

# RCE Recognition Award Application



**\*\*NOTE: Your project should have achieved significant milestones or be completed at the time of application\*\***

**Who may apply:**

Applications may be submitted by the individual or organization, or by someone else, who believe(s) the project is worthy of recognition.

**Application deadline:**

Fill out the application form which follows and **e-mail it no later than midnight March 31, 2015 to:**

Heather Trueman, RCE Recognition Event Coordinator, at [rcesk.event@gmail.com](mailto:rcesk.event@gmail.com)

Submissions will be considered during the first week of April and applicants will be contacted shortly thereafter.

**Supplementary information:**

Photos and short videos (e.g., YouTube) are welcome with your submission. Please note that submitted photos will be posted on the RCE Saskatchewan website unless you request otherwise.

**Help completing this form:**

Please refer to the *Application Guide* section which follows Section 3 of this application form. It is intended to help you complete this form.

If you have any questions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the RCE Recognition Event Coordinator at [rcesk.event@gmail.com](mailto:rcesk.event@gmail.com).

## Section 1: Basic Information

Name of project:	The Qu'Appelle Initiative-Luther College at the University of Regina-Royal Saskatchewan Museum Ecomuseum Collaboration		
Lead organizations or individuals (if applicable):	Qu'Appelle Initiative: Aura Lee MacPherson Royal Saskatchewan Museum: Dr. Glenn Sutter, Curator of Human Ecology IDS 290AB (Ecomuseums: Exploring Place): Dr. Mary Vetter, Luther College at the University of Regina		
Project team members:	Aura Lee MacPherson	Mary Vetter	Glenn Sutter
students in IDS 290AB			

Contact person	Name: Aura Lee MacPherson and Mary Vetter	
Phone:	Email:	
Address:		
City/Town:	Postal code:	

## Section 2: Project Description

Answer the following questions as they apply to your project:

### 1. What is the purpose of your project?

To produce a collaboration among the developing Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum, IDS 290AB Ecomuseums: Exploring Place taught at Luther College at the University of Regina, and the Royal Saskatchewan Museum for the purposes of providing a significant contribution to the developing ecomuseum and to sustainability in the Qu'Appelle Valley (specifically the Calling Lakes region); to provide a meaningful community-engaged, skills-development, and experiential learning experience for the university students in the course; to serve as a model for further community-university course collaborations; and to advance the Saskatchewan Ecomuseums Initiative.

### 2. Why is your project important?

This project demonstrates the value of collaboration among Community, University, and Museum partners in achieving sustainability goals. The Calling Lakes region has been struggling with water quality issues for more than a decade, aggravated by lack of an integrated plan that brought together and developed consensus among the various groups in the region (First Nations, Metis, cottage owners, business people, various settlements, agricultural producers) to address these issues. A crisis unfolded in June 2014 when the City of Regina released approximately 1 million cubic metres of raw sewage into the Qu'Appelle Valley following heavy rainfalls that overwhelmed the City's sewage treatment infrastructure and threatened to flood many basements in the City. This galvanized the Calling Lakes community into searching for ways to address their water quality issues over the long-term based on sustainability objectives. A nucleus of people embraced the ecomuseum concept, and sought assistance from Dr. Glenn Sutter at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. Dr. Sutter facilitated pairing the Calling Lakes community with the instructor of a new course on Ecomuseums at Luther College at the University of Regina. The resulting collaboration provided the community with valuable resources and information, provided expertise on ecomuseums and sustainability along with skills and insights to the university students through experiential learning opportunities, and produced a working model for successful future collaborations between communities, university courses, and the Museum. While community-university collaborations are not new, the innovation here is that a mutually beneficial project was identified and carried out as the major focus of a university course with undergraduate students over a semester to accomplish sustainability goals. In addition, the Calling Lakes community gained access to other University faculty members and their expertise over the course of this collaboration, and strengthened their link with the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. The Calling Lakes group attests that the work of the students in the university course was instrumental in 1) identifying shared goals among community members; 2) identifying the importance of and commitment to place shared by various community groups; 3) showing where consensus lay in undertaking water quality improvements; 4) providing time, expertise, and resources to accomplish specific tasks; and 5) providing clarity on community members' views about how to move forward.

