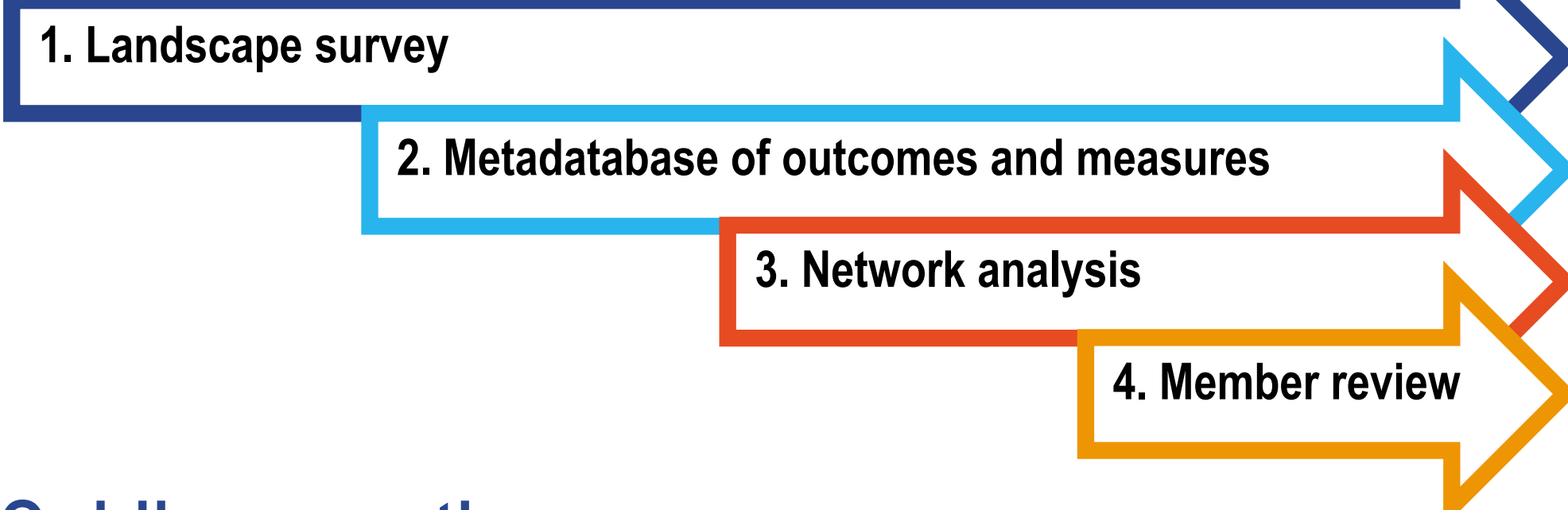


Foundations & Bridges

A needs assessment for cross-program collaboration in research and practice



Guiding questions

1. Which organizations offer intensive youth STEM programs, and what are their goals?
2. What outcome data are currently collected, and how are they used?
3. How do communication and collaboration currently occur within and across professional communities?
4. What do stakeholders need to apply findings and sustain future research-practice partnerships?

What we've done so far

The data on this poster reflect what we've gathered from our landscape survey (as of June 2026). Our sample includes responses from 82 individuals, representing 77 individual programs. Respondents were recruited through a combination of individual invitations, outreach through member organizations' platforms, and referral by other respondents. Respondents were invited to share a variety of basic information about their programs, as well as information about their goals and measurement efforts. In order to understand how these programs can practically and meaningfully learn from one another, we are now beginning the work of bringing these programs together – and growing our ranks at the same time.

