

May 4, 2018

To the Campus Sustainability Fund:

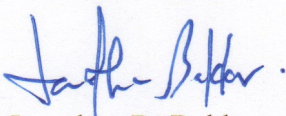
I am writing in **complete support of the ‘SER-UW Native Plant Nursery – Future Growth’ proposal** submitted by Sarah Shank and Derek Allen. I am the faculty advisor of SER-UW, our student chapter of the Society for Ecological Restoration. SER is recognized globally as the professional society for restoration ecologists. Sarah and Derek are active members of SER-UW and took the initiative to develop this proposal to enhance SER-UW’s activities.

A few years ago, CSF supported the construction of a hoophouse that provides critical physical infrastructure for the SER-UW nursery. The current proposal would support a graduate student and an hourly part-time student to oversee the nursery during the 2018-2019 academic year. During this time, they would design and implement production systems for key native ferns and rhizomatous plants. Producing plants in large quantities results in efficiencies of scale that reduce costs and increase revenues. In addition, this would provide valuable hands-on horticulture learning opportunities for many other UW students as volunteers and as interns. There currently are no production-focused opportunities like this on campus, yet efficiencies of scale are necessary when translating this practice to ‘real world’ scenarios.

In addition to leveraging previous CSF support, this proposal complements the current plant production and restoration ecology opportunities on campus. Students in various ESRM and SEFS courses – including two that I teach (*Native Plant Production*, *Introduction to Restoration Ecology*) – are interested in working in the hoophouse. In addition, this support would enable SER-UW to increase its efforts to influence the sustainability of campus projects by providing larger quantities of native plants for use on the UW campus, including in the Union Bay Natural Area and by UW Grounds Management. Plants would also be available for use in restoration capstones and other student projects. For example, several students in our Masters of Environmental Horticulture (MEH) program are doing on-campus projects that require more native plants than are currently available.

Please strongly consider funding this proposal. The resulting actions will enhance recognition and capacity of the CSF-funded hoophouse as a bustling horticultural education hub for our undergraduate and graduate students, and will improve the sustainability of UW’s practices by facilitating the use of native plants on campus.

Sincerely,



Jonathan D. Bakker
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