



DIVERSIFYING INNOVATION: OUR STRATEGIC VISION FOR CENTERING BLACK GIRLS IN STEM



JULY 2025

A LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Dear Community,

It is with great joy, deep gratitude, and unwavering conviction that I present to you the new strategic plan for Black Girls Do STEM. This plan is more than a roadmap—it is a declaration of our values, our vision, and our radical belief in the power of STEM to give us freedom and joy. It is a commitment to use STEM as a tool for radically changing our world and improving the lives of people: a pathway to liberation and a source of curiosity, creativity, wonder, and self-determination for Black girls.

Since the beginning, Black Girls Do STEM has stood on one core truth: Black Girls “DO” STEM—not as afterthoughts, but as architects of the past, present and future. And more than that, we believe they deserve to experience STEM as a space where they are free to innovate, to imagine, and to lead with joy.

This strategic plan reflects that belief. It was shaped by the lived experiences, insights, and hopes of the youth, families, educators, volunteers, and partners who walk alongside us every day. Together, we've built something transformative—and now, we're scaling that impact with bold intention.

Over the next five years, we are committed to:

Organizational Infrastructure & Culture: Catalyzing people power, living our values, and being who we say we are, Black Girls Doing STEM, where all forms of Blackness and womaness can exist and are invited to thrive as we collectively heal and reimagine first ourselves, then our children and finally our community.

Financial Sustainability & Development Strategy: Cultivating deep understanding of financial systems, tools, and investments to robustly build an organization that stands for generations to come, financially sound.

Program, Curriculum & The Pipeline: Creating strong systems for feedback, accountability and leadership for the community, our youth and alumni, to be the champions of this plan and beyond.

Strategic Partnerships & Ecosystem Building: Constructing a network of believers and hope dealers, with shared visions and open hearts to establish for our youth a region where they can have unburdened opportunities while radically reimagining and rebuilding their communities synonymous with how they might impact communities across the globe.

Our work is urgent. It is transformational. And it is joyful. At its heart, this plan is about *liberation*—liberating STEM from exclusionary practices, liberating our girls from the limits society places on their brilliance, and building a future where Black girls are free to thrive as their whole selves, boldly brilliant.

This vision belongs to all of us. To the 11 committee members that brought this plan together, thank you for your ideas and hours and your willingness to lend your brilliance and vulnerability to advance this mission and vision of Black Girls Do STEM. Now to our wider community, I invite you to read, reflect, and most importantly, stand with us as we move forward. Together, we can and we will see to it that Black Girls “Do” STEM.

With purpose, joy, and radical commitment,



CYNTHIA CHAPPLE
Founder & Managing Director
Black Girls Do STEM

INTRODUCTION

Black girls deserve to see themselves as future scientists, engineers, and innovators. Yet for too long, systemic barriers have kept Black women underrepresented in STEM fields. Black Girls Do STEM (BGDSTEM) is committed to dismantling those barriers. The organization was founded with the explicit mission to ignite curiosity and confidence in Black girls and to help Black girls discover their power in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

BGDSTEM creates something special: a learning space where Black girls can explore STEM through hands-on experiences that connect to their lives and communities. The organization doesn't just teach technical skills – it builds confidence. By connecting participants with positive role models who look like them and understand their experiences, BGDSTEM helps girls develop both the knowledge and the belief that they belong and in their capacity to lead, innovate, and succeed in STEM.

The organization's approach goes beyond traditional education. It focuses on building resilience and fostering a genuine love of learning through real-world projects and culturally relevant experiences. The goal isn't just to prepare Black girls for STEM careers; it's to empower them to become the leaders and changemakers these fields desperately need.

BGDSTEM dreams of a future where Black women are represented at every level of STEM, from research labs to corporate boardrooms. To make this vision a reality, the organization launched a comprehensive strategic planning process in late 2024. Working with consulting partners Amplify Equity and Reimagine Consulting, BGDSTEM brought together board members, staff, alumni, parents, youth, and community stakeholders to chart a path forward. Together, they've built a five-year roadmap that stays true to the organization's mission while ensuring it can grow and thrive for years to come.



ORGANIZATIONAL COMPASS

The first key step in Black Girls Do STEM's strategic planning process was a focused review and refinement of its mission, vision, core values, and equity pillars. Through an inclusive process, stakeholders collaborated to ensure these foundational elements reflected both the current direction of the organization and its future aspirations. Together, they provide a clear strategic compass and affirm BGDSTEM's core identity. The updated statements now serve as a north star, anchoring its work and guiding strategic decision-making through 2025 and beyond.

MISSION

Black Girls Do STEM ignites curiosity and confidence in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics by providing Black girls in every community with intentional hands-on learning experiences and opportunities to innovate, develop leadership, and shape a future where they thrive as STEM changemakers.

VISION

Black Girls Do STEM envisions a new normal where Black women are represented equitably in STEM, leading, and innovating with joy, confidence, and the power to solve global problems.

CORE VALUES

Scholarship

At Black Girls Do STEM, we rigorously engage in learning by doing. We embody the mindset of being lifelong learners and solution creators. With hands-on learning at the center of our model, not only will we provide scholarships to students through rigor, but also, we will also embody the same rigor, problem-solving, systems thinking mindset, and stick-to-it-ness we facilitate throughout programming.

Empowerment + Equity

At Black Girls Do STEM, we empower through exposure, as we learn by doing. We guarantee transparency in our processes, access to all, and deep listening to spur a culture of safe action, courage, and accountability. To have equity outcomes not just for our kids but for our entire organization. This requires us to correct in the spirit of love and growth and allow many opportunities for learning to happen.

Tenacity

At Black Girls Do STEM, we take risks to build skills; failing fast and forward, making sure we get the lesson from our learning. This is done through a culture of collaboration, self-awareness, and reflection. We cultivate this culture by learning new systems through research and putting them into practice through competency and trust.

Mentorship

At Black Girls Do STEM, we believe everyone and anyone can be the coach or coachee. We approach each other with the same curiosity that lives in our programming, working to lead and learn with and from each other.

EQUITY PILLARS

At Black Girls Do STEM, Equity is at the center of everything we do. Defining equity as the policy and practice of achieving positive outcomes associated with our program design for all Black girls in our program. We have outlined below our equity pillars:

Truth

At Black Girls Do STEM, we center equity by first centering the truth and history of the intentional anti-Black racism that has led to the stark underrepresentation of Black women and girls in STEM and others with marginalized identities.

Culture

At Black Girls Do STEM, we center equity by educating about Black inventors and innovators of the past and present, empowering girls and families to believe and understand the ingenuity of Black culture and how it has always been rooted in STEM. This is because we believe in the demystification of STEM as a practice, STEM is truly for all and has always been.

