

Birmingham Launches STEM Education Centre

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The University of Birmingham is to establish a STEM Education Centre, a direct legacy of the National HE STEM programme, which Birmingham has hosted since 2009. The new Centre will build upon previous work and profile of the University in leading science, technology, engineering and maths education at a national level.

The Centre will deliver a coordinated range of STEM enhancement and enrichment activities across the University. It will maintain a national, externally facing remit, working in conjunction with existing STEM initiatives and organisations and will enable a number of external activities established through the National HE STEM Programme to continue.

Within the University the STEM Education Centre will focus on enhancing all aspects of student recruitment and widening participation, the school-university interface, student support, learning and teaching, and graduate skills.

It will also bring together a range of initiatives across the University including the recently established mathematics support centre, maximising their collective impact and allowing effective practices to be shared and more widely adopted.

The STEM Education Centre has already initiated two significant collaborations that will benefit the sector. The first will see activities designed to build strategic relationships between universities and schools and colleges continue through collaborative working with the National STEM Centre. The second involves working with the Higher Education Academy on a range of strategic projects, the first of which will be a continuation of the Programme's work to support and encourage members of the higher education STEM community to undertake pedagogic research.

Michael Grove, Director of the STEM Education Centre said: *'The Birmingham STEM Education Centre provides a sustainable legacy for the activities and knowledge obtained from the National HE STEM programme in learning and teaching. There has been much learning and knowledge gained from the activities of the Programme, and the STEM Education Centre provides an opportunity to ensure these are captured and widely disseminated. It also provides an opportunity to undertake a range of strategic projects that will offer benefit to the entire sector.'*

Professor Craig Mahoney, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Academy (HEA), said, *"The HEA is delighted to support the STEM Education Centre at the University of Birmingham. This is an important collaboration to further scholarly practice to enhance the student experience in STEM education and complements our work to in providing learning and teaching support to the sector in these disciplines."*

Ends

Notes to Editors

The University of Birmingham has hosted the National HE STEM programme since 2009. The Programme, funded by the Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE), was launched to work with professional bodies and universities to set up pilot projects to raise demand and widen participation in chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics. Since then it has engaged with almost 90 universities and colleges across England and Wales through over 300 projects.

To mark the achievements of the programme a conference is being held at the University of Birmingham from 4 – 6 September. This will provide an opportunity for practitioners to find out about the latest developments in learning and teaching of STEM courses and will focus on the theme of developing skills for growth and enhancing the employability of graduates.

For further information

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