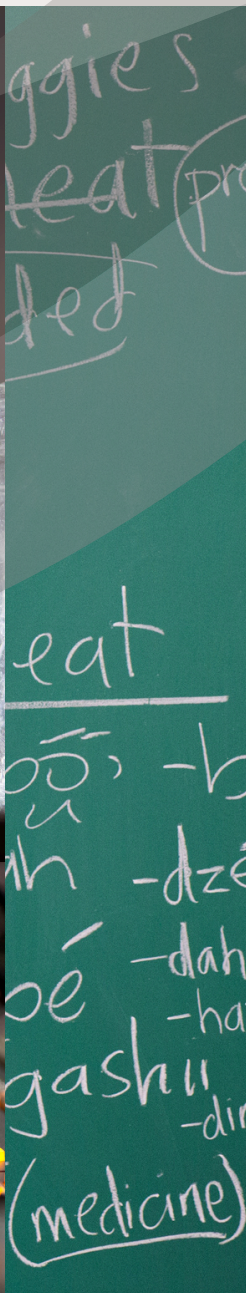


2024-25 Academic Year



# Interdisciplinary Request for Proposals (RFP)

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# 1.1 Overview

The Green Fund seeks proposals for innovative sustainability projects and research from all majors, schools, departments, and disciplines. With over \$400,000 in funding at our disposal, we are eager to support the NAU community in achieving its Climate Action goals by providing a space for students, faculty, and staff to chart their own course towards a greener future.

We accept submissions from any and all academic programs and campus designations. Whether you're in search of a funding award to pursue your research or institutional backing to implement a passion project, the Green Fund is here to help you execute your vision.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is your handbook as a future sustainability innovator. However, you are not limited by the guidelines provided here, and we encourage exploration and personalization in your project or research path. While the Green Fund works on the basis of campus improvement, the learning experience you gain in submitting and executing a proposal is of equal importance. Your unique skillset and perspective offer inherent value in building the future of NAU.

This RFP is purposefully interdisciplinary and directed openly towards all members of the NAU community. No idea is too big, too small, or too "out-of-the-box" to be submitted and heard. We believe in the power of what you can create and contribute.



## 1.2 About the Green Fund

The Green Fund is NAU's main source for sustainability funding. University students, staff, and faculty may submit project proposals, which are reviewed and selected for funding by our committee of eight students supported by staff and faculty advisors. Projects are supported by the \$15 per student, per semester Green Fee, which adds up to a yearly budget that is upwards of \$600,000. The Green Fund allows students to utilize fee money to make campus a better place for themselves, their peers, and future students.

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## 2.0 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### **Do I have to be an undergraduate student to submit a proposal?**

The Green Fund accepts project proposals from all NAU affiliates, including undergraduate AND graduate students, staff, and faculty. Research grants are accepted from full-time enrolled undergraduate and graduate students.

### **Who is reviewing my proposal, and what does the process look like?**

Your proposal is individually reviewed by each member of the Green Fund Committee, composed of eight student members, faculty, and staff. Each committee member is assigned a specific role and offers a unique perspective. Your submission is then discussed by the committee as a whole and analyzed for its clarity, completeness, and potential impact on campus. We decide as a group whether to pass your proposal or return it to you for further work.

If your proposal is passed upon the first session of deliberation, you will receive a congratulatory notification and more information on the conditions of your funding. A round of proposal reviews typically takes around 2-3 weeks.

### **What happens if my proposal is not approved the first time?**

If your proposal is not initially approved, you will be given constructive feedback and assigned a committee member as your "point of contact" to guide you in resubmission. There is no penalty for resubmitting a proposal, and it will only help your chances of putting your idea into action!



