



Invitation for
Expressions of Interest
to become an
Evaluation Partner
for
**Dudley People's
School for Climate Justice**

funded by the
**National Lottery Community Fund's
Climate Action Fund**



Hello

Thank you for your interest in this opportunity to join us on a three year adventure in which we will invite local people to get curious, increase connection with nature, and take action together in support of flourishing futures for both people and the rest of nature.

Dudley CVS are seeking an Evaluation Partner to support the Developmental Evaluation of a project (Dudley People's School for Climate Justice) funded through the National Lottery Community Fund's Climate Action Fund - Nature and Climate.

The evaluation contract will run from April 2024 - December 2026

The budget available is £18,500

Work will be undertaken in Dudley Borough and remotely.

This brief includes

- An overview of the project
- Outcomes we are working towards
- Evaluation plan essentials
- Our learning and evaluation approach
- Expectations: essential criteria
- Expectations: desirable criteria
- Selection process
- Useful links and information

We look forward to hearing from you if you feel you can bring what we are looking for to this work.

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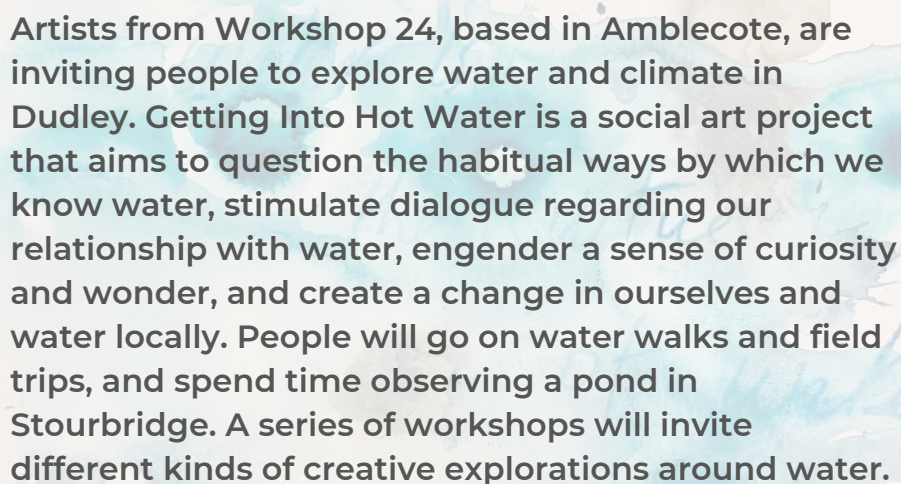
Overview of the project

Dudley People's School for Climate Justice is a community-led assemblage of activities and projects which **make it easier for people to learn from each other and connect with nature.** Everyone is a teacher, and everyone is a learner. Using nature's guidebook, place-based peer learning will lead to action for people, planet and the future.

In Dudley our most vulnerable communities are at high risk from climate change. We also have natural habitats listed as being at high risk and very high risk from climate change. (Source: West Midlands Combined Authority report on Climate Change Impacts, Nov 2022.)

This is an opportunity for hundreds of people across Dudley borough to share their ideas, skills and knowledge to respond to the climate crisis and reimagine the structures and systems which created the climate crisis and the inequalities which people face every day. It will see neighbours, artists, learners, designers, tea makers, tinkerers, researchers, crafters, gardeners, quiet activists and more to learning together, connecting with nature and taking climate action.

The team behind Dudley People's School for Climate Justice have backgrounds in social art, therapy, community work, architecture, research, education, and health and wellbeing. They are combining these to create a variety of activities to appeal to a wide range of people.



Artists from Workshop 24, based in Amblecote, are inviting people to explore water and climate in Dudley. Getting Into Hot Water is a social art project that aims to question the habitual ways by which we know water, stimulate dialogue regarding our relationship with water, engender a sense of curiosity and wonder, and create a change in ourselves and water locally. People will go on water walks and field trips, and spend time observing a pond in Stourbridge. A series of workshops will invite different kinds of creative explorations around water.

Overview of the project (cont)



Ekho Collective CIC, based at Hawbush Community Gardens in Brierley Hill are leading activity around land connection. Monthly Reclaiming Our Roots sessions will involve groups of people foraging and learning about plant uses. Exploring the Edges will see marginalised people adventuring to places that are on the margins. Alongside this another group will come together weekly to gently develop permaculture practices by tending a wellbeing garden.



Stories of Place, led by architect Holly Doron, encourages nature inspired observation, sensing and connection activities in Dudley town centre. These will be used to grow a living archive of ideas and stories to help inform community led climate action.

