T3 Online EE Professional Learning Community
Helping EE Organizations Become Online Learning Providers
June 1 – October 31, 2016

The Expanding Capacity in Environmental Education Project – EECapacity – provides opportunities for professionals and volunteers to join in discussions about our environment and our communities, share success stories of where environmental education has made a difference, and learn about successful practices from across the globe. We believe that by providing these opportunities for individuals working in environmental education, youth and community development, resource management, and related fields, we will be able to build on and expand the critical role environmental education plays in fostering healthy environments and communities. Many of the opportunities we offer take place on online learning platforms. A wide array of online learning offerings that range from webinars and social networking groups, to large and small online courses and project-based learning communities, help us achieve our capacity building goals.

Many environmental education organizations are starting to create their online learning opportunities to serve members of their networks and communities. These organizations may benefit from training in online learning pedagogies, approaches, and technologies. From this emerging need, the T3 Online EE Learning Accelerator was born. A Train the Trainers' Trainers effort[1], the accelerator is a hybrid (face-to-face and online) capacity building opportunity for organizations ready to take the leap into becoming an online learning provider.

In 2016, T3 will use a Project-based Learning Community (PLC), members of which will work together online from June to October to develop online learning opportunities, followed by a face-to-face workshop at the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) meetings October 18-22 in Madison WI. Funding of up to $1500 for attending the meetings and a small stipend for conducting online learning opportunities are available to T3 participants.

The Gist of It
- We will be accepting applications from 2015 T3 Fellows and from individuals from new environmental education organizations interested in developing online learning opportunities for their communities, members, and audiences. The PLC will be limited to 30 members.
- 2015 T3 Fellows who apply for this PLC will serve as mentors for the 2016 T3 Fellows.
- Participants will be selected by a competitive application process. Similar to the 2015 cohort, the 2016 Fellows will include a mix of national, regional, and local environmental organizations focusing on diverse audiences and areas of environmental education.
- The mix of expertise will enable new ideas to emerge and will drive the peer-to-peer learning model.

---

[1] EECapacity trains organizations to conduct online learning; the organizations in turn train their professionals and volunteers using various forms of online learning. So EECapacity trains the trainers (organizational leaders) of the trainers (educators and volunteers).

- The T3 Accelerator PLC is comprised of:
  - A pre-PLC self-assessment of needs, assets, and goals that will allow us to best design a learning experience that serves as an accelerator of ideas for each participating organization.
  - Monthly webinars or online learning experiences where participants will:
    - Learn from technology and instructional design experts about educational approaches and technologies to engage diverse audiences in online environment-related learning experiences.
    - Exchange ideas, resources, and lessons learned from other environmental education leaders on what has worked when using online learning in their communities.
    - Develop a plan for creating environmental online learning opportunities for their communities and audiences.
    - Learn about the latest EE resources and online learning trends.
  - An online social networking and resource sharing hub.
  - An in-person workshop at the 45th NAAEE Conference in Madison, WI (Wednesday, October 19).
  - PLC participants will also receive: 1) technical support from Cornell educational technologies professionals, and 2) programmatic support and mentoring from EECapacity staff and project partners to ensure each participating organization has the peer and expert support to succeed in implementing their online learning action plan.

Benefits to participants:
Professional Learning Community with peers and EECapacity staff to exchange ideas, resources, and lessons learned on what works in online learning for various audiences and networks.
- **Technical and programmatic support** to develop an online learning project.
- **Webinar series featuring experts** in educational technologies and online learning.
- **Professional development workshop** and **scholarship** to attend 45th NAAEE Conference in Madison, WI. Participants will learn the latest thinking around online learning technologies. Conference scholarship of up to $1,500 can be used for travel and conference expenses.
- **Participants can apply for a select number of EECapacity Online Learning Apprenticeships** and work directly on an EECapacity online learning project.
- **Opportunities to highlight PLC projects at NAAEE conference.**
- **Recognition and publicity** for their organization on EECapacity.net and eePRO, NAAEE's professional development and networking websites.
- **Enhanced ability to conduct online learning** for their audiences.

Expectations of participants:
- **Actively participate** in the monthly webinars and other aspects of the Online Learning Professional Learning Community over a period of **5 months: June 1, 2016 – October 31, 2016**. Webinars are held monthly, every 2nd Thursday of the month (June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13), 3-4:30pm ET. We will offer additional training opportunities as needed.
- **Attend professional development conference workshop at NAAEE conference October 19, 2016.**
- **Participate in evaluation activities** guided by external evaluator New Knowledge Organization and potential related research conducted by Cornell University.

