



SciNetworkNYC

a NYC Cultural Institution Partnership

American Museum
of Natural History



Staten Island
ZOO



NYBG



2024 - 2025 FINAL REPORT

About SCI Network NYC

WHO WE ARE

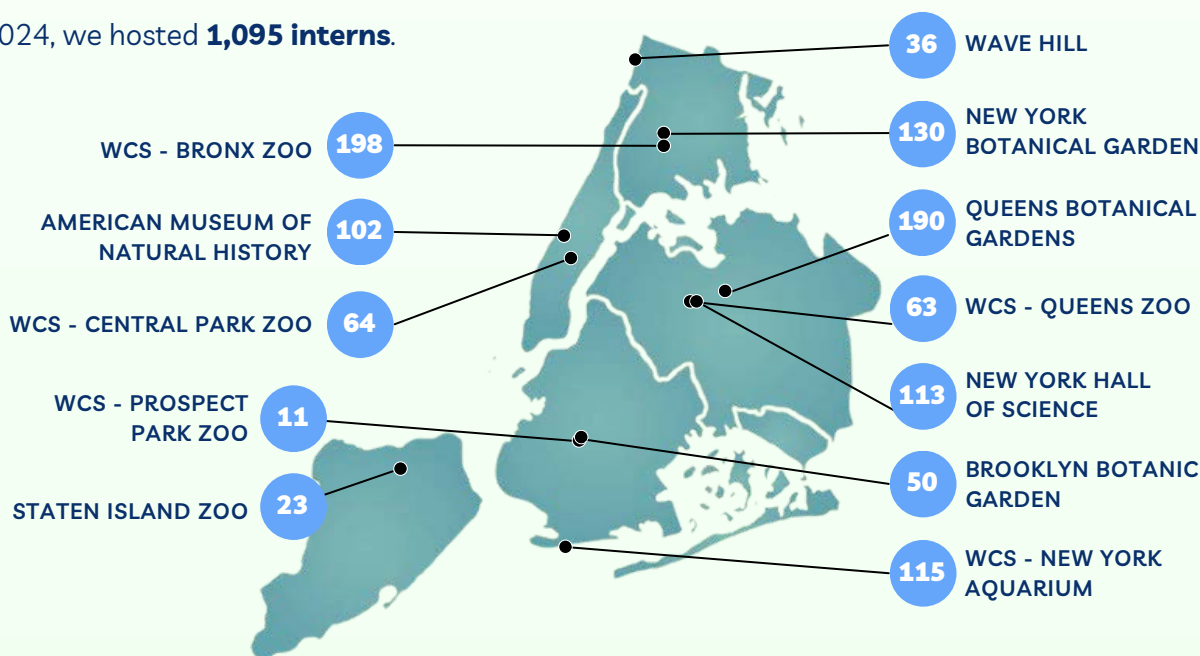
The SCI Network NYC is a consortium of eight science-based cultural institutions committed to providing high-quality STEM internships to New York City youth. We host nearly **1,100 interns** who gained experience in a variety of fields, including animal care, horticulture, science communication, teaching, and administration.

NETWORK GOALS

- Combine the strengths of our institutions to build pathways for New York City youth to pursue STEM internships.
- Provide training and support for internship supervisors to ensure high-quality career development experiences for youth.
- Leverage New York City's Summer Youth Employment Program to benefit our interns and institutions.
- Demonstrate our collective impact through evaluation, storytelling, and advocacy.

INTERNS BY INSTITUTION

In 2024, we hosted **1,095 interns**.



Acknowledgements

SCI Network NYC is generously supported by Speaker Adrienne E. Adams and the New York City Council



Contact

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Who Are SCI Network Youth?

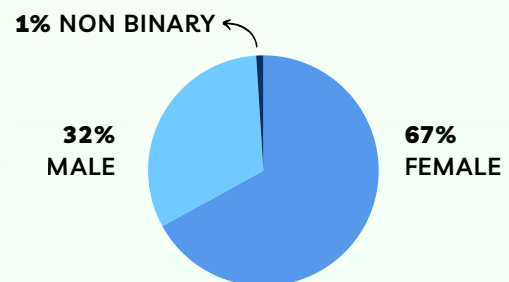
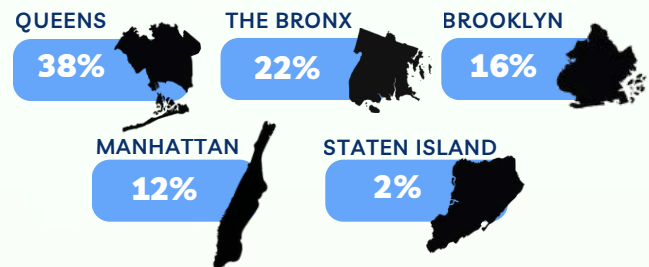
Internships are critical pathways to employment, but have historically been available only to those with financial resources and social capital. SCI Network NYC is working to ensure that youth from all backgrounds can participate in science internships. We partner with local organizations, council members, and schools to recruit youth and support them as they pursue the rich learning experiences at our institutions.

