

NAAEE Accreditation: Distinguished College and University Programs

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of NAAEE's Accreditation program?

NAAEE accreditation formally recognizes high quality college and university programs that consistently prepare well-qualified environmental educators who possess the understanding, skills, and dispositions associated with environmental literacy, as well as the ability to apply them in their educational practice. NAAEE accreditation provides a third-party, standards-based review.

What are the benefits of NAAEE's Accreditation?

While earning accreditation is an honor, the *process* of completing the Self-Study Audit is a major benefit unto itself, providing an important opportunity to compare program outcomes and performance with well-accepted environmental education criteria and to document program successes credibly and communicate them to internal and external audiences. A standards-based recognition helps programs attract and retain students; it provides evidence of excellence for employers, funders, and donors; and it documents program impact for university-wide reviews and other accreditation programs. NAAEE promotes accredited programs through our website, eePRO, and at our annual conference.

Who should apply?

This recognition is open to all college/university environmental education (EE) programs that meet the competencies outlined in [NAAEE Environmental Educator Knowledge and Skills: Guidelines for Excellence](#), including but not limited to college/university undergraduate and graduate programs in environmental education (e.g., majors, minors, certificates, endorsements) as well as other cross-disciplinary or integrated studies programs.

Note for current applicants: Programs that began the accreditation process under the [NAAEE Professional Development of Environmental Educators: Guidelines for Excellence](#) may continue using that version through 2029. Application reviewers are aware of this transition and will evaluate submissions accordingly.

What is the application process?

Applicants for *initial* accreditation submit a Self-Study Audit which includes **a minimum of two years of assessment data**. All application forms can be downloaded on the [Higher Education Accreditation page](#).

How are applications submitted?

Applications must be submitted electronically via email in a PDF file and sent to accreditation@naaee.org.

When are applications due?

Applications must be received no later than **June 15**.

Is there a re-accreditation application process?

Accreditation is awarded for **seven years**. At that time, an updated Self-Study Audit is submitted along with **at least one year of assessment data**.

Can more than one application be used for more than one program?

If more than one program is being submitted for accreditation or re-accreditation, a separate application should be made for each program.

Are there fees?

The college/university program applying for recognition must be a member of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) at the Partner Nonprofit level at the time of application. Membership must be maintained annually.

How can I learn more about NAAEE Accreditation?

[Visit our website and download the accreditation manual.](#) For additional questions, please email accreditation@naaee.org.