

ADA Approved Pathways at the UW Farm: Promoting the Intersection  
of Environmental Justice and Sustainability

CSF Grant Application  
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Proposal submitted by  
Perry Acworth, UW Farm Manager, Tooby Gallant, ASUW Student Disability Commission, and  
Vivien Chen, UW Farm Environmental Justice Intern

## 1. Executive Summary

The UW Farm comprises three green spaces located on the University of Washington Seattle Campus. All three sites offer growing spaces for: food and community-building, academic coursework and field trips, service learning, volunteering and also activities for the general public. During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the UW Farm continued operations as an essential food production operation supplying households, the UW Food Pantry, and area food banks.

Total space maintained by the UW Farm is 6 acres with 1.75 cultivated for crops, Many visitors enjoy walking through the farm from dawn to dusk, 365 days a year, 7 days a week. There are no gate fees, perimeter fences or NET ID required to enter the farm spaces.

However, farm trails and pathways do not currently provide access for those with disabilities. Removing barriers for accessing green spaces would help address a sustainability issue on campus - Social Sustainability. As stated on the College of the Environment Climate Justice and Sustainability website page;

“Environmental justice serves as a lens through which social justice principles can be incorporated into the realm of fair sustainability.”

The issue of access, environmental justice and sustainability are intertwined. In fact, the city of Seattle reports that 6.4 % of the population has a disability or 46,971 individuals, but on our campus the number increases. According to UW DOIT, 19% of post-secondary students have disabilities. How does our campus address disabilities through the lens of Environmental Justice? By removing barriers to enjoy, recharge and experience the outdoors.

The UW Farm at the Center for Urban Horticulture is accessible by walking, bicycling, bus and by car. But once you arrive, the single ADA pathway stops before you can enter, preventing food

access for those in wheelchairs. If there were ADA pathways then people in wheelchairs could learn about urban farming and related issues, recreate, and help plant, harvest and consume the produce grown on campus

Only the farm site at the Center for Urban Horticulture offers the potential for ADA approved pathways, due to gentle slope, proximity to restrooms, handicapped parking and amenities. This site also provides the largest number of CSF-funded projects for learning about sustainability and is adjacent to the Union Bay Natural Area, Miller library, and event areas and classrooms - all wheelchair accessible.

The UW Farm and students would like to help provide more access to the farm space, but lack funds to do so. The UW Farm budget is cobbled together with grants, sales of produce, and requests for donations from donors and departments. The farm does not receive any Student Activities Fee funding, or Academic Based Budget funding. We would like to ask CSF for the necessary support to install ADA approved pathways from one end of the farm to the other, running east -west and connecting key areas, the Native garden, World Cultural Kitchen, Heritage Orchard and Wapato Pond. These pathways would also connect visitors with disabilities to other CSF-funded projects - Compost Toilet, Vermiculture Facility, SuperShed, Children's Garden, and Greenhouse.

## Detailed Budget

### 2. Funding information

- a. Total amount requested \$17,220
- b. Budget breakdown (table or itemized budget), clearly indicating which budget items you are asking the CSF to fund

#### Materials

Pathway materials (includes commercial landscape fabric & gravel) \$12/linear foot by 5' wide

Wapato Pond Pathway - 5' wide by 85', \$12.00x85=\$1020.00

Main Farm Pathway - 5' wide by 250' long, \$12x250=\$3000.00

Cultural Kitchen Pathway - 5'x125', \$12x125=\$1,500.00

Heritage Orchard Pathway - 5'x100', \$12x100=\$1200.00

#### Labor and Rental

UWBG Arboretum and UW Grounds crew labor only - 5 individuals 10 days (6 hours/day)

\$33/hour = \$9900.00

Equipment rental - electric compactor \$120/day x 5 days - \$600.00

**Total Request from CSF \$17,220**

c. Other funding sources (include the existing project assets and discuss potential other funding sources for the project, if any)

In-Kind

**Labor, Management and Volunteers**

Student Volunteers - student volunteer work parties, helping with gravel and laying out materials  
- 75x2 hours each x \$18.69/hour = \$2,803.50

Overall Project supervision - David Zuckerman and Perry Acworth, labor and volunteer management - 40 hours total at \$28/hour = \$1120

Student project manager, Heritage Orchard - Althea Ericksen - labor and volunteer management  
- 10 hours x \$19/hour = \$190

Student Project manager - Wapato Pond project - Kove Janeski - labor, volunteer management contribution - 20 hours x \$19/hour = \$380

Total Labor Value Donated \$4493.50

**Materials and Equipment** - donated

Tools, wheelbarrows, shovels, rakes, gloves = \$2,500

UW Grounds Compact Utility Loader = \$1200/week

UWBG Equipment loan - tractor with scraper and hand roller - \$1,200/week

Total Equipment and Materials Value \$4900.00

Grand Total contributed/donated - \$9393.50

d. Grant or loan status (do you intend to pay back any of the grant?)

