

# You Have the Ingredients!

## A Canvas for Creating Your Own Green Library Recipe

*Eric Tans, Science Collections Coordinator and Environmental Sciences Librarian, Michigan State University, tans@msu.edu; Sarah Klimek, U.S. History Librarian, Michigan State University, klimeksa@msu.edu; Terence O'Neill, Head, Digital Scholarship and Makerspace Services and Entrepreneurship Librarian Michigan State University, oneillt@msu.edu; Stephanie Perentesis, Public Services and Linguistics Liaison Librarian, Michigan State University, perente1@msu.edu*

### NUTRITION INFORMATION

Developing an environmentally sustainable library initiative is much like creating an entrepreneurial startup project. As a result, entrepreneurship mental mapping tools are effective planning aids for green library projects. The Sustainability Canvas, adapted from Strategyzer.com's Business Model Canvas, provides a framework for identifying all the necessary ingredients for developing your own satisfying green library recipe.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Identify feasible sustainability initiatives that can be implemented in your library.
- Identify key partners, target participants, and success metrics for a sustainability initiative.
- Develop a preliminary plan for implementing a sustainability project.

### NUMBER SERVED

This recipe is highly adaptable and can feed individuals, committees, service-learning groups, classes, or any other group interested in developing sustainable programming in libraries.

### DIETARY GUIDELINES

This recipe provides a few important guidelines to consider:

- A strategic planning tool that highlights key areas for developing a successful green initiative
- A simple, one-page design that encourages a coherent project management approach by grouping key planning areas together
- An iterative, intuitive device that can be revisited and reevaluated throughout the planning and implementation process

### INGREDIENTS AND EQUIPMENT

- Sustainability Canvas worksheet
- Pen or pencil
- Laptops (for research on potential partners while completing the canvas)
- Knowledge of sustainability initiatives and potential community partners at your institution

### PREPARATION

Before completing the Sustainability Canvas, you will need to develop some ideas for sustainability projects:

- Create a "bug list": a list of procedures, workflows, or other elements of your library that could be more sustainable. Keep a running document of potential ideas to develop into full recipes.
- Briefly assess each idea for feasibility and impact (or your own chosen criteria) to help you identify a project that will be impactful but is still doable with the resources available to you.
- Based on your assessment criteria, select one project or idea to use in the canvas.

### INSTRUCTIONS

Start filling in your Sustainability Canvas with the section you are most comfortable with—then think about specifics for other sections. The sections are listed below.

#### *The Sustainability Proposal*

- The sustainability proposal refers to the ultimate project you will try to execute. It is the core of your Sustainability Canvas.
- Simply start with the chosen "bug" or basic project idea from your bug list. As you fill out the other parts of the canvas, you can return to your proposal and add more details.

**Target Participants**

- The target participants are the individuals or groups that will participate in your sustainability program or use the sustainable service you develop.
- To help identify your target participants, answer these questions: Who will use the particular program or service you will develop with your project? What matters to them?

**Key Partners**

- The key partners are the groups or individuals who will support your proposal and help you develop and implement your project. They could be campus organizations, library administration, custodians, and so on.
- To identify your key partners, answer this question: Whose support do I need in order to carry out my proposal?

**Metrics for Success**

- Your metrics for success are how you will determine whether your proposal

was successful after implementation and identify elements that need to be addressed or revised. These metrics can be numerical, survey-based, or some combination of the two.

- To identify your success metrics, answer these questions: How will you know whether your proposal was successful? What measurements or data sets will be most helpful in determining your success?

**ALLERGY WARNING**

This is an introductory planning guide, not a comprehensive planning tool. The canvas is designed to help you start to identify initial partners, participants, and success metrics that will help get your project off the ground. As you continue to develop your project, you may want to revisit this canvas and adapt and change components as your work progresses.

**CLEANUP**

Once you have filled out the canvas, the first step is to begin checking your sustainability

proposal against your target participants' expectations and to continue to change your Sustainability Canvas as you gain more information. You can also reach out to the key partners you've identified and establish relationships with those partners. As you develop those relationships and continue to refine your project idea, return to your canvas and adjust the components of your project as needed. Remember, filling out this canvas is an iterative process.

**CHEF'S NOTE**

The Business Model Canvas is licensed by Strategyzer.com under Creative Commons and allows remixing with attribution. The Sustainability Canvas described above has been adapted from the Business Model Canvas (Strategyzer Support, "Can I Use the Business Model Canvas or Value Proposition Canvas in My Own Teachings or Public Projects?" accessed April 8, 2019, <https://tinyurl.com/strategyzer>).

Figure. Sustainability Canvas

Key Partners	Sustainability Proposal	Target Participants
Metrics of Success		