Identity

At Black Girls Do STEM, we center equity by allowing Black girls to show up as they are, as they see themselves to be, giving them space to explore and become their best selves.

Shared Power

At Black Girls Do STEM, we center equity by practicing power with and not power over. Allowing girls and families to lead alongside the program team, advancing the organizational mission, because Black Girls Do STEM is made up of all of us.

Skill Building

At Black Girls Do STEM, we center equity by focusing on the application of learning through hands-on instruction. We believe in a learn-by-doing approach, resulting in building both metacognition and 21st century skills.



ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

As BGDSTEM continues to grow its reach and deepen its impact, establishing a more sustainable and scalable organizational structure is a strategic imperative. As of 2024, the organization operates with a lean team, with most core functions directly managed by the Founder and Managing Director (the current organizational chart is below in Figure 1). While this centralized model has successfully propelled BGDSTEM through its early stages, it places an outsized burden on a single leader – creating potential challenges for long-term sustainability, strategic execution, and shared leadership.

Looking ahead to 2029, BGDSTEM is transitioning to a distributed leadership model that better balances strategic oversight with operational and partnership-focused delegation (Figure 2). The new structure introduces two senior roles (Chief of Staff and Chief of Strategic Partnerships). These roles, reporting directly to the Executive Director, are designed to alleviate bottlenecks, promote cross-functional integration, and strengthen leadership capacity across the organization.

The updated organizational chart also introduces formal advisory bodies, including a Curriculum Committee, Alumni Committee, and a Fundraising Committee, reflecting BGDSTEM's commitment to inclusive design, feedback loops, and community voice. These groups support key strategic functions while reinforcing the organization's values of shared leadership and collaborative growth.

This evolution ensures that internal operations, program delivery, and partnership development are aligned, supported, and scalable, without compromising the organization's mission or agility. By 2029, this structure will enable BGDSTEM to remain a responsive, values-driven organization while expanding its capacity to center Black girls in STEM through every program, partnership, and strategic decision.

Figure 1: Current Organizational Chart

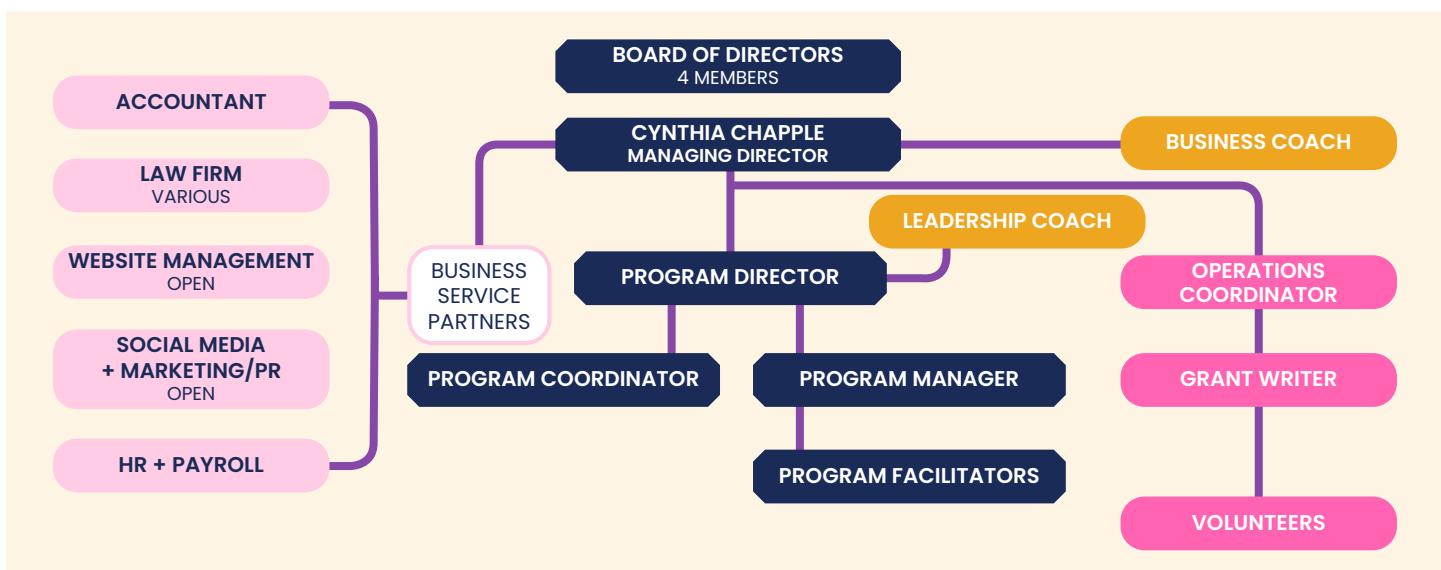
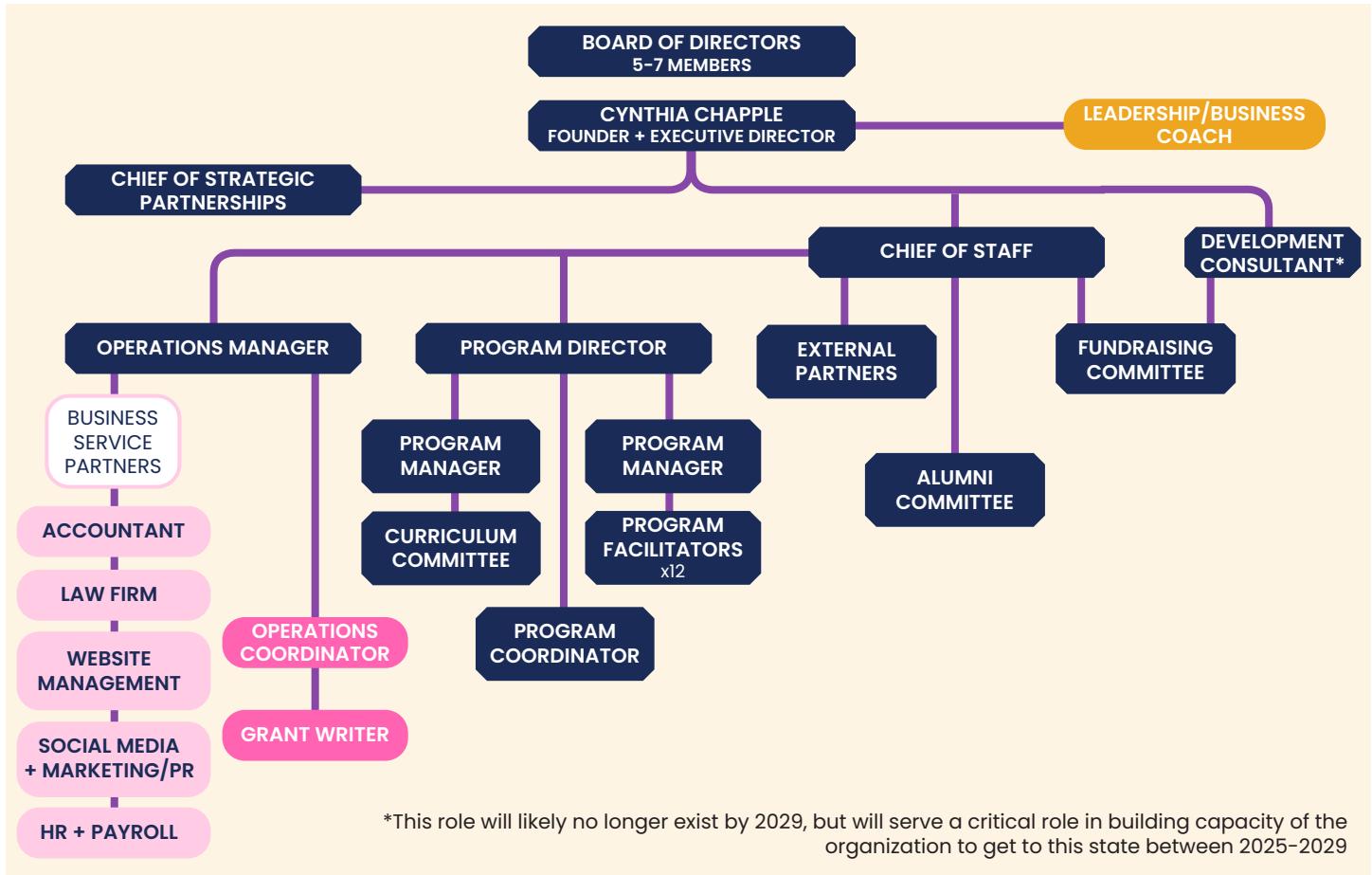