### 3. What Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)\* issues in general or which of the RCE SK themes/issues in particular does the project address? Please refer to the ESD definition and RCE Saskatchewan's ESD theme areas in the Application Guide at the end of this application form.

Building sustainable communities: Sustainability is a key component of ecomuseums; Thru the collaborative project we

recognized that sustainability is achievable. Prior to the project our community was over-whelmed, felt defeated and was expecting of a low standard. By bringing the community together and collaborating with the College of Luther University of Regina and the Royal Museum of Saskatchewan we removed our barriers of being uneducated. We learned, we were inspired and we came to believe sustainability was possible.

Climate change: The work enhanced recognition of the challenges of managing water supply and quantity in a changing environment.

Reconnecting to natural prairie ecosystems: Prairie ecosystems in the Qu'Appelle Valley are critical determinants of water quality. The project helped the Qu'Appelle Initiative move in the direction of self learning and self evaluation. As mentioned in point 2, prior to the destructive discharge of sewage into the Qu'Appelle system, the Calling Lakes community had lost its connectivity with the natural ecosystems of the Valley. For example, cottagers, unlike the First Nation communities, were removing the riparian area and replacing it with lawn. ATVs were allowed to destroy the prairie grasses on the hillsides. This disaster forced the Calling Lakes community to critically rethink and relearn our relationship with nature and with ourselves.

Sustainable infrastructure including water and energy: The project focused on collecting a community pulse. The following quote from one of the interviewees in the university students' report sums up our need to collaborate, communicate and educate ourselves in order to build sustainability into our community's water and energy infrastructure: "There's many levels of government, and many different groups that all need to come together and just be honest with each other".

Cultural adaptation for sustainability: The project showed the need for the different groups in the community to overcome challenges and work together for sustainability. On December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014, we held a community meeting at the Treaty Four Governance Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle. We closed the meeting with a Round Dance. Even though the community of Fort Qu'Appelle is over 100 years old, our eyes were opened up when we realized that non-First Nations people did not know how to do a Round Dance. This collaboration showed us that when we can dance and laugh together, we have a hope of building a sustainable future for our children.

K-12 education: A curriculum unit on the rare and endangered plants and animals in the Qu'Appelle Valley was generated by the students.

**4. In what way is your project educational? Education can be formal (e.g., part of a program in K-12 or post-secondary studies), informal or non-formal (e.g., corporate training, demonstration projects that are open to the public, media).**

**Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum educational goals: A central component of all ecomuseums is education, with the goal of enhancing awareness of the cultural, historical, social, economic, and environmental heritage and resources of an area and fostering the commitment to sustainability of these resources. Cultural, historical, social, and environmental heritage components of the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum include water quality, the Aboriginal history and presence, agricultural history and presence, the lakes and rivers, recreational use, a number of heritage buildings and locations, and native prairie and coulee habitats.**

**IDS 290AB educational goals: The projects with the Calling Lakes community formed the major component of IDS 290AB, through experiential learning projects and supporting lectures and guest speakers. The students in the course learned about sustainability, sustainable development, sense of place, and ecomuseums. They developed a number of specific skills including research and presentation, interviewing and coding, and storytelling.**

**Educational resources for the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum: The students produced a report on the interviews (focused on water quality and quantity, development, heritage, sense of place); a draft tour and map of significant buildings; a draft curriculum exercise on rare plants and animals for elementary schools; and draft resources for workshops on managing water runoff, water retention, and riparian habitats. In addition, the students developed a**

conceptual framework for the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum.

**5. Whom does the project target?**

The Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum project focuses on the communities in the Calling Lakes region, including towns, Reserves, cottage communities, and agricultural communities, and outreach to surrounding regions and tourists.

