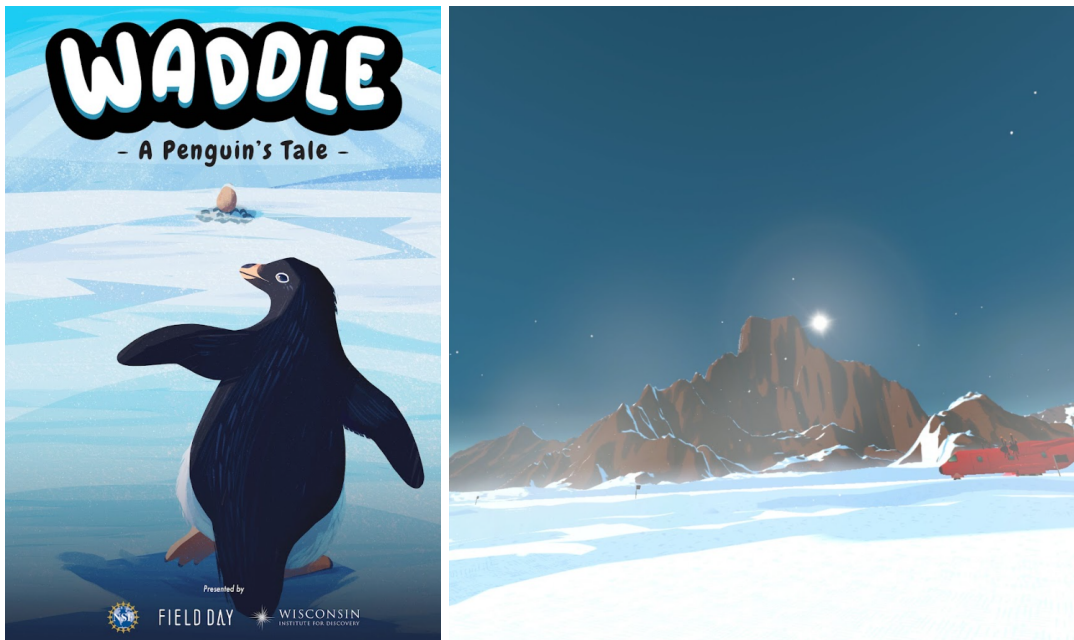


# PolarVR: Bring polar research to life in your library

Developing Virtual Reality-based Library Experiences  
to Engage Rural and Latine Communities in Polar Science



A partnership between Field Day, WID Virtual Environments Group, PolarTREC, the Wisconsin Center for Education Research (UW-Madison), and the Library Services Team of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

FIELD DAY



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## Overview

We're looking for ***school or public librarians in rural communities*** throughout Wisconsin to help us envision and implement a series of new Virtual Reality (VR) experiences. These experiences will focus on cutting edge research currently being done by scientists in the Arctic and Antarctic polar regions. We are specifically seeking participants who are motivated to develop, promote, and implement library programming focused on improving outreach to Latine audiences.

**Where do you come in?** As a fellow, you'll share your expertise as a librarian to help us develop strategies and ideas for implementing the VR experiences at your library with Latine audiences. We will supply you with the technology and training to make this happen. While no game development skills or design experience is required, you should be prepared to engage in outreach with Latine members and groups in your community, and have an interest in using VR technologies as part of your programming.

This is a unique opportunity to:

- Learn more about strategies for reaching and engaging members of your local Latine community
- Join a community of librarians, designers, and researchers interested in exploring VR technologies
- Learn more about polar research and related learning resources
- Help design a series of VR experiences that can be used in libraries across the country
- Network and share ideas and resources with other librarians

## Fellowship Activities

- Participate in a **one-day, in-person project workshop and dinner event** at UW-Madison (July 17, 2024 10:00 AM -7:00 PM). [Lodging and travel stipend provided if needed]
- Commit to implementing and reflecting on one or more **Latine-focused VR experiences in your library space**
- **Support our team in evaluating the project-focused programming in your library**
- **Provide feedback** (via surveys, interviews, and follow-up online meetings) on the design and implementation process and share what you learned through your involvement in the project

Note, due to our goal of reaching a diverse range of libraries, **we will only be able to invite one librarian from any single library** to participate in the July 17th workshop. Additional staff from a single library, however, are welcome to participate in other aspects of the program.

\*\* As an added bonus, interested Fellows are invited to stay in Madison to attend the [Play Make Learn Conference](#) on July 18-19. We can also cover registration fees and lodging for this if needed.

**CLICK HERE TO APPLY - APPLICATION WINDOW NOW CLOSED**

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Who can I contact if I have questions?

Please reach out to Chris Baker [[chris.baker@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:chris.baker@dpi.wi.gov)] or Jim Mathews [[jimmathew@wisc.edu](mailto:jimmathew@wisc.edu)]

## What will the implementation component entail?

We will work with you to develop an implementation that aligns with your setting and context. The implementation can be part of a new program, collection and/or display, or an extension of something you already offer at your library. It can be tied to a series or event, or it can be something that stands alone. A key part of our initial workshop will be brainstorming ideas for how to organize and facilitate an implementation in your space. It's important, though, that implementations involve Latine outreach and the Polar VR experiences.

## How will I get the equipment needed to test the VR experiences at my library?

We will be using Oculus Quest 3 VR headsets as part of this project. Each participant will get a new VR headset that they can take back to their library. We will also have additional headsets that can be checked out if needed for larger events or programming needs.

## Will I be compensated for participating?

Yes. Each Fellow will be eligible to receive a \$150 stipend. Please reach out if you have any questions about the stipend.

## Do I need to know about polar science or Latine outreach to participate in the program?

No. We will support librarians who have little experience leading these types of programs. We will provide materials and collaboratively generate ideas that will help you develop relevant programming.

## How are you defining rural libraries?

We are defining rural fairly broadly to include libraries that are not in large urban areas or in suburbs immediately surrounding a major urban area. There are many definitions used by the federal government to define rural — most based on the lack of urban characteristics. We are trying to be flexible and use a continuum of rurality that illustrates a library's access to resources. Rural is loosely defined as a population of less than 25,000, a population density of less than 1,000 people per square mile. If you are not sure if you qualify, please submit your application and let us decide.