



STEM-INSIGHTS Network and Unconference

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

About the STEM-INSIGHTS Network

What is the STEM-INSIGHTS Network?

The STEM-INSIGHTS Network connects individuals, groups, and organisations working in STEM education and engagement across Australia to strengthen program quality, impact and equity. It is a space to share experience, learn from each other, surface evidence and best practice, and improve how programs are designed, delivered and evaluated.

The Network focuses on understanding what works, for whom, and in what contexts - including for programs supporting low-opportunity and underrepresented communities.

What is the purpose of the Network?

The Network supports:

- Sharing practical insights, challenges, and examples from real programs.
- Co-developing usable tools, templates, and guidance.
- Connecting people across roles, regions, and program types.
- Making sense of evidence, evaluation, and on-the-ground experience.
- Ongoing learning through meetings, working groups, and communities of practice.

Who is the Network for?

The Network is open to people and organisations involved in STEM education and engagement, including:

- Program providers and delivery organisations.
- Funders and sponsors.
- Researchers and evaluators.
- Policy and sector organisations.

Whether you're brand new to the sector or an experienced leader, we'd love to have you involved.

What are the benefits of joining the Network?

Members can:

- Connect with peers and experts nationally.
- Access curated resources, tools, and case studies.
- Participate in events, workshops, and learning sessions.
- Share their own work and learn from others.
- Build evaluation and evidence-use capacity.

Is there a cost to join?

Participation in the STEM-INSIGHTS Network is free. Any specific events or activities will clearly indicate if there are associated costs.

How do I stay informed about upcoming opportunities?

You can stay informed by:

- Joining the [STEM-INSIGHTS Network](#).
- Subscribing to CSIRO Education and Outreach [updates or newsletters](#).

What happens when you join the Network?

Once registered to join the STEM-INSIGHTS Network, shortly after you will receive a welcome email and calendar invitation to join the next monthly STEM-INSIGHTS Network meeting.

What happens at monthly STEM-INSIGHTS Network meetings?

STEM-INSIGHTS Network monthly meetings bring together members of the Network to share updates, discuss emerging opportunities, and learn from each other's experiences. Meetings typically include presentations from Network members or guest speakers, spotlight examples of STEM engagement and evaluation practice, and provide opportunities for discussion and collaboration.

These sessions are designed to help participants stay informed about current activities, build connections across the STEM ecosystem, and identify opportunities to work together on shared challenges and priorities. Members are encouraged to contribute insights, ask questions, and share relevant resources with the group.

How do I leave the Network?

If you decide you no longer wish to be part of the Network, you can email Slnetwork@csiro.au to request to be removed.

About the STEM-INSIGHTS Unconference

What is the STEM-INSIGHTS Unconference?

The Unconference is a participant-driven, in person event where attendees collaboratively shape the agenda. Rather than a fixed program, sessions are proposed and developed by participants based on shared interests, challenges, and opportunities in STEM education.

How is an “Unconference” different from a traditional conference?

Unlike traditional conferences:

- There are no pre-set presentation slots.
- Participants co-create the agenda on the day.
- Sessions are interactive, discussion-focused, and collaborative.
- Everyone is encouraged to contribute, not just present.
- Participants co-create a clear set of themes or opportunities

What is the purpose of the Unconference?

The Unconference is designed to:

- Surface emerging challenges and opportunities.
- Facilitate peer learning and knowledge exchange.
- Spark collaboration and new ideas.
- Connect diverse perspectives across the STEM ecosystem.

Who can attend the Unconference?

The Unconference is open to members of the STEM-INSIGHTS Network and invited participants who are actively engaged in STEM education, evaluation, or related fields.

Are there any eligibility criteria?

While the event is inclusive, priority may be given to participants who:

- Are working in or alongside STEM education.
- Have an interest in evidence, evaluation, and/or impact.
- Can contribute to collaborative discussions.
- Represent diverse perspectives (e.g. sector, geography, communities).

Is there a cost to attend the Unconference?