IDS 290AB, the Ecomuseums course was available to all students at the University of Regina who had completed at least 15 credit hours. The project serves as a case study and model for future community-university course collaborations on sustainable development.

The project addresses "The University as Living Lab" of the draft University of Regina Sustainability Strategic Plan.

**6. Where did it take place?**

The community-university collaboration involved people living in the Calling Lakes region of south-central Saskatchewan (Fort Qu'Appelle, Lebret, Mission Lake, Katepwa Lake, Reserves in the area, cottage communities, surrounding communities and farms); staff at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum in Regina; and faculty and students at Luther College at the University of Regina. A field trip to the Calling Lakes region took place in late September, and the students conducted interviews by telephone.

**7. When did it take place?**

The collaboration took place in the Fall 2014 (September-December) semester at the University of Regina, with planning meetings during summer 2014. The Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum project is ongoing and will continue over the next several years and into the future. Future IDS 290AB courses will follow the same model of collaboration among the community, the university, and the Museum.

**8. How did it come about?**

Glenn Sutter was the liaison between the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum group and the IDS 290AB course instructor, Mary Vetter. In summer 2014, everyone met together and we discussed ways in which the students in IDS 290AB could provide a direct benefit to the Qu'Appelle Initiative group while learning about ecomuseums in general and developing specific skills in interdisciplinary research and work. In fall 2014, Aura Lee MacPherson provided a list of potential interviewees and led a field trip in the Calling Lakes area. The Qu'Appelle Initiative also learned about other researchers at the University, with whom they have connected to learn about sustainable development. At the same time, First Nations people joined the Qu'Appelle Initiative, and are committed to working together with all of the other groups in the Calling Lakes region.

In the words of the Qu'Appelle Initiative, this collaboration was possible because of the "right people, in the right place, at the right time."

**9. What has been accomplished to date and what else is expected to be accomplished?**

The IDS 290AB students completed a major interview project and report, drafted a conceptual model of the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum, developed specific educational resources for the Ecomuseum (described above under point 4), and presented their materials and report to the community at an evening meeting on December 4, 2014, at the Treaty Four Governance Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle. The students' work was presented to the Heritage Saskatchewan Living Heritage Forum and AGM on February 21, 2015, and to the Johnson-Shoyama Living Heritage: Growing our Cultural Heritage forum on March 10, 2015. The project was highlighted in the Fort (Qu'Appelle) Times on October 3, 2014. Mary Vetter presented a teaching circle at Luther College (open to the University community) on community-based, experiential learning using IDS 290AB as a case study, on March 10, 2015.

The work of the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum is ongoing and they held their first meeting on Feb 12, 2015 with nine members attending. At present the Ecomuseum group is defining goals and mission statements and plan to organize an educational party for the community in June of 2015.

The community engagement model will be followed in IDS 290AB in Fall 2015.

## Section 3: Building Capacity for Sustainable Development

This section is intended to help you tell us how your project builds capacity for sustainable development. Please answer those questions which you believe are relevant to your project.

**1. What is/was the level of community involvement including involvement of those often excluded from decision-making (for example, youth involvement)?**

The IDS 290AB student project conducted interviews with First Nations peoples, Metis peoples, cottage owners, business people, and agricultural producers. The interview results are being used by the Calling Lakes community to draw all of the groups together into a plan for the sustainability of water quality. The work provided a way to connect with the First Nations and Metis people in the Calling Lakes region, with everyone coming together around the issue of water quality, importance of place, and importance of sustaining the heritage. The collaboration culminated in a community meeting and Round Dance at the Treaty Four Governance Centre on December 4, 2014.

**2. What contributions does/did it make to community improvements that benefit a large number of people and/or disadvantaged/marginalized/vulnerable individuals, groups, and/or populations?**

The Qu'Appelle Initiative states the following:

- The IDS 290AB course and other work with University faculty brought the Calling Lakes community together. Respect for the University ensured that the interview results were believed and accepted.
- The relationships among First Nations, Metis, and settler communities in the Valley have been strained in the past. The collaboration provided the opportunity to listen and come together, both as participants in the interviews and in the community meeting and Round Dance on December 4, 2014.
- "Our divided community meant the land was sick and therefore the water was sick. People in the Valley can now 'look each other in the eye and talk about what needs to be done'. We know that community healing will lead to healing of the land and healing of the water."

