



Short-Term Projects 2024-2025 Grant Cycle Project Idea Worksheet

Please complete this worksheet and the questions found at the bottom of this page and send to Sam Kilpack at samantha@cw.utah.gov no later than **March 25, 2024**.

For project criteria, visit cw.utah.gov.

Name of the project:	Environmental Sustainability Education
Location of the project:	Summit County and Park City
Project contact person:	Helen Nadel, Executive Director
Project contact email address:	helen@summitcommunitygardens.org
Project category (select any that apply)	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation and transit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental protection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation stewardship <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic sustainability
Do you have community partners for this project? Please list your partners, if applicable:	Summit County School Districts Park City Day School Artes de México en Utah Recycle Utah Youth United (formerly Solomon Fund) PC Tots Preschool Holy Cross Ministries Preschool Momentum Recycling and Spoil to Soil
What is the estimated total cost of the project? How much will you request from the CWC?	\$113,356 Budget for our Education Programming CWC Request: \$15,000
What is the expected starting date and completion date for the project?	Start Date: July 1, 2024 Completion Date: June 30, 2025

1. Briefly describe your idea. How will it implement transportation and transit solutions, protect the ecosystems that originate in the Central Wasatch, steward recreational access, or sustain the economic viability of the project area?

Summit Community Gardens and EATS has a mission to gather, learn, and grow in our gardens and schools. We teach youth in the Wasatch Back about garden, environmental and nutrition education, including health and life sciences, ecosystems, horticulture, and the food system through a program called Edible Education. Lessons are taught in partnership with district and local schools, cultural organizations, and other nonprofits; providing age-appropriate lessons that integrate into curricula for children preschool through 8th grade.

Our *Environmental Sustainability Education* project expands our Edible Education program, developing and executing a plan to infuse a higher concentration of sustainability objectives, methods, concepts, and practices into the curriculum. Specifically, we intend to deepen our focus on land stewardship through demonstrating sustainable growing practices, composting, food rescue, local/seasonal eating, and honoring cultural heritage. Our existing 2,000 student audience, who participate in school-based lessons, after school classes, and on-site summer camps will learn social responsibility and begin to influence their schools' and community's culture to further value and implement these practices. This project consists of time and materials to achieve our impact.

Environmental Sustainability Education contributes toward **three of the four** stated grant objectives by:

1. Protecting the ecosystems that originate in the Central Wasatch - Through fun, interactive classes, children will learn the essentials of protecting our local ecosystems in the areas of waste reduction, water conservation, responsible land management, and sustainable food systems. We will enhance sustainability awareness by inserting more environment-based learning opportunities into our 32 weeks of afterschool program classes, 16 weeks of after school garden lessons, 16 weeklong summer camps, and numerous educational tours for school groups. For the past two years, Edible Education focused on building students' proficiency in sorting and diverting organic matter from trash and recyclable materials. This venture was a success, reaching over 1,500 students and diverting over 60,000 pounds of food waste, enabling K-9th grade students to directly participate in climate action and providing a tangible example of the power of collective impact.
2. Steward recreational access - A central learning space for students is our 1.5-acre community garden. This outdoor classroom is a platform to explore and connect to the natural world through gardening, outdoor play, and honoring the history of the land. This unique contribution to youth and their families is open to all in our community. New spaces include a natural dye garden to supplement art and science lessons, sensory stations, natural features for climbing (logs, boulders, wooden bridge), ADA-compliant flagstone and patio area, and native plants that stimulate the senses. Also, a new Imagination Garden was built this year, surrounded by mammoth sunflowers, with a trail of natural log slices that wind through the various stations to explore: a Fairy Garden, Alphabet Abacus, Xylophones, Drums, Bug Hotel, Sorting Table, Kitchen Play Area, and Outdoor Chalkboard. To increase a sense of belonging, we are installing bilingual (English and Spanish) educational signs.

3. Sustain the economic viability of our area - Summit Community Gardens and EATS teaches youth that they can grow food at our altitude. The curriculum's focus on food sustainability will reduce our reliance on imported goods, promote food security, and support local farmers and producers. Our curriculum also teaches kids to embrace the planet's long-term well-being through lessons that create awareness of our relationship with local resources.

2. Does this idea result in other benefits to the Central Wasatch and its users?

Benefit #1 - Changing Behaviors: Raising the next generation of land stewards, forming lifelong habits for sustainable food waste disposal, and creating more waste-conscientious consumers.

When we educate our youth with hands-on lessons and provide opportunities for them to connect to the environment, habits and behaviors shift. Participating in local climate solutions, such as Zero Waste initiatives, is a powerful way for youth to feel they are safeguarding their future.

Benefit #2 - Diversion of Food Waste: Actual reduction of waste in landfills, cleaner air with less carbon emissions, and food rescue and redistribution.

Data from various schools participating in our sustainability education and composting efforts show that our collective impact is growing. Last year, the food waste diversion project diverted over 66,000 pounds of organic food waste and involved 1,500 students among five participating schools. Students also learned the practice of food rescue by setting aside unopened packages of food, or untouched fruit, to a "share table." These items are collected for children participating in free/reduced lunch plans.

Benefit #3 - Systems Change: Encouraging schools and organizations to make conservation part of their value system.

We collaborate with local partners to achieve sustainability goals. Over the last two years, we have seen schools institutionalize composting and food diversion programs, programs which continue to gain traction as partners connect and support one another in their efforts. In addition, implementing measures that reduce ecological footprint often result in future cost savings and efficiencies.

Benefit #4 – Involving the Family: Promoting family activities and engagement, sparking a culture of volunteerism, and creating stronger social ties.

Bringing the community together and fostering a sense of belonging is central to our mission. We provide several opportunities to enhance health, wellness, and connection. First, the Gathering Space in the Garden contains picnic tables for themed dinners, special harvest celebrations, art and education classes, plot renter discussions, groups connecting and sharing ideas, and the public enjoying the space. Second, we host hundreds of volunteers for activities such as planting, weeding, harvesting, maintaining pathways, delivering fresh produce donations, and education assistance. Third, we encourage our 132 community garden plot renter families to use organic methods and sustainable practices, such as using a drip irrigation system, providing a composting center to reduce waste, encouraging recycling via designated receptacles, and utilizing reusable materials during our fundraising events.