



About NAAEE

For more than five decades, NAAEE has served as the professional association, champion, and backbone organization for the field of environmental education (EE). Our members and supporters include EE professionals working in formal and nonformal education—including university professors; preschool educators; K-12 teachers and administrators; professionals in informal learning centers such as zoos, aquariums, museums, community centers, nature centers; as well as those working in government agencies, foundations, and corporations.

Vision

A healthier and more sustainable world where environmental and social responsibility drive individual, institutional, and community choices.

Mission

To use the power of education to advance environmental literacy and civic engagement to create a healthier and more sustainable future. We work with educators, policymakers, and partners throughout the world.

naaee.org



Education We Need for the World We Want



Dear NAAEE Members, Partners, Affiliates, Donors, and Supporters,

Thanks to your incredible support, 2023 was a year of growth, connection, and impact for NAAEE. Together—with our Affiliates, members, and partners around the globe—we expanded access to high-quality environmental education and deepened our work at the intersection of education, equity, and environmental action.

Through our programs, research, and outreach, we continued to show that education is one of the most powerful tools for creating a more just and sustainable future. We worked across sectors and borders to support educators and learners of all ages—in classrooms, nature centers, museums, zoos, government agencies, and communities everywhere. And we remained grounded in the values that define our work: building leadership, strengthening networks, creating more resilient communities, and centering equity in all that we do.

Here are just a few highlights from 2023:

- Nearly 400,000 visitors accessed resources and networks through our newly redesigned eePRO 2.0 platform.
- Virtual conferences hosted by **NAAEE** and the **Natural Start Alliance** drew almost 2,000 participants from more than 40 countries.
- Our **ee360+ initiative** supported professional learning and outreach efforts for more than 15,000 educators and millions more indirectly.
- We partnered with organizations including NOAA, the U.S. Forest Service, EPA, BLM, Foundation for Environmental Education, and the Ministry of Taiwan to advance environmental literacy worldwide.
- Our **leadership programs** (EE 30 Under 30 and CEE-Change Fellows) supported more than 60 leaders from around the world who are creating healthier and more resilient communities.
- Our **eeCREDENTIALS program**, developed with the Affiliate Network, continued to grow, with hundreds of educators participating in online **eeCOURSES**.
- We co-authored Mapping the Landscape of Nonformal Climate Communication and Education in the United States, which is scheduled for publication in 2024, providing key insights to strengthen the field.
- We expanded the **Global Environmental Education Partnership (GEEP)**—hosting a meeting of the GEEP Advisors in Belfast and supporting the Africa Hub through webinars, team convenings, and new collaborative initiatives.

As we reflect on the past year, we're reminded that environmental education is so much more than sharing facts—it's about cultivating leadership, sparking action, achieving impact, and building a more informed and engaged society. With your support, we're helping shape the kind of education the world needs now more than ever.

Thank you for being part of this work. We're excited for what lies ahead and what we can continue to accomplish together.

Judy Braus

Executive Director

Mary Ford

Judy Brows Mary Ford

NAAEE Board Chair

Drive Excellence and Spark Field-Wide Innovation

Guidelines for Excellence

NAAEE's *Guidelines for Excellence* series—six cornerstone publications for the field—support educators in developing high-quality environmental education programs and resources. We continue to share these essential tools through in-person and virtual trainings, helping ensure strong, effective practice across the field.

Highlights

- Conducted 44 workshops in 20 states and provinces for 1,075 formal and nonformal educators
- Collaborated with eight state Affiliates to expand the Guidelines Trainers' Bureau and offered an additional 12 state-level train-the-trainer workshops for 111 educators













I love the focus on systems, deliberative discussions, action from personal to community to beyond, and the emphasis on understanding others.

—Workshop participant

Professional Development Webinars

NAAEE webinars explore timely and relevant topics to help environmental education professionals—in formal and nonformal settings—strengthen their programs, broaden their impact, and communicate more effectively. NAAEE's monthly webinar series on eePRO is part of NAAEE and EPA's ee360+ initiative, presented in partnership with members of our Affiliate Network. NAAEE also partners with the U.S. Forest Service on additional webinars, called eeINSPIRE webinars, to advance the field and reach new audiences.

