

Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority

2017-2018 Measure Q Urban Open Space Grant Program

1/12/2018 deadline

Living Classroom Campbell Union Elementary School District Edible and Native Habitat Gardens

\$ 65,000.00 Requested
\$ 155,369 Total Project Cost

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EIN 45-5192035

B. Project Description

Project Overview

1. Grant Category (check all that apply)

- Environmental Stewardship and Restoration
- Parks, Trails, and Public Access
- Environmental Education
- Urban Agriculture / Food Systems

2. What type of project is this (check all that apply)

- Capital improvement
- Planning
- Program

3. Project Location: Address

If the project will be in multiple locations, please list all addresses. If there is no street address, please describe the area(s).
The project will be implemented at multiple school locations within the Campbell Union Elementary School Districts for their schools located in the cities of San Jose, and Campbell. This may include Lynnhaven, Forest Hill, Monroe Middle and Sherman Oaks Charter Schools in San Jose, and Rosemary, Capri, Village, Campbell Middle, and Castlemont Schools.

4. Project Location: Neighborhood

If unknown, please enter "N/A."

Neighborhoods around the schools in San Jose, Santa Clara and Campbell.

5. Project Location: OSA District (check all that apply)

A detailed map of the OSA Districts can be found under the Library tab, or online at <http://www.openspaceauthority.org/about/boardmap.html>.

- OSA District 1
- OSA District 2
- OSA District 3
- OSA District 4
- OSA District 5
- OSA District 6
- OSA District 7

6. Are there any project partners?

If there are project partners, please list each partner and describe their roles. Required - upload letter from each partner describing their role.

Campbell Union Elementary School District (CUSD)

7. Project Abstract

(Brief, 3-4 sentences)

Living Classroom is partnering with CUSD to implement their new Environmental Literacy Initiative called "Champions for Change". This element focuses on Living Classroom and CUSD designing, installing and maintaining new and enhanced edible and native habitat gardens on all CUSD school campuses and providing garden-based lessons across all grade levels with the aim of connecting students to nature and the sources of their food and graduating environmentally literate students by 8th grade.

Community Engagement / Stakeholder Support (10 points)

8. Describe the community support and/or community engagement process.

When applicable, the application should include letters of support from local jurisdiction(s), particularly for capital improvement projects. Please submit letters using the Documents Upload tab.

In each school district that Living Classroom serves, we garner significant community support that goes well beyond the school district itself including financial, in-kind and volunteer labor support from local business and corporations, service clubs, foundations, student groups, and volunteer docents from the community. Once Living Classroom's programs commence as planned in August, 2018, we will begin a multi-faceted community outreach campaign to raise awareness of our program and solicit resources. Two major efforts will be to publicize our docent training program whereby retired teachers, school parents, master gardeners, and other community members who love to share their love of nature with children will be recruited to be volunteer docents to teach a portion of the hundreds of lessons provided each year. Our docents have added remarkably to our success in reaching thousands of students each year in our current 3 school districts. The other immediate effort will be with Hands-On Bay Area who has partnered with us to help install over 12 school gardens to date with amazing crews of corporate volunteers and materials and financial support.

Project Planning (20 points)

9. Describe the proposed project

The project will consist of the following components:

1. Planning: Living Classroom program staff will work with CUSD facilities and maintenance and instructional staff to develop plans for each school. Some schools already have substantial gardens in place which need minor enhancements to make them ready for Living Classroom's lessons while other schools have inadequate and unused garden space and will require significant investment to create new gardens and/or expand what is currently in place. The goal is that every school has beautiful, biodiverse, and educational gardens to enhance learning experiences that instill a love and understanding of nature and healthy eaters who know how to grow food. Living Classroom's garden managers have designed every single native habitat garden we have installed (24 of them to date) and many new edible gardens as well. We understand the safety and ADA requirements for school gardens and have successfully worked with three school districts to successfully maintain them and continuously improve them with new features.

