



THE HEALTHY WORKPLACE INITIATIVES PROGRAM

BEST PRACTICES FOR SUSTAINED IMPACT

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Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program (HWIP) is an annual fund available to UBC departments and units to support grassroots activities that promote wellbeing in the workplace. While HWIP's short-term impacts on individual and department/unit-level wellbeing are measured and documented each funding cycle, HWIP's long-term impacts and the sustainability of wellbeing initiatives beyond the funding period have not been previously examined.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS REPORT

This report shares the outcome of a Sustainability Scholars Project which aimed to:

1. Understand long-term impacts of HWIP funding on departments and units
2. Identify common facilitators and barriers to sustaining wellbeing initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period
3. Identify promising strategies for sustaining HWIP initiatives beyond the funding period

This report is intended to inform HWIP administration and program development in order to better help UBC departments and units better understand how to embed wellbeing into their workplace culture and programs.

METHODS

A post-project impact evaluation approach was utilized to identify long-term impacts of HWIP and examine ways in which wellbeing initiatives have been sustained. The project was guided by four evaluation questions:

1. What long-term impacts has HWIP funding had in departments and units that received funding between 2016-2019?
2. Have wellbeing initiatives been sustained in departments and units that received HWIP funding between 2016-2019? What do they look like now?
3. What successes, challenges, or barriers were experienced in sustaining initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period?
4. What strategies have helped facilitate sustainable wellbeing initiatives and the embedding of wellbeing in the workplace?

First, program materials and documents (including applications and final reports) submitted by HWIP grantees from 2016-2019 were reviewed. Then, twelve interviews were conducted with departments and units that received HWIP grants between 2016-2019. These interviews focused on the long-term impacts and sustainability of HWIP initiatives beyond the funding period.

FINDINGS

Long-term impacts of HWIP: Long-term impacts of HWIP on UBC departments and units included culture change, wellbeing practices maintained at the individual and/or group level, continued access to and use of resources, leadership support for wellbeing initiatives, and sustained wellbeing initiatives or programming.

Sustainability of HWIP initiatives: Of the twelve departments and units interviewed, four (33%) reported that their HWIP initiatives were continuing as originally implemented, five (42%) reported that initiatives were sustained, but had evolved from the original HWIP initiative, and three (25%) reported that their wellbeing initiatives had come to an end.

Facilitators and barriers to sustainability: Capacity to plan and coordinate wellbeing initiatives, sufficient resourcing, ongoing engagement and participation among team members, integration of wellbeing initiatives into existing goals and structures, leadership support, and planning HWIP initiatives with the long-term in mind were identified as facilitators to sustainability of initiatives. Barriers to sustaining wellbeing initiatives include lack of departmental and/or leadership support, funding limitations, competing work demands, staff turnover, and loss of novelty.

HWIP tools and resources to support sustainability: One on one support provided by HWIP staff and the application process were most commonly cited as useful tools and resources for supporting sustainable wellbeing initiatives. Funding area toolkits, website information, and other resources provided by HWIP (e.g., optional implementation support tools, making the case to departments documents) were rarely discussed as supportive resources for sustainable HWIP initiatives, and most departments and units were unresolved about their usefulness. When asked to recommend additional supports or resources that could help departments and units to sustain wellbeing initiatives, interview participants suggested connecting present and past HWIP grantees with each other and providing more data, stories of impact, and examples from previous HWIP funding cycles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Best practices for HWIP applicants and grantees: HWIP applicants and grantees may more successfully sustain HWIP initiatives and embed wellbeing in their workplaces by completing a needs assessment, securing leadership support, sharing responsibility for planning by creating a committee or planning team, combining efforts with other committees or initiatives with similar goals, developing plans for project sustainability from the start, seeking regular feedback from team members, evolving wellbeing initiatives based on feedback, using innovative ways to maintain team engagement, and sharing stories of success and impact.

Best practices for HWIP administration and program development: HWIP could better support sustainability of wellbeing initiatives by more clearly defining sustainability, providing examples of sustained initiatives, highlighting best practices for sustainability in funding area toolkits, creating an additional resource to help guide planning for sustainability, providing opportunities for HWIP grantees (past and present) to connect, sharing data or stories of success/impact, and continuing to provide individualized support on an as needed basis.

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THIS REPORT

Strengths: This report gives new insight into the challenges and successes of sustaining wellbeing initiatives directly from the perspectives of departments and units that recently received an HWIP grant.

Limitations: Because final reports were not available for all 2016-2019 HWIP grantees and only twelve departments and units were interviewed, the perspectives represented in this report may not be representative of all HWIP grantees. While efforts were made to include a wide range of departments and units, those which had positive experiences with HWIP and intentionally planned for sustainability are likely overrepresented in this small sample. Nevertheless, this report contains important insights into HWIP grantees' experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

This report should be utilized to inform the development of funding area toolkits and other resources to help HWIP applicants and grantees better plan and implement sustainable wellbeing initiatives. This work will support the Health, Wellbeing, and Benefits team's broader efforts to embed wellbeing in the workplace at UBC and, in turn, support the goals of the UBC Wellbeing Strategic Framework and the university's commitment to the Okanagan Charter.

Introduction

BACKGROUND

The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes the workplace as a key setting for health promotion¹, and while workplaces have been shown to lead to stress and negative health outcomes among employees, research demonstrates that workplaces can also act as positive health resources and enhance employee health and wellbeing.²

The University of British Columbia (UBC) has formally committed to wellbeing through adopting the Okanagan Charter, incorporating wellbeing into UBC's Strategic Plan: Shaping UBC's Next Century and Focus on People 2025 Framework, and activating the Wellbeing Strategic Framework (WSF), a shared vision for UBC as a health-and-wellbeing-promoting university. The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program is one program that seeks to support the university's wellbeing goals and commitments and focuses on workplace wellbeing (see **Appendix 1** for alignment between HWIP and WSF.)

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program (HWIP) is an annual fund available to UBC departments and units to support grassroots activities that promote wellbeing in the workplace. Administered by the Health, Wellbeing, and Benefits unit of Human Resources (HR) at UBC since 2008, HWIP provides start-up funds and support for health-related, sustainable initiatives. Currently, grants ranging in amount from \$500-\$2,500 are awarded in eight funding areas (see **Box 1**).

As part of the Health, Wellbeing, and Benefits unit's broader evaluation strategy, HWIP's short-term impacts on individual and department/unit-level wellbeing are measured and documented each funding cycle. However, until now, HWIP's long-term impacts and the sustainability of wellbeing initiatives beyond the funding period have not been examined.

HWIP FUNDING AREAS
Art & Creative Expression
Bike Share
Community Garden
Healthy Eating & Nutrition
Innovative New Idea
Mental Health Training
Team Health Challenge
Yoga/Fitness Classes

Box 1: HWIP Funding Areas

OBJECTIVES OF THIS REPORT

This report shares the outcome of a UBC Sustainability Scholars Project. The aims of this project were threefold (see **Box 2**).

PROJECT AIMS

1. Understand long-term impacts of HWIP funding on departments and units
2. Identify common facilitators and barriers to sustaining wellbeing initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period
3. Identify promising strategies for sustaining HWIP initiatives beyond the funding period

Box 2: Project Aims

The information presented in this report is intended to inform the development of funding area toolkits to help future applicants and grantees plan and implement wellbeing initiatives that are sustained beyond the HWIP funding period and embedded in their workplace culture and programs. It is also intended to inform the future development and administration of the Healthy Wellbeing Initiatives Program and the Health, Wellbeing, and Benefits team's broader efforts to embed wellbeing in the workplace at UBC.

Methods

A post-project impact evaluation approach was utilized to carry out this project. Sometimes referred to as Sustained and Emerging Impacts Evaluation (SEIE), post-project impact evaluation focuses on long-term impacts and examines the extent to which intended impacts have been sustained as well as what unintended impacts have emerged over time.³ Four evaluation questions were developed to guide data collection and analysis (see **Box 3**). A simplified evaluation matrix can be found in **Appendix 2**.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What long-term impacts has HWIP funding had in departments and units that received funding between 2016-2019?
2. Have wellbeing initiatives been sustained in departments and units that received HWIP funding between 2016-2019? What do they look like now?
3. What successes, challenges, or barriers were experienced in sustaining initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period?
4. What strategies have helped facilitate sustainable wellbeing initiatives and the embedding of wellbeing in the workplace?

Box 3: Evaluation Questions

First, a document review of program materials and documents submitted by HWIP grantees from 2016-2019 (including applications and final reports) was conducted. Then, twelve interviews were conducted with departments and units that received HWIP grants between 2016-2019 (see **Appendix 3** for a full list of interview participants). These interviews were conducted between May-June 2020 and focused on the long-term impacts and sustainability of HWIP initiatives beyond the funding period (see **Appendix 4** for a list of interview questions). The departments and units interviewed represented a diversity of funding areas, campus locations, and department types, as well as unique challenges, successes, and strategies employed to implement and sustain initiatives.

While comprehensive findings from this project were summarized in a preliminary report, this report focuses primarily on the insights about facilitators, barriers, and strategies for sustaining wellbeing initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period that emerged in the analysis of end-of-year reports and follow up interviews. Based on these insights, a set of recommendations were developed for both future HWIP grantees and for HWIP administration and program development.

Findings

LONG-TERM IMPACTS

Long-term impacts of HWIP funding on UBC departments and units included culture change, wellbeing practices maintained at the individual and/or group level, continued access to and use of resources, leadership support, and sustained wellbeing initiatives or programming.

1. Culture change

Interview participants described sustained changes in departmental or team culture as a result of their HWIP initiatives. The most common outcome of HWIP reported by departments and units were improvements in workplace culture and increased social connection. For example, departments and units across almost all funding areas reported increased collaboration in the workplace due to relationships built or strengthened through HWIP initiatives.

