

Outdoor Recreation Terracycle

Grant Type

Mini Grant

Application Type

Final Application

Project Manager 1 Name

Lila Carruthers

Project Manager 1 Status

Student

Project Manager 1 Email

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Project Manager 1 Department

Outdoor Recreation

Project Manager 2 Name

Michael Morgan

Project Manager 2 Email

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Project Manager 2 Status

Staff

Project Manager 2 Department

Outdoor Recreation

Project Manager 2 Role

Back-up

Project Advisor Name

Project Advisor Email

Project Advisor Department

Fiscal Officer

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Fiscal Officer Email

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Fiscal Officer Department Name

Campus Recreation

Requested Funding Amount

Only enter this number after completing the budget sheet (the budget template will round up your request).

Mini Grants may request \$250 up to \$5,000.

Annual Grants may request \$5,001 up to \$100,000, and up to three years of funding.

Year 1:

\$900

Year 2:

Year 3:

Official Project Name

Outdoor Recreation Terracycle

Primary Project Category

Waste

Secondary Project Category

Campus Life (Health & Wellbeing, Behavior Change)

Background and Context

Please provide relevant background about your organization/team including your mission and/or expertise. 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 plan and specifics.

Response:

Outdoor Recreation is a program housed within Campus Recreation. Given the university's waste diversion rate, we have recently been brainstorming ways in which we can do our part to reduce the amount of trash that ends up in the landfill. One of the ideas was to begin composting through the Compost Cats program and we have recently set that up! However, we were left with the dilemma of what to do about our recycling since most of it ends up in the trash no matter what. The idea to use Terracycle came up in order to ensure that our waste is properly sorted and actually goes through the recycling process. While we may not have control over the entire rec center/contamination rates, we can work to ensure that Outdoor Recreation recycles as much as possible.

Not only would this improve Outdoor Recreation's waste diversion rate, but it would also improve the sustainability literacy of our staff. With over 30 employees, Terracycling in Outdoor Recreation has the potential to have a large impact on our staff's recycling habits and awareness. Beyond this, being able to recycle all of the cardboard, glass, metal, plastic, paper, batteries, and food we produce leaves almost nothing left in our trash cans. Guides and participants on our trips will also get involved in separating our waste into these categories, packing out all of the waste, and properly disposing of it when returned to the rental center. Through this, even more students have the potential to be exposed to these sustainability practices.

Project Description

Please provide a thorough description and explanation of your project. Be explicit in what your team is proposing. What are the goals of your project? What will your project's outcomes be? Outcomes should be SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely. Describe how each objective will be achieved with the anticipated timeframes for each, including any key dates for when certain elements must start or be completed.

Response:

Our project as a whole is an overhaul of how Outdoor Recreation handles its waste. For the purposes of this grant, however, we would like to integrate Terracycle bins into our rental center to as a step in this process. Our goals for this project are:

- Reduce Outdoor Recreation's landfill waste to almost 0 (using Terracycle, Tucson recycling facilities, and composting)
- Prevent contamination and teach our staff proper recycling techniques (this is a realistic goal given that there is always a supervisor on shift, meaning there is a resource for the staff present at all times)
- Pilot a program that, if successful, could be expanded to other areas of the rec center (there is a new sustainability committee that both Michael and I are active members of)

Budget Narrative

Use this section to provide supplemental justification for the items you are requesting on your budget sheet. Please break down your justifications into the budget categories: Personnel or operating budget. Do not list out each expense or repeat notes made in the budget template, but instead address why the line items are being requested and the purpose they will serve, providing elaboration when necessary.

If you are requesting funding for personnel, use this section to elaborate on the position you are creating and how the budget and timeline was established for it. If you plan to hire students, describe in what capacity.

Describe relevant details thoroughly (wages, responsibilities, duration of job, extent of involvement, how you will solicit/ market these opportunities etc.).

Ensure the descriptions match the line items in the budget sheet.

If matching or supporting funds are secured for the project, identify the source and amount in this section, and detail the impact of the matching funds on your overall budget.