2. School Gardens: This grant would fund school garden upgrades and expansions for 3 schools during the 2018-19 (July - June) school year. The plan is to seek additional funding sources to work on an additional 3 schools in the following school year and continuing until all 12 CUSD schools. Living Classroom has a track record of designing, installing, and then maintaining these gardens with each school district we serve and in the last several years, have been able to successfully implement 3-4 new and expanded garden projects within a calendar year.

3. Programs: Living Classroom hires a professional outdoor instructor for each school district we serve to teach the majority of our lessons, train docents to teach the remaining lessons, and work directly with teachers to schedule lessons, seek their evaluations of our lessons and their delivery, and be the primary point of contact for all teachers. In the 10 years we have been providing garden-based lessons, we have developed a proven program and process to very efficiently and effectively provide

meaningful and relevant learning experiences to several thousand students in each school district each year in grades K-8. Our lessons build upon each other from one grade to the next, offering increasingly sophisticated concepts and inquiry methods covering topics like biodiversity, habitats, ecology, ethnobotany, citizen science applications (iNaturalist and The Great Sunflower Project), photosynthesis, decomposition, life cycles, energy cycles, soil science, plant anatomy, nutrition, sensory observation, scientific method, and social science topics related to the role of plants and staple crops in history.

10. What is the lifetime of this project?

For capital improvement projects, applicants must state how long the project would remain on the site AND demonstrate that they have appropriate permissions. Please submit the Land Tenure form and documentation using the Documents Upload tab.

- 5 Years (minimum for capital improvement projects)
- Other time period - explain: Living Classroom and CUSD expect the gardens and education programs to be long-term
- Perpetuity
- Not applicable

11. Describe your plans for operating and maintaining the project over the next 10 years, and indicate your source of funds for ongoing management.

This question is required for all capital improvement projects. For planning and program projects, please answer if applicable, otherwise enter "N/A."

The school gardens will be maintained by a partnership between a Living Classroom and CUSD.

Living Classroom employs a garden manager for each school district in serves to assure that all educational edible and native habitat gardens are maintained to maximize the students' experience with the lessons that take place there. The garden manager also purchases all new seedlings, interpretive signs, and other materials needed to support each lesson provided. Our garden managers have extensive backgrounds as master gardeners, are very knowledgeable about native plants, can organize and supervise large scale garden work days, and efficiently maintain school gardens across multiple locations. They are also very experienced in dealing with the everyday challenges that occur in the gardens including the stresses and strains of hundreds of students and sometimes neighborhood visitors not always respecting the garden, various critters who like to devour our edible gardens, and broken irrigation among other challenges.

CUSD also employs a part time gardener who works exclusively on maintaining the educational gardens. This is a wonderful commitment that CUSD has already made toward their gardens and Living Classroom is thrilled to have a school district employee to partner with as the garden maintenance is significant and is needed 12 months/year. This resource has not been available to Living Classroom at our other three school districts.

The sources of funds for our educational programs and garden maintenance will come from CUSD itself, local foundations and corporations, service clubs, and corporate and other volunteer groups, including Hands-On Bay Area. The proof of the success of this multiple source funding model is our program at the Mountain View Whisman School District which is now in it's 6th year and has been funded through the school district, the district's educational foundation, foundations, corporations, service clubs and Hands-On Bay area as well as the Beautiful Day project. Living Classroom's Executive Director is adept at grant writing and creating lasting supporting partnerships to support it's programs and school gardens.

12. Describe the project's readiness for implementation.

Please include the status of any planning, design, or funding development necessary for project completion. This includes the status of CEQA compliance and any permits required for this project. REQUIRED: CEQA form, if applicable.

Living Classroom staff has met with CUSD administrators in both facilities/maintenance and instruction and and the garden manager several times to discuss their sincere interest in expanding and improving their school gardens to be used for instruction, nature experiences, growing food and developing healthy eating habits. Their environmental literacy framework "Champions of Change" and what Living Classroom provides, are aligned extremely well. In addition Living Classroom staff has toured six school gardens thus far to gain a good understanding of the differences in the quality and size of school gardens thus far as well as the many challenges we will face in expanding or siting new school garden sites on the school campuses and to make sure that the requirements we have to provide our lessons can be met and approved by CUSD.

