

COLLABORATION BETWEEN RESEARCHERS AND EDUCATORS ENABLES AN AUTHENTIC AND ENGAGING LEARNING EXPERIENCE

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The use of authentic learning experiences and real-world problem solving is an effective means to increase student engagement with course content. Providing broader context of the application of chemistry can aid students in relating abstract chemical concepts to their own experiences of the world, and improve students' willingness to learn and understand deeper concepts (King, 2012). In addition, there is increasing evidence that engaging in citizen science projects, wherein students work with peers and researchers towards a common goal, is a powerful motivator for students (Vitone et al., 2016).

The Breaking Good project is an ongoing citizen science program in which high school and undergraduate students work cooperatively with researchers to synthesise novel drug candidates that are screened against various neglected tropical diseases. We will discuss our experiences implementing this synthetic workshop program in both schools and universities and explore how different educational settings require and enable different levels of immersion and styles of learning. In particular, we examine the balance between providing authentic and immersive experiences while maintaining close alignment with learning outcomes. We suggest that co-creation between educators and researchers facilitates a more cohesive and enriching experience for students.

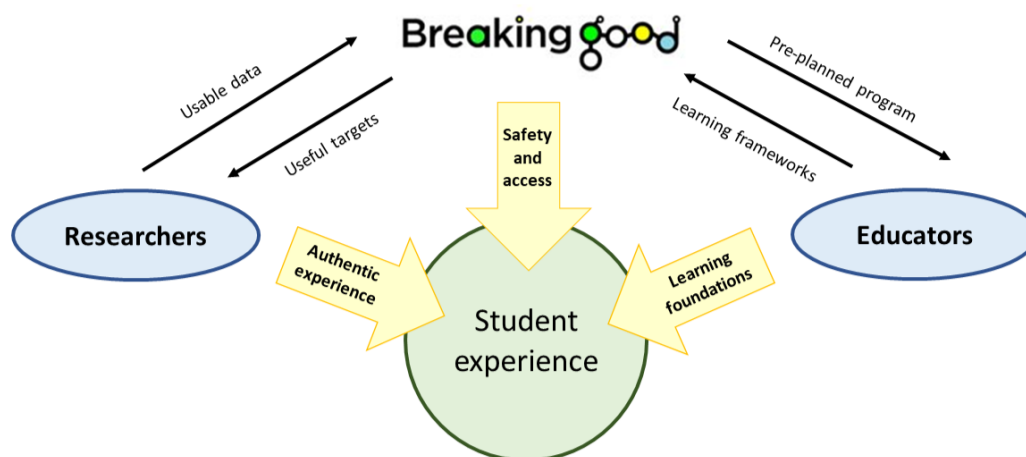


Figure 1. Overview of how collaboration between researchers, program organisers and educators can create a richer experience for students.

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