Our annual report shares our work for the time period between September 2017 to August 2018.

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I am continually in awe of the growth of Visions of Science. Over the last few years, we have established ourselves as a high-impact organization by building our capacity, successfully scaling our efforts to new communities and expanding initiatives to better serve our growing cohort of youth.

What truly sets us apart as an organization is our long-term engagement model. We have the unique opportunity to consistently invest in communities to allow for meaningful development and empower leaders to emerge. With STEM learning as the vehicle, we are also providing meaningful opportunities for youth to develop key critical skills. Ultimately, we are on track to supporting and developing a growing population of socially conscious and confident STEM leaders!

We are entering 2018-2019 with a defined strategic plan that provides a bold focus for the next 5 years. Considering what has already been accomplished, I have no doubt that we will achieve beyond our goals and see transformation within our communities.

I would like to say a huge thank you to our dedicated staff and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to ensure that these opportunities are available for the youth that we serve. Their collective vision is what fuels the future of this organization and I am so grateful to lead this incredible group of people. We have come so far and this is only the beginning. Thank you for continuing to build with us.

As the Board Chair for Visions of Science, it is an honour to witness the incredible force and tenacity with which the organization carries out its mission to impact underserved youth.

Over the past few years we have seen the organization grow in capacity, expand programming to reach new youth, and deepen existing impact in communities. 2017-2018 has been no different. Guided by the exceptional leadership and dedication of Dr. Eugenia Duodu and facilitated by a team of caring staff, we implemented a strategic planning period to sharpen our mission.

As we move forward, our increased vision will help us continue to reach new youth and deepen our impact. The board is incredibly excited to witness the growth of these young people as they move through our programs today and become the leaders of tomorrow - in their careers and in their communities.

- Adnan Syed
  Board Chair, Visions of Science
  Twitter: @adnansyed786

- Eugenia Duodu, Ph.D.
  CEO, Visions of Science
  Twitter: @EugeniaDuodu

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**WORDS FROM...**

**THE ORGANIZATION**

"Visions of Science is creating an environment where youth facing multiple barriers will become the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics leaders of tomorrow. Fostering the natural curiosity of our youngest and brightest is inspiring and noble work. The Ontario Trillium Foundation is proud to support STEM engagement for the future wellbeing of our communities."

— Katharine Bambrick
CEO, Ontario Trillium Foundation

"The Counselling Foundation of Canada is proud to support Visions of Science’s STEM Community Leaders Program. As the seed funder for this project, we have been delighted to see this program continue to evolve and grow. The team at Visions of Science has done fantastic work to provide participants with a rich – and fun – educational experience. We look forward to the continued success of the program and its participants!"

— Bruce Lawson
President & CEO, The Counselling Foundation of Canada

"Amgen is committed to raising the value of science literacy in the community, attracting bright young minds into the field of science by improving access to science resources for students and the community at large. We are proud to support Visions of Science, making possible meaningful STEM engagements for youth in low-income and marginalized communities, economically disadvantaged young people who are often underrepresented in science disciplines because of limited access to enriched science learning environments."

— Dr. Ponda Motsepe-Ditshego
Executive Medical Director, Amgen Canada Inc.
Visions of Science Network for Learning Inc. (VoSNL) is a charitable organization that exists to advance the educational achievement and positive development of youth from low-income and marginalized communities through meaningful engagement in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Since incorporation (2004), Visions of Science has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting marginalized youth across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). We have engaged over 11,000 youth in STEM activities and our impact is growing across communities and age groups. We are still one of the only STEM-based organizations in Southern Ontario that delivers consistent programming directly within low-income communities in collaboration with social housing partners such as Toronto Community Housing and Peel Housing Corporation.

Annually, our initiatives engage over 700 youth from 25 communities. Our community-based development model serves to intentionally support young people from low-income communities to succeed by eliminating common barriers to engagement.

Our Strategy

We work to build a network for learning that creates consistent and multi-year opportunities for youth. Key components of our delivery model include:

- Mentorship from caring staff and volunteers
- Accessible, hands-on STEM learning opportunities
- Network of partners
- Positive youth development opportunities

Youth who are well prepared to succeed and positively contribute to a constantly evolving society.
"My leadership skills have drastically improved over the summer. When participating in group activities I stepped out of my comfort zone and spoke out a lot more than before. It felt good when my voice was being heard."

— STEM Community Leader

Our programs and initiatives create an accessible and supportive STEM learning network. This support ensures that our participants are knowledgeable in STEM fields, skilled and confident as they progress from childhood, to adolescence, and into adulthood.

WHAT WE DO

OUTREACH WORKSHOPS
We spark interest in STEM through engaging youth from target communities in short-term outreach initiatives in community spaces and existing summer camps.