**I'm not an Environmental Science & Sustainability major, or even involved in STEM. Can I still submit a proposal?**

The Green Fund welcomes proposals from every discipline and field of study. No matter where you are in your sustainability journey, no matter what your interests and career goals look like, we want to hear from you! There is no requirement that projects or research must be centered on “hard science”. In fact, this RFP is intended to encourage that voices from the arts, liberal studies, social sciences, and beyond be uplifted in the sustainability dialogue at NAU.

**I have no prior experience with research or grant writing. Am I eligible for funding?**

Any NAU Flagstaff Mountain Campus affiliate with any level of experience can submit for funding, as long as they demonstrate an interest in improving sustainability at NAU. Green Fund Committee members are eager and willing to work with you throughout the proposal process, and we offer a wealth of resources and opportunities for one-on-one review sessions to help you along the way.

**Does my research or project idea need to be novel?**

The Green Fund looks for ideas that better NAU's campus culture of sustainability, regardless of how new or glamorous they are. Innovation takes many forms, and relatively few concepts in climate science completely revolutionize the discipline. We have received and approved many proposals in the past that build on or draw inspiration from an existing project or body of research. In fact, previous efforts supported by the Green Fund, scientific literature, and traditional knowledge systems are great starting points for a proposal.

**Can a Green Fund project or research involve multiple people?**

There is no limit to who can share in a Green Fund project or research grant. We encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration and love to see a wide array of perspectives highlighted in a proposal.

**Why should I submit a proposal?**

Submitting a Green Fund proposal can provide valuable knowledge and experience to aid in building your resume and career. No matter where you stand in your educational or professional journey, successfully executing a project or research offers tremendous benefits. You will work closely with a faculty advisor, engage in hands-on learning, develop new skillsets, and leave a lasting positive effect on your community. It's not just a resume builder; the Green Fund is your avenue towards research experience, professional and academic development, and applied skill building.

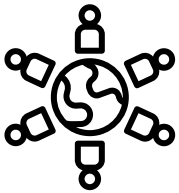
## 3.0 Focus Areas

Key “focus areas” are general topics frequently underrepresented in Green Fund research and project proposals. You are not required to adhere to any of these areas of study or to follow any of the examples provided. The purpose of this section is to provide inspiration and to demonstrate the wide-ranging potential of what a Green Fund project or research proposal can look like.

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### 3.1 Cultural Awareness & Appreciation

Promoting identity-based connection with sustainability in terms of cultural values, tradition, and history



- Indigenous Knowledges & Sciences (IKS)
- Ceremonies and celebrations
- Traditional agricultural practices
- Cultural stewardship
- Belief systems, legends, and stories
- Art, dress, music, and food

### 3.2 Environmental Justice

Evaluating the social, political, and economic dimensions of climate issues



- Economic and class stratification
- Racial justice
- Gender and sexuality dynamics
- Politics and legislature
- Psychology and sociality
- Disability and access
- Global perspectives

### 3.3 Data Science & Interpretation

Utilizing data manipulation and modeling programs to better understand Climate Action Plan progress



- GHG emissions
- Demographic data
- Environmental quality
- Cost avoidance and cost-benefit analysis
- Utilities consumption
- Life cycle analysis

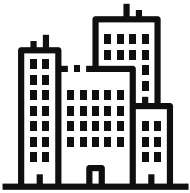


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### 3.4 Campus Infrastructure & Design

Modifying, revitalizing, or adding to campus structures to improve environmental quality, reduce pollutants, or foster green engagement



- Carbon sequestration
- Green roofs
- Alternative power
- Water and energy conservation
- Urban gardening
- Green spaces

### 3.5 Community Resilience & Engagement

Providing space and resources for student interaction with sustainability, encouraging interpersonal and human-environment connections on campus



- Science communication
- Educational events and outreach
- Artistic expression
- Resource creation
- Collaboration between clubs and organizations
- Workshops and skill/career development

### 3.6 Public Health & Pathology

Examining the physical and mental health effects of environmental change on the NAU community



- Acclimatization
- Behavioral response
- Risk factors
- Human development
- Monitoring strategies

## 4.1 Additional Information

The Green Fund Committee is here to help you succeed in achieving your campus sustainability mission. We are always open to receiving additional questions via email:

**GreenFund@nau.edu**

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## 4.2 Research Grant Information

### Green Fund Student Research Grant Website

### 2024 Student Research Grant Application

Grants will be awarded using rolling deadlines and the Committee will enforce a priority date with a soft close during week 12 of the semester. Due to limited time and a reduction in weekly meetings at the end of the semester, the Committee may not review applications submitted after.

