

Bringing Earth Science to Life: A Resource from EdGEO for Teacher Workshop Facilitators

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Established in the early 1970s, EdGEO supports locally driven geosciences workshops for Canadian teachers. Workshops are organized by geoscientists and teachers, and typically have field, laboratory and classroom components. Grants of up to \$3000 per workshop are available from the National EdGEO Program.

An important element of each EdGEO workshop is the package of resource materials provided to participating teachers for use in the classroom. The contents of this package varies for each workshop, but it typically includes a workshop manual that contains curriculum-linked, hands-on learning activities and the background Earth Science information that supports these activities.

EdGEO has worked in partnership with volunteer EdGEO workshop facilitators to compile a digital resource manual containing existing learning activities, relevant to junior and intermediate curricula across Canada, that have been used successfully in teacher-training. The learning activities have been extensively reviewed and revised to ensure a consistent voice for workshop facilitators, teachers and students. Over thirty practical hands-on learning activities are grouped under the themes of Earth history, geomorphology, surface processes, soils, rocks, minerals, tectonics, using natural resources, and careers. The resource includes fact sheets and sample workshop outlines. The resulting collection leverages existing high-quality learning activities and significantly reduces the effort in planning for future EdGEO workshops.

This resource will greatly assist volunteer EdGEO workshop organizers by providing materials that can be used directly or adapted for use in new workshops. Materials are available for download on the EdGEO Web site free of charge. Facilitator kits for the resource will be developed and made available to volunteer Earth scientists hosting EdGEO workshops so that the teacher-training component of the project can be replicated with relative ease anywhere in Canada for the National EdGEO Workshop Program.

By providing educational opportunities for today's teachers and, through them, their students, EdGEO seeks to cultivate a heightened awareness of our planet. EdGEO workshops provide teachers with potential fieldtrip sites for their students and the knowledge, enthusiasm and materials to inspire their students to engage in geoscience. Networking opportunities with local experts promote the importance of the geoscience profession. The expected result is an improved capacity on the part of Canadians to understand the Earth and to make informed decisions, especially with regard to the use of mineral and energy resources, the maintenance and remediation of the environment, and response to geological hazards.

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