Figure 2: Proposed 2029 Organizational Chart



OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Black Girls Do STEM's 2025 strategic planning process was intentionally designed to be collaborative, inclusive, and grounded in the lived experiences and insights of those closest to the work. The process was launched with a robust organizational review that included an in-depth analysis of foundational documents, existing policies, procedures, and program plans. This document review provided critical historical context and ensured that all strategic decisions were built upon the foundation of the organization's first years of operation.

To center stakeholder voice, the consulting team conducted a comprehensive and stakeholder-driven data collection process. This included focus groups and interviews with BGDSTEM parents and family members, board members, staff, and community partners, along with a targeted youth survey to hear directly from current participants and alumni. These insights, alongside findings from the document review, were synthesized into a detailed SWOT analysis summary that captured organizational strengths, challenges, opportunities, and potential risks. This analysis (see [Appendix A](#)) became the cornerstone of the planning process, guiding the identification of strategic priorities and investment areas.

The consulting team then convened a Strategic Planning Workgroup (SPWG), a cross-functional team of 11 core stakeholders representing youth, caregivers, staff, board members, and organizational partners. Over the course of three facilitated sessions, the SPWG co-constructed the strategic plan through a dynamic and iterative process. The first session focused on aligning around a shared vision of success and surfacing areas for growth. The second session built upon this foundation to finalize strategic priorities and explore measurable outcomes. Between sessions, BGDSTEM staff completed an effort vs. impact matrix to help prioritize initiatives and guide phased implementation (see [Appendix B](#)). The third and final session was dedicated to action planning, which included the establishment of clear timelines, identifying responsible leads, and co-designing a roadmap that aligns with BGDSTEM's mission, values, and future aspirations.

The insights gained throughout this process, grounded in both qualitative and quantitative data, have illuminated not only the current strengths of the organization but also the bold opportunities for deeper impact and growth. With a renewed commitment to its mission of centering Black girls in STEM, BGDSTEM is poised to advance a strategic vision that is both community-informed and future-forward.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

Informed by deep community listening and reflection on the organization's growth and future potential, four strategic pillars emerged as priorities, being the most vital areas for investment and focus. These pillars reflect the insights of youth, families, staff, board members, volunteers, and partners, capturing what is most needed to strengthen BGDSTEM's foundation and expand its reach.

Over the next five years, these four strategic pillars will guide BGDSTEM's efforts to grow with purpose, deepen its impact, and remain rooted in its mission to center Black girls in STEM. Each pillar includes a set of focus areas and intended outcomes, which are further detailed in the pages that follow. Together, they form a strategic framework designed to support long-term sustainability, sharpen programmatic excellence, and ensure continued alignment with BGDSTEM's core values of Scholarship, Tenacity, Empowerment + Equity, and Mentorship:



These pillars represent more than just organizational goals. They are commitments to the BGDSTEM youth served and to the broader community it is building. Through this strategic plan, BGDSTEM is charting a bold, values-driven path forward. The following pages offer a closer look at each strategic priority, outlining the outcomes to be achieved, the action steps to be taken, and the metrics and timelines that will guide progress.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE & CULTURE



As BGDSTEM expands its impact, strengthening internal infrastructure is critical to sustaining its mission. A healthy organizational culture – one that is rooted in clarity, trust, and shared purpose – ensures that the day-to-day experience of staff mirrors the equity and excellence BGDSTEM strives to deliver through its programs. This pillar focuses on building a resilient, values-aligned internal system that supports staff retention, leadership development, and shared ownership. Key priorities include improving hiring and onboarding practices, embedding professional growth pathways, and establishing clear communication and people management systems. These efforts are designed to ensure agility, accountability, and alignment with BGDSTEM's long-term vision and equity commitments.

STRATEGIC PILLAR GOALS

- Cultivate a high-retention, mission-driven team within a supportive and clearly defined structure
- Clarify internal roles and processes to reduce bottlenecks and increase transparency
- Embed leadership development and career growth opportunities across all levels
- Institutionalize equitable policies, communication systems, and cultural rituals
- Foster a strong sense of belonging and commitment to organizational values across the organization

5-Year Outcomes + Metrics

Outcome	Key Metrics
Sustainable staffing model with distributed leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reach and maintain 75–90% annual staff retention• Increase average staff tenure to 2.5+ years by Year 3• “Portrait of a BGDSTEM Employee” finalized and adopted by Q2 of Year 2• 100% of roles filled by values-aligned staff as determined by updated hiring rubric and reference checks (alignment with the portrait above)
Shared leadership and career pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Internal leadership tracks and promotion criteria documented, approved, and accessible to 100% of staff by Year 2• 75%+ of eligible staff report awareness of career pathways and promotion opportunities in the annual engagement survey• Each core team member has at least one designated or rotating leadership role embedded by Year 2
Strong organizational culture and shared ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% of staff have individual goals aligned with team and organizational priorities, reviewed at least biannually• Implement at least 3 formal community-building practices (e.g., monthly pulse checks, quarterly retreats, cross-role rituals) by Year 1• 80%+ of staff report feeling valued and connected to team culture in annual survey• Staff appreciation structures (e.g., peer shoutouts, milestone celebrations) are implemented and maintained throughout all program cycles
People systems are fully institutionalized	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Onboarding, coaching, and feedback systems are codified in internal protocols and updated annually• 100% of staff complete onboarding within the first 90 days of hire and a uniform 12-month training program focused on culture alignment• Each staff member has a Professional Development Plan (PDP) with goals reviewed at least twice a year• The annual performance review process is completed for 100% of staff starting in Year 2



Timeline of Strategic Priorities

Within First Year



Track Employee Satisfaction



Align Hiring Practices with Organizational Values

Years 1-2



Enhance Employee Onboarding*



Hire Chief of Staff



Refine and Scale Professional Learning

Years 3-5



Implement a People Management and Coaching System



Succession Planning

*Detailed action Plan available in the Appendices.