Our team



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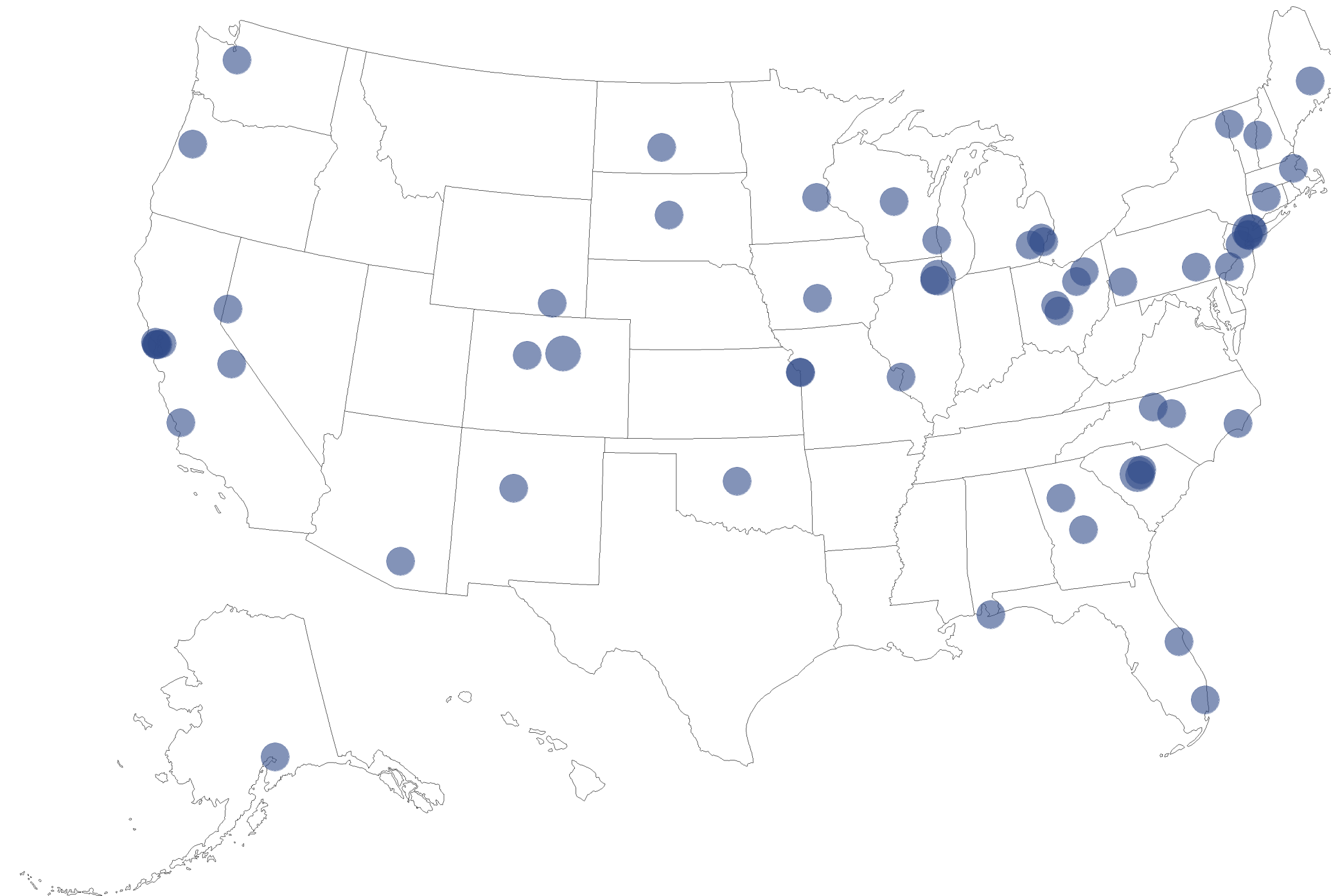
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Exploring Needs among Intensive Teen STEM Programs

