

TRU Sustainability Grant Fund

Terms of Reference (2023-2024)



MISSION

The TRU Sustainability Grant Fund was created with the goal to advance sustainability at Thompson Rivers University. Grants are awarded to improve the university's operational environmental performance, foster sustainability literacy and campus community engagement, advance applied research, and/or demonstrate the viability of sustainability technologies.

Proposed projects must support the goals and objectives outlined in TRU's Environmental Policy and must be consistent with the major planning documents of the university including the Campus Master Plan, the Strategic Plan, The Academic Plan and the TRU Campus Strategic Sustainability Plan. The fund accepts small or large project proposals from TRU students, staff, and faculty. Approximately \$100,000 will be available for each application intake, and there will be one intake each year. In addition, any unused funds from previous years will also be available.

The Fund will be reviewed after the fifth year of operation (2018-2019) to look at issues including funding take-up and consistency with TRU priorities.

For those specifically interested in funds to support sustainability research there are two TRU Sustainability Research Grants; one for faculty and one for students. For each of these there are two individual grants each worth \$5000. For details, please visit: <https://www.tru.ca/sustainability/get-involved/sustainability-research-grants-for-faculty-and-students.html>

GENERAL INFORMATION

Types of projects funded

Operations

Projects that pilot innovative ways to improve campus operations. Anything from food services to transportation is eligible. Energy and resource related projects are generally only funded through the Sustainability Revolving fund; however projects that do not meet the Sustainability Revolving Fund criteria may be eligible to apply through the Sustainability Grant Fund in exceptional circumstances.

Research & Design

Applied research or design that creates new sustainability opportunities. These projects must be integrated with the university campus through use of TRU as a living lab for data collection, or by producing deliverables with the potential to create operational, academic, or cultural change at TRU.

Behaviour Change & Education

Activities that foster a campus culture of sustainability, such as efforts to improve sustainability literacy, stimulate behaviour change, and activism projects.

The committee will allocate funds to projects that include but are not limited to:

- Decreasing TRU's carbon emissions
- Increasing indoor and/or outdoor water efficiency
- Improving sustainability-based transportation options on campus
- Reducing the amount of waste generated
- Education, research, and outreach initiatives directly related to campus sustainability

- Campus awareness of sustainability issues
- Sustainability-related events

PROJECT GUIDELINES

- Projects must address environmental, social or economic sustainability at TRU.
- All funded projects will be required to prepare a mid-point progress report (max of 300 words; six weeks after the start of the project), as well as a final project report max 600 words and presentation (max 5 minutes) within 3 months of completion.
 - Also, 10% of the value of the grant will be withheld until the final project report is submitted.
- Projects will normally be implemented and completed within 12 months of project funding.
- Projects must be stand-alone projects. This fund provides one-time funding for start-up pilot projects and does not cover continuing operational expenses.
- Projects must be discussed with the relevant administration or academic unit responsible for the area prior to submission.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- Address the themes and goals in TRU's planning documents: the Strategic Plan, the Academic Plan, the Campus Master Plan or the TRU Campus Strategic Sustainability Plan.
- Have broad campus impact.
- Use leveraged funds or matching funds.
- Are effective in educating or changing behaviour beyond the project itself.
- Are interdisciplinary and engage multiple stakeholders across the TRU community.

ELIGIBILITY

- **Each project must have at least one student, one faculty member, and one staff member.** Where it is a community linkage project, the application should also include a member of the broader community.
- Recipients are ineligible to apply again with other projects until they have successfully closed their previous project by submitting final reports and any other applicable materials.
- There is no limit on the number of proposals that may be submitted by one applicant, however only one project grant will be awarded per applicant.
- Previously funded projects cannot apply for funding again. The purpose of this fund is to be one-time funding to help projects off the ground and to provide funds for a pilot project that would otherwise not be funded.
- Members of the selection committee cannot apply for funding or be on a project team of a new proposal while they are serving as a committee member.

DATES FOR APPLICATION PROCESS & GRANT WRITING WORKSHOPS

The application process consists of a pre-proposal, optional grant-writing workshop, proposal, and selection stage. Applications will be accepted once yearly. Application intake deadlines are as follows:

- November 13, 2023 - Pre-Proposals due (500 words)
 - returned with comments to applicants: November 21
- November 21& 22, 2023 – Grant Writing Workshop from 4 to 5 PM in the TRUSU Red Room.
 - The workshops are identical in content, so attendees can come to either one.
 - This is an optional workshop open to anyone. It's designed for those with little or no experience in writing grants.

- Other workshops can be arranged upon request, so please contact the Sustainability Office at sustain@tru.ca if you can't make the ones on Nov 21 or 22.
- February 12, 2024 – Full Proposals due
 - this includes an original 90 to 120 second YouTube video about the project
- March 7, 2024 – Proponents notified of results
- March 7, 2025 – Awarded funds must be spent (within 12 months of being awarded)

Projects can also be reviewed & accepted on an as-needed basis as determined by the Manager of Sustainability Programs.

