



**NYU**

Office of  
Sustainability

## **NYU GREEN GRANTS**

### **APPLICATION PROCESS TOOLKIT**

2016-2017



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Process Overview .....	3
<b>Program Policies.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Eligibility .....	4
Types of Projects Funded .....	4
Proposal Criteria.....	5
Funding Policies.....	6
Property Ownership .....	6
Green Grants Selection Committee .....	7
Selection Rubric.....	7
<b>Submission Procedure .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Expression of Interest (EOI) .....	9
Proposal .....	9
Frequently Asked Questions .....	11
Campus Innovation Challenge.....	12
Past Grants .....	12
What to Expect as a Grantee.....	13
<b>Example Proposal .....</b>	<b>14</b>

# INTRODUCTION

NYU Green Grants are awarded to improve the university's operational environmental performance, foster environmental literacy and community engagement, advance applied research and design, and demonstrate the viability of best practices and technologies for sustainability. NYU defines sustainability as addressing the needs of future generations while meeting our current needs, recognizing and respecting nature's limits, and striving for social, economic, and ecological sustainability.

Both optional Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and Proposals for funding are reviewed in monthly batches by the Green Grants Selection Committee. We strive to provide feedback on EOIs within two weeks, and the Proposal review schedule can be found on page 10 of this toolkit or online at [nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply](https://nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply).

## Process Overview

1

Peruse the program's policies in this toolkit.  
Consider attending a Green Grants Workshop Session ([dates online](#)).

2

Submit a short [Expression Of Interest](#) (EOI) online (optional).  
Program staff will contact you shortly to provide advice for developing your EOI into a successful proposal. This step is not required.

3

When you're ready to submit a full proposal, see the submission schedule [online](#). We encourage applicants to submit EOIs and meet with Green Grants Program staff in advance of proposal submissions.

Questions? Write to us at [green.grants@nyu.edu](mailto:green.grants@nyu.edu) or call us at (212) 998 -1425

## PROGRAM POLICIES

### Eligibility

- Current NYU and NYU-Poly students, faculty, and staff may apply as project leaders.
  - All NYU sites within the Global Network University are eligible for Green Grants.
  - Students are required to plan projects that end at least one month before their expected graduation date.
  - Eligible applicants may apply together as co-project leaders if they have similar degrees of responsibility within a proposed project.
- Alumni, community organizations, and interested neighbors are permitted and encouraged to collaborate as members of project teams.
- Members of the Green Grants Selection Committee may not apply for funding or be on a project team of a new proposal while they are serving as a committee member.
- No person may be a project leader on multiple open grants.
  - Past Green Grant recipients are ineligible to apply again until they have completed all terms of their prior Green Grant.

### Types of Projects Funded

**Operations:** Projects that pilot innovative ways to improve material, physical, or infrastructural elements at NYU, from food service to energy reduction. Proposed projects may not include green roofs, which fall outside the scope and scale of the Green Grants.

**Engagement:** Activities that foster a campus culture of sustainability, such as efforts to improve environmental literacy, projects which stimulate behavior change, and activism.

**Research and/or Design:** Research or design projects that create new sustainability opportunities. These projects must be integrated with the university campus or community through use of NYU as a test-bed for data collection, or by producing deliverables with potential to catalyze operational, academic, or cultural change at NYU. “Living Lab” projects are encouraged as they cyclically engage both data collection and application.

Entrepreneurial ventures typically fall under this category, and both for-profit and non-profit organizations are eligible.

**Academic:** Projects which improve the university's capacity for educating around sustainability, including curricular initiatives. We highly recommend that faculty are involved in these projects.

Grants may also explore any combination of the above categories.

## Proposal Criteria

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The following are required of all proposals submitted for funding. Program staff can assist applicants who submit Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in fulfilling these criteria:

- You must **identify the sustainability problem(s) or issue(s)** addressed by your project.
  - Use the below suggestions on your proposal, or state another issue if your project addresses a sustainability problem not listed here:

▪ Air Pollution	▪ Fair Wages	▪ Poverty
▪ Biodiversity Loss	▪ Future Generations	▪ Public Education
▪ Climate Change (Global Warming)	▪ Habitat Preservation	▪ Resource Depletion
▪ Community Development	▪ Hazardous & Toxic Substances	▪ Resource Waste
▪ Cost-Savings	▪ Land Degradation/Contamination	▪ Water Pollution
▪ Economic Development	▪ Light/Noise Pollution	▪ Wellness & Nutrition
▪ Environmental Health	▪ Ozone Depletion	
▪ Environmental Justice		
- **You must include a plan for measuring the effect(s) of your project** in relation to the sustainability problem(s) your project addresses.
- You (and your team members, if applicable) must **possess the knowledge and skills necessary to execute the entire project**.
  - For example, your project team must include architects if your project involves siting a structure on or outside of a building.
  - The project leader(s) must be the lead implementer(s) of the grant, carrying out the majority of the project and possessing a working knowledge of all aspects. Additional team members may play important roles and be paid for their work in some cases (see funding policies on page 6), but should be incorporated as auxiliary implementers.

