



a Coalition to Support NYC Youth

## INTERIM REPORT 2025



American Museum  
of Natural History



Wave Hill



# ABOUT SCI NETWORK NYC

## WHO WE ARE

SCI Network NYC is a coalition of eight science-based cultural institutions committed to providing high-quality STEM internships for NYC youth.

**Paid internships are the single most important driver of successful paid employment, next to college graduation.**

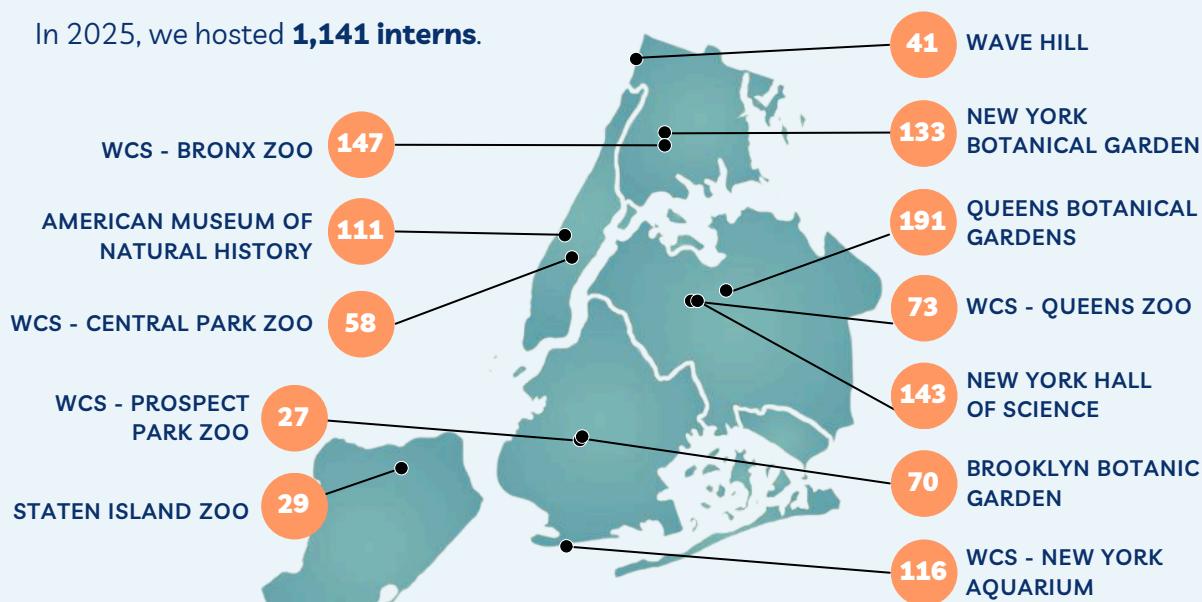
Each year, we host **1,100 interns** who gain experience in a variety of fields, including horticulture, animal care, science communication, teaching, and administration. These positions are career launchpads, building our city's next generation of STEM professionals.

## OUR GOALS

- Build pathways for NYC youth to pursue STEM careers.
- Provide training and support for internship supervisors.
- Share our work, impact, and ideas to benefit the field.

## INTERNS BY INSTITUTION

In 2025, we hosted **1,141 interns**.



# WHO ARE SCI NETWORK YOUTH?

Our approach to recruiting interns is grounded in our commitment to inclusion and opportunity. We partner with schools, council members and community organizations to connect with and support youth. By doing so, we not only expand the pool of talented interns — but also invest in broadening pathways into STEM careers.

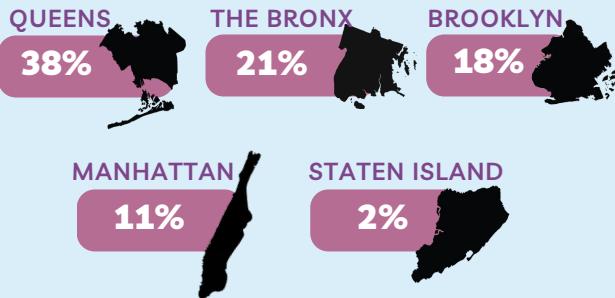
Youth collectively speak  
**49 languages**



