[The Institute for Learning Innovation](http://www.instituteforlearninginnovation.org) is seeking participants for an upcoming focus group as part of NSF Funded [project](https://www.instituteforlearninginnovation.org/project/learning-solutions-support-for-change-agents/) that is designed to support professionals working in various free-choice learning spaces such as museums, zoos, science centers, libraries, and community organizations (e.g., community gardens, Boys & Girls Clubs, 4-H, etc.).

Focus groups will be an hour long and will take place via zoom. During this time we will introduce the project and work together to identify potential topics or areas in which support might be beneficial to participants. Challenges that may be discussed could include work-life balance, delegation, organization, time management or navigating changes in the workplace/life. We ask only that you come open to discussing workplace challenges and barriers to your professional growth and well-being.

Following the initial focus groups, we would meet one-on-one with interested participants to better understand the issue/topic where personalized professional learning could be helpful to support their professional growth and well-being. Finally, we would select a small subset of this group, as a case study to see if the *Learning Solutions* team/process could actually be of help to these individuals in supporting their needs – we would basically play a “concierge” role, helping to find resources, facilitate connections, etc.

Focus Groups Dates:

1. Monday, October 10, 10 PST/1 EST
2. Friday, October 21, 9 PST/Noon EST
3. Wednesday, October 26, 10 PST/1EST

[**Sign Up**:](https://forms.gle/L4whp7zmXAzUroBy6) <https://forms.gle/L4whp7zmXAzUroBy6>

Please contact Ashanti Davis, [ashanti.davis@freechoicelearning.org](mailto:ashanti.davis@freechoicelearning.org) if you would like to participate or have any questions.

**Additional Information**

**The initial goal of *Learning Solutions*** was to see if it is possible to create tools and resources that would enhance Informal Science Education (ISE) by directly supporting individuals and groups, engaged in cultivating the public’s understanding of STEM. However, unlike most such professional support/learning efforts, the project is NOT directly focused on facilitating STEM learning of end users, but rather is focused on the ISE professionals/facilitators themselves. Our goal is to support the needs and day-to-day well-being of the people working on supporting STEM learning.

**What We’ve Learned (so far)**: We began the project assuming that task number one was identifying the problems and finally, somewhere down the road, work out how best to communicate these to professionals. After more than a year of working in this space we have been able to identify lots of challenges professionals could and desire support about. However, we now appreciate that we cannot just start with problems, then develop a list of solutions, and then hope that professionals will find us looking for help; the “build it and they will come approach.” Rather, we now appreciate that step one needs to be *creating a community* (or perhaps even better, working with an existing community) of professionals, who over the course of their work bump up against problems/issues, that we could then be responsive to/supportive of. The central focus of this new *Learning Solution* approach would be to position ourselves like a “professional support concierge” – someone you could ask when and if you have questions related to your day-to-day professional life.