- **Plan, design, and implement an online learning project. Participants who do not have their own project can select from a number of EECapacity online projects through EECapacity Apprenticeships. See below for more information.**

EECapacity Online Learning Apprenticeships
PLC participants who do not have their own online learning project have the option to apply for a competitive apprenticeship in a select number of EECapacity online learning projects. PLC apprentices will learn about the process of designing, implementing, and evaluating an EECapacity online learning experience. Apprenticeship timelines vary and may continue outside of the PLC June – October timeline. PLC participants who successfully complete their apprenticeship will receive a $500 stipend.

EECapacity Example Apprenticeships
Example apprentice options are described below but will ultimately depend on apprentice interest and experience and EECapacity needs. Additional examples of apprenticeships could focus on citizen science, Twitter chats, Facebook professional communities, or other platforms for online professional development.

Environmental Education: Trans-disciplinary Approaches to Addressing Wicked Problems
Course description: The goal of this course is to create an environmental education "trading zone"—an online space where scholars and students gather to learn about multiple disciplines that shed light on how to improve environmental quality and change environmental behaviors. Each of the lectures, readings, discussions, and case studies will focus on the implications of a particular discipline for environmental education, as well as what environmental education has to contribute to related disciplines and sectors. Learn about how environmental education, environmental governance, environmental psychology, environmental sociology and other disciplines can work together to address 'wicked problems,' not readily addressed by working in disciplinary silos.
Apprenticeship description: Apprentice will learn about online learning course design for a global audience. Course is currently being taught until April 24. Working with course team, apprentice will learn process of making adjustments to course content and design based on results from post-course survey data. Apprentice will also learn how to modify course materials (video lectures and multi-media case studies) for future learning opportunities. We strongly encourage applicants with an interest in multi-media production and knowledge management and/or applicants interested in adapting the course materials for other audiences, e.g. K-12 educators.
Timeline: June 1 – November 30 (approximately 6 months)

Achievements in EE – an Introduction to Environmental Education
Course description: Explore multiple EE outcomes -- youth development, critical thinking, school achievement, in addition to environmental knowledge and behaviors. Find support for your program outcomes in research summaries and in the work of fellow students. Diagram a conceptual model for how activities lead to intended outcomes.
Apprenticeship description: Apprentice will learn about online course design for participants new to the field of EE. Apprentice will learn how to use social media for learning and will learn effective instructor-student engagement techniques when working with a semi-synchronous online learning environment.
Timeline: June 1-November 30 (approximately 6 months)

Climate Change Communication for Environmental Educators
Course description: Why is climate change such a polarizing topic? How can environmental educators address this loaded issue effectively in their communities and programs? This course is for environmental education professionals interested in becoming more effective climate change communicators. Students will explore ideas like psychological distance and the impact of social and cultural identities on climate-change related behavior. We will discuss techniques for addressing these issues in environmental education programs through strategic language and program structures. Students will apply what they have learned about climate change communication by incorporating theories and ideas into a lesson plan for their school or center or by evaluating a new climate change public deliberation issues forum guide.
Apprenticeship description: Apprentice will learn about online course design and how to effectively use social media and multimedia for learning. Apprentice will also learn effective instructor-student engagement techniques when working in a semi-synchronous online learning environment.
Timeline: June 1 – November 30 (approximately 6 months)

***

Timeline:
Applications due May 15
PLC Participants notified by May 20
Online needs assessment due May 27
PLC begins June 1

Apply Online for the T3 2016 Professional Learning Community

About EECapacity[2]
The Expanding Capacity in Environmental Education Project – EECapacity – provides opportunities for professionals and volunteers to join in discussions about our environment and our communities, share success stories of where environmental education has made a difference, and learn about successful practices from across the globe. We believe that by providing these opportunities for individuals working in environmental education, youth and community development, resource management, and related fields, we will be able to build on and expand the critical role environmental education plays in fostering healthy environments and communities. For more information visit www.EECapacity.net.

For more information, contact Marianne Krasny (mek2@cornell.edu) or
Anne Umali Ferguson (anneferguson@cornell.edu).

---

[2] The United States Environmental Protection Agency funds the EECapacity Project through a cooperative agreement with the Cornell University Civic Ecology Lab. This project was developed under Assistant Agreement No. NT-83497401 awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It has not been formally reviewed by EPA. The views expressed are solely those of EECapacity, and EPA does not endorse any products or commercial services mentioned.