



EPISODE 26: SHOW NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS

In this interview Dr. Linda Molnar, Program Director at the National Science Foundation, talked about the Convergence Accelerator program described here, <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/convergence-accelerator> which grew out of NSF's Future of Work at the Human-Technology Frontier initiative, <https://www.nsf.gov/eng/futureofwork.jsp>.

Your action items are to explore some of the projects sponsored by the NSF Convergence Accelerator project. For example, Dr. Molnar highlighted a project called LEARNER, Learning Environments with Augmentation and Robotics for Next-gen Emergency Responders and you can see a brief highlight of the project at <https://youtu.be/2Ee9ku19pk4> She also describe the Skillsync project, a project of particular interest to community colleges involved in addressing future of work educational issues. Skillsync is designed to help meet skill demands created by digital transformation. See <https://www.eduworks.com/press-release/Skillsync-sept2020.html> for an overview.

Additional resources on the Convergence Accelerator program can be found at: <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/convergence-accelerator/resources.jsp>.

Linda also mentioned a series of workshops that you may be interested in. The Convergence Accelerator selected 12 topics for further exploration in May and June 2021: <https://www.nsf.gov/od/oia/convergence-accelerator/2021-workshops.jsp>

The one on Reimagining Innovation in STEM Education (RISE) may be of particular interest and is described below:

Advanced research in artificial intelligence, quantum computing, cloud computing and other science and technology related areas have the opportunity to change the world as we know it. To ensure an equitable scientific future, we propose an ecosystem approach to ensuring representation, success and meaningful outcomes of science and technology for future scientists, engineers and technologists and society at large. This goal requires that we re-think the educational process itself.

Through a series of workshops titled "Reimagining Innovation in STEM Education" (RISE), IBM and NSF will bring together practitioners from various public and private institutions including institutions of secondary and higher education, industrial and academic research organizations, social justice organizations, government agencies, tech companies and startups, along with current students to focus on a convergence approach in discussing and addressing four areas:

- Support for advancement of underrepresented groups in STEM to pursue and obtain post-secondary degrees and careers in high-demand tech fields like artificial intelligence (AI), quantum technology, cloud technology, cybersecurity, biotechnology, etc.
- Social and human good research foundations to explore how research topics, such as the use of technology for social or human good, might ignite the interest of students from underrepresented groups by associating the application of technology with issues they care about.
- Technology supported education to identify how advanced technology areas like AI can be used to shape new models of education, evaluate and potentially course correct traditional education models and make connections from initial technology entry points (e.g., social/human good contexts) to application of the expertise to other technology challenges. Also, identify learning modules to address particular tech education gaps and help bridge the educational, aspirational and financial gaps caused and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Data trust development to capture details on student demographics, educational pursuits, participation in specific programs to support their advancement, and the resulting student educational and career outcomes. Also, recommend specific internship or research opportunities based on student skills and interests, or conversely, help hiring organizations identify candidates from underrepresented groups with appropriate skills.

DETAILS:

Dates: May 25, May 27, June 3, and June 8, 2021

Times: 1:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. ET

Workshop Website for potential participation : <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RAISE-Recruitment>