



# Outreach Planning Toolkit



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Experiential Learning Hub  
Faculty of Applied Science

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# How to plan an Outreach Event

## Purpose of this Toolkit

To help teams plan and host a successful outreach event for (primarily) high school and middle school students.

## Why outreach?

Rather than just creating and growing your digital presence as a team, in-person outreach events give you a chance to directly connect with next generation of STEM students and potentially UBC Engineering students.

Having a name and face to attached to your outreach efforts makes the experience for your target audience a lot more impressionable. Also, any fun activities that you decide to do during your event will add to a positive and relatable experience.

## Identify your outreach goals

It is important to know what you are trying to achieve with outreach events. Your goals may vary depending on what your target group is.

Some ideas may include –

- Spark interest in STEM related fields
- Introduce basic engineering principles
- Raise awareness about the specific area your design team works in (e.g. – automotive, aerospace, biomedical)
- Reach out to minority/equity-seeking groups in STEM (see [WiE, Gears and Queers](#))
- Introduce UBC Engineering and program options available

## Plan your event

In most cases, you will likely be visiting a local school and be talking to students directly in their classrooms. If this is the case, you will have limited time and resources – so having a simple plan is the way to go!

If you are doing any outreach to high school aged students, **you must submit the [APSC Outreach form](#)**. You can also use this form to request promotional support, UBC Engineering swag, info cards, UBC Engineering promotional displays, or general UBC Engineering presentation slides. UBC Engineering Recruitment is happy to support your outreach efforts.

## Getting your ideas across

- **PowerPoint presentation** - Most classrooms have an A/V setup (make sure to double check with the school) so a presentation is a great way to get across information to the kids visually. You might need to tailor the material you are covering depending on the age group.
- **A fun activity** – A hands-on activity is a great way to get kids thinking and get them to experience the team-oriented nature of engineering. An example of this that has worked particularly well is an [egg drop competition](#), where student are challenged to build a container (with limited resources) that holds an egg and can withstand a drop from a height.
- **Free-thinking sessions** - Another idea to get everyone in the classroom involved could be a free-thinking session where students are encouraged to come up with their own ideas to solve problems in areas your team tackles at a design team level. For example - if Formula Electric were doing an outreach event, they might ask students to come up with a list of things required for a formula vehicle and get them to design/draw their ideal car.

## Reach out to potential audience

Contacting local schools is a great place to start if you want to inspire the next generation of STEM students. Generally, you are more likely to receive a response to your outreach session proposal if you reach out to directly to STEM subject teachers at the school you are interested in.

In your initial email, make sure to provide:

- An introduction to your group
- High-level details about your proposed event
- A list of resources you might need – e.g. AV system, outdoor space.

Creating a one-page graphic poster with information about your group would also help your target audience learn about your organization briefly. This document should be shared in your initial emails to schools!

Work with your contact to confirm a date (and time) that works for both of you and make sure you confirm your team members who will be helping with this event. Aim to have the event planned at least a week before the day of. Doing a dry run of any hand-on activities you have planned can go a long way in helping you predict and sort out any issues that might arise. This way, you can also make sure the activity fits within the time slot you have been assigned for the outreach session.

## Finalise details/collaborate

- Plan the event fully within the assigned time (usually 40-60 minutes). Make sure to allow for some fluff time.
- Complete the [APSC Outreach Form](#) to inform the Recruitment Team who your outreach will be targeting and request materials or support from Erin Fehr. This is required for any group doing any outreach to high school aged students, even if you are not requesting any support.
- Reach out to other groups that might be interested in collaborating – e.g. UBC Mars Colony has partnered with Women In Engineering for outreach sessions at local schools.
- Keep your contacts at outreach venues updated on plans wherever applicable.

## Outreach event/Day of

- Arrive at least 15 mins early than the session start time.
- Make sure to have a backup of your presentation on a USB stick.
- Make sure to have a timer for any activities/presentations so you do not run over time and need to cut short or rush your session.

## Follow up

Make sure to send a follow up email to your contact after the event to get any feedback and thank them for taking the time to make the event possible.

# Resources

## Still have questions?

You can book an advising appointment with Minoli Navaratnam ([minoli.navaratnam@ubc.ca](mailto:minoli.navaratnam@ubc.ca)) in APSC Professional Development. We can:

- Review the content of this module.
- Discuss any other questions you may have.

## References

- <https://buggyandbuddy.com/stem-kids-egg-drop-project/>
- <https://www.uua.org/sites/live-new.uua.org/files/events-reaching-out.pdf>



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