Other units reported that conversations and dialogue around wellbeing topics (e.g., mental health, healthy eating) continued well beyond the HWIP funding period. Certain behaviors (e.g., taking the stairs, encouraging one another to take breaks, checking in on team members' mental health, eating lunch together) were also reported as becoming normalized through the HWIP initiative and as being maintained by team members beyond the funding period.

"After we started the Lunch Club, walking through the halls of the school was a very different experience... Having those opportunities to informally connect really changes the feeling of where you are. Just being able to say, "Hey, hi, how are you?" makes a huge difference."

"The [mental health training] initiative made us think about our mental wellbeing and started a conversation among colleagues about taking care of ourselves not only physically but also mentally."

2. Wellbeing practices maintained at the individual and/or group level

As a result of new skills, behaviors, motivation, or knowledge gained from the HWIP initiative, wellbeing practices were reported to be maintained at the individual and group level after the completion of HWIP initiatives.

For example, one unit received an Art & Creative Expression grant for a team watercolouring workshop focused on art as a stress reduction practice. They reported that individuals continued to practice watercolouring at home with their families using materials provided by the workshop. This unit also had plans for informal drop-in art sessions in the office in order to provide opportunities for team members to continue painting together.

"[The bootcamp classes] gave the team a starting point to talk about health. It wasn't really talked about as a team before we started this. People started going on walks outside of the classes or sharing smoothie recipes. It gave people that healthy mentality, that I don't think was there before."

3. Continued access to and use of resources

Materials obtained with HWIP funding, such as art materials, bicycles, tea making or food preparation equipment, and garden tools, continued to be used one to four years after the funding period. Additionally, spaces and infrastructure created during the HWIP funding period continued to be utilized (e.g., community gardens) or appreciated (e.g., art murals). Some partnerships developed through HWIP were also maintained. For example, one unit which received Yoga/Fitness Classes grants in 2016 and 2017 continued to contract with the yoga instructor for weekly classes through November 2019. Even after weekly classes came to an end due to scheduling issues, the department maintained a partnership with the instructor to provide occasional workshops. Another department used Community Garden funding in 2016 to purchase plants and materials that continue to be used in 2020.

"We used much of the funding to purchase fruit trees and shrubs, items that will be productive for many years. We now have the physical materials needed to keep the garden going for many years, and a dedicated group of staff to tend it."

4. Leadership support for wellbeing initiatives

Interview participants sometimes reported that the success of HWIP initiatives led senior leadership to invest human and monetary resources in future wellbeing initiatives. Several departments and units discussed how demonstrated impact of their wellbeing initiatives on team members' wellbeing or workplace culture led to decisions to dedicate annual budgets to future wellbeing initiatives and/or prioritize wellbeing as part of the department or unit's strategic plan.

"It was so successful the facility manager said whether you get the [external] funding next year or not, look at putting forth something like this again because it was super effective."

5. Sustained wellbeing initiatives or programming

The majority of interview participants reported that wellbeing initiatives or programming had been sustained beyond the HWIP funding period. Some initiatives were maintained as they were originally planned and implemented while others adapted and evolved based on available resources, capacity, and team member interests and needs.

One unit shared that participation in the HWIP program helped their team to pilot many different approaches to workplace wellbeing and determine the types of activities and topics that worked best and could be continued in the future. They found that informal "Art Nights" were particularly popular and low-cost, and the department continued to offer such events beyond the HWIP funding period.

"Participating in HWIP was a chance for [us] to try out many different approaches to workplace wellbeing. It gave us a chance to really trial out a lot of different activities and approaches... We got to see what had the most interest and uptake, and build on the things that went over well."

More details and examples of wellbeing initiatives or programming sustained beyond the HWIP funding period can be found the "Sustainability of Initiatives" section below.

SUSTAINABILITY OF INITIATIVES

Of the twelve former HWIP grantees interviewed, four departments and units (33%) reported that their HWIP initiatives were sustained as originally implemented (Community Garden (2), Bike Share (1), and Healthy Eating & Nutrition (1) funding areas).

Five departments and units (42%) reported that initiatives were sustained, but had evolved significantly from the original HWIP initiative (Art & Creative Expression (1), Team Health Challenge (1), Innovative New Idea (1), Mental Health Training (1), and Yoga Classes (1) funding areas).

For example, an Art & Creative Expression initiative which entailed a team watercolouring class led to informal staff painting sessions using materials provided by the department. In the Mental Health Training funding area, an initiative that began as a series of social events focused on mental health continue on a monthly basis but have evolved to include a broader range of topics such as celebration of cultural events and discussions around equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Three departments and units (25%) reported that their wellbeing initiatives had come to an end (Innovative New Ideas (2) and Fitness Classes (1) funding areas). For the two Innovative Idea initiatives, reasons cited for discontinuation include a lack of buy-in from faculty and departmental leadership and insufficient funding to continue.

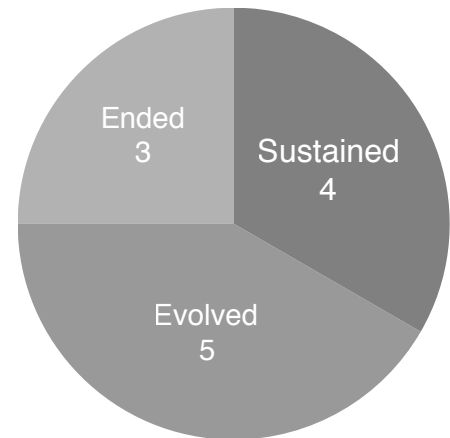


Figure 1: Status of 2016-2019 HWIP initiatives (June 2020)

STATUS OF 2016-2019 HWIP INITIATIVES IN 2020

Sustained (4)

- Community Garden (2)
- Bike Share (1)
- Healthy Eating & Nutrition (1)

Evolved (5)

- Art & Creative Expression (1)
- Team Health Challenge (1)
- Innovative New Idea (1)
- Mental Health Training (1)
- Yoga/Fitness Classes (1)

Ended (3)

- Innovative New Idea (2)
- Yoga/Fitness Classes (1)

Box 4: Status of 2016-2019 HWIP initiatives in June 2020

However, both units cited long-term impacts of the HWIP initiative such as strengthened working relationships between staff and faculty, continued use of tea making equipment for team meetings, a physical resource (recipe book) that was created and continues to be available to staff and the public, and a culture that normalizes conversations around food and health.

A Fitness Class initiative was also reported to have come to an end. However, this unit explained that the bootcamp classes were not the main point of the initiative, but rather that the classes served as a “jumping off point” for team building and starting to create a culture around health and wellbeing. This unit has received HWIP funding (Team Health Challenge funding area) for the 2020 cycle and are excited to continue building a team culture around wellbeing.

FACILITATORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

Departments and units that successfully sustained wellbeing initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period exhibited several key similarities; however, considerable variation in continuation strategies exist across departments and units. The following emerged as common facilitators of sustainability and strategies used to sustain wellbeing initiatives.

1. Capacity to plan and coordinate wellbeing initiatives

“Having the committee involved and having that be a shared responsibility. That’s something that we have found that helps with sustainability.”

While the amount of time dedicated to coordination, number of people involved in planning, and structure of planning teams varied widely between departments and units, all departments and units that successfully sustained wellbeing initiatives had at least one individual or, more commonly, a team dedicated to planning and coordinating activities and events. Almost all interview participants noted that without the dedicated individual or team, the wellbeing initiative likely would not have been successful or sustained.

Strategies: Some departments and units created formal committees, informal clubs (e.g., Garden Club), or ad-hoc teams, merged wellbeing initiatives with existing committees (e.g., Pro-D Committee, Social Committee), or created a subcommittee within existing committees with aligned goals and interests (e.g., Training, Environmental, and Education Committee). Less frequently, a single individual took on the responsibilities of planning and coordinating wellbeing initiatives.

2. Sufficient resourcing

“The success of these initiatives led to the decision to continue funding the Gardening Club through operational funds.”

Departments and units that sustained wellbeing initiatives had sufficient funding, materials, and partnerships, to do so. Sufficient funding, in particular, is a key facilitator of sustainability.

Strategies: Common strategies used to fund wellbeing initiatives after the initial HWIP funding period include use of departmental funding (e.g., operational funds, discretionary funding, funding allocated to committees), charging nominal fees for participation, and self-funding by participants. Many departments and units also discussed strategies to reduce or eliminate ongoing costs by organizing low-cost or free activities (e.g., group walks, potlucks).

Some departments and units used HWIP funding to purchase materials that could continue to be used beyond the funding period. This was especially common in Community Garden, Art & Creative Expression, Bike Share, and Healthy Eating & Nutrition funding areas. Examples of materials purchased in advance include garden tools, art supplies (e.g., canvasses, paint), spare bike parts, and cooking equipment (i.e., large salad bowls). Other departments provided materials (including food or prizes) while others relied on materials to be contributed by participants (e.g., art supplies, food for potlucks).

Initiatives that require partnerships (e.g., Yoga/Fitness Classes) often maintained relationships built during the HWIP initiative (e.g., with instructors). In other cases, new partnerships and resources on campus and in the community were utilized. For example, a Community Garden initiative on the Point Grey campus utilized seed libraries on campus to attain seeds for free.

3. Ongoing engagement and participation among team members

“It might need to be that the program needs to be evolved over time with what the staff want and what the need is. So you need that kind of ongoing touch base with what’s relevant to people or where their interests lie.”

In addition to ongoing planning and coordination, ongoing engagement and participation among team members is critical to the sustainability of wellbeing initiatives. To justify continuing wellbeing programming, team members must attend, participate in, and benefit from the initiatives.

Strategies: Ongoing communication with team members, both formally (e.g., surveys, team meetings) and informally (e.g., hallway or break room conversations) is key for maintaining team engagement. Ongoing needs assessments, regular feedback mechanisms, and participatory planning processes were used to align programming that aligned with team members' needs and interests. Programming was often reported to evolve based on feedback and changing interests and needs.