No.

How the project meets the goals of the funding organization

**3. Sustainable Impact**

a. The sustainability problem(statement of need), be sure to discuss the local context of the problem if your project addresses a broader sustainability concern

Working with the ASUW Student Disability Commission, it was learned that access to the UW Farm would be appreciated by those with physical disabilities. As it happens, new signage will

be installed in Spring 2023 (See Oliver Norred CSF Interactive Sign Design project) for those with vision and/or hearing impairments. The signage will be installed by the end of Spring quarter 2023 at the same site where the proposed trail would be installed.

What is needed now is an ADA approved trail that would provide access through the farm for those with physical mobility challenges. Currently the main walkway is gently sloping, but it is muddy, weedy, with bark chips and rocks.

b. How your project addresses the sustainability problem

Farm trails or pathways do not currently provide access for those with physical disabilities. This is a prime example of an element of Sustainability, known as Environmental Justice (and Disability Justice!). For the first time, this project would bring together the ASUW Student Disability Commission RSO, disability students, The Native Garden volunteers, tribal elders, the UW Farm team, and hundreds of student volunteers in the construction of new pathways through the farm.

Removing barriers for everyone to access green spaces, would help address a sustainability issue on campus - Social Sustainability. As stated on the College of the Environment Climate Justice and Sustainability website page; "Environmental justice serves as a lens through which social justice principles can be incorporated into the realm of fair sustainability." The issue of access, environmental justice and sustainability are intertwined.

What is needed now are ADA approved trails or pathways that can accommodate wheelchairs and those with ambulatory challenges. Pathways that are nearly level and made of ¼" minus gravel can provide access through the farm and additional educational "spots" for those with physical mobility challenges. Currently the Main Farm pathway, Heritage Orchard, Wapato Pond and World Cultural Kitchen (adjacent to the Native Garden) learning and celebration areas offer gently sloping pathways, but they are uneven, seasonally muddy, weedy, and strewn with bark chips and rocks.

c. How your project's impacts will be measured (for monitoring and evaluation)

We can do the following -

- invite members of the ASUW Student Disability Commission to visit the site for guidance and feedback. This is our first project working together to provide Environmental Justice for our community. We will seek input from visitors who have disabilities which will inform improvements for access and usership in the future. We will learn from this group how best to promote and invite those with disabilities to participate in farm events and/or just visit.

-invite First Nations students, staff, faculty and tribal elders to the site. We will seek feedback on user-ability, improvements and methods for promoting visits to the greenspace which includes the Native Garden

To measure involvement of volunteers, the UW Farm AmeriCorps Volunteer tracks all hours, classes, events and academic usage of the farm. The AmeriCorps Volunteer will recruit and involve the community and measure involvement via our records.

#### **4. Education and outreach**

a. How will the UW community find out about your project?

Outreach:

Website page - The UW Farm will create a dedicated website page for Environmental Justice and Access to the UW Farm, the Center for Urban Horticulture, and adjacent Union Bay Natural Area. The website will feature a map showing the ADA pathways, parking spaces, and amenities.

Word of Mouth - Thousands of students make their way to the farm each year, so news of the Trail would be sheared by word of mouth.

The ASUW Student Disability Commission RSO will help promote and broadcast the trail to those within the disability community.

The Daily - UW Farm manager would also contact The Daily and ask for an article profiling the trail.

The UW Farm newsletter, The Weekly Dirt will feature an article and multiple social media posts will occur to promote the new trail access.

UW Sustainability hosts events for tabling and promoting groups and activities centered on sustainability. We will continue to participate and provide an ADA Trail map/brochure of the farm at these events.

b. How will the UW community become involved in and/or support your project?

The UW Farm is host to nearly 2,000 volunteers per year. Both UW and non-UW individuals contribute to daily operations, events, newsletter articles and projects. This ADA pathway project will rely on the continued participation of students and community volunteers.

The UW Farm supports an AmeriCorps Volunteer Food Security Lead every season. One of the responsibilities of this position is recruiting and managing volunteers. The AmeriCorps Volunteer posts events in The Weekly Dirt newsletter, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, and the UW Trumba calendar for volunteer opportunities year-round for the general public, UW staff, faculty and students. The UW Farm will invite individuals and groups to the farm to help with this project.

## **5. Student involvement**

a. How will your project directly involve/affect UW students?

As noted in the Executive Summary, this project will directly involve and affect UW Students, primarily First Nations students and their tribal elders, those with disabilities. Access to green spaces on campus, and historic lands of the Coast Salish tribes will be provided at the Native Garden, Wapato Pond and the World Cultural Kitchen. Wheelchair accessibility of a pathway system will combine with proximity to already existing ADA approved restrooms, classrooms, event space, a library, and free parking.

