

Associated Students, Incorporated - Funding Support Proposal

Funding Year: 2020-2021

Program: Cal State LA Edible Garden

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**Title**

Cal State LA Compost Hub Development in Partnership with LA Compost

**Area Mission**

Mission Statement: The mission of Cal State LA's Edible Garden Club is threefold: to teach students to grow organic and sustainable food using cross-cultural gardening practices; to promote food sovereignty, access, and justice; and to provide a living lab to support classes, workshops, community building, and the research of students and faculty.

Vision Statement: To grow food and build interdisciplinary civic and scientific learning on the Cal State LA campus for the purpose of empowering student connections to environmental stewardship, food access, and community health.

**Introduction**

In August 2019, a group of nutrition science students put together a comprehensive proposal for an edible garden on Cal State LA's campus as an effort to increase campus sustainability efforts, access to fruits and vegetables, and to decrease food insecurity on campus (proposal and project justification attached as Appendix A). As of July 7, 2020, the development of an edible garden in Cal State LA housing was approved by President Covino (Appendix B). Additionally, a four year USDA grant called "Growing Food in the City: Urban Food Gardens for Research and Education" was received by four professors: Dr. Barry Hibbs of Geosciences, Dr. Alexandra Wright of Biology, Dr. Kathryn Hillstrom of Nutritional Science, and Dr. Choi Chatterjee of History to support research and academic programming using the garden as a living laboratory (Appendix C). An official club called the Edible Garden Club was also developed to create a community for students to learn about edible gardening practices, volunteer with local urban farm and garden organizations, and form community partnerships on campus.

**Project Description**

LA Compost is a local non profit founded in 2013 that actively assists in reducing Los Angeles' carbon footprint by reducing food waste and building healthy soils to support organic growing of fruits and vegetables. They create Compost Hubs around LA county that serve as locations for high-volume composting for individuals and communities, and to educate those communities on

the importance of composting in order to establish sustainable and long-lasting systems, unique to each site ([www.LACompost.org](http://www.LACompost.org)).

Cal State LA's Edible Garden Club is requesting funding for an LA Compost Compost Hub to serve the campus and Housing and Residence Life community. Enlisting their services will increase campus and housing sustainability efforts by diverting its compostable food waste, especially as it relates to SB 1383 Organics Diversion from Landfills and Methane Emissions compliance (Appendix D). Housing Dining will be the main contributor of food waste collection, however, the bins will also be available for food waste drop off for the entire Cal State LA community, and especially those living in housing.

Housing dining is currently functioning at limited capacity due to COVID-19 which will simplify the establishment of an effective collection system in their kitchen, including staff training. Food service director, Stephanie Ho is on board to purchase kitchen collection bins and to train staff on how to collect organic food waste in the kitchen (Appendix E). When students return to campus and the new housing building is full, our systems will be established and ready to take on the increased capacity.

LA Compost will build a three-bin composting system (4 ft x 12 ft total) that will act as the infrastructure for Housing and Residence Life's current composting needs. Their fees include Best Management Practice (BMP) tools, supplies, and materials to support aerobic hot composting practices. Most importantly, our Compost Hub will have an official LA Compost manager that will visit the site twice per month for three hour periods to ensure the compost is being managed properly and the campus systems are running smoothly. They will also provide two 4-hour campus-wide workshops per year to aid in the education of compost and sustainability for Cal State LA students, faculty, and administration.

### **Objectives**

1. To establish a Housing and Residence Life composting system to reduce food waste in the Housing Dining, within dorms, and eventually campus-wide through an LA Compost "Compost Hub."
2. To support Cal State LA in SB 1383 compliance.
3. To build healthy, nutrient-rich soils in the Edible Garden to support organic growing of fruits and vegetables that do not require pesticides or fertilizers.

### **Program Evaluation**

LA Compost provides materials, tools, and training to weigh all green waste that goes into the compost bin in order to determine the amount of waste Cal State LA is collecting. That data goes

into reports provided by LA Compost to help the campus reach waste diversion goals and for the purposes of learning how much waste goes into creating soil.

### Marketing and Outreach

Community building and outreach are of great importance to the Edible Garden to ensure that its mission and vision are being executed. This is done through programming by the Edible Garden Club, via Instagram, through campus-wide workshops on regenerative gardening and farming practices, and through composting programs with Housing and Residence Life Dining. It is also done maintaining relationships with professors who conduct research in the space, and reaching out to students through various departments to maintain involvement.

### Partners

In addition to the Edible Garden Club, a USDA grant called “Growing Food in the City: Urban Food Gardens for Research and Education” was awarded to four professors: Dr. Barry Hibbs of Geosciences, Dr. Alexandra Wright of Biology, Dr. Kathryn Hillstrom of Nutritional Science, and Dr. Choi Chatterjee of History. Within this grant are also funds to support the garden build, including \$1,000.00 for compost infrastructure. These grant funds will supplement the funds being requested from ASI to fulfill the budgetary needs.

### Financial Plan and Expense Detail

A comprehensive list of the three bin systems, in compliance with SB 1383, describes the costs of the supplies, labor, and compost manager employment in collaboration with LA Compost (Appendix F). The subdivided lists detail the measurements and cost of the materials for the open bin composting system (Sheet 1). Furthermore, the document includes best management practices (BMP) material costs in order to maintain the composting system for a long duration (Sheet 2). There are also supplemental costs regarding the delivery and installation as a contribution to LA Compost.

#### Three bin system and Compost Hub expenses covering 2-years of programming:

<b>Expense Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Building Materials	Includes lumber, corrugated metal, fencing, hardware, wire, repair expenses, taxes and other	<u>\$ 1,760.00</u>
Best Practice Management Material	Includes tools, storage bins, drop-off bins, signage, locks, etc.	<u>\$ 1,380.00</u>
Personnel Costs	Includes community outreach, labor costs, and compost manager fees.	<u>\$ 3,450.00</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b><u>\$ 6,590.00</u></b>
Grant amount allocated to composting		\$(1,000.00)
<b>Total Requested</b>		<b><u>\$ 5,590.00</u></b>