Upon receiving this grant, Living Classroom will immediately begin the planning process to initially improve or create new school gardens on three school sites and will also begin the hiring process for program staff to begin a modest-scale scope of lessons to launch the first year of the program, growing each year until every school and every grade receives the benefit of outdoor, nature-based, and engaging experiential lessons from bringing nature to their own school grounds.

Project Budget (15 points)

13. Budget Summary

This is a budget summary only; a detailed Project Budget must be submitted using the Documents Upload Tab. Please note: after the application is submitted, the software will automatically total all lines. This additional TOTAL will not be used.

38,000	Grant request: Personnel
0	Grant request: Contracted Services
23,150	Grant request: Supplies/Materials
850	Grant request: Other Direct Costs
3,000	Grant request: Indirect Costs
65,000	TOTAL GRANT REQUEST
90,369	TOTAL MATCHING FUNDS
155,369	TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (grant request + matching funds)
139	PERCENT MATCH (matching funds / grant request)
375,877.00	TOTAL

Project Goals (15 points)

14. Describe the specific problems, issues, or unserved needs the project will address.

Living Classroom provides a critical component of addressing the issues of Richard Louv's well coined term "nature deficit disorder". Children today are more than ever, distant from the natural world. They are also more distant than ever from the sources of their food. This is particularly true for socio-economically disadvantaged students who represent almost 50% of the student body at CUSD.

And nowhere in most schools is there a program whereby students can learn from experiential lessons in a natural setting on the school campus in garden spaces that also provide wonderful places for informal and unstructured play. These garden-based and nature-based lessons cannot be replicated by textbooks or tablets--they are real-life experiences which focus on observational skills, use of the senses, engaging students completely and resulting in superior knowledge retention and relevance to students' lives.

Our program provides the "everyday" and neighborhood nature experience for students and the most effective and efficient way to reach every student in a school by bringing nature to their very own school yard so that they can find and really "see" nature where they live, where they go to school, and everywhere around them, even in our suburban and urban settings.

Our lessons provide a strong linkage to our local environment and understanding of our region's varied natural communities and help instill a "sense of wonder" so eloquently described by Rachel Carson. We aim to help train the next generation of environmental stewards. Students also learn where their food comes from by growing fruit, vegetable and grain crops at school, harvesting and eating them, leading to healthier eating habits.

School gardens support multiple learning styles among groups of students and allow for a change from the traditional classroom experience. Many students learn best through visual, kinesthetic or other sensory learning as do English Language learners. Our lessons provide a great opportunity for those students to feel fully engaged.

15. Please list the project's goals (both social and environmental).

These should be specific, measurable goals (e.g. 600 people participating in educational programs). Please see Appendix E of the Grant Program Guidelines for a list of sample goals.

Our goals are:

1. To design and install expanded and new school gardens (native habitat and edible) on three CUSD school campuses by the end of the 2018-19 school year (June, 2019). Gardens will include outdoor gathering places, composting areas, and natural features like boulders and logs for students to jump on and sit on.
2. To deliver at least 400 garden-based lessons across grades K-3 to approximately 1,200 students from 4-5 schools in the inaugural 2018-19 school year, growing each year until all schools and grade levels are served.
3. To recruit and train 12 volunteer docents to support our new program manager in providing top notch and engaging garden-based instruction.
4. To engage 180 community and corporate volunteers in at least three work days at three schools during the 2018-19 school year.
5. To install interpretive signs for every species of native plant in each native habitat garden (average of 35 species per

garden), to educate students and the public about garden pollinators and milkweed to attract Monarch butterflies, and garden observation posting signs to encourage any garden visitor to post what they saw in the garden, including photographs of wildlife attracted to the garden.

6. To gain National Wildlife Federation wildlife garden certification for one school which will include in addition to native plants, including other features such as water elements, bird feeders, stick piles, insect hotels, and other wildlife attracting elements

Impact (15 points)

16. Describe the lasting impact of the project.

What Living Classroom and our public schools attempt to do is provide meaningful, impactful, relevant and enjoyable learning experiences for students. Living Classroom's important angle is focused on multi-disciplinary environmental education through the school gardens not only through the content and experiences inherent in our 40 lesson plans but also by virtue of simply taking students outside where they learn to pay attention to the natural world around them when before they were oblivious.