Youth collectively spoke 48 Languages

59% speak a language other than English at home



90% of interns lived in New York City



**84% of SCI Network youth identify as people of color
compared to 69% of New York City residents**

The Other Identity category includes American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and write-in options.

SCI Network Internships At a Glance

Collectively, we hosted
1,095 interns

This total has remained consistent over the past two years, thanks in part to SCI Network support.



Youth earned more than
\$2.4 Million
in stipends and wages

**20% of these funds come from NYC Department of Youth & Community Development, CUNY, and Fordham University*

SCI Network NYC Internships are wide ranging. We offer opportunities for youth in the following disciplines:



SCIENCE COMMUNICATION



SCIENCE RESEARCH



CONSERVATION ADVOCACY



HORTICULTURE/GARDENING



ANIMAL CARE



SCIENCE EDUCATION

On average, youth receive more than

200 hours of training through internships

Youth receive access to SCI Network resources, including:



SKILL DEVELOPMENT
WORKSHOPS



PEER NETWORKING EVENTS



ASSISTANCE WITH ADVANCING

2024 YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Auguste Schmidt

📍 Queens, NY

- Staten Island Zoo Research Intern (2024)
- Staten Island Zoo Aquarium Intern (2023)
- New York Aquarium Sales Associate (2022 - Present)
- NYBG Advanced Explainer (2020)
- NYBG Intern Explainer (2019- 2020)

"Working at Staten Island Zoo as an aquarium intern, expanded my interest in working with marine animals and the skills I learned from working alongside keepers and educators alike were invaluable. Later, I had the extraordinary opportunity to present the enrichment project I developed as a poster at the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' annual conference!"



2024 YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Edwin Gomez

📍 Queens, NY

- NYSCI Senior Explainer (2024-Present)
- AMNH MEEP Intern (2023)
- NYSCI Program Explainer (2022-2023)
- NYSCI Explainer (2019-2022)

"My time at NYSCI and AMNH solidified my passion for education and STEM outreach. Working and interning in these institutions has given me a great foundation in science education and classroom management. These experiences have inspired me to pursue a career that bridges education, psychology, and STEM, whether as an educator or counselor, to inspire and guide the next generation of learners."

2024 YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Ilana Weinstein

📍 Bronx, NY

- Wave Hill Youth Programs Manager (full-time)
- Wave Hill Forest Project Crew Leader (2016)
- WCS HIVE Intern (2014)
- Wave Hill Forest Project Intern (2013)
- AMNH SRMP Intern (2013)

"From bumping into Neil deGrasse Tyson at AMNH to hearing Eric Sanderson speak at the Bronx Zoo to meeting countless horticulturalists at Wave Hill, the people I met always seemed willing to share their passion even though I was just in high school. Feeling seen by adults in the field was a really great experience I hope to share with my interns now that I manage a SCI Network internship myself!"



Youth & Civic Engagement

Our communities, city, and country become stronger and more just when all people are empowered to shape our future. Our programs cultivate youths' sense of civic responsibility and their ability to create change around the issues that matter most to them. **Some highlights:**

NEW INTERNSHIPS

- **QBG's Growing Justice internship** is a sustainable urban farming internship for 30 high school youth. Interns reach thousands of community members through food production and distribution, peer education workshops on food justice and nutrition, and advocacy on food policy and sustainability.
- **Queens Zoo's Youth Environmental Advocates internship** brings together 20 high school students passionate about environmental advocacy. Interns planned the WCS Youth Conservation Summit which convened 100 youth from 50 NYC schools to learn to reduce the impacts of climate change on their communities and take part in a beach cleanup.

STEWARDSHIP

- **NYBG Explainers** help maintain gardens at NYBG's Edible Academy and in the local Bronx community through a partnership with the Friends of Mosholu Parkland. Explainers connect their understanding of local plants while removing invasive species, mulching garden beds, and planting bulbs and edible and ornamental species in our communities.
- **Wave Hill Woodland Ecology Research Mentorship interns** visited two community gardens in the Bronx. At Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, interns helped prepare the gardens for winter and at James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center, they worked with community volunteers to pick up litter, remove bittersweet vines, and clean trails.

GOVERNMENT ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

Youth joined WCS Government Affairs at the Association of Zoos & Aquariums Advocacy Day in Washington DC, attending meetings with US representatives and senators. Key issues included joining the Congressional Zoo and Aquarium Caucus, expanding awareness of the role of aquariums and zoos in animal rescue and rehabilitation, federal conservation legislation, and appropriations priorities.