- You should have already **thoroughly researched your project** so that if it is awarded, you can begin immediately.
  - **Include a letter of support** from affiliated departments or institutions whenever the success of your project is contingent on a **permission or collaboration**.
- **Student project leaders are required to submit a resume or letter of reference** that demonstrates their diligence, responsibility, and ability to carry out an unsupervised, year-long project. Staff and faculty project leaders are welcome, but not required, to submit letters of support or reference.

## Funding policies

Proposed project budgets may total \$20,000 at maximum. Green Grant budgets must list individual line-items, and thus cannot contain categorical slush funds such as "gardening supplies" (e.g. list out mulch, hoses, seeds, etc.). Note that all line-items listed on your proposal's budget will stand as maximum spending limits if a grant is awarded; for example, if you are listing refreshments for a presentation in your budget, your spending on refreshments for that presentation will be capped at the value listed on your budget.

The following policies apply to all Green Grants:

### **Personnel:**

- Outside experts, speakers, mechanics, etc. who are not affiliated with NYU can be paid for their services.
- Faculty and staff who already draw a wage at NYU cannot be paid any kind of honorarium or wage.
- Faculty and staff may hire casual student workers if they or a sponsoring department can take responsibility for supervision and approving timesheets. Green Grants staff cannot supervise or sign student timesheets.

### **Equipment:**

- Tools and equipment, such as water meters, textbooks for curriculum development, shovels, etc. so long as they are demonstrably integral to the project.
- Promotional products or giveaways may not be the core aspect of a Green Grant project. These items are allowable only if justified as bolstering a core aspect of a project (e.g. a gift card as an award for increasing survey participation or materials that promote awareness or attendance for a core initiative).

## Property ownership

All physical materials purchased under Green Grants must be **permanently installed and remain parts of projects for their lifetimes or be returned to the Office of Sustainability** after the grant term.

- You should state in your proposal which of these two options you believe makes the most sense for your project.
- When grants are awarded, ownership terms specific to each project are finalized and become part of the Grant Agreement.

**New York University will not make claims to Intellectual Property, earned revenue, or equity** on the basis of providing funding through Green Grant awards. The university does reserve the right to freely distribute media and information about projects' impact as shared in final reports submitted by grant recipients.

- Materials which are generated through Green Grants sponsorship must recognize the university's support (specific language will be provided).

## Green Grants Selection Committee

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Each year, a Green Grants Selection Committee is assembled with representation from sustainability experts across university administration, faculty, and student stakeholder groups.

The Selection Committee always includes a lead representative from Facilities Management: SETS (Sustainability, Energy and Technical Services – home department of the Office of Sustainability), at least two other NYU staff members, three faculty members from different departments, and three students who represent a cross-section of NYU schools and degree programs. The Green Grants Program requires consensus among Selection Committee members to award a grant.

## Selection Rubric

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The Green Grants Selection Committee uses the following rubric to assess applications:

### Operational Impact:

- Does it demonstrate **meaningful, substantial sustainability benefits**?
  - Does the proposal include a sound plan for **measuring the project's performance** in relation to these sustainability benefits?
- Is it **greenwashing** (making misleading, non-environmental claims)?
- Does the project have potential for scaling up, or **institutionalization**, later?

- Are there **cost-savings**? Does **cost-benefit analysis** help to justify the project?

**Other Impacts:**

- Does it demonstrate meaningful, substantial **social or economic sustainability benefits**?
- Can it advance NYU's core academic mission through **curriculum development** or by increasing **environmental literacy**?
  - Does it contribute to **students' professional and/or academic development**?
- Is the project **innovative**?
- Is the project **visible** on campus?

**Feasibility:**

- Is this **feasible**? Is it reasonable, sensible, logical, intelligible and plausible?
- Does the applicant and project team have the **knowledge, skills, time and initiative** to carry out this project?
- Are they requesting too much money? Not enough money? Is the budget fully described?
- Is the project of a **suitable pilot scale** in terms of funding, implementation time, size and target audience?
- Has the applicant **contacted and received permissions or assurance of collaboration** from all **third-parties and/or NYU departments** necessary for the project's success?
- Does the project adhere to all policies listed in the current Application Toolkit?

# SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

## Expression of Interest (EOI)

Prospective applicants are encouraged to first submit an Expression of Interest that outlines the concept, scope, and budget of a project they are considering submitting as a full proposal. EOI submissions are anticipated to be in a draft stage and should increase applicants' success in developing a proposal feasible for funding and implementation at NYU. Program staff will provide preliminary feedback for EOIs within two weeks of submission, and further consultation will be made available as necessary. EOIs are an optional step.

EOIs may be submitted year-round using [the online form](#).

EOI feedback is designed to highlight obstacles that applicants should address before submitting full proposals, suggest dialogue between applicants developing similar or synergistic ideas, and share initial reactions to the scope and intent of applicants' projects. EOIs also enable program staff to connect applicants with relevant university experts, administrative decision-makers, and other useful resources. Early submissions of EOIs are appreciated.

EOIs are reviewed by program staff with support from the current year's Green Grants Selection Committee. Proposals are fully reviewed by the entire Selection Committee.

## Proposal

The Green Grants Selection Committee considers proposals for funding per the schedule posted below. It is highly recommended, but not required, that applicants first submit Expressions of Interest, as the Selection Committee will provide only limited feedback for rejected proposals. There is no limit to the number of times a project may be proposed for funding, nor the number of proposals that may be submitted by a project leader who meets the eligibility requirements described in this toolkit (but an applicant may be *awarded* only one grant at a time).

Blank proposal forms can be found online at [nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply](https://nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply). Applicants may download the Microsoft Word (.doc) format form and e-mail completed forms [green.grants@nyu.edu](mailto:green.grants@nyu.edu), or fill out the online Google Docs form. Supplementary documents should also be sent to [green.grants@nyu.edu](mailto:green.grants@nyu.edu) as attachments. There is an example filled-out proposal form at starting on page 14 of this document.

Proposals will be reviewed in batches, according to the following schedule:

Submission Deadline (by midnight)	Award Notification Date
<b>August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016</b>	August 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
<b>September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	September 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2016
<b>October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016</b>	October 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2016
<b>November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	November 25 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
<b>November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	December 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
<b>February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017</b>	February 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2017
<b>March 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017</b>	March 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2017
<b>April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017</b>	April 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2017
<b>May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017</b>	May 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2017

Any changes made to this schedule will be posted online at [nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply](http://nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply)

Because so many proposals significantly impact the university’s operational processes and/or physical infrastructure, they frequently require fine-tuning to be practicable and executed. As an example: A student may propose placing a wind turbine on an NYU residence hall, but the building in question may be found to be structurally unsuitable. In this case, the Selection Committee may propose an alternate building. In these cases “conditional awards” are offered, and the Selection Committee may offer an award with revised terms or a reduced budget.

It is not the intent of the Green Grants Selection Committee to alter the essential goals or outcomes of a submitted proposal without the willing consent of the project’s leader. If proposed modifications are found to be unworkable, applicants should withdraw the proposal from that round of funding and consider resubmitting it in another round.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. What is an EOI? How is it different from a full proposal?**

A: The Expression of Interest (EOI) is a document that outlines the concept at an earlier stage in development than the full proposal, though they can also be a “dry run” of the proposal. Unlike proposals, EOIs are non-binding and do not require line-item budgets.

### **Q. Can I give myself an honorarium as part of my budget?**

A. Honoraria can only be paid to individuals who are not affiliated with NYU.

### **Q. Can I pay for food?**

A. Food may be purchased when it is integral to your project’s realization. It would be

acceptable if your project is about food justice and culminates in an award ceremony with sustainable food, for example. Providing refreshments for volunteer labor is also acceptable. The quantity and price of food must be within reason and itemized on your budget with an explanation for each purchase.

**Q. Can I contact the Office of Sustainability to ask questions?**

A. If you have read the Application Process Toolkit and you have specific questions that are not addressed here, you can email [green.grants@nyu.edu](mailto:green.grants@nyu.edu) with questions. Questions can also be answered at the Green Grants Workshopping Sessions (see [here](#) for session times and dates).

**Q. If I am proposing a research grant, can I include travel, training and conference expenses?**

A. This program is designed for applied project grants, not travel or conference funds. However, if travel or a conference presentation is integral to your project's success or completion, these expenses are not explicitly restricted, and you may apply to have them funded.

**Q. What is the difference between a project leader and a project team member?**

A. Project leaders are the individuals responsible for the creation and implementation of the project, and for writing the midterm and final reports. Projects often require extra people to help carry out aspects of the project, and these individuals are called project team members. Project team members do not need to meet our eligibility requirements.

