



VCC Eco Grants

Environmental Advisory Group

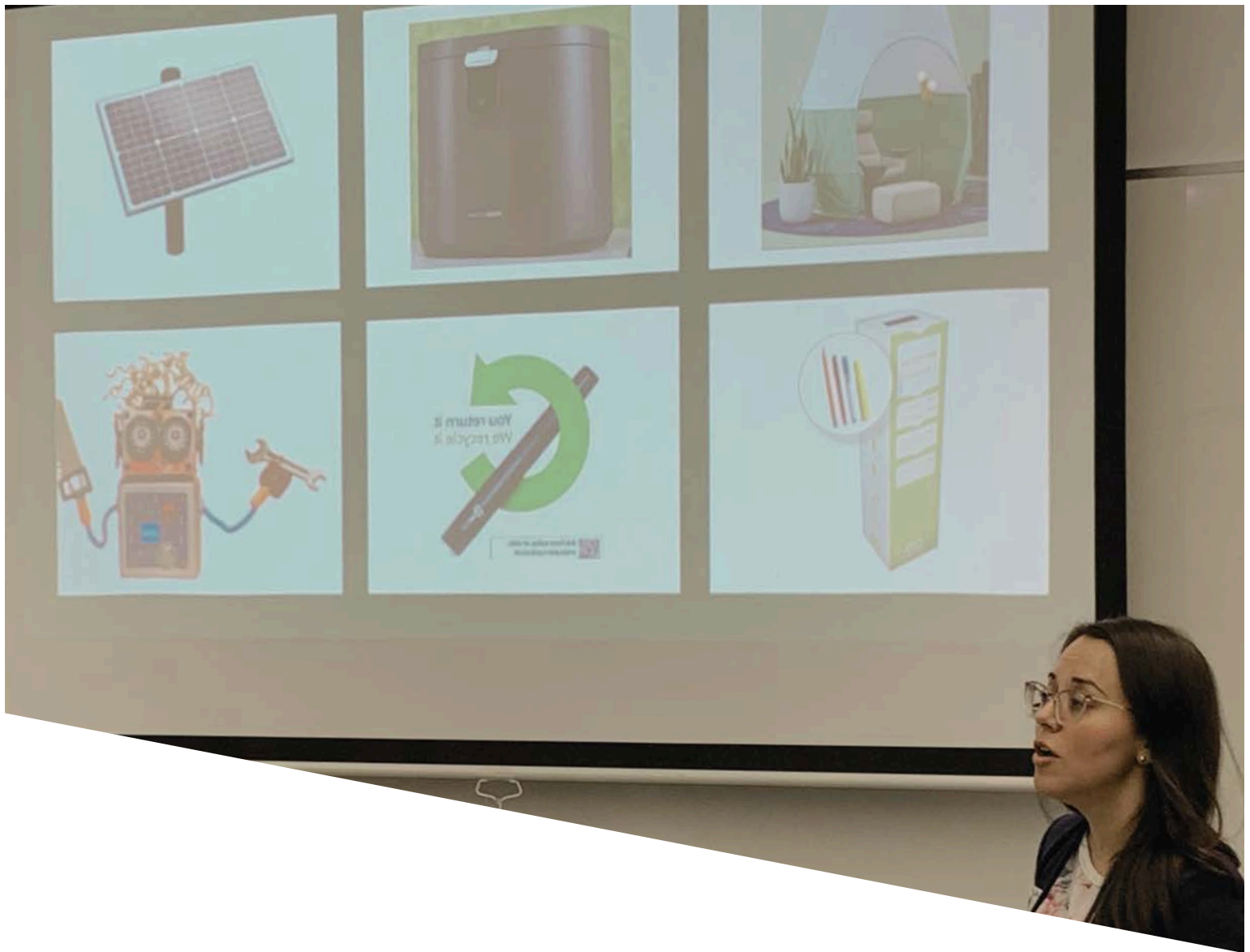
2023/2024

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Vancouver Community College (VCC) is located on the traditional unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm̓ (Musqueam), Sk̓w̓x̓w̓ú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish), and səliłw̓ətał (Tseil-Waututh) peoples who have been stewards of this land from time immemorial.

