

What we look for on Earthworks applications:

Specific teaching goals: The number one aspect we look for is to have *specific* teaching goals that Earthworks can support. Do you have an outdoor area that you would like to make into a nature trail? Have you received new equipment in your department that you would like to learn to use? Do you have a site you would like to assess for restoration? Do you have new geoscience content areas in your curriculum? Do you have an existing unit that you would like to make more inquiry or field-based? If you wish to talk with me about your goals and how Earthworks can help, feel free to call me in advance of the application deadline. Far, far in advance is fine. We often receive applications throughout the year. My phone number is 303-492-5657.

Clear understanding of Earthworks: Is it clear in your answers that you understand what we do at Earthworks? Were you referred by a previous participant who told you about what we do? We do not provide a structured set of activities or curriculum. Rather, we provide an experience in which you as a learner conduct a field-based project that you identify, design and conduct. You will learn about topics of relevance to your goals and use equipment suitable for the classroom. We provide the experience, you provide the application to your classroom.

Positive attitude: How do you talk about yourself and your students? Are you generally confident that you can implement steps towards new pedagogy and meaningful earth science experiences? Do you have confidence in your students' abilities to take steps towards inquiry-based learning? I use the language "take steps" intentionally-new ways of teaching and learning are not established in a day.

Previous experience: Not required, but useful. We bring in mainly newly practicing teachers. However, we also bring in mid-career and experienced teachers. We look for previous experiences that indicate you have some of the skills you need to go where you want to go, skills that you can build on through Earthworks. Past experience is not required, as we realize many new teachers have not been in the field long enough to build up a big resume. However, if you are a second career teacher, or an experienced teacher new to earth science, or a young teacher who has accomplished a lot in a short time or while as a student teacher, it helps.

Potential impact: Do you teach a student population that is educationally disadvantaged in some way, or is under-represented in science? Do you mentor new teachers? Do you coordinate the science program in your district? Are you designing a new curriculum for your school science program? This aspect is not as essential as some of the other qualities of a successful application, but can be a tie-breaker in the final decision-making process.

We hope this guidance is helpful. We wish you all the best for your plans and projects.