

# CSF - Mini Grant Final Application

Project Name: The Carol A Borcharding NSCSAS Garden for Growth

## Grant Type

Mini Grant

## Application Type

Final Application

## Primary Project Manager

The Primary Project Manager is responsible for completing this application, answering questions posed by the Campus Sustainability Fund Committee, and completing all required reporting on project progress and outcomes. If the Primary Project Manager is a student who graduates in May 2023, the Secondary Project Manager must be a staff or faculty member OR a student who graduates after May 2023.

## Primary Project Manager Name:

Alanis Dilic

## Primary Project Manager Status:

Student

## Primary Project Manager Email:

alanisd@arizona.edu

## Primary Project Manager Department

NSCS Student

## **Secondary Project Manager**

The Secondary Project Manager is the back-up for the Primary Project Manager if they are unable to complete any of the requirements of the Campus Sustainability Fund, particularly completing required reporting on project outcomes. Alternatively, the Secondary Project Manager could be co-facilitating the project with the Primary Project Manager should the proposal require or desire to have two Project Managers.

### **Secondary Project Manager Name:**

Cameron Bolles

### **Secondary Project Manager Email:**

cbolles35@arizona.edu

### **Secondary Project Manager Status:**

Student

### **Secondary Project Manager Department**

NSCS Student

### **Project Advisor Name:**

Projects where the Primary and Secondary Project Manager are both students require the involvement of a staff or faculty member within project's Fiscal Officer's department. The Project Advisor contact must be a staff or faculty member within your department who is responsible for monitoring the project's budget, communicating with the Fiscal Officer, and reporting if both project managers are unavailable. Please ensure you have received consent from this individual to be the Project Advisor for your proposal and have informed them of your proposal's intent and budgetary needs. If this does not apply to you, type N/A for these responses.

Dr. Julie E Miller

### **Project Advisor Email:**

juliemiller@arizona.edu

## **Project Advisor Department:**

Neuroscience

## **Fiscal Officer:**

The Fiscal Officer is a staff member within your department who is responsible for financial transactions and who will support reporting by pulling requested expenses against awarded funding and ensuring that funding is spent within awarded categories. Please coordinate with your department to properly identify an individual who is a designated Fiscal Officer. If awarded, this will be the individual who will help you access your project's funding. Please ensure you have received consent from this individual to be the Fiscal Officer for your proposal and have informed them of your proposal's intent and budgetary needs.

Jennifer L Lawrence

## **Fiscal Officer Email:**

jllawren@arizona.edu

## **Fiscal Officer Department Name:**

Neuroscience (2534 - School of Mind, Brain & Behavior)

## **Request Funding Amount:**

\$376

## **Official Project Name:**

Please be specific but concise as this name will appear on reports and our website. Creativity is encouraged!

The Carol A Borcharding NSCSAS Garden for Growth

## **Primary Project Category:**

Natural Environment

## Secondary Project Category:

Food

## Background and Context:

Please provide any relevant background about your organization/team including your mission and/or expertise. Please also lay out the rationale for the proposed project, focusing on the issue that your project would address. This section is meant to give us more information about you and the context for the project, while the questions below provide space to go into detail about your proposal's specifics.

### Response:

The Neuroscience and Cognitive Science Association of Students (NSCSAS) is a student-run undergraduate club at the University of Arizona. NSCSAS fosters a tight-knit community of students - brought together by a shared passion for neuroscience and cognitive science - in an effort to aid aspiring members in networking with faculty and developing professional skills. Although NSCSAS is one of the largest College of Science organizations on campus, we welcome all interested students - regardless of major, class, or program - and aim to provide social, outreach, and professional opportunities for our members and give back to the Tucson community. The Carol A. Borcharding NSCSAS Garden for Growth was formed over two years ago by current NSCSAS President Cameron Bolles in an effort to bring the neuroscience and cognitive science community together, help students develop landscaping and gardening skills, reflect on their personal growth, and call attention towards the current global climate crisis. Each semester, the NSCSAS organizes two gardening events - one at the beginning of the semester and one near the end. Specifically, during the fall semester, the NSCSAS team strives to hold an opening garden event - typically at the beginning of September - to introduce new members to our garden plot, plant autumn/winter flowers and vegetables, share tips on maintaining gardens without overwatering, and painting rocks/materials to represent the club. From here, each officer of the NSCSAS checks on the plants every-other-week to ensure that they have germinated and are faring well in the given weather. Any and all weeds are also pulled out, and water sprinklers are checked. At the beginning of December (the first weekend), NSCSAS holds the final garden event for the semester and all sprouted flowers and vegetables are harvested. Any and all vegetables that were successfully harvested would be sent to Campus Pantry. An identical schedule structure is arranged during the spring semester as well, with the first event being held during the first weekend in February, and the final event being held before finals week.