In 2023, NAAEE brought learning to life through seven dynamic webinars, reaching 2,458 participants live and on YouTube. Each session spotlighted diverse experts and timely topics—from climate change education and nature preschools to powerful communication strategies for the field. All webinars are free, close-captioned, and available on-demand, making it easy for educators to tune in anytime, anywhere.

What viewers are saying:

Thank you! My program serves existing preschools in the Minneapolis Parks with weekly naturalist visits, and I'm excited to imagine how all these resources might impact what we do.

-Attendee of "Nature Preschools in the United States: Results of a New National Survey"



eeWEBINAR and eeINSPIRE Webinar Topics

- Together We Decide: Practical Tools for Collaborative Decision Making
- More than a Like: Building Your Social Media Strategy
- Climate Change Education: What Are We Hearing from Educators and Administrators?
- Nature Preschools in the United States: Results of a New National Survey
- In This Together: Connecting with Your Community to Combat the Climate Crisis
- Birds for All
- The State of Outdoor Policy: A Recap of 2023 and What's in Store for 2024

View recordings of all eeWEBINARS.

eeCREDENTIALS

NAAEE and its Affiliate Network have teamed up to launch one of the most innovative professional development opportunities in environmental education. Affiliates across states and provinces are now offering high-quality, flexible, and engaging online courses that deepen understanding of environmental education theory and practice. These eeCOURSES can be taken individually or stacked to earn eeCREDENTIALS. By sharing expertly designed curricula across the Network, the program increases access, boosts efficiency, and is reaching educators across North America.



We're very excited in Maine to offer eeCOURSES. We appreciate the collaboration across states in this program, building courses where we have expertise and sharing them with other states in our network. This is a wonderful way to raise capacity for the field to more systematically advance environmental literacy and action in the United States.

-Olivia Griset, executive director, Maine Environmental Education Association

Higher Education Accreditation

NAAEE's Higher Education Accreditation program recognizes outstanding college and university programs that consistently prepare skilled and knowledgeable environmental educators. Through a rigorous, third-party review process grounded in the *Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence*, accreditation ensures programs meet high standards for quality and impact. This work also fosters a vibrant community of faculty, creating opportunities for networking, collaboration, and ongoing professional growth.

Highlights

- Thirteen higher education programs have been accredited since 2013
- Mentored faculty from ten colleges and universities as they develop programs designed to meet NAAEE's accreditation requirements
- Ten states are building statewide networks of EE faculty, reaching 900+ educators with resources and professional development
- 300+ participants engaged in eight targeted webinars for higher education faculty

EE Certification

EE Certification distinguishes highly qualified educators who demonstrate mastery of the skills and knowledge required for effective environmental education, as outlined in NAAEE's Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence. NAAEE accredits state certification programs that meet rigorous standards and undergo an intensive review process to ensure ongoing compliance with the Guidelines and best practices in EE.

Highlights

- 76 newly certified environmental educators added to the 1,651 total certified environmental educators, with a collective reach of 835,000+ learners
- 223 additional educators enrolled in 13 state programs operated by NAAEE Affiliates and partners
- Newly accredited California and Virginia Certification programs
- Currently reviewing Pennsylvania's application for accreditation



Research in EE

NAAEE Research Symposium

Each year, NAAEE's Research Symposium brings together emerging and established researchers from around the world to explore current and future directions of environmental education research. The event sparks vibrant dialogue, fosters collaboration across disciplines, and connects researchers, practitioners, and policymakers at every career stage. A special focus is placed on showcasing graduate student research, helping to elevate the next generation of thought leaders in the field. Read more about our 2023 Annual Conference and Research Symposium on page 8.

I enjoyed it. I appreciate the virtual Research Symposium, as someone who is trying to limit flying these days to reduce my carbon footprint. It also allows people from around the country to easily participate.