Dudley CVS will support people from neighbourhoods, groups, schools and colleges to become School Stewards, creating over 40 more learning journeys around many and varied topics over three years.

A programme of free exhibitions, performances, film screenings and seasonal celebrations, and a School Library tailored to local learning enquiries will enhance learning opportunities and inspire even more local people to take part.

Outcomes we are working towards

This work is already creating ripples of action and possibility through the process of being carefully designed by project partners and by being part of fruitful conversations with potential climate changemakers and collaborators across Dudley borough.

We know the ripples of change over the next three years will be many, take a mixture of forms, be both expected and unexpected. However, we have designed the idea of the school around **five expected outcomes** that as our evaluation partner **you will help us illustrate any progress towards and challenges we face in the pathways to these outcomes.**

Given our focus upon process (**how** we do, **not just what** we do) you will also be helping us to understand how our ways of working are part of this picture of change.

We will work together to measure movement towards these five key outcomes:

- **Greater nature connectedness and associated wellbeing.**

Note: this is distinct from simply access to, or time in nature (Richardson, 2020). Taking inspiration from the Nature Connection Index and the five pathways to nature connectedness in both our design and work making sense of change. (See derby.ac.uk/research/centres-groups/nature-connectedness-research-group/)

- **Spread of locally relevant and practically applied climate and ecological literacy.**

- **Increased regenerative design and cultural action capabilities.**

Taking inspiration in our design and ways of documenting change from the four lenses within the Data Portrait of Place framework designed by the Doughnut Economics Action Lab (doughnuteconomics.org) and the Pathways to Action in Bridget McKenzie's Culture Takes Action Framework (Climate Museum UK: climatemuseumuk.org)

- **Development of peer learning practices.**

- **Increased community participation, connectivity and sense of agency in taking climate action.**

We will convene participants to collectively map participation, connections and wider impact ripples using creative participatory systems mapping tools.

Evaluation plan essentials

The formal evaluation plan details will be agreed together at the beginning of the partnership and revisited as the project evolves.

The plan will include:

- Rhythms of data capture that complement the partner peer learning sessions convened by the project Learning Lead (see below).
- Methods of data collection and analysis that align with a Developmental Evaluation approach.
- Seasonal insight summaries to support ongoing adaptation and orientation towards our North Star intention of supporting a just transition to regenerative futures through peer learning and nature connection as pathways to climate action.
- Reflection time with project partners to ensure an evaluation feedback loop back into Dudley People's School for Climate Justice and wider ecosystem.

These four elements are key to supporting the People's School evolution and project iteration as we respond to changing contexts and emerging possibilities.

Seasonal rhythms of Project Partner Peer Learning

(when we convene / celebrate)

Winter - Rooting

- Data Mulching and Mapping (November)
- Gifting Seeds of the Future celebration (December)
- Co-design and connect our updated learning plans for year ahead (January)

Spring - Sprouting

- Sensing & Sense-making (April) - early season shared learning and iteration

Summer - Flowering

- Sensing & Sense-making (July) - end of season shared learning and data foraging

Autumn - Fruiting

Learning Harvest Time (October) - sharing and celebrating

Our learning and evaluation approach

Context from our project partner agreements outlining our approach, to help you decide if your skills, qualities and values are a good match.

The etymology (or linguistic roots) of evaluation helps us understand its core purpose. If you break the term down into its component parts you can see that “value” lies at the heart of evaluation. (Centre for Cultural Value, 2023)

The project partners are committing to an ongoing evaluation approach which is participatory, values led and involves people from the very beginning. Our reasons for adopting this approach include:

- **Making it easier for climate action** projects and activities to develop and evolve.
- **Working together to interpret and give meaning** to our work together and with people in Dudley (developing shared sense-making).
- Doing evaluation from the beginning so that can **inform project design** through critical thinking and reflection.
- Increasing the quality of evaluation through the **richness of multiple data sources** included.
- **Being more inclusive of many knowledge types**, and so shifting power to the communities that animate and lead climate action projects.

Through this project, including delivery by partners where relevant, we will support learners throughout their climate action projects to document and interact with their learning in a way that:

- **Meaningfully cares for their learning;** for example a clear understanding and comfort with our ethics and consent processes around data collection and sharing; as well as how learning is stored and curated for future participants to access.
- **Re-animates learning** through sign posting for cross-pollination of learning between different learning pods.
- **Amplifies learning** by helping learning pods to share their insights in a range of formats through cultural production support e.g. exhibitions, pamphlets, performances, web pages.

