The Green Grants program is an accelerator for piloting and institutionalizing operational, academic, and behavioral sustainability initiatives. The program forges cross-campus partnerships while funding student-, faculty-, and staff-led pilot projects in order to harness increasingly sustainable practices and technology for New York University's global campus network.

By channelling the manifold knowledge and skills of the university’s scholarly and administrative community, Green Grants yield dramatic resource savings, community engagement, and program development. Past grants have also provided a host of professional development, curricular development, and research opportunities that bolster the university’s core academic mission.

**INTRODUCTION**

**Selection (RFP)**
The Green Grants Selection Committee chooses pilot projects that improve NYU’s operational environmental performance, foster eco-literacy and community engagement, advance applied research & design, and demonstrate the viability of best practices and technologies.

**Implementation**
The Program Coordinator liaises with academic units, campus services, facilities managers, and project supply vendors to facilitate the completion of Green Grant pilot projects within sixteen months, and ensure that grantees collect sound data to measure their project’s performance for proof of concept.

**Institutionalization**
Upon completion, the Office of Sustainability earmarks successful projects and uses performance data from the pilot project to perform cost-benefit analyses and work with appropriate campus areas to scale up and institutionalize the best projects so that the university may reap the benefits at a campus-wide scale.

**METHODOLOGY**
Institutionalized Projects

Bike Share Pilot Program
Piloted as a student-led Green Grant, the since-institutionalized NYU Bike Share provides free short-term bicycle rentals to NYU students, faculty, and staff. The share currently boasts 10 locations across campus, 75 bikes and over 1,200 members.

Fast Facts
> Major recruitment tool for NYU Sustainability Initiatives and selling point for NYU admissions
> Became a model program for NYC and many colleges
> Growth in biking on campus supported the university’s cost-effective scaling back of the bus fleet in 2010
> Trained 1,300 community members in urban bike safety

Center for the Sustainable Built Environment
A Green Grant launched this academic center, which in turn catalyzed a new masters program concentration and professional certificate program at SCPS. It has since been commissioned by the United Nations and NYC Mayor’s Office to perform analyses on building emissions, and its annual conferences are one of the preeminent events for sustainable building design in NYC.

Fast Facts
> Produced a LEED for New Construction Analysis, which OCM reports will save 20-30% on LEED contractor costs
> Funded over 1,000 hours of high-end student research
> Has attracted over $250,000 in post Green Grant funding and in-kind gifts
> Fall 2011 Event Series included 7 events; non-NYU guests included top NYC real estate developers

Green Apple Move Out (GAMO)
Collecting dormitory residents’ unused goods, GAMO provides local charities with about 16,000 pounds of usable items, saves NYU thousands in hauling costs, and prevents hauling-associated GHG emissions.

NYU Recycling Services has institutionalized GAMO and expanded it to serve 14 buildings.

Fast Facts
> About $9,000 was saved through averted hauling costs
> 16,300 lbs of reusable goods were collected from 11 residence halls in the first year
> Saves up to $45,000 in five years of implementation.
> Reusing goods prevents greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, and other activities associated with production.
### Lighten Up & Go Green at Kimmel

A Green Grant allowed the Kimmel Center to perform the LED lighting conversion study that impelled a retrofit for its flagship event space. The project ushered in the next era of lighting retrofits at a time when university was focused on fluorescents; subsequent LED retrofits have yielded substantial savings not documented here.

**Fast Facts**
- Cost-Savings: $130,180 yearly
- Greenhouse gas emissions reduction: about 158,256 kg CO2e per year
- Saves approximately $650,900 over five years
- Reduces GHG emissions by approximately 791,281 kg CO2e over five years

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### Residence Hall Composting Initiative

This student-led initiative founded a revolutionary program at NYU: Large-scale composting in a 300-person residence hall in a dense, urban city. This was the first composting program at NYU and has since led to five spin-offs.

**Fast Facts**
- 72% of the Law School’s D’Agastino Hall began composting
- Currently composts an average of 820 lbs per month (five years after inception)
- Provided a sound model for residence hall composting
- Composting provides a route for reducing weekend trash hauls, potentially saving $46,000 yearly

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### Psychology and the Environment Course

When the faculty member proposed the course, the Psychology department didn’t have the funds to develop or list it; with resources provided by a Green Grant, SCPS was able to host the course on a trial basis. Enrollment quickly overfilled, and was expanded to 30.

The course is now offered on a yearly basis and has been adapted and offered at NYU-Poly.

**Fast Facts**
- Provided accelerated course development for the Psychology department, SCPS, the Environmental Studies program and NYU-Poly
- Environmental Studies program enrollment has tripled in the last 2 years
Web News Videos

This project produced professional videos for NYU Sustainability that supports their initiatives and provides content for their website and events. The videos have been viewed many thousands of times on NYU’s Youtube Sustainability Channel.