-2023 Research Symposium Attendee



eeRESEARCH Library

eeRESEARCH features research in environmental education, including the movement to connect children and nature. The database includes articles, syntheses, and research summaries. This project is a partnership with Children & Nature Network and NAAEE, and is funded by the Pisces Foundation with support from ee360+ and the U.S. Forest Service.





eeWORKS

eeWORKS is a series of meta analyses of available research reviews that demonstrate the impact and value of EE. Guided by an expert advisory board, NAAEE partnered with Stanford University, University of California–Davis, and University of Florida to demonstrate the impact and value of EE. Topics include, "Benefits of Environmental Education for K–12 Students," "The Impacts of EE on Conservation and Environmental Quality," and more.

Cultivate Collaboration and Strengthen Networks for Change

Annual Conference & Research Symposium

For more than five decades, NAAEE has convened one of the leading annual conferences for environmental education professionals and students—an event designed to inspire innovation, foster collaboration, and share effective practices across the field. In line with our commitment to sustainability and accessibility, we continued our alternating format in 2023 by hosting the 52nd Annual Conference and 20th Annual Research Symposium entirely online.

The theme, *Together We Thrive*, focused on the importance of collaboration, creativity, and crossing boundaries to address the environmental and social issues we face. None of us can tackle these issues alone; we need stronger collaborations, more diverse partnerships, and insights from people with varying backgrounds, perspectives, and ideas.

The events offered inspiring and thoughtful keynotes, a rich variety of workshops, symposia, traditional sessions,

research panels, roundtable discussions, bright spots, and posters, along with great opportunities for networking and growth. Sessions explored vital topics in our field, such as climate education, the benefits of connecting to nature, building a green workforce, protecting biodiversity, and ways in which current research can increase our effectiveness as we work together to build a sustainable future where everyone thrives.





What attendees had to say:

I really like trading between virtual and in-person conferences. It's so much easier to attend on my professional development allowance from work! You do an incredible job every year, and I really appreciated this virtual conference. I look forward to seeing you in person next year or virtually the year after!

Good overall! I enjoyed what I was able to attend and plan to go back and watch more recordings in the future. Thank you!



ee360+

ee360+ is NAAEE's signature program designed to grow and support the field of environmental education. Building on the work of ee360, this five-year cooperative agreement with EPA models a collaborative approach to developing and improving access to high quality environmental education. The project brings together the expertise of 26 training and dissemination partners, which include universities, nonprofit organizations, and federal agencies, to grow, strengthen and diversify the field. In the second year of the program, partners trained almost 15,000 educators who in turn reach over 3.5 million individuals. Additionally, resources shared through our eePRO website were accessed by over 365,000 users.

ee360+ advances the field of EE through the following:

- **Training**: PLT, WET, WILD, Earth Force, Florida A&M University, University of Florida, and Antioch University New England train formal and nonformal educators and preservice faculty in environmental education, civic action education, and community engagement centered in equity.
- **Leadership and capacity building**: The CEE-Change Fellowship supports civics and environmental education leaders across the United States and internationally.
- **Setting standards**: University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point leads the accreditation efforts for higher education institutions, while NAAEE works with state Affiliate programs to build the certification program for EE professionals. Bora Simmons spearheads the work on the Guidelines for Excellence that helps promote excellence in the field.
- Supporting the field: NAAEE supports state Affiliates in their efforts to work in vulnerable communities. The Center for Diversity & the Environment has created a community of support with webinars and coaching. eePRO and the dissemination partners help connect educators in the field and make new resources and programming accessible to environmental educators and professionals across the country.

eePRO: A Hub for Growing Engagement in EE

NAAEE's eePRO, a major ee360+ initiative, is an online community that connects environmental education professionals worldwide to each other and to a broad range of resources, research briefs, learning modules, professional development opportunities, webinars, job listings, and 18 discussion groups focused on specialized topics of interest.



