



# Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program

## LARGE GRANT - CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION

For applicants requesting \$5,000-\$300,000. Application instructions can be found in the Large Grant Application Toolkit and application deadlines located on our website [www.wvu.edu/sustain/programs/saf/aoolv/](http://www.wvu.edu/sustain/programs/saf/aoolv/). Submit applications by delivering a hard copy AND emailing a scanned version (including signatures) to the SAF Grant Program Coordinator Nate White at Viking Commons Room 24. Email: [Johnathan.Rioelle@wwu.edu](mailto:Johnathan.Rioelle@wwu.edu).

1. **PROJECT TITLE:** Outback Experiential Learning Program (OELP) Non-Student Program Specialist (3-Year Pilot)

### 2. TEAM INFORMATION

Project Advisor Information (Faculty or Staff). Student proposals must include a staff or faculty advisor. The role of the advisor is to provide assistance and guidance to the proposal submitter during the development, implementation and post-implementation stages of the proposal process.

Project Lead: There must be at least one team leader assigned to the project.

Name	Department/School	Position	Email
<i>Project Advisor:</i>	Students also provide major/minor	Faculty/staff/ student. Students provide expected quarter/year of graduation	
	<b>Jack Herring</b>	<b>Dean of Fairhaven College</b>	<a href="mailto:Jack.Herring@wwu.edu">Jack.Herring@wwu.edu</a>
<i>Project Lead:</i>	<b>Kamea Black</b>	<b>AS Outback Student Coordinator Fairhaven Student Grad Spring 2017</b>	<a href="mailto:BlackK3@wwu.edu">BlackK3@wwu.edu</a>
<i>Project Lead II:</i>	<b>Paul Kearsley</b>	<b>Graduate Student Environmental Ed Grad Spring 2017 Adjunct Faculty CFP, CSE, Huxley</b>	<a href="mailto:Paul.Kearsley@wwu.edu">Paul.Kearsley@wwu.edu</a>
	<b>John Tuxill</b>	<b>Fairhaven Faculty Outback Advisor</b>	<a href="mailto:John.Tuxill@wwu.edu">John.Tuxill@wwu.edu</a>
<b>Transition Team</b>	<b>Summer 2017</b>		
<i>Transition Project Lead</i>	<b>Maddie Price</b>	<b>AS Outback Assistant Coordinator Fairhaven Student Grad Spring 2019</b>	<a href="mailto:PriceM26@wwu.edu">PriceM26@wwu.edu</a>

\* Teams may have two to four people.

### 3. PROJECT DETAILS

a. Describe your proposed project.

Based on the recommendations set forth in previous assessments of the Outback Experiential Learning Program, as well as the observed success of other university farms, we are proposing **the creation of a 3-year Pilot of a half-time, non-student Program Specialist position for the Outback.** The specialist designation is in anticipation of a diverse and unique set of responsibilities, including but not limited to repairing irrigation systems, diagnosing plant pathologies, collaborating with faculty and community partners and working with a team of 8-12 student employees. This three-year study would serve as a proof of concept for the long-term existence of this position.

Year One:

- Orient within the program and refine job responsibilities.
- Establish responsibility delineation between this position and student coordinators.
- Establish responsibility delineation between this position and student employees as well as interns.
- Establish, and maintain, congruent farm hours with student staff.
- Create and enforce worker and volunteer safety procedures.
- Create and enforce data collection procedures.
- Establish, and maintain, potential savings account for large projects
- Establish, and maintain, long-term relationships with westerns academic programs (extracurricular activities to remain under the guidance of student coordinators).
  - Specific attention to be paid to optimizing STEM opportunities.
- Author 3-year Strategic Plan (a full year past the term of this pilot).
  - Specific attention to be paid to student impact and the program's economic sustainability.
- Establish, and maintain, an infrastructure maintenance calendar.
- Establish, and maintain, a crop rotation and soil amendment calendar.
- Establish, and maintain, perennial crop and fruit tree care calendar.

Year Two:

- Assist in training new student coordinators.
- Establish, and maintain, congruent farm hours with new student staff.
- Analyze end of year data.
- Adjust plans authored in year one accordingly.

- Implement goals set forth In Strategic Plan
- Publish first Annual Report.
- Maintain and expand upon academic relationships.
- Continue to enforce established data collection, Infrastructure maintenance, worker safety and soil stewardship procedures.

