



2021 Campus Race to Zero Waste Case Study Competition University of Washington

1. Contact info (name, department, school, email, phone)

UW Recycling
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(206) 685-2811
recycle@uw.edu

2. Focus of Case study

UW Recycling hosted a Trash Art Contest for UW community members to raise awareness about waste impacts on the environment.

3. Detailed description of campaign or effort:

UW Recycling hosted a Trash Art Contest for University students, staff and faculty to participate in. The contest required participants to make artwork by repurposing items conventionally considered to be waste. The campaign encouraged the UW community to explore ways to reuse items before sending them into a waste stream, which supports CRZW's goal of reducing campus waste. This is also a shared goal of the UW's Sustainability Action Plan.

The contest originally had three categories: visual arts, graphic arts and literature. Graphic and visual arts were later combined into one category. The judging criteria consisted of: originality and creativity, theme, material usage, and relevance to personal and/or UW campus waste. The contest was open for submissions for about six weeks. Submission of artwork was conducted virtually via an online Google form. Participants uploaded their artwork via the submission form and provided the required information. The submission form also asked participants how their artwork fit the judging requirements.

Winners of the contest were offered a choice of a gift card. These gift cards were either to a local arts and crafts store or a local low/zero waste store. UW Recycling chose these specific prizes to appeal to artists or to encourage the use of low/zero waste establishments to participants. Participants who did not win a top placement were offered a choice between reusable cotton produce bags and reusable silicone bags. The UW Recycling team wanted to reward community members who took the time to consider waste reduction in their lives or artwork. These gifts also promoted waste reduction through reusables.

4. Planning steps & timeline to implement:

PRE-EVENT PREPARATIONS:

- Determine contest categories and judging criteria
- Determine prizes
- Set up rule sheet for the contest and the online submission form

- Create content for a blog post announcing the contest
- Create social media content to promote event
- Create marketing content to supply to UW staff and faculty e-newsletters
- Create a list of student groups and faculty to directly contact about the contest

EVENT

Monday February 15th

- Post the blog post announcing the [Trash Art Contest](#) on UW Sustainability “In Our Nature” blog with the contest rules and timeline
- Post an Instagram story announcing the contest and linking to the blog post

Tuesday February 23rd

- Email the [Trash Art Contest blog post](#) and rule sheet to contacts in the UW Art departments, English departments, and registered student organizations
- Post to the UW Recycling Instagram and Facebook announcing the contest

Wednesday February 24th

- The Trash Art Contest is featured in the weekly faculty and staff e-newsletter “UW Insider”

Monday March 1st

- The Trash Art Contest is featured in the daily UW News e-newsletter “UW Today”

Wednesday March 3rd

- Post a reminder of the Trash Art Contest to UW Recycling’s Instagram and Facebook

Wednesday March 10th

- Post a reminder of the Trash Art Contest to UW Recycling’s Instagram and Facebook

Wednesday March 17

- A reminder about the Trash Art Contest is published in the “UW Insider”, the weekly e-newsletter sent to all staff and faculty

Monday March 22nd

- Post a reminder for the final week to submit to the Trash Art Contest to UW Recycling’s Instagram and Facebook

Monday March 29th

- UW Recycling team met to review entries and criteria and determine placement of entries in the contest

Tuesday March 30th

- Contact winners and participants for prizes and giveaways

Monday April 5th

- Write a [blog post announcing the winners](#) on UW Sustainability’s “In Our Nature” Blog

- Announce the winners through Instagram and Facebook post and accompanying story
- Send out prizes to winners and giveaway items to participants

Wednesday April 7th - Wednesday April 21st

- Spotlight each Trash Art Contest on an individual post and story on Facebook and Instagram
- A link to the Trash Art Contest Winners blog post is featured in the weekly faculty and staff e-newsletter, the “UW Insider”

Friday April 9th

- Post a highlight of special contest entries on Instagram

5. Resources and stakeholders involved

A budget of \$450 USD was needed to purchase prizes for the six winners of this contest. UW Recycling staff hosted this project. Other campus stakeholders such as UW Sustainability helped promote the event via e-newsletters and social media. UW Recycling staff also asked the UW Art and English departments to promote the contest to their students.

