



Seeking:	Place-Based Education Project Manager
Status:	Regular, full-time (40 hours per week)
Location:	White River Junction, Vermont
Hiring Range:	\$23-\$26 per hour
Posting Date:	April 28, 2022
Start Date:	As Soon as Possible
To Apply:	Submit a cover letter and resume to hr@vitalcommunities.org
Application Deadline:	Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

This job in One Sentence

Vital Communities seeks a full-time Project Manager with teaching experience who has passion for and commitment to the principles of place-based education (PBE) to lead our Farm to School programming and to be part of the Place-Based Education team.

Context: A New Chapter for Vital Communities' Projects Team

Incorporated in 1998, Vital Communities is a nonprofit organization that cultivates civic, environmental, and economic vitality in the Upper Connecticut River Valley region of Vermont and New Hampshire. We bring people together, bridging boundaries and engaging our whole community to create positive change. Explore vitalcommunities.org to learn more.

We are an organization at an exciting turning point; re-imagining our role in inspiring and supporting equitable, inclusive, transformational, community-scale, community-led change-making. By "community" we mean all people who have a connection to and stake in a specific geographic place (often a village, town, or cluster of towns connected by shared resources and identity).

This position will be part of a two-person PBE team with projects that include Farm to School, Valley Quest, and the Upper Valley Teaching Place Collaborative. The Place-Based Education team runs projects in which community members become more skillful and confident about their capacity to shape their lives in ways that will benefit themselves, their neighbors, the environment, and future generations. This learning is specifically situated in the context of the community and geography of the Upper Valley.

The entire Vital Communities project team (12 people) is transforming the ways we work together as staff and in the community. We are prioritizing approaches that center justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, building and strengthening existing community-based enthusiasm and capacity, and integrating multiple issue areas. Though our vision for a new way of working is growing clearer, real change is iterative and takes time. Our team often refers to this place we are in now as the "messy

middle.” Our new project manager must be ready to roll up their sleeves and be part of shaping a new chapter of community-based change-making at Vital Communities.

Role & Initial Project Assignments

This Project Manager will be part of a Place-Based Education (PBE) team and report to the PBE Program Director. This position will also collaborate on projects across Vital Communities that have a PBE aspect. This position will be responsible for implementing existing projects, like Farm to School, and working with the entire Vital Communities’ project team to develop new projects that will transform our collective work in ways described above.

Initial project assignments:

Upper Valley Farm to School (FTS) – a network of educators, farmers, and community members working to integrate local food and farms into the classrooms, cafeterias, and communities of our region.

As Farm to School Manager, this position will lead all FTS Programming (20 hours/week)

- Responsible for all aspects of project planning, implementation, and evaluation
- Oversee strategy to build an FTS culture in all schools in our region.
- Provide technical assistance to Upper Valley schools to enhance existing FTS efforts or support establishment of new efforts
- Implement specific FTS programming including Harvest Lessons/Harvest of the Month, develop curriculum, and offer annual FTS mini-grants
- Build and retain relationships with Upper Valley schools looking to start or further develop their FTS programming
- Engage with NH and VT statewide FTS networks, including attending meetings and participating as leader and model
- Plan, coordinate, and host quarterly FTS forums, professional development courses, and other FTS events
- Assist with the development of a yearly budget and fundraising plan for FTS
- Work to cultivate support for FTS, particularly from state and federal agencies and related nonprofits
- Work with grant writer on grant proposals to support FTS work
- Work with partners, volunteers, and organizations throughout the Upper Valley to build a stronger local food system
- Represent the Upper Valley in Vermont and New Hampshire FTS Networks

Valley Quest – a place-based education model that uses treasure hunts to teach about a community’s distinct natural and cultural heritage.

As part of the PBE Project Team, this position will:

- Plan and lead guided Quests

- Coordinate Super Quest, an annual collection of thematically related Quests
- Support classroom place-based educators to develop new Quests with their students

Upper Valley Teaching Place Collaborative (UVTPC) – a network of education professional development providers and practitioners who work together to advance high-quality place-based and ecological education (PBEE) in all Upper Valley Schools.