Response:

The quantity of boxes we have requested is based on an estimation of how much we will utilize the bins. The plastic and paper bins will reduce the majority of the waste we produce at Outdoor Rec. Combined with composting, this should allow us to be almost 0 waste.

We are requesting a total of 5 Terracycle bins:

1. The first one is the battery bin because we produce a significant number of a variety of batteries. This bin will allow us to collect and store the batteries and send them back when it fills up.
2. The second type of bin is the laminated paper packaging bin (we are requesting 2 medium size bins). This Terracycle bin will allow us to recycle packaging that comes from the food on our trips, packaging from office supplies, regular paper, and much more!
3. The third type of bin is the plastic packaging bin (we are requesting 2 medium size bins). This Terracycle bin takes all kinds of plastic which will again allow us to recycle food packaging, office supplies packaging, and more!

The laminated paper packaging box takes coated paper and cardboard while the plastic packaging bin takes soft and hard plastics. While they will help us to recycle similar items, neither of the boxes take what the other does. In order to successfully recycle all of our cardboard, paper, and plastics, we will need both boxes.

Terracycle provides prepaid shipping labels to use when sending the boxes back. Additionally, the Rec center is able to provide marketing materials including any posters or informational signage we may need. All of this makes the project relatively easy to do without requesting grant money for more of the little things that might come up!

Project Feasibility and Logistics

The Campus Sustainability Fund will only fund projects that have completed the necessary work to ensure they can succeed, be completed in the grant's timeline, or have an accurate budget.

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 to complete your project (such as from Housing and Residence Life, Facilities Management, Parking and Transportation, etc.)? Please identify them in your response.

If you are making modifications to campus, do you have authorization or official quotes from Facilities Management to accurately identify the cost of labor and supplies?

Response:

This project is more than feasible for Outdoor Recreation. We have a close-knit staff and monthly all staff meetings that will allow for proper training and upkeep. Additionally, as I mentioned previously, there is always a supervisor on shift who is able to act as a resource for staff. The bins will be kept in the garage throughout their use to ensure that they do not interfere with the custodial team. Also, since I have written a grant for Terracycle bins before and have helped to manage the library Terracycle project, I have significant experience in how the program works and best practices. In terms of authorization, Michael Morgan (the co-lead of the project) is the director of Outdoor Rec and is enthusiastic about doing our part to reduce the environmental impact that Outdoor Rec has.

The timeline of this project will require an extension to next semester. I plan to provide training to supervisors at our biweekly meetings and will train the rest of the staff at one of our all-staff meetings. Our boxes will be used until the semester ends and whatever is not used will roll over to next semester. I will be in charge of overseeing the boxes, preventing contamination, and shipping the boxes when they are full. I work 2-3 times a week which will make it easy for me to keep up with maintenance.

Currently, the rec sustainability committee is not a part of this project. The idea, however, is that if we see success with our pilot, it could be brought up to the rest of the committee and integrated into the rest of the rec center. So far, we have seen lots of success with the composting bins. All of the staff are aware of the bucket and how to use it properly. We have not had any contamination so far and empty the bucket on a regular basis (weekly). The success of composting so far gives me a lot of confidence in the capabilities and willingness of our staff.

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 Guides and Tips page.

Response:

This project will have many benefits in terms of environmental sustainability. Currently, Outdoor Rec collects trash from employees, participants, rec users, and more. All of this waste has the potential to be diverted from the landfill and properly recycled using Terracycle's program. This will be an impactful effort in terms of waste reduction in the campus recreation center.

Terracycle is a well-established company that has garnered worldwide participation since it began. Their process has gained a lot of credibility because of the in depth process they use to ensure that materials are properly sorted. They use several different sorting methods to ensure that there is no

contamination and then they process each type of material separately. The newly recycled plastic, paper, or other material is sold to companies and used to create new products. This closed loop system is a great way to limit the environmental impact we have.

In order to sustain this zero-waste initiative, we hope to be able to make Terracycle boxes a permanent fixture in our rental center. Given university budget cuts, however, it is unclear when this will be able to be built into the Outdoor Rec budget. If the project proves to be successful though, we then will have evidence to support the benefits of the program (making it more likely to get incorporated into the budget).

