



EMORY



sustainability initiatives

Application

1. How does your project address one of the core elements of the Break Free from Plastic Pledge (highlight one or more element listed below)?

- implementing strategies to annually reduce single-use plastic use;
- using viable alternatives to single-use plastic and implementing purchasing guidelines to eliminate the procurement of unnecessary single-use plastic in the future;
- investing in education, resources, and infrastructure to reduce single-use plastic use on individual and institutional levels;
- and increasing effort to eliminate plastic bags, plastic straws, and Styrofoam on campus in accordance with Atlanta’s Ordinance 19-O-1418.

2. Team and Project Information: fill out the chart below.

Team Leader	
Title of Project	BYOF — Bring Your Own Fork
Funding Amount Requested (Maximum \$5,000)	\$5000
Associated Department, Lab, Office, or Student Organization	
Building and Room Number	Interfaith Center

3. Project Personnel: For each team member, please submit the following information:

Name	Role	Email Address
Lakishia Hines	Sustainability Rep	l.m.hines@emory.edu
Maddie Herlong	Affiliates	mhend25@emory.edu
Liz Martin	Interfaith Center Rep	elizabeth.ann.martin@emory.edu
Robin Meyer	Student Ambassadors	robin.meyer@emory.edu
Morgan Lee	Student Ambassadors	morgan.lee@emory.edu

4. Provide a short summary (2-3 sentences) of each team member's skills and experiences as relevant to the completion of the proposed project. If your project requires any guidance, approval, or partnership from parties beyond the team described here, please identify those parties and needs.

- a. **Lakishia’s** has experience in campus programming, event coordination, and community engagement through her work supporting students, faculty, and staff within the center. She regularly manages fairs, tabling events, and outreach initiatives and helped the office earn Gold Office Certification for two

consecutive years, demonstrating her commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship on campus.

- b. **Maddie's** has experience supporting outreach and engagement efforts through her daily work with students and office affiliates within the center. She regularly assists with communication, relationship-building, and coordination that helps connect students, faculty, staff, and affiliates to campus programs and resources. Her strong outreach and community engagement experience will support effective promotion and distribution efforts for this sustainability initiative. She personally carries utensils with her on campus to reduce her own plastic use and can demonstrate to students how the simple habit makes a big impact.
 - c. **Liz's** has experience working closely with students and visitors within the center, helping create an engaging and welcoming community environment. Through her weekly programming with the Inter-Religious Council (IRC), an undergraduate student council of representatives, she has developed strong skills in student engagement, outreach, and program coordination. Her experience connecting with diverse campus communities will support the project's educational outreach and participation efforts.
 - d. **Robin's** work and studies focus on community-engaged research, environmental justice, and applied ecology, reflecting her strong commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. She is actively involved with Sunrise Emory, supports sustainability and community initiatives through her work with the Office of Spiritual and Religious Life, and brings prior experience from working at Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park. Her background in environmental advocacy and campus engagement will help strengthen the project's educational outreach and sustainability impact.
 - e. **Morgan** is new to sustainability initiatives but has shown growing interest in social sciences, student advocacy, and community engagement through his participation in campus forums and his work with the Office of Spiritual and Religious Life. His involvement in student-centered programming and outreach has helped him develop communication and collaboration skills that will support engagement efforts for this project. Through this initiative, Morgan will also gain hands-on experience in sustainability education and community-based environmental advocacy.
5. **Is this project being proposed by a student and/or implemented by an all-student team?**
- a. No. This project is a collaborative initiative involving professional staff and student leaders who work together to support campus programming, outreach, and sustainability engagement within the center. Student involvement will play an

important role in outreach, tabling events, and peer engagement efforts during project implementation.

6. If the application is an all-student team, please provide the contact information for your faculty/staff advisor below after getting their consent.

Faculty/staff advisor's name:

Email:

Faculty/Staff advisor expectation: As an advisor to this project, I accept the role of guiding this student or student team as they develop a proposal, as they respond to additional requests from the Office of Sustainability Initiatives Team, as they implement their project, and as they complete a final report.

Date of faculty/staff advisor's acknowledgement of this expectation:

7. Project Description: Provide a detailed description of the goals, activities, methods, and success indicators of the proposed research, project, or behavioral change.

a. This project advances Emory's commitment to reducing single-use plastics by driving a measurable behavioral shift toward reusable alternatives while fostering a shared culture of sustainability and community care across diverse campus communities. Our initiative will distribute portable, high-quality reusable utensil kits (fork, spoon, knife, and straw) to students, faculty, and staff who engage with our center and broader campus community. By eliminating the convenience barrier that often leads to reliance on disposable utensils, this project empowers individuals to make sustainable choices as part of their everyday routines.

