

Strategic Plan

SCIENCE ATL

2025-2027

OUR MISSION

To cultivate an equitable community of lifelong learners across metro Atlanta who are connected and inspired by the wonder of science.

OUR VISION

Science ATL envisions Atlanta as a science city, where people celebrate a shared appreciation for the ways science and technology are fundamental to the health and prosperity of our community, and where everyone – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic status – has equitable access to science learning opportunities.

OUR VALUES

1. Science has the ability to inspire a lifelong sense of wonder and curiosity about the world.
2. Science is fundamental to the health and prosperity of our community.
3. Science must be equitable, representative of, and made welcoming to groups underrepresented in STEM.
4. Collaboration and partnerships allow us to expand the reach and impact of science learning in our community.
5. Empowering current and future generations of science lovers creates a stronger, more innovative community.

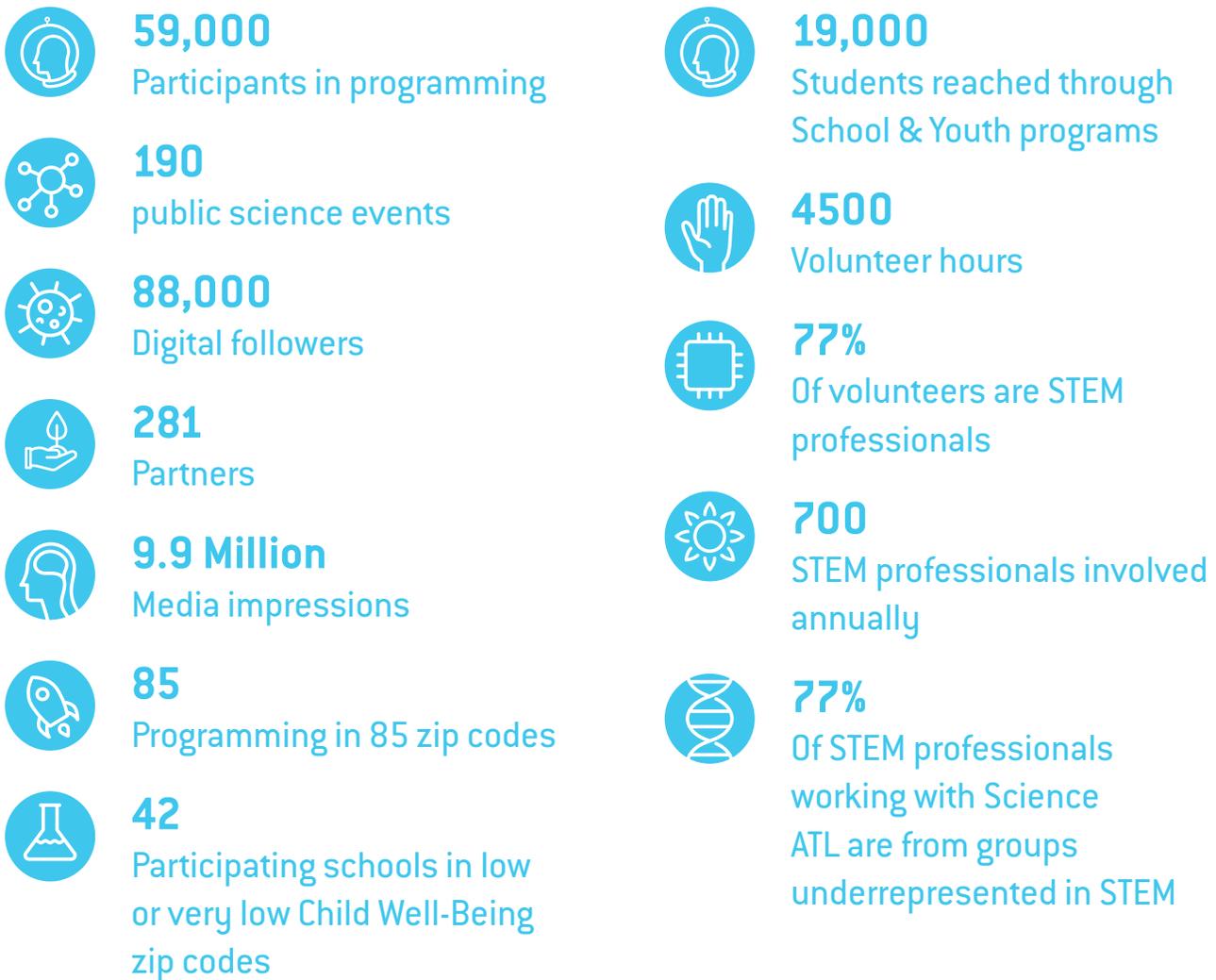


OUR STORY

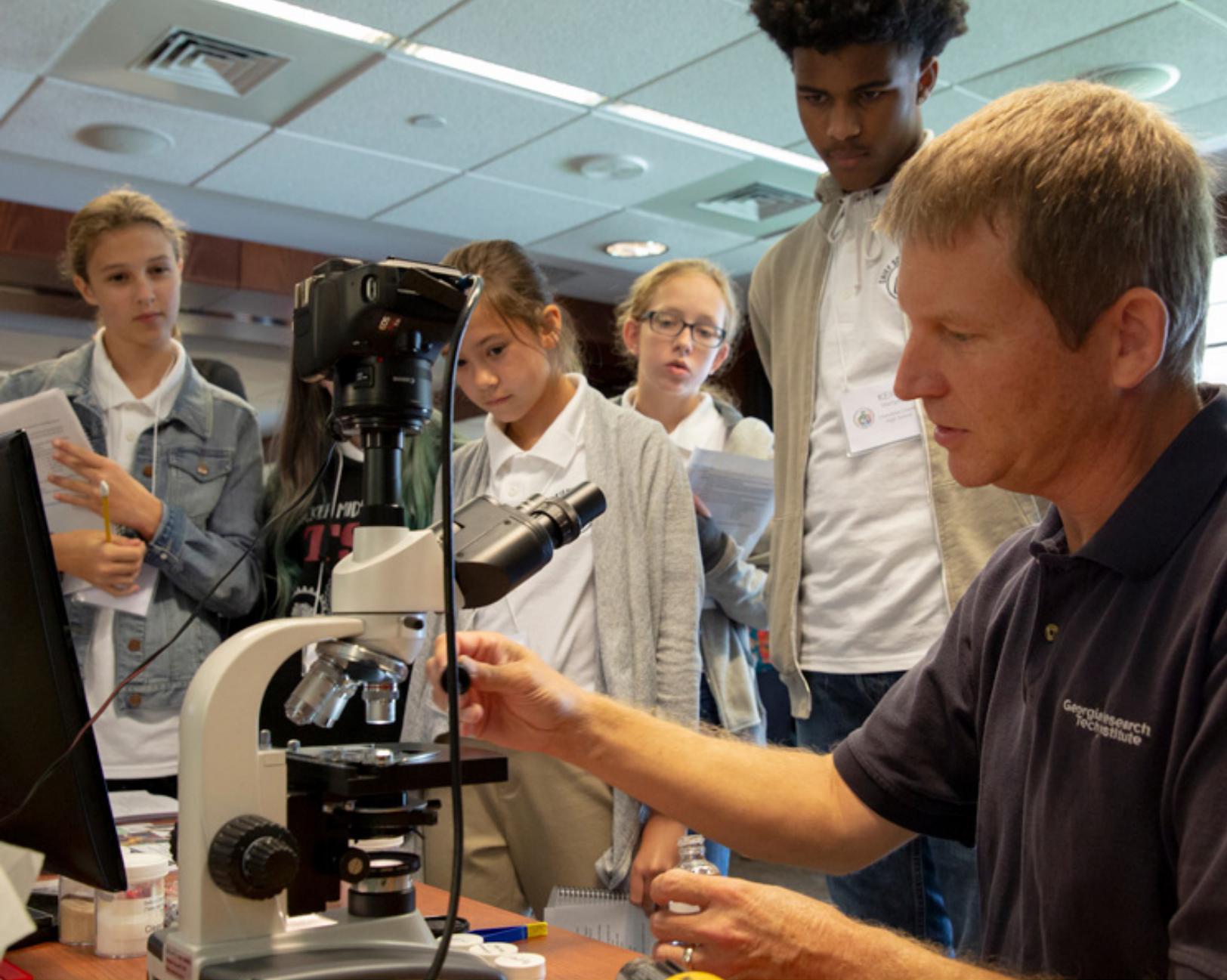
Science ATL brings people together through the wonder of science.

Founded in 2014 as Atlanta Science Festival Inc. by Emory University, Georgia Tech, and the Metro Atlanta Chamber, the organization changed its name to Science ATL Inc. in 2019. Science ATL produces monthly public science events, like the Atlanta Science Festival, Nature Navigator Hikes, Science Trivia, and more - plus the Chief Science Officers leadership program for middle and high school students, and the STEM Professional School Partnership program that strengthens partnerships between schools and STEM companies. Through this creative programming, Science ATL reaches 50,000 people annually in person plus 88,000+ digital subscribers, and reduces opportunity gaps for groups underrepresented in the sciences.

