# *Thank you for your commitment to green initiatives at the University of Illinois. One of the final steps in completing the terms of the funding agreement for your project is the submission of a Final Report with key information about your project. You will also need to submit a detailed report of expenses (if you don't list it within this document) as well as supporting photos to showcase your project.*

# *Please be as accurate as possible in describing the project (including possible setbacks or challenges in meeting the initial goals of the project). Not fully meeting your project's goals will not disqualify you from making future funding requests as long as your reports are as complete and accurate as possible. If you have any questions, please contact Micah Kenfield, Program Advisor for the Student Sustainability Committee, at* [*kenfield@illinois.edu*](mailto:kenfield@illinois.edu)*.*

**Project Name:** Pipette Tip Recycling

**Date of Report Submission:** 1/13/2017

**Project Purpose:**

Our goal with funding from the SSC is to take 600lbs of plastic out of the waste stream with using a pipette tip recycling program.

**Project Summary:**

Our goal was to capture the waste from our work that involves single use sterile pipette tip boxes, which are safe to be recycled. With funding from the SSC we could take 600lbs of plastic out of the waste stream using a clean pipette tip recycling program.

The program works through a partnership between VWR, a scientific supply company, and TerraCycle. With funding from the SSC, we purchased the pre-paid UPS shipping cardboard recycling boxes through VRW, filled them with clean tip boxes, and shipped them to TerraCycle. Through the stated program, Teracycle will recycle every tip box it receives. To measure our reduction of waste we weighed each box as we send it out for recycling to track our total landfill reduction.

Our total amount of recycled plastic was more than 900 Lbs. The pipette tip boxes are lightweight and often take up more space than weight, the total amount recycled was an impressive 103 cubic feet. Based on the EPA’s WARM model, recycling ~950lbs of plastic is equivalent to a reduction of 0.34 metric tons of CO2E emissions. Likewise, the type 5 plastic material was not currently being recycled, therefore our efforts in recycling were a bonus to the current recycling culture at UI. We were able to expand recycling to both the Bacteriology and Virology sections within the VDL relatively easily, as they are just down the hall for our laboratory. Through the internal press release of our project, we were able to inspire a pathobiology laboratory on another floor at Vet Med to recycle their pipette tip boxes. We believe this has been a worthy endeavor, and plan to continue recycling boxes in the future.

**Summary of Project Expenditures:**

budget general supplies= $2167.70 total spent general supplies= $2767.33

budget student wages= $1872.00 total spent student wages= $1120.00

total budget grant $4040 total spent $3887.33

**Problems/Challenges Encountered**

We were able to easily establish and set up our project with very little difficulty.

**Problems/Challenges Encountered**

We didn’t come across any challenges or setbacks to establish or continue our project.

**Student Involvement and Outreach to Date:**

Our student has been the primary resource for preparation of the tip boxes to be submitted for recycling. Our student was responsible for tracking the number of boxes and total amount recycled. We expect our student to present a poster detailing the outcome of our efforts at an upcoming Campus Sustainability Symposium.

**Marketing and Promotion Efforts to Date:**

Vet Med communications and marketing put together this story that was published on the Vet Med news website and was also part of a scrolling video selection used on monitors in the vet med building and teaching hospital. The story was able to been seen by Vet Med staff as well as public visitors to Vet Med.

<http://vetmed.illinois.edu/diagnostic-lab-staff-wins-4k-recycling-grant>/

In addition, all current veterinarian students rotate though our facility during their first year and they were all shown our project as part of the tour of the laboratory. We also gave tours to visiting consulting laboratories over the course of the funding and they were able to learn of our project. Many were interested in setting up their own practices when returning to their facilities.

**Additional Comments:**

We found over the course of the project that the time required for students to work on the project was less than we anticipated, therefore we under spent the amount budgeted for wages and spent additional money in the supplies and materials which enabled us to recycle more. Just recently, we discovered that Fisher Scientific offers a similar recycling program and the shipping boxes purchased through their company are 1/3 less than the VWR boxes. This helped us stretch our last remaining dollars to buy more boxes and will be a benefit in cost saving s for future projects.

In addition to the above fields, please provide a detailed accounting of how the funding was spent as well as pictures of the final project in an email to [kenfield@illinois.edu](mailto:kenfield@illinois.edu). Thank you again for your commitment to sustainability.