STEM stereotypes
 - Why do these stereotypes exist? Do you think they're true? How do they make you feel?

Implicitly

- Choosing books and media that showcase examples of diversity in STEM
 - Diversity related to gender, race, ethnicity, ability, career stage, field, and career pathway



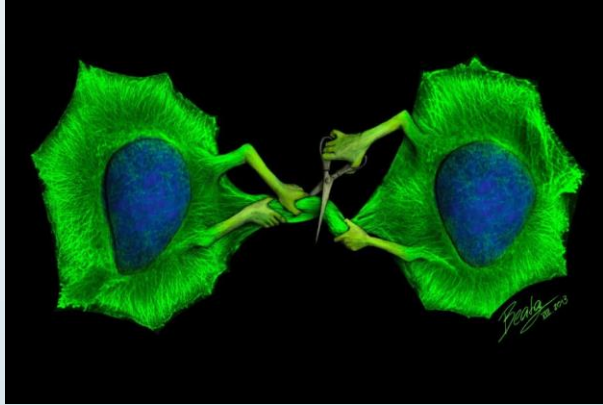
Be Mindful of your Messaging

- **Use positive messaging about STEM**
 - How do you talk about your own experience with math or science?
 - How do you talk about STEM professionals and fields?
- **Use positive message about learning**
 - How do you react when you make a mistake? Or, have difficulty figuring something out?
 - How do you talk about learning new things and skill development?



Role Model Beata Mierzwa

Molecular Biologist and Science Artist



Science art guessing game



Reflection prompts

"Don't let some outdated stereotypes get in the way of your dreams. For example, just because historically many scientists were male, it doesn't mean that women can't be amazing scientists too."

Educators, Volunteers, and Parents as Role Models

- Get to know girls and make STEM relevant
- Authentically share your STEM journey and lived experiences
- Share your hobbies and interests
- Recognize girls' ideas, interests, and skills
- Model a growth mindset: Learning is a process that involves making mistakes



**How might you integrate these strategies
as you prepare and collaborate with role
models in your work?**

Share in the chat or use the raise hand feature



Opportunities For Organizational Members

Activities Report

- Online reporting form to collect information from Organizational Network Members about the activities you have engaged in and resources you have utilized as part of the Network
- **Required** for all Organizational Members
 - One report per organization
- Please include pictures!
- **Complete by November 14, 2025**

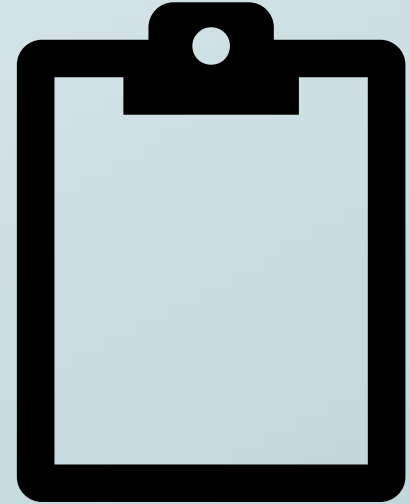


Exhibit Kit 1: This is What a Scientist Looks Like

- Select a **format** (pop-up banners, metal prints, foam core posters)
- Select **content themes** (Marine Biology, Ecology, Aerospace, Engineering, or Planetary Health)
- We print and ship directly to you
- Submit your request anytime this year. Requests processed within 3 - 4 weeks.



Program & Events Stipends

- Request one **stipend of up to \$750**
- Use funds to **showcase IF/THEN® Ambassadors through your programs, events, or spaces**
- **Submit your request** during one of these open cycles:
 - **Cycle 5:** Opens October 1, 2025 – Closes November 15, 2025
 - **Cycle 6:** Opens November 16, 2025 – Closes January 15, 2026



Opportunities for Organizational Members

Opportunity	Request by/Due
Welcome Kits	Anytime
Kit 1: This is What a Scientist Looks Like	Anytime
Program Stipend \$750	Anytime
Organizational Planning Sessions	Anytime, registration required
Kit 3: Hands-on exhibit kit	TBD, available mid 2026

Reach out to ifthen@astc.org with questions!





Resources and Upcoming Activities

Resources

Access resources at: <https://ngcproject.org/ifthen-champions-network>

- Links to IF/THEN® Initiative and Collection resources
- Instructions for requesting and downloading assets
- Media and branding guide
- Link to join the LinkedIn Group
- Details about upcoming webinars and an archive of past webinar recordings
- Details about network communications and an archive of past email communications



IF/THEN® Collection

Looking for resources to support gender equity in your classrooms and programs?

The [IF/THEN® Collection](#) is a free digital library with photos, videos, posters, and more, featuring diverse women STEM innovators – all available for educational and other non-commercial use. You'll find thousands of assets showcasing inspiring women whose jobs include training Olympic athletes, creating cosmetics, exploring space, working with animals, and designing everything from buildings and museum exhibits to prosthetics and medical equipment.

HOW TO GET STARTED

If you haven't already, please watch the [IF/THEN Collection](#) video. It's a quick overview of the site and our favorite resources. For more information, we recommend these entry points to find plug-and-play resources:

- **Activity Sheets** (www.ifthencollection.org/activity-sheets)
A compilation of all the puzzles, games, and hands-on educator guides and student activity sheets
- **Equity and Inclusion Assets** (www.ifthencollection.org/equity)
A curated set of assets for afterschool and summer programs focused on equity and inclusion
- **Educator Hub** (www.ifthencollection.org/educator)
A one-stop shop with ideas for using the Collection aligned with learning standards

CHAMPIONS NETWORK

Thank you for being part of the [IF/THEN® Champions Network](#), a new network for individuals and ASTC-member organizations interested in championing the [IF/THEN® Collection](#), the largest free resource dedicated to disseminating authentic and reliable images of real women in STEM!

In this email, we are sharing **new opportunities and resources** available to Champions Network members, including the opportunity to engage with other members at the ASTC Annual Conference in September, details about upcoming webinars, and more!



IF/THEN® CHAMPIONS NETWORK

Upcoming Activities

- **2026 Network Webinars and Meetups:**
 - **Webinars:** February 18 and May 13, 2026
 - **Meetup:** April 1, 2026
 - Calendar holds coming soon! Will be required to register in advance for each event.
- **2026 Annual ASTC Conference:**
September 16-19, 2026, in Phoenix, AZ – mark your calendar now!



Questions?

You can also email questions to
Emily Early at early@ngcproject.org

