Progress Report - Campus Sustainability Fund

May 2023 – TerraCycle It!

Email:

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Project Manager Name:

who is submitting this project?

Nicole Collins

Project Name:

TerraCycle It

Project Subaccount Number:

22937278

Project Summary Snapshot:

Please copy and paste the "Summary Snapshot" you provided in your project application.

Response

The TerraCycle It! project aims to prevent items that are not recyclable on campus from ending up in the landfill or contaminating current recycling. This pilot project will involve placing materials collection boxes from a company called TerraCycle at the UArizona Libraries (both the Main and Science & Engineering Library), and then having the Libraries ship those boxes back to TerraCycle for proper recycling. In each location, there will be an "Office Supplies" collection box and a "Candy and Snack Wrapper" collection box placed in public lobbies. Thus, UArizona and Tucson community members will be able to access the boxes. Additionally, signage will be displayed via physical fliers and digital monitors within the libraries to help participants sort materials and avoid contamination.

Requested Metrics:

Please report your project's metrics and their most recent number or response in a list format.

Response

As of May 1, 2023:

Contamination Levels/Articles of Contamination in each box Candy & Snack Wrappers 2nd floor Main Library: paper, plastic wrap, tissue, paper towel, receipt

- Office Supplies 2nd floor Main Library: paper

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 2nd floor Main Library: 2 plastic bottles, red bull can, Gatorade bottle, receipt, paper

- Office Supplies 1st Floor of Main Library: none

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 1st floor of Main Library: Ziplock bag

- Office Supplies 2nd floor of WSEL: none

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 2nd floor of WSEL: napkin

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 3rd floor of WSEL: Celsius can, wristbands

Weight/Fullness of each box/box type

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 2nd floor of Main Library: 2/3 full

- Office Supplies 2nd floor of Main Library:3 dozen pens/markers, binder clip, tape holder

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 2nd floor of Main Library: 3/4 full

- Office Supplies 1st floor of Main Library: lots of pencils/pens/markers, manila folders

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 1st floor of Main Library: 1/4 full

- Office Supplies of 2nd floor of WSEL: 40 pens/expo markers

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 2nd floor of WSEL: a handful

- Candy & Snack Wrappers 3rd floor of WSEL: 1/3 full

Project Accomplishments :

Please describe what aspects of the project have been accomplished. Be as descriptive and specific as possible. Examples of accomplishments could include: Held 4 public meetings totaling 130 attendees; Transitioned 300 square feet of dirt into usable garden space and signed on 14 community garden volunteers. Other examples of accomplishments could include sharing a confirmed schedule of events, the connections/contacts that have been established, etc.

Response

Since the beginning of the semester, our project has diverted 3.65 pounds, and counting, of waste in the form of candy and snack wrappers from the landfill. We shipped two Candy & Snack Wrapper boxes back to TerraCycle where the materials will be properly recycled. Each of the 8 boxes have been utilized and contain the proper materials. We established a strong professional relationship with the Director of Library Facilities Planning and Management, Hayri Yildirim, as well as the Library Assistant Dean of Finance and Administration, David Borycz via many email chains and in-person meetings surrounding the project. We held a tabling event on the UA Mall where we engaged with students about our project and educated them on what we were doing. We conducted weekly check-ins on the boxes where we removed all articles of contamination and collected data on what contaminants were found and the fullness of each box per week. We removed approximately 244 articles of contamination from all of the boxes in total since the start of the spring semester.

Next Steps:

Response

1. Over the summer, all of the boxes will be stored at their current locations in the Main Library and WSEL Library, and Hayri Yildirim will keep an eye on the boxes for the duration of summer.

2. Since none of the remaining boxes are quite ready to be shipped back to TerraCycle to be recycled, upon the beginning of the spring semester we plan to continue this project until all of the boxes fill up.

3. This continuation will consist of the same processes that we had this semester and once all the boxes fill up, we will reevaluate our next steps and the future of the project, i.e., expansion.

Challenges Faced:

Please identify and describe any obstacles/roadblocks you or your team have experienced, and detail how you've managed them/ will manage them. Should your project already be completed, please note what challenges you faced and what you would do differently.

Response:

At the beginning of our project, a challenge we faced was getting students to use the Terracycle boxes. It was a slow start when first introduced, likely since it was a new box student hadn't seen before. However, after a couple of weeks and a tabling event, more people began using the boxes and they filled up quicker. The primary challenge we faced throughout the project revolved around contamination issues. This was especially an issue with the office supplies boxes since they look similar to the recycling boxes already in place at the library. We troubleshooted this issue and decided to put lids on the boxes saying "Stop, is this office supplies?" in order to create a buffer between people just throwing trash into the box. We put them in place on 3/13/23 and this significantly improved contamination issues in these boxes (as demonstrated by the graph). The remaining contamination could be from a misunderstanding of what goes in the box. For example, paper cannot go in the box, but some may assume that it counts as office supplies. In the future, putting signage closer to the opening of the box might be helpful to catch people's attention. Additionally, adding common mistakes to the lid could also be useful. Other than that, the Terracycle box is sometimes the first one people see. In the large area on the 2nd floor of the Main Library, the Terracycle box is one of the only bins in the area. Additionally, the office supplies box on the 2nd floor is the first bin you see walking in the main entrance. Both of these are examples of how the location may contribute to contamination levels. Despite challenges along the way, contamination was greatly reduced by the lids and decreased overall as time went on.

Project Support:

Can the CSF support you in addressing any roadblocks you've encountered? How else can the CSF support your project?

Response:

The only way that we can think of for CSF to support us in addressing the contamination issues that we encountered would be to advertise our project on social media to make more students aware of the project, as they can probably reach more people outside of the sustainability choir on campus.

Photo Upload:

Please upload or provide links (below) to relevant photos.

Response:

* office-supplies-poster-(1.png [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/339/office-supplies-poster-%281.png] * snack_candy-wrappers-poster.png [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/339/snack_candy-wrappers-poster.png] * terracycle-flyer.png [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/339/terracycle-flyer.png] * terracycle-poster-(1.png [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/339/terracycle-poster-%281.png] * screen-shot-2023-05-02-at-11.13.51-am.png [https://sustainability.arizona.edu/system/files/webform/csf_progress_report/339/screen-shot-2023-05-02-at-11.13.51-am.png] Photo Link https://share.icloud.com/photos/06174O8oHBysB7x6L4FZn8COg

Photo Link:

Please copy hyperlinks to photos here should you not be able to individually upload photos.

Response:

https://share.icloud.com/photos/06174O8oHBysB7x6L4FZn8COg

Media/Links:

Please include links to any media coverage or events information (e.g. news, social media, websites, interviews, etc.)

Response:

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