There are many studies that show that repeated exposure to and experiences in natural settings has a lasting impact on youth and lead to adults who are environmental stewards and change their behavior to reflect their understanding of and appreciation of the importance of intact ecosystems and generally a healthy environment.

In our lessons, students learn to identify native plants to our region and understand their important role in creating actual wildlife habitat, even amidst their suburban communities. We are guided by the work of the San Francisco Estuary Institute who published Resilient Silicon Valley and Re-Oaking Silicon Valley reports which inspire us to teach students about how they can, even in their neighborhood or school, play an role in bringing back, piece by piece, habitat landscapes and gardens that will help restore our native ecology. This is an important paradigm shift for many, in the realization that what is suburban or urban does not preclude the planning for or restoration of habitat within those places.

By growing food in the school edible gardens, students truly connect with the sources of their food and how crops related to important times in history, and to their geographic origin, and importantly how they nourish their bodies. Our informal surveys in another school district show that students not only understand more about nutrition and why eating more fruits and vegetables and whole grains is healthy for them, but they also change their eating habits to include more fresh foods in their diets, including eating more fruits and veggies in their school lunches. Children are really thrilled to grow their own food and often carry this enthusiasm to their families and start their own edible gardens at home.

Leadership & Innovation (10 points)

17. Describe how this project employs innovative approaches or encourages collaboration and partnership in the field of parks, open space, urban agriculture, land conservation, or environmental education.

Living Classroom is both an innovative and workable solution to the problem of "nature deficit disorder", which is widespread among youth today. We are innovative in that we work with entire school districts to provide a consistent learning experience across all grades K-8 and across all schools. We are highly leveraged with community financial and volunteer support which enable us to provide a breadth and depth of program with a lean budget. We are also flexible to meet particular needs of each school district we serve which have differing demographics. We also pride ourselves on our commitment to continuous improvement of our lessons, our gardens, our outreach, and our overall operations.

By our nature, we create collaborations and partners in support of small-scale agriculture through our edible gardens and "farm to lunch" program whereby after-school students plant and harvest crops, prepared into delicious dishes by school district chefs, to be used for special "taste-testings" at rotating schools to connect kids to organic produce grown on their own school campuses. All of our educational programs directly support environmental education not only through the content and experiences within our 40 lesson plans but also by virtue of simply taking students outside where they learn to pay attention to the natural world around them.

Organizational Capacity (15 points)

18. Briefly describe the organization.

Please include the year the organization was founded and its mission and goals. If the applicant is a Fiscal Sponsor, please describe both the APPLICANT and the SPONSORED ORGANIZATION.

Living Classroom was founded in 2008. Our mission is inspire children to learn about and value our natural world through garden-based education. We support a new generation of students that are excited about science, connected to nature, and are equipped and inspired to build a future that is environmentally sustainable. Our gardens are ecological laboratories that provide beautiful and stimulating learning environments.

We collaborate with school districts and their local communities to provide engaging, hands-on lessons that stimulate curiosity and create beautiful and educational natural areas on school grounds that offer daily exposure to nature. Living Classroom's field tested lessons impart key concepts in California's content standards for life, physical, and earth science, math, social studies and nutrition while also giving students the opportunity to connect directly with the natural world.

Studies show that school gardens improve environmental attitudes and instill a respect for nature that lasts into adulthood. We believe that garden-based education is a key way to nurture future environmental champions, particularly among children from socio-economically disadvantaged communities with sometimes little access to outdoor nature experiences.

19. Describe the organization's ability to successfully implement this project. This might include successful past projects, staffing levels, financial resources, etc.

If applicant cannot otherwise demonstrate its capacity, expertise, and experience, please provide names and contact information of individuals knowledgeable about the organization's work.

Living Classroom has successfully launched its programs at three school districts: Los Altos, Mountain View Whisman, and Palo Alto Unified. We currently serve 22 schools in those three districts and have designed, installed, and maintained the gardens in all of those schools and have gotten to know the students we teach after seeing many of them for 6 or more years in a row as they progress from one grade to the next.