Year Three:

- Assist In training new student coordinators.
- Establish, and maintain, congruent farm hours with new student staff.
- Analyze end of year data.
- Publish second annual report.
- Analyze current status of goals In Strategic Plan
- Adjust plans accordingly.
- Assess programmatic Impact of position.
- Draft third annual report before completion of this study.

Once the viability for a long-term existence of this position Is proven:

- Operationalize long-term funding.
- Hire for position.

At the conclusion of year three, this project will be complete.

b. Describe the purpose of your proposal.

The proposed Program Manager position will facilitate the mid- and long-term development of the Outback Experiential Learning Program (*OELP*) Into an Invaluable resource for Western Washington University (*WWU*).

Long-term continuity Is a crucial component for any campus garden (*Jordan 2005, Keeler 2011, Sayre 2011, Perez 2010*). Programs designed as exclusively student-run are severely limited by the rapid turnover of key personnel. Adding additional student positions Increases capacity, to a degree, but does not contribute to long-term continuity In program and site development.

With programs of this nature, there comes a point In development when the need for organizational maturation supplants the Intrinsic value of student direction. The *OELP* has reached this point. Indeed, the formation of a non-student program specialist has been on the table for nearly 10 years (*Bolton 2014, Spring 2010, Tuxill 2013, Ventres-Pake 2012*).

Since merging with the AS, the *OELP* has undergone two major assessments, occurring In 2010 and 2014. These processes analyzed the goals of the *OELP*, and the efficacy of Its existing programming. One recommendation In particular arose from both assessments; the need to Implement a non-student supervisor position that will oversee and support existing student employees.

Now, the OELP is presented with a unique opportunity. In 2007, the program was adopted by the Associated Students and has seen significant development for the site and program. Along with growing societal interests in sustainable food production, students are increasingly interested in hands-on experiential education as it relates to human-scale sustainable systems (*Sayre 2011, Perez 2010*). In addition, interdisciplinary studies and systems thinking are emerging as key components of sustainability studies (*sustain.wvu.edu*).

The SAF Large-Grant is an appropriate source for funding the initial 3-year pilot for a number of reasons. This non-student position will dramatically improve the performance of an existing campus sustainability resource, promoting a broader reach for the OELP as well as deeper, more sophisticated connections between students and the space. The OELP is a small scale demonstration site and with some facilitation it could host a variety of sustainability projects both large and small. These opportunities would reach many students as well as the Bellingham community.

This SAF proposal provides evidence-based justifications for the creation and implementation of a pilot for a non-student specialist position for the farm.

- c. Provide a rough budget estimate. An estimated range is acceptable here. Provide the source documentation of how you came up with this estimate.

**Summary- \$40,447** per year, for a **3** year pilot; **\$121,341** total

**Human Resources:** .5 FTE Classified Staff (*Program Specialist A: ~\$40,000 cost per year (salary, benefits & payroll burden)*)

The position is proposed as a Classified Program Specialist A. (The title and salary are based on various postings on the WWU Novus HR website)

The Outback Manager plans and implements most functions required by the program and works collaboratively with existing student positions with minimal direction or oversight. The primary purpose of this position is to achieve the goals and objectives of the OELP as they affect Western Washington University.

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:** \$2,400 Discretionary Budget (~\$200 per month) Truck Access (~\$1500 per year, TBD)

The Outback currently has access to a ~\$5,000 annual budget. This is often sufficient for basic site operations and would not change as a result of this grant. However, this money would be the responsibility of the AS Student Positions.

Site operations, installations, maintenance, tool upkeep, bulk materials, consumables etc. are all critical for smooth operation of a site of this nature. Therefore a small discretionary budget for the Specialist Position would be instrumental for their capacity to work effectively. Any additional Capital developments and the associated costs would be funded through means beyond this proposal, such as other other funding streams or appeals to Fairhaven College.

d. How does your proposal align with the Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program mission?

Students connect with the Outback through broad and diverse paths. Many students simply walk through the site on their commute to main campus. Others stay to read on a swing, lounge in the Amphitheatre or hang out with the chickens. More involved experiences are facilitated through the Outback Work Parties which happen up to three times weekly and host between 6-20 students.

LEAD (Learning, Environment, Action & Discovery) is a small student program that also runs restoration focused work parties in the space, providing service learning extra credit for ENVS 202, a course of +200 students. There are, generally 6-10 student employees and a range of other courses bringing students into the site.