Priority Deadline: November 11, 2024

Submit completed application packages to: GreenFund@nau.edu

### **Primary Requirements**

1. Research must be primarily conducted by either an undergraduate or graduate student who is currently enrolled full-time at NAU [Flagstaff Mountain Campus].
2. Research must be conducted under the guidance and approval of a full-time NAU faculty member.
3. Research design and goals must focus on improving sustainability on NAU's campus.

### **Additional Requirements**

- Funding provided by the Green Fund may not be used in any way for faculty salary.
- Funding may allow for use as student wages depending on the specifics of the project and explicit approval from the Green Fund. The Green Fund recognizes that some projects require minimal physical materials, but rather a significant amount of time.
- If funding is being utilized to pay student wages, the applicant must coordinate these payments through the department of the project advisor. The Green Fund does not coordinate student positions.



**Additional Requirements**

- Funding is limited to one proposal per student per year, but applicants may apply across multiple years. A student who has previously received a Green Fund Student Research Grant is no more or less likely to receive a second year of funding.
- Recipients of the Student Research Grant will be determined at the sole discretion of the Green Fund Committee. Funding is dependent on merit and goals-based review of all complete applications.
- As of Spring 2024, the Student Research Grant application portal and associated documents will remain available throughout the calendar year; however, funds will be encumbered at the beginning of each semester to cover the expected costs. Grants will be awarded using rolling deadlines to increase student participation and the Committee will enforce a priority date with a soft close during week 12 of the semester. Due to limited time and a reduction in weekly meetings at the end of the semester, the Committee may not review applications submitted after.
- Other university entities may need to be contacted for the utilization of space or alteration of existing infrastructure, this must be coordinated by the applicant.
- Upon approval, funding will be dispersed to the department of the project advisor.
- Undergraduate students may budget \$15.00/hour for 200 hours maximum
- Graduate students may budget \$15.50/hour for 200 hours maximum
- Any increase/decrease in these wage values is up to the discretion of the committee.

**Application Packet Requirements**

Only a complete application package will be considered for funding. A complete application package includes:

- An abstract of the project's goals, expected results, and broader impacts to the NAU campus community; 200-300 words.
- Detailed project proposal with specific information about current literature, research goals, methods, data collection and dissemination, and how this research will improve sustainability at NAU; 1-2 pages.
- Questionnaire (filled out from template provided in proposal form).
- Project budget (filled out from template provided in proposal form).
- Project timeline (filled out from template provided in proposal form).
- Letter of recommendation from the faculty supervisor of the project which specifically addresses the student's ability to conduct and complete the research (may be submitted separately from the rest of the application package, but must be received by the deadline).
- Signed commitment from the student to present a status update of their research in the form of both an oral presentation to the Green Fund Committee and a poster/exhibit presentation at the Undergraduate or Graduate Symposium, no more than 1 year after receiving notification of funding.

## 4.3 Project Information

### Submit a Green Fund Proposal

### Green Fund Project Application Form

### Space Committee Approval Form

All applications will go through a comprehensive vetting process, and you may be asked to provide more detailed information. The Green Fund is not responsible for acquiring the necessary permits, permissions, or approvals for a project, although we are happy to assist with this process if needed. Additionally, the Green Fund does not provide any ongoing maintenance costs unless otherwise specified by the committee. A sponsoring department must take responsibility for operations and management. The Green Fund Committee only meets during the academic year. All projects submitted outside of the regular academic year will be reviewed at the start of the next academic session.

