

Sustainable Campus Fund Recommendations

Fall 2021

Submitted by the Socially Responsible Investment Advisory Council to Richard Cate, VP for Finance and Administration

Executive Summary

During the call for proposals, the Sustainable Campus Fund (SCF) received fourteen proposals. Due to the strength of the proposals, eleven were invited to present at the SCF Forum on November 1st, which was held as a hybrid event. Projects totaling \$332,134 were proposed and the SRI Advisory Council is recommending that the SCF fund a total of \$162,434. Two projects (Organics Hauling Partnership Pilot with Green Mountain Compost and Quonset Hut Renovations) are currently tabled until the spring semester awaiting more information. The group recommends no funding for the Eco-Friendly Food Truck, the Recycle Coach Phone App and the UVM EcoSystem App.

One project received funding earlier this semester after approval by the VP for Finance and Administration. The project that has already received \$11,200 of funding is Batteries for Gravely Mower for the Facilities Management team and the request was submitted via a memo on October 26th, 2021.

Recommendations

Adaptability Internship

Proposed by: Emma Wardell Undergraduate student

Funding request: \$1,654

This proposal is to fund Phase I of an internship exploring general adaptability to further inform Phase II, which pursues the implementation of an education and consignment store. The completion of this project has the potential to educate members on the global environmental impacts of textile waste and how they can mitigate those impacts within their own lives moving forward. The store's purpose will be twofold: 1) a consignment center and 2) an educational hub that fosters inclusion and collective action in the face of an increasingly wasteful industry. The intention of this project is to be built by students, for students. Next to the provision of accessible garments, education is a main component for completion of this project.

Recommendation: The council voted to recommend full funding of this internship proposal at \$1654.

Covered Bicycle Parking for Trinity Campus

Proposed by: Jaydon Fisher, Undergraduate Student; Abby Bleything, UVM Sustainable Transportation Coordinator

Funding request: \$150,310

This proposal is for an enclosed bike shelter to provide protection and adequate storage for all of the bikes on the Trinity campus. Trinity campus, especially the “back five”, lacks a secure and weatherproof place to store the bikes. Many other dorms on campus have indoor bike rooms or outdoor bike shelters to store bikes so that they are safe and protected. The only current available place to store bikes on Trinity is the bike racks under the covering of McAuley Hall, and even this only provides some protection from the elements as it is only covered from above. The construction of an enclosed bike shelter would protect these bikes from the rain and snow, all while additionally providing a safer space to keep the bikes stored without worry of them being stolen. This project supports the Sustainable Campus Fund mission of displacing fossil fuel use on campus by encouraging people to commute to and get around campus using active transportation, rather than using fossil-fuel-powered vehicles. The bike shelter structure proposed in this project has already received the approval from the Campus Master Planning Committee (CMPC) and Landscape Advisory Committee (LAC). Covered and secured bike parking for Trinity residents has been discussed for decades without resolution. This enclosed shelter would provide the first secured and weatherproof bike parking option on all of Trinity campus and would also align the with the University’s Active Transportation Plan.

Recommendation: The group strongly approves of this project and recommends funding this project at the requested amount of \$150,310.

Eco-Friendly Local Food Truck

Proposed by: Melissa Zelazny, Nicole Reilly, Annie Rowell (all staff at UVM Dining)

Funding request: \$105,000

This project’s goal is to bring an economical new dining option to campus that increases local food choices for the campus community and is as carbon neutral as possible. UVM Dining’s proposed food truck model utilizes a used biodiesel-compatible step van retrofitted with solar panels and a battery bank to power an all-electric onboard kitchen. UVM Dining’s food truck will improve convenience for students on-the-go and bring this flexible dining option to meet fluctuating campus needs without a significant environmental footprint. Furthermore, the food truck model allows a greater variety of rotating menu options accessible to a broader swath of the student population, staff, faculty, and other community members. This creates new opportunities, from a food justice perspective, for providing more culturally significant food options to marginalized communities within our diverse campus population. A mobile, eco-friendly unit will enable more students to access local, quality food on campus in a safe, distanced, outdoor environment with minimal impact to the campus carbon footprint. As the food truck will be highly visible across campus, it presents a great opportunity to raise student awareness about UVM’s commitment to local food and sustainability. Strategies include: featuring local products in the menu, highlighting local producers as well as the eco-friendly systems on the truck. The flexibility and mobility of the truck will enable the dining team to meet students where they are: on the go. For dining operations, it will also provide a low-overhead dining unit, meaning that fewer staff will be required for operations.

Recommendation: The SRIAC members were unanimously opposed to this project, in particular the undergraduate students. The group voted to deny funding.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station Master Plan

Proposed by: Abby Bleything, Sustainable Transportation Coordinator, TPS; Clare Nelson, Sustainable Transportation Intern, CEMS Junior

Funding request: \$2600

As we install more electric vehicle charging stations on campus, we see the need to have a master plan that includes long-range goals for charging on campus, as well as an evaluation of suitable sites and equitable distribution of chargers. We expect more residential students to bring electric vehicles to campus, as OEMs like General Motors discontinue manufacturing internal combustion vehicles. An EV Charging Master plan would allow us to plan for short- (fast) and long-term (trickle) charging stations, based on the needs of resident and commuter students. It would also allow the University to understand and budget the necessary resources required to purchase and install these stations.

