

Information Sheet for UVM Water Resources Institute *Collaboration Accelerators*

Dates

November 5th, 2025: 2:30–4:00PM

November 13th, 2025: 8:30–10:00AM

Location

Farrell Hall 006: Conference room in WRI space in Farrell Hall basement

Purpose

Convene WRI-affiliated faculty and others interested in water resources research from across the UVM campus to create interdisciplinary, cross-departmental teams that can apply for up to \$75,000 in grant writing funds.

Agenda

Welcome and Framing (10 minutes)

- Welcome and introduction from Keith Jennings, WRI Director of Research
- Overview of goals, processes, and expected outcomes
- Introduce the grant writing funds and the application process
- Expectations for open communication and mutual respect
 - “Yes, and” not “no, but”

Lightning Introductions (15 minutes)

- Two minutes per person
- Each participant introduces themselves with their *name*, *position*, and *department/unit* on campus, and responds to three prompts:
 - “My main area of expertise is...”

- “A water-related challenge I want to solve is...” (even if, or especially if, it’s unrelated to their expertise)
- “What I look for most in a collaborator is...”

Theme Grouping (20 minutes)

- Discuss keywords from intros and online survey to identify potential thematic groups
- Group discussion to refine themes
- Participants identify theme(s) they’d like to work on

Break (5 minutes)

- Give our brains a refresher

Small-Group Collaboration Sprint (20 minutes)

- Break out into small teams based on theme grouping activity
- Use prompts to guide initial discussion:
 - “What shared research question or water-related societal challenge could unite us?”
 - “What strengths, skills, and resources does each person bring?”
 - “What funding opportunities could support our work?”
 - These could be federal agencies (e.g., NASA, NSF, USDA), state and local governments and programs, private foundations, etc.
- Any remaining time can go towards refinement of ideas, approaches, and opportunities
- Notetaking on shared Word document

Report-Out and Refinement (15 minutes)

- Each group gives a 3-minute summary on their:
 - Idea and/or theme
 - Collaborators, roles, and strengths
 - Possible funding opportunities
- Group discussion after each group’s 3-minute summary to provide cross-team feedback
 - Identify synergies, challenges, and opportunities

Next Steps and Closing (5 minutes)

- Summary of emergent themes and groups

- Identify a lead for each team
 - Schedule follow-up with team lead
- Close with one-word summary from each participant
 - “I’m _____ and I feel _____ about the WRI Collaboration Accelerator.”
(apologies to the *Conan O’Brien Needs a Friend* podcast)