## Project Description:

Please provide a thorough description and explanation of your project. Describe the objective(s) and what will be accomplished. Describe how each objective will be achieved (listed as steps or goals, with anticipated timeframes for each). Explain how the project will be implemented (who does what?). Finally, please identify the core goals of your project and how you will measure the degree of its success includes the metrics you will track to measure the success or impact of your project (e.g., number of kWh saved, gallons of water saved, number of student training hours, etc.). Responses are limited to 3,000 characters including spaces.

## **Response:**

The core goals of the Carol A. Borcharding NSCSAS Garden for Growth stemmed from the endeavor to bring the neuroscience and cognitive science community together for an ecological and environmentally-focused event. Due to recent circumstances, the purpose of the NSCSAS garden has also shifted to draw support for Campus Pantry, in addition to calling attention to the current climate crisis. As a result, the current NSCSAS garden plot enables participants to learn more about garden care, proper compost methods, as well as the accessibility of seed resources for members of the Tucson community. As mentioned in the Background & Context section of this application, the NSCSAS organizes two gardening events - one at the beginning of the semester and one near the end. Specifically, at the first garden event, the NSCSAS team strives to introduce new members to the Campus Garden, its staff and corresponding organizations, as well as the garden plot the NSCSAS currently holds. Seeds are then planted according to the time of year and plan of harvest, and the NSCSAS officers share tips on maintaining gardens without overwatering, as well as protecting various crops. Finally, new members are encouraged to paint rocks/materials to leave a legacy of their involvement in NSCSAS and to remember their involvement with efforts to support students facing food insecurity and sustainability efforts. As the primary and secondary project managers, Alanis Dilic and Cameron Bolles have been coordinating with each NSCSAS officer to check on the state of the garden and its water sprinklers every two weeks. At the end of each semester, we will measure the degree of its success by recording the number of attendees at the final harvest. We facilitate a round-table discussion where members reflect on their semester - many of which will be finishing their first semester of undergrad. We cover what we are grateful for, what we were able to accomplish as an organization, in addition to our individual accomplishments. The board also collects feedback that members may have for the club for future semesters, and formulates plans for individual growth for next semester. The NSCSAS is applying to the CSF Mini-Grant because our expenditures have increased beyond expectation due to the opportunity to send eight of our students to the Society for Neuroscience conference - which is located in San Diego this November - for the first time in four years. In addition, we are still seeking ASUA funding for T-shirts. It is our hope, with the financial aid of the CSF Mini Grant, to expand to a full garden bed and support our growing organization.

## **Project Summary Snapshot:**

Please provide a short summary of your project. This summary will be used on our new website and other Office of Sustainability materials, if approved. Think of this as a hyper-concentrated summary to capture your project's scope and impact.

## **Response:**

The Carol A. Borcharding NSCSAS Garden for Growth strives to bring the neuroscience and cognitive science community together for an ecological and environmentally-focused event. This garden plot enables participants to learn more about responsible environmental behavior, in addition to the accessibility of seed resources for members of the Tucson community. All produce generated from garden plots and harvest will be donated directly to the University of Arizona Campus Pantry. The donation to Campus Pantry will be accompanied by a club general meeting segment bringing exposure to the Campus Pantry with a summary of operations, volunteer information, and photos from our gardening plot and harvest.