Track Employee Satisfaction

BGDSTEM will lay the foundation for a robust employee satisfaction tracking system by launching an annual staff climate survey and establishing baseline data on engagement, retention, and alignment with organizational values. This initial feedback loop will help identify key drivers of satisfaction and areas for improvement, while modeling a culture of transparency and continuous learning. The organization can also introduce regular pulse checks (brief, quarterly check-ins) to monitor progress and ensure staff voices remain central to organizational decision-making.



Align Hiring Practices with Organizational Values

BGDSTEM will begin aligning hiring practices with its organizational values by revisiting job descriptions, interview questions, and selection criteria to reflect the mission, vision, and core beliefs of the organization. This includes developing tools to assess candidates' values alignment during the hiring process and providing training for staff involved in recruitment to ensure consistency and equity. By embedding its commitment to equity, inclusion, and community into every stage of hiring, BGDSTEM can attract and retain team members who are deeply connected to its purpose.



Enhance Employee Onboarding*

BGDSTEM will strengthen employee onboarding by evaluating its current process to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement. This includes standardizing onboarding components (such as role expectations, organizational culture, and key systems) and implementing structured 30/60/90-day check-ins to support new staff as they acclimate. A robust 12-month mandatory training series will be finalized and implemented for all staff. By ensuring all employees receive a consistent, values-driven onboarding experience, BGDSTEM can boost early engagement, clarity, and connection to the organization's mission.



Hire Chief of Staff

To strengthen internal capacity and advance culture-building efforts, BGDSTEM will begin laying the groundwork to hire a Chief of Staff. This includes clarifying the role's scope (focusing on organizational development, HR systems, and internal communications) and identifying the leadership qualities and values alignment essential for the position. By assessing current capacity gaps and securing funding or interim support, BGDSTEM can ensure the Chief of Staff is well-positioned to lead strategic initiatives that foster staff development, operational clarity, and a thriving organizational culture.



Refine and Scale Professional Learning

Over the next two to three years, BGDSTEM will refine and scale its professional learning offerings by developing a clear framework that aligns staff development opportunities with individual roles, growth goals, and organizational priorities. This includes identifying learning pathways tailored to different functions, incorporating feedback from staff to ensure relevance and impact, and tracking participation and outcomes over time. By investing in meaningful, mission-aligned development, BGDSTEM can foster a culture of continuous learning, build leadership capacity, and increase staff satisfaction and retention.



Strengthen People Management and Coaching System

BGDSTEM will review, refine, and update a people management and coaching system that supports staff growth, accountability, and well-being. This system (built over the first 2 years) outlines clear expectations for feedback, one-on-one check-ins, goal-setting, and professional development planning, ensuring all team members receive consistent and supportive guidance. During Years 3-5, BGDSTEM will ensure consistent implementation of this system by embedding coaching practices into the organization's culture, so that BGDSTEM can strengthen leadership capacity, deepen employee engagement, and cultivate a values-aligned team committed to shared success.



Succession Planning

To ensure organizational continuity and long-term sustainability, BGDSTEM will begin the development of a formal succession planning strategy. This includes identifying critical roles—including top executive leadership—mapping key responsibilities, and building internal pipelines for leadership through mentorship, cross-training, and capacity-building opportunities. The plan will also establish protocols for emergency transitions and long-term leadership development, reinforcing a culture of shared leadership and future readiness. By proactively planning for leadership transitions at all levels, BGDSTEM can safeguard institutional knowledge, minimize disruptions, and nurture the next generation of mission-driven leaders.

To operationalize this pillar, the SPWG has developed a detailed action plan for employee onboarding, included in [Appendix C](#). This plan outlines key milestones, quick wins, and equity-centered measures of progress to ensure new staff are welcomed, supported, and set up for long-term success. Similar implementation plans should be developed for other priority areas – including hiring, employee satisfaction, and internal capacity-building – to maintain momentum and track measurable progress.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY & DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



A strong financial foundation is essential to sustaining BGDSTEM's mission and scaling its impact. As the organization grows, it must invest in robust development strategies and sound fiscal planning that ensure flexibility, resilience, and long-term viability. This pillar focuses on building diversified revenue streams, increasing unrestricted funding, and establishing systems that align fundraising practices with BGDSTEM's values and community-centered vision. Core strategies include hiring development expertise, cultivating multi-year funding commitments, engaging families as fundraising partners, and piloting earned income opportunities. Through intentional planning and inclusive engagement, BGDSTEM will strengthen its financial infrastructure while deepening relationships with donors, families, and community partners.