It is difficult to quantify exactly how many students this program and position reach on an annual basis but an earlier assessment of the Outback counted nearly 3,000 students per year. This is approximately 20% of the student population at WWU.

- Increase Student Involvement and Education

- Increases the efficacy of an already existing campus resource.
- Facilitates student relationships with a student-run space.
- Supports existing student positions focused on Sustainable Land-use.
- Develops academic relationships/projects within the space.
- Facilitates demonstration of sustainable living & land-use practices.

- Reduce the University's Environmental Impact

- Facilitates the ongoing restoration of the only functional wetland on campus.
- Develops habitat throughout the Outback for birds, insects and amphibians.
- Increases biodiversity via the Outback's perennial plant collection.
- Builds topsoil through on-site composting of crop residues, green manures.
- Develops and maintains a genetic repository of food producing perennial vegetables, fruit trees, berry bushes etc.
- Reduces food waste through hot composting systems.
- Repurposing campus waste into functional infrastructure.

- Create an Aware & Engaged Campus Community

- Prioritizes place-based/experiential education.

- Presents a functional model of sustainable land-use.
- Demonstrates appropriate/sustainable technologies for WWU and Bellingham.
- Hosts interpretive tours of the site to students, guests and visitors.

e. Does your project tie into any broader campus sustainability goals or initiatives? If yes, please describe how.

The AS Outback OELP has reached a bottleneck in its capacity to serve Western Washington University and its sustainability initiatives. This position would alleviate unrealistic responsibilities and time-restraints on the AS Student Coordinators.

A non-student specialist position would have the capacity to develop the site and associated programming while allowing student leadership to focus on farm work and the student-to-student relationships that are so valuable to the program.

This proposal would better position the Outback as a resource for broader campus sustainability goals and initiatives by emulating the management structures of other successful campus farm programs across the country (*including programs not housed within agricultural schools*). The implementation of the recommended pilot position outlined in this proposal would strategically position the farm to be a leader in the growing network of campus farms.

#### 4. CASESTUDIES

##### **UW Farm:** *University of Washington*

The recent success of the UW Farm in Seattle can be directly linked to the addition of a non-student supervisor which occurred in the summer of 2013. Having consistent management has resulted in the UW Farm being more visible, as well as accessible to their campus community. With the creation of an on campus farm stand, vegetable subscription service, and farm to table events, more student (*as well as faculty & staff*) use the space as a resource.

The first annual report of the farm was published in 2014. In this report the UW Farm recorded a 50% increase in sales to their dining halls over 2013, from ~\$5,500 to ~\$17,000. This growth continued through 2015, when the farm saw sales of ~\$23,000, and while the 2016 report has not been published, interviews estimate sales close to \$50,000 this past year.

In addition to the program becoming more financially stable under the guidance of a non-student manager, the UW Farm has seen an increase in its ability to form academic relationships across departments. This has manifested in the form of more classes utilizing the space for meetings as well as independent study projects.

*\*For more detailed information, the UW farm annual reports, interview transcripts, and job descriptions can be provided upon request.*

### **Fields of Learning (Sayre & Clark, 2011)**

Though not a direct case study, Fields of Learning (Sayre & Clark), published in 2011, is an effort to contextualize the Student Farm movement in American Higher Education. The collection represents evaluations of 15 campus farms from across North America. The Outback Farm fits into this movement of ~100 unique student farms in higher-ed institutions and is indeed mentioned in the book.

These farms represent an invaluable resource for profound, place-based, interdisciplinary education. Sayre herself explains, "The transition from theory into practice is when the most compelling forms of learning take place." (Sayre 2011)

In their assessment of campus farms, the authors outline a range of themes that provide both challenges and opportunities to programs of this nature. A primary concern is the difference between student versus faculty/staff management. A common pattern in the development of these sites and programs is the transition from chaotic student-led development period into a mature, fixed form of staff management. The OELP has been in this this liminal space for nearly ten years. As mentioned above, students and administration alike have made a range of efforts to transition from a student-led program. The TAP analysis conducted by the AS in 2010, an appeal to the AS by the Outback Coordinator in 2012, a SPAC assessment by the AS in 2014 have all surmised that the most critical need for the OELP is long-term staff involvement (Bolton 2014, Spring 2010, Tuxill 2013, Ventres-Pake 2012). In a series of interviews with the primary administrative OELP stakeholders conducted in the fall of 2016, all of the interviewed parties concurred that a staff position is critical in order to move the program beyond its current status.

