

## NGS CONNECTS Evaluation Focus Group Protocol (Educators)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our NextGen STEM (NGS) CONNECTS Evaluation Focus Group. Please know that all responses are voluntary. Individual responses will not be shared and only aggregated; anonymous results will be reported. Please answer each question regarding the NGS CONNECTS activity you are involved with.

### **Informed Consent Information Sheet:**

Purpose of this Research/Project: The purpose of the evaluation study is to measure, interpret, and evaluate the outcomes that MUREP addresses. The findings of this investigation are intended to be used by NASA (NextGen STEM CONNECTS specifically) to inform prioritization of NGS CONNECTS investments, activity design, and associated efforts related to sustainability and lowering of barriers to entry for learners, especially those from groups historically underrepresented and underserved in STEM.

Targeted NGS CONNECTS Activities: CONNECTS activities that have been active for at least one year are the targeted sample for this study.

Procedures: The research will include a document analysis, surveys, and focus group data collection.

Risks: Participation in this research does not place you at more than minimal risk of harm.

Benefits: While there may be no direct benefit to you as a participant, results from this study will assist in ensuring that NGS CONNECTS activities has evidence on the perceptions regarding efficiency, usefulness, and relevance of NASA CONNECTS for continuous improvement and decision-making.

Extent of Anonymity and Confidentiality: All the results of this study will be kept confidential. The study participants names and contact information will be disassociated from responses gathered through the study's data collection processes (including from this focus group). All data will be presented in aggregate. It is possible that the NASA Institutional Review Board (IRB) may view this study's collected data for auditing purposes. The IRB is responsible for the oversight of the protection of human subjects involved in research.

Compensation: None

Freedom to Withdraw: As a participant, you are free to withdraw from a study at any time without penalty and you may choose to not answer any questions you deem unnecessary.

Subject's Responsibilities: I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have the following responsibilities: Participation in a focus group, participation in an interview, and submit project documents for analysis by the evaluator.

Contact Information: Should you have any questions about this research or its procedures, you may contact the principal investigator of this project, Dr. Aime Black, at [aime.t.black@nasa.gov](mailto:aime.t.black@nasa.gov).

## **Introduction Script:**

Guardians of Honor was contracted by NASA to conduct an evaluation of NextGen STEM (NGS) **Connecting Our NASA Network of Educators for Collaborating Together in STEM (CONNECTS)** community of practice. The purpose of the evaluation study is to conduct a process evaluation that builds knowledge about NGS activities by understanding the efficiency, usefulness, and relevance of NASA CONNECTS to its end users (registered participants). The findings of this investigation are intended to be used by NASA (the NGS CONNECTS community of practice specifically) to inform NASA Office of STEM Engagement and NGS goals and objectives and evidence building directly related to the Learning Agenda. The goal of this evaluation is to conduct a process evaluation that builds knowledge about NGS activities by understanding the efficiency, usefulness, and relevance of NASA CONNECTS to its end users (registered participants) to help guide decision-making.

This evaluation is not an assessment of you. In addition, participation in this focus group is voluntary. You can skip any questions you do not want to answer. This focus group will last approximately 45-60 minutes.

At the end of this evaluation study, we will be writing a report for NASA. We will be summarizing all of the focus group responses; however, we will not disclose any names or connect your responses to your specific site. Today, we will be taking notes during our conversation. To ensure accuracy, we would like to record this conversation. The recording will be deleted after we have summarized your responses. Are you okay with us recording the interview? Do you have any questions?

1. What is your end goal when you log into CONNECTS? How has CONNECTS helped you meet that goal?
2. What changes would you recommend to make the CONNECTS platform more user-friendly?
3. How do you contribute to the collaborative experiences in your group?
4. What features on CONNECTS do you find helpful for collaboration? Why?
5. Do you have suggestions for keeping CONNECTS "fresh" and making it more useful for educators to keep coming back?
6. How often do you expect to see new content? Why?
7. When new content is posted, what causes you to click on it?
8. Can you describe an example of how you have used information or materials from NASA CONNECTS in your classroom or organization?
9. What, if any, personal or professional benefits have you gained from engaging in the NASA CONNECTS community?
10. What, if any, benefits have your students experienced that stem from your engagement with the NASA CONNECTS community?"

Thank you for participating in the focus group. We greatly appreciate your time and feedback.