Our work measuring outcomes will occur in the context of a commitment to a learning culture, nurtured by all project partners with all the diversity of ways of knowing this brings into relationship. This will include pooled learning, peer exchange and a practice of paying attention and noticing throughout the lifetime of the project and into the ripples beyond.



Preparation for Reclaiming our Roots in Ekho Woodland



Afro Histories Dudley exhibition at a Stories of Place event

Expectations: essential criteria

We consider the following ways of working as **essential** to a partnership with an evaluator / evaluation team.

1. Making time to generate meaningful connections

Let's take time to get to know each other. Take time to understand the values, intentions and ways of working each of the project partners use. Practice and process are as important as outcomes to Dudley People's School For Climate Justice.

We expect you to allocate time at the beginning of the partnership getting to know us.

2. Agreeing rhythms and rituals that support the evaluation process

Working with the internal project Learning Lead and project partners to agree an optimal rhythm of data collecting, shared reflecting and feedback loops over the life of the project. That rhythm, and associated supporting learning rituals, should be both practically workable in terms of capacity of all partners, and critically useful for project development.

We expect you to allocate time for seasonal face to face or online evaluation sessions with Partners over the life of the project.

3. Approaching evaluation as an act of collective learning

Co-design evaluation sessions to support partner and People's School learning. Our approach to learning is open, and inclusive - we seek to bring as many members of the school into the learning and evaluation process as possible.

We expect you to work with the Learning Lead and partners to see how evaluation sessions can connect to and support existing partners' project learning plans.

4. Being interested in improving not just proving

We want to work with you to agree upon data collection methods aligned to a Developmental Evaluation approach that you think will clearly demonstrate People's School impact ripples for present and future Dudley kin; in relation to our expected and unexpected outcomes, unlocked potential, and new lines of possibility and development for the future.

We expect you to use a Developmental Evaluation approach and methods to demonstrate impact in relation to expected and unexpected outcomes.

Expectations: essential criteria (cont)

5. Making evaluation a catalyst for action

Evaluation that stays on the shelf is redundant. We are more interested in how can we bring it to life and make it a catalyst for action. How might you collaborate with us to find creative ways to meaningfully and clearly share the evaluation learning with a range of audiences to inspire and support action?

We expect you to collaborate with project partners to consider different framings formats, designs, and mediums for the evaluation insights.

6. An accountability to future generations

In seeking ways to support action for climate justice we hold ourselves accountable to present and future generations of people and the more-than-human. As part of this accountability we have an emergent People's School ethics process and practice that sits within our wider regenerative learning approach that seeks to deepen relationships, honour labour, is actively non-proprietary and non-extractive.

It includes consideration of: informed and ongoing meaningful consent to participate in People's School learning and evaluation; intentional care in design of how and what data is collected; honouring participant authorship and voice; care in the safe storage and disposal of data; with consent sharing of findings openly within the knowledge commons; and finally, integrity in relation to bias recognition.

We expect you to use the School ethics process that supports care for the knowledge co-created as well care and accountability to school participants and future generations of human and more-than-human kin.

7. Working with emergence

The project will have multiple cohorts of local community climate changemakers, as well as an unknown number of partner project participants all exploring the different elements of nature connection and climate action they are passionate about. These changemakers are not yet identified and their topics of action yet to be named.

We expect you to bring flexibility and curiosity to working with an evolving project in a dynamic context with multiple emerging elements over the course of the partnership.

Expectations: desirable criteria

We consider the following as **desirable** in a partnership with an evaluator / evaluation team. These are ways of working we believe would really help a partnership be truly generative for both all involved.

1. Knowledge flows

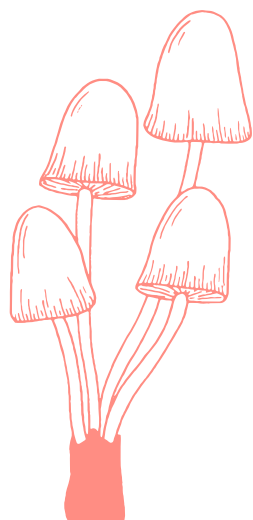
Exchange of ideas, knowledge and experiences of working with projects designed to explore or respond to complex issues like the climate emergency and climate justice. Sharing lessons and supporting flourishing through this exchange of wisdom.

We desire proactive practice of sharing insights and resources from related projects.

2. Evolution and development of regenerative learning infrastructure

Working together to design and explore regenerative evaluation and learning practices that better supports this type of work.

For example, working with project partners as part of the evaluation process to give greater clarity to the People's School ethics framework and guiding principles.



