

Brita Eco-Challenge Grant

Outline

Students at St. Lawrence would like to use this grant to expand our existing Green Bikes program to offer a long-term loan service. Currently our school has a bike-sharing program that allows University community members to check out one of twelve bikes from the library to use for 48 hours. The program is extremely popular and has been very successful. However, because the bikes can only be checked out for 48 hours and they are primarily used as on campus transportation, they have not had as substantial of an environmental impact as we imagine some additional bikes could provide.

By implementing a semester-long bike loan program we can better meet our demand for bike loans, and increase the environmental benefits of bike sharing. Although all students will be eligible to borrow one of these bikes for the semester, we would especially like to target students living off campus, international students and other students who fly to campus and cannot easily bring a bike from home.

There are approximately 85 students living off campus, 60 of these are in two sorority houses and 25 are seniors living on their own. The sorority members and most of the seniors live within one mile of the campus, which is a slightly long walk but well within safe and easy biking distance. Most of them commute to campus in private cars and many make the trip multiple times per day. We have completed a campus transportation survey and our data show that this commute accounts for the bulk of these students' driving. Our survey also shows that 45% of students would bike more often if there were more bikes available. By giving students like these the opportunity to borrow a bike for an entire semester, we hope to provide them with an alternative means of transportation and to decrease the environmental impact of their commute.

We would also like to target international students and others who may not be able to easily bring a bike from home or who may not own a bike. We would like to be able to offer these students a quality bike to use around campus and for making runs into town (again, less than one mile). By loaning them a bike, we hope to prevent them from buying a cheap bike at a box store and then abandoning it or throwing it away when they graduate (as we have observed in the past). We hope that sharing a bike will encourage people to reduce their personal consumption and consequently their environmental impact. Our data have shown that international students are already some of our most frequent users of the Green Bikes program.

In order to expand the program we would like to purchase 25 new Kona Africa Bikes. They are the same model that we use in the rest of our fleet and were chosen for their durability, ease of maintenance, low cost and philanthropic component. The bikes are extremely rugged and can handle the heavy use of college students. They are designed to require very little maintenance and to be easily repaired should they break. They are also very affordable and Kona donates one bike to healthcare workers in Africa for every two bikes purchased.

As with our current bike fleet, the semester long loaned bikes will be maintained by our Outdoor Program. Bikes will have routine maintenance done before they are loaned out and when they are returned, as well as any maintenance requested by the users during the loan period. More information on the costs of maintenance can be found in the budget

section. Because the bikes will be loaned out by the University library, it will be possible to use their billing system should the bikes be damaged or lost.

This grant could provide us with the necessary funding to substantially improve an already successful initiative, increase its positive environmental impact and inspire students to become lifelong bicycle commuters. With long-term loans, we hope to increase bicycle use, and subsequent environmental benefits, among a group of students who are already frequent users of our 48 hour loan program.

Budget

25 Kona Africa Bike- \$9,375 (\$375 each)

25 Wald Rear Bicycle Basket- \$275 (\$11 each)

Total from grant: \$9,650

University Contribution: 2 six bike racks and installation-\$300

Continual bike repair and maintenance-we already own tools and have a maintenance budget

The bike racks are for two off campus houses. We wish to add rear baskets to these bikes (as we did with our current fleet) so students can more easily use them for commuting, front baskets alone do not provide enough capacity. As with our current (48 hour bike rentals) we will perform standard maintenance on the bikes. We generally cover flats, lube, and brakes; any damage that appears to be due to bike abuse will be covered by the student. This maintenance program will ensure continued use of our bikes for years (we are still using bikes purchased in 2005), contribute to the biking culture at St. Lawrence and reduce short trip vehicle emissions associated with on campus and in town travel.

Timeline

January/February 2010

Receive funds and purchase bikes and baskets from Wear on Earth, a local retailer

February/March 2010

Receive shipment of bikes and baskets and store at University

Early March 2010

Assemble bikes

- The last time we assembled these Kona bikes, it took about 1.5 hours per bike with one person working on each bike. With this in mind, it will take approximately 38 man-hours to assemble the bikes. The school staff and students involved in the project will do this work.

Advertise program and sign up users.

- Advertising will be done through the campus community website and through information sessions. Some of these will be organized for

members of the sororities and students living in the International House (our main target groups).

- Once we complete our advertising, we will begin signing up users to loan out the bikes. Because we expect the demand to exceed 25 users, we will hold a lottery to determine who will receive bikes. Some of the spaces in the lottery will be reserved for the sorority members and international students, and some spaces will be open to all students.
- Once students are signed up, they will complete the necessary paperwork including a waiver and use agreement.

Late March/Early April 2010

Distribute bikes to users.

- We will begin to distribute bikes once the snow has melted and biking on roads is safe and comfortable.

May 2010

End of semester loan, recall bikes

- As students leave campus at the end of the year, we will collect the bikes. There will be an exact due date set when they check out the bikes. If the bikes suffered damage or were not returned, students will be billed for the costs on their final University bill. Once all repairs and maintenance are completed, the bikes will be placed into storage.

June 2010

Redistribute bikes

- During the summer, there are many students on campus enrolled in summer classes and conducting research. We will make the bikes available to these students to loan for the time they will be on campus during the summer.

August 2010

End of summer loan, recall bikes

- At the end of the summer session, we will collect bikes and perform maintenance.

Sign Up Users and Distribute Bikes

- When students return to school we will once again advertise the program and hold information sessions. About a week into school, we will hold a lottery for those interested in borrowing a bike.

Early November 2010

End of semester loan, recall bikes

- As it begins to get cold and snowy and riding becomes unsafe and uncomfortable, we will once again collect the bikes. We will set this due date when students check out a bike in August. The bikes will be inspected and repaired and then placed into storage for the winter.

We will follow this basic timeline as the semesters progress and may slightly adjust the exact dates for distribution and the due dates (as our academic calendar changes slightly year to year). After each loan period we will distribute a survey to users to determine their actual bike usage and obtain suggestions for program improvements.