**3. In what ways are/were project participants encouraged to participate and are/were recognized (e.g., volunteers)?**

Interviewees were selected from the list drawn up by Aura Lee MacPherson. They were contacted by the IDS 290AB course instructor to provide background on the project and asked about their willingness and interest in participating in the interviews. The interviewees remain confidential and their responses are anonymous; but all were invited to the community meeting on December 4, 2014, and many came.

**4. How does/did your project enable mitigation and adaptation to sustainability challenges?**

The goal of an ecomuseum is to address sustainability of social, cultural, and natural resources and heritage, and to directly assist with the economic sustainability of a region. The interview results reveal what is important to people in the region, and gather ideas on how to sustain those resources. In this way, the interview results inform the development and work of the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum going forward. In addition, the student projects provide educational resources to mitigate environmental challenges, such as the loss of riparian habitats.

**5. How does/did your project contribute to preserving or restoring natural ecosystems?**

The interviews conducted by the students asked interviewees to identify environmental concerns that need to be addressed, especially those related to water quality and quantity. The information from those interviews is already guiding the Qu'Appelle Initiative's work in this area. For example, a workshop on the role of riparian ecosystems in water quality, and on riparian restoration and management, will be held in June 2015 in the Qu'Appelle Valley.

In addition, two student projects addressed preserving and restoring natural ecosystems. One project developed an

elementary school hands-on curriculum project to help young students recognize rare plants and animals in the Calling Lakes region and compile information on locations and ecosystem functions. Another project compiled educational resources to help people understand how to retain stormwater runoff and the importance of restoring and maintaining riparian habitats.

**6. What are/were the specific results/accomplishments and measurable successes of your project?**

In the words of the Qu'Appelle Initiative:

- "The work provided by the students saved us 2 years of work, showed us that the community was committed to addressing water quality issues, and created awareness and consensus."
- "We knew there were pockets of good things going on, but nobody knew about each other."
- "The interview results provided clarity."
- "The work the students did clearly showed us that we need better communication. Everybody had to come out of their silos."

IDS 290AB: conceptual framework for the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum; three possible Ecomuseum components (educational resource on rare plants and animals, educational resources on stormwater retention and riparian habitat restoration and preservation, guided tour and map to three heritage buildings); conducted, coded and presented results of 8 extensive interviews with people living in or connected to the region, and surveying attitudes and priorities on heritage, resources, conservation, development, place attachment, and water quality and quantity.

This collaborative model was very successful and will be used in future offerings of IDS 290AB. As well, the experience was shared with other University professors through a teaching circle and the "Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage" workshop of the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy.

**7. What are/were the transformative educational dimensions of your project including formal education (for example, in schools, colleges, technical institutes, universities), non-formal education (for example, non-profit awareness programs, corporate or professional training), and/or informal education (for example, the media)?**

**Formal education:** IDS 290AB is an experiential, engaged learning course in which students both learn about issues and develop specific materials to address those issues. Through direct work with the community the students learned about community engagement and presented results to the community in a public forum. In their research and in developing the materials presented to the community, the students learned about policy analysis and development; ethics research board applications and approvals; developed research and presentation skills including conducting and coding interviews, powerpoint presentations, and report formulation; and developing frameworks for conceptualizing complex issues.

