NEXTGEN STEAM

Funding & Partnership Starter Pack

Sleinad Foundation

EXPOSE. IMMERSE. EQUIP.

A funder-ready starting point built from the recovered NextGen STEAM program framework and current Sleinad Foundation direction.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A modern youth STEAM platform built on an existing program framework.

NextGen STEAM is a Sleinad Foundation youth-development initiative designed to expose young people to science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics through mentorship, project-based learning, career immersion and college/career readiness.

The historical framework includes career and college education, student assessment, ongoing mentorship, digital-skills instruction, resume preparation, project-based learning, on-site professional experiences, guest speakers and measurable youth outcomes. The current model keeps those foundations and adds AI literacy, responsible AI, automation, digital productivity, data, cybersecurity awareness and creative technology.

Flagship	NextGen STEAM Mentorship Lab - adaptable 8-week cohort
Short-form	Career Immersion Experiences - visits, panels, demonstrations and mentor sessions
Future-tech	Digital Futures Lab - AI and emerging-technology literacy
Institutional	Program Design & Implementation Services for schools, nonprofits and municipalities
Method	Discover → Expose → Immerse → Equip

2. WHAT WE CAN CREDIBLY SAY NOW

Source-backed program roots

- The working program name NextGenSTEAM appears in 2020 program materials.
- The original concept emphasized making STEAM fun, immersive and connected to careers outside students' normal exposure.
- Historical materials included mentorship, student assessments, STEAM majors/careers, college/financial-aid guidance, resume preparation, digital-skills instruction and project-based learning.
- Historical funding plans contemplated technology hardware/software, field trips, guest speakers/mentors, instructors/SMEs, outreach, program software/CRM, evaluation and staff development.
- In 2021, the framework was shared in connection with Illinois communities and school/community discussions.

Credibility guardrail: Do not call the program "piloted," "proven," or "previously delivered" unless Sleinad can document actual implementation. Current language should say the framework was documented, developed and expanded.

3. FUNDING CASE

What funding makes possible

People	Program leadership, instructors, mentor coordination, guest speakers and subject-matter experts.
Technology	Computers/tablets, software, AI/digital tools, learning platforms and project technology.
Exposure	Transportation, site visits, workplace/studio/lab experiences and career-immersion events.
Projects	Hands-on materials, student projects, demonstrations and showcase experiences.
Student readiness	College/career resources, resume development, digital productivity and mentor support.
Access & outreach	Student recruitment, community coordination, communications and partner engagement.
Measurement	Data collection, pre/post assessments, outcomes reporting and third-party evaluation when appropriate.

4. RECOMMENDED PARTNERSHIP MENU

A simple ladder from participation to full program support

Planning positions only - not historical commitments or final public pricing. Final amounts should be tied to the delivery budget for each school/community.

Partnership	Planning Position	What It Supports
Industry / Mentor Partner	In-kind or customized	Speakers, mentors, workplace access, project challenges, tours or professional demonstrations.
Program Supporter	Suggested starting point: 5K+	Project materials, student resources, events, mentor honoraria or transportation.
Technology Partner	Suggested starting point: 10K+	Devices, software, digital tools and the Digital Futures Lab.
Career Immersion Partner	Suggested starting point: 15K+	Site visits, transportation, guest experts and immersive career experiences.
Cohort Sponsor	Suggested planning range: 25K-50K+	Helps fund a complete 8-week cohort, depending on staffing, technology, transportation and project scope.
Expansion / Regional Partner	Suggested starting point: 100K+	Multiple cohorts, program infrastructure, staff capacity, evaluation and geographic expansion.

5. GRANT POSITIONING

Funding themes to pursue

Youth development and mentorship • STEM / STEAM education and access • College and career readiness • Workforce and future-of-work preparation • Digital equity and technology access • AI literacy and responsible technology use • Underserved-community opportunity and exposure • Out-of-school-time enrichment • Career-connected learning and experiential education

6. REUSABLE FUNDING LANGUAGE

Draft program abstract

NextGen STEAM is a Sleinad Foundation youth-development initiative that helps middle- and high-school students discover and prepare for careers in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics. The program combines individualized discovery, mentorship, career exposure, project-based learning and college/career readiness with real-world immersion experiences. Its current Digital Futures component adds AI literacy, responsible technology use, automation, data, cybersecurity awareness and creative technology. NextGen is designed to expand students' knowledge of career pathways, strengthen confidence and belonging, build practical skills, and help each participant leave with clearer next steps for education and career planning.

Short funder pitch

Many young people cannot pursue opportunities they have never been able to see. NextGen STEAM is built to close that exposure gap. We help students discover their interests, meet professionals, enter real work environments, build practical skills and connect those experiences to college and career plans.

Sample outcomes / KPIs

- Student completion and attendance rate
- Pre/post change in knowledge of STEAM careers and education pathways
- Pre/post change in confidence, belonging and career self-efficacy
- Number of mentor interactions and professional-exposure experiences
- Project completion / showcase participation
- Percentage of students completing a next-step education or career plan
- Student and parent satisfaction / reported value
- Partner participation and repeat-engagement rate

7. COHORT BUDGET FRAMEWORK

Build the budget from scope - not from an arbitrary number

Budget Category	Build Basis
Program leadership / instruction	Lead hours + facilitator/SME hours
Mentor coordination / honoraria	Coordinator time + mentor/speaker stipends
Technology & software	Devices + licenses + project technology
Career immersion	Transportation + admission/site costs + meals where appropriate
Student project materials	Per-student material allowance
Outreach / enrollment	Recruitment, communications, printing, community coordination
Space / event costs	Venue, insurance or equipment if partner site does not cover
Data & evaluation	Assessment tools, reporting, evaluator if required
Administration / indirect	Foundation-approved allocation consistent with funder rules
Contingency / accessibility	Accommodations, replacement materials, unplanned program needs

8. RECOMMENDED 30-DAY FUNDING LAUNCH

Turn the new site into an active funding pipeline

Week 1	Finalize leadership photos, branded domain, one-pager and cohort budget assumptions. Dad approves public positioning.
Week 1-2	Build a target list of foundations, corporate giving programs, local banks, technology companies, school/community partners and public funding opportunities.
Week 2	Create a concise sponsor email + partner outreach message using the one-pager as the attachment.
Week 2-3	Package one flagship ask: fund one 8-week cohort.
Week 3	Prepare a reusable narrative bank: need, population, program design, outcomes, evaluation, sustainability and organizational capacity.
Week 3-4	Begin outreach and grant submissions; track every lead, deadline, ask amount, next step and response in one pipeline.

Immediate decisions for Dr. Daniels + Alex

- Confirm the first geography/community for the relaunch.
- Confirm whether the first funding ask is a single 8-week cohort, a Digital Futures Lab, or both.
- Choose the working cohort budget once delivery assumptions are known.
- Choose leadership headshots and approve final public biography language.

- Decide which existing Sleinad relationships should receive the first one-pager.

Prepared from recovered NextGen STEAM / NDICA program materials and current Sleinad Foundation decisions. Historical budget figures were not reused as current costs.