ULC Summer Learning Cohort Program Details

**Program Details**: as part of the ULC Summer Learning Cohort 2022, MPL is developing a Middle years STEM/STEAM program with a focus on inclusive programming for Neurodiverse tweens in the Milton Community. Potential Community partners for this project include: Wilfred Laurier University, Kerry’s Place, HYDAC, Town of Milton Summer Camps, and an Occupational Therapist.

Note: Laurier has been contacted in order to find a staff/faculty member whose skills can assist with this project. No other partners have been contacted about this project to date.

**Proposed project:**

The proposed project has 2 distinct phases: program/content development and planning (spring 2022) and program execution (Summer 2022).

**Phase 1: STEM/STEAM program development🡪 youth led, community driven**

* Phase 1 of this project is centered on the development of inclusive Summer STEAM program. In keeping with MPL’s commitment to Community-led programming, this phase of the program offers Teens and Tweens in Milton the opportunity to co-create the summer program with the Teen Services Librarian and other Library staff. Their tasks include: determining program details (frequency of program, length of sessions, location) as well as curriculum development (activities, supplies needed etc.).
* MPL offers a weekly volunteer program in the spring of 2022 (May/June) for Teens and Tweens. The program participants are tasked with creating neuro-diverse inclusive STEM/STEAM activities that will be offered in the summer to Middle school aged Tweens. This program will be offered for 1 session weekly (length of time TBD) for between 4-6 weeks (depending on program planning needs, TBD).
* In this program, MPL will set parameters for participants in their planning process, including: program goals, learning outcomes, evaluation criteria, etc. As well, all aspects of the program must be inclusive for neuro-diverse participants (including: program location, materials, and activities).
* To assist the youth in their program development, community partners are engaged to facilitate sessions with participants centered on: activity development, implementation strategies, and training for working with neurodiverse tweens, how to make programs inclusive for neurodiverse learning needs.
* In depth program structure:
	+ Volunteer program is 4 sessions in May, and registrants have the option of registering for the first 2 sessions, or all 4, and those who participated in all 4 sessions, have the option of volunteering through the summer
	+ High Level overview of sessions and content:
		- Session 1: introduction
			* Introduce participants to the program, to each other, goals of the project, overview of tools at their disposal, opportunity to play with resources, overview of budget (during session 1 and 2, neurodiverse part isn’t brought in yet)
		- Session 2: brainstorming and creating lesson plans
			* Participants begin brainstorming and creating activity plans in small groups. The goal is to generate 4 lesson plans that can be used through the summer
		- Session 3: introduction to neurodiverse component
			* This is a training session/information session introducing participants to the neurodiverse piece of the program, and giving them tools to better understand needs of neurodiverse youth. This training will be facilitated by a community partner and used to inform work in session 4
		- Session 4: Adapting
			* In this session, participants will use their training to adapt the lesson plans generated in session 2.

**Phase 2: Consulting Community Partners to Meet a Variety of Needs**

* Phase 2 involves consulting with community partners, getting professional opinions on the program planned by Milton youth
* Ensuring that the programming options that were developed in Phase 1 are appropriate for a neurodiverse audience, engaging the expertise of community partners to gather feedback and make adjustments as necessary
* Phase 2 also involves advertising the program, connecting with Town of Milton summer camps, school teachers and other community organizations to attend the program in the summer
* This is also evaluating phase 1 both from a staff perspective and gathering feedback from participants.

**Phase 3: STEAM/STEM program offered in the summer**

* Phase 3 of this program is the Summer STEM program planned by Milton youth, offered through the summer 2022.
* Program length and style to be determined in phase 1 of this project (frequency throughout the summer and length of each session)
* Youth who participated in phase 1 are encouraged to volunteer and assist with program facilitation along with other MPL staff and partners as needed
	+ For example, Laurier partner may be engaged to facilitate activities, depending on the nature of their involvement with the program
* The program is designed and facilitated keeping in mind neurodiverse participants’ needs. All program details will be determined in phase 1, but some potential program adaptations include:
	+ Program is delivered out of the Beaty Branch
		- This branch is typically quieter and less busy than other branches.
		- Beaty branch also has a large, isolated programming space to accommodate program space requirements
	+ Program operated outside of Library operating ours to minimize sensory overstimulation for participants
* Program is evaluated on a continuous basis by youth volunteers and Teen Services Librarian to ensure the program is achieving intended goals and desired outcomes.

**Program Mission and Vision**

Studies increasingly show the importance of out of school STEM/STEAM programs in developing youth interest in STEM fields, helping to make connections between schoolwork and the world around them, and teaching essential problem solving skills. However, not all STEM programs are inclusive to the needs of all youth, particularly neurodiverse youth.

MPL is working to address this gap, by designing and offering a Sumer learning STEAM/STEM program for Milton Middle School aged youth (Tweens). This program is developed by Milton youth, for Milton youth, with the vision of creating an inclusive youth STEM program, open to all tweens in Milton, specifically catering to the needs of neurodiverse youth in Milton.

**Program objectives**

* Provide enriching, inclusive, exciting STEM learning opportunities over the summer for Milton’s Tween population.
* Provide an opportunity for youth to take on leadership role in creating this program and championing inclusive learning in their community

**Breakdown of tasks, timelines and work planning**

**February:**

* Program kick off with ULC
* Summer Experience Grant submitted
* One on one meeting with ULC partner
* Laurier contacted about partnership opportunity
* Program overview created
* Program mission and vision created using SSinS as a guide

**March/April**

* Program plan for Phase 1 created
* Program Phase 1 approved internally
	+ Marketing material created
	+ Program added to MPL program calendar
	+ Program added to Social media calendar
	+ Program added to E-Newsletter for April/May
* Partners: HYDAC and Kerry’s Place contacted
	+ Overview of project and how we envision their involvement
	+ Nail down dates/times to work with phase 1 participants
* Laurier engaged and booked to help facilitate workshops with youth about activity planning etc.
* Town of Milton Camps contacted about bringing campers to participate in program during the summer

**May/June**

* Phase 1 begins
* Phase 3 program plan created in consultation with youth
* Phase 3program plan approved internally
	+ Marketing material created
	+ Program added to MPL program calendar
	+ Program added to Social media calendar
	+ Program added to E-Newsletter for June/July
* Materials needed for summer program are ordered
* Program space is prepared according to program needs
* Consultation with HYDAC, occupational therapist?

**July/August**

* Phase 2 program is offered
* Continuous program evaluation by Youth and Teen Services Librarian and tweaks are made to ensure program is meeting goals and outcomes

**September**

* Program evaluation and debrief
* Overview of what worked, what can be improved for the future