



URBAN GREEN LAB™

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#livesustainably

Students in Sustainability

Workplace Collaboration Internship

Program Handbook
2020-2021



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What is the Students in Sustainability Program?

The Urban Green Lab Students in Sustainability Internship program places Metro Nashville Public School high school juniors and seniors in green teams inside of Nashville workplaces, which enables students to witness how businesses and nonprofits make sustainable choices. Additionally, participants have the opportunity to build mentorships, gain professional skills, and discover how any job can be a green job. Each academic year, interns work side-by-side with professionals who are working on their sustainability strategic plan. The students work with a small group of peers to research one of the tasks within the plan and formally present their findings and recommendations at the end of the semester.



Testimonials

(2019 - 2020 Cohort)

"I became more **knowledgeable on sustainability** and I gained a lot of experience."



"The discussions **inspired me** to think of more sustainable habits I can implement in my life."



"I really enjoyed the program! Working with my partners and **making new friends** made the program that much better."



HISTORY

The Students in Sustainability Program was created via a wonderful partnership between Urban Green Lab, MNPS, PENCIL, and Turner Construction. In addition to several other advisors, the group collaborated to create a program that brought youth voices into the workplace and taught students that sustainability principles should be applied no matter what line of work they pursue in the future.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, 11 seniors from McGavock High school worked with one of three great organizations: Country Music Hall of Fame, Turner Construction, and CMT. Each group of students attended monthly green team meetings at the workplace and were tasked with solving a sustainability problem that the organization was facing, and presenting solutions by creating a formal presentation at the end of the semester.

The first iteration of the program was named Sustainable Professional Pathways and has since been renamed to Students in Sustainability. Turner Construction Continues to be a valued supporter and sponsor this program.

The logo for Turner Construction, featuring the word "Turner" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font.

LOGISTICS

- Urban Green Lab will select workplace partners who are participating in the Urban Green Lab Recognition program. This ensures that all students are paired with an organization with a robust and organized Green Team.
- Students will apply to participate in the internship via an online application that includes 3 short essays. Urban Green Lab will conduct interviews and match groups of 2-3 students with selected workplace partners.
- All workplace partners and students will participate in an online orientation in early October in order to give students a baseline understanding of sustainability and prepare them for entering the professional world.
- Students will attend monthly green team meetings that partner organizations will host and participate in discussions, acting as an equal member of the team.
- Partner organization, Urban Green Lab, and student will work together to identify a objective on the organization's sustainability strategic plan that the students will take on.
- Students will be tasked with researching the objective, the organization, and sustainability principles in order to propose a process or solution to completing the ob.
- At the end of the program, students will choose a medium to present their proposals to Urban Green Lab and the partnering organization. (ex. paper, powerpoint, PDF proposal, video, etc.)
- The hours spent working with the partnering organization can be used towards the Tennessee Promise scholarship.
- The project can be applied toward any capstone or AVID course.
- **This program will take place virtually for the duration of the fall semester.**
Arrangements for the spring semester will be determine before the holiday break.



August

Urban Green Lab
hosts information
session.
Applications are
opened on 8/10.
Workplace
partners are
selected.

September

Applications are
closed on 9/10.
Students are
interviewed and
placed with
organizational
partners.

October

Students
receive
acceptance
by 10/1.
Orientation
for students
and partners.

October-
March

Students attend
monthly green
team meetings.
Research a
problem from
strategic plan and
create proposal
for solution.

April

Students present
their proposal to the
organization and
Urban Green Lab.

PROGRAM TIMELINE

2020 - 2021 ACADEMIC YEAR



October

November

Dec-Jan

February

March

April

Introductions

- Attend first green team meeting
- Students and partner select objective from strategic plan for students to pursue

Resource Gathering

- Students Determine what resources they need from the organization to start their research
- Identify and collect all relevant internal and external resources

Research Phase

- Conduct thorough research on the objective, background, and possible solutions.
- Present mid-program update to partner.

Proposal Planning

- Utilize research to begin proposal creation.
- Determine the medium in which the proposal will be presented.

Completion

- Attend final green team meeting with partnering organization.
- Students begin preparing proposal presentation.

Presentation

- Students present their project to partners and Urban Green Lab
- Students complete completion survey and receive certificates of completion.

