

Mission Statement

The Science Outreach Initiative serves faculty and other researchers in the School of Arts and Sciences by helping develop outreach program ideas and proposals, locating potential partners, and promoting information and resource exchange among all of Penn's STEM outreach programs.

Catalysts for Establishing an Office

- Nearing the end of an NSF MSP grant, a potential loss of valuable community relationships and partners
- Desire to align efforts within the Natural Sciences Departments with **The Penn Compact: Increase Access, Integrate Knowledge and Engage Locally, Nationally and Globally**
- Concern for NSF BI requirements & competitiveness of Penn proposals

Organizational Structure

- Two full time staff, each acting as "point of contact" for half of the Natural Sciences departments
- Annual budget of ~\$185,000 including salaries and benefits for current staff members
- Funded 100% by SAS operating budget in 2nd full year of operation
- Physical office space located within the Physics and Astronomy Department, with additional weekly office hours held in the Biology Department

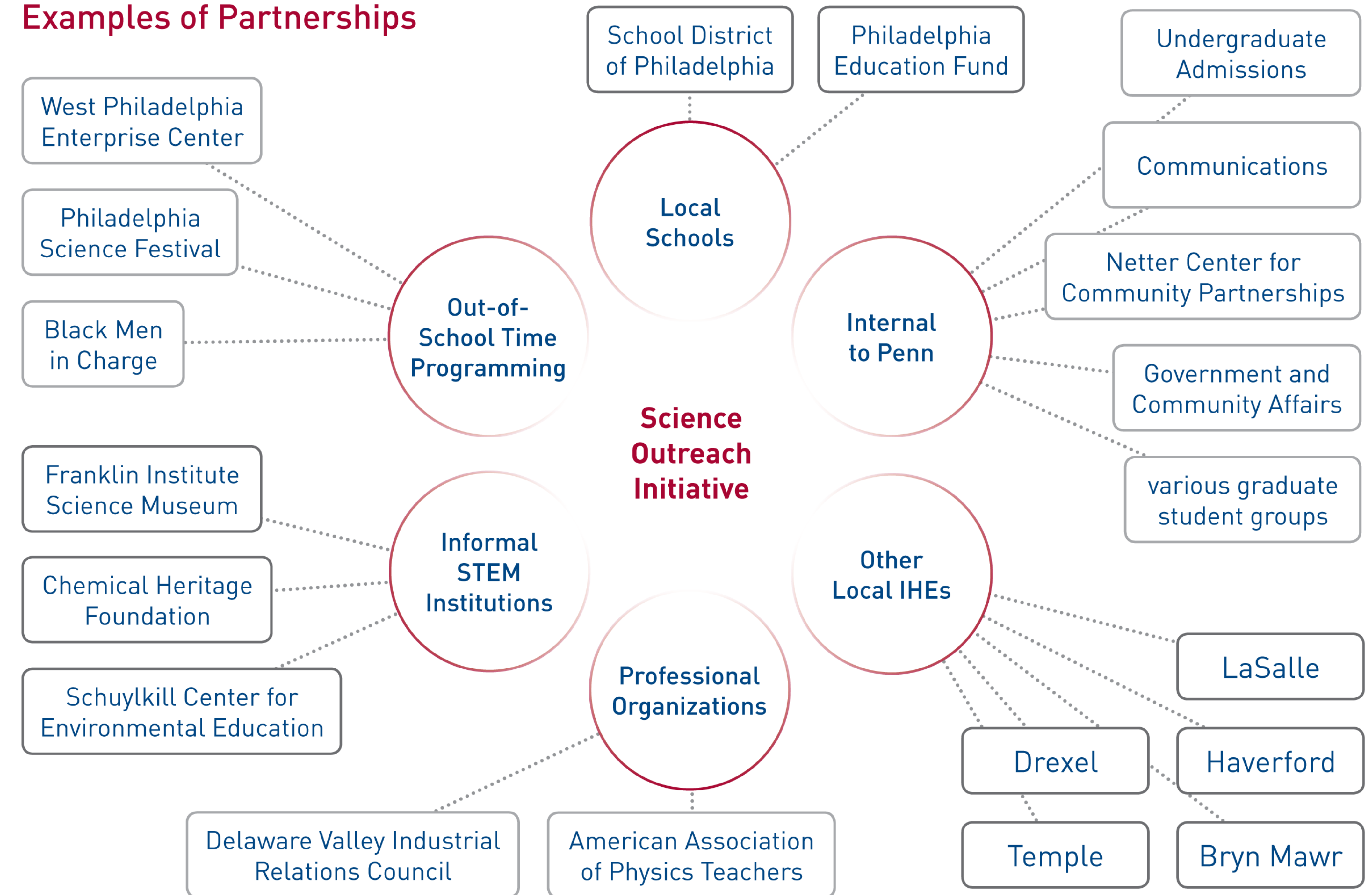
Development of the Office

- 2011 MAR** • Business plan developed and presented to SAS administration
- SEP** • SOI approved and goals/objectives established
- NOV** • SOI established, reporting to SAS Sponsored Research Office
- 2012 AUG** • SOI moves to Department of Physics and Astronomy, reporting to SAS Associate Dean for Natural Sciences, Richard Schultz
- 2013 SEP** • SOI hires Assistant Director, Kristen Coakley
- 2014 JUL** • SOI reports to new Associate Dean for Natural Sciences, Larry Gladney

Services for STEM Researchers

- Personal consultation with faculty, post-docs and graduate students on specific proposals
- Matchmaking between existing Penn outreach efforts and proposed research projects
- Development of innovative approaches to outreach
- Examples of successful Broader Impacts statements
- Up-to-date Information on NSF Broader Impacts Review Criterion
- Website with a searchable database of STEM outreach programs ongoing at Penn

Examples of Partnerships



Best Practices for Broader Impacts

- Maintain a broad network of STEM education contacts (K-12 teachers, museums and OST programs) eager to work with Penn researchers
- Regular contact with Penn PIs about grant opportunities and upcoming outreach events

Challenges We Face

- Financial insecurity - funding must be approved each year
- Researchers don't have mandate to use our services
- Juggling priorities, deadlines and workflow
- Easy to get distracted by new activities and opportunities
- Desire to return to some level of program implementation
- Instability in local urban school district

Contact Information

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