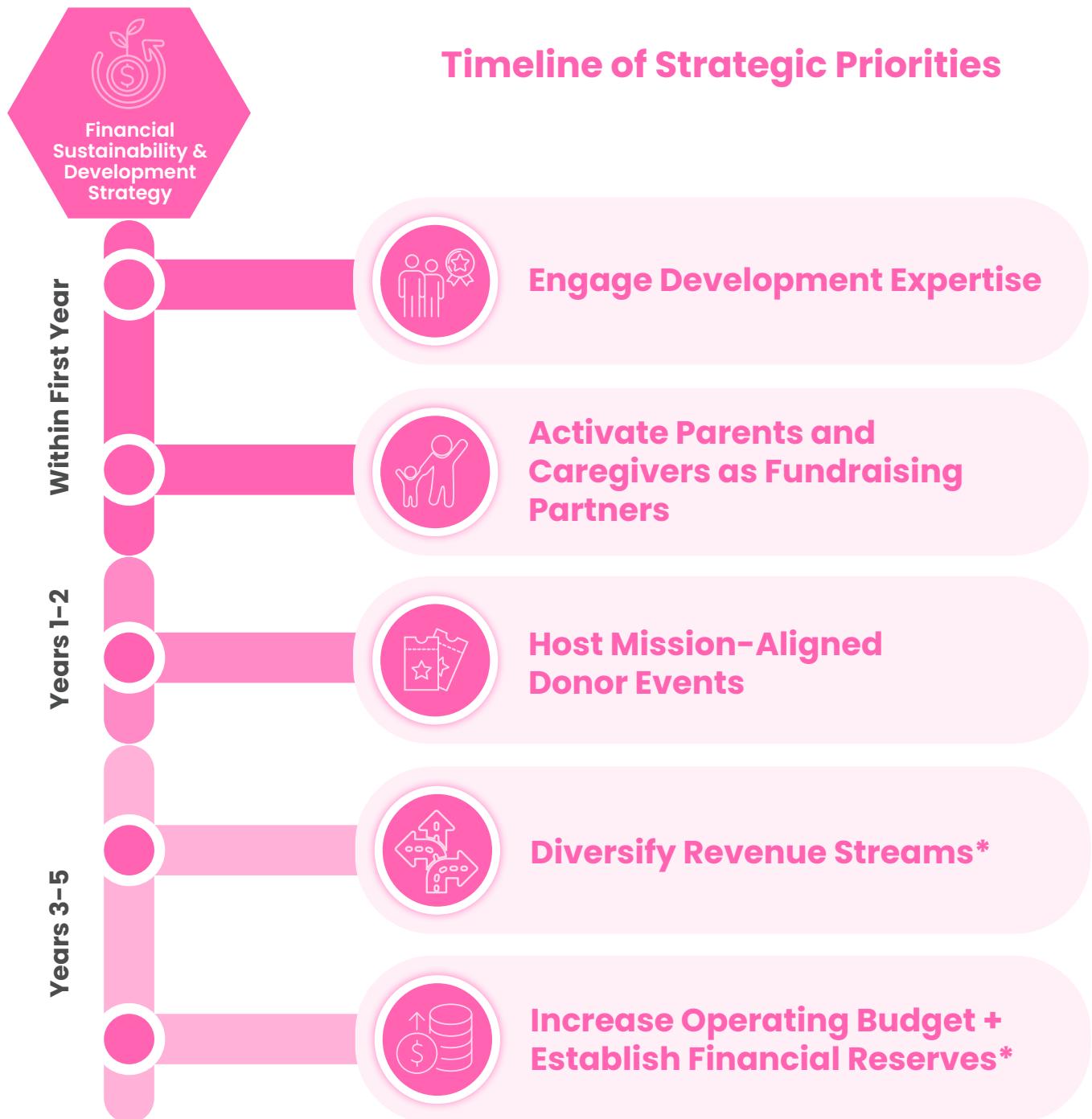
STRATEGIC PILLAR GOALS

- Build a resilient funding model that supports growth, innovation, and long-term sustainability
- Reduce reliance on short-term and restricted grants by cultivating diverse revenue streams
- Strengthen fundraising infrastructure and align donor engagement with strategic priorities
- Increase unrestricted revenue through mission-aligned events and community partnerships
- Establish financial reserves and assess long-term financial readiness

5-Year Outcomes + Metrics

Outcome	Key Metrics
Strategic Development Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contract development consultant or firm within 6 months of strategic plan launch• Pitch deck and sponsorship toolkit created and used in 100% of major donor outreach by Year 2• Donor communications strategy aligned to long-term funding goals and updated annually
Expanded Individual Donor Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grow individual donor base by 40% over 3 years and 60% over 5 years• Launch at least one new annual giving event by Year 2, generating a minimum 15% increase in unrestricted revenue• Establish three donor tiers/pathways aligned with strategic priorities by Year 3
Increased Financial Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete financial readiness assessment reviewed and approved by the board by the end of Year 2• Build a reserve fund equal to 6 months of operating costs annually, in alignment with organizational budget• Conduct an endowment feasibility study and report findings to the board by Year 2
Diversified Revenue Streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generate a minimum of 15% of total annual revenue from earned income sources by Year 5• Develop and offer 2-3 fee-based services for school partners by Year 3• Ensure 100% of fee-based programs include sliding scale or subsidized access options that are accessible to low-income families
Community-Driven Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Launch and sustain a parent/caregiver-led fundraising committee with at least 5 active members by Year 2• Identify and implement 2+ project-based fundraising initiatives annually by Year 3• Host at least 2 informal donor engagement events each year with participation from families, alumni, and community partners

Timeline of Strategic Priorities



*Detailed action Plan available in the Appendices.



Engage Development Expertise

To jumpstart a more strategic approach to fundraising and donor engagement, BGDSTEM will contract a development expert or firm with nonprofit fundraising experience. This engagement will support the refinement of development infrastructure, including donor cultivation strategies, campaign planning, and case-for-support materials. It will also help lay the groundwork for multi-year funding commitments, provide staff support in building out core tools like pitch decks and sponsorship one-pagers, and inform the development of a long-term fundraising calendar aligned with BGDSTEM's growth trajectory.



Activate Parents and Caregivers as Fundraising Partners

Recognizing the vital role families play in BGDSTEM's community, the organization will formally invite parents and caregivers to participate in fundraising efforts. This includes launching a fundraising committee of engaged parents and caregivers who can lead initiatives such as event planning, donor outreach, or peer-to-peer giving campaigns. BGDSTEM will provide clear pathways for involvement, training, and project-based opportunities (e.g., fundraising for a specific program or initiative). These efforts not only build community ownership but also diversify fundraising activity and extend the organization's reach.



Host Mission-Aligned Donor Events

To deepen community engagement and broaden its donor base, BGDSTEM will initiate new fundraising events that operate independently of the traditional year-end showcase. These events will serve dual purposes: raising unrestricted funds and fostering deeper connection with donors, families, alumni, and community partners. Potential formats may include themed donor appreciation nights, community-centered trivia events, wine tastings, or small salon-style gatherings where supporters can hear directly from youth, alumni, and program leaders. In addition to strengthening donor relationships, these events will offer new entry points for giving, especially for those who prefer informal or social giving environments. Over time, BGDSTEM will develop an annual calendar of giving events that aligns with its broader development strategy and offers touchpoints for year-round engagement. These efforts will expand the culture of philanthropy within the BGDSTEM ecosystem and support the organization's goal of increasing individual donor contributions and unrestricted revenue.



Diversify Revenue Streams*

Over the next five years, BGDSTEM will diversify its revenue streams to reduce reliance on restricted grants and short-term funding. This strategy includes expanding individual donor engagement, cultivating corporate sponsorships, and developing earned income opportunities through school-based partnerships, training, and consulting services. Key initiatives include hiring a development consultant to strengthen fundraising infrastructure, launching a family- and alumni-led fundraising committee, and piloting new campaigns and events that broaden participation. These efforts will be grounded in community voice and designed to reflect BGDSTEM's values, ensuring fundraising practices are inclusive, mission-aligned, and sustainable.