By the numbers:















eeNEWS

The latest news, resources, and opportunities in the EE community



A library of EE research at your fingertips

eeJOBS

The leading job listing service in the EE field

eeWORKS \(\tau \)

Research reviews and tools illustrating the benefits of EE

eeLEARN 📆

A series of online learning modules exploring the foundations of EE

PR Picks

Expert recommendations for resources in 13 topic areas

NAAEE Affiliate Network

NAAEE's Affiliate Network promotes environmental education and supports the work of environmental educators by strengthening the capacity of state, territorial, regional, and provincial environmental education associations. The Affiliate Network provides a forum for ongoing dialogue, shared learning, and joint activities to enhance EE capacity. The Network yields greater impact through collaboration and creates a stronger and more unified voice for EE.



Highlights

- Launched the Affiliate Toolkit, an online library of nonprofit development tools created by Affiliates for Affiliates
- Over 70 Affiliate leaders attended the Annual Affiliate Workshop during the 2023 NAAEE Conference and participated in professional development on the eeGuidance for Equitable Pay and Hiring in Environmental Education report developed by the Southeastern EE Alliance
- Awarded over \$180,000 to 25 Affiliates through the NAAEE Affiliate Fund for Technical Support, Capacity Building, and Collaboration Projects
- · Continued to support Affiliate communities of practice in fund development, state policy, and more

Natural Start Alliance

The Natural Start Alliance, an NAAEE initiative launched in 2013, promotes early childhood environmental education for children from birth through the early elementary years. Natural Start connects and convenes early childhood environmental educators, provides research and resources, and represents early childhood environmental education in a variety of forums.

Our annual Nature-Based Early Learning Conference brings professionals together to explore and promote nature-based learning for young children through workshops, field trips, interactive indoor and outdoor sessions, and engaging plenaries. We hosted NatStart23 in an online format, gathering online and in person in alternating years.

Our advocacy work centers on promoting equitable access to nature-based education through public funding of nature-based education. We also promote equity by hosting conference workshops and sessions on culturally responsive and inclusive teaching practices and highlighting children's book collections that promote equity and representation.



- Published a report on the growth of nature-based preschools in the United States, documenting continued rapid growth across the country
- Published Volume 11 of the International Journal of Early Childhood Environmental Education, our peer-reviewed open-access electronic journal promoting early childhood environmental education





Global Environmental Education Partnership

The Global Environmental Education Partnership (GEEP) is a vibrant and inclusive learning network designed to strengthen environmental education globally to create a more just and sustainable future for all. The GEEP connects EE professionals and thought leaders from around the world, sharing effective practices for strengthening EE at the regional, country, and local levels. GEEP programs amplify the stories and innovations of multi-generational environmental educators and leaders working to address the complex environmental and social issues we face.

Highlights

- Convened a GEEP Advisory Group meeting in Belfast, Northern Ireland, to plan for future GEEP activities
- Published updated GEEP Strategy 2023–2028
- Published Strengthening EE in Your Country: A Discussion Guide, designed to help assess environmental education efforts, strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement in a country or region
- Published a new e-book chapter, "The Power of Case Studies," focused on the value of case studies as learning tools for educators and programs working to advance environmental literacy and civic engagement in their communities
- Facilitated webinars in collaboration with the GEEP Asia-Pacific Regional Center (APRC), GEEP Africa Hub, and the eePRO Global EE group, covering topics such as sustainable lifestyle practices, AI, and marine education
- Led a GEEP workshop that explored net zero education
- Supported three international fellows from the Washington Mandela Fellowship program, Humphrey Fellowship program, and the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations fellowship program





Invest in Leadership for a Stronger and More Inclusive Movement

Civic and Environmental Education (CEE)-Change Fellowship

The CEE-Change Fellowship, supported by ee360+ and the Cedar Tree Foundation, fosters leadership and innovation to promote civic engagement and environmental responsibility and ultimately build more resilient and healthy communities. CEE stands for Civics and Environmental Education.

Thirty Fellows representing eleven countries made up the second class of the CEE-Change Fellowship. Each Fellow developed a Community Action Project that addressed a local climate issue, led to progress on civic engagement, and strengthened community resilience to address environmental concerns. Additionally, each project addressed U.S. EPA's core mission to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water and healthier communities. The fellowship included immersive leadership training; monthly training webinars; and small grants, guidance, and peer support for implementing community-based civic action projects.





