

# Rethinking K-12 Outreach for Broader Impacts

## Beaupre 105

Monday

Oct. 2, 2023

3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Room 105 Beaupre Center  
for Chemical and Forensic  
Sciences,  
University of Rhode Island  
Kingston, RI

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Nationally funded STEM research proposals are evaluated on the broader impacts of the project to ensure that federal funding is adding value to society not merely increasing the knowledge base of the research community (National Alliance of Broader Impacts, 2018). Diversifying and growing the STEM workforce has been an on-going priority in the US leading to funding opportunities that include community outreach programs to the K-12 education community. Oftentimes, the research design uses a 'translation metaphor' approach (Penuel et al., 2015). In the translation metaphor, scientists and engineers create materials which often include classroom visits, curricula materials, or teacher workshops with the intention of strengthening education and sparking students' interest in STEM career pathways. Penuel and colleagues (2015) call for a shift away from the translation metaphor towards a *joint work at boundaries* perspective. Guiding Education in Math and Science Network, GEMS-Net is a research practice partnership (RPP) between URI and 13 school districts throughout Rhode Island who are committed to continuous improvement in K-12 STEM education. This presentation will share how GEMS-Net has successfully supported proposal writing, helped to facilitate outreach activities, and evaluated educational outcomes so that the work is translational and sustainable, ultimately contributing to greater evidence-based impacts. Survey data collected from K-12 teachers will highlight "what teachers want" from University STEM professors. Discussions about how to partner with GEMS-Net or other educational agencies will provide concrete steps for writing your next proposal.