## **Project Feasibility and Logistics:**

Please provide a description of the work that has been completed so far to make this project feasible. Have all relevant partners been contacted/coordinated with? Have you received consent or authorization from relevant departments or offices to complete your project (Housing and Residence Life, Facilities Management, Parking and Transportation, etc.)? Please identify them in your response. For example, have you received reasonable quotes for supplies? What research has been completed to lay the foundation for this project?

### **Response:**

Within the first stages of our project, Project Manager and NSCSAS President Cameron Bolles contacted the garden manager at the time and discussed potential methods of owning a garden plot for the NSCSAS. At first, he didn't think this event was possible considering we had to pay for a plot, tools, seeds, and additional resources. However, after discussing the quotes for a potential garden plot, the cost to renew garden plots in the upcoming semesters/years, as well as the events that occur within the Community Garden, Cameron and the Community Garden Managers agreed upon a two-third length bed, as this was the only way we would be able to support this recurring event financially. Historically, our funding has come from the various fundraisers that the NSCSAS has held throughout the years. However, our expenditures have increased beyond expectation due to the opportunity to send eight of our students to the Society for Neuroscience conference - which is located in San Diego this November - for the first time in four years. In addition, we are still seeking ASUA funding for T-shirts. It is our hope, with the financial aid of the CSF Mini Grant, to expand to a full garden bed and support our growing organization. The NSCSAS has held four successful garden events so far, and we have a great relationship with the garden staff. NSCSAS has grown by over twenty-five percent since this gardening event began, and we would like to increase our bed size to accommodate all the new interest! All quotes were confirmed with our program director and are the best possible estimate.

## **Environmental Sustainability Outcomes:**

Please provide a description of how you expect your project to advance environmental sustainability on campus. A definition of environmental sustainability is provided on our Resources webpage.

### **Response:**

Here it should be acknowledged that the NSCSAS aims to create and promote community awareness of responsible environmental behavior, in addition to elaborating on the effective management of resource consumption - particularly regarding water and energy - in order to reduce waste and greenhouse gas production and improve air quality. Further, the NSCSAS has worked with the UofA's Compost Cats to properly compost decomposed organic matter and we direct all interested students to their respective resources. Our connection to Compost Cats aids in students understanding the various benefits that come from composting. From enriching soil, to retaining moisture and suppressing plant diseases/pests, as well as reducing the need for chemical fertilizers, the UofA Compost Cats has aided NSCSAS in informing members about garden care and environmental sustainability. Because we live in an urban environment, the UofA's Community Garden is one of the few projects that students can advocate, actively participate in, and learn more about vital role of environmental sustainability, as well as increasing student awareness of the garden and its associated projects in general.

## **Social Sustainability Outcomes:**

Please provide a description of how you expect your project to advance environmental sustainability on campus. A definition of social sustainability is provided on our Resources webpage.

### **Response:**

The primary aim of NSCSAS is that we strive to provide a support network for all members in the pre-health community. Our member base is made up of primarily underclassmen; however, it also includes freshmen, transfer, international, students with English as a second language, individuals living away from home for the first time, and students coming from underserved populations. Things as simple as learning the layout of campus has been a difficulty for our executive board, which is an added benefit of having our event at a location that many of our members are unfamiliar with. In addition, the Campus Pantry is a source of social sustainability that gives to under-served populations within the university community to further promote inclusion. Our collaboration with Campus Pantry aids in educating members about sustainable practices to incorporate into the wider university community. In essence, the NSCSAS serves as peer support and advisement with professional advisor oversight, and the Campus Garden has been a core event that allows us to bring our group together while having the excuse to get outside and briefly relieve the stresses of being a full-time or part-time student.

### **Student Leadership & Involvement:**

Please provide a description of how you expect your project to benefit students on campus regarding the creation of leadership opportunities or student engagement. What leadership opportunities exist within your proposal? If you plan to hire/ or involve students, please describe in what capacity. For example, if you plan to hire students, create an internship, or seek student involvement, please describe relevant details thoroughly (wages, responsibilities, duration of job, extent of involvement, how you will solicit/ market these opportunities etc.).

