

March 18, 2012

Dear CU Environmental Board,

Here, the Recycling Outreach Team of the Environmental Center addresses the following grant components requiring additional information: product justification, budget details, incentive, innovation, and student involvement.

Reusable Mug and Bag Justification

The importance of having two options for students interested in reusable items is that some people may already have one of the items we are giving out, and some people may have budget constraints that prevent them from purchasing either one or both of these items. By showing how you can reuse in more than one way, and by trying to target where reuse can be improved in the life of each individual, we have decided that two items will better suit a range of student needs.

Chico bags are extremely popular for many reasons. The bags are lightweight, compactable, and very durable. We could purchase reusable bags at a cheaper price, but the quality would be compromised, and we do not want these items to become disposable. The Chico bags are a recognizable brand, which can sometimes help with creating behavioral change. The ease of use and the clip on the bag will encourage students to transport it with their belongings every day and make more use of it.

EcoMugs were chosen because they are a very popular reusable mug. A study conducted on campus by a group of students in Lisa Barlow's Sustainable Solutions Consulting course (http://envs.colorado.edu/uploads/undergrad/Reusable_Mugs_for_a_Greener_campus.pdf) concluded that most students want reusable mugs that have a handle and that can store both cold and hot drinks. As an Environmental Center employee, I have an EcoMug that I get questions about on a daily basis: Where did you buy that? How much is it? Can I get one? Popularly of the EcoMug and the versatility of the product combine to best suit our student body.

Budget Breakdown

The quotes from Chico Bag and EcoMugs are not available as an electronic invoice at the current moment because I have spoken with representatives and communicated only over the phone. EcoMugs are less than \$8 without shipping, and the cost with shipping comes out to be almost exactly \$8 per mug. Logo's are an additional fee. There would be no fee for the Environmental Center logo because they already have the print. The logo for the CU Environmental Center, which provides students with a website full of resources, is one possibility. The information is simple and promotes an ecologically friendly university and the Environmental Center. We are creating a simple logo for the banners that we will be painting promoting our message for the week. One of the student interactions will be to personalize the banner and add their own reusable and waste reduction mentality ideas.

As with the mugs, a logo for the Chico Bags is an additional fee for preparing the logo on the printing machine, and the price difference is a factor of how long and detailed the logo is. The cost of the Chico bags will potentially be discounted, however, there is no confirmation on this yet, so in the meantime, the price stands as the wholesale cost of \$3.99 per bag (which we rounded to \$4 in the initial grant). The available wholesale sellers are located within the greater Boulder area, such as Fort Collins and Denver, and we would be able to pick these up without an additional cost. We are also able to get free shipping with orders as large as the 125 bags we are requesting, for areas that are outside a reasonable bus distance.

After reviewing this with our team, we have decided that a logo on the EcoMugs and Chico Bags would be limiting to the number of people we can reach with reusable products. The purpose of our event is to communicate with students on a one to one basis and create an informative interaction with them before the reusable item is given away. This will be achieved through conversation,

imagery, quizzes, and pledges, which have shown to be very effective at events such as America Recycles Day.

Incentive, Student Involvement & Innovation

Our focus is to engage with students about our message and about how their actions make up an enormous contribution, and they can choose to either reduce or create waste. The opportunity to speak with students is what we hope will make the biggest difference in our campaign. Some of these incentives to use their reusable materials will come from learning more about the impact their actions have, through our displays, the quiz, and conversations with Recycling Outreach students. The students will have to take a quiz in order to receive their item. For America Recycles Day in November, this turned out to be an extremely successful tactic for educating students. In some cases, the effort of taking a quiz and interacting with Outreach employees will deter students from participating. Unfortunately, these students will not be allowed to have a mug or bag, but this will prevent students who are not eager to engage and learn and are unappreciative, from getting free items. The people who choose to participate in item giveaways that require some thought and engagement will more likely remember the interaction they had and therefore have incentive for using their item for its purpose. Peet's Coffee has agreed to provide us with free coffee for those bringing their own mug to campus. This will allow our event to still involve those who already own reusable mugs and therefore we will not be excluding students, but rather positively reinforcing eco-friendly behavior. We will also have decorations and stickers available with messages about recycling and environmentally positive action, such as those from the environmental center promoting reuse, green transportation, and waste reduction. Students will get to add style and personality to their items, which will encourage the use of these products. A sense of community, ownership, and responsibility will be instilled as incentives for the students participating in our event series.

The level of innovation for this campaign is really measured by the creative components of our event series, including our approach and how we display and promote behavioral changes to students. As a team, we will be taking the necessary time to interact with students to educate and inform them about the impact of their daily decisions. An important factor of our effort is that we are empowering students to reduce and reuse with the tools and resources that are available to them. Part of the program will be to provide students with ideas for being less wasteful, such as carrying their own silverware to school, "upcycling" clothes and other things to make new out of the old, where and how to recycle and donate items that most people throw away, and encourage behavior change with positive reinforcement. We will present creative ideas for living sustainably and educate students on how to make the easy changes that still fit their lifestyles. Involvement with students and performance by students who work on the Recycling Outreach team and other E Center teams such as Green Teams, Energy Outreach, and the Environmental Justice team will encourage more creative educational interactions between Environmental Center employees and the student body. Past events conducted by the Recycling Outreach team that involved more engagement and personal interactions have proven to be extremely successful. By providing students with resources and tools, we can create behavior changes that come from a place of personal integrity and positive thinking.

Thank you again for your consideration of our grant application. We are happy to provide students with as much enthusiasm, incentive, education, and resources they need to make a positive change. This is what drives our team, and we hope to pass the message on to students that their actions matter. We appreciate your thoughtful work and look forward to hearing from you!

Genuinely,

Victoria Kraft on behalf of the Recycling Outreach Crew