Additionally, effective promotion and reduction of barriers to participation was key to both the success and sustainability of wellbeing initiatives. Branding of initiatives (e.g., clever naming of initiatives, branded items), incentives (e.g., low cost prizes or recognition strategies such as certificates of participation), and participation modeled by senior leadership (e.g., attending classes) were commonly used strategies to encourage participation. Departments and units reduced barriers to participation through removing or minimizing cost and level of commitment to participate and accommodating different interests, skill level, and abilities within the group. New team members were introduced to wellbeing initiatives as part of their onboarding or orientation processes to maintain momentum during staff turnover.

4. Integration of wellbeing initiatives into existing goals and structures

"Our success [sustaining this initiative] came from linking it into other campus initiatives."

Sustained wellbeing initiatives were often integrated into departmental structures and processes. Wellbeing programming were not standalone initiatives, but rather aligned with other organizational priorities and integrated with other initiatives, events, or goals.

Strategies: Sustained wellbeing initiatives were often cited as aligned with departmental strategic plans, goals, or work priorities. They were integrated into ongoing, regular events (e.g., team meetings, annual retreats) or, in some cases, ongoing initiatives or events were adapted to include wellbeing components (e.g., switching snacks during team meeting to healthy snacks, wellbeing topics integrated into ongoing Pro-D workshops).

5. Leadership support

“Support from our Chair [was the most effective resource in working to ensure the success of the initiative]. She attended the classes and recognized the importance of healthy workplace exercise.”

Underlying many of the above facilitators of sustainability was departmental or leadership support for wellbeing initiatives in the workplace. Almost all departments and units interviewed cited leadership support as key to the success and sustainability of their initiative, whether that support had been present before the HWIP funding period or was gained during the HWIP initiative.

Strategies: Departments sought and gained leadership support in different ways. Some departments ensured they had senior leadership support before applying for HWIP while others sought to gain support through demonstrating impact during the HWIP funding period. Many departments and units explained that senior leadership had supported their initiatives from the start and had an interest in workplace wellbeing. Others used strategies to demonstrate the value of wellbeing initiatives in order to gain support (e.g., inviting leadership to events or classes, sharing testimonials or positive feedback from staff with leadership).

In practice, leadership support looked different in each department and unit. Common demonstrations of leadership support included allocating or advocating for ongoing, intermittent, or matching funds, allowing or encouraging work time to be allotted for planning and participating in wellbeing initiatives, and setting departmental goals or objectives related to wellbeing.

6. Planning HWIP initiatives with the long-term in mind

“[T]he really key piece was making sure we had that leadership buy-in from the beginning. And we also wanted to have that conversation about whether we had their buy-in to continue it after the fact.”

Finally, wellbeing initiatives that were successfully sustained beyond the HWIP funding period were commonly planned with sustainability and the long-term in mind. Intentionally designing, planning, and implementing HWIP initiatives with the goal of suitability facilitates sustainability.

Strategies: Departments and units reported having held discussions about long-term viability and impact during the HWIP planning and application phases, developing long-term plans, and intentionally building systems and capacity that would last beyond the funding period.

BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABILITY

Common challenges and barriers to sustaining initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period include the following.

1. Lack of departmental and/or leadership support

“I went on [leave] and the new Associate Head was supposed to take it on, but she did not continue [the initiative]. She had no investment in it, she never came to it once.”

While departmental and leadership support was identified as a key facilitator to sustaining wellbeing initiatives, lack of such support emerged as detrimental to an initiative’s success and sustainability. Without support from leadership, organizing, resourcing, and engaging team members in wellbeing initiatives is likely unsustainable.

2. Funding limitations

“Funding was a big part of [the initiative coming to an end]. We’re just a research group that runs on grants, so we don’t have that extra wiggle room.”

Some departments and units reported high uptake, participation, and enthusiasm among team members to continue wellbeing initiatives, but were unable to do so due to funding limitations. In end-of-year reports, this was by far the most commonly cited anticipated barrier to sustainability.

Funding areas and initiatives that relied heavily on instructors, speakers, and workshops (e.g., yoga/fitness classes, cooking or art classes, and mental health trainings) appeared to more commonly report lack of funding as a key barrier to sustainability. However, departments and units across all funding areas anticipated challenges to continuing in a low-cost or no-cost way. For example, it was noted that incentives such as prizes and refreshments are important for encouraging participation but require ongoing funding. Charging nominal fees or asking team members to pay (or otherwise contribute materials or food) to participate were perceived as disincentivating or creating barriers to participation.

Others cited that costs required to continue wellbeing initiatives fell outside of the scope of their department or unit's operational funding and other sources of funding were not available to support their initiatives. Budgetary flexibility to allocate funding for wellbeing initiatives appeared to vary based on the type of unit (with grant-funded units having less flexibility) and were related to the level of senior leadership support.

3. Competing work demands

"It wasn't a lack of interest but rather an issue with scheduling [that brought the classes to an end]."

The administrative time required to plan activities, events, or projects was often cited as a key barrier, especially when there was not a committee in place and the responsibilities fell on a single individual or was done "off the side of someone's desk."

Competing work demands and busy schedules were also described as limiting the team members' time and capacity to participate in events and activities, especially when participation was not actively supported by senior leadership or management. Additionally, busy schedules made it challenging to find times to schedule events or activities at times that worked for everyone's availability. While some departments were granted permission to spend work time to plan and participate in wellbeing initiatives and others did so outside of regular work hours, competing work demands were reported as a barrier to sustainability across all funding areas.

4. Staff turnover

“Unfortunately, all of us [who were key promoters of the program] left at the same time. It’s hard when you have a small team and you have people leave, because it’s hard to keep that sustainability piece.”

Staff turnover emerged as a barrier to sustainability in two ways. First, when key promoters and champions of wellbeing initiatives left the department or unit (or transitioned into a different position), the responsibilities and roles they took on could be left unfilled. One interview participant who championed the HWIP Community Garden initiative noted that if they ever left their position in their unit, that they anticipated the garden would almost certainly be dismantled.

Second, turnover among team members more generally was also as a challenge to maintaining momentum for wellbeing initiatives. During times of leadership transitions or high staff turnover, enthusiasm for initiatives could wane and cultures or norms change. For example, something that had become an embedded part of a department or unit (e.g., a lunchtime walking club or afternoon painting break) or an expected recurring event (e.g., a holiday team potluck or annual spring planting of the community garden) could be lost when many staff transitions occur.

It should be noted, however, that while staff turnover was identified as a barrier to sustainability, HWIP and wellbeing initiatives were also often discussed as being opportunities to onboard new staff in a positive and welcoming way and build team camaraderie or boost morale during times of change and transition.

5. Loss of novelty

“I think it would be great if UBC had a connection between groups that have similar programs so that we can get ideas. Because it’s hard for us to come up with new ideas. We bring back old ideas, but we’ve invested so much into this already that it would be nice to have a new source of ideas.”

Departments and units often stated that HWIP was particularly useful for gaining momentum and building enthusiasm for wellbeing within their teams. However, maintaining this momentum and enthusiasm emerged as a common challenge across all funding areas.

While some departments reported sustained (and in some cases, increased) enthusiasm and participation with time, others noted that interest and participation declined once the novelty of something new wore out. Many departments expressed a desire to continue offering new and exciting events and activities but described (or anticipated) “running out of new ideas” to keep their team engaged. Offering new or novel activities was particularly challenging for departments and units with limited budgets for wellbeing initiatives.

FACILITATORS OF SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity to plan and coordinate wellbeing initiatives
2. Sufficient resourcing
3. Ongoing engagement and participation among team members
4. Integration of wellbeing initiatives into existing goals and structures
5. Leadership support
6. Planning HWIP initiatives with the long-term in mind

BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABILITY

1. Lack of departmental and/or leadership support
2. Funding limitations
3. Competing work demands
4. Staff turnover
5. Loss of novelty

Box 5: Summary of facilitators and barriers to sustainability of wellbeing initiatives

HWIP TOOLS AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT

Tools and resources currently provided by HWIP to support applicants and grantees to think about, plan for, and implement initiatives with sustainability in mind are summarized in **Box 6** below. When prompted to discuss tools and resources they found most useful for supporting the sustainability of their wellbeing initiatives, interview participants most frequently cited the following: one on one support provided by HWIP staff on a case by case basis and the application process. The funding area toolkits, website information, and other resources provided by HWIP (e.g., optional implementation support tools, making the case to departments documents) were rarely discussed without further probing and most departments and units were unresolved about their usefulness in terms of initiative sustainability.

PRE-IMPLEMENTATION	IMPLEMENTATION	POST-IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Funding Area Toolkits • Application • 1:1 Support on a case by case basis • Orientation • “Making the Case to Departments” Tools* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Area Toolkits • Implementation Support Tools** • 1:1 Support on a case by case basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Report
<p>*Making the case to departments tools include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the case to managers document • Evidence to support workplace health initiatives document • Link to Workplace Experience Survey data <p>**Optional implementation support tools include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and promotion guide • Program planning tool • Survey template for collecting team member feedback 		

Box 6: Existing tools and resources to support HWIP initiative sustainability

Funding area toolkits

Funding area toolkits did not emerge in interviews as a significant useful tool for supporting sustainability. Only two interviewees discussed the toolkits when asked about useful tools for sustaining initiatives, while one other participant expressed that it was not as useful as they would have liked since the funding area (Innovative New Idea) was very broad. When prompted to reflect on the toolkit, other interview participants primarily referred to the usefulness of the financial elements of the toolkit (i.e., guidelines for approved and disallowed funding) or to a different tool that was used to support funding reporting and the reimbursement process.

Common suggestions for making the toolkits more effective for supporting initiative sustainability included providing more detailed examples of initiatives from previous funding years, resources or templates used by grantees in the past, and more specific and detailed guidance for specific funding areas (e.g., more information regarding instructors for fitness/yoga classes, budgets and quotes for local providers of cooking/art classes). However, some interviewees cautioned against providing too many examples or being too prescriptive, as it may limit creativity and innovation. Another suggestion was to include a list of questions to consider while planning initiatives or developing the application and to include in this list a set of questions to specifically prompt and guide thinking about sustainability.