Recommendation: The members fully support this idea and voted unanimously to fund.

Recycle Coach App

Proposed by: Corey Berman - Program Manager, UVM Recycling & Zero Waste

Funding request: \$ 2000

This proposal seeks funding for the purchase of the Recycle Coach app to further UVM's commitment to recycling and waste reduction on campus. The app would centralize all campus recycling information into an easily accessible and smartphone-friendly platform. The service provides a variety of assistance tools including "What Goes Where function (both text and image)", weekly and monthly updates and newsletters customized to the UVM community, learning activities, marketing assistance, data analytics and more. Full integration and roll out would bolster participation from students, faculty and staff and make it easier for the campus community to follow local recycling guidelines and boost program performance. Students could directly benefit through course work studying the design, designing potential improvements, and even creating an app to be used once the contract expires.

Recommendation: The SRI Advisory Council voted unanimously to deny funding citing concerns about the efficacy of another phone app.

Surplus Tracking Feasibility Study

Proposed by: Corey Berman - Program Manager, UVM Recycling & Zero Waste

Funding request: \$ 2000

We do not currently have a cataloguing system to track items like chairs, desks, file cabinets, bookshelves, and other office supplies nor a way to get them into the campus reuse cycle. In some cases, furniture gets purchased that is already on campus which is a waste of both natural and financial resources. This project would seek to hire an intern to research options for tracking UVM furniture and other identified items and develop a system framework that would put implement this plan.

Recommendation: The SRI Advisory Council recommends funding this project at \$2000.

Switching Campus to Sustainable T-shirt Purchasing

Proposed by: Marie Bouffard, Purchasing Services; Caylin McCamp, Office of Sustainability

Funding request: \$ 1,870

Successfully moving to more sustainable t-shirts would be highly visible to students. If we can purchase shirts with an obvious eco label on them, then students would see our commitment to sustainability when they receive these shirts from campus departments. This includes every first year who receives a t-shirt for Convocation, making this one of UVM's first impressions and something that will have touched our full undergraduate campus in four years.

Most of the current purchases are with small, local t-shirt printers. One Burlington company currently produces 75% of UVM's promotional t-shirts. The intern would meet with existing vendors to see how they can support this endeavor and research new vendors that are a good fit for the defined sustainability and social characteristics. The end goal would be to put in place tiered pricing contracts with vendors for different volumes. These would be publicized and communicated directly to the major campus buyers, shifting most campus t-shirt purchases to a sustainable product. The UVM Bookstore and UVM Athletics will also be encouraged to move to sustainable clothing. Our intern would meet with these departments to learn about their current clothing purchasing and how they could switch to purchasing sustainable t-shirts.

Recommendation: The SRI Advisory Council recommends full funding for this project at \$1,870.

UVM Eco-System App

Proposed by: Ailey Bosworth, undergrad student, Business Administration Major, GSB

Funding request: \$ 1,700

This proposal addresses stated priorities of the Office of Sustainability: to consider solutions that create meaningful change on campus and strengthen sustainability planning. There is a need to raise awareness about sustainability issues, unify programming efforts on behalf of environmental groups, and increase student engagement as no integrated format presently exists. This proposal argues for a campus sustainability app, called UVM Eco-System. The UVM Eco-system app will provide an integrated and efficient approach to communicate and leverage sustainability initiatives across campus. This project would seek to partner with the UVM Eco-Reps program to publicize the Eco-Reps' work in various areas of sustainability. It will provide a

platform for raising awareness about sustainability events, offer notifications and keep track of dates, times, locations, and links to meetings in one singular location. This app will target the goal of increasing inclusivity, access, and fairness to learning about and participating in sustainability.

Recommendation: The SRI Advisory Council voted unanimously to deny funding citing concerns about the efficacy of another phone app.

Zero Waste Video "Shorts"

Proposed by: Corey Berman - Program Manager, UVM Recycling & Zero Waste
Funding request: \$ 4,000

Studies have shown that short form videos, specifically those under 1 minute, were the most effective component of their social strategies. More than ever today users are browsing social media and watching video on their mobile devices. Short-form videos allow them to quickly consume a point or get clued-in to a story while on the go. And despite the limited time frame, short form offers a lot of flexibility in content and style. Topics can range from quickly covering a news item, doing a list rundown, providing a look behind the scenes at an event or operation, or providing a quick tutorial. This project seeks to leverage the video medium to educate and inform the greater UVM community on issues including the basics of recycling and composting to the introduction of concepts such as the Circular Economy and conscious consumption. This project taps into the creative core of UVM's students to bolster our already existing eco-conscious culture.

Recommendation: The SRI Advisory Council recommends full funding for this project at \$4,000.