**Q. Can I ask for funding for my thesis, dissertation or faculty research?**

A. Yes, so long as your project also adheres to all other criteria contained in this document.

**Q. Can my project improve on something that has already been done before?**

A. Yes. You should include a clear description of how and by how much your project differs from and improves upon preexisting initiatives.

**Q. What is the difference between awareness and education, and why do the Green Grants make the distinction between them?**

A. We refer to outreach which results in permanent behavior change as education, while merely informing people about an issue is considered awareness. The best projects would be educational or increase involvement, that is, create systematic change, rather than provide mere information and awareness. Awareness comes before education, but it is not enough to produce the goals of the Green Grants. Green Grants require education, meaning that you can demonstrate that a person's understanding of something has deepened. Pre and post surveys are common tools for measurement, and sustained behavior change is another indicator of learning.

**Q. Can I count my Green Grant work as an independent study?**

A. You may use Greens Grant funds in support of a thesis, dissertation research, course study or independent study, but you will still need a faculty sponsor as the Office of Sustainability is not the source of academic objectives, nor do we oversee them.

## Campus Innovation Challenge

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NYU Campus Innovation Challenge (CIC) Green Grants identify crucial campus sustainability needs and call on NYU community members to formulate and execute the most comprehensive, educational, operationally-feasible and economically viable solution in response. Applicants will receive the identified problem or need-gap in current operations, known caveats, previously explored solutions and, when relevant, pre-approved project locations and campus partners.

The challenges are designed to provide a foundation upon which applicants can be imaginative, entrepreneurial and effective with our university's and city's diverse skill sets and resources. CIC Green Grants have the same scope, selection criteria, rules and deadlines as all other Green Grant projects, except as explicitly mentioned otherwise in a CIC description.

Campus Innovation Challenges are announced on the Green Grants [homepage](#).

## Past Grants

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Examples of previous Green Grants include:

- Water consumption behavioral research coupled with water fountain quality testing
- Campus bike-sharing program pilot
- High-efficiency hand dryer pilot installation
- Study of sustainable rooftop perimeter barriers
- Community Agriculture Club start-up garden
- Creation of Psychology and the Environment course
- Workshops that used e-waste to teach basic electronic skills and physics concepts

You can browse through a full list at:

[nyu.edu/sustainability/campus.projects/greengrants/browse.php](https://nyu.edu/sustainability/campus.projects/greengrants/browse.php)

Previous successful projects have tended to exhibit the following characteristics:

- The grant is well-researched and all partnerships, technical issues, and metrics have been anticipated.
- There are two or more project leaders.
- The applicant solicited and provided letters of support from all relevant university units.

## What to Expect as a Grantee

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- Past grantees report that the best aspects of a Green Grant are engaging with the NYU environmental community and learning to carry out institutional change.

- Because NYU is a large and decentralized institution, be prepared to work closely with the Office of Sustainability to navigate the necessary protocols at NYU.
- All Green Grantees must submit Mid-Term and Final Reports detailing their projects' progress and achievements, including metrics for determining its impact.
- After project completion, the Office of Sustainability aims to institutionalize applicable projects as permanent parts of NYU.

**Recommendations from previous Grantees and Green Grants Selection Committee members:**

“Plan your budget, research every expense, think it through. Close second — problematize your grant, and understand what it is trying to accomplish, as a way to make sure its overall thrust is coherent, that the budget supports it, and that you have a Point B to get to from Point A.”

“Pick something you are really driven to see happen!”

“Enjoy the engagement and be open to new ideas.”

“Keep your project short term or immediate.”

“Be firm in what you need or want and decline the grant if you can't meet it.”

“Be clear about your goals and outcomes, and put together a plan for evaluating them that the Green Grants Committee can approve in advance.”

“Select a project that interests you and that you feel will make a difference in awareness or practice of sustainability. Make it a project you can handle with resources you are familiar with from previous experience. Make sure it is feasible in the time allotted and with the money requested.”

## EXAMPLE PROPOSAL

This is an example proposal to help you in drafting your own. Please note that this is solely an example, and not all statements in this proposal should be considered factual.

### NYU Green Grants Fall 2013 Application

#### Project Title:

Silver Center Paper Towel Composting Pilot Program

#### Project Summary: (up to 5 sentences)

Most bathrooms at NYU have trash cans full of paper towels that can be readily composted to divert the amount of waste going to landfills and help recover a valuable resource. As NYU already has a formalized relationship with a composting service, this project will consist of purchasing special paper-towel-only bins for select restrooms and having three students split the duty of moving the compost receptacles to ground floor for pickup on schooldays.