Fields of Learning offers a range of different anecdotal insights as to the development and management of place-based, experiential learning programs. The conclusion of the book provides a set of 10 steps along the way to the development of a robust and meaningful academic resource. These ten steps provide the framework for the methods of this proposal. Some of them have already been accomplished (Step 3. "Hunt for Land", Step 4. "Know the Context"). Others are explicitly addressed (Step 2. Identify allies, Step 5. Seek funding, Step 11. Cultivate partners and supporters beyond campus).

*\*More case studies to be provided within the large grant application, or by request.*

## **5. PROJECT TEAM, PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS**

a. Using the table below describe how each of your team members can contribute to the success of this project

**Name**                      **Relevant experience or knowledge for this project. Also detail the roles and responsibilities of each project partner.**

<i>Project Advisor: Jack Herring</i>	As the Dean of Fairhaven College, Jack Herring will serve as an advisor to this grant team. Herring's position gives him a unique ability to advise the team on university policies and standards. Additionally, he has agreed to take ownership of this position by housing it at Fairhaven should it be funded. As Herring will ultimately supervise the proposed position, it is paramount that he is included throughout the grant and position creation process.
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This proposal has two project leads: Kamea Black & Paul Kearsley.

Each bring to the table different areas of experience in working with the Outback, as well as other campus farms or urban garden projects. Additionally, they have each done vast amounts of independent research under the guidance of their academic pursuits.

*Project Lead I*

*Kamea Black*

Black has been on the coordination team of the Outback Farm for the last 2.5 years. No one is more qualified to speak to the challenges and glories of being a student coordinator of the Outback. During her term Black headed the project of rewriting the job descriptions of every student employee involved. This means she is fully aware of the exact parameters of those positions and how a non-student supervisor could support these students while maintaining their autonomy. Whatsmore, Black has dedicated extensive time into investigating various campus farm and garden programs around the country (*nearly all of which have non-student management*) and can offer case studies as well as contact information to garden leaders for further investigation.

Black's responsibility to this project is to co-author requested documents (*including the final proposal*), call on contacts for interviews as needed, and to serve as a resource to the SAF committee as they consider this project. Upon graduation on June 10th, Black will select a student to take her place as co-lead (Anna Kemper), and step into a community advisory role for the technical development committee.

*Project Lead II*

*Paul Kearsley*

Kearsley is a Master's candidate in Fluxley's Environmental Education program and an NTT professor through Fluxley College, the College of Fine & Performing Arts and the College of Science and Engineering. Flis Outback specific courses have resulted in multiple successful infrastructure projects, that increased the accessibility of the gardens. Moreover, these courses cultivated significant student loyalty to the space. This ultimately resulted in students creating a club based off the values he instilled in them called *The Permacorps*. While many professors have taught classes in the Outback, Kearsley has a unique ability to plug students into long-term relationships and encourage their continued work in the space, well past the end of the quarter. This makes him extremely qualified to speak to the potential of student development that can occur in the gardens, provided effective facilitation. Additionally, Kearsley has made the development of this project the very essence of his graduate studies and can provide the SAF committee with extensive research results that point to the necessity of this position.

Kearsley's responsibility to this project is to co-author requested documents (*including the final proposal*), provide research results, and to serve as a resource to the SAF committee as they consider this project. Upon graduation on June 10th, Kearsley will select a student to take his place as co-lead (Maddie Price), and step into a community advisory role for the technical development committee.

**John Tuxill**

Tuxill is a professor in Fairhaven College, and the site advisor the the Outback Farm. As an advisor to the space he has worked with multiple student coordinators. This makes him very qualified to provide the team with information on the effects of student turnover as well as the professional development of previous students in these leadership roles. Additionally, Tuxill has been at the forefront off trying to create a non-student position for the Outback over the last few years.

Tuxill's responsibility to this project is to read drafts of the final proposal, provide the team



with institutional memory, and to serve as a resource to the SAF committee as they consider this project.