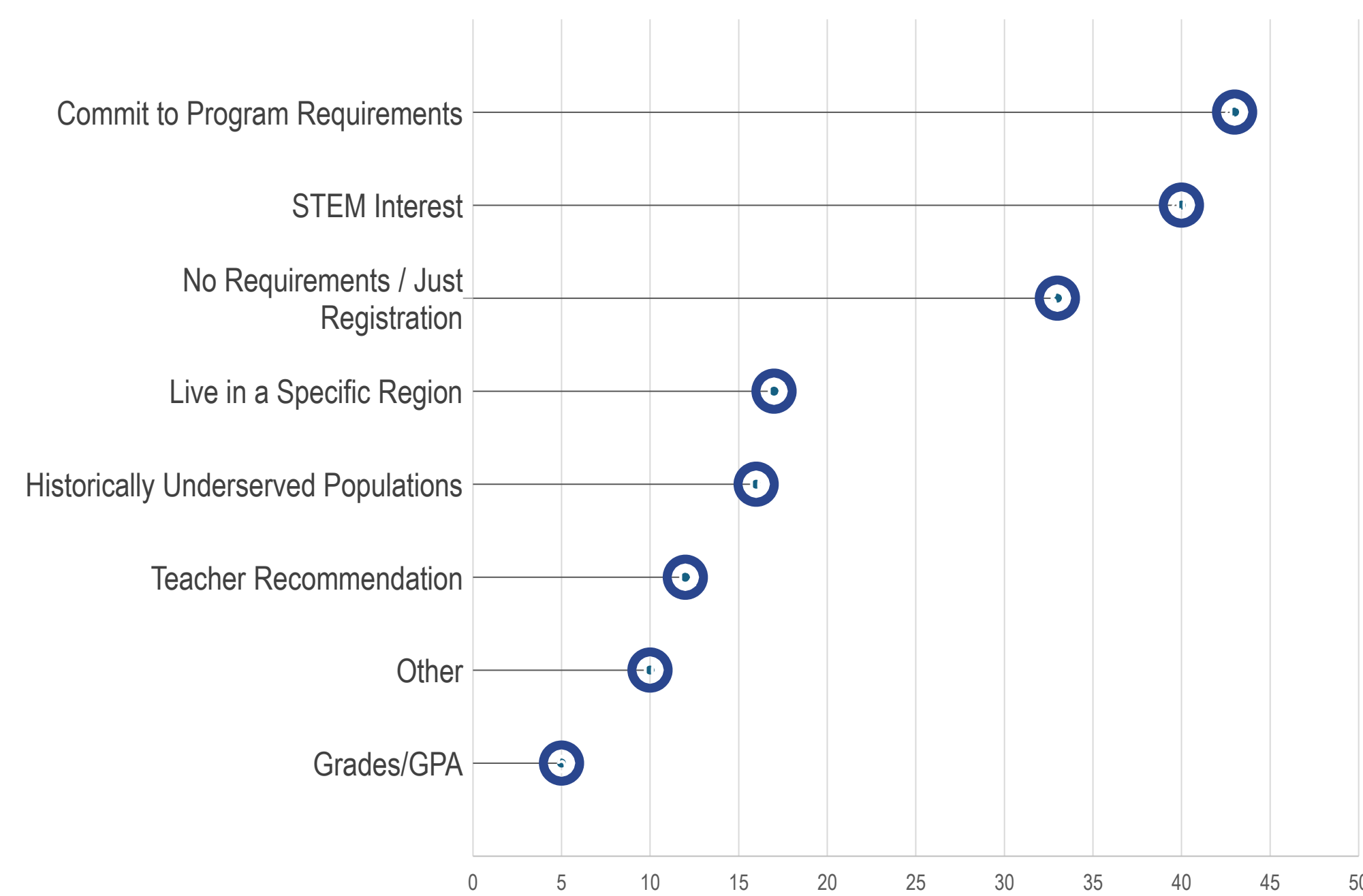
How do time-intensive teen STEM programs inspire youth—and what might be possible if they collaborate?

So far, respondents are from programs from across the United States, with a few regions less represented.

