

Girls in Science Fund

The Girls in Science Fund has been established by local donors to provide local funding in the White Bear Lake Area Community Foundation (WBLACF) service area to lower barriers faced by girls in pursuing educational and career opportunities in the fields of science, technology (computer science), engineering, and mathematics (often referred to as STEM).

Girls are significantly less likely than boys to pursue STEM educational opportunities and embark on STEM related careers. The US has a shortage of skilled workers in these fields, often needing to hire people from foreign countries to fill these jobs, even though these jobs tend to provide much better than average salaries and growth opportunities.

The unique barriers faced by girls and women in pursuing STEM curricula and jobs are well-documented. For K-12 girls, these include lack of awareness and exposure to science, absence of female role models, social pressures commonly beginning in middle school, and lack of encouragement of girls' skills and potential in STEM. These barriers are particularly pronounced for those girls who lack significant exposure or encouragement in science at home.

The White Bear Lake Area Community Foundation will administer grants in connection with the fund to two major categories of programming:

1. Provide additional exposure to science and female role models for girls (K-12) in our area through programs such as summer camps, events at the Science Museum of Minnesota, Girls in Science programs run by Twin Cities non-profits, or local programs developed in the public schools.
2. Support the development of local STEM programs for girls (K-12) in our service area by assisting non-profit organizations, teachers, or school administrators in complementing current STEM public school curricula and programs. Supported programs should focus on strategies to lower the barriers to girls' achievement in STEM as noted above and provide opportunities to those girls that do not already have active encouragement in this area.