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Introduction

VCC Eco Grant provides grants to students and employees who wish to initiate projects that advance sustainability through education, research, service and campus operations.



Background

The VCC Eco Grants program debuted in 2019/2020 academic year, initiating projects including the introduction of mason bees, the establishment of perennial flower beds, and a campaign addressing fast fashion and textile waste. Grants were capped at \$500, and the project had a total budget of \$2,000.

Following a hiatus, the Eco Grants program resumed in the 2023/2024 academic year with increased funding providing more opportunities. Grants were raised to \$500 to \$3000 per applicant and were supported by a total budget of \$10,000.

In the 2023/2024 academic year, a total of nine applications were submitted—six from staff members and two from students. Out of these, six projects (two of which overlapped) were selected and successfully launched. Following are highlights from these initiatives.

Eco Grants Highlights

Culinary Composting

Two food composters were added to the Broadway culinary kitchen, allowing culinary students to compost food waste and add it to the culinary gardens, thus completing the food production loop. These composters run twice daily, ensuring a continuous and efficient process for managing food waste.

UN Sustainability Goals



Initiated by student Yuliia Uhriumova.

Office Supplies Recycling

Starting in September 2024, as a pilot program, recycling bins for school and office supplies will be available in common areas at both campuses.

Students and employees can recycle items such as pens, scissors, paperclips, and staplers, promoting a more sustainable campus environment.

UN Sustainability Goals



Initiated through two proposals:
1. Student Marcus Ng (pictured)
2. Faculty member Emily Simpson.

Eco Grants Highlights

Learning Centre Sustainability Hub

The Learning Centre at the Broadway campus has established a sustainability hub, featuring a serene study area complemented by plants and the collection of books on sustainability purchased through another Eco Grant. The chair, table and plants were purchased through the Eco Grant, while the tent was donated by Heritage Furniture.

UN Sustainability Goals



Initiated by faculty member Mari Paz Vera.

Refillable Whiteboard Pens

The Biology and Math departments are conducting a trial of refillable whiteboard markers to reduce plastic waste. Staff and students will get an update on this initiative in the VCC News.

UN Sustainability Goals



Initiated by faculty member Jennifer Kelly.

Eco Grants Highlights

Library sustainability book collection



Initiated by faculty member Mari Paz Vera.

UN Sustainability Goals



The VCC Library has acquired a variety of books on sustainability and climate change for different fields of study. These books help students research sustainability practices relevant to their courses. Some are part of the United Nations' SDG recommended list. For more information, please visit the library.