Haitian Creole Bangla  
Chinese Hindi Korean Yoruba  
Bangali Portuguese Tibetan  
Turkish Vietnamese Italian  
Filipino Thai Malayalam Punjabi  
Albanian Fujianese Gujarati Twi Haitian  
Macedonian Akan Japanese Bengali  
Darija Cantonese German  
Fulani Tagalog Greek  
Quichua Wolof Romanian Urdu  
Swedish Guyanese French Polish Mandarin  
Waray-Waray Russian Serbian  
Burmese Armenian  
Hebrew Taishanese

# Spanish

**91%** of interns live in  
New York City



**75%** speak a language other than English at home



**90%** of SCI Network youth identify as people of color compared to 69% of New York City residents.

**51%**  
of SCI Network youth  
identify as Black or Hispanic



# SCI NETWORK INTERNSHIPS



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

In 2025, we hosted

## 1,141 interns



This total increased by 46 interns since 2024, thanks to ongoing support from SCI Network funders.



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

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

# YOUTH SPOTLIGHTS

## Maria Martorana

📍 Staten Island, NY

- Staten Island Zoo, Animal Care Intern (2025)

*“During my internship, I taught a bird to fly to my finger on cue, which provided mental stimulation, exercise, and built trust, and allowed me to form an incredible bond with this unique species. I’ve learned that teamwork and collaboration, like comparing observations, are essential in animal care. I am now pursuing a career in Zoo Medicine, which will allow me to work hands-on with these species while also promoting their medical care, conservation efforts, and protection.”*



## Blanca Maymi

📍 Manhattan, NY

- American Museum of Natural History, MEEP Intern (2024)
- Bronx Zoo, Visitor Engagement Associate (2025)
- Wildlife Conservation Society, AIP Graduate Student (2025-Present)

*“It was through my SCI Network internships that I learned that I love science communication. It took me a little while to find my niche, but overall, I just loved teaching and talking to people. Until that point, I never saw myself as a person who can guide others and that shift changed my life - I was proving to myself that I knew more than I gave myself credit for. Now my graduate work is focused on engaging urban youth in marine biology and conservation; I want kids to learn about the world, especially during our climate crisis.”*



# YOUTH SPOTLIGHTS

## Amelia Hearse

📍 Bronx, NY

- Bronx Zoo, Discovery Guide (2023-2024)
- Bronx Zoo, Discovery Guide Leader (2023-2025)
- Wave Hill, WERM Intern (2025)

*"When I was younger, I was fascinated by plants and animals. The Bronx Zoo and Wave Hill made that part of me light up and these experiences helped me realize that nature is ubiquitous, whether you're walking the busy streets of Manhattan or driving upstate. They also boosted my confidence in pursuing STEM. Engaging with labs and professionals sparked my passion for innovation and collaboration, helping me clarify my next step, continuing to educate people on conservation and nature."*



*"I have held a variety of positions within the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, from being taught as an apprentice to teaching those very same apprentices. I have been able to experience the program and later give back to others so that they might have an amazing experience like I did. Working at BBG has shown me that you can be successful at a job that you love and are passionate about and the more I have worked within the Garden, the more I feel called to work within an environmental or educational field."*

- Brooklyn Botanic Garden, Garden Apprentice, (2016-2019)
- Brooklyn Botanic Garden, GAP Program Assistant (2022)
- BBG Junior Botanist Plant Investigator Summer Instructor, 2023 & 2024
- BBG Children's Garden Fellow, 2025

## Cristina Martinez

📍 Brooklyn, NY



# YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

SCI Network NYC offers opportunities for youth to learn from peers and staff across institutions and build their social capital.

## *Holiday Lights Youth Networking Night*

In November, we hosted a networking event at the Bronx Zoo, bringing together 52 interns and staff from seven SCI Network institutions for a night of community building and celebration.

We hosted a Green Career Panel featuring four professionals from ConEdison who represented a variety of careers, including customer service, community engagement, science research, and environmental compliance. They shared stories about their career pathways and answered questions from youth.

Interns practiced networking with panelists and their peers, learning about other science opportunities for youth across NYC cultural institutions. They then ventured out into the zoo to Holiday Lights celebration with a scavenger hunt and holiday desserts.



## Next Steps



Providing LinkedIn training to help youth set up their professional profiles.



Opening up each partner's intern training events to interns at other SCI Network institutions.



Building a SCI Network group on LinkedIn to share information about our opportunities with youth and families.

# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Our community of practice advances our growth as leaders and allows us to share our expertise with the youth development field.

## Supervisor Support

Each year, we host an intern supervisor workshop, bringing together dozens of staff who support young people for networking and shared learning. The next workshop will be hosted at the New York Hall of Science in March 2026.