**Non-formal education:** The results of the collaborative project are informing the development of the Qu'Appelle Initiative, particularly in the need for communication, the need to involve everyone and provide meaningful tasks, and in recognition of the shared attachment to place. The new draft Vision Statement of the Qu'Appelle Initiative reflects this: "The Ecomuseum has a shared vision to create a culture of trust, a culture of communication and a culture of awareness by collaborating, connecting, and caring in our community." The collaborative project was shared with the Heritage Saskatchewan Living Heritage Forum and AGM on February 21, 2015, with the Johnson-Shoyama Living Heritage: Growing our Cultural Heritage forum on March 10, 2015., and a teaching circle at Luther College (open to the University community) on community-based, experiential learning, using IDS 290AB as a case study, on March 10, 2015.

**Informal education:** The project was profiled in the Fort (Qu'Appelle) Times in October 2014.

**8. How does/did your project show good organizational policies and practices and ways of sharing this expertise with others?**

There was very close liaison among Glenn Sutter, Aura Lee MacPherson, and Mary Vetter in identifying the optimal project between the community and the course. The community opened its doors to the IDS 290AB course during a field trip in late September 2014; this was essential in helping the students gain an understanding of the region. Expertise and results were shared in a meeting with the Calling Lakes community, at the Treaty Four Governance Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle, on December 4, 2015.

9. What new knowledge is/was gained and what innovations are/were included in your project (including new knowledge or innovations associated with your project's implementation in a specific organizational or community setting)?

The report on the interviews presented to the Qu'Appelle Initiative Ecomuseum comprised new knowledge about peoples' attachment to and sense of place in the Qu'Appelle Valley, and the issues they identified and wanted addressed regarding development, conservation, and water quality and quantity. New educational resources were developed that can be used directly by the community to support the developing Ecomuseum.

In the words of the Qu'Appelle Initiative, "This collaborative project was a gift to our community. As mentioned, the work the students did saved our community roughly 2 years of work. We just did not have the know how or the volunteers to attempt the scope of work needed. This project gave us the confidence to believe in ourselves - and there is no greater gift to our community than the gift of believing." The successful collaboration "catalyzed and help set direction for the Qu'Appelle Initiative ecomuseum work" and "helped us understand what an ecomuseum is."



# Application Guide

## ***How is Education for Sustainable Development defined?***

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) promotes reflection and discernment in our region that helps us identify and pursue paths to sustainability. Such paths lead to ongoing improvements in quality of life while sustaining healthy ecosystems. They promote active environmental stewardship, social justice, and intergenerational equity. Projects should address education for sustainable development, including the three pillars of environmental stewardship, social justice, and economic sustainability such that the project strengthens one or more pillars while not damaging any of the other pillars.

## ***What are RCE Saskatchewan's Education for Sustainable Development theme areas?***

1. Building sustainable communities
2. Climate change
3. Farming and local food production
4. Health and healthy lifestyles
5. Reconnecting to natural prairie ecosystems
6. Sustainable infrastructure including water and energy
7. Cultural adaptation for sustainability
8. K-12 education

## ***How will the application be evaluated?***

The application will be evaluated in the following manner:

### ***Section 1:***

*Project description* – Has the applicant provided a clear project description using the suggested bullet points as a guide?

1 = weak, 2 = moderately weak, 3= average, 4=moderately strong, 5=strong

*Project achievements* – Has the ESD project or program shown it has reached a significant milestone and/or has it reached its conclusion?

1 = weak, 2 = moderately weak, 3= average, 4=moderately strong, 5=strong

### ***Section 2:***

*Building capacity for sustainable development* – Does the applicant integrate relevant bullet points into their response?

1 = weak, 2 = moderately weak, 3= average, 4=moderately strong, 5=strong

## ***What kinds of projects have received recognition in the past?***

The RCE Saskatchewan Recognition Program acknowledges innovation, research, and activities promoting Education for Sustainable Development (see definition above) in the province and celebrates the organizations and individuals who are building capacity for ESD in Saskatchewan. Education can take place in a formal context such as K-12 or post-secondary programs. It also includes informal or non-formal initiatives undertaken by individuals, community groups or organizations, which can range from small, not-for-profit groups to large companies, cooperatives and crown corporations.

The following table provides examples of initiatives that have received recognition in the past.