As a multifaith and community-centered space, our center serves individuals from a wide range of cultural, religious, and personal backgrounds. This initiative reflects the shared values of stewardship, responsibility, and care for the environment that are present across many traditions and communities. Through this project, we aim to unite sustainability and community engagement by creating visible opportunities for collective action around reducing waste and protecting the environment.

Our primary goal is to significantly decrease the use of single-use plastic utensils across campus spaces by normalizing reuse. To achieve this, we will strategically distribute utensil kits during high-traffic engagement opportunities, including campus fairs, tabling events, and center-based programming. These distribution points allow us to reach a diverse audience while reinforcing sustainability messaging in real-time, where consumption decisions are often made.

In addition to distribution, the project will incorporate targeted educational components to deepen impact. This includes brief, accessible messaging on the environmental and financial costs of single-use plastics, as well as practical guidance on incorporating reusable habits into daily life. Visual cues, pop-up signage, and sustainability displays stating our support for reducing plastic waste

and promoting reusable practices will be featured during events and within our center. Peer engagement and educational outreach will help reinforce behavior change and sustain momentum beyond initial kit distribution.

Student led ambassadors involved in our weekly programs will also help further the initiative by actively promoting the use of reusable utensil kits during community gatherings and meals. Programs such as WISE, Beloved Community, Jummah prayers, and International Student Friday Lunch, among others, provide recurring opportunities to model and encourage reusable practices in communal settings. By integrating sustainability into existing student-lead support with programs and traditions, the project will create consistent visibility and ongoing reinforcement of environmentally responsible behaviors across campus.

Our approach is grounded in behavior-change theory—pairing accessibility (providing tools) with awareness (education and visibility) to create lasting habit formation. By embedding sustainability into existing campus touchpoints and multifaith community spaces, this initiative ensures both immediate impact and long-term cultural shift.

Success Indicators will include:

Number of reusable utensil kits distributed across campus events and programs

Reduction in demand and visible use of single-use utensils within our center

Engagement levels at fairs and tabling events (interactions, sign-ups, or pledges)

Participant feedback reflecting increased awareness and behavior change

Increased visibility of sustainability messaging and reusable practices through pop-up signage and outreach efforts

Student led ambassadors' participation in promoting reusable habits during weekly programs and events

Potential for replication or expansion across other campus departments

By transforming everyday dining habits and reducing dependence on disposable plastics, this project delivers both environmental and behavioral impact. It positions our center as a model for scalable, low-barrier sustainability solutions that align directly with Emory's waste reduction and climate goals while fostering a stronger culture of sustainability, shared responsibility, and community engagement across campus.

8. **Project Timeline:** Project teams will be notified on a rolling basis about funding of their proposals. All funds must be expended by June 26th, and all projects must be completed by August 31st, 2026. With these parameters in mind, please provide a detailed timeline for project implementation and completion.

Project Timeline for Implementation and Completion

Phase 1: Project Planning & Procurement

May 2026 – June 10, 2026

- Finalize project scope, outreach strategy, and estimated quantity of reusable utensil kits needed
- Identify and confirm vendor(s) for purchasing reusable utensils and related materials
- Develop educational messaging and sustainability awareness materials to accompany distributions
- Coordinate with campus partners and identify upcoming fairs, tabling events, and high-traffic engagement opportunities for distribution

Phase 2: Purchasing & Preparation

June 11 – June 26, 2026

- Purchase reusable utensil kits and all supporting materials
- Receive, inventory, and organize supplies for distribution
- Prepare outreach materials, signage, and educational handouts promoting reduction of single-use plastics
- Assemble and package utensil kits for efficient event distribution
- Ensure all project funds are fully expended by the required deadline of **June 26, 2026**

Phase 3: Campus Outreach & Distribution

August 10 – August 31, 2026

- Launch the reusable utensil kit initiative across campus through outreach and community engagement efforts
- Distribute reusable utensil kits during campus fairs, tabling events, and center programming
- Incorporate pop-up signage and sustainability messaging that visibly supports reducing single-use plastic waste and promoting reusable practices
- Engage students, faculty, and staff through brief sustainability education and conversations about environmental stewardship and waste reduction
- Encourage long-term behavior change by promoting daily use of reusable utensils carried in bags, backpacks, or pockets

- Utilize student leaders to further the initiative during recurring community programs such as WISE, Beloved Community, Jummah prayers, and International Student Friday Lunch, helping model and reinforce reusable practices in shared dining and gathering spaces
- Increase visibility of sustainability efforts within multifaith and community-centered spaces to foster a culture of collective responsibility and environmental care across campus