**Stakeholder/Project Owner**

**Describe how each listed stakeholder/project owner will be impacted by or involved in this project. Will their permission be required for your project to move forward?**

*Fairhaven College*

Fairhaven college currently manages and develops the physical site of the OELP. They are a primary stakeholder and would greatly benefit from the improvements associated with a non-student position. Increasing academic participation, extracurricular participation and improved "curb-appeal" would all serve Fairhaven College well.

Also, Jack Herring, the Dean of Fairhaven, has tentatively agreed to house the position within the college. Permission from Fairhaven will be necessary.

*The Associated Students*

The AS currently manages any extracurricular programming offered through the Outback. This includes the 3 Coordinator Positions, Outback events, workshops, etc. Given the involved relationship between a non-student Program Specialist and the AS funded student positions, collaboration with the AS will be critical for a successful pilot.

*Additional Community Effects.*

The Outback serves a diverse community in a number of ways. The following is a rough list of additional partners, both historic and current, who stand to benefit from the implementation of an on-going professional site representative/liaison:

Huxley, The Outback Community Gardeners, The LEAD Program, The Biology Department, The WWU Child Development Center, WWU Facilities, WWU Dining, Woodring, WWU Residences, WWU Environmental Health & Safety, The Bellingham Food Bank, The City of Bellingham, Bellingham Parks Department, Common Threads Farm & School Garden Collective, Cloud Mountain Education Center, Sustainable Connections etc.



## **Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program**

### **LARGE GRANT - CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION**

#### **Applicant Team/Advisor Partnership Agreement**

An Applicant Team / Advisor partnership is a relationship of substance between the project applicant(s) and a faculty or staff advisor involving shared responsibilities and mentoring in undertaking the project funded by the SAF Grant Program. To ensure that the project runs smoothly and achieves its objectives, the SAF Committee requires project applicants and the faculty/staff advisor to demonstrate their commitment to the project by acknowledging the principles of good partnership practice set out below and identifying the nature and role of the partners.

#### **Principles of Good Partnership Practice**

1. Project partners must have read the Rules of Operation for the SAF Program (found on this webpage: [www.edu/sustain/programs/saf/about/](http://www.edu/sustain/programs/saf/about/)), reviewed the Large Grant Application Toolkit, and understand what their role in the project will be before signing the partnership statement.
2. The project lead must consult with the partners regularly and keep them fully informed of the progress of the project.
3. Substantial changes to the project should be agreed upon by the partners before being submitted to the SAF Committee. Where no such agreement can be reached, the applicant must indicate this when submitting changes for approval.
4. The partners authorize the project lead to sign the proposal application and represent them in all dealings concerning the project's development, review, and implementation.
5. Project partners must have read the project proposal before signing the completed application.
6. All partners must receive copies of any report submitted to the SAF Committee.
7. All project partners agree to be present during the team's presentation to the SAF Committee in case input is needed or requested.
8. If the grant is awarded, partners shall take part in the development, implementation and review of the project under clearly identified roles and responsibilities.

We will comply with the principles of good partnership practice during the development, implementation, and review of this project.

Project Lead Name	Project Lead Signature	Date
Team Member Name	Team Member Signature	Date
Team Member Name	Team Member Signature	Date
Team Member Name	Team Member Signature	Date
Faculty/Staff Advisor Name	Faculty/Staff Advisor Signature	Date

## Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program

### LARGE GRANT - CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION

**Once your conceptual project proposal is complete, you must print and submit a final copy with hand-written signatures.**

**PROJECT TITLE:**

**Project Lead Name (print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Lead's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*By signing this document you agree that all information is true to the best of your knowledge. You also agree that this information may be shared with the public and members of the Sustainable Action Fund Committee.*

**Staff/Faculty Advisor's Name (print):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Staff/Faculty Advisor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*By signing this document you agree that all information is true to the best of your knowledge.*

**Comments:**

After completing the final draft of your Conceptual Application proposal, please set an appointment with the Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program Coordinator to have your proposal reviewed and signed.

**Sustainable Action Fund Grant Program Coordinator, Nate White**

Viking Commons, Room 24

Available by appointment

Email: [Johnathan.Ricoelle\(5\)wwwu.edu](mailto:Johnathan.Ricoelle(5)wwwu.edu)

Phone: (360)650-4501

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*This signature does NOT indicate that you have received funding, but it does verify that you have fulfilled all the requirements and have successfully submitted a completed Project Proposal by the deadline.*

**Comments:**