Increase Operating Budget + Establish Financial Reserves*

To ensure long-term stability and strategic flexibility, BGDSTEM will focus on growing its annual operating budget while steadily building and maintaining financial reserves. The organization will set annual benchmarks for revenue growth that support expanded programming, staffing, and infrastructure investments. Concurrently, BGDSTEM will maintain an annual reserve fund (equal to 10% of the annual revenue) and ensuring at least six months of operating expenses on an annual basis. These financial safeguards will enhance the organization's ability to weather funding fluctuations, plan for scale, and remain mission-focused amid a changing philanthropic landscape.

To support this strategic pillar, BGDSTEM has developed a detailed action plan focused on diversifying revenue streams and increasing the operating budget, outlined in [Appendix D](#). This plan includes key milestones, near-term strategies, and equity-centered practices to build a more resilient and sustainable funding model. Moving forward, BGDSTEM should prioritize building additional action plans to guide donor cultivation, earned revenue development, and reserve-building efforts, ensuring financial growth remains aligned with mission and community needs.

PROGRAMMING, CURRICULUM & THE PIPELINE



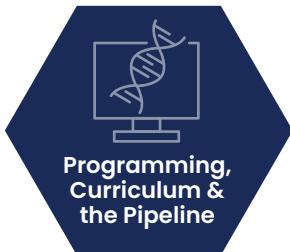
At the heart of BGDSTEM's mission is a commitment to delivering transformative, culturally relevant STEM education experiences. To deepen its impact, the organization is focused on developing a cohesive and responsive pipeline that supports Black girls from middle school through college and into their careers. This strategic pillar aims to align programming across middle and high school stages, expand alumni engagement, and ensure that youth voice is embedded into all aspects of design and delivery. Programming will be flexible and adaptive, particularly for high school youth managing complex schedules and life responsibilities. Alumni engagement will serve as a bridge beyond program completion, offering mentorship, leadership opportunities, and continued connection. Through feedback loops, flexible pathways, and collaborative curriculum design, BGDSTEM ensures its programming remains relevant, rigorous, and equity-driven.

STRATEGIC PILLAR GOALS

- Align STEM programming across middle and high school to promote continuous engagement and identity development
- Strengthen participant retention through targeted supports and flexible participation models
- Center youth voice in curriculum and program development
- Build and sustain a mission-aligned alumni network with leadership and mentorship opportunities
- Foster a culture of feedback and co-creation to ensure the curriculum remains responsive and youth-centered

5-Year Outcomes + Metrics

Outcome	Key Metrics
Aligned Secondary STEM Pipeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure 100% of program offerings are developmentally appropriate for middle and high school youth by Year 3• Explore opportunities to introduce light-touch STEM engagement or early exposure initiatives for K-5 youth to spark interest and expand awareness of future BGDSTEM pathways• Increase total participant retention by 15% across all stages by Year 5• Improve middle-to-high school transition retention by 20% through targeted supports by Year 4
Flexible High School Pathways	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Design and implement 2-3 flexible high school program models by Year 2• Increase high school active participation by 25% and retention by 20% over baseline by Year 5
Sustainable Alumni Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80% of graduating 12th graders enrolled in the alumni network annually by Year 3• Virtual alumni hub launched and accessed by 60%+ of alumni within Year 2• Annual alumni survey response rate ≥ 70%, with data used to inform programming each year
Feedback-Driven Curriculum Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80%+ of youth complete the annual experience survey and at least two quarterly pulse checks by Year 2• Youth feedback incorporated into 100% of curriculum revisions starting Year 3• Curriculum committee (youth + SMEs) established and meets quarterly by Year 3• New Program Manager hired by Year 3 to lead curriculum design efforts and manage the curriculum committee, ensuring feedback integration and alignment across programs



Timeline of Strategic Priorities

Within First Year

Years 1-2

Years 3-5



Establish a Youth Feedback System



Launch an Alumni Interest Survey



Develop Alumni Committee and Leadership Structures*



Increase Youth Participation and Retention



Design Flexible High School Partnership Program Pathways



Form a Curriculum Committee

To operationalize this pillar, the SPWG has developed a detailed action plan for employee onboarding, included in [Appendix C](#). This plan outlines key milestones, quick wins, and equity-centered measures of progress to ensure new staff are welcomed, supported, and set up for long-term success. Similar implementation plans should be developed for other priority areas – including hiring, employee satisfaction, and internal capacity-building – to maintain momentum and track measurable progress.



Refine a Youth Feedback System

BGDSTEM can strengthen its foundational feedback loop by reviewing and updating its annual youth experience survey and ensuring it effectively captures data on satisfaction, engagement, and curriculum relevance. This ongoing process will help the organization stay attuned to the needs, interests, and aspirations of participants, keeping programming culturally responsive and aligned with real-time youth experiences. To complement the annual survey, BGDSTEM can implement enhancements to quarterly program pulse checks (short, structured reflections integrated into program sessions) to surface insights and ideas on a more frequent basis.



Launch an Alumni Interest Survey

To deepen alumni engagement and inform future programming, BGDSTEM will launch an alumni interest survey designed to capture the evolving needs, aspirations, and strengths of its growing alumni community. This survey will serve as a foundational tool to understand how alumni wish to stay connected, contribute to the organization, and continue their own development. It will explore areas such as mentorship, leadership opportunities, career support, and preferred modes of engagement. The insights gathered will guide the creation of alumni-driven initiatives, shape leadership roles, and ensure that post-program pathways remain relevant, supportive, and aligned with BGDSTEM's long-term vision of community and continuity.



Develop Alumni Committee and Leadership Structures*

To begin building a sustainable alumni engagement system, BGDSTEM will launch an alumni committee that serves as both a leadership opportunity and a structured channel for ongoing connection and collaboration. This committee will provide a platform for alumni to advise on program design, mentor current girls, and shape post-program initiatives that reflect their evolving needs and aspirations.

To support this work, BGDSTEM will hire a recent program alum as an intern, offering both professional development and capacity to coordinate outreach, events, and communications with the alumni community. As engagement deepens, the organization will also establish an Alumni Lead role to formally guide this area, ensuring alumni efforts are strategically aligned, well-resourced, and consistently nurtured over time. Together, these structures will lay the foundation for a vibrant, mission-aligned alumni network that extends BGDSTEM's impact well beyond the initial program experience.