Projects Awaiting Future Opportunities

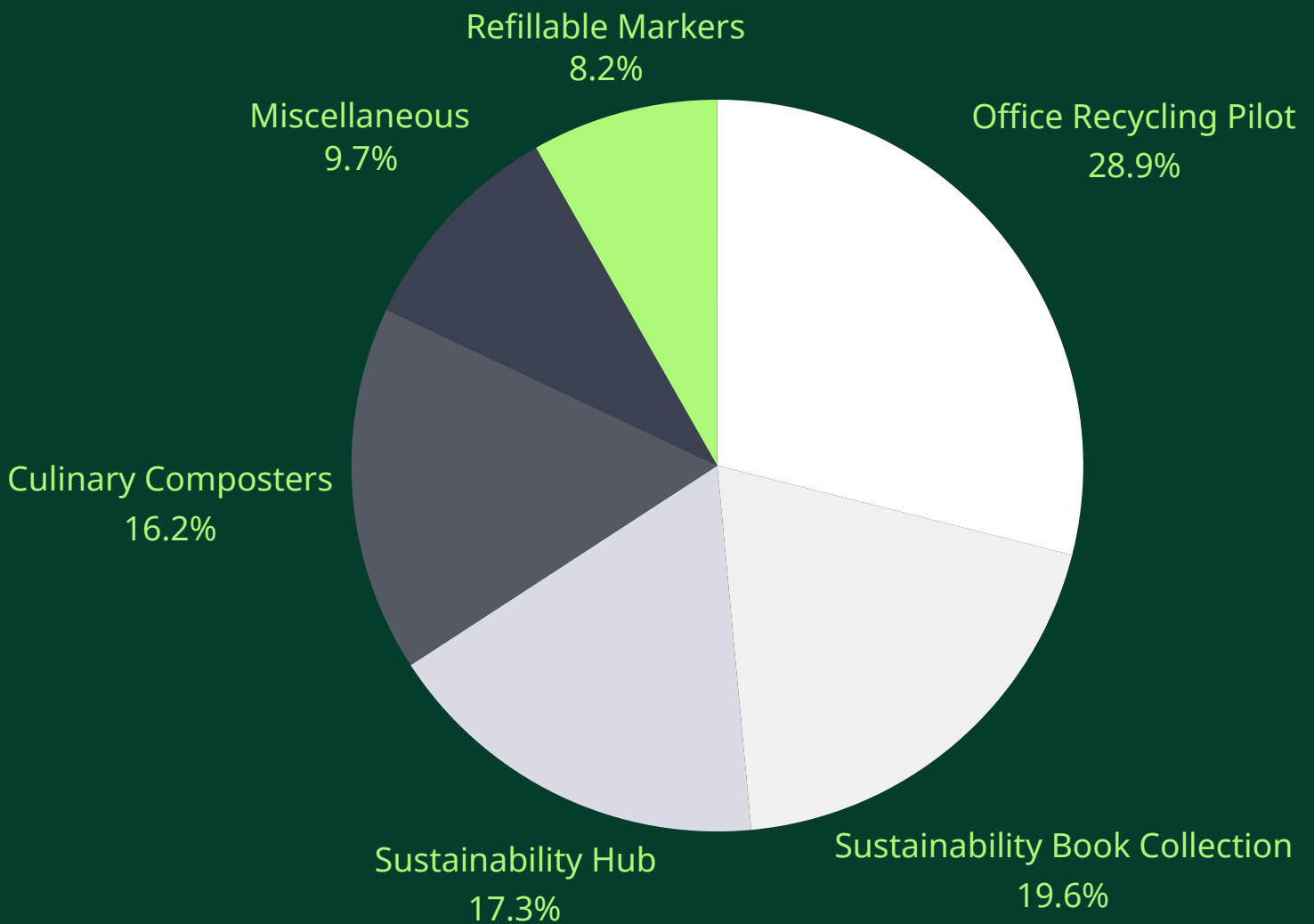
After careful exploration, three proposed projects were not selected to move forward at this time due to feasibility issues. These projects included:

- Adding a solar panel to power the library cell phone charging station.
- Establishing an electronic repair café run by Electronics Repair Technology students.
- Conducting a feasibility study for integrating a plasma arc waste gasification system at the college.



Eco Grants Budget Analysis

The total budget for the Eco Grants was \$10,000, with \$9,602 spent so far, leaving a remaining balance of \$607





Challenges

With the increase in budget, the potential for creativity and innovation grew, along with the scale and complexity of the projects. This increased complexity required more staff time and cross-department collaboration for successful implementation. Additionally the Eco Grants project was launched in the fall with the goal of completion being the fiscal year end. For some proposed projects this timeline was too short.

Eco-Hero Actions



Achievements

Nine applications for eco grant projects were received, and six were successfully implemented. One project proposal, which involves installing a solar panel phone charger with educational material, is still being explored.

Many departments across VCC are working collaboratively to support these projects, fostering a culture of sustainability and creating institutional change.

At the final celebration, each applicant had the opportunity to share a few words about their projects. One of the highlights of this event was the custom-made cookies crafted by VCC alumni Jessica Kruger. She created a unique cookie representing each of the nine proposed projects.

Celebration of Achievements





Eco Grant Celebration of Achievements
campus tour of the projects.

Celebration of Achievements

The Eco Grants project provides a unique opportunity for staff and students to propose innovative sustainability initiatives for the campus community.

The Environmental Sustainability Advisory Group has dedicated significant effort to implementing these projects, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration across the campus and driving institutional and educational change.



We are enthusiastic about continuing our support for the 2024/25 Eco Grants program.

Eco Grants Highlights

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Be an Eco Hero!

Apply for an Eco Grant
and bring your ideas to
life at vcc.ca