#### Classification(s):

- Operations
- Engagement
- Research or Design

#### Area(s) of focus:

- Energy/Water/Resource Savings
- Waste Diversion and Recycling**
- Dining
- Transportation
- Landscaping and Grounds
- Buildings
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### May we post this proposal publicly on our website?

Yes

#### Work Plan

#### Project Goals and Objectives:

- 1) Implement a compost collection system to divert paper waste from NYU trash streams to composting facilities.

- 2) Determine the ideal signage strategy to increase diversion rates through occupant participation.
- 3) Engage students in thinking about where their waste is going by directing them to a receptacle other than “trash” in bathrooms, while introducing the concept of composting through a convenient situation.

### Concept & Rationale:

Paper towels are organic waste material that can be composted. When paper is landfilled, its inherent carbon (and, to a lesser extent, nitrogen) content is underutilized and trapped, representing resource waste. Composting paper towels helps ensure availability of nutrients in top soil for agriculture, provides opportunities to decrease fossil-fuel based inorganic fertilizer use, and increases the efficiency of valuable landfill space. Ultimately, composting paper towels creates opportunities to use a resource in a more closed-loop fashion, thus reducing NYU’s waste that is landfilled.

Our team has chosen to target bathrooms as an area for paper waste collection because the proportion of paper that we observe in bathroom trash receptacles is consistently higher than in other waste streams we observed. We can also place the paper-only collection receptacles directly beneath paper towel dispensers to increase the convenience of participation, much like recycling bins are commonly placed next to high-usage printers.

We see this plan as an easy and simple way to introduce composting to the campus community, and an opportunity to significantly increase NYU’s landfill diversion rate overall. When students are directed to separate their paper towels from waste usually designated as trash, they are invoking mental consideration of what goes where — and why. Routine composting, especially paper composting, may be a new concept and behavior for many students, and this pilot intends to normalize the behavior as an engagement technique. We are not recommending to remove trash cans from bathrooms, but rather to pair them with the paper-only collection bins to provoke the mental consideration of where waste will go and prevent compost contamination (by non-compostable goods).

### Methodology:

This pilot program will use four restrooms (two men’s rooms, two women’s rooms) that, according to our observation of trash receptacles, receive significant traffic and trash disposal. One men’s room and one women’s room will be on the second floor of the Silver Center, and the other two will be on the eighth floor. Before we implement paper towel composting, our student team will do a waste characterization audit. This will establish a baseline weight of the current weight of paper towels destined for a landfill.

Next, we will install purchased receptacles and signage as described under to ask users to use the paper towel composting system. We will pilot two types of signage:

*Signage Type #1)* Simple bold text stating “PAPER TOWELS ONLY” on bins. No other signage. These will be installed in the second floor restrooms.

*Signage Type #2*) For the two restrooms on the eighth floor of Silver, we will augment these instructions with smaller text inside of stall doors (and above urinals, in men’s rooms) to explain our project and the impacts of participation. This text will be accompanied by a picture of composted paper towels being used in an agricultural or landfill setting to demonstrate the benefit of participation. Smorgas Board (the project leader) is enrolled in Max Liboiron’s Environmental Communications course during Fall 2013, and will refine the messaging techniques with her guidance (I’ve attached her letter of support). We also understand that the signs will need to be consistent with NYU Recycling Service’s logos and color schemes, and earn their approval (their Letter of Support is also attached).

Once a day, our project team will empty restroom paper towel collectors into composting bins on the ground for pickup as arranged with Action Carting, the university’s composting service. We have already contacted them, and they have assured us that adding these paper towels to their arranged pickup with NYU is within the parameters of their current contract with NYU (their letter of support is attached).

To carry out these activities, our team will consist of three students for legwork. One of these students (Smorgas Board) is the project leader and will be directly responsible for ensuring that someone is always available to move the compost when necessary.

## Project Team

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Describe your project team.

<p><b>Team Member Type</b> <i>Project Leader or Team Member</i></p>	<p>Project Leader</p>
<p><b>Contact Info</b></p>	<p><b>Name:</b> Smorgas Board <b>Email:</b> sob187@nyu.edu <b>Phone:</b> 718 123 4567</p>
<p><b>NYU Affiliation</b> <i>If your affiliation is “student,” please also tell us your degree program (undergraduate, medical, non-degree, etc.)</i></p>	<p><b>Affiliation:</b> <i>Student - Undergraduate</i> <b>Graduation Date:</b> December 2015 <b>Major:</b> Economics <b>School:</b> CAS</p>
<p><b>Role(s) within project</b> <i>If applying as the sole project leader with no team members, you may leave this section blank (as it will be assumed that you will carry out the entire project).</i></p>	<p>Smorgas Board will be the student who designs the signage and leads the waste audits. She will also be one of the three students who moves paper towels to the ground floor for pickup. Smorgas will be</p>