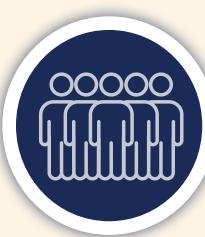
Increase Youth Participation and Retention

Expanding access and deepening engagement are essential to sustaining a robust, equity-centered pipeline. To increase youth participation and retention, BGDSTEM will assess current outreach strategies, enrollment trends, and engagement data to identify barriers and opportunities for improvement. This process will include disaggregating data by age, geography, and program stage to better understand where participation drops off and why. Based on these insights, BGDSTEM will refine its recruitment and retention approaches, develop targeted supports for key transition points (such as middle to high school), and introduce more flexible engagement models that reflect the real-world needs and responsibilities of participants. These efforts will ensure that more girls not only enter the pipeline but also stay connected and supported throughout their STEM journey.



Design Flexible High School Partnership Program Pathways

As youth advance in their academic and personal lives, their availability, interests, and engagement needs evolve, especially for high school youth. To better support this stage, BGDSTEM will design flexible participation models that accommodate a range of schedules, commitments, and learning preferences. A key focus will be on increasing high school participation and strengthening retention from middle to high school to ensure a continuous and supportive STEM journey. This work will include tailoring recruitment efforts, offering flexible program formats for older youth, and fostering stronger connections with schools and community partners. By supporting consistent engagement through these pivotal years, BGDSTEM will help participants stay connected and empowered throughout their high school career.



Form a Curriculum Committee

To ensure BGDSTEM's programming remains innovative, relevant, and grounded in both lived experience and academic expertise, the organization will establish a curriculum committee composed of youth and subject matter experts. This committee will serve as a collaborative space where diverse voices come together to co-design and refine program content. By integrating youth perspectives with professional insights, the committee will help shape a curriculum that is culturally responsive, intellectually rigorous, and aligned with current industry and educational standards.

This effort will be led by a newly hired Program Manager, who will oversee the committee's formation, operations, and integration into BGDSTEM's program development cycle. The Program Manager will serve as a key connector across programs, ensuring that curriculum development is aligned with youth feedback, strategic priorities, and emerging trends in STEM education. This structure will institutionalize collaboration, promote shared ownership, and create a feedback-driven process for continuous improvement.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS & ECOSYSTEM BUILDING



Expanding BGDSTEM's long-term impact requires cultivating a connected ecosystem of mission-aligned partners who share a deep commitment to equity in STEM. This pillar centers on building and sustaining values-driven relationships across sectors – including education, community organizations, research institutions, and industry – while ensuring that partnerships are responsive to youth needs and aligned with BGDSTEM's vision. Rather than channeling participants into pre-designed pathways, BGDSTEM seeks to co-create opportunities with partners based on youth aspirations, identities, and aptitude. Through thoughtful alignment, shared vision, and clear partnership systems, BGDSTEM will expand its geographic footprint, provide richer learning and career pathways, and serve as a national model for equity-centered partnership development in STEM education.

STRATEGIC PILLAR GOALS

- Develop a clear and mission-aligned partnership strategy
- Build a thriving cross-sector ecosystem that expands access, opportunity, and equity
- Increase high-impact opportunities for youth and alumni, including internships, mentorships, and research experiences
- Establish internal systems and staffing to manage, evaluate, and grow partnerships
- Extend geographic reach and visibility through intentional expansion and collaboration

5-Year Outcomes + Metrics

Outcome	Key Metrics
Defined Partnership Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Portrait of a BGDSTEM Partner" finalized and adopted by Q2 of Year 2• Partnership evaluation framework piloted and refined across 100% of active partnerships by end of Year 2• Standardized onboarding process implemented for 100% of new partners by Year 3
Robust Partnership Ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase total number of active partnerships by 20–30% across education, community, and corporate sectors by Year 5• Maintain an average partnership length of 3+ years across all sectors• At least 75% of active partners report high alignment and satisfaction (via annual partner survey)
Expanded Opportunities for Youth & Alumni	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place at least 50% of high school youth annually in internships, mentorships, or research opportunities by Year 5• Implement and utilize a youth-partner matching system for 100% of placements by Year 3• Alumni engagement (measured by participation in events, mentorship, or committees) increases by 15% year over year
Geographic & Sector Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operate in at least 6 distinct community sites, including 2 in Metro East, by end of Year 5• Secure 3–5 new district partnerships by Year 5• Establish at least 3 nationally recognized partnerships (e.g., with STEM nonprofits, HBCUs, or corporate leaders) by Year 5
Internal Capacity to Manage Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hire Chief of Strategic Partnerships by end of Year 3• Build and maintain a system that captures 100% of partner engagement activities and youth opportunity placements by Year 4• Implement structured communication and feedback loops with quarterly partner check-ins and an annual partnership review cycle across all active partners

Timeline of Strategic Priorities



*Detailed action Plan available in the Appendices.



Evaluate Current Partnerships

BGDSTEM can assess its current partner landscape to better understand values alignment, partnership scope, and opportunities for deeper engagement. This includes reviewing partnership retention, satisfaction, and outcomes (e.g., internships, mentoring), while identifying what parameters make a partner well-aligned. The insights gained will inform a more strategic and equitable approach to future partnership development.



Define Values-Aligned Partnership Criteria

Clarifying what it means to be a values-aligned partner helps BGDSTEM stay rooted in its mission while building toward its future. As part of this effort, the organization will develop a "Portrait of a BGDSTEM Partner" - a shared vision that outlines core commitments, desired mindsets, and the kinds of engagement that best support Black girls' agency, aspirations, and joy. This tool will serve as both an internal guide and an external signal, helping BGDSTEM cultivate new relationships, strengthen existing ones, and ensure that all partnerships reflect the organization's values and long-term goals.



Expand Partnership Opportunities*

As the partnership ecosystem grows, BGDSTEM can grow the number of youth placed in internships, mentorships, and research opportunities with trusted partners. BGDSTEM should focus on increasing access to high quality experiences that reflect the girls' interests and values. This includes developing intentional systems for youth-partner matching, tracking outcomes, and ensuring these opportunities provide meaningful exposure, support, and growth for participants. By creating a structured placement process and tracking long-term outcomes, the organization can ensure these experiences are impactful, empowering, and aligned with youth aspirations - not just industry trends.



Hire Chief of Strategic Partnerships

To lead this evolving body of work, BGDSTEM envisions a senior leadership role (Chief of Strategic Partnerships or similar role) dedicated to partnerships and ecosystem building. This role will oversee relationship cultivation, cross-sector collaboration, and ecosystem development. This leader will cultivate and manage cross-sector relationships, guide long-term strategy, ensure sustained engagement with schools, companies, and community organizations, and ensure that partnership work remains tightly connected to youth success, organizational growth, and the broader vision for equity in STEM.



