

Dear Campus Sustainability Fund Committee,

I am writing to express my support for the proposal to fund a Research Assistantship with the Society for Ecological Restoration Nursery, titled “SER-UW Native Plant Nursery - Future Growth”. As a student who has participated in activities with the SER-UW for four years, I have witnessed firsthand the incredible impact that their activities have on the everyday life of students. The SER-UW Nursery (a local, entirely student run organization) offers volunteer opportunities and formal internships to students, allowing them to put academic knowledge into practice while also gaining classroom credit. Additionally, the SER-UW Nursery provides native plants for capstone projects and community events, which help create a more environmentally responsible, sustainable, and connected campus. The opportunities that the SER-UW Nursery support have impacts beyond just the scope of the School of the Environment, as they draw students from all backgrounds to learn about ecology, restoration, and green living.

Derek Allen and Sarah Shank have gone above and beyond their duties as managers of the SER-UW Nursery. The nursery has been the cornerstone of the Society for Ecological Restoration UW since its beginning, and the RA positions have allowed the nursery to maintain its status as an invaluable student resource for ecological knowledge. Derek and Sarah effectively operate the complex and time consuming tasks that a nursery demands, as the previous nursery managers did before them. The SER-UW depends entirely on the efforts of our graduate students to sustain the short term and long term goals of the nursery. Every dollar of funding that the SER-UW Nursery receives for its graduate students are returned in full value and more, from the investment that these students bring to campus with their fellow classmates. The SER-UW Nursery is close to becoming a fully independent organization, and will be another step closer to our ultimate goal of self-sufficiency with the help of this grant.

As a volunteer, I was able to find my niche in the environmental science community. I met many other students, especially students who were not a part of my major, and I grew roots into this incredible organization. The Nursery took me on as an intern, where I was able to learn about plant propagation, ethical restoration practices, how to manage a nursery, and how to connect with volunteers. Now, as the SER-UW Treasurer, I can see just how important it is for the Nursery to receive funding at this critical point in our growth. The SER-UW has come so far, and we depend on the efforts of future RA positions at the Nursery to continue our mission to support our students and to make the university a more environmentally conscious community. With the help of this grant, we will both sustain our services and expand our opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Victoria Fox

B.S. Honors Environmental Science and Resource Management, Candidate