

# Conservation and Efficiency Revolving Fund (CERF)

## 2015-2016 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

*Note: There is only one CERF solicitation for the 2015-2016 academic year.*

### PURPOSE

The Conservation & Efficiency Revolving Fund (CERF) subcommittee invites proposals from UW students, staff, and faculty for campus energy, waste, and water efficiency projects. As opposed to a traditional request for research or project funding, the subcommittee seeks effective project *ideas* to implement on campus for good stewardship of university resources. Proposals should aim to make UW a better place, and successful proposal participants are encouraged to involve students in project development, outreach, and related research.

Funding from the CERF supports campus sustainability projects typically administered by the UW Physical Plant or other administrative units. Although funding does not accrue directly to the applicants, the CERF is an opportunity for members of the campus community to drive and shape sustainability efforts at UW. The funding also connects curriculum to real world problem solving by funding student-initiated projects and allows faculty to use campus as a living laboratory for research. Successful proposals will be publically acknowledged and authors will be recognized as leaders in conservation, efficiency, and campus sustainability.

### BACKGROUND

The CERF is a UW Campus Sustainability Committee initiative, successfully established in spring 2014 with seed capital provided by UW Physical Plant. Revolving funds such as the CERF are innovative funding mechanisms for campus efficiency, conservation, and sustainability projects that demonstrate an excellent return on investment. Savings from these projects are “revolved” back into the CERF to continually fund similar projects.

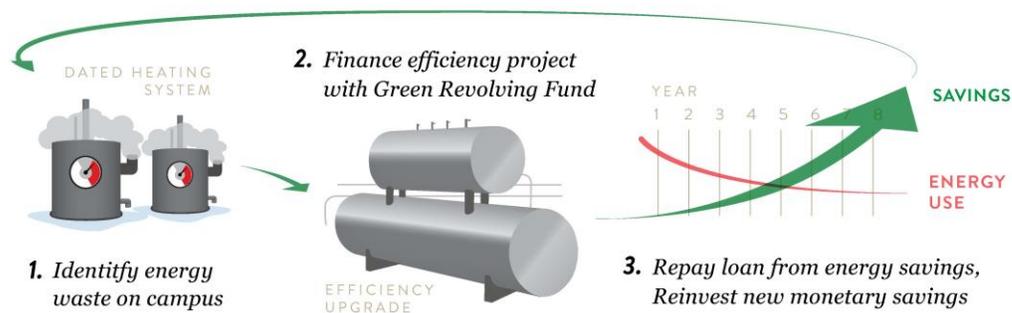


FIGURE 1: Green Revolving Fund Capital Cycle

Source: Sustainable Endowments Institute & Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, *Green Revolving Funds: An Introductory Guide to Implementation & Management*; p. 6.

Specifically, the CERF:

- Provides a formal mechanism for efficiency and conservation to serve as an investment in the university, rather than an expense, ensuring beneficial and profitable projects do not go unfunded due to capital constraints;

- Demonstrates good stewardship of state financial resources by reducing operating expenses;
- Creates a living laboratory for student engagement, applied research, and curriculum-based learning;
- Improves the UW built environment;
- Reduces exposure to energy price fluctuations;
- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions per UW's American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment obligations; and
- Provides examples of innovative efficiency measures and processes for implementation throughout the state per UW's land grant mission.

### **PROJECT CRITERIA**

Estimated proposal costs should not exceed the current fund amount of \$350,000. For this RFP, the subcommittee highly encourages *smaller projects, no less than \$1,000, to maximize student learning and engagement opportunities*. The subcommittee will evaluate projects based on financial return, ability to address deferred maintenance concerns and ongoing repair costs, student engagement and educational opportunity, overall environmental sustainability impact, and demonstration of clear financing, implementation, publicity, and maintenance plans. All CERF projects must make *measurable* energy, water, and/or waste efficiency or conservation impacts, including projects such as but not limited to:

- Energy – Lighting replacements, HVAC enhancements, weatherization and insulation, building controls, on-site renewable energy systems, renewable fuels (e.g. biodiesel) from agricultural or dining waste;
- Water – Low-flow appliances, systems to recover or reuse wastewater, irrigation enhancements;
- Waste – Increased composting, waste diversion through additional and/or improved recycling;
- Other campus sustainability projects that do not clearly fit into one of these categories, including behavior-based programs that demonstrate clear reductions in resource use and costs.

### **BUDGET**

Proposed budgets are restricted solely to project implementation costs, including design, materials, labor, and measurement/verification. Other costs, such as research, publication, travel, salary, or student support, are not currently permissible.

As the CERF is funded through savings from previously funded projects, the entire \$350,000 may not be available during each funding cycle. Based on available funding, selected projects may not be officially funded and implemented until the following fiscal year. Applicants are still encouraged to apply for larger-scale projects, as partial funding may be awarded or other funding sources may become available.

### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Submit proposals as a single Word or pdf document by email to [mgeiger1@uwyo.edu](mailto:mgeiger1@uwyo.edu) and [rbudowle@uwyo.edu](mailto:rbudowle@uwyo.edu) by May 6, 2015. Applicants must complete Part 1 of the proposal and cover sheet. Proposal narratives should not exceed two single-spaced pages and should address the above criteria and CERF goals. Additionally, narratives should provide clear examples of similar efficiency and conservation projects successfully implemented in other university or commercial settings and/or from related literature. Finally, provide a biographical sketch or resume not exceeding one page for all authors.

Applicants should complete parts 2 and 3 of the proposal, relating to estimated costs, benefits, and project implementation, as fully as possible. Providing further information will increase the likelihood of

project selection. The subcommittee recognizes, however, that many applicants eager to contribute to efficiency and conservation measures at UW may not have the expertise to provide such information and encourages applicants to collaborate with subcommittee members on proposals. The subcommittee will also announce formal, open CERF brainstorming and collaboration sessions during the semester to facilitate this process. *Subcommittee members are available to provide CERF informational presentations and sessions for courses and student organizations upon request.*

The CERF subcommittee, which is comprised of students, staff, and faculty, will formally review proposals and publicly announce successful projects by June 15, 2016.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS**

<http://www.uwyo.edu/sustainability/cerf/>

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