Students who visit the farm for courses, engage in CELE service-learning (over 150/year) and RSO volunteers will have the opportunity to participate in the construction of the pathways and enjoy the completed greenspaces. These pathways will also improve the greenspace for the general public, who visit the farm daily.

b. If you plan to use student volunteers in your project, how will you identify and recruit student volunteers?

During the few weeks that we will work on the pathways, students and volunteers will be on the farm helping with harvests, plantings, weddings and in class. We can ask for assistance on any day when we have regular volunteer shifts.

The UW Farm also has 10-week internships including a Winter quarter Environmental Justice intern. Every year this individual can focus their attention on maintenance of the trail and outreach.

See also 4.b. Above

## **6. Accountability & Feasibility**

a. Project timeline (Gantt chart or a list of project tasks and expected duration of each task)

Due to wet weather in the Pacific Northwest work can only be done May-August each year. Two students are managing two of the projects for capstone and their majors - the Heritage Orchard and Wapato Pond. They will not have their projects completed until December 2023 and May 2024 respectively. Therefore the pathway construction will occur in two phases over two years.

Phase 1 - June-August 2023 - stringing, laying guides for pathways removal of organic matter, paying of gravel in the Cultural Kitchen and Main Pathways.

Phase 2 - May-June 2024 - stringing and laying guides for Wapato Pond and Heritage Orchard, removal of organic matter, laying weed barrier fabric, shoveling gravel, pounding and compaction.

b. List of project team and any sub-teams

Overall Project supervision - David Zuckerman and Perry Acworth, budget, equipment, labor and volunteer management

Cultural Kitchen Path and Main Farm Pathway - Perry Acworth

Heritage Orchard - Althea Ericksen, UW POE undergraduate senior, capstone

Wapato Pond project - Kove Janeski, UW MLA, masters student, 2nd year, studio project

UW Farm AmeriCorps Volunteer - Chrina Munn, UW Alumnus, volunteer tracking, recruitment and records

ASUW Student Disability Commission - Toby Gallant

c. Is your project “shovel-ready”? Should your project be funded, what, if any, steps need to take place in order for your project to begin?

Cultural Kitchen Path and Main Farm Pathway - shovel-ready

Heritage Orchard - shovel-ready by September 2023, more earth work is required and is on-going

Wapato Pond project - Wapato Pond currently under construction, will not be shovel-ready until April/May 2024 due to student taking fall 2023 quarter abroad

## 7. Partners and Stakeholders

Indicate the project stakeholders, separating the following groups:

a. The project partner (the campus unit that the project will work with most directly)

UW Botanic Gardens and ASUW Student Disability Commission

b. Who the project will need direct approval from (remember that any project that directly affects a campus unit will require approval from the campus unit prior to funding). The project partner may or may not be the one providing direct approval. Some projects will require approval from more than one campus unit.

UW Landscape Architect - Kristine Kenney - has approved

UW Botanic Gardens - Director, Christina Owen, Horticulture Operations, David Zuckerman, Collections, Ray Larson and UW Farm Manager, Perry Acworth

c. List other important stakeholders for the project (specifically any faculty, staff, student groups, and external individuals or groups that will be involved in the project)

Chenoa Henry - Intellectual House Director

Sarai Mayer - Native Garden Food Sovereignty Liaison

Toby Gallant - ASUW Student Disability Commission

Steve Badanes and Jake LaBarre - Neighborhood Design Build Studio

Julie Johnson - Landscape Architecture Studio

Grant Application - Contact Information

Primary Contact First & Last Name: Vivian Chen, Food Systems, Nutrition, and Health; Political Science

Campus Affiliation: UW Farm Environmental Justice Intern, undergraduate student partnering with campus unit

Campus Address: 3501 NE 41st, ste 112A

Phone: 2068028788

E-mail: [whchen90@uw.edu](mailto:whchen90@uw.edu)

Secondary Contact First & Last Name: Toby Gallant, ASUW Director of Student Disability Commission

Campus Affiliation: RSO (Registered Student Organization)

Campus Address: HUB Office 131Q

Phone: NA

E-mail: [asuwsdc1@uw.edu](mailto:asuwsdc1@uw.edu)

Third Contact

Perry Acworth, UW Farm Manager



Campus Affiliation: Permanent Staff, UW Farm, UWBG, SEFS, College of the Environment  
Campus address: Box354115  
Phone: 206-550-4169  
Email: [uwfarm@uw.edu](mailto:uwfarm@uw.edu)

Fourth Contact

David Zuckerman, UWBG Horticulture, Operations  
Campus Affiliation: Permanent Staff, UWBG, SEFS, College of the Environment  
Campus Address:  
Phone: NA  
Email: [dzman@uw.edu](mailto:dzman@uw.edu)