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March 18, 2013 at 1:36 pm by: CAISE
CAISE Initiative on Practice-and-Research

As part of its Practice-and-Research initiative, the Center for Advancement of Informal Science Education (CAISE) has been hosting a series of field-wide discussions to explore the current and potential connections between ISE practice and research. A rich variety of practitioners, researchers and evaluators have contributed to one or more of these conversations that have taken place on conference calls, an online forum, and an in-person convening to share and broaden understandings about the benefits and challenges in facilitating these connections.

Following on the suggestions from those who participated in the January convening and with support from our AISL program officers, CAISE's next step is to further explore the idea of developing a research and development agenda, or agendas, for the field of informal STEM learning. The term "research and development" has emerged as CAISE continues to learn from about the myriad, interconnected ways that evidence is gathered and knowledge is built in the ISE field.

Among the questions that have arisen in our forums up to now are:

Does the field need a research agenda, or a research and development agenda?

What would a research and development agenda for the informal STEM learning field look like?

What are the domains of research that would be represented in such an agenda?

Should each sector have its own agenda (e.g., science centers and museums, broadcast media, citizen science, out-of-school time programs, etc.)?

What is the right category and grain size of research questions and how would they be framed?

How can we leverage what we have learned from past efforts in this area and from the opportunities identified in the National Research Council's Learning Science in Informal Environments and other consensus documents?

CAISE continues to welcome input and feedback on these questions, which you can direct via e-mail to [CAISE Project Director Jamie Bell](#). To read more about the background resources, ideas and discussions that have informed this initiative so far, visit the [CAISE Convening Wiki](#).

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