We built a professional learning community for supervisors to keep in touch and continue to share best practices and resources with each other.



## Outreach & Dissemination



Upcoming Conference: Staff from four SCI Network partners will present at the American Alliance of Museums Annual Conference in May 2026. Our session, titled **Building a Cultural Institution Network for Youth Internships** will highlight how breaking down institutional silos can increase museums' impact on youth career pathways.

Career Discovery Week is a citywide initiative for NYC public high school students to explore careers through workplace visits, activities, and conversations with professionals. In 2026, three SCI Network partners will join 130 other employers to host students, and will be the only cultural institutions represented.

# LAUNCHING CAREERS



2016

**Prospect Park Zoo,**  
Project TRUE  
Green Roof Research

2021

**Wildlife Conservation Society,**  
Assistant Data Analyst

2023

**New York Botanical Garden,**  
Urban Conservation Research Intern

2024 - Present

**New York Botanical Garden,**  
Manager of Urban Conservation Data,  
Tools, and Outreach

**Lucinda  
Royte**

Brooklyn, NY



*"I was drawn to WCS and NYBG because they are large, mission-driven institutions with a real stake in New York City's future. Their deep engagement with the city and commitment to connecting people with nature through innovative urban sustainability work made them ideal places for me to grow professionally."*

2013

**Queens Botanical Garden,**  
Children's Garden Volunteer

2014 - 2015

**American Museum of Natural History,**  
Visitor Services Representative

2017 - 2018

**Brooklyn Botanic Garden,**  
School Programs & Children's Garden  
Instructor

2019 - 2023

**Queens Zoo,**  
Senior Conservation Educator

2022 - 2024

**Wildlife Conservation Society,** Advanced  
Inquiry Program Graduate Student

2023 - Present

**Prospect Park Zoo,**  
Manager of Education

**Christine  
Peralta**

Brooklyn, NY



*"The way I approached my career at the beginning was thinking about the places I loved to visit and finding any available roles in that organization, which is how I found myself volunteering at QBG, while having a service industry job. Sometimes, in order to follow my interests, I would have to supplement my income by getting another, more 'random', role. As a result, I accrued a variety of skills that made me a very competitive applicant for any roles I went for. Ultimately, I was able to combine the varied experiences to become the Manager of Education at PPZ, where I am now collaborating with these organizations and others like them to make connections through our shared goals."*

# IMPACT

SCI Network NYC internships prepare youth for careers at cultural institutions, in science research, and across industries.

## Career Plans

**75%**

of youth would like to pursue a career in STEM

**77%**

of youth would like to work for a cultural institution in the future

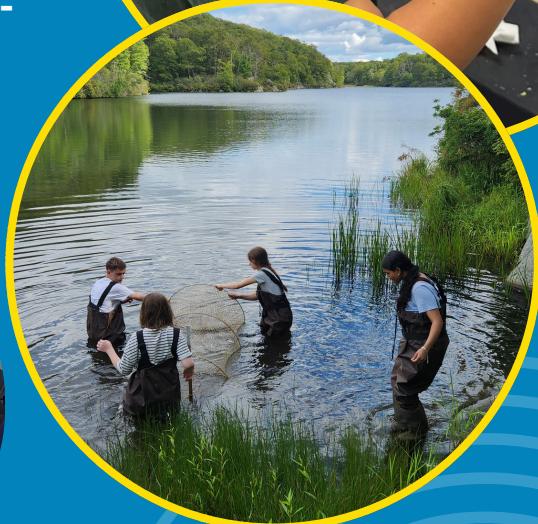
## Learning & Skill Development

**53%**

of youth described how they developed **workplace skills** like teamwork, time management, and communication.

**55%**

of youth described learning **position-specific skills** like machine learning, science research, pedagogy, plant identification, customer service, and animal husbandry.



### Acknowledgements

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



Photo Credits: AMNH, BBG, NYBG, NYSCI, QBG, Staten Island Zoo, Wave Hill, WCS,

### Contacts

Erin Prada, Wildlife Conservation Society  
[eprada@wcs.org](mailto:eprada@wcs.org)

Daisy Rodriguez, Wildlife Conservation Society  
[drodriguez@wcs.org](mailto:drodriguez@wcs.org)

Chris Durosinmi, Wildlife Conservation Society  
[cdurosinmi@wcs.org](mailto:cdurosinmi@wcs.org)