Social Sustainability Outcomes

Please provide a description of how you expect your project to advance social sustainability on campus. A definition of social sustainability is provided on our Guides and Tips page.

Response:

This project will advance social sustainability in a couple ways. Firstly, the Terracycle program as a whole will help to advance the sustainability literacy of employees and participants in Outdoor Rec. Additionally, this program will help to educate users about the specific details of recycling (such as what kinds of plastics can be recycled, how to properly dispose of batteries, etc.). Lastly, as I mentioned earlier, this project has the potential to be a pilot for other areas of the rec, meaning that the impact could be even more widespread. The whole project is based on education about how recycling currently works at UA and how it could be improved. I think spreading awareness about this is a really important step in making change on campus. Providing opportunities for students to learn about contamination problems in the recycling system will make them more cognizant of their own actions.

With the new sustainability committee, I hope to see the rec make more connections on campus in the future. The committee currently meets on a relatively infrequent basis, but projects like this will help to inspire more action and a need for ongoing efforts to continue. Waste Reduction within SFS has already partnered with the rec center to discuss placing collection bins in their spaces for the clothing swap event we are having. Small initiatives like this will gradually make larger changes in the rec.

Student Leadership & Involvement

Please provide a description of how your project will benefit students on campus regarding the creation of leadership opportunities or student engagement. What leadership opportunities exist within your proposal? If you plan to seek student involvement, include relevant details thoroughly and how you will solicit/ market these opportunities.

Response:

Student employees are the heart of Outdoor Rec and everyone will be involved in the Terracycle program as they will be active users. As already demonstrated with our composting efforts, our staff will be trained and educated on best practices and will then utilize the bins in day to day operations. There is always a supervisor on shift who will be able to answer questions and help staff to use the boxes. Signage will be posted as well for reference in addition to the verbal training mentioned earlier.

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, particularly beyond the "sustainability choir?"

Please provide a description of how you expect your project will communicate its impacts to the campus community.

Response:

There are many ways this project will help campus/community members to learn about sustainability. This includes learning about waste diversion rates on campus, learning about proper recycling techniques, learning about Terracycle itself, and more. While Outdoor Rec employees are stewards of the outdoors by nature, not all of them have experience in the field of sustainability. Additionally, many employees are just like other college students, busy and sometimes unable to make larger changes in their lifestyle (due to transportation issues, financial constraints, etc.). The Terracycle program will give each person who utilizes Outdoor Rec to have the opportunity to learn about sustainability and waste diversion in addition to reducing their own environmental footprint.

We plan to begin packing out all recyclable items on our trips and saving them until we return to the rental center where they can be recycled properly using Terracycle. This gives us a huge opportunity to educate trip participants and demonstrate to them how our process works and get them involved as well. As I have mentioned a few times, supervisors will help to guide rental and trip staff and will act as a resource for any questions that may come up. Signage has been super useful with the composting project so far and I think it will be similarly beneficial in this project. How-to guides, informational posters, what can and cannot be put in the boxes, and more will all be incorporated into the spaces around the boxes. I think the issue with the "Terracycle It!" project is that there is not oversight 100% of the time that the Terracycle boxes are being used. With Outdoor Rec, however, there is always a supervisor in the rental center when we are open. This makes watching over the boxes and guiding our staff significantly easier than relying on students to utilize the boxes correctly in the libraries.

After hopefully seeing success with Terracycle in our rental center and on trips, I hope to propose this idea to Troy Vaughn (the director of campus rec). He has meetings with student supervisors

relatively frequently and has expressed that he is open to projects several times. If we are able to prove that this system can work, it will make my project pitch much more credible and will also give us an outline of what did or didn't work as we went through the process ourselves. Assuming I did have the opportunity to pursue this in the rest of the rec, I would likely go into the all-staff meetings of the other rec center areas and provide education then. I also think it would be helpful to have a point person in each area that helps me to oversee the boxes in their area. As I mentioned before, this is all what I would like to happen but currently I have not spoken to anyone in the rest of the rec center about this project. I think it's best to start in a controlled area and expand from there.