

## Environmental Impact Challenge Grant

Sponsored by the Political Science Department, the Straayer Center for Public Service Leadership, and the Center for Public Deliberation at Colorado State University

**Overview:** This project will partner middle school and high school students in Poudre School District with Colorado State University students enrolled in Public Achievement, a proven civic engagement program operating in classrooms around the country. These teams will work together to develop small dollar grant proposals (less than \$5,000) designed to have a direct impact on either reducing waste or greenhouse gas emissions in their communities. CSU and PSD students will meet approximately once every two weeks over the 2018-2019 school year, in order to develop a project proposal, navigate existent policies and procedures related to the proposed project, and, if selected for funding, implement their project.

### Project Timeline

September 19, 2018	Expressions of interest from teachers or club advisors due.
Week of October 1, 2018	CSU students begin meeting with PSD classes and clubs
December 21, 2018	Draft proposals submitted for feedback
January 31, 2018	Final proposals due
February 15, 2018	Winners selected
February 15 – May 31, 2019	Project implementation

### Project Guidelines

#### Who is eligible?

Proposals will only be selected from middle school or high school classes, clubs, or extended learning communities in Poudre School District. Teachers or advisors should first submit an expression of interest [via link to application] that includes the teacher or advisor's name, a brief description of the classroom or club, the estimated number of students in the classroom or club, and potential times and locations for meetings. From interested applicants, between three and six classes, clubs, and/or extended learning communities will be selected to participate. The CSU public achievement team will work with selected teachers and advisors to identify the best times for meetings.

#### What types of projects are we looking for?

The CAP Challenge Grant offers a limited amount of funds for projects that aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions or waste in Fort Collins or the surrounding community. Teams of students can implement the project in their school, neighborhood, or any other community or organization of which they are a part. Successful proposals may require creating partnerships with other local organizations or businesses.

Although the Challenge Grant is open to different ideas, we are particularly looking for projects that address the following needs:

### **Transportation (~26% of greenhouse gas emissions)**

*Projects that encourage people to walk, bike, carpool, or take public transportation more often.*

Here are a few ideas to get you thinking about how you might address this issue:

- Can you think of ways to lighten the load for trips where people will be hauling bulky or heavy objects?
- Can you think of ways to help get people to or from public transport stations?
- Is there a particular intersection near a school or park that needs simple upgrades that would make walking or biking safer?
- Can you buy bike repair equipment for a community organization or a school club to help community members keep their bikes in working condition?
- Can you encourage group walks, bikes, or carpools to points of public transport to help people more easily access public transportation?
- Is there an area of your neighborhood that is particularly difficult to walk or bike through? Is there a way to improve that section for a relatively low cost?
- Can you implement a marketing or education program that encourages students to walk, bike, or take public transport instead of driving to school?

### **Waste Reduction (~4% of total greenhouse gas emissions)**

*Projects that encourage waste reduction.*

Here are a few ideas to get you thinking about how you might address this issue:

- Can you facilitate a partnership between a business or organization and a community garden to transform food or yard waste into compost?
- Is there a way that you can reduce waste in your school, such as distributing reusable water bottles or straws?
- Can you identify ways to reduce food waste at home or at school?
- Can you help create a community composting pile so that neighbors contribute to and keep up a collective compost bin?
- Can you implement a campaign in your school to encourage people to bring food in reusable containers rather than disposable ones?
- Can you identify ways to divert non-recyclables from the recycling bins?
- Could you develop a training program for elementary or middle school students in what can and cannot be recycled or in reducing waste?
- Can you develop a program designed for students to teach their families about clean recycling or waste reduction?

### **Energy Use (roughly 70% of greenhouse gas emissions)**

*Projects that encourage people to reduce their energy use.*

Here are a few ideas to get you thinking about how you might address this issue:

- Can you come up with education campaigns to increase energy efficiency in your neighborhood?
- Can you develop education materials to help students encourage their families to reduce energy consumption?
- Are there neighborhood associations that you could partner with to create incentives for homeowners to receive energy efficiency audits?
- Is there a particular community or building that you could make simple upgrades to, like adding insulation around doorways or providing or installing LED light bulbs?
- Can you organize a volunteer day to help change out light bulbs for those who are physically impaired?
- Can you offer funding for students or low income community members to engage in training related to things like home energy efficiency audits or insulation installation so that they can apply for environmentally-friendly jobs?

### What should you consider when choosing potential projects?

- **Impact:** Our first priority in considering potential projects will be their impact on greenhouse gas emissions or waste reduction. How will your project reduce emissions and/or improve the local environment? Will the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions be permanent or temporary? What members or parts of the community will be impacted? We are particularly interested in projects that can assist underprivileged or hard to reach communities.
- **Feasibility:** Is this project realistic? Can it be implemented in a relatively short timeline? Can it be implemented with relatively low cost? Is this something that you as students could implement or would you need someone else to help or approve the implementation? Can you develop the partnerships with individuals or organizations that you would need to implement the project?
- **Cost:** Grants will range from a few hundred to a few thousand dollars. How much will it cost to actually implement the project? What will materials cost? What will labor cost? Will there be long-term costs such as care or upkeep that need to be considered and included? We are also interested in projects that will reduce future costs for individuals, organizations, or institutions. Will your project reduce energy costs or other types of cost?
- **Timeline:** We will favor projects that can be implemented by the end of May 2019. Can you realistically implement the project by then? Can you obtain the resources and permissions needed in that timeframe? Will your project be a singular implementation or will it require several stages to implement? If your project will take longer to implement, will students, teachers, administrators, or staff members be willing to see the project through after some students have graduated or moved on to different classes?
- **Upkeep:** We will give priority to those projects which require a one-time implementation and will not need continual or regular upkeep. Will the project need continual care? If so, who will provide that care? How often will it be needed? What will be the scope of maintenance?
- **Partnerships:** We encourage applicants to create partnerships with organizations, businesses, or community members that could assist in the implementation of the project. Are there any partnerships that might help to increase the impact of your project? Can you find any partners who could provide matching funds to expand the impact or reach of your project?
- **Replicability:** We encourage projects that may be replicable in other locations or situations. If your project is successful, can it be implemented elsewhere? Would replication be cost effective? Could you utilize similar resources to implement the project in multiple locations?

### What types of projects won't work?

We're excited to hear about all of your ideas, but we want to make sure you're introducing projects that are realistic to implement within the confines of this grant program. Here are a few things to avoid:

- **Projects that are very expensive:** We'll be able to fund a maximum of \$5,000 per project, so things like installing solar panels or extending the MAX routes are probably unrealistic. Similarly, projects that will require continual upkeep at the expense of the city or school, such as hiring a crossing guard at an intersection or supplying reusable water bottles to all incoming freshman every year are probably outside the scope of what we can fund.
- **Projects that are difficult to implement on your own:** We encourage you to find partnerships that can help you implement your project, but you should be realistic about the scope and type of work that you can expect. Creating a new sidewalk in a neighborhood or changing the buying practices in your school cafeteria are likely going to be difficult to implement within the timeframe or without much larger institutional support.