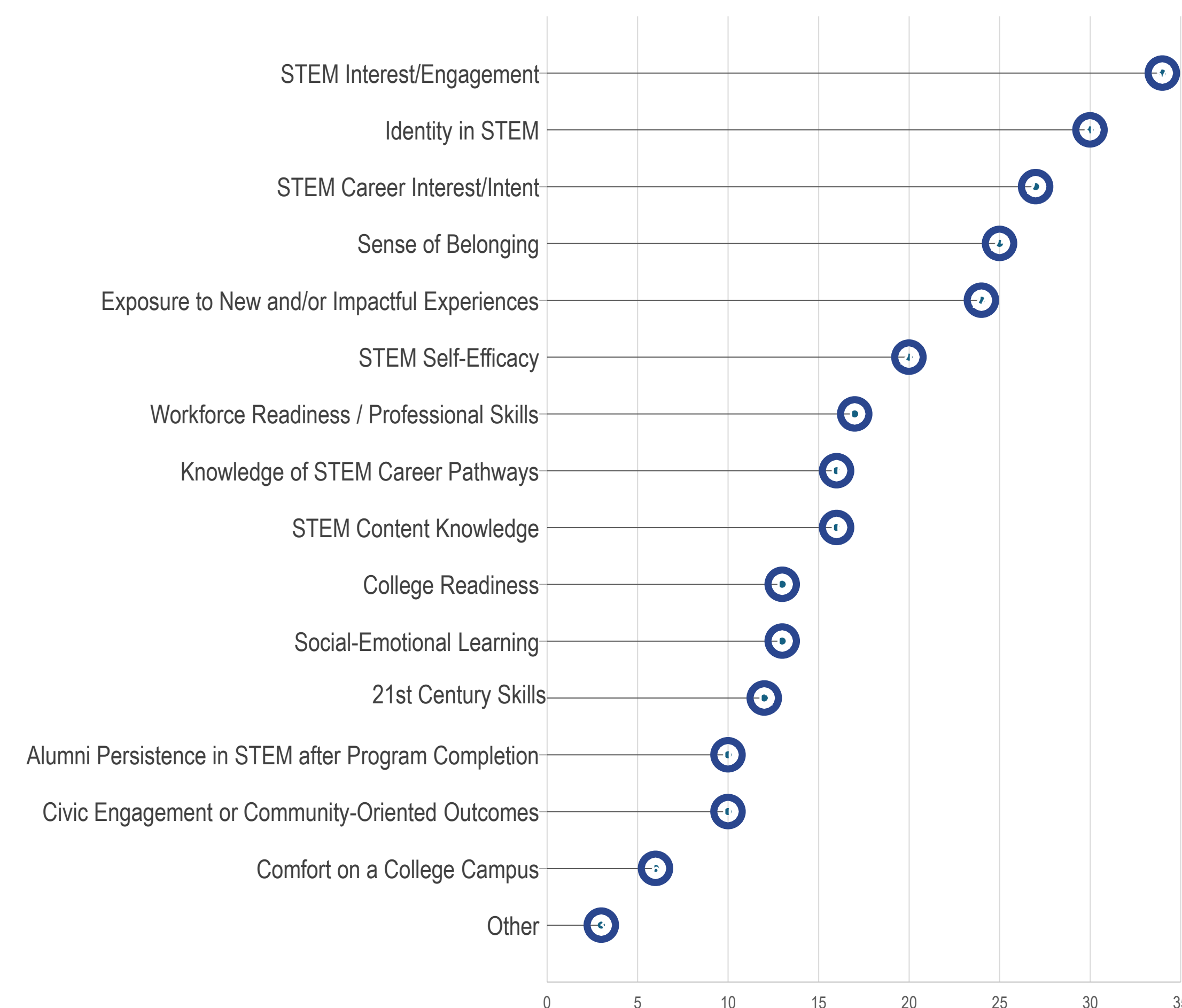
Each dot in the map below is centered on a distinct ZIP code. Larger dots reflect more responses from a single ZIP code.



