



EMPHASIZING IMPACT: EXPLORING EFFECTIVE PROJECT REPORTING STRATEGIES FOR GRANT-FUNDED SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Session: A, Breakout Room #28

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Grant-funded efforts are integral to sustainability work, yet it is difficult to measure the impact that these interdisciplinary projects have. Thus, metrics must be collected to evaluate how projects are reaching their goals, receiving necessary support, and making a community-engaged impact. This research is conducted through an internship as the Project Development Specialist at the Campus Sustainability Fund (CSF). The CSF is a student-run and student-funded grant program at the University of Washington whose mission is to promote resilience, equity, and justice-centered sustainability on campus. This research provides recommendations for how the CSF's current quarterly reporting process can be enhanced to better measure project impact. This is investigated through stakeholder interviews with (1) current CSF-funded project teams and (2) sustainability-focused grant organizations at other universities. Based on research findings, it is recommended that instead of developing a new reporting process, the CSF should dedicate time to improving the existing system. This should be pursued by exploring routes for project categorization and metric development beyond implementation-oriented phases. Additionally, the CSF should seek to implement a more structured schedule for project check-in meetings. Lastly, the CSF should assess the potential for integrating creatively-focused reporting methods. These findings will enable the CSF to meaningfully improve its reporting process, which will position the CSF to better understand and communicate project impact, expand funding opportunities, reach new audiences, and sustain funded projects. Ultimately, this research will provide a framework for the CSF and other grant organizations to more effectively support interdisciplinary, justice-centered sustainability initiatives.