Phase 4: Impact Assessment & Follow-Up

August 16 – August 25, 2026

- Track the number of utensil kits distributed and outreach interactions completed
- Gather informal participant feedback regarding usability and behavior changes
- Assess reduction in disposable utensil usage within the center and during programming events
- Evaluate project effectiveness and identify opportunities for future expansion or continued sustainability efforts

Phase 5: Project Completion & Final Reporting

August 25 – August 31, 2026

- Compile project outcomes, participation data, and impact observations
- Document lessons learned and overall contribution toward reducing single-use plastics on campus
- Complete and submit final project report by **August 31, 2026**

9. **Project Outcomes:** Provide a list and/or description of outcomes should the project be successful. For example, answer the question “How will you demonstrate to campus community members that your proposed project has been successful and advanced Emory’s sustainability goals?” Proposals with clear and compelling outcomes are more likely to be selected for award.

a. We will demonstrate the success of this project through measurable reductions in single-use plastic utensil usage, active campus engagement, and visible behavior changes among students, faculty, and staff. By distributing reusable utensil kits during campus fairs, tabling events, center programming, and recurring community gatherings, we will provide community members with practical tools that make sustainable choices easier and more accessible in their daily routines.

Success will be measured through several key outcomes, including:

- The total number of reusable utensil kits distributed across campus
- Engagement and participation levels at fairs, tabling events, and center programs
- Increased visibility and use of reusable utensils within our center and campus spaces
- Reduced reliance on disposable plastic utensils during programs, meals, and gatherings
- Positive participant feedback and increased awareness of sustainability practices
- Student leader participation in promoting reusable habits during programs such as WISE, Beloved Community, Jummah prayers, and International Student Friday Lunch
- Increased visibility of sustainability messaging and pop-up signage supporting waste reduction and reusable practices

We will also use educational messaging, peer engagement, and outreach during events to connect individual behavior changes to Emory’s broader sustainability and waste-reduction goals. Through our multifaith and community-centered programming, student leaders and affiliates will help further the initiative by modeling and encouraging reusable practices during weekly gatherings and shared meals. By encouraging community members to carry reusable utensils in their bags or pockets for everyday use, the project promotes long-term habit formation rather than one-time participation.

This initiative advances Emory’s sustainability goals by reducing plastic waste at the source, fostering environmental responsibility, and creating a culture of reuse within the campus community. The project’s visibility, accessibility, community-centered outreach, and measurable impact make it a scalable model for promoting sustainable behavior changes across campus.

10. **Budget:** In the chart below provide an itemized description of expenditures with short explanations and justification. \$5,000 is the maximum for requesting funds. Where possible, please develop your budget via products available from Emory Express or Emory-approved vendors. This can increase negotiated rebates to Emory, reduce post-award delays, ensure we do not pay sales tax unnecessarily, and provide other benefits.

Item Description (Please include details on the specific item desired, with relevant information like make, model #, size, etc.)	Website link to item (if applicable)	Unit Cost	Unit Count	Total Cost
1. Travel Cutlery set	4imprint	\$10.16	450	\$4572.00
2. Outreach material				\$430
Total Request				\$5000

11. Budget Explanation and Justification: In this section, please carefully explain the need and use for each item listed in the table above. If you already have received partial funding for this project from another entity, please list that entity below and which aspects of the project are already funded. If uncertainties exist in project budget, please note them here. Projects with incomplete budgets or justifications will not be considered for funding.

- a. The stainless-steel utensil kits are a critical component of this project because they provide a durable, reusable, and long-term alternative to single-use plastic utensils commonly used across campus. Many students, faculty, and staff rely on disposable utensils due to convenience and availability while eating between classes, meetings, and campus events. By providing portable stainless steel utensil kits that can easily fit into bags, backpacks, or pockets, this project removes a major barrier to sustainable behavior and makes reuse a practical everyday option.

Stainless steel utensils were selected because they are:

- Durable and designed for repeated long-term use
- Easy to clean and maintain
- More environmentally sustainable than disposable plastic alternatives
- Resistant to breakage and wear compared to lower-quality reusable materials
- Suitable for daily campus use and transportation

The utensil kits will be distributed during campus fairs, tabling events, and center programming to maximize visibility, accessibility, and community engagement. The project is designed not only to reduce plastic waste immediately, but also to encourage long-term behavior changes that support Emory's sustainability and waste-reduction goals.

