Science and Technology Excellence Program (STEP)
May 26 - May 28, 2009
University of Michigan Ann Arbor Campus

Call for Participation

The University of Michigan ADVANCE Program, with support from the National Science Foundation, announces the third annual Science and Technology Excellence Program (STEP). Designed specifically for science, engineering, and mathematics departments, STEP will offer leadership training and support for teams of faculty to make positive changes in the work environment within their academic units. Approximately 20 teams from educational institutions across the nation will be selected to participate in an intensive, three-day workshop to be held in Ann Arbor from May 26 to May 28, 2009.

Like other programs sponsored by ADVANCE, STEP is guided by social science literature on unconscious bias, accumulation of disadvantage, critical mass, demographic and career issues facing women and underrepresented minority scientists and engineers, and the dynamics of effective cross-gender and cross-race alliances. The goal of the project is to equip teams to lead efforts within their home departments to improve departmental effectiveness and the environment for faculty, staff, and students. We are delighted again to be collaborating in this program with the University of Michigan CRLT Players, an interactive theatre program. Workshop topics to be addressed include:

- Organizational Change Principles
- Being Strategic about Change
- Assessing Incentives and Challenges

At the workshop, each team will develop a plan of action that they can implement in their home campuses and departments. The details of that plan, and the level of effort required, will be determined by each team individually. Plans will be made for efforts to take place within about one academic year. Comments from former participants are on the reverse side.

Schedule: The STEP 2009 Workshop begins with the opening session at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2009 and concludes at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 28, 2009.

Costs of Participation: There are NO registration costs for any team member. Travel and accommodation costs for two team members from each institution will be covered by the grant. Participating institutions must cover travel and accommodation for all other members of the team.

Team Composition and Commitment: Teams must include at least two and no more than four members from a single department at each institution. All team members must be able to attend the full three days of the STEP workshop and be committed to full participation in the team’s change project for the 2009-2010 academic year.

How to Apply: Applicants must send a letter of application, and the names and affiliations of confirmed team members who will be participating. The letter of application is limited to 2 pages and should articulate the team’s reasons for wanting to participate, their overall aim, and goals for the workshop.

Deadline for applications is March 2, 2009, with final decisions being made by mid-March. Space is limited and we encourage all teams to submit strong, well-considered applications. Applications should be submitted to:


Questions?

Inquiries about the STEP 2009 Workshop can be directed to the planning committee at the ADVANCE Program at the University of Michigan

• Phone: (734) 647-9359 • Fax: (734) 764-9533 • http://sitemap.umich.edu/advance/home • E-mail: advanceprogram@umich.edu
Feedback from the STEP 2008 Workshops

Post-workshop surveys indicated that:
- 91% of respondents viewed the workshop as somewhat (25%) to very effective (67%)
- 97% of the respondents indicated that their teams have now defined a goal for their change project
- 86% indicated that they have a workable strategy for initiating that change
- 81% of all respondents agreed that the workshop provided them with tools and knowledge that will help them be successful in implementing their change project
- 73% are planning on recruiting new members to their teams

Post-workshop comments from participants:
- “Thank you for accepting our application to participate in the workshop. It was a great experience and so far our team is working out better than we anticipated.”
- “This was a wonderful workshop. The staff was extremely helpful and encouraging. This is an especially valuable tool for our department because the team is young and these tools will stay with them for decades.”
- “We entered the workshop with a seemingly overwhelming task that we were not entirely sure how to ‘tackle’. Specifically identifying the issue we are working on, and then identifying the resources and barriers we have to work with was key to bringing the issue down to a workable level. The vignettes really illustrated ‘good’ and ‘not-so-good’ ways of presenting ideas to colleagues.”
- “The conference provided tools to make change in our department! In addition, we returned to campus energized and ready to talk to our colleagues and get to work.”
- “Scientists are not used to planning out their interactions with people. I now understand how useful this might be, even if I am not very practiced at it.”
- “Great mix of theory and practical application; excellent mix of knowledgeable presenters who were all on the same page.”
- “I found the STEP workshop to be very thought-provoking and effective. I have already found several applications (beyond the change project that we developed) for which this new “tool” in my toolkit would apply.”
- “I was rather impressed at how my team coalesced. One of our members was certainly a skeptic, and was less aware of the issues we chose to take on for our specific change goal. But, the structure drew him in very effectively.”
- “I strongly endorse this program as means by which to be taught how to be a change agent. The workshop was highly effective and thought-provoking.”
- “GO, and run don’t walk. It was extremely helpful in learning/considering strategies to implement change in departments, and also in labs, collaborations, and other arenas of life.”
- “The setting of having a workshop provides an environment for brainstorming among the team members, and the training in the workshop provides necessary tools required to formulate the strategy of change, and help members to be prepared on facing various potential impediments when implementing the changes. The CRLT sketches are especially enlightening.”
- “Overall excellent workshop. Go with a plan in mind. What goals are you trying to achieve by instituting this change? What are the needs of your Department with respect to the change plan?”
- “I questioned the usefulness of the STEP workshop before attending. But, your excellent work proved me wrong. Thank you all!”
- “We really enjoyed the workshop and feel more confident in our ability to carry out our change effort.”