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Internships in Public Science Education program: a model for informal science education GRETA ZENNER, OLIVIA CASTELLINI, ARTHUR ELLIS, WENDY CRONE, University of Wisconsin-Madison — The NSF-funded Internships in Public Science Education (IPSE) program provides a unique opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students with varied academic background to experience learning and teaching science—specifically nanotechnology—to the general public and middle-school students. The program is in collaboration with Discovery World Museum of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. IPSE interns have created a number of classroom activities ranging from understanding the scale of a nanometer to experimenting with liquid crystal sensors to critically examining the societal implications of nanotechnology. In a new phase of the program, the interns are developing a museum exhibit on nanotechnology to be housed at the Discovery World Museum. Through this experience, intern teams learn about nanotechnology, brainstorm ideas, present and receive feedback on their ideas, and create an exhibit prototype to explain nanotechnology and related science concepts. The program also focuses on professional development, during which interns learn techniques for presenting to non-technical audiences, strategies for assessing their materials, and work on their skills in teamwork, project design, leadership, and science communication.

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