



## Program Summary

The Science and Technology Research Initiative for the Southern Vermont Economy (STRIVE) brings local stakeholders together to build a more deliberate, inclusive, and transformative STEM research ecosystem in Southern Vermont. Working together to navigate a fractious present, STRIVE is a novel partnership of educational institutions, business leaders, advocacy groups, economic development corporations, and local governments committed to using science and technology research to enhance our Green Mountain State. STRIVE works in the four most southern counties of Vermont, which are Bennington, Rutland, Windham, and Windsor counties. In these counties, economic development and planning is coordinated by three development committees and ten community development corporations. The Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) is the lead development organization and serves as the liaison between STRIVE and the regional economic development groups.

STRIVE's higher education partners are:

- Landmark College (lead institution) located in Putney,
- Bennington College located in Bennington, and
- The Community College of Vermont (CCV) with a statewide footprint and campus locations in Brattleboro, Bennington, Rutland, Upper Valley and Springfield within the STRIVE target area.

## Mission Statement

The mission of STRIVE is to catalyze and support a collaborative, civic-minded STEM research ecosystem as the foundation of regional planning and economic development in Southern Vermont.

## Vision Statement

In the STRIVE ecosystem, learners at all levels have opportunities to explore science and research topics that are relevant to life in Southern Vermont. Beginning in primary school and continuing through secondary and post-secondary education, students are exposed to the use of science and research to address local concerns and issues. Research-based learning methods are used to broaden participation and create a culture of inclusion in regional research and science activities.

Students learn about careers in research and the sciences, and related employment opportunities with businesses, manufacturing, government entities, and educational systems. Multiple pathways to science and technology research and development employment exist and include work-based learning experiences such as internships, assistantships, apprenticeships, and mentoring opportunities.

A well-established infrastructure for administrative research support oversees the submission of multiple funding requests to a variety of funders including local, state, federal, and private entities. Workshops on grant writing topics are provided and experienced grant writers are available to assist with developing funding applications. Seed funding is available to explore and pilot new STEM research activities.

Businesses, nonprofits, and educational entities are supported in pursuing funding opportunities for science and technology research funding. Economic development groups guide community members through government requirements. Funding awards and research activities from across the ecosystem are tracked and reported on. Formal and informal communication channels exist to connect research activities and create synergistic research partnerships. Lessons learned and systems development models are identified and shared internally and externally for replication in other regions.



# STRIVE

The Science and Technology  
Research Initiative for the  
Vermont Economy

## STRIVE Activities

STRIVE will coordinate activities to build a robust science and technology research ecosystem in Southern Vermont. These activities will include working with stakeholders to:

- gather data and information to assess the current state of research activities,
- create a strategic plan to develop the research ecosystem, and
- in a continuous improvement loop, assess progress, make adjustments, and report out to stakeholder groups.

Some of the activities that will be targeted to specific groups include:

- **For grades 7-12 students:** summer programs, classroom presentations, career exploration.
- **For K-12 educators:** research opportunities, research proposal development training and support, neurodiversity training.
- **For businesses, employers, and nonprofits:** funded interns, research partnerships, potential product development support, working with neurodivergent employees training, research proposal development support.
- **For local and county government groups:** funded interns to work on science and technology research, research support on local science and technology related issues, partnerships in pursuing research funding.
- **For higher education students:** paid science and technology work-based experiences, proposal writing training and experience, increased hands-on research experiences.
- **For higher education faculty and staff:** research proposal development training and staff support, new analytical equipment to enhance faculty research and student learning, increased research opportunities, increased research partnerships with colleagues within higher education, opportunities to develop research projects with businesses, local government, and nonprofit groups, support to integrate research and work experiences in the classroom.

This list is not meant to be all-inclusive or static. It is expected that as the research ecosystem grows, new activities will be added, and existing activities will be adapted or removed as the needs of the research ecosystem, the region, and its stakeholders evolve.