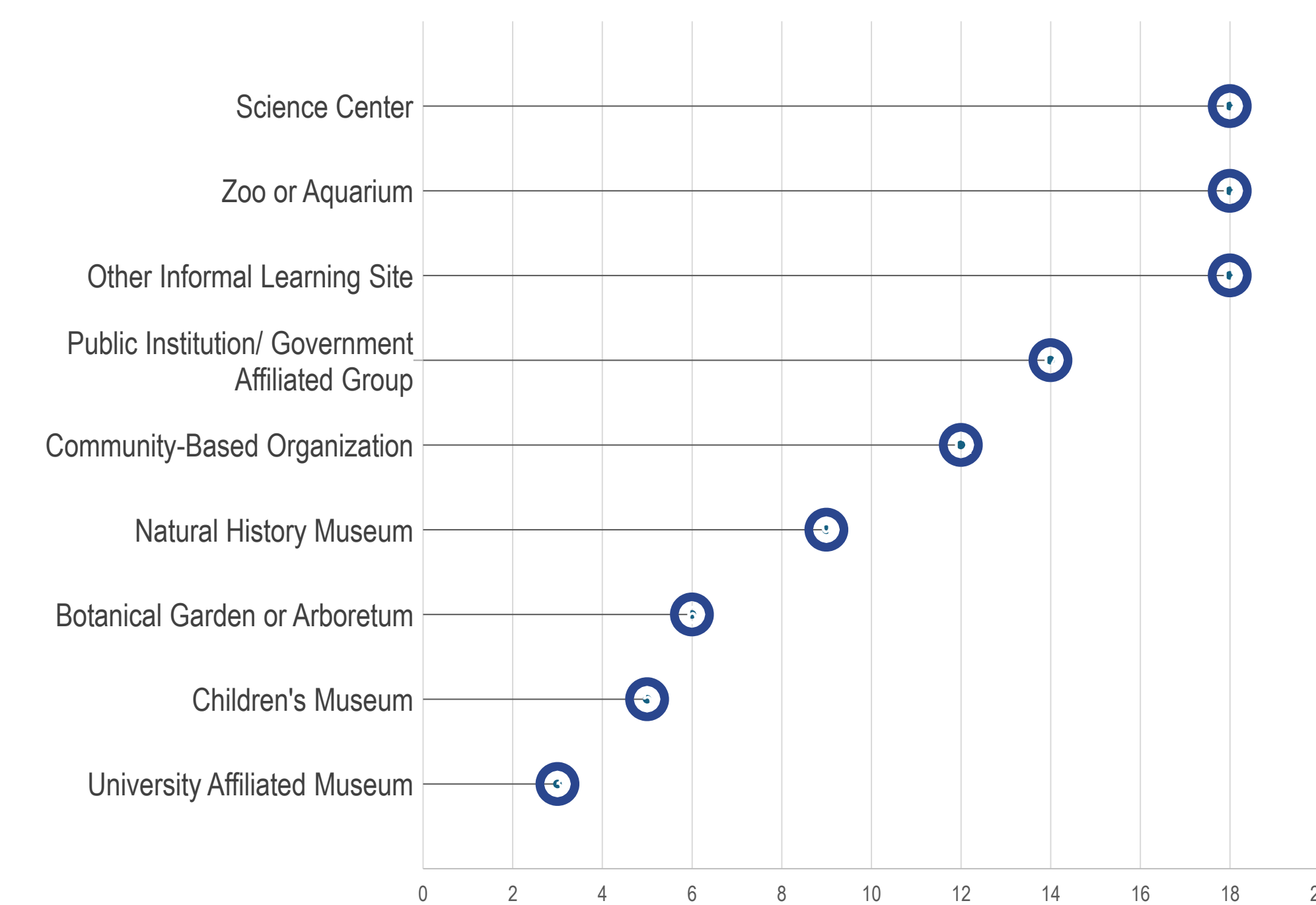
Programs' selection criteria have often prioritized participants' commitment and interest.