### **Response:**

For the past two years, the NSCSAS garden plot has connected students with the UofA's community garden program, as well as the goals of Campus Pantry. Although we do not plan to hire any students for a formal job position, we use the campus garden as one of the main events to train our interns. NSCSAS interns are second, third, and fourth semester students that hold their position for the duration of an academic semester. The administrative side of event planning, logistics, emailing garden managers, and maintaining other responsibilities, all serve as the foundation that interns are given before we give them the opportunity to create an event of their choosing during their time as an intern. Further, we use the garden planning as a reference for how they should operate and delegate responsibilities across our executive board. For instance, the NSCSAS interns are encouraged to take initiative in the leading garden planting and social events, such as the new Earth Day event for Spring 2023. Our two gardening events educate members about the different environmental impacts they can make on campus, by partnering with the garden itself. It is through this partnership and the NSCSAS's social events, that the NSCSAS provides Campus Garden with additional social media exposure. This CSF Mini-Grant would aid in creating additional opportunities for student leadership and involvement through the initiative on expanding the knowledge of fellow members, interns, and officers on sustainable agricultural/gardening practices in a unique way, outside of other leadership positions in a major such as Neuroscience.

## Education, Outreach, and Behavior Change:

What opportunities does this project provide for members of the campus/ community to learn about sustainability? How will your project educate the campus community and/or incorporate outreach and behavior change? How are you reaching beyond the "sustainability choir?" Please provide a description of how you expect your project will communicate its impacts to the campus community. What is your plan for publicizing your project on campus? How visible and accessible will your project be to the general campus population?

### Response:

One of the main opportunities that our project provides to encourage campus/community awareness regarding sustainability stems from our immense support of the UA's Campus Pantry - the primary source of food for many students on campus. Each semester, over half of our seeds are eligible donations to Campus Pantry, and it is through the increase in NSCSAS membership that we would like to provide new students with opportunities to plot and produce more eligible donations be more informed of a variety of environmentally-sustainable methods for their own gardens. In addition, we compost other plants/materials from previous garden plots and use our general meeting platforms - such as Instagram, and our NSCSAS email which reaches the entire NSCS student list - to spread the word on campus sustainability, both within the campus and for various student efforts that our executive board is exposed to by social media. Further, it is through our gardening events and social media platform that we are able to aid in the awareness of Campus Pantry's resources and support as a basic needs center for under-served students. Through these events, new members are encouraged to paint rocks/materials to leave a legacy of their involvement in NSCSAS and to remember their involvement with efforts to support students facing food insecurity as well as practicing our responsibility of environmental sustainability.

### Timeline:

Please describe the timeline of your project. The timeline may be estimations at the point of this Preliminary Application but providing this is especially important if your project is a time-sensitive event. Funds may not be used as reimbursement for projects already completed, therefore a realistic amount of lead time should be given in order for proposals to be eligible for review. Please describe when your project will take place, key dates for when certain elements must start or be completed by, or any other known dates. Timeline extensions will be granted on a case-by-case and limited basis.

### Response:

In general, our project does not consist of any time-sensitive events, but we do coordinate with the UA garden managers throughout the semester to ensure that our event dates/times do not conflict with the schedules of their other tenants. Each semester, the NSCSAS organizes two gardening events - one at the beginning of the semester and one near the end. Specifically, during the fall semester, the NSCSAS team strives to hold an opening garden event - typically at the beginning of September - to introduce new members to our garden plot and plant autumn/winter flowers and vegetables. From here, each officer of the NSCSAS checks on the plants every-other-week to ensure that our plants have germinated and are faring well in the given weather. Any and all weeds are also pulled out, and water sprinklers are checked. At the beginning of December (the first weekend), NSCSAS holds the final garden event for the semester and all sprouted flowers and vegetables are harvested. Any and all vegetables that were successfully harvested would be sent to Campus Pantry. An identical schedule structure is upheld during the spring semester as well, with the first event being held during the first weekend in February, and the final event being held before finals week. In essence, each gardening event and checkup ensures that our garden plot is clear of weeds and dried plants, in addition to checking on the soil and water quality.