

# Understanding the Role of Informal STEM Educators in Creating Maker-based and Community-Centered Technology and Computer Science Learning Hubs for Urban Youth (Rec-to-Tech U)

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## Project Description

Makerspaces and making-related programs are often inaccessible, unaffordable, or simply not available to underserved youth. This three-year, Innovations in Development project involves partnership with four Recreation Centers (two each in Baltimore and Pittsburgh) to (1) train educators in equity-oriented approaches to making, (2) create four learning hubs, (3) develop and test equity-based curricula in each space, and (4) establish a replicable Localization Toolkit for future implementation in other communities.

## Activities to date:

- Established partnerships with two city governments and selected four sites for technology hubs
- Conducted initial interviews with administrators to assess their visions for the learning hubs and view on COVID-related challenges
- Developed integrative online resource for knowledge dissemination and multi-stakeholder communication
- Developed and disseminated findings from a pilot study informing the project with 3 local sites (Award # DRL- 1723610)



## Next Steps:

- Hiring and training educators at the participating sites (December '21)
- Facilitating delivery of technology-rich programs for youth at the sites (Winter and Spring '22)
- Conducting first round of comprehensive data collection (interviews with educators and administrators, surveys and focus groups with youth)



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