What are Mind Trekkers After-School Clubs (ASC)?

Mind Trekkers ASCs are student organizations within middle and high schools. The original four clubs were formed with the support of a grant from the State Farm Youth Advisory Board with the goal of providing near-peer mentoring in several ways: to have college students teach high school students STEM, and have those high schoolers pass on their STEM knowledge to elementary students. The goals of a Mind Trekkers After-School Club are for students to: engage in hands-on activities related to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); gain STEM literacy and a college positive attitude; and give back to their local community by sharing that learned knowledge.

What benefits does these clubs provide for our school?

Mind Trekkers ASC allow your students to continue to engage in hands-on learning outside of the classroom. The club will receive mentoring from the Center for Pre-College Outreach staff and expertise in demonstration development. Also, students in ASC are eligible to apply for a special Summer Youth Programs scholarship reserved for ASC members.

What kind of a relationship will there be with Michigan Technological University?

Michigan Technological University will help to organize the new ASC and get it off the ground. We ask that any use of the Mind Trekkers logo follow Michigan Tech’s approved style guide. There will be periodic phone check-ins after meetings to see the progress of the club and possibly a site-visit but the club will be overall managed by the host school. An annual report will be required at the end of each school year.
Who would lead the club?

A teacher, usually a science teacher due to the STEM nature of the club, from the host school is needed to help organize the club. This lead teacher/advisor from the host school is needed to help organize meetings around busing, class schedules, and be a point of contact for the students interested in the club and the community.

What students would be targeted to join the club?

ASC’s target high school students. The club mentors can serve as a way to show high school students possibilities for STEM careers from community mentors and motivate them to pursue secondary education in these fields. High school students can also act as mentors for elementary and middle school students and can host their own events for younger students, allowing all grades to benefit from one club. Also, students in ASC are eligible to apply for a special Summer Youth Programs scholarship reserved for ASC members.

How often/for how long do clubs typically meet?

The standard model is for the club to meet once a month for 1-1.5 hours per meeting. If there is interest from the students and the teacher leading it, the club can certainly meet more often! Although it can be difficult to coordinate time during the day, the club does not have to meet after school. We have had a large amount of success with in-class meetings because students can work it into their schedules more easily without missing sports practices or transportation home.

What activities are a part of the club?

A main component of ASC are the hands on demonstrations. Mind Trekkers has created a spreadsheet of great options to begin developing your pool of demonstrations that pair well together for clubs. You will also have access to all of our newly created demonstrations and engineering challenges. Additional demonstration ideas can be found on sites like YouTube, the links on our website, and by having students create their own demonstrations to show at the next meeting. Local speakers from STEM businesses or colleges are a great addition to clubs and can serve as an invaluable resource for questions and as a role model. Clubs could also potentially tour these businesses or campuses. Once the club is established with committed students, you can also host an event for younger students where the club members will be the Mind Trekkers and perform their demonstrations for the rest of the school.