Environmental Education 30 Under 30



education, each year awarding 30 changemakers under the age of 30 who are creating more sustainable and equitable communities around the world. The program celebrates the passion and innovation of these young leaders from diverse backgrounds and identities and gives them a professional boost to increase their impact. We provide ongoing support to our 241 awardees and alumni, including networking, professional development, and grant opportunities. The EE 30 Under 30 Class of 2023 includes 31 changemakers from 20 countries working on climate action, environmental health, land restoration, and more.

Being recognized as an EE 30 Under 30 was a significant milestone, a pivotal moment in my career, that opened doors to incredible opportunities I had never imagined. I am profoundly grateful to the NAAEE team and the environmental education community for their daily inspiration and guidance, which have shaped me as the educator and leader that I am today.



eeBLUE: Environmental Literacy for a Blue Planet

NOAA and NAAEE's eeBLUE partnership aims to advance environmental and science literacy for more resilient communities nationwide. The collaboration combines NOAA science and NAAEE's environmental education expertise into educational programs and supports high-quality STEM education to help conserve natural resources and build resilient communities. eeBLUE fosters professional networks, shares best practices, and drives impactful change in environmental education and outreach initiatives.

The initial five-year funding round closed in 2023 and enabled 40 grantees in two programs—eeBLUE Watershed STEM Education Partnership Grants program and eeBLUE Aquaculture Literacy Mini-Grants program—to work with communities and partners to complete projects that help protect natural resources and foster resilient communities across the country. We completed evaluations and published the findings for both grant programs, working with the Education Development Center for the 21st CCLC Watershed STEM Education Partnership Grant evaluation report and with GeoLiteracy, LLC for the evaluation of the Aquaculture Literacy Mini-Grants program. We published an eeBLUE Community Partnership tool to provide guidance for environmental education organizations that work with out-of-school partners.

At the end of 2023, NOAA awarded NAAEE with a second five-year partnership to continue eeBLUE in 2024, including funding for more Aquaculture Literacy Grants and eeBLUE 21st CCLC Watershed STEM Education Partnership Grants programs. The latter received additional support from the U.S. Department of Education.

Youth Innovation Challenge: Saving Our Seas!

The Youth Innovation Challenge (YIC) is a program that recognizes young environmental leaders ages 15-30 who are addressing issues affecting marine environments and ecosystems. In our third year of the program, young people from around the world shared their innovative solutions to protect marine resources and support people of all ages to be engaged stewards for marine conservation, using environmental education as a key component. In partnership with the Taiwan Ocean Conservation Administration (OCA), the GEEP YIC highlights the ingenuity of the new generation and encourages young people to consider how education can help us tackle today's pressing marine challenges. The three winners received \$1,000 USD each to support their efforts, and all awardees received a certificate and global recognition through the Global Environmental Education Partnership's network.

By the numbers:

- 12 finalists and 3 winners from 11 countries
- Applicants from 50 countries







Pratt & Whitney E-STEM Awards

In 2023, NAAEE continued working with corporate partners to support programs that advance E-STEM (Environment, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)—integrating environmental education into STEM learning for youth around the world.

Through the Pratt & Whitney E-STEM Awards, NAAEE and Pratt & Whitney worked together to support established and promising E-STEM programs that increase students' environmental literacy, build STEM skills, and create pathways to environmental careers. In 2023, \$250,000 in grants and prizes were awarded to 15 nonprofit organizations in 12 countries and 4 continents, and the 2022 cohort of awardees reached 64,489 beneficiaries with their programs.







From awardees:

It is imperative that we address this problem [of climate change] seriously and we at WCN feel that focusing on E-STEM is the most effective investment in climate action. Therefore we are so grateful to NAAEE and Pratt & Whitney for this award, which has given us a lifeline to continue our journey in mainstreaming Green Schools and Environmental Education in Nepal with hopes to ensure sustained intergenerational positive behavior change.

