

## The SGA Green Grant 2023-2024

### **Context**

The Student Government Association's (SGA) Sustainability Commission acts as the senior advisor to the SGA in all matters of sustainability and has recognized the absence of funding at Skidmore College for student-led initiatives for interdisciplinary sustainability efforts. Numerous higher education institutions have implemented a green/sustainability grant to improve community and on-campus sustainability, including some of Skidmore's peer and aspirant schools: Vassar College, Colgate University, Oberlin College, Middlebury College, Union College, and Haverford College.

As a result, the SGA Sustainability Commission presented Resolution 33-36: The Green Grant Act (Sponsored by Madison Situ and Apolonia Alvarez) to the SGA Senate in the spring semester of 2023 in order to create a designated fund available to all students to develop Skidmore's Campus Sustainability Plan. As a result, beginning with the academic year 2023-2024, the SGA has agreed to allocate \$10,000 to a Green Grant program overseen by the SGA Sustainability Commission and the newly developed Green Grant Review Committee.

### **Description**

The Green Grant is a competitive grant managed by the Sustainability Commission in collaboration with the Sustainability Office to support students in pursuing sustainable initiatives on campus to improve student life and the environment. The projects must be based on Skidmore's Campus Sustainability Plan while addressing intersecting spheres within sustainability such as social equity, economic viability, and environmental stewardship. All students are eligible to apply for the Green Grant.

### **Structure**

#### *I. Funding*

The fund amount for the Green Grant 2023-2024 will be \$10,000 provided by the SGA. Any project is eligible for funding up to \$10,000, however, if a selected project does not use the entirety of the fund, it can be distributed among more than one project.

The Co-Chairs of the Green Grant Review Committee and the SGA Accountant will oversee the purchases for each selected project. Students cannot make any purchases for their project without first meeting with the SGA Accountant. Any selected project can have its funding suspended if the project fails to meet the SGA Financial Policies.

If an applicant plans to complete the project in the summer and/or is a graduating senior, the grant cannot be used to cover housing expenses. The applicant(s) are expected to seek alternative funding resources at Skidmore to cover additional costs such as housing expenses.

If the entirety of the grant has not been used after the chosen project(s) budget has been approved then the remaining fund amount will be returned back to the SGA Reserves. Projects selected for funding with timelines that exceed the fiscal year (FY) will have their budget carried over into the following FY(s) until the project is completed.

## *II. Application*

All applicants will be required to fill out an application accessible through both the Sustainability Office's and SGA's web pages on the Skidmore College website. Only one application will need to be turned in per group or individual. The deadline for the application is December 15th, 2023, at 11:59 pm EST. The chosen project(s) are expected to be announced at the end of the break.\*

\*Any group is subject to be met during the break for follow-up questions and concerns

The application will consist of three general parts:

1. Overview
  - a. Required information such as members of the group, estimated project duration, requested budget amount, etc.
2. Short Essay
  - a. Please write a short essay (no more than 3 pages single-spaced) that explicitly defines the proposed project, outcomes, challenges, and collaborators.
3. Additional Documentation
  - a. Provide a timeline of the project, an explicit budget, and other attachments you feel may be useful for the reviewers to understand your experience and/or project.

In addition, the requirements for applicant(s) are the following:

- Applicant(s) must be in good academic standing with Skidmore College.
- Applicant(s) may work individually or in groups (no more than 3 people).
- Applicant(s) must seek out a faculty or staff sponsor to assist with project management and execution.
  - Projects cannot be undertaken as credit-bearing experiences and thus cannot be combined or implemented as independent studies or internships.
- Applicant(s) awarded funding must complete their project within the timeline approved by the Green Grant Review Committee.\*

\*If an emergency, transfer, or unavoidable conflict occurs during the execution of the project, please contact one of the Co-Chairs of the Green Grant Review IMMEDIATELY for assessment

## *III. The Green Grant Review Committee*

The Green Grant Review Committee (GGRC) is comprised of faculty, staff, and student representation. The committee members were chosen to embody Skidmore College's interdisciplinary sustainability approach and efforts. A majority vote within the committee will determine the final projects chosen for funding. A member of the committee cannot serve as an applicant or a sponsor for a Green Grant proposal; nor can they discuss information about Green Grant applications or decisions outside of designated meetings. If matters pertaining to project application or implementation are not covered in this framework, it is at the discretion of the Green Grant Review Committee for review. Each member of the committee will be expected to attend 3 meetings throughout the academic school year to discuss:

- Green Grant Applications

- Green Grant Project Selection
- Green Grant Program Evaluation and Development

#### *A. Project Selection*

The Green Grant Review Committee will base its final decision on the following criteria:

- Content: The project must build on one of Skidmore College's sustainability goals identified in Skidmore's Campus Sustainability Plan as well as have a comprehensible plan of how the project can be self-sufficient after implementation.
- Quality: The application needs to demonstrate students' knowledge or experience in their desired project.
- Creative Thought Matters: The project must show creativity through either an original idea or a development of a current or previous Skidmore College initiative.
- Intersectionality: The project is not required, but encouraged to consider Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) in collaboration with sustainability.

The projects that have been selected must use their own time overseen by the designated faculty or staff sponsor to complete the project. Designated sponsors must meet with their sponsored applicant(s) at the start of the project and as needed after to keep their sponsored applicant(s) on track with their approved timelines. Sponsors are expected to provide guidance and oversight of the project throughout the entirety of its execution. Lastly, sponsors are to be informed on The Student Government Association Bylaws Title VIII: Financial Policies and Procedures Section 9.13, the Green Grant, and Resolution 34-27: The Updated Green Grant Act.

Additionally, once the project is completed, participant(s) must present their project to the SGA Senate at the following SGA Senate meeting on the impacts and results of the project. Throughout the entirety of the implementation of the project, the participant(s) must report to the Green Grant Review Committee Co-Chairs at least once a month for updates and feedback.

#### *B. Membership*

- Co-Chairs: *Tarah Rowse*, Sustainability Office Director, and *Apolonia Alvarez*, SGA Sustainability Commission Chair
- Environmental Science and Studies Department Representative: *Karen Kellogg*, Associate Professor of Environmental Science and Studies Department
- Facilities Services Representative: *Bruce Murray*, Director of Facilities Services
- Leadership Activities Department Representative: *Emily Poole*, Associate Director of Leadership Activities
- Appointed Student Representative: *Grace Coale*, Class of '25

### **Resources**

The SGA Sustainability Commission and Sustainability Office are committed to being a consistent resource to students throughout the application and implementation process. The SGA Sustainability Commission will hold an annual Green Grant workshop event in the fall semester

to answer questions students may have about the Green Grant and serve as a networking opportunity to bring students together who may have similar sustainable initiatives. The Green Grant Review Committee members will also be encouraged to attend.