

# How can funders and policy-makers support equitable informal STEM learning?



Informal STEM learning has considerable potential for engaging young people with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), but these experiences are not always as equitable as they could be.

## WHAT IS EQUITY?

**Equality (noun)** /uk-kwal-i-tee/  
Each individual or group is given the same resources or opportunities.

**Equity (noun)** /e-kwa-te/  
Recognising that everyone has different circumstances and provides the resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

The YESTEM project's **FOUR RECOMMENDATIONS** for funders and policy-makers are based on five years of collaborative research between practitioners, researchers and young people.

### 1. Ensure the principle of equity informs everything you do

Equitable practice is powerful when it is 'everybody's responsibility' and central to organisational systems and culture - not limited to special projects or individuals.

Use tools like the Equity Compass for funders to consider how and what you fund.

### 3. Create a culture where everyone understands and challenges power and privilege

Critical reflective practice is crucial for any professional who wants to understand, plan for and act in equitable ways.

Help informal STEM learning educators to use tools like the Equity Compass (practitioner version) and this free self-paced course.

### 2. Invest in meaningful collaborations between practitioners and researchers

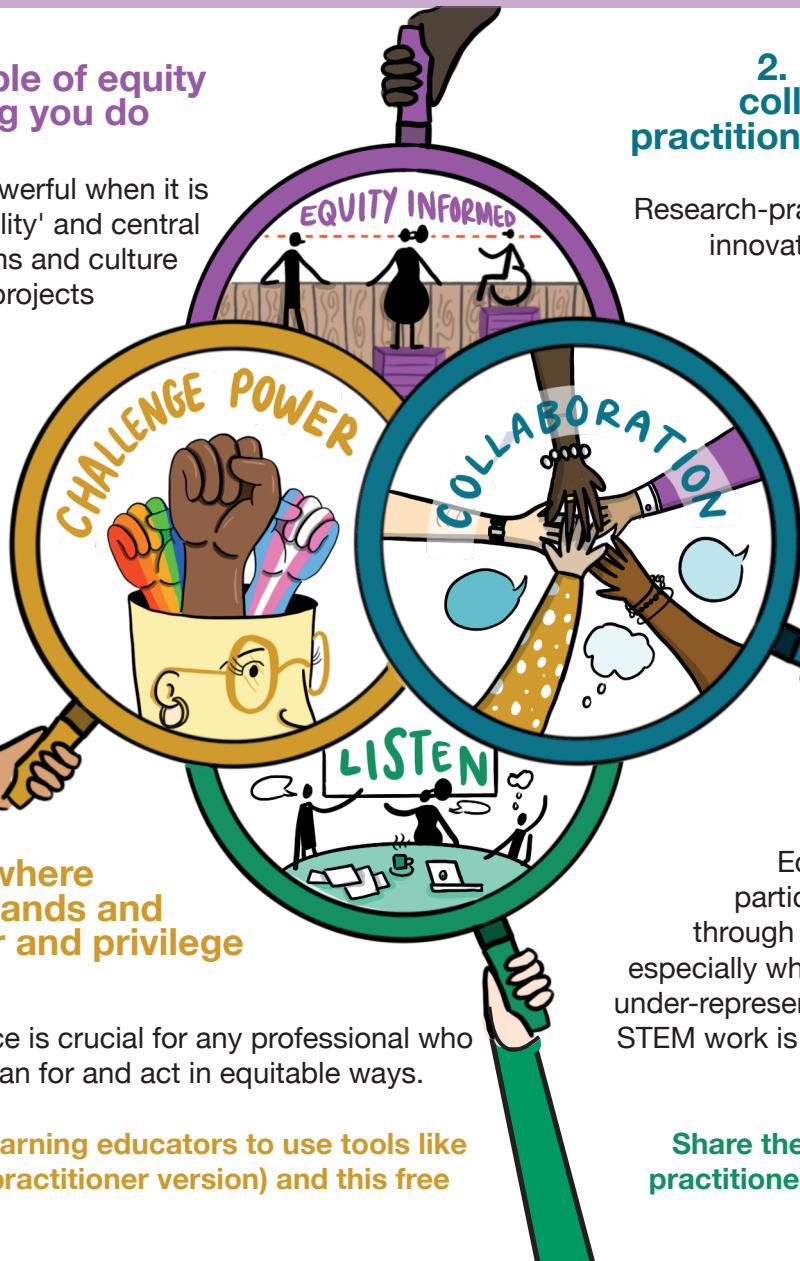
Research-practice partnerships support innovation and evidence-informed approaches.

Use resources like the Research-Practice Partnerships Toolkit and read about other Science Learning+ partnerships in the UK.

### 4. Listen to what people need

Equitable practice prioritises participants' voices and agency through participatory approaches - especially when working with youth and under-represented communities - so that STEM work is a vehicle for social justice, not an end in itself.

Share the YESTEM resources with practitioners, such as how to set up inclusive youth boards.



For more information about supporting equitable STEM learning, visit [yestem.org](http://yestem.org)

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