

HIGH DESERT MUSEUM

W I L D L I F E *and* L I V I N G H I S T O R Y

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HIGH DESERT MUSEUM RECEIVES ONE OF FOUR NATIONAL STEMEx GRANTS
\$250,000 Award supports research on STEM-based science inquiry in museums and libraries

Bend, OR—How might experts' use of storytelling impact rural families' interactions during Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) activities? This is a core question that the High Desert Museum and its partners, Oregon State University - Cascades and the Deschutes Public Library, will research thanks to the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) \$250,000 STEMEx grant. The newly awarded grant (MG-77-16-0120) and one of only four nationwide – will examine how the processes of inquiry and problem solving are embedded in STEM-based education for children and families from diverse economic, social and cultural backgrounds, and with different levels of knowledge or understanding about STEM.

“Our long-term goal is to build the capacity for STEM learning in this region and support scientific literacy. STEM's interdisciplinary approach aligns with the Museum's mission and lessons from this project will help shape the museum and library fields about the integral role they play in their communities as educational program leaders and conveners.” said the High Desert Museum's Executive Director Dana Whitelaw, Ph. D. “Museums and libraries are well positioned to blend STEM education with other disciplines like art and history into our public offerings.”



The research team will work with High Desert Museum curators and biologists, university professors, librarians and other experts (the “eX” part of STEMEx) and families, to discover the most effective aspects of inquiry-based STEM practices. Outcomes from this project will inform museums and libraries about the integral role they play in communities through supporting STEM learning ecosystems, and ultimately establishing connections between school, work place, community and the global economy.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that, during the period from 2008-2018, employment in science and engineering occupations will grow by more than double, providing a robust job market for U.S. graduates.

About the High Desert Museum: Through exhibits, wildlife and living history, the High Desert Museum creates learning experiences to help audiences discover their connection to the past, their role in the present and their responsibility to the future. The Museum is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization that was founded in 1982. To learn more, visit www.highdesertmuseum.org.

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About the Institute of Museum and Library Sciences:

The Institute of Museum and Library Sciences is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 35,000 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit

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