	responsible for coordinating between herself and the other students, making sure there is always someone to move the compost when necessary.
<b>Experience and Qualifications Relevant to Project</b>	Smorgas has worked on signage and donation appeals through her marketing internship at Sankynet Communications (8 months) and also ran an ad-hoc paper re-use system at the fourth floor Gramercy Green printing lab. Smorgas is an Environmental Studies minor and will use course materials and check with professors to ensure signage accuracy.
<b>Integration with other responsibilities</b> <i>Explain how you this project will integrate with your student and/or professional schedule.</i>	Smorgas has a job near NYU that will end at 5pm on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. She will move the compost after work.

#### Team Member #2

<b>Member Type</b> <i>Project Leader or Team Member</i>	Team Member
<b>Contact Info</b>	<b>Name:</b> Lovely Rita <b>Email:</b> lvn187@nyu.edu <b>Phone:</b> 718 123 4567
<b>NYU Affiliation</b> <i>If your affiliation is "student," please also tell us your degree program (undergraduate, medical, non-degree, etc.)</i>	<b>Affiliation:</b> Student - UG  <b>Graduation Date:</b> May 2014 <b>Major:</b> Recycling: Vital, But Can't Save the World <b>School:</b> Gallatin
<b>Project Role</b> <i>If applying as the sole project leader with no team members, you may leave this section blank as it will be assumed that you will carry out the entire project.</i>	Assisting Smorgas Board to move the compost on Tuesdays and Wednesdays during the Spring 2012 semester.
<b>Experience and Qualifications Relevant to Project</b>	I study different types of waste diversion as part of my academic course of study. I have also worked on an organic farm for two summers, where we worked with compost.

<p><b>Integration with other responsibilities</b>  <i>Explain how you this project will integrate with your student and/or professional schedule.</i></p>	<p>Lovely will move the compost between 5-6pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays this semester, and will work with other team members for next semester.</p>
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Team Member #3

<p><b>Member Type</b>  <i>Project Leader or Team Member</i></p>	<p>Team Member</p>
<p><b>Contact Info</b></p>	<p><b>Name:</b> Walle K Mart  <b>Email:</b> wkm136@nyu.edu  <b>Phone:</b> 718 123 4567</p>
<p><b>NYU Affiliation</b>  <i>If your affiliation is "student," please also tell us your degree program (undergraduate, medical, non-degree, etc.)</i></p>	<p><b>Affiliation:</b> Student - Graduate  <b>Graduation Date:</b> May 2014  <b>Major:</b> Historical Perspectives on Attractive Environmentalists  <b>School:</b> Gallatin</p>
<p><b>Project Role</b>  <i>If applying as the sole project leader with no team members, you may leave this section blank as it will be assumed that you will carry out the entire project.</i></p>	<p>I won't be working on this project until the Fall 2014 semester because I'm taking the Fall 2013 semester off. During Spring 2014, I will be returning with a normal course load and will be in a good position to help with this project.</p>
<p><b>Experience and Qualifications Relevant to Project</b></p>	<p>This project isn't particularly germane to my experience or course of study, but moving the compost is something I am passionate about implementing at NYU.</p>
<p><b>Integration with other responsibilities</b>  <i>Explain how you this project will integrate with your student and/or professional schedule.</i></p>	<p>I take many classes in the Silver Center and have an apartment near campus, so it shouldn't be a problem to find 15 minutes a few days a week to help.</p>

## Estimated Timeline

Use the following table to set forth a timeline for your project, keeping in mind that you will be asked to submit measurements regarding the performance of your project in your mid-term report.

Please add as many rows before and after the Mid-Term Report as you require, and be as detailed as possible.

Date	Task
February 2014	<b>Launch Meeting – Sign Grant Contract</b>
March 2014	Waste audit to establish baselines
April 2014	Begin compost collection
May 2014	End of semester - waste audit, pause composting operations during summer
June 2014	<b>Write Mid-Term Report</b> using findings from first audit
September 2014	Resume compost collection
November 2014	Final waste audit.
December 2014	<b>Project Completed, Final Report Due</b>

## Measurement of Sustainability Outcomes

All proposals must include a plan for measuring the success of addressing your chosen sustainability objective. Please consider metrics relating to resource usage, impact reduction, financial costs/savings and contribution to a campus culture of sustainability.