PROJECT TIMELINE

2020 - 2021 ACADEMIC YEAR



HOW THE SPP PROJECT MAY WORK WITHIN CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

1. Identify a workplace sustainability problem or opportunity - examples include:
managing materials for zero waste, lack of recycling infrastructure or education,
engaging employees in alternative transportation options, pursuing a workplace
certification (for onsite garden or other effort)
2. Research - may include: understanding potential reasons for the problem, finding
examples or models that lend to understanding of problem/solution/ or inform
project planning (**research paper**)
3. Develop creative potential solutions to the problem or options for pursuing
opportunity through collaboration and critical thinking, identify necessary
stakeholders and ensure all have opportunity for input (**research paper/product**)
4. Determine pros and cons of these potential solutions and options (**research
paper)/product**)
5. Identify best solution/option and develop a plan for implementation to include
communication plan for stakeholders and broader community, how will be
measured, what success will look like, and how the project or plan will be sustained
beyond the duration of the student involvement (**product**)
6. Prepare program/project evaluation and summary report, presentation for
stakeholders (**product/presentation/portfolio**)

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Students will:

- Attend Students in Sustainability orientation in early October.
- Prioritize this program as an internship opportunity.
- Attend all green team meetings as scheduled by the organization partner.
 - Missing a meeting without prior notification may lead to removal from the internship.
- Participate in discussions at green team meetings.
- Behave in a professional and respectful manner during all interactions with partners, Urban Green Lab, and fellow students.
- Work as a team with 1-2 other students
- Throughout the term, research the organization, industry, sustainability, and other relevant subjects to help develop a solution proposal to a sustainability problem identified by the green team as part of their strategic plan.
- Present research and solution in a medium that you choose as a team or individual student. Every student must participate in either a group presentation or create an individual presentation.
- Mediums may include a research paper, a youtube-style video, portfolio, powerpoint presentation, PDF proposal or other creative presentation format.
- Communicate in a timely manner with Urban Green Lab regarding any concerns or questions.
- Meetings may be used as hours towards Tennessee Promise and this experience can be used for a future or current capstone or AVID project.

Professional Partners

- Must be a participant of the Urban Green Lab Recognition program
 - Will have created a strategic plan with UGL before October 2020
- 1-2 members of green team will act as “mentors” to students from Oct 2020-April 2021
 - Mentors should respond promptly to student emails, calls, and inquiries within 1-2 business days
- Provide resources and guidance as needed to the students
- Participate in a 30 minute check in call with students once per month between green team meetings, as needed.
- Ensure that meetings remain professional and appropriate for students
- Pre-schedule all monthly green team meetings from October 2020 through March 2021 and send dates to UGL by October 15, 2020
 - Dates can be changed as needed but students must be communicated with.
- Understand that students are to attend each green team meeting and have an equal seat at the table.
- Email UGL with student attendance after each meeting
- Welcome and value contributions and feedback from students.
- Exhibit appreciation for the work the students are doing for your green team.
- Communicate with UGL regarding any concerns or issues.

Urban Green Lab will:

- Provide a solid foundation. For the program and all stakeholders.
- Be a resource for students, partners, and teachers.
- Help problem-solve, mediate and settle conflicts or issues as needed.
- Ensure all stakeholders expectations are being met.
- Consistently communicate with all stakeholders.
- Support students with regular mentoring, provision of resources, and general guidance.

MNPS teachers and coaches will:

- Support students in fulfilling Capstone requirements.
- Support student research.
- Act as liason between Urban Green Lab and MNPS to ensure programs are well aligned and serving student needs.
- Coordinate resources as needed by students.

RESOURCES - GLOBAL/NATIONAL

Environmental Defense Fund Climate Corps Resources

<http://edfclimatecorps.org/resources/our-resources>

-Blog, webinar series on sustainability issues, case studies, written report examples, etc

World Resources Institute

<https://www.wri.org/tags/sustainable-business>

NRDC Sustainable Business Case Studies

<https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/fostering-green-business-report.pdf>

Environmental Resource Management

<https://www.erm.com>

-Sustainable business consulting, online case studies

Nashville Office:

5000 Meridian Boulevard, Suite 300

Franklin, Tennessee, United States 37067

T: +1 615 656 7100

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

United States Green Building Council

<https://www.usgbc.org/>

RESOURCES - LOCAL

Urban Green Lab
www.urbangreenlab.org

Socket's Nashville Sustainability Outlet
<https://socket.nashville.gov/>

Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation - Office of Policy and Sustainable Practices
<https://www.tn.gov/environment/program-areas/opsp-policy-and-sustainable-practices.html>

Compost Nashville
<https://compostnashville.org>

Turnip Green Creative Reuse
<http://turnipgreencreativereuse.org>

Green Village Recycling
<https://www.greenvillagerecycling.com>

Metro Nashville Waste and Recycling
<https://www.nashville.gov/Public-Works/Neighborhood-Services/Recycling/Residential-Waste-and-Recycling-Facilities.aspx>

Davidson County Long-Term Zero Waste Master Plan
<https://www.nashville.gov/Public-Works/Solid-Waste-Master-Plan.aspx>

Walk Bike Nashville
<https://www.walkbikenashville.org/>

Nashville Connector
<https://nashconnector.org/>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Program Manager: Nicole Brose

nicole@urbangreenlab.org
615-390-8341

Executive Director: Todd Lawrence

todd@urbangreenlab.org
703-231-4884

Mailing Address:

1310 Clinton St. Ste. 205
Nashville, TN 37203

Website: www.urbangreenlab.org

General Inquiries: connect@urbangreenlab.org

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