Application process and reporting requirements

Some participants noted that developing the application and writing the final report helped them consider and plan for the sustainability of the initiative as they were required to describe plans for sustainability at these two points in the funding cycle. However, interview participants expressed that there was a lack of clarity around what sustainability meant or what it could look like. This lack of clarity around the term “sustainability” was also evident in the way that different units and departments seemed to interpret and respond the questions regarding sustainability in applications and final reports in a number of different ways.

It was suggested that a detailed definition or description of sustainability and examples of successfully sustained initiatives could help clarify the concept of sustainability to applicants and grantees. Several participants shared that they would have found it useful to have more conversations around sustainability throughout the funding period (after the initial orientation and before the final reports are due) to share ideas and troubleshoot challenges with other grantees.

1:1 Support on a case by case basis

Interview participants expressed gratitude for support provided by HWIP staff during both the application process and funding period. While they varied in when and why they reached out for support, many interviewees noted that Miranda Massie and Truelove Twumasi-Afryie were both very responsive, flexible, and helpful when they required support to plan their initiatives, troubleshoot challenges, or had questions that needed clarification.

Suggested tools and resources

Connecting HWIP grantees (past and present): One of the most common suggestions for supporting grantees in planning for sustainability was to facilitate connections between grantees within the same or similar funding areas. There was a strong sense of wanting to know and learn from what others were doing and a desire to share ideas, resources, and discuss strategies for navigating implementation challenges and sustainability planning with other departments or units working on similar initiatives. Suggestions included creating formal and informal spaces for connection between current grantees (e.g., end-of-term wrap up event, an online community or discussion board), for connecting with former grantees (e.g., making contact information of previous grantees available to current grantees, with permission), and for learning about previous projects in other ways (e.g., stories highlighted in a newsletter or on the HWIP website).

Sharing data and stories of impact: Another suggestion for supporting grantees in sustaining HWIP initiatives beyond the funding period was for HWIP to share more data, examples, and stories of success or impact that could be used to spur new ideas, learn from previous HWIP grantees, gain support from senior leadership, or support departments and units in collecting and sharing their own stories and data.

Recommendations

BEST PRACTICES FOR HWIP APPLICANTS AND GRANTEES

Box 7 summarized best practices that departments and units can use to support sustainability of wellbeing initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period. Some of these best practices are currently required or supported by HWIP tools, resources, or processes listed above in **Box 6**; however, some areas could benefit from stronger support and resource development. Recommendations for HWIP to further support departments and units in implementing these best practices are discussed in the section below.

BEST PRACTICES FOR HWIP APPLICANTS AND GRANTEES

1. Complete a needs assessment prior to developing an HWIP initiative/ submitting a grant application in order to determine the needs and interests of team members.
2. Seek support from leadership*, not only for the HWIP initiative, but also to continue wellbeing initiatives beyond the funding period.
3. Share responsibility for planning by creating a committee or planning team.
4. Combine efforts with other committees or initiatives with similar goals, if possible.
5. Develop plans for project implementation*, communication*, and sustainability from the start.
6. Seek regular feedback from team members, formally* and/or informally, and evolve wellbeing initiatives based on feedback.
7. Use innovative ways to maintain team engagement, particularly during times of staff turnover and transition.
8. Share stories of success with HWIP, leadership, and team members.

*HWIP tools and resources currently exist to support these best practices

Box 7: Best practices for HWIP applicants and grantees

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HWIP ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

1. More clearly define and communicate sustainability

The concept of sustainability should be more clearly defined and explicitly promoted as part of HWIP processes (e.g., communication, recruitment, application, orientation, reporting, etc). It has been documented in the literature that there is no consensus for a definition of sustainability and that inconsistency in definitions has led to a lack of guidance on how to promote and attain program sustainability.⁴ In order to provide guidance for sustainability, HWIP must first define and conceptualize what sustainability means. The insights provided in this report, along with the case studies conducted as part of this project, could be used to support the development of this definition. The HWIP definition of sustainability should be communicated to all HWIP applicants grantees at various points in the recruitment, application, orientation, and reporting process as well as throughout the program year.

2. Provide examples of successfully sustained wellbeing initiatives

HWIP should also provide examples of successfully sustained wellbeing initiatives for applicants and grantees to reference. The case studies developed as part of this Sustainability Scholars project could be shared on the HWIP website, added to funding area toolkits, and/or used in recruitment communications. Previous HWIP grantees could be invited to briefly speak or present during the orientation for new grantees. While it will, in part, depend on how HWIP decides to define sustainability, the examples should be framed as being intended to illustrate many potential ways to sustain initiatives, rather than to prescribe specific ways to sustain wellbeing initiatives.

3. Include best practices for sustaining wellbeing initiatives in funding area toolkits

Strategies outlined in the “Facilitators of Sustainability” section of this report and best practices listed above in **Box 7** should be integrated into the funding area toolkits. The toolkits should also be updated to include funding area specific best practices (see **Appendix 5**). Some of these funding area specific best practices are already included in funding area toolkits; however, they could be elaborated on with examples or more explicitly highlighted as strategies for sustainability. It may be useful to add a section called “Sustaining the Initiative Beyond the Funding Period” or something similar.

4. Create an additional resource to guide planning for sustainability

This additional resource should include a set of questions or considerations to guide departments and units through thinking about different elements of sustaining a wellbeing initiative. The tool could also include a definition of sustainability, the importance of considering sustainability in the planning/implementation process, examples of strategies that can be used to sustain initiatives (as described in this report), case studies or examples of successfully sustained initiatives, and links to resources that support sustainability (e.g., making the case to departments document). This tool could be incorporated into funding area toolkits, into the HWIP application, or included in the set of optional implementation support tools provided to grantees after the orientation session. Ideally, the resource would be available to departments and units as they conceive of their HWIP initiative ideas and develop their applications. See suggested questions to include in **Appendix 6**.

5. Provide opportunities for (past and present) HWIP grantees to connect

A Canvas course or other online platform could be created for HWIP grantees to connect with one another, share ideas, and troubleshoot common challenges in an informal way. Topics of discussion could be initiated to spark discussions around strategies for sustaining initiatives. Past HWIP grantees could also be included in discussions to share lessons learned, ask for new advice, and gain new ideas. While it will take some time and resources to set up such a system, facilitating the flow of ideas and support between HWIP grantees could potentially reduce the HWIP staff's burden of providing individualized support to applicants and grantees.

6. Share data or stories of success/impact

Sharing impact data and stories of success more regularly could not only help HWIP grantees better make the case of wellbeing initiatives to their department or unit leadership, but could also spark new ideas for strategies or activities that could help embed wellbeing in the workplace. Communication tools (e.g., case studies) developed as part of this Sustainability Scholars project can support this effort.

7. Continue to provide case by case support on an as needed basis

Each department and unit at UBC is unique, with different context, interests, goals, and resources. Thus, while HWIP can seek to support sustainable wellbeing initiatives through broad reaching resources, communication, and tools, it should continue to provide individualized support to departments and units as needed.

Strengths and Limitations of this Report

The long-term impacts and sustainability of HWIP initiatives have not been examined before. This report gives new insight into the challenges and successes of sustaining wellbeing initiatives directly from the perspectives of departments and units which have received a grant between 2016-2019.

It should be noted that final report data was not available for all 2016-2019 HWIP grantees. Additionally, interviews were conducted with only twelve out of over 170 projects funded in this time period. While efforts were made to include a wide range of perspectives across department/unit types, sizes, locations, funding amounts, funding areas, and funding years, interview participants were also selected based on promising strategies for sustainability that were discussed or implied in their final reports. Thus, the perspectives captured in the twelve interviews may not be representative of all departments and units who participate in HWIP, and departments and units that intentionally planned for sustainability are likely overrepresented in this small sample. Additionally, all of the departments and units interviewed shared several key characteristics.

1. At least one key contact for the HWIP initiative was currently still employed in the department or unit at the time of follow-up.
2. Many interviewees were in positions that included program management or coordination as part of their responsibilities.
3. All departments and units interviewed had the time and willingness to spend 30-45 minutes being interviewed about their HWIP experiences.

These shared characteristics suggest that this sample of former HWIP grantees may have had more positive experiences with the HWIP program and more success in sustaining wellbeing initiatives beyond the funding period than the average HWIP grantee.

Nevertheless, this report contains important insights into former HWIP grantees' experiences with sustaining wellbeing initiatives in UBC departments and units which can be used to inform future administration of HWIP and program development to better support the embedding of wellbeing in UBC workplaces. This work will, in turn, support the goals of the UBC Wellbeing Strategic Framework and the university's commitment to the Okanagan Charter.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1: ALIGNMENT BETWEEN UBC WELLBEING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PRIORITY AREAS AND HWIP FUNDING AREAS

HWIP Funding Area	WSF Priority Areas
Art & Creative Expression	1. Social Connection 2. Mental Health & Resilience Built & Natural Environments (<i>some projects</i>) Collaborative Leadership (<i>some projects</i>)
Bike Share	1. Built & Natural Environments 2. Physical Activity Social Connection (<i>some projects</i>)
Community Garden	1. Food & Nutrition 2. Built & Natural Environments 3. Social Connection 4. Physical Activity 5. Mental Health & Resilience Collaborative Leadership (<i>some projects</i>)
Healthy Eating & Nutrition	1. Mental Health & Resilience 2. Physical Activity 3. Food & Nutrition 4. Social Connection Collaborative Leadership (<i>some projects</i>)
Innovative New Idea	1. Food & Nutrition 2. Social Connection Built & Natural Environments (<i>some projects</i>) Collaborative Leadership (<i>some projects</i>)
Mental Health Training	1. Social Connection Collaborative Leadership (<i>some projects</i>) Mental Health & Resilience (<i>some projects</i>) Food & Nutrition (<i>some projects</i>) Built & Natural Environments (<i>some projects</i>) Physical Activity (<i>some projects</i>)

Team Health Challenge	1. Mental Health & Resilience 2. Social Connection
Yoga/Fitness Classes	1. Physical Activity 2. Social Connection 3. Mental Health & Resilience Built & Natural Environments (<i>some projects</i>)

Note: The above are most common alignments between HWIP funding areas and WSF priority areas. It is possible that HWIP projects in a funding areas may align with WSF priority areas not listed in this table and that a single HWIP project may align with multiple WSF priority areas.

