

UIS Green Project Letter of Intent

Project Name: Menstrual Cup Initiative

Contact Information:

Project Team

Name	UIS Student/Faculty/Staff & Department (or Office)	UIS Email	Phone #
Sarahi Porcayo	UIS Student	Sporc2@uis.edu	3312509195
Jarrod Knapper	Student	Knapper2@uis.edu	8156140412
Rexann Whorton	Women's Center Program Director	Rworh2@uis.edu	N/A

Organization/Affiliation: Green Fee Committee, Women's Center

Project Information:

Please provide a brief description of the project. What are the goals and the desired outcomes of the project? Please address all of the above items including concrete examples of the desired outcomes.

The MCI's main goal is to provide a menstrual cup to all the students at UIS, if they choose to have one. The goal is to allow everyone to have the option of one and to provide an alternative to tampons and pads as well as educate people on the benefits and how to use.

Please describe why this project matters to you and how it relates to sustainability.

How will it aid in promoting the sustainability culture on campus? Describe your long-term vision.

This project really matters to me because as a person who menstruates, switching to a menstrual cup has been one of the best decisions I have ever made, I would love to spread that with more people and share an equal opportunity in menstrual health. This project relates to sustainability because of how sustainable switching to a menstrual cup can be. On average a person who menstruates will bleed for 5 days, during those 5 days they will use about 15 tampons. If a person menstruates every month, (average of 40 years total) that adds up to 7,200 products for that person's lifetime. On average a person will spend \$1,700 on just tampons, and \$4,500 on pads. With menstrual cups, you only buy one every 2 years, if they on average are 30 dollars, they cost the same amount as 4 boxes of tampons, the menstrual cup will last you longer than those tampons though. Along with being reusable, menstrual cups also help decrease the amount of plastic ending up in landfills as well in sewer systems that can eventually lead to oceans. Most tampons and pads come in plastic, with a plastic applicator and usually have plastic in them. All that plastic will most likely end up in landfills. If the University can offer all students a more sustainable option, then our university will be one of the first of many, to help in the effort to make campus' more environmentally friendly.

Where will the project be located?

The project does not need a specific location, distribution can happen publicly at first (at the Union) and if people would like a more private way of attaining their cup, they would be stored in the Women's Center building.

Please provide a brief summary of how students will be involved in or affected by the project:

Are there any relevant opportunities for student or multidisciplinary involvement with your project?

Students who choose a menstrual product would be able to use that product each month on their period. They would also have the chance to become educated on more sustainable period health products and methods that they could begin to share with more people. There is also research opportunities that can come if our students make the switch.

Please provide a brief summary of the project timeline (Most approved projects are proposed in the Fall and implemented in the Spring)

A brief summary of total project timeline and key milestones

Using Organicup, we would be able to choose a 14-day period in which we would send out information and surveys to all students and they would be able to indicate whether they would want a free menstrual cup. Organicup's campus cup project is a service that after you indicated your university as willing to help facilitate the spread of the cups, then they will ship information as well as free menstrual cups for all the individuals that chose to have one. Total I could see this project taking 2-3 months to completely implicate the large drop of menstrual cups. Afterwards, we would still want to supply a menstrual cup to those who were hesitant to receive one or as more students arrive at different times in the semester, we would also like to offer menstrual cups as a year-round option and not just after the 14 day period. So we could buy a supply of menstrual products and then we would be able to supply anyone.

Please provide a brief itemized breakdown of the funds needed.

We will help you factor in the cost of labor and installation. If you have a plan for where you would like to purchase supplies from, provide it here and include a URL link to each item on the desired retailer's website. This table shows the funds we would be asking for, to help supply menstrual cups after the 14 day period of organicup. First we would use organicup to obtain the majority of products but we would also like to have an extra supply of menstrual cups at the school. At the school we currently have 4,275 students, if 54.3% identifies as female, then that leaves about 2137 students who may possibly be interested in the free organicup menstrual cup. After the initial distribution, I think it would be good to have about 1000 cups in storage for the people who would be interested later, this would leave us with these options for supplying:

Product	Cost per Person (\$)	Total Cost (\$) for 1000 cups
June Cup	6	6000
OrganiCup	20	20,000
Diva Cup	~15	15,000

In the end, SGA would also love to fund this project so we may be asking for half of the prices listed.

Do you have any suggestions for how we could measure the success of this project?

A survey on how stratified they are as well as what we could do for improvement for future years.

Additional comments:

Any additional comments/relevant information about the project proposal

The Women's Center, Diversity Center and Gender and Sexuality Center are all very excited and would also like to endorse this project to move forward. In this email there is an official endorsement. I would also be very willing to hold meetings online and in person for those individuals wanting to learn more or needing help with the use of a menstrual cup. This is a great way to directly give back and really empower the people who menstruate. There is no shame in bodily functions that are part of our lives, we just need more people to educate themselves and help end the stigma of always having to hide periods.

Letter Confirming Women's Center partnership:



Whorton, Rexann A
Fri 10/29/2021 12:35 PM
Inbox

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Hello,

I spoke with Sarah today about the looming Green Fee proposal deadline. The Women's Center continues to be in support of moving forward with a menstrual cup initiative. Specifically in working with a company (Sarah mentioned Organicups) that can provide a certain amount of free or low cost items, and then using some green fee money to purchase cups to have on hand moving forward. We believe this will not only greatly increase sustainability, but reduce period poverty and promote equity of resources on campus. I plan to draft an e-mail in support of the program from the combined WC/DC/GSSS unit for this proposal for use of green fee funds and our willingness to store extra cups for future use in our storage space.

I wanted to loop everyone in on this topic since I have not had a chance to chat with Jarrod about it recently. I am hopeful that SGA might look at this issue and provide a letter or vote of support for this proposal as well since this was an initiative of interest. I will leave that to Jarrod to bring to SGA, as that is outside my purview.

Let me know if we need to meet or if anything else is needed from the Women's Center at this time.

Rexann Whorton
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References:

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College Factual. (n.d.). *University of Illinois at Springfield diversity: Racial demographics & other stats*. University of Illinois at Springfield Diversity: Racial Demographics & Other Stats - College Factual. Retrieved October 30, 2021, from https://www.collegefactual.com/colleges/university-of-illinois-at-springfield/student-life/diversity/#gender_diversity.

Pandia Health Editorial Team. (2021, August 26). *The true cost of your period*. Pandia Health. Retrieved October 30, 2021, from <https://www.pandiahealth.com/the-true-cost-of-your-period/>.