1. What specific problem(s) or issue(s) pertaining to sustainability does your project address?

- Air Pollution
- Biodiversity Conservation
- Climate Change (Global Warming)

- Community Development
- Conservation
- Cost-Savings
- Economic Development
- Environmental Health
- Environmental Justice
- Fair Wages
- Future Generations
- Habitat Preservation
- Hazardous and Toxic Substances
- Land Degradation/ Contamination
- Light/Noise Pollution
- Ozone Depletion
- Poverty
- Public Education
- Resource Depletion
- Resource Waste
- Water Pollution
- Wellness & Nutrition
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What data is available to explain the relevance of your project to these sustainability problem(s)?

Use of composted paper in agricultural fields and spread over landfills has been found to:

- **Reduce the amount of content going to landfills**, where space is extremely valuable.
  - Paper is considered to make up about 40% of the solid waste in landfills (US EPA, 2005).
  - Landfilling productive materials is inherently unsustainable because it constitutes an open loop system that consumes but does not replenish natural resources.
  - Conservation and biodiversity are at odds with new landfill creation; reducing the amount of space should reduce demand for new landfill creation.
- **Decrease the use of fossil fuels that accelerate climate change and reduce resource waste by recirculating paper's nutrient content** instead of relying on inorganic fertilizers in agricultural operations.
  - The Solid Waste Authority of Palm Beach County found that using 100% mixed paper compost increased bell pepper yields when accompanied by no to little fertilizer, suggesting that its mineral content "was partially sufficient to compensate for inorganic fertilizer." When using Mixed Paper in compost at a proportion of .36, the compost performed equally or over performed compared

to the paperless compost mix. (See “Mixed paper compost improves crop growth by Patrick Byers in BioCycle 36.10 October 1995)

- John Sawyer from Iowa State University found that natural gas accounted for 90% of the cost of producing the inorganic fertilizer used in Iowa; using less inorganic fertilizer can decrease natural gas use.
- **Decrease land degradation (and air/water pollution) caused by wind erosion**
  - Jimmy Apel, USDA Soil Conservation Service Coordinator believes that spreading a layer of mixed paper compost can decrease wind erosion and water contamination in cotton fields (see “Trash to Treasure – Compost pellets from waste paper in the American Society of Agricultural Engineers Journal August 1994, Issue #4).
  - Canadian government buildings at Parliament Hill compost paper towels and spread them over landfills to decrease wind erosion and prevent methane emissions. (see <http://greenhill-collineverte.parl.gc.ca/programs/compost-e.asp?>)
  - If paper towel composting at NYU is successful, we could explore options for compost donation, such as NYU’s new Urban Farm or local rooftop gardens.

3. Is there any data available pertaining specifically to NYU that can serve as a baseline for measuring your project’s performance? If not, please provide a measurement plan for gauging a baseline as part of your project.

NYU’s 2008 Waste Characterization Study Report found that 59.2% of the university’s landfilled waste is compostable (58.7% in purely academic buildings, like my proposed location). While slightly higher percentages of waste were found to be compostable in other area types (63.2% in Academic/Admin and 65.9% in Residence Halls with Dining Facilities), academic buildings are responsible for the highest percentage of total waste generation among the various building types by a wide margin – 38%, which is 24% higher than the next-leading building type. Given also that NYU has already implemented back of house composting in the majority of dining halls since that study, and is still piloting front of house composting in dining halls, this data supports our decision to choose the Silver Center for diverting compostable materials at NYU.

In order to obtain data that will accurately provide a baseline for the amount of compostable materials in the waste stream where we will run our pilot, we will take fifteen samples in the exact bathrooms where we’ll be composting, one on each day of the week for three weeks. This methodology draws on the Stern Centralized Recycling Pilot and Composting at Wagner Green Grants. Office of Sustainability staff indicated that they can help us work with NYU’s custodial service to measure the trash right before they empty it, so that we’re measuring the entire load’s worth. After we’re sure that everything is dry, we will measure the weight of the entire bin’s contents, and then weight of the compostable materials.

In FY 2009, NYU’s diversion rate was about 36%. The 2008 report indicated that 59.2% was compostable, during a time when composting was just beginning at NYU. These data indicate that increasing campus-wide composting has the potential to increase the university’s diversion rate upwards of 23.2% (though because of the high prevalence of recycling compared

to composting in 2008, the potential is likely far higher). Ultimately, the diversion rate of compostable materials in bathrooms in academic buildings can be assumed in 2008 and at this point in time to be 0% given that no composting or recycling programs have been implemented in these areas.

**4. How will you measure the performance of your project in terms of addressing the sustainability issues you identified in Question #1?**

To gauge operational improvement, we will measure our project’s diversion rates by weighing the compost bins per the schedule in our timeline – collecting one sample of fifteen consecutive weekdays beginning in May 2014 and a second fifteen consecutive weekday sample in November 2014 (to measure if the increased signage strategy affects the diversion rate).