APPENDIX 2: EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Question	Source of Data & Collection Method
1. What long-term impacts has HWIP funding had in departments and units that received funding between 2016-2019?	Interviews (grantees)
2. Have wellbeing initiatives been sustained in departments and units that received HWIP funding between 2016-2019? What do they look like now?	Interviews (grantees)
3. What successes, challenges, or barriers were experienced in sustaining initiatives beyond the HWIP funding period?	Document review (final reports) Interviews (grantees)
4. What strategies have helped facilitate sustainable wellbeing initiatives and the embedding of wellbeing in the workplace?	Document review (final reports, applications, program materials) Interviews (grantees) Interview (program staff)

APPENDIX 3: COMPLETE LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Funding Area	Funding Year	Department/Unit	Campus	# Interview Participants
Art & Creative Expression	2019	Faculty of Arts, Dean's Office	Point Grey	1
Bike Share	2019	Financial Operations / Accounts Payable	Point Grey	1
Community Garden	2016, 2017	UBCO Campus Operations and RMS	Okanagan	2
Community Garden	2016	David Lam Library	Point Grey	1
Healthy Eating & Nutrition	2019	School of Nursing	Point Grey	2
Innovative New Idea	2016	UBCO Community, Culture and Global Studies	VGH	1
Innovative New Idea	2017	UBC Department of Continuing Professional Development	Okanagan	1
Innovative New Idea	2018	Neuroethics Canada	Point Grey	1
Mental Health Training	2017	Centre for Heart Lung Innovation	St. Paul's	3
Team Health Challenge	2019	Athletics & Recreation - Aquatic Centre	Point Grey	1
Yoga/Fitness Classes	2016, 2017	First Year Arts program	Point Grey	1
Yoga/Fitness Classes	2018	Strategy and Decision Support	Point Grey	1

APPENDIX 4: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is your current position and unit/department? Can you tell me a little about your unit/department? (i.e., How many staff/employees? What is the nature of the work?)
2. Can you tell me about the [FUNDING AREA] initiative that your department/unit implemented in [YEAR]?
3. How were you involved in the conception/implementation of HWIP initiative in your workplace? What was your role in planning/rolling out? Who else was involved in planning/rolling out?
4. From what you can remember, what were the most valuable outcomes of the initiative? What resources/factors were key to the success of the initiative? What barriers were faced/what was most challenging about the initiative?
5. Thinking more long-term, what would you say were long-term impacts, if any, of the HWIP initiative in your unit/department? Were there any unexpected impacts or benefits that you saw in the long-term?
6. Has the [FUNDING AREA] initiative continued in its original form or in any other way? How has it changed or evolved in the time following the HWIP following period? Which aspects have been maintained, which have not? [Specific Qs based on final report]
7. If YES, to Q6: Can you tell me more about your/the department's efforts to keep the initiative going? What has worked well to keep it going? What resources/factors have been key to sustaining it? What's been challenging or didn't work? How have these challenges been navigated/overcome? [Specific Qs based on final report] *Probe for details related to resources, capacity, motivation, linkages.*
8. If NO, to Q6: Can you tell me about the process of how it came to an end? What were some reasons it did not continue? What were the challenges you faced? What strategies were considered or used to try to overcome them? What would have been needed to continue the initiative? Can you think of anything that could have been done differently in the planning, rolling out, or follow up of the HWIP initiative to help sustain it beyond the funding period?

Can you think of anything that could have been done differently in the planning, rolling out, or follow up of the HWIP initiative to help sustain it beyond the funding period? [Specific Qs based on final report] Probe for details related to resources, capacity, motivation, linkages.

9. Other specific questions related to their HWIP initiative and sustainability plans/barriers [Specific Qs based on final report]
10. Thinking back to your HWIP initiative, what support, tools, resources from the HWIP program were most useful to help your department sustain the workplace wellbeing initiative? What resources, tools, or support from HWIP to you think could have been useful to help your department better sustain your workplace wellbeing initiative?
11. HWIP and the Health, Wellbeing, and Benefits team is interested in looking at ways to better support departments and units embed wellbeing in the workplace, and sustain healthy workplace initiatives beyond the funding period. What advice would you have for this team as they think about new ways to help departments and units do this?
12. What advice would you give to other departments or units interested in implementing a healthy workplace initiative that is sustainable?
13. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience with the HWIP program, about wellbeing in your unit/department, or about workplace wellbeing in general? Do you have any questions for me?

APPENDIX 5: FUNDING AREA SPECIFIC BEST PRACTICES

Funding Area	Best Practices for Sustainability
Art & Creative Expression	Follow up on one time events (e.g. follow up on a one time art class or event with regular, informal art time during breaks)
Bike Share	Make purchases with the future in mind (e.g., bike repair tools, spare parts, etc)
Community Garden	<p>Make purchases with the future in mind (e.g. garden tools, seeds, etc.)</p> <p>Select plants based on available future resources and maintenance (e.g., plant more perennials for less ongoing costs and maintenance)</p>
Healthy Eating & Nutrition	Follow up on one time events (e.g. follow up on a cooking lesson with ongoing healthy snack preparation for team meetings)
Innovative New Idea	N/A as projects vary widely. Applicants/grantees may want to identify funding areas most similar to their project to identify potential strategies or best practices.
Mental Health Training	Follow up on one time events (e.g. follow up on a mental health training workshop with continued conversations during team meetings)
Team Health Challenge	Consider low-cost recognition to incentivize participation (e.g., certificate of participation)
Yoga/Fitness Classes	Consider charging nominal fees for classes

APPENDIX 6: SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR A “PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY” TOOL

1. How might the initiative look after the funding period? Will it continue as it is, or will it look different? If it will look different, how so? What elements of the HWIP initiative will continue?
2. Who will be responsible for continuing to plan and coordinate initiatives? What will happen in the case that a key person leaves their position or the department/unit?
3. What resources (e.g., time, funding, materials, space) will be needed to continue wellbeing programming after the funding period? What resources does your department or unit have that will support sustainability? What additional resources will you need to secure? How will you secure these resources?
4. Can this initiative be integrated into existing, ongoing programming, processes, or initiatives (e.g., team meetings, annual retreats, Pro-D workshops, strategic plans)? If your initiative includes a one time event, what follow up will there be?
5. How will you continue to engage team members after the funding period ends? How will ensure that wellbeing programming continues to be interesting, relevant, and meets your team’s needs? How will you maintain momentum during staff turnover?
6. If you haven’t already secured leadership support for continuing the initiative after the HWIP funding period, how do you plan to do so? What evidence or information will they need in order to become supportive?
7. What factors will determine whether the initiative continues? What challenges or barriers do you anticipate to sustaining your initiative? How might you overcome these?



UBCO GARDENING CLUB

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Photo credit: UBCO Facilities Management

DEPARTMENT

Facilities Management,
UBC Campus Operations
and Risk Management
Services

CAMPUS

UBC Okanagan

FUNDING YEAR

2016 & 2017

ABOUT HWIP

The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program (HWIP) is an annual fund available to UBC departments and units to support grassroots activities that promote wellbeing in the workplace. The program provides start-up funds and support for health-related, sustainable initiatives.

www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

With their first HWIP grant in 2016, the UBCO Gardening Club was launched. They hosted a series of “Lunch and Learn” workshops led by faculty and community experts about native plant and animal life, installed a pollinator garden, and hosted nature walks around campus. Inspired by a workshop on nectar trails, the Gardening Club decided to install a nectar trail on campus in 2017. With a second, smaller HWIP grant, club members designed, planted, and maintained 12 pollinator gardens along a 1 kilometer trail on the UBCO campus.

The success of these initiatives led to the decision to continue funding the Gardening Club through operational funds. The club chooses a new theme each year based on ideas and interests of its members. Each summer, they offer educational, building, planting, and social activities that get people outside and into the campus landscape. In 2018, they partnered with Lee Valley Tools, a local hardware company, to build and install pollinator hotels on campus and in 2019, the nectar trail built in 2017 was enhanced.

“Our most valuable resource for this initiative is undoubtedly our knowledgeable campus partners, including faculty and community experts who have facilitated workshops, and our landscape maintenance contractors who have lent their assistance and expertise to our planting activities.”

KEY TO SUCCESS

Strong partnerships with campus and community partners have been key to successfully launching and maintaining the Gardening Club at UBCO.

The Gardening Club engaged faculty and community experts to facilitate workshops ([see examples here!](#)). They also secured matching funds and donations from a local hardware store. A donated shed created a central “homebase” for the club and donated tools continue to be used for new projects.

SUSTAINABILITY

Over the years, the Gardening Club has become something that its members expect and look forward to each year.

Each winter, members start to email asking when the Gardening Club will start and sharing ideas for themes and activities for the spring.



VALUABLE OUTCOMES

Through educational workshops, planting activities, and social events ([see examples here!](#)), Garden Club participants are able to take mental, physical, and social breaks from their work.

They have also developed awareness of pollinating species and native flora on campus and developed a sense of ownership and contribution by building features that support these species and can be enjoyed by everyone on the UBCO campus.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Built & Natural
Environments

Collaborative
Leadership

Social Connection

Physical Activity

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1

Look for opportunities for synergies with institutional or departmental goals

“Our success [sustaining this initiative] came from linking it into other campus initiatives... The nectar trail supports indigenization, sustainability, and design guidelines. It probably checked about six different boxes. We can link other activities the Gardening Club has done in a similar way [to campus or departmental goals or initiatives].”

2

It can take some time to build momentum. Be persistent and consistent!