-Sanjeevani Yonzon Shrestha, Director, WCN

Advancing Environmental and Climate Change Education Policy

NAAEE advocates for funding and programs that support high-quality EE programs at the federal, state, and local levels. We work with our Affiliate organizations and other partners and educators to monitor opportunities to shape EE policy, develop strategies for advancing key initiatives, and build capacity for advocacy within the EE community. We build coalitions and grassroots networks for greater impact in promoting policies to improve environmental literacy and increase climate change education. Learn more about our climate change education work.

Highlights

- Disseminated a new report—Mapping the Landscape of Climate
 Change in Higher Education Policy in the United States on the state
 of climate change policies in universities and colleges across
 the country—in partnership with the Monitoring and Evaluating
 Climate Communications and Education Project
- Released four editions of eeADVOCATE, a quarterly newsletter covering a range of topics related to policy and advocacy for EE, with 3600+ subscribers





Advancing climate literacy for a just and sustainable future

eeADVOCATE



Sustain a Thriving Organization

NAAEE Staff & Consultants

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Thanks to all our partners and funders for their continuing support, passion, and confidence in our work.

And a huge thank you to our members and all who supported NAAEE during 2023.































































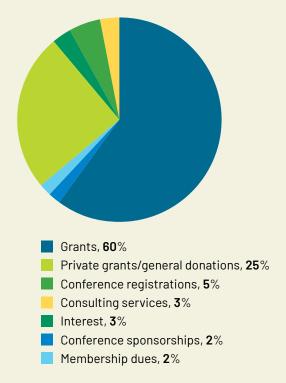


Financials

Statement of Activities

	2023	2022
Support and Revenue		
Grants	\$2,967,539	\$5,601,078
Conference sponsorships	\$93,700	\$118,140
Membership dues	\$84,845	\$106,755
Private grants/general donations	\$1,243,258	\$2,133,552
Consulting services	\$151,373	\$72,471
Conference registrations	\$247,566	\$520,830
Interest	\$168,315	\$22,145
Total revenues	\$4,956,596	\$8,574,971
Expenses		
Program services	\$4,185,082	\$6,808,254
Management and general	\$497,231	\$597,406
Fundraising	\$171,267	\$238,151
Total expenses	\$4,853,580	\$7,643,811
Change in net assets without		
donor restrictions	\$822,871	\$584,363
Change in net assets with		
donor restrictions	(\$719,855)	\$346,797

2023 Support & Revenue

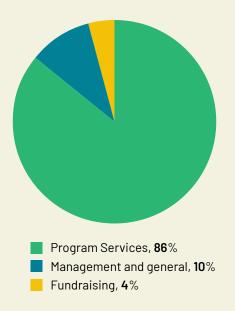


Statement of Financial Position

Assets

7.00010		
Cash	\$2,969,813	\$3,416,094
Accounts receivable	\$11,810	\$116,611
Grant receivable	\$905,853	\$2,567,325
Unconditional promises to give	\$24,730	\$502,371
Investments	\$3,886,671	\$1,608,909
Prepaid expenses and deposits	\$19,393	\$14,482
Total assets	\$7,818,270	\$8,225,792
Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$414,829	\$904,148
Deferred revenue	\$30,603	\$69,940
Accrued payroll liabilities	\$170,873	\$152,755
Net assets		
Without donor restrictions	\$6,600,908	\$5,778,037
With donor restrictions	\$601,057	\$1,320,912
Total liabilities and net assets	\$7,818,270	\$8,225,792

Expenses



^{*}Audited statements available upon request

Demonstrate Your Commitment

A strong commitment to environmental education helps create a more sustainable world for tomorrow. When you give to NAAEE, you help elevate environmental education as a key strategy for building healthier, more resilient communities.

There are many ways to support environmental education:



Become a member



Make a one-time or monthly cash gift



Support the EE Futures Fund



Support our scholarship fund



Make a charitable gift of stocks, bonds, or mutual funds



Give a gift membership to an education or conservation professional



Honor a loved one with a tribute gift



Make a planned gift to NAAEE



