



Smithsonian
Science Education Center



Arab American
National Museum

Smithsonian Youth STEM Exchange Program Overview for Educators

Program Overview:

The Smithsonian Science Education Center's (SSEC) Smithsonian Youth STEM Exchange connects American and Iraqi youth for collaboration on projects that address environmental justice and biodiversity issues. Participating educators will use the [Smithsonian Science for Global Goals' *Environmental Justice!*](#) guide to give students a framework for working with their international peers toward science-focused solutions for a more sustainable world. In collaboration with local implementation partners the Iraq Space Center in Baghdad, Iraq, and the Arab American National Museum (AANM) in Dearborn, Michigan, United States, this virtual exchange contributes to a global network of young people and educators dedicated to taking action on the biggest global issues of our time, like those found in the UN Sustainable Development goals.

Program Activities:

Through this program, local implementation partners will select up to 8 educators to receive professional development on the Smithsonian Science for Global Goals *Environmental Justice!* guide, participate in synchronous and asynchronous virtual exchange, and support students to deepen their understanding of environmental justice issues by engaging in local investigations and global research with their peers using Zoom and Moodle platforms.

This program is available for high school students/classrooms only.

Responsibilities of Participating Educators:

- Attend (virtual) 6-8 hours of professional development to learn how to implement the *Environmental Justice!* guide with students.
- Identify students who will participate in the program.
- Distribute and collect release forms signed by parents/guardians of participating students.
- Support students to use the Moodle platform to fully engage in the program.
- Attend 3 separate, virtual hour-long sessions throughout the semester. Students from Michigan and Iraq will participate in a virtual cultural exchange.
- Implement the *Environmental Justice!* guide with your group of students
 - Educators may be flexible in how they implement the guide
 - For example, it can be an afterschool program, incorporated into a science class during the school day, etc.



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- This flexibility includes how often implementation takes place during a given week
- Collaborate with other participating educators to:
 - Identify additional opportunities for meaningful exchange between live sessions
 - Work through challenges of implementation
 - Build connection and collaboration with educators in another location
- Support students as they take on action and make a video capturing their experience with the *Environmental Justice!* guide.
- Maintain regular communication with the local implementation partner and the SSEC
- Administer a survey provided by Smithsonian at the conclusion of the program
- Participate in follow-up “Alumni” activities held by both the Smithsonian Science Education Center and the Stevens Initiative after the program is complete.
- Teachers will receive a small stipend for their participation in the program

We are looking for a small group of educators in the metro Detroit area to be a part of this project. If you are interested in being a part of this wonderful initiative, please complete our form found here: <https://bit.ly/aanm-STEM>

For any questions, please contact Dave Serio, Curator of Education at AANM at dserio@accesscommunity.org or 313.429.2546. **Participating educators will receive a stipend at the end of the program.**



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What is the Smithsonian Science Education Center?

The Smithsonian Science Education Center is the only unit of the Smithsonian Institution that is solely dedicated to formal K-12 education. To achieve the mission of transforming K-12 Education Through Science™ in collaboration with communities across the globe, the SSEC has three (3) Programmatic Goals:

1. Innovation: Promote authentic, inquiry-based K-12 STEM teaching and learning
2. Inclusion: Ensure diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion in K-12 STEM education
3. Sustainability: Advance STEM education for sustainable development (STEM4SD)

The Smithsonian Science for Global Goals project contributes to advancing STEM Education for Sustainable Development by connecting young people and their educators to understand the science and social science that underlies the UN Sustainable Development Goals. They then Discover, Understand, and Act to make a positive impact in their own local communities.

What is the Stevens Initiative?

The [Stevens Initiative](#) is an international leader in virtual exchange, which brings young people from diverse places together to collaborate and connect through everyday technology. Created in 2015 as a lasting tribute to Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, the Initiative invests in virtual exchange programs; shares research, resources, and promising practices to improve impact; and advocates for broader adoption. By summer 2023, the Stevens Initiative will reach nearly 75,000 young people around the world.

Smithsonian Youth STEM Exchange is implemented by the Smithsonian Science Education Center and is supported by the J. Christopher Stevens Virtual Exchange Initiative (JCSVEI). JCSVEI is a U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs program administered by the Aspen Institute.

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