

# Youth Virtual Conference of the UNU RCEs: A Regional Perspective on Energy Systems and Sustainability

## **Project Abstract**

### Introduction:

The UNU RCE of Grand Rapids, Michigan USA seeks to create a virtual conference for the world's next leaders to dialogue around the regional and universal issues facing their communities as it relates to their regional energy systems and sustainability.

### Rationale:

The world's dilemmas of tomorrow will be faced by the youth of today and it is imperative that we equip them with the tools to communicate, collaborate, innovate, and problem-solve in order to begin to address these complex issues of sustainability with regard to food, water, energy, etc.

### Intent:

This project seeks to give students the perspective and practice of a global dialogue, in hopes that they will better understand the unique energy systems dilemmas facing the regions of the world and in turn reveal and embrace the universal themes of sustainable evolution through dialogue, empathy, and collaboration.

### Project Concept:

In early 2016, multiple RCEs will come together virtually through teleconferencing technology to participate in a youth conference (secondary educational level /approximate ages 14-19) which will provide a forum for students and educators to present on sustainability-related energy systems issues of their communities/regions.

Each RCE will virtually present and participate as audience members via teleconference in a one day conference. Presenters will be the youth of participating schools to be identified by participating RCEs.

### Project Process:

The project will involve multiple voluntary RCEs who will identify secondary schools in their regions to participate in the project. These participating schools will identify administrators/teachers/students interested in studying sustainable energy systems issues in their community/region. Identified teachers will allow student groups to study issues of energy which are regionally significant in terms of sustainable development. Participating student groups will apply the "Sustainable Energy Systems Project Guide" to implement the study.

The results of the study will be presented to the larger participating RCE members of the virtual conference in February or March of 2016 via virtual teleconference. *Blackboard Collaborate* (internet-based presentation and collaboration platform) will be hosted by RCE Grand Rapids and administered through invitation and basic user training. Reliable internet connectivity and basic audio/video capability is required for conference participation. Conference will be conducted in English.

Committed participants will receive a Doodle link to have a vote in the scheduling the date for the conference. Consequently, there will be more detailed information regarding the conference and the process for participation upon receipt of their registration form.

*In the name of education for sustainable development, the members of RCE Grand Rapids appreciate your consideration!*