In 2026, the registration fee is \$250 for the two-day event. This cost is heavily subsidised by funding provided by the BHP Foundation.

What time does the Unconference start and finish?

Registration and arrival are from **8:30am**, with sessions commencing promptly at **9:00am** each day.

- **Day 1:** 9:00am – 5:00pm.
- **Day 2:** 9:00am – 3:00pm.

We recommend arriving by **8:30am** to allow time for registration, networking, and settling in before the official start.

What meals are included in the Unconference?

Morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea are provided on all full event days. Breakfast, dinner, and any meals outside the scheduled event program are at participants' own expense unless otherwise stated in the event information.

Is there a bursary available to help cover the costs of attending the Unconference?

Yes, BHP Foundation funding has meant that we are able to offer a limited number of bursaries to help cover the costs of attending the Unconference. These are intended to support participants who may otherwise be unable to attend. Details on eligibility, what is covered, and how to apply can be found in the [bursary application information](#).

When do registrations for the Unconference close?

Registrations will close on **28th August**, or earlier if the event reaches capacity. We encourage you to register as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

Where is the Unconference held and is parking available onsite?

The Unconference is being held at Doltone House Jones Bay Wharf, 26-32 Pirrama Rd, Sydney NSW 2009. There is no parking available onsite. Parking costs are the responsibility of attendees and will not be reimbursed.

What public transport options are available to get to the venue?

Doltone House Jones Bay Wharf is well connected by public transport and is a short distance from Sydney CBD.

Light Rail: The closest stop is Pyrmont Bay (L1 Dulwich Hill Line), approximately a 5minute walk to the venue.

Train: The nearest major station is Town Hall or Wynyard, both around a 15-20minute walk or a short light rail/bus connection away.

Bus: Several bus services stop near Pyrmont Bridge Road and Harris Street, about a 5-10minute walk from the venue.

If you're travelling from Sydney CBD (Circular Quay, Wynyard, or Town Hall), the journey typically takes 10-20 minutes via light rail, bus, or a combination of walking and public transport.

We recommend using the Transport for NSW Trip Planner to find the best route from your starting location: <https://transportnsw.info/trip>

Accessibility: Pyrmont Bay light rail stop and surrounding paths are generally accessible, though some waterfront surfaces may vary.

Do I need to present to attend?

No. You are not required to present. However, all participants are encouraged to actively engage, share insights, and contribute to discussions.

What happens at the Unconference?

Typical activities include:

- Agenda-setting session (participants propose topics).
- Breakout discussions and collaborative sessions.
- Knowledge sharing and problem-solving workshops.
- Networking and informal conversations.

What kinds of topics are discussed?

Topics are participant-driven and may include:

- STEM program evaluation and impact.
- Equity and inclusion in STEM.
- Evidence-informed practice.
- Partnerships between schools, industry, and research.
- Scaling effective STEM initiatives.

Will outcomes be captured?

Yes. Key insights, themes, and resources from the Unconference are often documented and shared with participants and the broader Network. These outcomes will form a foundation for the Network going forward.

How can I contribute a session?

In the lead up to the Unconference, participants can:

- Propose a discussion topic or question.
- Suggest a collaborative workshop.
- Offer to share a case study or challenge.

You don't need a formal presentation - just an idea to explore with others. *Please note: On the morning of day one of the Unconference, topics for discussion will also be surfaced from the group.

What happens after the event?

Participants are encouraged to:

- Stay connected through the STEM-INSIGHTS Network.
- Continue collaborations that emerged during the event.
- Apply learnings in their own contexts.
- Share insights with their organisations and communities.

Will there be ongoing opportunities to engage?

Yes. The Network offers ongoing activities such as:

- Monthly meetings.
- Coffee Roulette.
- Webinars and learning sessions.
- Collaborative projects (through Network working groups or [Capability Enhancer](#)).
- Resource sharing and case studies.
- Future events, including additional Unconferences.

Who can I contact for more information?

For further information, please contact the STEM-INSIGHTS team via email Slnetwork@csiro.au or using the 'Contact Us' button on the CSIRO website.