## Examples of Initiatives Recognized in Previous Years

Initiative	Exemplifies education for sustainable development (ESD) because:
<p>The Saskatchewan Ecomuseum Initiative* helps preserve and build natural and cultural heritage in Saskatchewan communities. The initiative brings together partners from a variety of sectors (the museum community, governments and non-governmental organizations, businesses, volunteers, and researchers) to advance local projects with important cultural and environmental dimensions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotes environmental stewardship and heritage preservation</li> <li>• collaboration and partnerships build capacity to work together among multiple communities</li> <li>• demonstration sites provide opportunities for public to learn about sustainable development</li> </ul>
<p>Regina's Edible Campus is an organic community garden located at the University of Regina that brings together faculty, staff, students and community members to plant and harvest high quality vegetables. Produce harvested from the community gardens is donated to the Carmichael Outreach Centre. The Edible Campus is a result of a partnership between the First Nations University of Canada, the Regina Public Interest Group, Wascana Centre Authority and the Institut Français.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides a demonstration site for the community to learn about localized food production, healthy lifestyles and food security</li> <li>• gives faculty, staff, students and community members the opportunity for hands-on horticulture experience</li> <li>• promotes healthy lifestyles by giving underprivileged groups access to high quality vegetables</li> </ul>
<p>The events of Sustainability Action and Awareness Month (SAAM) showcased sustainability initiatives at the University of Regina and educated the public on a wide range of sustainability themes such as food security and transportation. SAAM featured events such as movie screenings, winter cycling workshops, and seminars. The project served to empower university members to make a change in their lives and their community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• showcased sustainability initiatives happening on campus giving the campus community opportunities to get involved</li> <li>• featured Information sessions and seminars that educated the public about a variety of sustainability issues</li> <li>• created a space where interested parties on campus could network and develop partnerships, building capacity</li> </ul>
<p>Footprints, an initiative by the First Nations University of Canada Northern Campus, was initially to develop an on-campus recycling program to promote awareness of waste recycling specifically. It later grew to include wider environmental concerns including growing food locally, composting, and hosting events in association with Earth Day 2011.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A committee with broad campus representation, including students, was established to address local environmental concerns.</li> <li>• The committee gained wide internal support and involvement in their on-campus activities and their educational efforts reached a large number of students.</li> </ul>
<p>Green Sustainable Housing Forum, a forum on sustainable housing options in Canada was hosted by Saskatchewan Polytechnic in 2012 in conjunction with the City of Moose Jaw Environmental Advisory Committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• networked many local experts in fields related to sustainable housing, as well as some from other parts of Canada</li> <li>• sessions were attended by Sask Polytechnic engineering and architecture students and was open to the public</li> <li>• walking tours of local sustainable housing projects were included</li> </ul>

<p>SaskPower Energy Conservation &amp; Efficiency Education Program provides customers with information to assist in effectively managing electricity use with the goal of saving money, benefiting the environment and helping SaskPower manage infrastructure growth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• helps individuals to understand how energy conservation and efficiency benefits themselves, the environment and reduces the need for more power stations</li> <li>• encourages and supports positive behavior change</li> </ul>
<p>Regina Catholic School's Oil Recycling Project is organized and operated by students to provide Regina residents with an opportunity to drop off used oil products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• students learn about environmental impacts of the disposal of used oil</li> <li>• builds students' capacity and life-long skills for leadership and taking positive action</li> <li>• provides Regina residents with an easy way to dispose of used oil responsibly and to learn about why they should do so</li> </ul>
<p>Prairie Spruce Commons is Regina's first multi-generational cohousing community committed to creating a beautiful, sustainable, green building with abundant common spaces.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• builds capacity in cohousing members for cooperative decision-making</li> <li>• building designed for energy and water efficiency</li> <li>• located to reduce transportation-related ecological footprint</li> <li>• designed for efficient use of resources by enabling sharing of space and other resources</li> </ul>

\* This project celebrated at a past event received international recognition at the *9th Global RCE Conference* in Okayama, Japan, last November.