IN-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT (K-12)
We aim to support STEM education in elementary and secondary schools through the development and facilitation of STEM curricula.

COMMUNITY STEM CLUBS (Grades 3 to 8)
A weekly, multi-year program that offers youth ongoing opportunities to explore STEM learning within their community.

STEM COMMUNITY LEADERS (Grades 8 to 12)
We support positive youth development in communities through STEM-based experiential learning, leadership opportunities and mentorship.

OUR IMPACT

24+ communities across Greater Toronto Area

700+ youth involved in STEM annually

110+ volunteers across the organization

11,500+ youth engaged to date

VISIONS OF SCIENCE 2017/18 ANNUAL REPORT
“I am aware of all the science around me. I ask more questions than before. I am smarter. I am a better scientist.”
— Participant, Community STEM Clubs

“My daughter never had a liking for science until she started going to this program, she loves science now. When she’s at school she is participating a lot more in science class...Thank you for making science fun and easy to understand for the little ones.”
— Parent, Community STEM Clubs

“Aside from just the science and learning, the club was fundamental to building confidence and collaborative skills which is important for every stage of their life.”
— Volunteer, Community STEM Clubs

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— Parent, Community STEM Clubs

“There are modules, events and trips that I have been involved in alongside the participants, I have seen their engagement and excitement to join in on activities increase...by the year-end event, all of my participants were confident that they fully understood the experiment...”
— Youth Facilitator, Community STEM Clubs

Community STEM Clubs (CSCs) - a weekly, multi-year program offered to youth (grades 3-8) which consists of 26 sessions from October to May. Clubs occur directly within the community and engage youth in ongoing opportunities to explore inquiry-based STEM learning, develop critical thinking and foundational learning skills. We also partner with housing providers, postsecondary institutions, and community-based groups and organizations to create a ‘learning network’ within communities. CSCs are designed to “spark and sustain interest” by bringing youth hands-on STEM workshops, experiments, and trips to STEM-based institutions.

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On March 17th we held our second annual STEM Day at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM). Over 150 youth from 11 Community STEM Clubs in the Peel and West Toronto regions visited UTM to gain a firsthand look at what science looks like at the university and its real-world applications. Clubs travelled to different parts of campus and took part in hands-on workshops held by UTM faculty and students. Workshops ranged in diversity from investigating research on bats to exploring on-campus nature trails in a bird-watching expedition. The keynote speaker for the day, Vice-President and Principal of UTM Dr. Ulrich Krull even brought youth to the stage to conduct a live demonstration of a comet traveling through space. Thank you to UTM for collaborating with us to deliver an engaging STEM Day - for the second year!

Our annual year-end event, the Visionary Expo brings together STEM Clubs from across the GTA in a celebration of STEM learning. With the support of the volunteer facilitators, youth worked in their teams to develop presentations on a module from the year. This year over 350 youth showcased their learning in science-fair style presentations delivered to parents, community partners and supporters with six clubs taking home top-category medals. The presentations truly reflected the hard work that youth dedicated to their presentations and all year in the program. This year’s expo was held at the Ontario Science Centre with a keynote speech from Dr. Molly Shoichet asking youth to ‘imagine if we didn’t ask questions’. All participants walked away having completed another exciting year of the STEM Clubs program!

“After doing projects and presentations with other people I feel have become much more collaborative, learning from others has also given me better group work skills.”

— STEM Community Leader
One year ago we launched the STEM Community Leaders (SCL) program targeting youth grades 8-12 in immersive STEM-based experiential learning opportunities directed towards the pursuit of post-secondary education and enhanced career aspirations. This program also involves youth as leaders and facilitators in their communities while actively developing critical skills. This year we engaged 43 youth from 15 communities across the Greater Toronto Area.

### Experiential STEM learning Opportunities
- 93% of participants indicated an increase in leadership skills
- 97% of participants indicated an increase in their personal development (i.e., confidence, communication, social skills)
- 90% of participants indicated an increase in their connection to their community

### FALL/WINTER ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

In the fall term youth worked alongside a team of facilitators to deliver workshops in their own communities, as part of Community STEM Clubs. This opportunity intentionally builds the leadership capacity of youth through consistent coaching and modelling as well as mentorship. Youth also took part in a leadership camp during March Break - a three-day experience at YMCA Cedar Glen consisting of challenge-based activities in pursuit of developing critical skills including teamwork and communication.