This position will collaborate with the UVTPC Project Manager to support and help grow UVTPC's network by:

- Building relationships and creating connections among educators and administrators across schools, school districts, and early childhood care providers
- Supporting the re-establishment of educator working groups and coordinating their activities
- Supporting peer-to-peer connections, outreach, and gatherings
- Assisting in planning an annual conference
- Seeking to create Communities of Practice for PBE educators and administrators that support and nurture interest in and passion for place-based education
- Designing and delivering on-site presentations to students in coordination with teachers and providing presentations to schools to raise awareness of and access to professional development opportunities in the Upper Valley.

Project Manager Responsibilities

- Thoughtfully incorporate principles of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion into all aspects of project ideation, design, implementation, and evaluation.
- Work collaboratively with internal and external partners to meet existing and emerging community visions and needs.
- When needed for new projects, work with Vital Communities' development team to procure project funding, including management of grants, funder relationships, and contracts, with support from Vital Communities' Development Team.
- Establish and track progress toward project goals, metrics, timelines.
- In collaboration with supervisor and Director of Finance and Administration, draft and manage project budgets, recruit and supervise staff as needed, and ensure that projects are implemented in compliance with Vital Communities policies and procedures and with grant-specific terms.
- Carry out and/or delegate all project tasks, including but not limited to event planning, event logistics, website updates, creating/printing/compiling materials, scheduling meetings, facilitating meetings, recording meeting notes, conducting research, communicating with partners, managing database records and project files, etc.
- Recruit, train, coordinate, and keep track of volunteers and program participants.
- Oversee the work of any Vital Communities Project Coordinators, interns, and/or volunteers assigned to support your projects.

- Track and articulate project outcomes, producing grant reports, partner updates, and content for Vital Communities' print and web communications.
- Respectfully collect and share stories to illustrate key challenges and successes, in collaboration with Vital Communities' communications team.
- Ensure all projects are coordinated and integrated with other community-based projects, whether led by Vital Communities or others.
- Build and manage community partnerships, presenting an engaging, curious, humble, and optimistic presence when interacting with the public.
- Represent Vital Communities in a range of public and collaborative settings, including meetings with funders, interviews with the media, participation in networks, stakeholder meetings, and casual interactions with community members.
- Other duties as assigned.

Desired Competencies and Qualifications

The ideal candidates will have:

- At least three years as a classroom educator working in K-12 schools utilizing PBE in the curricula, ideally in Vermont or New Hampshire.
- Can partner effectively with teachers, staff, and administrators, especially in primary and middle schools.
- Project management skills (including organization, attention to detail, prioritization across multiple projects, delegation, and flexibility in response to emerging priorities).
- Facilitation skills (confidence and experience facilitating meetings and collaborative processes with diverse participants for the purpose of relationship building, information sharing, goal setting, and action planning)
- Communication (clear oral, written, and visual communication skills).
- Community engagement experience (experience in community engagement/organizing, including experience engaging those who are traditionally marginalized or excluded).
- Ability and passion to build and maintain relationships that will create and support an integrated network of PBE educators, professional development providers, and community stakeholders.
- Personal and professional growth with respect to understanding and centering JEDI, willingness to continue learning, and readiness to help our entire team integrate JEDI values in our work.
- Ability to work on individual projects with a great deal of personal autonomy, yet also ready and willing to collaborate on team projects.
- Desire to learn by doing and continually improve one's knowledge and skills.
- Ability to prioritize tasks and advance multiple projects at one time.
- Proficiency in PC computing and aptitude for quick and self-directed learning of new software programs. The team currently uses Microsoft Office, Sharepoint, WordPress, Google Suite, Alchemer, Exceed Beyond, and Toggl.
- Access to personal transportation and willingness to work occasional nights and weekends (when

required for public engagement, stakeholder meetings, etc.).

NOTE: All Vital Communities staff are working remotely until further notice due to the COVID- 19 pandemic. After the pandemic, this position will be based in White River Junction, likely with the option of remote work several days per week.

Vital Communities is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of age, gender / gender identity, race, religion, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation, or disability with respect to: employment, volunteer participation, and the provision of services.