OUR ANNUAL IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS*



*Data from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024



ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Building Bridges

Cultivate Science Audiences

Sustainable Growth

BUILDING BRIDGES

Science ATL thrives as a convener, bringing together diverse groups through partnerships. By strategically leveraging these partnerships, Science ATL can continue to be a driving force in building a more equitable and inclusive science community for Atlanta. For this strategic plan, the focus is on deepening existing relationships. This approach strengthens the impact of current partnerships and allows for piloting new programmatic components with trusted partners. These successful initiatives can then be adapted and expanded to future partnerships. Prioritizing existing partners acknowledges current staff capacity, ensuring the ability to provide meaningful engagement throughout collaborations.

Goal:

Develop a thriving network of partners to ignite a passion for science in all Atlantans.

Key Strategies:

- Conduct partnership audits to identify high-impact opportunities for creating science programs with existing partners that cater to diverse needs.
- Enhance relationships with leadership at all levels within the school districts and individual schools to strengthen organizational relationships and ensure greater longevity of partnerships.
- Partner with non-science organizations to develop new initiatives that connect more people to science.
- Equip partners to become brand ambassadors through training, resources, and support to expand the reach of Science ATL.
- Refine and package successful pilot programs into signature offerings for school and corporate partners, amplifying Science ATL's impact as a leader in STEM education and maximizing mission fulfillment.

Metrics of Success:

- Satisfaction and reported impact of current school partnerships
- Increase number of science professionals engaged with Science ATL
- Increase percentage of sponsors with at least 5 science professionals engaged with Science ATL
- Increase diversity of science professionals engaged with Science ATL

CULTIVATE SCIENCE AUDIENCES

Science ATL currently reaches a diverse audience, but engagement varies across different programs. While the annual Science Festival enjoys high attendance and serves as an important entry point for new audiences, year-round program visibility and connections with audiences on an ongoing basis remain limited. Science ATL will work to deepen its engagement with audiences across all of its programs - from corporate volunteers to students and their families to science professionals - through intentional communications and engagement strategies. This plan prioritizes fostering deeper audience engagement, recognizing that the festival and programs serve as a springboard to cultivate a network of lifelong science enthusiasts. By building capacity to convert one-time attendees into active participants, Science ATL can empower a more engaged and knowledgeable science community.

Goal:

Cultivate engaged audiences with a lifelong passion for science.

Key Strategies:

- Increase the number of public events offered throughout the year to develop a stronger community through in-person opportunities.
- Integrate impactful science storytelling that highlights the real-world relevance of science for diverse audiences.
- Develop an additional large scale public event to complement the annual festival.
- Host regular convenings for science professionals to create a stronger community that fosters opportunities for professional development, networking, and group identity.
- Convert one-time attendees into repeat customers through targeted outreach and communications.

Metrics of Success:

- Increase audience attendance at Science ATL programs
- Number of Atlanta youth served¹
- Increase in followers/subscribers to Science ATL digital platforms
- Increase representation in Science ATL programming of science professionals underrepresented in STEM

¹ Year one of implementation will establish the baseline for this metric and a quantitative goal will be set to achieve in years two and three of plan implementation.

SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Science ATL currently relies heavily on corporate sponsorships, leaving its financial future vulnerable to external factors. To ensure long-term stability and propel its mission forward over the next three years, Science ATL needs to build a diversified funding infrastructure. This strategic goal goes beyond simply increasing revenue. It focuses on empowering the organization by establishing a sustainable financial foundation. By securing diverse funding streams and strengthening internal development capacity, Science ATL can invest in impactful programs, expand its staff's capacity to implement programs across Metro Atlanta, and solidify its position as a leader in STEM education.

Goal:

Ensure sustainable growth for Science ATL by building a diversified funding infrastructure.

Key Strategies:

- Develop a comprehensive strategy for diversified contributed income to ensure long-term sustainability.
- Empower board members to cultivate and steward relationships with supporters of Science ATL.
- Develop annual partnerships with year-round opportunities for engagement for corporate partners.

Metrics of Success:

- Increase diversity of revenue sources
- Maintain 80% retention rate of sponsors
- Increase board participation in organizational sustainability



ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Purpose Possible surveyed different local and national non-profit organizations to better understand Science ATL's role within the science education system. Our team has put together the following document with trends and key takeaways that pertain to strengths and possible areas of opportunity for Science ATL to consider.

