Creating a Workforce for Startups

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Why is STEM important?

Not only is promotion of training in the STEM fields essential for advancing and transforming technology, but a STEM-literate public will be better equipped to embrace technological change. The U.S. has become the world's most competitive and dynamic economy through cutting-edge technological advancement and promotion of STEM education will ensure our future success.

Why is diversity important?

Not only is promoting diversity the right thing to do, studies show that gender-diverse organizations are 21 percent more likely to experience above-average profitability than their less-diverse peers and ethnically diverse teams are 33 percent more likely to be profitable. As technology adoption becomes more widespread, promoting a diverse workforce will ensure that underrepresented segments are not left behind.

Why do startups care?

Access to talent is one of the most important issues facing startups. Ensuring that the U.S. has a diverse talent pool of STEM-literate Americans will be essential for driving innovation and startup creation. With a team of less than five people, a scrappy startup needs workers who can tackle difficult problems, STEM education is crucial for success in this environment. Finally, it is no secret that tech has a diversity problem, but startups understand that they must strive to find a diverse workforce if they hope to disrupt entrenched industries.

Where are we now?

Lawmakers at the federal, state, and local government levels can play a key role in furthering STEM education by working in partnership with stakeholders at all levels and seeking to remove barriers to participation in STEM careers, especially for women and other underrepresented groups. To build strong foundations for STEM literacy, policies must ensure that every American has the opportunity to master basic STEM concepts, including computational thinking, and digital literacy. Congress should support legislative efforts to:

- Increase funding for STEM education programs that support interdisciplinary learning and promotes entrepreneurship.

- Encourage work-based learning and training through educator-employer partnerships.

- Create STEM programs that target diversity and inclusion of underrepresented groups.