At this time, no partial funding has been received from another entity for this project. Funding requested through this proposal will support the purchase of reusable stainless steel utensil kits, outreach materials, and educational signage associated with the initiative.

The proposed budget is based on estimated pricing for bulk reusable utensil kits and outreach materials. Minor fluctuations may occur depending on vendor pricing, shipping costs, and product availability at the time of purchase; however, the overall project scope and implementation plan will remain the same.

12. Creating a Lasting Impact: The BFFP Incentives Fund is a one-time-only funding opportunity. Please describe how your project will create or encourage a lasting impact

despite the one-off nature of this funding (e.g., building funding into your regular budget for purchasing zero-plastic items in the future, reusing materials, doing educational outreach, etc.).

- a. Although the BFFP Incentives Fund is a one-time funding opportunity, this project is intentionally designed to create long-term behavioral and cultural change within the campus community through a collaborative effort between the Interfaith Center and Emory's sustainability initiatives. By providing durable stainless steel utensil kits, the project encourages students, faculty, and staff to adopt reusable habits that can continue well beyond the initial funding period. Unlike disposable items that require continuous replacement, the reusable utensil kits are intended for long-term daily use, creating sustained environmental impact over time.

The project's lasting impact will also come through continued education, visibility, and community engagement. By distributing utensil kits during fairs, tabling events, and center programming, we will normalize reusable practices and reinforce sustainability messaging in highly visible campus spaces. Through the Interfaith Center's ongoing gatherings and multifaith programming, sustainability practices can be integrated into existing community traditions and shared experiences. As more community members begin carrying reusable utensils in their bags or backpacks, the project helps establish a stronger culture of reuse and waste reduction across campus.

This initiative also strengthens collaboration between the Interfaith Center and sustainability-focused efforts across Emory by connecting environmental stewardship with values of shared responsibility, care for community, and respect for resources. Student leaders and affiliates involved in programs such as WISE, Beloved Community, Jummah prayers, and International Student Friday Lunch will help further the initiative by promoting reusable habits and modeling sustainable behaviors during recurring community meals and gatherings.

In addition, the center plans to continue incorporating sustainability education into future outreach and programming efforts, even after grant funding concludes. Educational signage, outreach materials, pop-up displays, and peer-to-peer engagement developed through this initiative can be reused for future campus events and sustainability campaigns at little to no additional cost. These materials will continue reinforcing sustainability messaging within both Interfaith Center programming and broader campus outreach efforts.

This project also serves as a scalable model for future sustainability initiatives within the center and potentially across other campus departments. By demonstrating measurable reductions in disposable utensil usage and strong community engagement, the initiative can encourage continued institutional

support for reusable alternatives, sustainable purchasing practices, and collaborative sustainability programming in the future.

Ultimately, the project creates lasting impact by combining durable reusable resources, ongoing educational outreach, multifaith community engagement, and behavior-change strategies that encourage long-term reduction of single-use plastic waste at Emory.

13. If any of the items listed in your budget proposal cannot be purchased through Emory Express or another Emory-preferred vendor, please explain why below.

- a. All items included in this budget proposal are expected to be purchased through Emory Express or another Emory-preferred vendor. At this time, we do not anticipate needing to purchase materials outside of approved university purchasing channels. If minor adjustments become necessary due to vendor availability, shipping timelines, or product stock limitations, we will work with Procurement and follow all applicable Emory purchasing guidelines and approval processes.

14. Projects that propose the installation of items in buildings or on Emory grounds may require approvals from relevant departments or entities, including and up to, the Board of Trustees. If your project may require such approval, please describe below whether those approvals have been received, or demonstrate how they will be pursued, within the timeframe of the grant.

- a. This project does not involve the installation of permanent items, infrastructure modifications, or physical changes to buildings or Emory grounds. The initiative focuses on the purchase and distribution of reusable stainless steel utensil kits and related educational outreach materials during campus fairs, tabling events, and center programming.

Because the project does not require construction, installation, or alterations to university property, we do not anticipate needing approvals from Facilities Management, the Board of Trustees, or other campus entities related to physical infrastructure projects. Any outreach or tabling activities associated with this initiative will follow standard university event and space reservation procedures as required.

Applicant Acknowledgements

Please initial to indicate that you have read and understand all guidance in this application.

LH

Initials

Please initial to confirm that your submitted budget totals to no more than \$5,000.

LH

Initials

Please list any questions or concerns you have in complying with the project guidelines and limitations.

Please submit your completed application in this Word document via email to emorysustainability@emory.edu by or before Friday, May 15, 2026.

On behalf of the OSI team, thank you for your time and effort! Emory is a better place because of innovators like you!