

# The art of neuroscience: creating networks for innovative engagement at sfn, schools, local communities & congress

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"All outstanding work, in art as well as in science, results from immense zeal applied to a great idea." – Santiago Ramon y Cajal

Science needs investment, and engaging people builds support for research and education. Integrating arts in STEM ("STEAM") fosters innovative engagement. We excited thousands of K-12 students, scientists, policy makers and the public about research and art during the 2017 Society for Neuroscience conference in Washington, DC.

Nonprofit NW Noggin ([nwnoggin.org](http://nwnoggin.org)) organizes undergraduates and graduates to collaborate and engage, building networks and inspiring academic priority students and the public about discovery in neuroscience and art. Volunteers leave classrooms and labs, and benefit from connecting across disciplines and institutions, serving as "near peer" role models, gaining skill explaining work and thinking creatively about careers.

We've met with over 20,000 K-12 students since 2012!



In fall of 2017, 21 Noggin volunteers attended the Society for Neuroscience conference in DC. SfN provided complimentary registration, the Portland State University Neuroscience Club and NIH BUILD EXITO funded outreach supplies and travel for 8 PSU participants, while OHSU covered travel for their 5. The remaining 8 (4 from PSU, 4 from WSU) were supported by NW Noggin, along with housing for all 21, partly through money raised at Noggin Fest, a student-run celebration of research, music and art at Portland's Alberta Rose Theater.



During a week in DC, in partnership with the American Brain Coalition, SfN, and the Phillips Collection, we worked with 750 students at Turner Elementary and Sidwell Friends. We staffed a popular "Art of Neuroscience" booth at SfN, and presented our volunteers, research, and evidence of outreach effectiveness to the U.S. House Neuroscience and STEAM caucuses at a "Noggin Briefing with Brains, Art & Ice Cream," as we did previously in 2016. Three of the four caucus co-chairs represent Northwest districts we've visited before. At the briefing, co-sponsored by PSU, OHSU, the p:ear homeless youth center and the Portland Art Museum, we examined human cerebrums, discussed research, and crafted pipe cleaner neurons with two House members and more than 80 Congressional staff.



Building excitement and awareness of discoveries in neuroscience through arts-integrated outreach across institutional, state, federal and generational lines trains diverse new scientists to collaborate and communicate, and increases awareness and support for further investment in brain research and the arts.



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For more information go to [nwnoggin.org](http://nwnoggin.org)