After 10 years, we fully understand what is needed to start up in a new school district successfully, including adequate staffing levels, and build relationships with teacher, administrators, and school maintenance staff. We have amazing lessons and lesson kits for every lesson and they have been recently updated to reflect Next Generation Science Standards. We have a palette of native plants we use in ecology/ethnobotany lessons that really tell a story about the wildlife they attract, how native Californians used the plants, and why they are so important in the important quest to restore native habitats everywhere we can, even at our schools, in our yards, our parks, and other places in our communities.

We know very well just how much financial resources are needed to implement our program. Although we are very lean, each school district program requires a paid program staff of at least three--a program manager, program assistant, and garden manager. As the scope of program services increases their hours increase and in the case of a 7,300 student school district like CUSD, we eventually would hire additional instructors to handle the lesson load as we have done in Mountain View, augmented by our trained volunteer docents. We have an excellent docent training program that runs seasonally with fall, winter, and spring trainings along with classroom management training and instructional coaching.

Another great feature of our program is our lesson sign up and calendaring system that allows teachers to request lesson dates through an online program, docents to sign up for lessons online, and automatic lesson reminders to both teachers and docents. This is essential for a program that is providing over 1,500 lessons this current calendar year to over 270 teachers.

20. Briefly describe key staff members and volunteers' qualifications and experience relevant to the project.

Vicki Moore (Executive Director), is the founder of Living Classroom and has launched the Living Classroom program in three school districts. She has worked in the environmental education field for 14 years and prior was the policy director for Greenbelt Alliance where one of her proudest achievements was helping to create and fund the Open Space Authority! Mallory Traughber, (Director of Curriculum), has a B.A. in Elementary Education from Indiana University. Ms. Traughber has over 5 years of outdoor education experience, which includes instruction, docent training, and curriculum development. Shawn Shahin (Director of Training), is an experienced elementary educator with over 15 years teaching in both classroom and outdoor settings. She has her B.A. in Environmental Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and a California Multiple-Subject Credential from San José State University. Ms. Shahin also holds a California Administrative Services Credential, serving youth in many capacities over her career: classroom teacher, Science Specialist, Instructional Coach, and school site Principal. Ms. Shahin brings a wealth of experience and leadership in writing curriculum, mentoring teachers on best practices, and knowledge of public schools with diverse student populations. Patti Berryhill (Garden Manager), is a master gardener, Foothill College horticulture graduate, garden designer and has managed our farm to lunch program in Mountain View for the last 3 years

BONUS POINTS: Underserved Communities (10 points)

21. Describe how the project addresses open space needs for sensitive populations such as residents of park-poor neighborhoods, underserved or disadvantaged communities, youth, seniors, or is located within a Deep Engagement Community (DEC).

A map of the DEC's can be found under the Library tab of online at <http://www.openspaceauthority.org/urban>. This question is optional; please answer if applicable, otherwise enter "N/A."

CUSD students come from a very diverse population both socioeconomically and ethnically.

42% of students qualify for free or reduced lunch, 32% are English Language learners.

Ethnically, 47% are Hispanic, 24% are white, 13% are Asian, 6% are 2 or more races, 4% are black, and 6% other.

BONUS POINTS: Community Building (10 points)

22. Describe how this project actively encourages community building by engaging or accommodating local residents in novel and creative ways.

This question is optional; please answer if applicable, otherwise enter "N/A."

Local residents and workers will be invited to join our garden work days and join the ranks of Living Classroom docents as our primary ways to engage local community members in our programs and support their local schools. We also receive and will continue to recruit more specialized services including graphic designers, landscape contractors who can operate equipment for garden construction including pathways, boulder moving and soil moving, and event planners. Many of our gardens serve as the setting for school-based gatherings as well.

BONUS POINTS: Leverage Funding (5 points)

23. Describe how the project leverages funding with more than 25% match by grantee (cash or in-kind).

This question is optional; please answer if applicable, otherwise enter "N/A."