Unfortunately, because we won’t compost the paper towels ourselves, we cannot make any full claims to the full life cycle benefit of our program, but we can estimate the landfill space saved, carbon content recirculated, and make inferences to the potential campus-wide diversion rate if the pilot were expanded to all NYU restrooms. Diversion rates will also demonstrate student participation in our program (engagement). As many students aren’t familiar with composting, this can get them accustomed to the practice and become a metric for student participation.

**Budget**

Please create a line-item budget for your project. Use prices from Staples for office supplies, [NYU Bookstores](#) for books and [NYU Computer Store](#) or [B&H Pro Photo, Video & Audio](#) for technology whenever possible. For all other items, first draw upon NYU’s list of [approved vendors](#); if you need goods not offered by these options, determine an appropriate vendor and list their price here. Refer to the Application Toolkit for a complete list of funding rules and restrictions.

<b>Goods/Services</b>	<b>Vendor/Payee</b>	<b>Cost (each)</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Four 23-gallon stainless steel receptacles for paper towels	Amazon.com	\$74.39	4	\$298
Large Composting Bin	Action Carting	\$143.22	1	\$143
Signage materials	NYU Copy Central	\$340 (estimate)	1	\$340

**Total Project Cost: \$781.00**

## Integration

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List all internal (NYU departments, offices, etc.) and external (government agencies, partner institutions, businesses, NGOs, etc.) permissions and collaborations necessary for realization of your project. Obtain and attach statements of approval or support whenever possible.

We have spoken with Action Carting (NYU's contracted composting service) about our plan, and have received positive feedback. We also have the logistical support of Dianne Anderson, who manages NYU's Recycling Services. Both parties' letters of support are attached.

## Institutionalization

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What future project phases can you envision after the Green Grant term?

NYU could choose to adopt this program at a larger scale, ranging from all restrooms in Silver to all across campus.

How would the project be able to sustain itself (in terms of funds, staff time, etc.) beyond the Green Grant term?

We have a team of three students who are sharing the legwork for this project. Instead of doing this, NYU could rely on new volunteers or FCM/CBS staff could move compost like other types of waste for disposal.

Composting small amounts is not cost-effective because the university pays the carting service a small fee per pound while hauling costs for landfilled waste do not scale; however, it could be extremely cost-effective to build a physical and cultural infrastructure for composting at NYU, because composting has the potential to reduce NYU's weekly trash hauls from 6 to 5, which may save over \$40,000 yearly.

How might successful completion of this project present new opportunities for sustainability at New York University? Could it be scaled up in the future? Will it answer a question or solve a problem that benefits others at NYU?

As students become accustomed to the concept of separating their organic waste for compost collection, the project could pave the way for composting to become normalized at NYU (in support of other on-campus composting efforts). In addition to illustrating the ability to divert more waste from landfills, paper could be collected and composted for use at NYU's Urban Farm or local rooftop gardens.

Do you know if a similar project has been done at NYU or other institutions?

If so, please include the name of the institution and any other relevant project information.

Since 2002, many Canadian government buildings at Parliament Hill have adopted bathroom paper towel composting with separate bins and San Francisco State University has begun pilot programs for this practice as well. We have reviewed the procedures and signage from the Canadian model and have incorporated them into the methodology herein.

In 1994, the USDA-ARS National Soil Dynamics Laboratory began to use paper pellets instead of fertilizer when growing cotton to reduce erosion, improve water quality, and recycle waste material.

## Next Steps

### Remaining Issues & Challenges:

NYU Recycling Services informed us that we will need to work with them to make signs that are consistent with their campus-wide signage. Because the signs need approvals before we can get an estimate from the printing service, we don't yet know how this will impact our budget – we have provided an estimate in our budget on this proposal based on the last time Recycling Services had similar signage made by NYU Copy Central.

### Questions for the Selection Committee:

1) Who in Silver or the College of Arts and Science needs to or should be contacted or made aware of this project?

## SUBMISSION & ATTACHMENTS

When you're ready to submit this proposal, email it to [green.grants@nyu.edu](mailto:green.grants@nyu.edu) along with any supplementary documents. It will be reviewed by the Green Grants Selection Committee per the schedule posted online at [nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply](http://nyu.edu/sustainability/ggapply).

*Please remember that **student project leaders are required to submit a resume or letter of reference that demonstrates their diligence, responsibility, and ability to carry out an unsupervised, year-long project. Staff and faculty project leaders are welcome, but not required, to submit letters of support or reference.***

***All applicants should also provide letters of support whenever third party approvals are vital to the manifestation of their proposed projects.***