Community of Practice

The SCI Network NYC community of practice continues to advance our professional growth and collective action to support NYC youth.



GROWING SYEP PARTNERSHIPS

- In 2024, seven SCI Network institutions hosted interns through SYEP, providing paid early career experiences for **274 young New Yorkers**.
- SYEP is not a perfect fit for mission-driven non-profits because of timing and the administrative burden. We continue to strategize about how to best leverage SYEP for our institutions and interns.
- In the short-term, we reduced the administrative load by working with a single provider – St. Nicks Alliance – to place 100% of their 2024 SYEP sector-focused contract at four SCI Network institutions: WCS, NYBG, Staten Island Zoo, and Wave Hill.
- We also continue to build relationships with SYEP contacts from City University of New York, ExpandEd, and the Department of Youth & Community Development to strategize about how to scale participation for all SCI Network internships.

2024 YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Indigo Arena-Hurd

📍 Brooklyn, NY

- Bronx Zoo Animal Associate (2023)
- New York Aquarium Sea Cliffs Intern (2023-2024)
- Staten Island Zoo Animal Care Intern (2024)
- Staten Island Zoo Seasonal Keeper (2024-Present)



"I have always wanted to be an animal caretaker, and being surrounded by so many keepers with different life and career experiences was such an enlightening experience for my own career path. Getting to observe and engage in various hands-on husbandry practices was a great view into what the world of zoo keeping is like!"

2024 YOUTH SPOTLIGHT

Oscar Smith

📍 Bronx, NY

- NYBG Explainer (2022-Present)
- Wave Hill WERM Intern (2022-2023)
- Bronx Zoo Project TRUE Intern (2024)



"I enjoy explaining scientific topics, such as how nighttime pollination works or the various uses of indigenous plants. My roles developed my public speaking skills and scientific knowledge. In the future, I hope to have an environmental career, where I work alongside others to study the climate and design green infrastructure."

Supervisor Training

We provide training and networking opportunities for intern supervisors to support their professional development.



In March 2025, we hosted a workshop at Wave Hill, which brought together 38 supervisors to discuss cross-cutting topics like recruitment, career development, and youth sense of belonging.

SUPERVISOR SPOTLIGHT



Marianne Scocco

Staten Island Zoo
Volunteer, Docent, &
Intern Manager

What types of internships do you offer?

"The Staten Island Zoo offers internships to students passionate about conservation, animal well-being, and science. Our program helps them develop professional skills and explore their field of interest. My hope is that students will walk away feeling confident and excited to return to school with a foundation of real-world experiences and connections with mentors who inspire them."



How does SCI Network NYC support you?

"My biggest challenge has been reviewing internship applications. There are so many incredible young people interested in conservation and it can be difficult to decide who to bring on board. This year's SCI Network Supervisor Training was my first and it was nice to meet so many like-minded professionals who are passionate about providing opportunities to youth. I left with fresh ideas to strengthen our application review process, valuable guidance from experienced colleagues, and a renewed sense of purpose."

Hosting Youth Events

SCI Network NYC offers opportunities for youth to network and build community with their peers across institutions.

HIGHLIGHT: HOLIDAY LIGHTS YOUTH NETWORKING NIGHT

In November, we hosted a Holiday Lights Youth Networking event at the Bronx Zoo, bringing together 44 interns and staff from five institutions for a night of community building and celebration. Interns and staff practiced networking and learned about opportunities for science-interested youth across NYC cultural institutions before enjoying the Bronx Zoo Holiday Lights celebration with a scavenger hunt and holiday desserts.

“Some things we have in common are we all like science and nature, our internships all have a capstone experience, and we all feel supported in our internships.”

-Youth Attendee



Impact

CAREER PLANS

74% 

of youth envisioned their future career involving science

“I will use most of the things I've learned and the skills I've gained from this experience, like getting to know the characteristics of animals and how we can help them survive in the wild. I gained a greater passion on this subject and this career path.”

- WCS Intern

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77%  

of youth would like to work or intern at a cultural institution in the future

“The skills I've honed in adaptability, flexibility, and learning quickly will be invaluable in the future. Most importantly, my internship helped me discover my passion for interdisciplinary science, where I can combine my interests in technology, storytelling, and problem-solving to create meaningful solutions.”

- NYSCI Intern

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LEARNING & SKILL DEVELOPMENT

60% of interns described how their internship helped them develop important workplace skills that would be useful throughout their careers, like teamwork, flexibility, time management, and communication.

35% of interns described how their experience helped them gain skills in science communication.

59% of interns described the future relevance of other position-specific skills like pedagogy, plant identification, customer service, and animal husbandry.

Interns described how learning and practicing new skills developed their confidence, particularly with presenting and public speaking.