Grow Geographic and Sector Reach

As partnerships deepen, BGDSTEM can focus on geographic expansion by identifying new communities and sectors where values-aligned partners are present and eager to engage. This includes targeting regions like the Metro East and identifying high-potential opportunities that increase access for more girls while maintaining program quality and fidelity. Looking ahead to Years 4 and 5, BGDSTEM will begin exploring strategic expansion beyond the local region, including potential growth into the broader Midwest and other national markets. This will require conducting a formal feasibility study to assess demand, readiness, and capacity in target regions, leveraging insights from emerging national partnerships and identifying ecosystem conditions that support scalable and sustainable program growth.

To support implementation of this pillar, BGDSTEM has developed a detailed action plan focused on expanding high-quality partnership, internship, mentorship, and research opportunities for youth - outlined in [Appendix F](#). This plan includes key milestones, quick wins, and equity-centered measures of progress to ensure partnerships are intentional, aligned, and responsive to the aspirations of Black girls in STEM. Moving forward, BGDSTEM should prioritize building detailed action plans for additional focus areas, including geographic expansion and partner engagement infrastructure.

With a clear vision and four interconnected strategic pillars, BGDSTEM is now equipped with a comprehensive roadmap to guide implementation over the next five years. The visual map in Appendix G offers a high-level snapshot of this journey - sequencing key actions across near-term, mid-term, and long-term milestones. It is designed to serve as a practical tool for staff, leadership, and partners alike, helping to align priorities, track progress, and ensure that all efforts remain grounded in BGDSTEM's mission and values. From foundational steps like aligning hiring practices and activating parent-led fundraising, to transformative investments in leadership, alumni infrastructure, and ecosystem partnerships, this roadmap charts a bold, actionable path toward organizational sustainability, deeper impact, and expanded opportunity for Black girls in STEM.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER: A CALL TO ACTION FROM OUR BOARD

Black Girls Do STEM enters this next chapter with a renewed sense of purpose, guided by community input and a clear strategic vision. This plan is not simply a document; it is a collective commitment to advancing equity, deepening impact, and creating a future where Black girls thrive as leaders and innovators in STEM. The success of this plan depends on sustained collaboration across all stakeholder groups. Each group has a vital role to play in implementation, reflection, and growth. We invite you to engage with this plan in ways that align with your unique role, expertise, and connection to the mission. In the months and years ahead, this strategic plan will serve as a living guide, informing decisions, aligning priorities, and holding us accountable to the communities we serve. Progress will be tracked through regular reviews, and updates will be shared through ongoing communication with staff, families, partners, and participants.

We encourage every member of our community to stay connected, ask questions, offer feedback, and take action. Your continued involvement is not only welcome, it is essential. Below are specific ways each stakeholder group can support the implementation of this strategic plan and help advance our shared mission.



BRITTANY CAMPBELL
RESEARCH DATA ANALYST AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SAN
FRANCISCO



DR. JOSLYN RICHARDSON
DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING PARTNER GUIDE RIVET
EDUCATION



DR. DIA JONES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE
PHILADELPHIA ROBOTICS COALITION



DR. JEREMIA ORY
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AT
THE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

CALL TO ACTION

Staff and Board Members

As organizational leaders, we will play a critical role in translating this strategy into practice and modeling the values it represents. We will:

- Use this plan to inform annual goals, priorities, and team alignment
- Champion a culture of equity, transparency, and shared leadership
- Participate in progress monitoring and adapt implementation based on data and feedback
- Model collaboration and accountability across all levels of the organization

Current Youth

You are the reason this organization exists. Your voice and participation guide every step of our work. You're the reason BGDSTEM exists, and your voice makes us stronger. Here's how you can keep making a difference:

- Share your feedback on programming through surveys, check-ins, and focus groups
- Participate actively in hands-on learning, leadership opportunities, and mentorship
- Explore your interests and let us know what you want to learn, build, and create
- Stay connected to the BGDSTEM community and encourage your peers to engage

Parents/Caregivers and Families

Your insight, trust, and partnership are foundational to BGDSTEM's work. You know the needs and strengths of your children best. Here's how you can help us grow together:

- Join family-led fundraising and community-building initiatives
- Provide ongoing feedback to help improve programming
- Participate in parent advisory groups or volunteer roles
- Share BGDSTEM opportunities with other families and networks

Community Partners

Your collaboration helps extend BGDSTEM's reach and deepen its real-world impact. Together, we can co-create meaningful opportunities for participants. Consider how you will contribute:

- Review the partnership criteria and assess alignment with your mission and goals
- Provide mentorships, internships, or career exposure opportunities for youth and alumni
- Sponsor events, programs, or expansion efforts aligned with BGDSTEM's strategic priorities
- Contribute financially to programs, events, or long-term initiatives
- Participate in regular partnership feedback and evaluation processes

Volunteers

Your time, talent, and commitment are essential to bringing BGDSTEM's mission to life. Whether you serve as a mentor, support events, or serve in leadership roles, your contribution makes a lasting impact. Here are ways you can make a lasting difference:

- Sign up for mentor training or capacity-building sessions to support youth with confidence and care
- Join our national mentor network to connect girls with role models across STEM fields
- Volunteer at events, workshops, or learning experiences (your presence matters!)
- Explore opportunities to serve on the Board of Directors or in advisory roles
- Help us grow! Share BGDSTEM's mission and programs with your networks and community

Alumni

You carry the mission of BGDSTEM into the world. Your continued connection creates a powerful network of support, inspiration, and leadership. We invite you to stay involved and give back in these ways:

- Join the Alumni Committee and help shape alumni programming
- Mentor younger participants and share your experiences
- Provide feedback on post-program needs and help improve the alumni experience
- Stay engaged through events, surveys, and leadership opportunities
- Give back by contributing to alumni-led campaigns or making a donation to support future participants

New and Prospective Partners

We welcome new relationships with partners who are committed to equity, innovation, and advancing access and belonging for Black girls in STEM fields. Consider these opportunities to connect and collaborate:

- Reach out to learn more about BGDSTEM's partnership model
- Explore opportunities to co-design programs, sponsor initiatives, or collaborate on strategic goals
- Support our geographic expansion and ecosystem-building efforts
- Partner with us through a financial contribution that helps scale impact and align with your organization's goals

This work will take all of us – youth, families, educators, community leaders, and partners. With aligned efforts and a shared belief in the brilliance of Black girls, we are ready to move forward. Together, we will bring this vision to life and build a future where every Black girl can thrive, lead, and shape the world through STEM.



APPENDICES

[**Appendix A: SWOT Analysis Top Line Summary**](#)

[**Appendix B: Mapping Key Priorities**](#)

[**Appendix C: Detailed Action Plan for Employee Onboarding**](#)

[**Appendix D: Detailed Action Plan for Revenue Streams & Operating Budget**](#)

[**Appendix E: Detailed Action Plan for Alumni Network**](#)

[**Appendix F: Detailed Action Plan for Increasing Strategic Partnerships**](#)

[**Appendix G: Implementation Roadmap**](#)