### **Requirements for Funding**

- The project must be implemented on the Flagstaff Mountain Campus.
- The person submitting the project must be a NAU student, faculty, or staff member.
- Projects must provide all necessary documents, letters of support, and authorizations prior to submission.
- The Green Fund distributes funding on a reimbursement basis. Project teams should partner with an administrative office to provide upfront funding for the project. Once the project has been successfully completed, the Green Fund will reimburse the administrative partner.
- All project applications should be submitted to [greenfund@nau.edu](mailto:greenfund@nau.edu) for review.

### **Proposal Requirements**

- Executive Summary
- Project Components
- Project Specifics
- Project Requirements
- Budget
- Timeline
- Letters of Support



## 4.4 Additional Resources

[NAU Departments Directory](#)

[NAU Green Fund Project Archives](#)

[NAU Green Fund Important Documents](#)

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# 4.5 Your Pathway to a Successful Project Proposal

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## From Draft to Passed: *Your Pathway to a Successful Project Proposal*

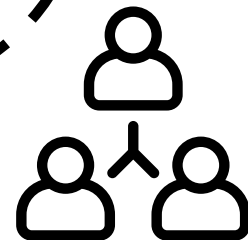
It all starts with an idea! Submit an **Idea Summary** to receive initial feedback from the Green Fund Committee.



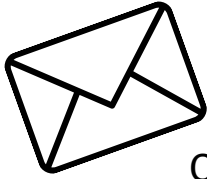
Research your idea and begin developing your project. Identify any potential sources or existing literature to support your design process. Make sure you know the **what, when, why, where, and how** of your proposal.



Seek out an on-campus **sponsoring department** for your project and get in touch with an interested contact to be your **project advisor**.







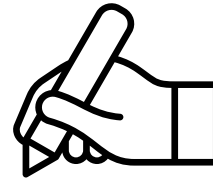
Collect **letters of support** from your sponsoring department and any department heads, chairs, building managers, faculty or staff that will be involved in your project's implementation and ongoing maintenance.

Obtain any necessary approvals. If your project modifies an existing campus area, follow the instructions outlined in the Space Committee document.

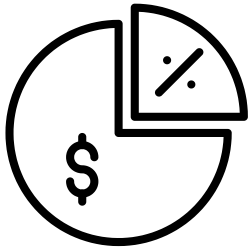


Pit stop: it is highly recommended that you meet with a Green Fund Committee member during the drafting and approval process. You can sit in on a meeting, contact us via email (**GreenFund@nau.edu**), or attend our open office hours.

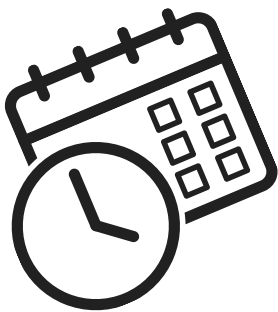
Begin drafting your project executive summary. This should be a 200-300 word description of your project's goals, outcomes, and impact on campus.



Quantify all costs associated with the project, including equipment, consumable materials, promotional swag, labor, upfront expenses, and continued maintenance. Calculate a total with an added 5% contingency and input these details into the budget template in the proposal form.

