



# The Student Environment Centre

Student Resource Group  
University of British Columbia

6138 Student Union Blvd. Box 39, or Room 245  
Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z1  
enviro@ams.ubc.ca

## Eco-Initiatives Form: Above \$500

Name: [REDACTED]

Date: Saturday October 18, 2014

Contact Email or Phone: [REDACTED]

Club or Group Affiliation: UBCC350

Amount Requested: \$650

### TREASURER USE ONLY:

Approved

Modified

Denied

Submitted as of:

Notes:

### 1. Describe your project and its purpose (approximately 200 words)?

UBC's climate justice activist group, UBCC350 spearheaded the Divest UBC campaign last year, is continuing in full force this year. We are targeting UBC's faculty for more leverage in lobbying the Board of Governors to follow through with the student body's demand to divest the approximately 100 million dollars of our endowment fund which is currently invested in the fossil fuel industry.

We will be achieving this through mobilizing more students to reach out to faculty members, asking professors for their support through the signing of an Open Letter from the Faculty prepared by UBCC350, holding a faculty information night and debate, with the ultimate goal of amassing enough voting support from UBC faculty for a favourable outcome in the faculty referendum planned for January 26 – Feb 8, 2015.

After last year's successful student campaign, 76.9% of students voted in

favor of UBCC350's Divest UBC Campaign at the UBC AMS elections. In the meantime, the university updated its Endowment Responsible Investment Policy to incorporate a section on investment policy development which outlines the five criteria that must be met before divestment will be considered as a policy option. Despite the overwhelming student support for divestment and the growing number of institutions worldwide that have opted to go fossil free, UBC has thus far not agreed to begin the process of divesting from fossil fuel companies.

We believe that by showing the Board of Governors the majority of students and faculty, the two largest bodies on campus, support fossil fuel divestment, it would put significant pressure on them to act. With the Student Environment Centre's financial assistance, UBCC350 will continue the Divest UBC campaign urging UBC to present itself as a leader in the global fossil fuel divestment movement, helping to mobilize passionate UBC students to climate action and ultimately decreasing the economic and political strength of the fossil fuel industry which is one of the largest contributors to global emission.

**2. Outline how your project pertains to the environment and sustainability at UBC (approximately 200 words)?**

UBCC350's faculty divestment campaign directly pertains to the environment and sustainability. By gaining the majority of faculty support on divestment, it will put UBC one step closer to withdrawing our holdings in the fossil fuel industry and transition to fossil free companies. UBC is already making great strides as an institution in sustainability, but to be a leader in divestment alongside universities such as Stanford University and the University of Glasgow will raise our overall environmental profile and hopefully create a spin-off of environmental action on campus. It will be a tremendous source of empowerment for students to be responsible for such positive environmental change.

Our current investments in fossil fuel do not align with the University's image as a globally responsible, forward thinking, and innovative entity, and it is time to change that. By divesting, we will be taking removing approximately 100 million dollars from the toxic industry and adding to the overall divestment commitment pool of an estimated 50 billion dollars, according to the recent Arabella report.

**3. How will you document the successes and difficulties of your project? In what ways do you foresee this documentation aiding other SEC Eco-Initiatives (approximately 200 words)?**

We have already begun documentation on our faculty divestment campaign and will continue to provide in depth reflection on the struggles and successes of our initiative. This will be our second campaign on divestment and we are already using our past experiences to build a stronger and more efficient platform. We

are currently operating through Nationbuilder, a website and database engine that is one of the most widely used for community organizations, which tracks our supporters, open letter signatures, and acts as an accessible place for weekly meeting minutes and next steps.

We are also using the snowflake model (e.g. UBCC350->Biology Team->Snowflake members) to reach as many faculty members as possible for their support. This allows us to split off into subgroups and operate on a smaller, more manageable level. Our executive team is comprised of faculty, graduate and undergraduate students who spend a lot of time planning our next steps. Information is shared with UBCC350 members through meeting minutes, email updates and updates on our internal Facebook page. Campaign background and rationale is well documented and is available on our website [ubcc350.org](http://ubcc350.org) for members and non-members alike.

This campaign will be able to help other SEC initiatives because we will be able to track the specific number of support signatures and votes in favour of divestment, correlating to our strategies and leadership models. This year we are placing a lot of importance on networking with other groups and hope to receive feedback on our approach, which we will learn from and pass on. This campaign is looking to achieve some unprecedented things, such a faculty-wide referendum organized primarily by students and will be a valuable learning experience for the UBC advocacy community.

- 4. For most requests of funding of this amount, the SEC would like to see other funding sources contributing to the financing of your project. Are you pursuing any other sources of funding? If so, what sources, and for what amount? (SEC Treasurers can help you identify other sources of funding.)**

Yes we are and have been pursuing other funding opportunities. During this academic year, UBCC350 has applied to the Social Justice Centre, where we were helpfully directed to the Student Environment Centre, though received no funding for our \$650 budget. We also have plans to apply for the Global Lounge Fund.

- 5. What aspects of your project (purchases, bookings) will SEC funding be used for?**

Promotional Materials:

Printing: Educational aids and reports: \$100

Display board materials: \$50

Faculty support letters: \$50

Advertisements for faculty event: \$50

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Reusable dual-sided display board: \$200

Faculty Event/Debate:

Refreshments (finger food, coffee, etc.): \$200

Signed (Your Name):

**SEC Treasurer**

Name:

Signature:

**SEC Chair**

Name:

Signature:

**A note about Eco-Initiatives Grants**

If your project is approved, the SEC will reimburse you for the purchases made. You must provide the SEC with proof-of-purchase. If you have any questions regarding the Eco-Initiatives Funding, please contact SEC Treasurers. Arrangements can be made to provide students with funding before purchasing if they cannot afford to make the purchase for their project and then receive compensation. Reimbursement usually takes about 5 business days. Eco-Initiatives Grants can fund a wide variety of projects; any projects related to the environment or sustainability, and involving members of the UBC student body, will be considered. However, requests for funding for projects undertaken as part of coursework at UBC, or individual volunteer projects, must illustrate a connection to the wider student body at UBC.

Completed forms should be emailed to [enviro@ams.ubc.ca](mailto:enviro@ams.ubc.ca). Alternatively, we welcome you to drop your form off at our office, Room 245B of UBC's Student Union Building. The Treasurers and other active members of the SEC would love to help you formulate your project, and will be glad to assist with the project's development and applications for funding.