



Connecting Classrooms to Professionals 2019-2020

Connecting Classrooms to Professionals

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Teachers have told us that students engaged in project-based or inquiry-based learning benefit from bringing in professionals to support classroom learning, answer questions, and inspire students.

The Connecting Classrooms to Professionals Program will do just that. We match classrooms with working professionals in various fields to help teachers and students advance learning in topics connected to **climate, energy, the environment and sustainability.**

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS: *FOR TEACHERS*

1

You submit your topic of inquiry or project proposal to our website

2

We review the application and pair you with a suitable professional

3

You are introduced to the professional you'll be working with

4

The professional visits the classroom (either virtually or in person) to answer students' questions, discuss action projects and talk about their work

5

Your students deepen their understanding of a new topic through creativity and exploration, becoming agents of change through their environmental projects

QUESTIONS?

For questions about the Connecting Classrooms to Professionals Program, please contact:

Maria Granados, Program Coordinator
Alberta Council for Environmental Education
Email: maria@abcee.org
Phone: 587.437.5707
<http://www.abcee.org/connectingclassrooms>



Connecting Classrooms to Professionals

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Education is changing, and more and more teachers are engaging their students in inquiry-based and project-based learning. With this approach, teachers go from being the “sage on the stage” to the “guide on the side”, giving students the opportunity to take learning into their own hands. Through the process of inquiry, students explore a topic, design their own questions, and find their own answers.

Teachers have told us that students engaged in this style of learning benefit from bringing in professionals to answer students’ questions, discuss their work and inspire students.

That’s where you come in! Through this program, we match classrooms with working professionals in various fields to help teachers and students advance learning in topics connected to **climate, energy, the environment and sustainability.**

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS: *FOR PROFESSIONALS*

1

You join our roster of professionals who support classroom learning

2

We match you with a classroom with the best fit for your area of expertise

3

You receive training on the basics of inquiry- and project-based learning and communicating effectively with students

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4

You connect with the classroom and support the students through their inquiry process, answering their questions and guiding their projects

5

You work with youth and build your leadership skills, leaving a positive impact in your community in the process



Program Objectives

The Connecting Professionals to Classrooms will:

- Help students build 21st-century skills to prepare them for careers in climate, energy, environment and sustainability
- Enrich student learning by creating meaningful and relevant projects that are student-led, teacher-supported and expert-advised
- Advance environmental education in the classroom by bridging gaps in knowledge in areas where teachers may lack expertise
- Facilitate excellent education through authentic learning opportunities, giving students the chance to connect their day-to-day learning with real-world experiences

Teacher's Role

Teachers are expected to:

- Work with the students to develop a project with curriculum links and a clear objective.
- Submit clear, detailed asks and specific areas in which support is required to ACEE in order to facilitate the matching process.
- Attend the initial meeting with ACEE and the professional (booked by ACEE). Subsequent meetings for the duration of the project will be the teacher's responsibility to coordinate with the professional.
- Be present in the classroom for the duration of the presentation, perform classroom management and act as a participant throughout the presentation.
- Be included in all communications between the professional and students.
- Submit the required feedback forms

Professional's Role

Professionals are expected to:

- Commit to up to 3 (1-hour-long) classroom visits using various means **per class**.
- Respond to students' questions using the most accurate and up-to-date information available (as opposed to delivering a 'canned' presentation)
- Help students understand the connections between theory and real-world application as it relates to the area of inquiry/ project through the lens of your profession
- Work with the teacher to support students through various stages of the project, from the early stages of planning to feedback and assessment

ACEE's Role



- Recruit and train professionals*
- Match teachers to professional and provide the first introduction
- Provide teachers with resources relevant to the project/ area of inquiry
- Collect feedback from students, teachers and professionals for program evaluation

*Professionals will receive an information document introducing them to the classroom and the project as well as training by ACEE on how to work effectively with students. This training includes

- A briefing on how to communicate with and engage students
- An introduction to inquiry and project-based learning and excellent environmental education
- A code of conduct for classroom interactions

The training will take place either in person or through a webinar. The training will take approximately one hour and will be scheduled during office hours at a mutually convenient time.