“After the second year, we had kind of established ourselves, we had a core group, and we were getting emails in the late winter going, “Hey, is the Gardening Club happening again?” It’s almost like we didn’t have a choice to not continue [at that point].”



STAFF & FACULTY YOGA

YOGA/FITNESS CLASSES

DEPARTMENT

First Year Programs, Arts

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2016 & 2017

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Recognizing a gap in wellness resources specifically for staff, the First Year Arts department launched weekly yoga classes for faculty and staff at the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre in 2016. They found an excellent instructor through [UBC Recreation](#) who lead classes that included both physical movement and meditation and were tailored to the varying experiences and abilities in the group. A portion of the HWIP grant was used to purchase yoga mats and blocks.

Colleagues in the building and in other Arts units were invited to attend these classes, allowing First Year Arts staff and faculty to engage with people outside of their own small units with whom they normally would not interact with on a regular basis. While the classes were free for First Year Arts staff and faculty, a small fee was charged for others who attended. These nominal fees, along with some departmental funding, allowed the yoga classes to continue beyond the HWIP funding period.

“Support from our Chair [was the most effective resource in working to ensure the success of the initiative]. She attended the classes and recognized the importance of healthy workplace exercise.”

KEY TO SUCCESS

Key to the success of this initiative was leadership support.

The Department Chair supported the initiative by allowing some “soft funds” to be utilized for subsidizing the cost of ongoing classes. They also attended yoga classes along with other staff and faculty, modeling the importance of taking breaks and integrating wellbeing practices during the workday.

By regularly attending, they were also able to see the positive impacts the classes had on staff and faculty and justify continued financial support for the initiative.

SUSTAINABILITY

One challenge to implementing this initiative was finding dates and times for weekly classes that worked for everyone who wanted to participate.

While weekly classes eventually came to an end in November 2019 when scheduling became too difficult, the First Year Arts department still contracts with their yoga instructor for occasional workshops and special events.

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

Class participants, many of whom attended weekly classes for several years, built up a yoga practice and reported experiencing reduced stress and increased flexibility.

They also improved their mental and social health by taking time away from their desks during the work day and building relationships and sense of community with other attendees.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Physical Activity

Social Connection

Mental Health &
Resilience

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

Make it accessible for participants and listen to their interests and needs

Try to find an instructor who knows how to work with varying abilities and experience. Choose a time and location that is convenient for your group and create a safe environment where they feel comfortable. The yoga classes could have accommodated more people in a larger room, which would also have allowed more fees to be collected, but the participants expressed appreciating the small group, the convenient location, and peaceful room. So, the classes were kept small and intimate.

“It wasn’t a lack of interest but rather an issue with scheduling [that brought the classes to an end]... Actually, I was in conversation with [our yoga instructor] to do a couple of one-off workshops in the summer. [Because] the desire and demand were there, it’s just a the weekly scheduling was more difficult. We’ll see if we ever get back to that.”



THE LUNCH CLUB

HEALTHY EATING &
NUTRITION

Photo credit: Adactio

DEPARTMENT

School of Nursing

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2019

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

When Elisabeth and Rana noticed that staff and faculty in the School of Nursing did not always interact or know each other, they wanted to create a natural space for engagement that was low barrier, fun, and optional. They asked, "How do we bring people together?" and thought, "Food brings people together." The new Canada Food Guide had just come out and included a recommendation to eat as a community as a healthy eating habit. From this, the idea for the Lunch Club emerged.

When they sent out a Qualtrics survey to gauge interest among team members, they received enthusiastic feedback from faculty and staff members who agreed that a focus on healthy eating, combined with opportunities for connection and community building over lunch, would be a welcome initiative in the school.

The Lunch Club meets once a month and has hosted potlucks, introduced the new Canada Food Guide, and compiled a collection of recipes to create a cookbook. The monthly "make your own" salad bar is its most popular event, and everyone who joins the Lunch Club receives a branded, reusable salad bowl!

"After we started the Lunch Club, walking through the halls of the school was a very different experience... Having those opportunities to informally connect really changes the feeling of where you are. Just being able to say, 'Hey, hi, how are you?' makes a huge difference."

KEY TO SUCCESS

Recognizing that “it can be hard to get people excited about trying something new with people they don’t know, especially if they have to pay for it,” the Lunch Club was designed to be informal, with no expectations, no cost, and low barriers to participation.

Now that there is momentum, people are willing to pitch in money and bring items to keep the monthly salad bars going.

SUSTAINABILITY

While everyone works from home due to Covid-19, the Lunch Club continues to stay connected via lunchtime Zoom gatherings.

Once everyone is back to working on campus, there are plans to continue having monthly Lunch Club gatherings. A newly formed Wellbeing Committee will help the Lunch Club keep their momentum. By sharing food and being strategic, they have figured out how to make the communal salad bar less expensive than any lunch that can be purchased on campus. New members will continue to be welcomed with their very own reusable Lunch Club salad bowl!

“I’ve been at the school for eight years, but there was a series of new faculty and staff that were hired. People that I normally would not have sat down to lunch with, I now know through the Lunch Club.”

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

In a school where there is a culture of skipping lunch or eating at your desk, people have started to use lunch as a time to take a break, eat, and socialize with colleagues.

New faculty and staff have expressed that the Lunch Club has provided an opportunity to feel a part of the school community and meet and interact with staff that they would not normally engage with. Informal connections are being made between staff and faculty and there is a new sense of community that will last beyond the HWIP grant period.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK*
PRIORITY AREAS

Social Connection

Food & Nutrition

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

“People are now truly using the lunch as a break.”

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1 Have a diverse planning team

“Having both a faculty member and a staff member, in partnership, organizing the initiative has been really key to showing that this is not just for a subset of our community, but that we really want to bring everyone [that works in our school] together.”

2 Align your initiative with your department or unit’s strategic plan

The Lunch Club initiative aligns directly with the “Engagement & Responsiveness” value of the School of Nursing’s Strategic Plan. It helps the school meet its goal of “creating opportunities for community engagement and collaboration with peers and partners to foster and sustain health and a healthy work environment in order to responsively advance people’s wellbeing.”



AQUATIC CENTRE TEAM HEALTH CHALLENGE

TEAM HEALTH CHALLENGE

Photo credit: UBC Aquatic Centre

DEPARTMENT

Athletics & Recreation,
UBC Aquatic Centre

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2019

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In Fall 2019, the Aquatic Centre piloted a 4-week team health challenge. It got such a good reception from staff members that they launched a full 6-week health challenge in January 2020. The challenge included individual targets for hydration, sleep, healthy eating, mindfulness, physical activity, and aquatic activity. Team members self-tracked, reported, and earned points for their progress on a massive tracker in the central hallway.

Staff were also broken into teams for weekly team challenges and activities such as hopscotch, team walk, a group meal, and snowman building. HWIP funding was used to award individual and team challenge winners with wellness related prizes such as cookbooks, resistance bands, and water bottles, that could be used to maintain healthy habits.

"It was so successful the facility manager said whether you get the [external] funding next year or not, look at putting forth something like this again because it was super effective."

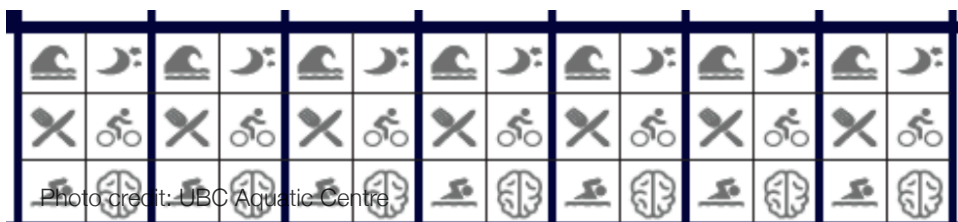


Photo credit: UBC Aquatic Centre

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

The Team Health Challenge was successful in boosting team morale as well as encouraging individual healthy habits.

Everyone was excited about the healthy competition and motivated each other to meet their goals.

SUSTAINABILITY

The Aquatic Centre is planning to do similar challenges in the future and are considering expanding the challenge across Athletics and Recreation units.

They are also considering weekly water or sleep challenges that can be done with minimal cost and using low-cost ways to recognize employees who excel with these challenges, such as giving “kudos” or high fives on the Centre’s announcement board.



Photo credit: UBC Aquatic Centre

KEY TO SUCCESS

One challenge to implementing the team health challenge was communicating and promoting the initiative to a very large staff.

Aside from introducing the challenge at a team meeting, leadership and management support was key to promoting the challenge and encouraging staff to participate. The full-time staff were encouraged to participate and track their points every day to set an example for part-time student employees.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Physical Activity

Food & Nutrition

Mental Health &
Resilience

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

“Communication was the biggest barrier at first. But now that [the staff] have seen it and seen what a success it was, that word of mouth will continue, and we can build upon it.”

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1 Consider starting with a smaller pilot

“We started with a pilot and made tweaks and changes based on what worked and what we learned. This was something completely new to us, and we wanted to get as much buy-in as possible and support all these different facets of health and wellness. The pilot was really successful and effective in shaping some of the rules and criteria we used for the full challenge.”

2 Be conscientious about the duration of a Team Health Challenge

“For us, 6 weeks was probably on the upper end of what we’d want to do because the interest level may die down over time. But it can be done multiple times over the course of the year.”



TEAM WATERCOLOURING

ART & CREATIVE
EXPRESSION

DEPARTMENT

Faculty of Arts,
Office of the Dean

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2019

ABOUT HWIP

The Healthy Workplace Initiatives Program (HWIP) is an annual fund available to UBC departments and units to support grassroots activities that promote wellbeing in the workplace. The program provides start-up funds and support for health-related, sustainable initiatives.

www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Office of the Dean in the Faculty of Arts contracted with a local company to hold a team-building workshop focused on art and mental health. The two hour long session held on campus consisted mostly of individual painting time as participants learned and practiced basic watercolour techniques, but also had a team building component as people conversed while painting their various pieces.

