

Upper Valley Linkages for Environmental Literacy 2024 Teacher-Directed, Place-Based Learning Professional Development

Dear Colleagues:

We invite you to participate in a teacher-directed professional development initiative for 2024. *Upper Valley Linkages for Environmental Literacy (UVLEL)* is a project led by the Four Winds Nature Institute and funded by the Wellborn Ecology Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation. **The aim of this project is to improve place-based education and increase student engagement in learning** by leveraging local resources and supporting school/community environmental citizenship.

UVLEL will fund eight (8) New Hampshire and Vermont teachers in 2024 to create instructional units or develop projects that nurture a sense of place using environmental education as a frame for investigating issues that have meaning for students in their own communities. WATER is our connecting theme this year, so we'll explore the properties of water, the power of water, life in and around water, water and human geography, water in art, music, and literature – we'll see where it flows – as we all develop projects for our own students and subject areas.

Each UVLEL teacher will receive an **\$800 stipend** (prorated by meeting) for their participation – time spent on project development, working with content specialists, project implementation, and four meetings over the course of the year, including participation at a year-end share-out. This initiative also funds up to **20 hours of content specialist support** to develop and implement the project. In addition, participants will be reimbursed for **\$400 of unit-related materials or expenses**. Graduate credit may be available if there's group interest.

This is a *teacher-directed* professional development learning community. Interested educators complete an application/essay in which they identify their own project goals and needs. UVLEL project co-managers will review proposals, select participants, and work with teachers to connect them with content specialists and other resources to meet teacher-identified needs. All work developed during the UVLEL project will be shared with others in a celebratory event at the end of the school year and posted online. You can see some of the work of past UVLEL teachers posted at <https://fwni.org/linkages/>

We hope you'll consider applying to be a part of this learning community. Admission is rolling, and our intro meeting is Jan 29, 2024. Additional dates tbd. The funding is limited, thus project managers will review applications and make final decisions regarding participation. We look forward to receiving your one-page proposal (see attached application form).

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