Living Classroom has and will apply for grants from health and nutrition oriented foundations and grantees including the USDA Kaiser Permanente Foundation, Whole Foods (Campbell), and other organizations interested in supporting youth, health, and environmental causes. We also receive significant in-kind support annually through our docent team of over 60 docents, with more to be recruited from the CUSD area, and significant volunteer labor during multiple volunteer garden work days each year with an average of 300 garden volunteers both from the local community and area corporations taking shovel in hand and doing wonders in the course of a day!

The truth of the matter is that environmental education and school gardens generally have not yet garnered the funds and resources they deserve in spite of the overwhelming evidence of their importance to the education and well being of every child and the planet. Thus Living Classroom, in order to be financially viable, has consistently and successfully obtained major community support for all of our programs, both financially and in-kind.

C. Work Plan

C.1. Project Work Plan

Task Number	Activities	Timeframe	Outcome/Deliverables
1 Design Gardens	Living Classroom garden manager, in coordination with CUSD gardener and facilities/maintenance administration, complete garden designs for new and expanded native habitat and edible gardens	June - July, 2018	Great garden designs ready to install!
2 Hire Staff	Living Classroom staff recruits for three CUSD program positions. Job postings need to go out as soon as possible. Interview process with program staff and job offers made by July. New staff to be trained extensively.	mid-May - August 2018	High caliber program staff on board to launch CUSD program
3 Create new set of lesson kits	Lesson kit materials purchased and assembled	July-August, 2018	New lesson kits for every lesson provided for the first year of the CUSD program.
4 Install new/expanded gardens	Recruit volunteer work crews from school parent community, Hands-On Bay Area, and other service groups like Beautiful Day to hold one-day garden work days. Some tasks are arranged to be completed ahead of work days like pathway installation or other work that requires heavy equipment	July-Nov , March-April	New and/or improved/expanded gardens are ready for Living Classroom lessons and other school use.
5 Orientation to teachers	Living Classroom program staff provides introduction to all participating teachers and instruction how to sign up for lessons.	August-September, 2018	Teacher understanding of program and how lessons tie into their instructional calendar; teachers can easily schedule lessons

6	Begin scheduling lessons	Program manager starts to fill up the calendar with lessons through the entire school year	August-Sept, 2018	The lesson schedule is set and program staff and docents are assigned to lead and/or assist lessons.
7	Begin lesson delivery	All initial lessons are lead by program manager with assistance by program assistant. Docents are then brought in after initial training to assist with lessons.	Sept 2018- June 2019	Great, well-delivered and organized lessons; kids have a fun time learning, teachers are thrilled!
8	Garden maintenance	Living Classroom garden manager and CUSD gardener work as a team to assure that gardens are in great shape for lessons and all garden supplies like seedlings, prepared garden beds, labels, etc. are in place	August 2018- June, 2019	Gardens are maximized for educational benefit, engagement of children outside of class time, beauty habitat value and biodiversity.
9	Docent recruitment	Significant outreach effort in local communities and school parent population to recruit docents to informational meetings and then fall, winter, or spring training sessions.	Aug - Nov 2018; Jan- March	For the first year, we aim to recruit and train 12 docents to support our instruction through leading or assisting our lessons. Docents enable us to deliver a large number of lessons to more students than otherwise we could provide and they add their own unique background, experiences, and teaching style which students love.
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D. Documents Upload

Documents Requested *	Required?	Attached Documents *
Financial statements	✓	CUSD financial statement
		CUSD financial statement 2015-16
		Living Classroom 2017-18 FY Budget
		Living Classroom 2016-17 Fiscal Year Report
Authorizing Resolution from Governing Body download template	✓	CUSD resolution
Project Budget download template	✓	Living Classroom Project Budget
Acknowledgment Form download template	✓	acknowledgement letter
Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement download template		
Land Tenure Form download template		
CEQA Compliance Certification Form download template		
Letters of Support		
Letters from Project Partners		CUSD Partner Letter

Maps

Other

[Living Classroom Informational Materials](#)

[Informational materials](#)

[Informational materials](#)

[At a Glance](#)

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