At the end of the workshop, a framed mural was created by putting together one piece from each team member. The collaborative team mural now hangs in the central office. A set of paints and cards were given to each staff member to take home so that they could continue the healthy habit of de-stressing through painting.

"Thanks again for organizing [the workshop]. It was fun! My daughter and I have been painting a lot all weekend, including a birthday card for a friend of mine. Truly, I never would have thought I would ever paint a card for anyone! But it was fun to paint and bringing home the watercolors was really neat. They are still on our kitchen table to be used again."

Staff member

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

Through this workshop, staff members learned a new skill to de-stress and express themselves creatively.

It brought the whole team together, including those who work in separate physical spaces. Connections were made and staff expressed appreciation for being together in the same space and having informal time together.



Photo credit: Faculty of Arts, Dean's Office

KEY TO SUCCESS

"For us, the really key piece was making sure we had that leadership buy-in from the beginning. And we also wanted to have that conversation about whether we had their buy-in to continue it after the fact."

Leadership not only matched the HWIP funding, but they also supported the workshop being held during work hours and on campus to reduce barriers to participation. Everyone who was interested was able to attend.

"Because if people are happier or if they feel supported, they work better. They do better work. So it's not just about how they feel, it's also that you're going to get better work out them because they feel supported and appreciated."

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Mental Health &
Resilience

Social Connection

Built & Natural
Environments

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

SUSTAINABILITY

The watercolouring workshop generated lots of excitement and enthusiasm among team members to continue painting together.

They plan to continue holding informal drop in painting sessions at the office.

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1

Make a value proposition to gain leadership support

Communicate with your leadership what it is you want to do and why. Explain how will it help not only the staff, but the work as well. "[Our leadership] has a commitment to mental health, and so making the connection to this with the art workshop was key."

2

Plan to follow up on one time events

"Having a plan and support to follow up on the one time event is key. Otherwise, people would be asking what's the point? There were immediately questions about when we would do it again or what's next, and it was good to be able to answer and show we had leadership support to continue or do it again."



FOUR SEASONS OF CPD HEALTH

INNOVATIVE NEW IDEA

Photo credit: UBC CPD

DEPARTMENT

Continuing Professional
Development, Faculty of
Medicine

CAMPUS

VGH

FUNDING YEAR

2016

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

When CPD staff were surveyed about their interest in a healthy workplace initiative, many different interests and ideas emerged. So, a year-long, holistic, and multi-faceted initiative called the "Four Seasons of CPD Health" was designed. Each "season" focused on a different theme: Movement in the Summer, Stress Management in the Fall, Mental Health in the Winter, and Nutrition during Spring.

Programming for each theme included 1) a lunchtime professional development (Pro-D) session led by an expert, 2) a health challenge, 3) an organized group activity, and 4) in-office support and motivation provided by CPD Seasonal Champions.

Over the course of the year, CPD staff attended workshops on healthy eating and mental health, took part in step and nutrition challenges, participated in group painting events and team bike rides, and more! Art Night in particular was so popular that it was offered twice and UBC CPD decided to apply for an Art & Creative Expression HWIP Grant in 2017.

"Participating in HWIP was a chance for CPD to try out many different approaches to workplace wellbeing. It gave us a chance to really trial out a lot of different activities and approaches... We got to see what had the most interest and uptake, and build on the things that went over well."

KEY TO SUCCESS

"Having the committee involved and having that be a shared responsibility. That's something that we have found that helps with sustainability."

"Seasonal Champions" volunteered to help coordinate and promote events and activities. They essentially functioned as a working group for each season.

SUSTAINABILITY

During the HWIP funding period, the HWIP Committee was merged with the Social Committee to create a combined "Healthy-Social Committee." The Healthy-Social Committee is still active, gaining new members each year, and continues to plan social and health activities and events for the office.

The Pro-D Committee also continues to integrate wellbeing topics into professional development Lunch 'n' Learn sessions.



Photo credit: UBC SPD

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

Through this initiative, staff had multiple opportunities to gather together, which facilitated group cohesion. Through gathering, discussing, and learning about topics related to health, staff made new personal connections beyond purely work relationships.

Having received a well-rounded overview on different health topics, staff members were also able to pursue further learning in areas of interest in order to make strides toward improving their own health.

UBC WELLBEING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PRIORITY AREAS

Physical Activity

Mental Health &
Resilience

Food & Nutrition

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1

Integrate the HWIP initiative into existing structures

Partner with existing initiatives and committees, like Pro-D Lunch 'n' Learns or Social Committee, that have shared interests and goals.

2

Share planning responsibility

"When something is done off the side of your desk, it has to be shared. If someone was taking on the entire project, it would have to be part of their job description. But if it's shared, it's reasonable."

3

Conduct a needs assessment, and evolve to meet changing needs and interests

"We did a needs assessment and we weren't able to identify one theme that met all of the interests of the team. That's why we started with the four-pronged approach.... It might need to be that the program needs to be evolved over time with what the staff want and what the need is. So you need that kind of ongoing touch base with what's relevant to people or where their interests lie."



FACULTY TEA BREAKS

INNOVATIVE NEW IDEA

Photo credit: [Praveen](#)

DEPARTMENT

Community, Culture, and
Global Studies

CAMPUS

UBC Okanagan

FUNDING YEAR

2017

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Recognizing that there is substantial evidence that friendly workplace relationships focused on non-work issues enhance employee wellbeing, the Community, Culture, and Global Studies Department at UBC Okanagan scheduled three “tea breaks” each term to provide opportunities for faculty to informally connect with one another.

The breaks featured fairly traded tea from a local tea shop, snacks, and a door prize draw for a copy of the book “The Slow Professor,” which had inspired the initiative through its theorization of the importance of time and space for reflection and connection for university professors today.

KEY TO SUCCESS

Faculty often express a desire to socialize with colleagues, but rarely take a break to do so.

The quality of the teas made it feel special and provided an incentive to take a break with colleagues.

SUSTAINABILITY

While the monthly tea breaks came to an end during a time of staff and leadership transition, tea making equipment is still used for department meetings and events.

Workplace relationships built and strengthened during the tea breaks continue to be friendly, making for a more positive working environment.

“The most valuable outcome was the creation of unpressured time for faculty to connect on non-work-related topics. It really allowed for the fostering of positive relationships.”

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework



TAKE 5 CAFE

MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING

Photo credit: Heart Lung Innovation

DEPARTMENT

Centre for Heart Lung
Innovation

CAMPUS

St. Paul's Hospital

FUNDING YEAR

2017

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Centre for Heart Lung Innovation is a research centre located at St. Paul's Hospital in Downtown Vancouver. In 2017, it launched a series of events called "Take 5 Cafe" where team members explored different ways to deal with daily stress and improve their mental wellbeing. Activities ranged from group puzzle and colouring sessions to playing games that facilitated conversations around mental health and alternated between physical and sit down activities.

The monthly "Take 5 Cafe" events were complemented by an Awareness of Mental Health at Work workshop from the Canadian Mental Health Association and a Conflict Theatre Skills Development workshop by UBC HR and Department of Theatre and Film. Mental health tips and resources were also shared on Health and Wellness boards around the centre.

TAKE 5 CAFE TOPICS & ACTIVITIES

- Relaxing Music
- Exercise
- Puzzles & Colouring
- Pet Therapy Dog
- Pumpkin Carving
- Tea & Chill
- Balloon Sword Fight
- Individual & Organizational Mindfulness
- Tree of Gratitude
- Community Service Project

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

This initiative brought together Principal Investigators (PIs), students, and staff and started a culture of creating space and time for social and wellbeing activities at the Centre.

The Centre is now known for having these kinds of events and a culture that cares about its people, values everyone in every lab, and fosters collaboration.

KEY TO SUCCESS

Key to the success and sustainability of this initiative have been a dedicated group of people who organize and promote the events.

As a subcommittee of the Training, Environment, and Education Committee, this group gets ideas, support, and a small amount of funding from the larger committee.

"The initiative made us think about our mental wellbeing and started a conversation among colleagues about taking care of ourselves not only physically but also mentally."

SUSTAINABILITY

The Take 5 Cafe events have evolved from gatherings of around 10 people at the start to now being held in the biggest meeting room in the Centre, which holds about 40 people.

Each year, new ideas, activities, and topics are included in the events. Recent events have included topics such as culture, equity, and inclusion.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Mental Health &
Resilience

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

"One the best things I like about UBC is this fund. It's imaginative and very supportive. And it's for everybody. It's not just for PIs, or staff, or for students. It's for everybody who works here."



Photo credit: Heart Lung Innovation

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

It can take time and perseverance to get something new off the ground. Keep at it!

Getting endorsement from leadership can help team members feel that it is both permissible and worthwhile to spend work time attending wellbeing events.

"We advocate for leadership to promote and support attendance at the events. We nudge PIs at meetings to encourage their labs to attend. And once some people attend, others see and hear about it, and they start to attend, too.... Don't give up! Keep doing it and at some point, it will become expected and part of the culture."



PATIO GARDEN

COMMUNITY GARDEN

Photo credit: David Lam Library

DEPARTMENT

David Lam Library

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2016

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2016, the David Lam Library built a community garden on the 3rd floor patio of the Sauder School of Business. The project began with an engineering assessment of the load capacity of the patio. Then, the team deliberated on the types of plants and trees to plant in the garden. Working together, they brought soil, containers, plants, trees, and shrubs to the space, planted vegetable seeds, and transplanted fruit trees and shrubs into permanent containers.

Planning with long-term maintenance in mind, they elected to plant a mix of perennials, which live more than two years, and annual plants, which only live for one growing season. What started as a small garden with 3 containers now spans two floors of patio space and is producing a variety of fruits, herbs, flowers, and vegetables.

"The space where we have the garden, it was previously locked and unavailable to use. Once we got the garden going, [it was unlocked and opened up for use]. Now, students and staff take their lunch out there, students will have group meetings, staff will invite colleagues for tea in the garden. So it's used for enjoyment and for hanging out [in addition to gardening]."

