

# SciNetworkNYC

a Coalition to Support NYC Youth

**FINAL REPORT  
2025**



American Museum  
of Natural History



BROOKLYN  
BOTANIC  
GARDEN

**NYBG**



Queens  
Botanical  
Garden

Staten Island  
**ZOO**



Wave Hill



Wildlife  
Conservation  
Society

# 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.**

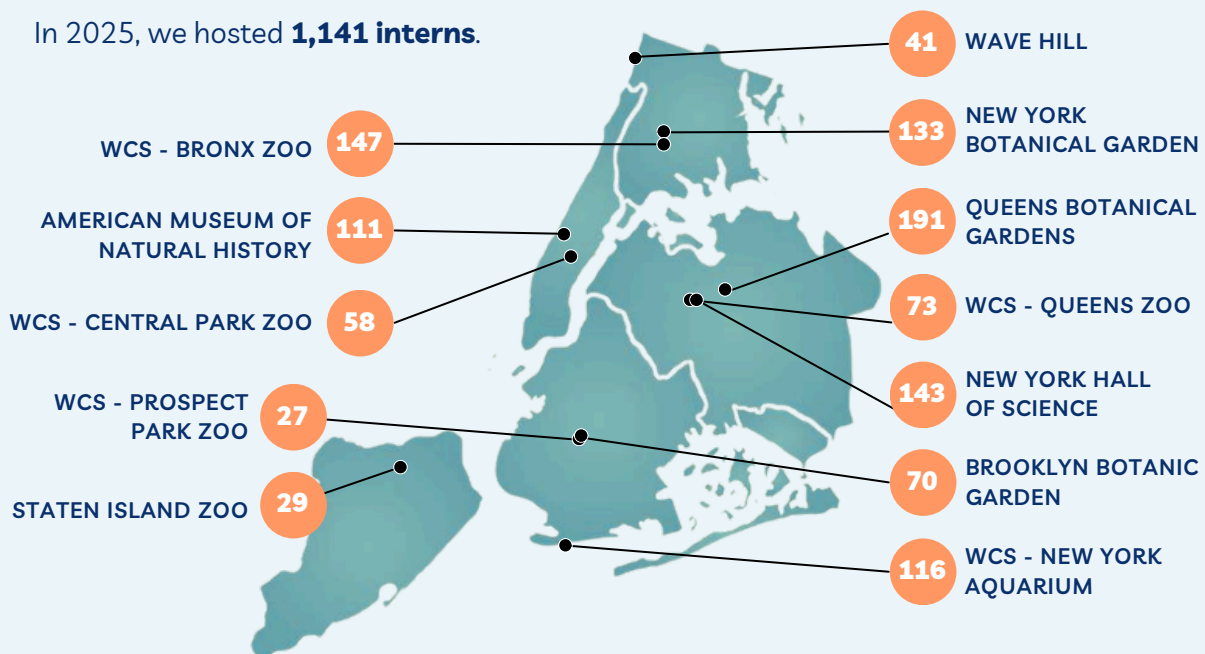
Each year, we host **1,100 interns** who gain experience in a variety of fields, including horticulture, animal care, science communication, teaching, and administration. These positions are career launchpads, building our city's next generation of STEM professionals.

## 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?

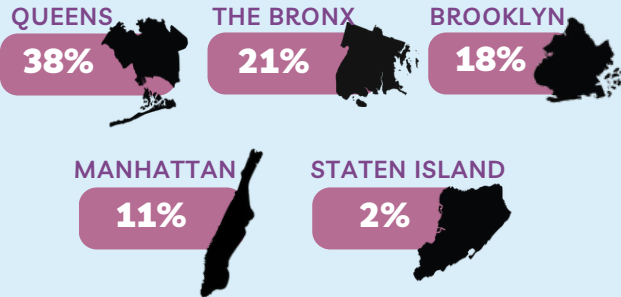
Our approach to recruiting interns is grounded in our commitment to inclusion and opportunity. We partner with schools, council members and community organizations to connect with and support youth. By doing so, we not only expand the pool of talented interns — but also invest in broadening pathways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

Youth collectively speak  
**49 languages**



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

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



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

**51%**

of SCI Network youth are Black or Hispanic



# SCI NETWORK INTERNSHIPS

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

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

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 (2025-2026)

*"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.

## Networking Night

In November, we hosted a networking event at the Bronx Zoo's Holiday Lights for 52 interns and staff from seven SCI Network institutions.

We hosted a Green Career Panel featuring four professionals from ConEdison in a variety of careers: customer service, science research, community engagement, and environmental compliance. Interns practiced networking with the panelists and their peers and then ventured out into the zoo to enjoy Holiday Lights.

We will host future events for SCI Network interns and alumni and invite youth to events hosted by individual institutions, such as NYSCI's STEM Career Expo and WCS's REEL Wild Film Festival.



## Art Call: Show us your Internship

We put out a call to current and recent SCI Network youth to create art representing their internship. We prompted them to think about moments that sparked curiosity or surprise, behind-the-scenes perspectives, or ideas or experiences that stuck with them.

SCI Network leadership will select designs to print on stickers and totes, with the artists receiving a \$100 honorarium for their contribution. We will distribute the merch to youth to show their SCI Network pride.



# SUPERVISOR SUPPORT

We built a professional learning community for supervisors to network, build skills, and share best practices and resources.

## Training and Networking

We host an annual intern supervisor workshop, bringing together youth development staff from all eight SCI Network institutions. In March, 43 staff met at NYSCI for a day of networking and shared learning.

Michaela Labriole, NYSCI's Senior Director of Strategic Education Initiatives, led a session on Climate Storytelling, about how climate change is impacting NYC and practical strategies for engaging interns in climate conversations. We used future-focused visioning to identify opportunities for youth-centered climate engagement in our programs.

We explored NYSCI's CityWorks exhibit to learn about how natural and built systems work together to make New York City function. The day concluded with a rose, bud, and thorn reflection to reconnect and acknowledge the emotional weight of climate change and youth work.



## Online Community of Practice

Building on the momentum started during the in-person training, we launched an online community on Discord to allow supervisors to continue their conversations.

# DISSEMINATION

We share our work, impact, and ideas to benefit the field.

## Outreach

Career Discovery Week is a city-wide initiative for high school students to explore careers through workplace visits, activities, and meeting professionals. In 2026, three SCI Network partners will join 130 other employers as the only cultural institutions to host students



## Presentations



Leaders 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.

## Digital Network



This spring, we launched the **SCI Network LinkedIn page**. Posts highlight the collective impact of our internship programs by sharing coalition activities, professional development opportunities, intern and partner spotlights, and position openings in NYC's science and culture sector.



Follow us!



# LAUNCHING CAREERS

2016



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

2021

**Wildlife Conservation Society,**  
Assistant Data Analyst

2023

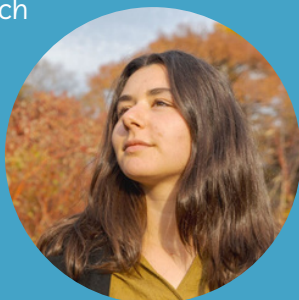
**New York Botanical Garden,**  
Urban Conservation Research Intern

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

In an open-ended question about learning:

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 the Speaker and 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

Daisy Rodriguez, Wildlife Conservation Society  
drodriguez@wcs.org

Chris Durosinmi, Wildlife Conservation Society  
cdurosinmi@wcs.org