



Engage 052

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## How STEAM is bringing business and schools together

We have all heard in recent years about the ongoing advancement and emphasis being put on improving the quality of education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Organisations such as **STEAM Education Ltd** expand STEM learning to include the arts, creating STEAM – i.e. including humanities, language, dance, drama, visual arts, design and new media.

The difference between STEM and STEAM are small but significant. STEM focuses on investigating scientific concepts. STEAM expands the lens through which we address, teach and engage subjects through inquiry and problem-based learning, using creative processes, and incorporating imagination, arts, design and creativity as critical elements of holistic learning. In short it allows us to support learners to build their creative and critical thinking skills. These well-developed hard and soft skills are vital to growing a versatile modern workforce.

The STEAM Education community in Ireland continues to grow. It now includes 50+ companies, local authorities, and STEAM professionals supporting 150+ schools and over 13,000 primary school students to date.

The benefits of industry engagement with schools through our fun, hands-on early intervention programmes can already be seen. STEAM role models from companies have been trained to inspire the next generation in a way that fully supports teachers, the primary curricula, and of course the children - the next generation of STEM and Arts professionals.

### How does it work?

**STEAM Education Ltd** links STEM & Arts industries with primary school teachers and students around the country to inspire children in critical and creative thinking and 21st century skills development. As remote working has become commonplace, developing a future workforce of creative, independent, problem-solving individuals has never been so important. STEAM Education, based in Cork but working countrywide, has been in operation for 8 years, working with primary schools and industry to develop and facilitate **award winning CSR/education programmes.**

### What are the benefits?

Direct industry interventions in the classroom enhance and support an under-funded STEAM education system, inspire class teachers to reinforce the subject matter and carry it through into their broader teaching. Companies will also benefit in building a network of engaged, creative, and critical thinking graduates and apprentices, by offering the children some real-world exposure to grown-up opportunities.

Research indicates that the optimum age for engagement with STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) subjects is between 9 and 13 years. This is when a child's curiosity about the world they live in is most active. There is a natural fascination with what makes their world turn and how everyday things work. This, coupled with a limitless imagination, can lead them into an exciting world of discovery and learning. Research also shows that the younger the child, the smarter the investment in education, and that the effective introduction of STEAM subjects at the right stage produces beneficial outcomes for STEAM-related industries.

Hundreds of **primary schools and STEM companies** have already got involved. Global biopharmaceutical company Alexion Pharmaceuticals shares their experience.

*"After a fantastic 10 weeks inspiring kids to be curious about the world we live in, the final day showcase really captured the essence of the STEAM programmes and how rewarding it is for us to make a difference in the community in which we operate"*

- Raymond Hale, Senior Continuous Improvement Specialist, Alexion Pharmaceuticals.

### How to you get involved:

Your company can support a primary school through an early intervention programme, matched to your company activity, staff and CSR direction.

For further information on supporting your local school, teachers and students through STEAM+Arts, please visit [www.stameducation.store](http://www.stameducation.store) or contact STEAM Education on 021 4205437 / 0876189837 to discuss virtual and in person programmes.

Read more about STEAM and what early intervention with primary schools can do for your company and for society here: <https://bit.ly/The-World-Needs-STEAM>.

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