CURRENTLY GROWING IN THE GARDEN

mulberries - figs - peaches - apples - cherrie - blackberries -
blueberries - raspberries - roses - lavender - grapes
- tomatoes - leafy greens - mint - basil



VALUABLE OUTCOMES

The patio garden has continued to grow and provide positive impacts on the wellbeing of team members.

Having a space where people can slow down, remember to breathe, and engage closely with plants has been beneficial for mental, emotional, social, and physical health.

KEY TO SUCCESS

HWIP funding was used to purchase fruit trees and shrubs that will be productive for years and to buy tools and materials needed to keep the garden going for many years.

A dedicated group of staff to tend the garden was established in the first year, and, with leadership support, a small budget has been dedicated to garden maintenance. Campus and community resources, such as the [UBC seed lending library](#) and the [City of Vancouver's \\$10 Tree Sale](#), are utilized to keep costs low.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Food & Nutrition

Built & Natural
Environments

Mental Health &
Resiliency

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

SUSTAINABILITY

Team members take turns to water, plant, and help with garden maintenance and activities.

The Garden Committee meets to make decisions about budgeting and what to plant each season.

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1

Think about long-term maintenance of the community garden

Figure out which plants your team wants to plant, what makes sense for the space, and how much maintenance and future resources they will require. Perennials require less maintenance and ongoing care than annuals, which need to be planted each season.

2

Be patient!

The journey of building and growing a garden are important parts of the initiative. It's not just about the end product, but about the process, too.



HEALTHY BRAIN CHEF

INNOVATIVE NEW IDEA

Photo credit: [Marco Verch](#)

DEPARTMENT

Neuroethics Canada

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2018

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Neuroethics Canada is a research unit within the Faculty of Medicine's Department of Neurology. While the unit provides many public outreach events to promote brain health for external audiences, activities that promote and foster brain health among staff were limited. Through a food focused initiative, they sought to provide opportunities for staff to develop and practice brain health promoting skills.

"We always focused more on ergonomics or good communication as a part of a healthy workplace, but we often forget that food is a big part of it. Because we're a brain focused research group, we decided to focus on brain healthy foods for our initiative."

The HWIP initiative kicked off with a private cooking workshop led by Ms. Lynn Raires, RHN at the Canadian School of Natural Nutrition. The workshop focused on brain healthy foods and how to incorporate them into daily meals. Following the cooking lesson, the "Healthy Brain Chef" portion of the initiative was launched. Each week, one team member was designated to make a brain healthy dish to share at the weekly lab meeting.

A mid-project food tour with Vancouver Foodie Tours in the Gastown neighborhood helped maintain momentum and enthusiasm for the initiative and introduced team members to new and creative brain healthy dish ideas.

KEY TO SUCCESS

By making healthy snacks for weekly lab meetings the focus of the initiative, it became a regular part of the unit's culture.

The cooking class and food tour helped team members gain new skills, knowledge, and enthusiasm, but it was critical to have the ongoing "Healthy Brain Chef" piece to help staff apply those new skills and knowledge, share new ideas, and continue conversation around brain healthy foods.

SUSTAINABILITY

While funding limitations and staff turnover have brought the Healthy Brain Chef initiative to an end, all recipes used during the project were compiled to produce a [recipe book](#) which was posted on the Neuroethics Canada website and made available to the public and for team members.

The initiative also changed the way Neuroethics Canada talked about food as a critical component of health. Through this initiative, food became a part of the conversation about what makes a healthy lifestyle and a healthy workplace.

"The bigger impact has been the conversations that revolve around food. It's a conversation that's ongoing."

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

The "Healthy Brain Chef" initiative increased awareness about brain healthy eating practices among team members.

It also provided opportunities to practice preparing and sharing healthy foods and helped build team spirit and group engagement.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Food & Nutrition

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1

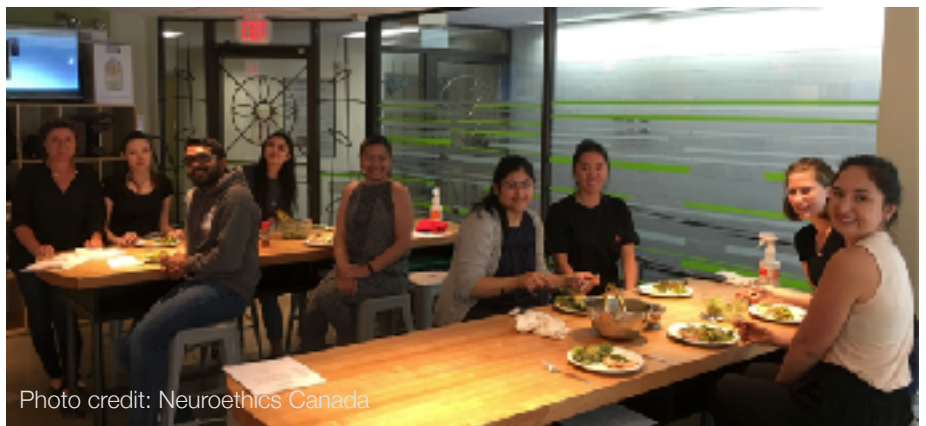
Consider integrating a healthy eating initiative into regular team meetings

"We thought, well, we can just incorporate it into our lab meetings! The bigger events were just complementary to our main focus of the weekly Brain Chef."

2

Communication is key

Communicate regularly with your team members about the initiative! Make sure the team understands the purpose of the initiative and ask them for input or ideas.





SATELLITE OFFICE BIKESHARE

BIKESHARE

Photo credit: Financial Operations

DEPARTMENT

Financial Operations,
Accounts Payable

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2019

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

As the Accounts Payable team of the Financial Operations unit grew, they needed to move to a new office located in Wesbrook Village. When staff were asked what they needed and wanted as they made this transition to the new satellite office, the idea of a bikeshare emerged.

Its goals were to allow staff members to travel between the satellite office and the main office in a cost effective, time saving, and healthy way. Staff were involved in choosing one bicycle and one tricycle, and a scheduling system was created for reserving and signing them out.

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

The bike and trike are used regularly for travel between offices as well as for leisure. The bikeshare has helped maintain a sense of connection between the main office and the satellite office. With the ease of traveling between the two offices, staff members are more easily able to meet in person for both work and social purposes.

Staff members also ride the bike and trike for leisure - to ride around Wesbrook Village during breaks, to ride to lunch spots that are out of walking distance, to meet with friends and colleagues for lunch, or to attend events across campus.

"So they would just jump on the bike or trike and still meet a friend from the main office and do lunch together."

SUSTAINABILITY

The bike and trike will continue to be available for staff to use for years.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK
PRIORITY AREAS

Physical Activity

Social Connection

Built & Natural
Environments

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework



BOOT CAMP CLASSES

YOGA/FITNESS CLASSES

Photo credit: slackgc

DEPARTMENT

Strategy and Decision
Support

CAMPUS

Point Grey

FUNDING YEAR

2018

ABOUT HWIP

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www.hr.ubc.ca/hwip

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The idea of a Healthy Workplace Initiative was new for the small team at Strategy and Decision Support, but they were excited. Together at a team meeting, they decided to apply for the fitness funding area in order to put on a series of boot camp classes.

The goals of the classes were threefold:

- 1) Create time in the workday for exercise and fitness
- 2) As part of the office's strategic plan, help increase and sustain team engagement
- 3) Start to create a culture of health and wellbeing in the office

Lunchtime classes with two instructors from the Birdcoop Fitness Centre were held twice a week for 12 weeks during the summer of 2018. Throughout the weeks, the staff laughed and joked about how sore they were from the workouts and encouraged each other to become more physically fit.

"Many of our team members have young families or are taking classes in the evenings and feel crunched for time. This initiative has supported our team in creating time throughout the workday for exercise and fitness to lead healthier lives all around."

KEY TO SUCCESS

Because the entire team was engaged in selecting and developing the HWIP proposal, there was buy-in and high participation from the beginning.

Senior leadership also supported the initiative and attended the classes, modeling and encouraging participation in the initiative.

SUSTAINABILITY

After seeing the positive impact of the initiative, leadership allocated a portion of the team's budget to sustaining team engagement. This funding is spent on an annual retreat, which includes afternoon physical team activities.

While the boot camp classes ended after 12 weeks, many team members were motivated to keep up their commitment to fitness by climbing the Wreck Beach stairs together, buying gym passes together, swimming at the Aquatic Centre, or going on runs and walks together over lunch breaks.

"I wouldn't say the classes were the main [point of the initiative]. We wanted the team development and culture change."

The team received another HWIP grant in 2020 for a Team Health Challenge. They are looking forward to building on the culture of wellbeing and team engagement that the boot camp classes helped start to develop.

VALUABLE OUTCOMES

Through the boot camp classes, the Strategy and Decision Support team started to develop a culture where individuals take responsibility for their health.

The initiative also helped further develop team engagement. Attending classes together allowed staff members to connect and bond in a different way than they typically do in the workplace.

UBC WELLBEING
STRATEGIC
FRAMEWORK*
PRIORITY AREAS

Physical Activity

Social Connection

wellbeing.ubc.ca/framework

"It gave the team a starting point to talk about health. It wasn't really talked about as a team before we started this. People started talking about going on walks outside of the classes or sharing smoothie recipes. It gave people that healthy mentality, that I don't think was there before."

ADVICE FOR FUTURE HWIP GRANTEES

1 Share responsibility for planning

In the future, the team plans to share more responsibility for planning wellbeing initiatives and activities. Rather than one or two people presenting ideas and getting feedback, each team member will propose and plan an idea for a weekly health challenge. They hope this will engage the team even more deeply and gain more investment in workplace wellbeing.

2 Partner with other units or offices

As a small unit, the Strategy and Decision Support team plans to invite "neighbors" from nearby offices to participate in future workplace wellbeing initiatives. Because they work in close proximity, extending these invitations and collaborating on initiatives allows for people to get to know each other better and create a more positive working environment.