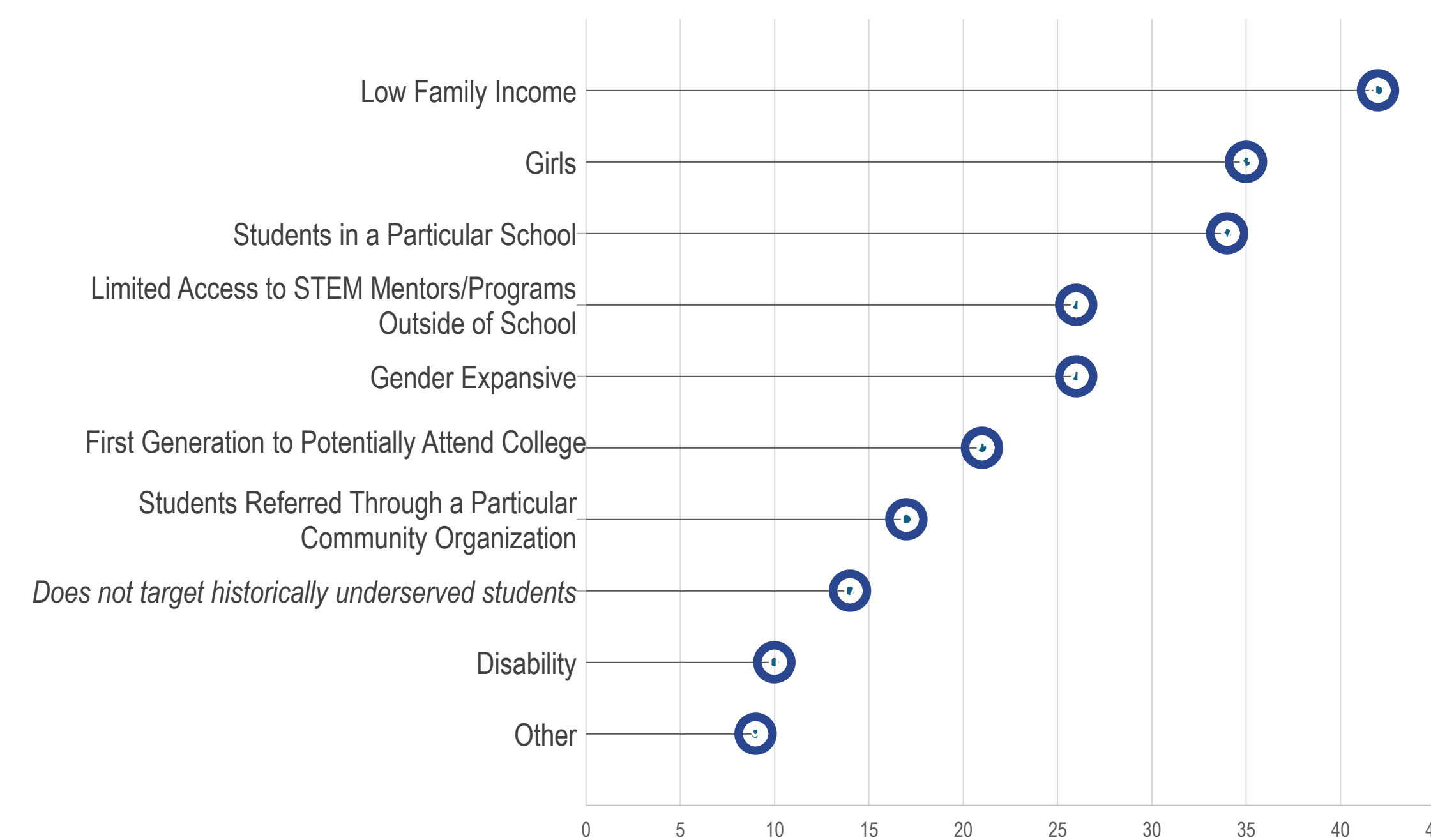
The most commonly tracked outcomes relate to STEM interest/engagement and STEM identity.



Organization types with a STEM-relevant mission are strongly represented in the sample.



Most programs so far recruit youth from historically underserved populations.



- **Only about half of respondents (n=40) to date have reported that they track outcomes. Even fewer report tracking long-term outcomes.**
- **Outcomes related to 21st century skills and workforce readiness are most strongly represented among programs serving older audiences.**
- **Programs with goals related to youth development and/or workforce development are so far more likely than others to be free to participants.**
- **Goals related to technology and math skills and/or fostering STEM interest are more strongly reflected in programs serving younger audiences, while social or “soft” skills are more strongly reflected in programs for older audiences.**



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What's next?

Based on the response to our initial survey, we have chosen to take a more constructivist approach to this research than originally planned. Specifically, we aim to help people with interest in a network of this type build community in order to identify common needs and opportunities for mutual benefit. In doing so, we aim to create space for the network formation process to help determine the scope of the needs assessment.

One aspect of our needs assessment project will be determining which structures and resources might unify efforts across programs (e.g., common measures and casemaking support) and which kinds of data would facilitate future longitudinal, multi-site research. Results will enable collaborative identification of effective practices toward common desired outcomes of intensive youth STEM programming in museums.

Get involved to...

- add your program to the landscape via a short survey
- access a growing network of people who implement and study intensive teen STEM programs
- help shape shared tools and evaluation resources
- identify areas of common interest and concern
- support internal and external casemaking for time-intensive teen STEM programs

