

ECAP Organizational Partner Role

Supporting Climate Stewardship in the Upper Valley

2026–2027 Program Year

The Equitable Climate Action Partnership, or ECAP, is rooted in the belief that young people need meaningful opportunities to know, care for, and contribute to the places they live. We also believe that climate stewardship grows through relationships

This year, ECAP will support approximately 18 Educator Leaders (our teachers!) as they develop student-centered climate stewardship projects across the Upper Valley. Some are returning teachers who are deepening work they have already begun. Others are new to ECAP and are beginning to imagine what climate action might look like with their students, in their schools, and in their communities.

Organizational partners are essential to this work. You bring knowledge, technical expertise, and a sense of what is already happening in this region. You can also serve as role models and demonstrate what's possible to accomplish when we work together.

What Educator Leaders Are Committing To

ECAP Educator Leaders are committing to a year of learning, planning, action, reflection, and public sharing. During the year, they will:

- Collaborate with one or more local community partners
- Design and implement a student-led climate stewardship project
- Participate in ECAP cohort gatherings and workshops
- Share student work publicly at the 2027 Climate Action Symposium at VINS
- Work with PEER Associates to develop a short “hopeful story” video that highlights student learning and action

These projects may connect to food, flooding, flora and fauna, fuel, fast fashion, or other local climate stewardship issues that matter to students and their communities.

The teacher's role is to listen to students, shape the learning, and guide the project within the realities of school. The partner's role is to support the teacher and students, however they can, to help make this happen.

The Role of Organizational Partners

We are not looking to assign partners to Educator Leaders or ask organizations to arrive with a finished program. Instead, we hope partnerships will emerge more organically from listening, shared interests, real needs, and perhaps an anticipated joy in working together.

That might include:

- Helping a teacher think through a project idea
- Co-planning curriculum, field experiences, or student investigations
- Visiting a classroom or hosting students at a site
- Supporting student research, stewardship, storytelling, design, restoration, or action
- Offering local knowledge, technical expertise, materials, tools, or community connections
- Helping students understand how climate stewardship is already happening in the Upper Valley
- Supporting students as they prepare to share their work at the May Climate Action Symposium
- Collaborating on a short “hopeful story” video that helps tell the story of the work

The heart of this is not just service delivery. It is relationship-building.

We hope partners will come ready to listen to what teachers are trying to grow, and then help tend to what makes sense.

June 26: A Place to Begin

The June 26 ECAP Educator Leader Kickoff Retreat will be our first opportunity this year to bring teachers and partners together.

Educator Leaders will have time to share what they are hoping to explore with students this year. Partners will have time to share what they might be able to offer. Then we will create space for conversation and possible collaboration.

Conversations might include:

- What students are curious about or concerned about
- What climate stewardship question or opportunity the project will explore
- What students might investigate, create, restore, improve, change, or share
- How the partner can support the project
- When classroom visits, field experiences, planning meetings, or other supports might happen
- What materials, transportation, partner fees, or other costs should be included
- How the work might connect to the hopeful story video
- How students might share their learning at the May Climate Action Symposium

Not every organization will find a direct Educator Leader match that day, and that is completely okay. Part of the value of gathering is helping teachers understand who is doing climate stewardship work in the Upper Valley and what kinds of support might be possible over time.

If a formal partnership does not emerge right away, ECAP, UVTPC, and the broader Community of Practice can help keep these connections alive.

Summer and Early Fall: Co-Planning the Work

If a teacher and partner identify a promising connection on June 26, we hope they will continue talking and planning over the summer and early fall.

By the September 24 ECAP gathering at Shelburne Farms, Educator Leader - partner teams should aim to have a rough project plan and budget in place. This does not need to be perfect, but should be clear enough that everyone understands the shape of the work, the likely roles, rough timelines, and the resources needed.

Project Proposals and Funding

Educator Leaders will be invited to submit a project proposal in September for approximately \$5,000 per school, possibly a little more depending on the project and available funds.

These funds may support:

- Partner fees
- Materials and supplies
- Transportation or bus costs
- Field experiences
- Student project needs
- Other supports that help make the work possible

The proposal needs to come from the school, however we hope Educator Leaders and partners co-create the proposal together.

Partner fees may be included in the project budget. Partners may be paid separately for their work once their agreed-upon commitments to the teacher, students, or school have been completed.

Key ECAP and Regional Dates

Partners are invited to stay involved in the year as much as makes sense for their organization and their teacher partnership. Possible touchpoints include:

- **June 26, 2026:** ECAP Educator Leader Kickoff Retreat
- **September 24, 2026:** Fall ECAP Curriculum Planning Workshop at Shelburne Farms

- **September 25, 2026:** Climate Education Collaborative Summit at Shelburne Farms, optional depending on partner interest and availability
- **November 6, 2026:** Upper Valley Teaching Place Collaborative Conference
- **January 29, 2027:** ECAP Winter Workshop focused on Hopeful Stories
- **May 7, 2027:** ECAP Climate Action Symposium at VINS

Partners do not need to attend every event. These dates are offered as opportunities to stay connected, support teachers and students, and help grow a more connected climate stewardship network across the Upper Valley.

Questions, Concerns, or Ideas

Leigh Ann Reynolds will serve as the ECAP Organizational Partner Liaison for 2026–2027. Partners are encouraged to reach out to Leigh Ann (info@uvtpc.com) with questions, concerns, suggestions, or ideas about how to support teachers and strengthen the partner network.

Partners may also reach out to Joan Haley (Joan@ed4climateresilience.org) with questions about ECAP's overall goals, program structure, or proposal process.

We are grateful to be in this work with you, and excited to see what we can grow together this year.