The Youth Facilitator opportunity provides a forum for youth in the STEM Community Leaders program to leverage the skills and competencies they have developed and passion they have gained as past CSC participants and make a meaningful contribution to their communities. Cumulatively, these youth have invested over 2,500 hours back into their communities already!
SUMMER ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

For 7 weeks this summer, 25 youth from 12 of our target communities participated in immersive STEM experiences including:

- Hands-on STEM workshops with Code Mobile and Ryerson University
- Behind-the-scenes experiences at Toronto Zoo and Ripley’s Aquarium of Canada
- Space-themed workshops at York University Astronomical Observatory and Dunlap Institute of Astronomy & Astrophysics at University of Toronto (UofT)
- The Da Vinci Engineering Enrichment Program at UofT Engineering
- The Amgen Biotech Experience at UofT Mississauga

Many of the young leaders also took on additional roles in STEM fields including:

- Research at University of Toronto Department of Chemistry
- Media & Communications at the University of Toronto Engineering Outreach
- Facilitators in the Lay-Up Youth Basketball Camp

Throughout the summer (and entire first year of the program) youth have not only grown as leaders and developed critical skills but also built meaningful relationships and explored STEM in real-world job settings - and had an incredible time doing it!

GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

Nawaal and Arefa began their journeys with Visions of Science in 2013-2014. As participants in the Swansea Mews STEM Club, they spent three years taking part in hands-on STEM workshops and field trips broadening their minds to STEM and how it works all around them. Four years later, now high school students and having graduated from their participant role, Nawaal and Arefa both returned to the organization to explore STEM learning and leadership as STEM community Leaders. Throughout their time with the organization they have taken part in a wide range of immersive STEM-based learning opportunities, grown as leaders and developed long-lasting relationships with their peers and mentors.

“Arefa and Nawaal are a shining example of the power that young people can have as leaders and advocates when they are given the appropriate support and mentorship. I’ll never forget how they opened their presentation by engaging the audience with a live chemistry experiment to demonstrate how science can be a tool to connect and communicate. Their excitement to share the impact of this program with classmates and peers was inspiring, and as Facilitators they are modelling confidence and community pride for the next cohort of young scientists. Congratulations to Visions of Science for helping to shape these amazing young leaders!”

— Rachel Paris, Manager Digital Strategy & Community Engagement, Youth and Philanthropy Initiative Canada

The Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) connects high school students to social issues impacting their community and the local charities that address them. The program gives students an opportunity to research a local charity of their choice, prepare a presentation and take part in a competition with their peers. Driven by their personal connection to the organization and wanting to give back, Nawaal Ali Sharif and Arefa Tafawa, two senior participants of the STEM Community Leaders Program competed and won $5000 - which they donated right back to the charity!
SUMMER OUTREACH

LAY-UP YOUTH BASKETBALL CAMP

We are dedicated to providing equitable STEM access to marginalized populations all year-round including engaging youth and communities that are not captured in our long-term programming.

Throughout the summer, we partner with youth programs to deliver drop-in guest workshops for organizations across Toronto such as Lay-Up Youth Basketball Camp. In this, we seek to engage youth during the ‘off season’ of our STEM Clubs as well as those who would not normally attend our programs. We also take part in several events celebrating STEM in communities including Science Odyssey and Science Literacy Week.

“I definitely am more aware of what opportunities are out there in term of post secondary and I am more confident to go into postsecondary now that I have all of this exposure.”

— STEM Community Leader

Bringing STEM to the community!

SCIENCE ODYSSEY

As part of Science Odyssey we host community events in target communities across Toronto. Here we engage youth and community members in fun, hands-on STEM through a series of fun, interactive booths with activities and challenges.

SCIENCE LITERACY WEEK

During this week-long celebration of science we host pop-up science workshops to promote science literacy in communities. This includes engaging the community through STEM workshops as well as raffle prizes and giveaways. This year’s theme is space!
I began volunteering with Visions of Science in 2014. At the time I was in a graduate program at Ryerson University, studying Biology. With a Bachelor of Science degree under my belt, I had become very well acquainted with traditional learning environments and was ready to do more with the skills and knowledge that I had gained over the past few years. One evening, when sharing these desires with close colleagues I was introduced to Visions of Science. Several of them had been volunteering with the organization and absolutely swore by it. They said, “Want to expand your horizons and do STEM in the real world? Visions. Want to share your love for STEM and empower the potential future scientists of tomorrow? Visions.” My interest was peaked and the excitement in the room was almost tangible! Only a few weeks later, I began my volunteer journey at the Willowridge location. It has been four years now since that time, and I am completing my PhD in Molecular Science. Each year, I have the privilege of meeting a new group of youth as well as welcome returning faces. Seeing the youth come to club each week, armed with their excitement and curiosity, ready to begin the day’s experiment is why I return every year. Not only have I built meaningful connections with the youth and my fellow facilitators, but I have greatly developed my capacity as a leader - all of which I will carry with me into my future career. If there is anything that I want these youth to walk away with, it is the importance of thinking critically and asking questions about the world around them. I hope that they use the passion and learning they have gained and take steps to making the world a better place - each one of them is capable!