Pre-Proposals and Proposals can be submitted in one of the following three ways:

Email: sustain@tru.ca

Mail to: Thompson Rivers University
Sustainability Office
800 TRU Way Kamloops, BC V2C 0C8

Drop off: TRU Sustainability Office. Located in the People & Culture building (formerly Human Resources; go to the orange door facing the Gym)

1) Pre-Proposal

Prior to submitting a full project proposal, a pre-proposal is submitted that provides a general idea of the project. This allows the committee to provide the applicant with initial comments and questions to ensure application success. Clear and complete pre-proposals will include the following information in 500 words or less:

- Project Description
- Groups Involved
- Project Goals
- Total Cost (estimates are acceptable)
- Educational Opportunities
- Project Duration
- Linkage to campus planning documents or other campus initiatives

2) Proposal

Complete the application form. The application form covers the following areas:

Project Description	Include an abstract that gives a brief yet comprehensive summary of the project in less than 500 words.
People	Identify all project members, their roles, contact information, and relevant experience.
Partnerships	Identify all potential partnerships or collaborations and include letters of support to demonstrate all partners' commitment to your project.
Student Engagement	Describe how your project will involve and/or benefit students.
Project Timeline	List anticipated project start and completion dates, order tasks and milestones chronologically, and estimate how long each task will require for completion.

Impacts	Outline the desired social, ecological, or economic impacts. Clearly demonstrate how you will measure the results of the project, either quantitatively or qualitatively.
Permissions	Include a letter of support from affiliated departments or organizations whenever the success of your project is contingent on permission.
Budget and Purchasing	Prepare a detailed budget using the Excel document <i>TRU Sustainability Grant Fund Budget Template</i> . If it is a continuing project, describe your strategy for financially supporting the project long-term. Itemize all sources of matching funding (including in-kind donations) in support of the proposed project. Include funding that has been applied for but not yet awarded. All purchasing of goods and/or services for a project must follow the guidelines provided in the document <i>TRU Sustainability Grant Fund Purchasing Guideline</i> . Both of these documents are on the website: http://www.tru.ca/sustain/initiatives/Funds.html

3) Selection

Selection of the projects will be done by the Review Committee, membership of which is comprised of the following nine people:

Chair: Manager, Sustainability Office

Members:

- Two Faculty members appointed by the TRU Environmental Advisory Committee
- Two Staff members appointed by the Manager, Sustainability Office
- Two students appointed by TRU Student Union.
- One Facilities Services staff member appointed by the AVP of Ancillary Services, Sustainability and Capital Projects
- TRU Energy Manager

Administrative Support: Sustainability Office

Five Selection Criteria

Selection will be made by the Review Committee. The committee will identify successful projects based on the total score of the following five Selection Criteria. Each of the five criteria will be scored out of the amounts shown under Criteria Weighting, and then given a final score out of 100.

Five Selection Criteria	Description of Criteria	Criteria Weighting
<i>Project Description and Articulation of Benefits</i>	The proposal demonstrates meaningful social, ecological, and/or economic sustainability benefits to TRU	25
<i>People, Partnerships, and Performance Measurement</i>	The proposal includes a sound plan for measuring the project's performance in relation to these social, economic, and/or ecological benefits	15
<i>Level of Impact</i>	The impact measurement must include: - the level of student involvement in the project; - a description of how the project advances TRU's Strategic Planning documents; and - education or outreach opportunities with the project	25

<i>Project Feasibility</i>	Project feasibility is based on the following criteria: - whether the applicant and project team have the knowledge, skills, time, and initiative to carry out this project; - the proposal is cost effective; - the proposal includes a full and reasonable description of the budget; and - the project size, implementation time, and target audience is reasonable	20
<i>Planning</i>	Where formal permission is required, preliminary discussions have been held with all relevant departments/organizations. Proposal includes a plan for sustained funding if additional or annual operational funding will be required.	15
		Total out of 100

Decision Making

Funding decisions will be made by the Manager of Sustainability Office following receipt of the recommendations of the Review Committee.

Terms of Office for the Review Committee

1 year term, renewable for students. All other members will serve two year renewable terms with the exception of the Energy Manager which is an ex-officio appointment. However, initially all non-student appointments will be for a one year term to provide for longer term continuity by having only half of the terms ending in one year.

Recommendations

Projects will be recommended for funding on the basis of consensus decisions of the committee.

Quorum

A quorum of 50% plus one member must be present for an official meeting to take place. If there is a second meeting without a quorum the members present will be deemed to constitute a quorum.

Meetings

Meetings will normally occur following the February intake each year at the call of the Chair. The number of meetings required will be related to the number and complexity of proposals being considered and whether or not additional information is requested from applicants.

Records and Reports

The Review Committee must keep the following on record:

- Minutes of all meetings, the names of those present and the proceedings.
- Adequate and correct books and records of account, including amount of assets, receipts, disbursements, gains, and losses.
- Record of projects selected each year and the funds allocated to each project.

MEDIA CONTACT/RELEASES

Any media activity related to proposals from proponents must be coordinated through and led by the Sustainability Office. This would include news releases, events or interviews. Please email sustain@tru.ca

ADDITIONAL NOTES

In the event of a lack of suitable applications, the Sustainability Office will identify projects that meet the criteria previously outlined.