Project Proposal: Undergraduate Community Scholarship

Project Proposer: Emma Charlotte Richards
Organisation name: Cooler Projects CIC
Community Project title: Cycles of Good City Network Project

Project Summary: Please provide details about the projects aims and its outcomes

Cycles of Good is a Stoke on Trent-based charity collecting worn-out bicycle tyre inner tubes, and shipping them to Malawi where they are remanufactured into a range of durable consumer products. They are then returned to the UK for sale in order to generate the funds required to keep the project running. Material that would have otherwise generated disposal costs and pollution as landfill, is diverted out of the waste stream, used to create useful products, removes the need for the production and use of new virgin materials to manufacture these products, creates an added value product, saves carbon and other environmental emissions and generate gainful employment and income for the Malawian workers involved.

Cooler Projects CIC (an established Manchester based not-for-profit Community Interest Company) wants to establish a self-sustaining Greater Manchester based network of bike-shops all collecting their inner tubes and shipping them collectively to Cycles of Good. The aim is to demonstrate the value in apparent waste resources, divert material from the waste stream, reduce carbon emissions, demonstrate practical circular economy, quantify the emissions savings, and develop the initiative as a case study both for the recycling of inner tubes but also the case for innovative thinking in support of the circular economy in many other fields.

The delivery of the full strategy will take longer than a single month, but the scholar’s contribution will be demonstrable and significant and part of any award application.

Cooler prides itself on its treatment of volunteers and project-workers and has a lot of experience in this area. See one of our projects: http://carbonliteracy.com/work-with-us/past-volunteers/ for an insight into the experience of our current and previous volunteers. All our current staff started out volunteering with the organisation.

What will the Scholar do? Please provide as much detail and if possible a breakdown of main responsibilities and tasks by week

We would like our Scholar to begin to deliver a strategy of:

- Recruiting Manchester-based bicycle-shops to collect their own and customers used tyre inner-tubes;
- Creating promotional materials for shop use to explain the scheme via in-shop visuals, social media, web content and printed materials;
- Calculating the theoretical carbon and resource savings and costs of the scheme;
- Quantifying this for the shops involved during a pilot period;
- Supporting the shops in establishing an ongoing network to maintain the solution and service;
- Creating and releasing press and media content to promote the scheme and those shops taking part;
- Submitting the scheme and its case study for sectoral award scheme(s) to further promote the solution.
Undergraduate Community Scholarship

The delivery of the full strategy will take longer than a single month, but the scholar’s contribution will be demonstrable and significant and part of any award application.

Skills required by the Scholarship holder:

A range of skills will be required and developed:

- relationship building and communication skills
- social media content development and delivery
- online and practical research and numerical skills
- informational presentation
- personal and human management skills
- press and media
- communication skills
- a wider and deeper understanding of sustainability

We don’t expect any scholar to arrive with all of these skills in place, and the Carbon Literacy project-team members will work with the successful scholar, to help them build on their existing skills and develop those that are new to them, with the aim of delivering a great project, a sound personal development experience and a better environment for all involved.

How will your project benefit the Scholarship holder and your organisation?

The project will benefit the Scholar by providing real world, office based experience in an environmental organisation which is also a charity. The placement will include the production of a main piece of work ‘the project’ that the Scholar will see through to completion, which can be used as evidence / to form a portfolio of work for job applications. Additionally, if we get you involved in any of the office based tasks, they will develop transferable skills, required in most organisations. If there are specific skills the Scholar is wishing to develop, and it’s within our capacity to help, we will look to do this (e.g. previous volunteers have gained specific experience in Excel, Wordpress, etc.). Upon completion of the project, we would be happy to provide a reference for any future employment.

We are a small organisation so Scholars will be in the thick of what we do, the work they produce being directly relevant and necessary for our operations now and going forward. After completion of the project, the opportunity for Scholars to stay on with Cooler Projects as a regular volunteer would further develop their skills and relationship with our organisation, providing new opportunities. It is highly unlikely that you’ll be asked to make tea.