—

Chris Chey
STEM Club Volunteer

OVERVIEW OF VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are the backbone of our organization. It is their passion and commitment to inspire, elevate, and empower youth that enables our programs to be possible. Through their ongoing volunteering in communities, they become integral members of the communities they engage. They are the leaders, mentors, and facilitators who bring our mission to life each week.

Recruited primarily from local universities across the Greater Toronto Area, this year we engaged over 95 volunteers in Community STEM Clubs, with a total of 120 volunteers across the organization. Together, volunteers contribute over 7,500 hours on average of community service to the organization per year - we appreciate you!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Adnan Syed (Chair)
Manager of Research Programs, Partnerships & Strategic Initiatives, Faculty of Science, Ryerson University

Dr. Winston Klass
Mathematician and Vice President, Ipso Reid (Retired)

Annelies Groen
STEM Instructional Leader, Toronto District School Board

Keddone Dias
Executive Director, LAMP Community Health Centre

Trisha Hosein
Ontario Certified Teacher, Peel District School Board

Erin Stein
Senior HR Director, RBC Insurance
All financial data presented is from our 2017 financial statements audited by Pennylegion Chung LLP for the period January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017.

For a full copy of our 2017 audited financial statements please visit: www.vosnl.org/finance-and-transparency

### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

For a full copy of our 2017 audited financial statements please visit: www.vosnl.org/finance-and-transparency

#### REVENUE

- **Government of Canada**
  - 2017: $47,794
  - 2016: $22,000
  - Percentage: 76.8%

- **Municipal Government**
  - 2017: 18,900
  - 2016: 4,167
  - Percentage: 9.5%

- **Foundations & Partnerships**
  - 2017: 385,653
  - 2016: 145,017
  - Percentage: 18.7%

- **Individuals**
  - 2017: 26,400
  - 2016: 12,296
  - Percentage: 6.1%

- **Events**
  - 2017: 22,439
  - 2016: 14,674
  - Percentage: 3.8%

- **Other**
  - 2017: 919
  - 2016: 6,110
  - Percentage: 0.2%

**TOTAL**
- 2017: $502,105
- 2016: $204,264

#### EXPENDITURES

- **Personnel**
  - 2017: 337,938
  - 2016: 147,750
  - Percentage: 67.7%

- **Program**
  - 2017: 93,137
  - 2016: 25,134
  - Percentage: 16.7%

- **Fundraising**
  - 2017: 14,872
  - 2016: 10,425
  - Percentage: 4.1%

- **Occupancy**
  - 2017: 18,747
  - 2016: 7,910
  - Percentage: 3.8%

- **Professional Fees**
  - 2017: 12,226
  - 2016: 6,863
  - Percentage: 2.4%

- **Office & General**
  - 2017: 20,226
  - 2016: 3,289
  - Percentage: 0.4%

- **Insurance**
  - 2017: 2,061
  - 2016: 1,299
  - Percentage: 0.3%

**TOTAL**
- 2017: $499,207
- 2016: $202,670

**Excess of revenue over expenses for the year**
- 2017: 2,898
- 2016: 1,594

**Net assets, beginning of year**
- 2017: 2,406
- 2016: 812

**NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR**
- 2017: $5,304
- 2016: $2,406

“I feel that I am now quite comfortable with post secondary rather than scared like I used to be. This program has given me all the support that I have needed.”

— STEM Community Leader
It is with the support of a diverse network of program partners that we are able to engage VoS youth in multifaceted STEM experiences. We deeply value the incredible program partners who not only support our vision but help us bring it to life.

University of Toronto Engineering Outreach has been integral in supporting the STEM Community Leaders program since the inception of the pilot year as well as our organization as a whole. At this year’s Visionary Gala we presented UofT Engineering Outreach with the Outstanding Community Partner Award for their constant dedication. Thank you for all your support – we look forward to building this partnership!
LOOKING AHEAD

It is an exciting time of focus for Visions of Science!

As we emerge from our strategic planning period, we are excited to deepen our impact, continue to develop our capacity and reach more youth. As always we will continue to inspire, elevate, and empower youth through STEM. The future looks bright!

JOIN THE MOVEMENT AND GIVE!

In order to provide barrier-free support to youth, we offer all of our programs FREE of charge. By making a donation, you ensure more youth are reached through meaningful STEM programming and mentorship. Please consider making a donation.

WWW.VOSNL.ORG/DONATE