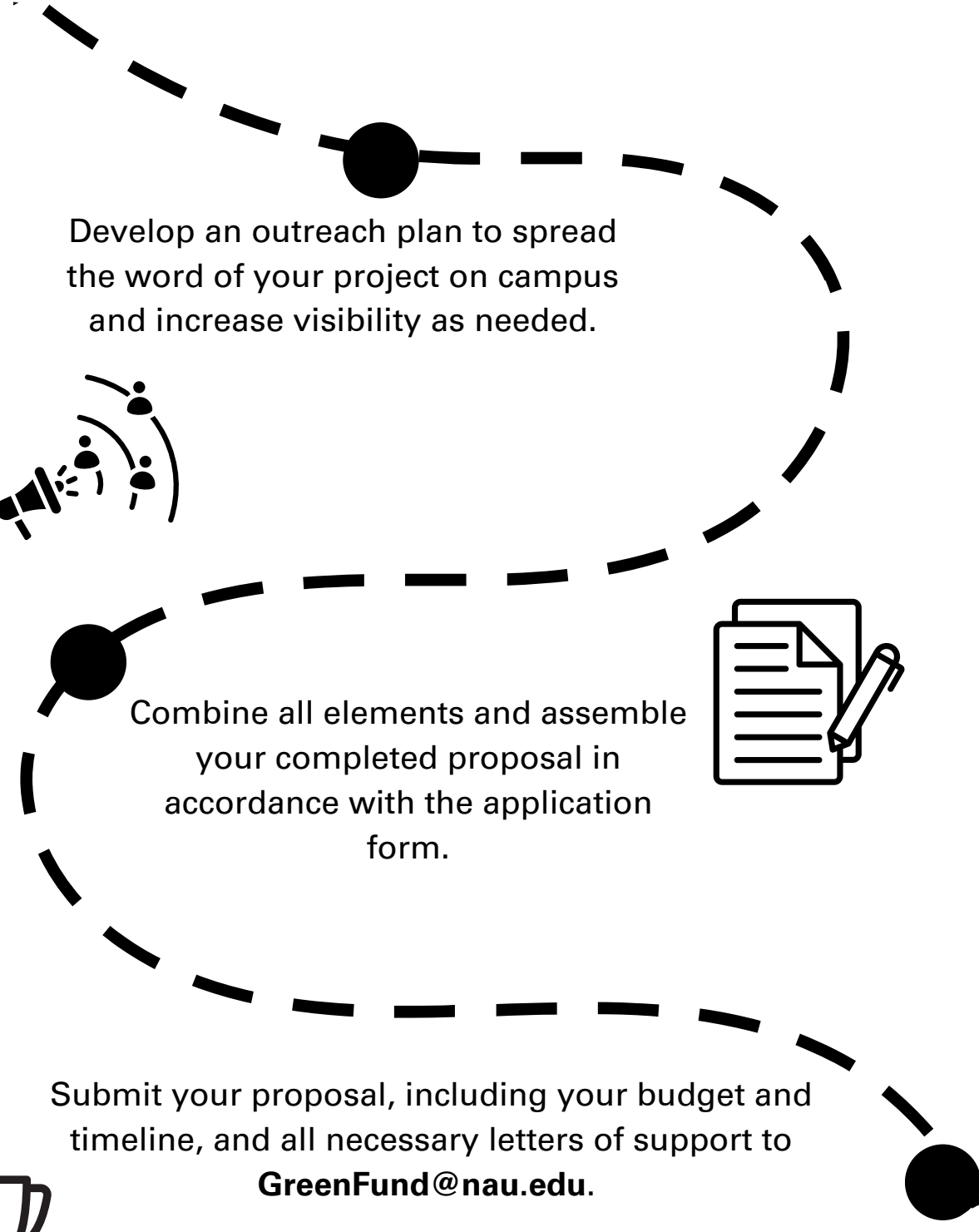


Plan the execution of your project along a realistic timeline by dividing your process into monthly stages. Don't rush-give yourself ample time to complete each phase.



Consider the environmental costs, benefits, and overall impact of your project. Take into account your research findings and perform any projection analysis in advance.





Develop an outreach plan to spread the word of your project on campus and increase visibility as needed.



Combine all elements and assemble your completed proposal in accordance with the application form.



Submit your proposal, including your budget and timeline, and all necessary letters of support to **GreenFund@nau.edu**.



Congratulations! The Green Fund Committee will deliberate and notify you of your proposal status following submission.



For all inquiries, contact  
us at  
**GreenFund@nau.edu**