Organizations researched: *Out of Hand Theater, Trees Atlanta, SEM Link, 21st Century Leaders, InspirEDU, Piedmont Park Conservancy, STE(A)M Truck, Story Collider (NYC), Exploratorium (San Francisco, California), STEM From Dance.*

SCIENCE ATL DIFFERENTIATORS

The following are points that make Science ATL stand out from other organizations in Atlanta.

Convenor

Science ATL stands out in the science education sector through its exceptional ability to convene a diverse array of interested parties via its annual festival and comprehensive school programming. The Atlanta Science Festival, a cornerstone event, attracts students, educators, families, and science enthusiasts from across the region, fostering a vibrant community centered around scientific discovery and learning. This inclusive approach not only amplifies Science ATL's impact but also creates a collaborative platform where various interest parties can share knowledge, resources, and innovative ideas, thereby enriching the overall science education ecosystem.

Credibility & Trust

Moreover, Science ATL is uniquely distinguished by its impressive retention of sponsorships over the years. This sustained support from sponsors is a testament to the organization's credibility and effectiveness in delivering high-quality science education initiatives. By leveraging these long-term relationships, Science ATL has successfully extended its reach beyond the annual festival, implementing year-round programming that continuously engages and educates the community. This strategic approach not only maximizes the benefits for sponsors but also ensures a steady stream of impactful science education opportunities for learners of all ages throughout the year.

TAKEAWAYS

The following are trends that we saw across all organizations researched and that point to a strategic approach for Science ATL to consider in this process:

Diverse Funding Sources:

Research showed the importance of a multi-faceted approach to funding. Science ATL should continue to diversify its revenue streams by pursuing government grants, corporate partnerships, individual donations, and fundraising events. This diversity will ensure financial stability and sustainability.

Corporate Partnerships:

Building, expanding, and maintaining relationships with corporate sponsors can provide substantial financial support and enhance Science ATL's visibility and reach within the community. This is comparable to many of the organizations in the environmental analysis.

Community Engagement:

Engaging the multiple communities for science/education work through memberships, events, and fundraising campaigns are all common strategies for these organizations. These efforts can not only generate revenue but also build a loyal base of supporters who feel a sense of ownership and commitment to Science ATL's mission.

INTERESTED PARTIES FEEDBACK

Purpose Possible reached out to various collaborators and interested parties to garner feedback through a series of questions delivered via surveys and one-on-one interviews. The feedback was foundational for the strategic planning process. Below are the major takeaways from this feedback.

Overall Trends

The community overwhelmingly expresses admiration and appreciation for Science ATL's endeavors, emphasizing its role as a valuable, community-oriented organization with a strong emphasis on education, inclusivity, and innovation. Notable perceptions include Science ATL's identity as a connector of science enthusiasts, its family and youth engagement initiatives, and its status as a trusted educational resource.

Organization's Strengths

Several strengths emerge from the community feedback, including Science ATL's exceptional community engagement, its role as a valuable connector within the STEM education community, and its prowess in youth programs such as the CSO/SPSP initiatives. Moreover, Science ATL is praised for its supportive environment for volunteers and professionals, bridging the gap between educational programs and real-world applications, and fostering community integration.

Opportunities for Growth

Community input acknowledges several areas for enhancement for Science ATL. These opportunities include expanding school partnerships, initiating an early science education initiative, advocating for interdisciplinary education, and expanding event accessibility. Additionally, suggestions for geographic expansion, internship initiatives, and national outreach are highlighted as avenues for growth.

METHODOLOGY

Science ATL began working with Purpose Possible in January 2024 on a strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee helped us identify questions to ask, interested parties to survey, and generally ensure we were staying true to Science ATL. We spent February and March gathering interested party feedback through one-on-one interviews, and surveys. From there, we held a retreat with the full Board of Directors and staff. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee worked to review the community input, environmental scan data, and discussions from both staff and the Board of Directors to develop consensus on the organizational direction for the next three years.

Our steering committee was made up of the following individuals:

- Cheryl Kortemeier, *Board Chair*
- Tjuan Dogan, *Board Member*
- Dana Buskovitz, *Public Events Manager*
- Jamal Jessie, *Board Member*
- Jordan Rose, *Co-Founder & Co-Executive Director*
- Meisa Salaita, *Co-Founder & Co-Executive Director*

Purpose Possible Consultant Team

- Susannah Darrow
- Natalia Garzón Martínez
- Chantaine Bulluck