Fast Facts
> Produced 9 hours of video that document the university’s efforts and achievements around sustainability
> Created 40 videos for the Sustainability section of NYU’s Youtube channel
> These videos have accrued 12,163 total views

Two Birds, One Stone

This student club originally collected around fifty pounds of food a day from Hayden Hall and delivered it to NYC Rescue Mission, but was ineligible to receive funding from CSALS in its first year. With a one year Green Grant, Two Birds One Stone was able to deliver about 500lbs of food weekly and earn multi-year funding from CSALS.

Fast Facts
> Provides 15,000 lbs of otherwise wasted food to pantries per academic year (300 meals per week)
> The club has become one of NYU’s most successful community service groups
> Provides cost-savings of about $900 yearly, up to $4,500 over five years, in averted compost hauling

Copy Central Document Imaging Service

Copy Central had a budget for operating this service, but needed a Green Grant to fill the gap between capital costs and operational staffing costs. The new service helps units go paperless with future records and has aided in the University in maximizing the use of its physical space by unfreezing rooms previously required for filing records.

Fast Facts
> Over 105,000 pages have been scanned for electronic storage as of July 2012
> Producing just one set of paper copies instead would be associated with nearly two metric tons of carbon equivalent emissions and over twelve trees; future emissions savings scale with further electronic reproduction of these scanned documents
Candidates for Institutionalization

Stern Centralized Recycling

Stern students piloted the practice of removing trash bins from classrooms and pairing recycling bins with trash bins wherever there were trash bins. The team found that the practice catalyzed a 178% increase in recycling rates, 50% less trash left in public areas, and a reduction in the time it took cleaning staff to maintain these areas.

**Fast Facts**

> Increased recycling rates by 178% (diverting 445 pounds of recyclables from landfills)
> Raised NYU’s recycling rates, securing its free landfill permit
> If expanded to all academic buildings, may divert 500 tons from landfills (raising NYU’s diversion rate by 10%) and generate $12,000 in recycling revenue yearly

NYUnplugged

The NYUnplugged residence hall energy-savings competition reduced energy use by an estimated 6.5 percent across 14 dorms during its first year.

**Fast Facts**

> Reduced GHG emissions by approximately 31,000kg CO2e
> Produced cost-savings of about $24,860
> Could reduce GHG emissions by about 1,550,000kg CO2e and save $124,300 if implemented for five years

Replacement of Water Aspirators

A grant to replace outdated water aspirators with diaphragm vacuum pumps in research labs made funding available for immediate cost-savings and tremendous water savings during a time when no other funding source was feasible.

**Fast Facts**

> Water savings: 18,000-55,000 gallons per year
> Cost-Savings: $1,968-$3,510 per academic year

Replacing all aspirators in labs across NYU would provide:
> An estimated water savings of 19,584,000 gallons and cost-savings of $56,900 over five years
Success Rate of Green Grants, by Year Selected

Potential for Institutionalization

Projects that are deemed institutionalized here are not only permanent, but have become sewed into the fabric of the university’s operations. For example, if a Green Grant pilot project successfully increased recycling rates by re-organizing bin placement in one building, it would be deemed a candidate for further institutionalization and only be considered institutionalized when adopted systemically to inform future decisions made by departments that have a role in bin placement.

A Green Grant project is considered fully institutionalized when it has been scaled up to meet the needs of all applicable campus areas, has been incorporated into the practices of departments beyond the Office of Sustainability, and the university has realized its investment in the pilot project to its maximum potential.

Green Grants by the Numbers

- Submissions Received: 229
- Grants Awarded: 65
- Faculty Grantees: 17%
- Staff Grantees: 32%
- PhD Candidate Grantees: 6%
- Graduate Student Grantees: 22%
- Undergraduate Grantees: 22%

- Total Investments to Date: $479,400
- Projected 5-Year Return on Investment through Institutionalization: Over 200%
“Green Grants have created a community that fosters inspiration, efficacy, and sustained change. They convey knowledge and create opportunities to take action – action which better the university and which will travel out into the many domains of employment and entrepreneurship which our students and employees touch.”
- Irina Feygina, PhD Candidate & Adjunct Faculty Grantee

“The experience aligned me to get my foot in the door of the field in which I now work.”
- Emily Allen, UG Student Grantee

“[I learned] methodology — how to do good, applied environmental research as opposed to theoretical idea-generating or paper-type research.”
- Max Liboiron, PhD Candidate & Adjunct Faculty Grantee

“Green grantees are empowered to be self-driven agents of change within the NYU community. In a large and often alienating institution, this is an incredibly awesome opportunity!”
- Zoe Abram, UG Student Grantee

“With extensive public engagement and participation from non-experts, as well as a rigorous evaluation protocol, this program has become a national model. It is my hope that as it evolves, the Green Grants program can generate deal flow for the ACRE incubator, and we can continue our collaborative work to secure NYU’s position as a global leader for experiential education, sustainability and entrepreneurship.”
- Micah Kotch, Director, NYU Poly Incubator Initiatives