Selection process

Stage 1: Written responses to the possibility of partnership

Please provide a written proposal outlining how you would work to meet the criteria above. Feel free to include questions you have and any aspects of the work you are particularly excited to explore together. Demonstrate how your ways of working and skills match our needs and approaches. Please feel free to share examples of previous work which illustrates common ground / potential for common ground.

Please provide a breakdown of how you would profile use of the £18,500 budget between April 2024 and December 2026, and what this would include.

Please note that we anticipate that April - May 2024 would involve an investment of time meeting online with Lorna (the Dudley CVS Senior Development Officer stewarding this work) and Jo (the project Learning Lead). These team members have capacity to support your orientation, understanding of the history and roots of the work and relationships, and resulting emergence. They can walk you through project plans and aligned learning plans, and explore evaluation methods which might have a great fit.

Deadline for written Expressions of Interest: **9am, Monday 26th February 2024**
There is no word/page limit, please use your discretion in deciding what works.

Stage 2: Exploring common ground and alignment

During the week commencing 26 February 2024 project partners will consider Expressions of Interest and select evaluators / evaluation teams to have an online conversation with. During this conversation we'll be sensing for a relational match, whether the vibe is right for a long term relationship.

Dates for online conversations to be arranged to suit **w/c 4 March 2024**

Stage 3: Sharing decisions and feedback

During the **week commencing 11 March 2024** Dudley CVS will provide written feedback and notification of decisions to all individuals / teams who submitted an Expression of Interest. The selected Evaluation Partner will be asked to provide 2 references for our team to contact.

Useful links and information

We're a matter of days into the delivery of this project, so we don't have a dedicated website, published plans or invitations yet. However we have been working on the proposal for a year, and testing out some ideas. Below are links to a few key things we've shared to date:

News post on Dudley CVS website announcing Climate Action Fund award:

www.dudleycvs.org.uk/750000-investment-in-community-led-climate-action-in-dudley-borough/

Blog post on Dudley CVS website about our development of the proposal (includes a link to our submission in March 2023)

www.dudleycvs.org.uk/collaborating-to-develop-dudley-peoples-school-for-climate-justice/

Workshop 24 work on Getting Into Hot Water (and associated Field Works) in 2023

www.workshop24.co.uk/getting-into-hot-water

www.workshop24.co.uk/field-works

Stories of Place lab note

(another one drawing together 2023 activity will be published soon)

medium.com/colab-dudley/stories-of-place-as-regenerative-design-practice-5a3de58e7763

Reflections on an Ekho Collective Reclaiming Our Roots session in 2023

www.dudleycreates.net/news/hedgerow-syrup

CoLab Dudley website (this work is held by our CoLab Dudley team)

www.colabdudley.net

Useful links and information (cont)

Other resources and people

We rent large ex-retail premises on Dudley High Street which are available to our Evaluation Partner for meetings, workshops, interviews etc. The downstairs area is mostly open plan with different sized table and around 30 chairs. There is another space upstairs. Please note that the toilet facilities are not accessible, they are on the first floor, accessed by stairs. There is a large touch screen which can be used for audio visual activities, it connects to wifi. We have a good supply of stationery including large rolls of paper etc. We have a Zoom Pro account, Miro and Notion accounts, and Slack workspace which Evaluation Partners can be invited to use to support collaboration and communication.

Partners' premises include an artist studio in Amblecote, Stourbridge, and a woodland with a roundhouse and composting toilet, on the Hawbush Community Gardens site, Brierley Hill.

People working on this project, and their FTE time on the project is:

Lorna Prescott, project manager & climate changemakers lead, up to 0.8 FTE
Senior Development Officer, Dudley CVS, based in Dudley borough

Jo Orchard-Webb, Learning Lead, up to 0.4 FTE
Researcher, Dudley CVS Associate in the CoLab Dudley team, based in Dorset (in Dudley once a month)

Holly Doron, Stories of Place Lead, 0.2 FTE
Architect, Dudley CVS Associate in the CoLab Dudley team, based in Dudley.
Remainder of time undertaking a PhD with Birmingham City University in collaboration with CoLab Dudley.

Bill Laybourne and Helen Garbett, Getting into Hot Water leads, 0.3 FTE each
Art practitioners/researchers, Workshop 24, based in Dudley borough

Deb McDonald, Exploring the Edges lead 0.4 FTE on this project
Community connector and creative

Claire Butroid, Reclaiming our Roots lead 0.4 FTE on this project
Nature-based health and wellbeing practitioner

Erika Keshelya, Tending , 0.2 FTE on this project
Therapeutic horticulture & regenerative resilience practitioner
Ekho Collective CIC, all based in Dudley borough