UW Recycling’s Marketing & Outreach Specialist shared information through social media. The Specialist also asked other departments and registered student organizations to help promote the contest.

6. Describe the Results of this campaign component

a. General results

6 total winners were selected. Camus involvement included support for UW Recycling, while UW Recycling supported partners’ social media pages. UW Sustainability and UW Surplus marketed the contest on their media platforms as well. The blog post announcing the contest winners was also shared by the staff and faculty e-newsletter, the [UW Insider](#), and the main University account on LinkedIn.

b. Specific measurable impact figures

Date of Social Media Post	Analytics
2/23/21	54 likes
3/3/21	16 likes
3/22/21	13 likes
4/5/21	85 likes
4/7/21	29 likes
4/8/21	7 likes
4/9/21	25 likes
4/13/21	13 likes
4/14/21	9 likes

4/19/21	18 likes
4/21/21	17 likes

[Feb. 15 blog post:](#)

- 1,212 site visits (from 2/15 – 5/18)

[April 5 blog post:](#)

- 1,378 site visits (from 2/15 – 5/19)

Notable Numbers:

- 33 unique contest entries
- 21 students, 11 staff, and 1 faculty member entered this contest
- 286 total likes
- February 15th blog post is the second-most visited UW Sustainability blog post of the past 5 months
- April 5th blog post is the most visited UW Sustainability blog post of the past 5 months

7. What would you do differently in the future?

After discussion, the UW Recycling team would make the following changes to the campaign:

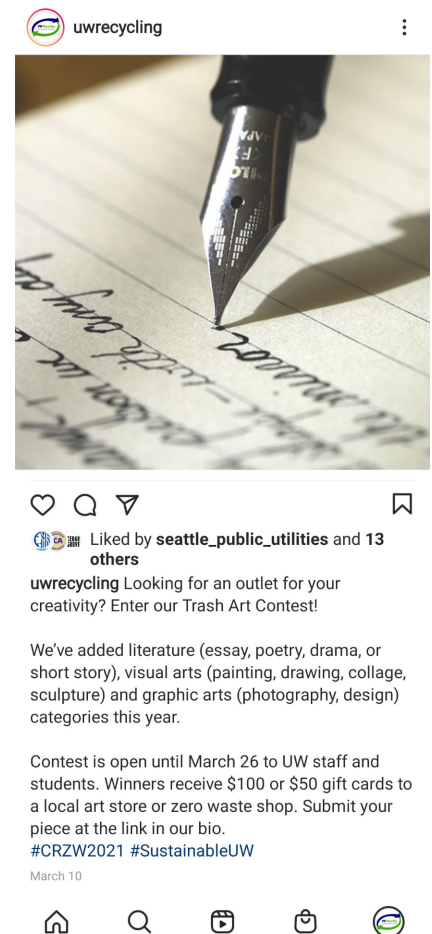
- Combine graphic and visual arts categories into one category.
- Consider splitting visual arts category into 2D and 3D categories.
- Add examples of previous year's submissions for each category for participants to reference.
- Include a prompt and have criteria be relevant to the prompt in the contest rules, for example "How has plastic waste impacted your life?"
- Ask for preferred pronouns and name in the submission form.
- Add a descriptor to the submission form explaining that winners' responses in the form will be used in the final blog post and social media content.

8. What advice would you give to another college that wanted to do a similar effort?

After discussion, the UW Recycling team would recommend the following considerations to other campuses:

- Prepare a few months in advance of CRZW to outline rules of the contest and set up a timeline.
- Create a contact list of departments and student groups that may have an interest in this contest, and promote through them.

9. Photos and Graphics





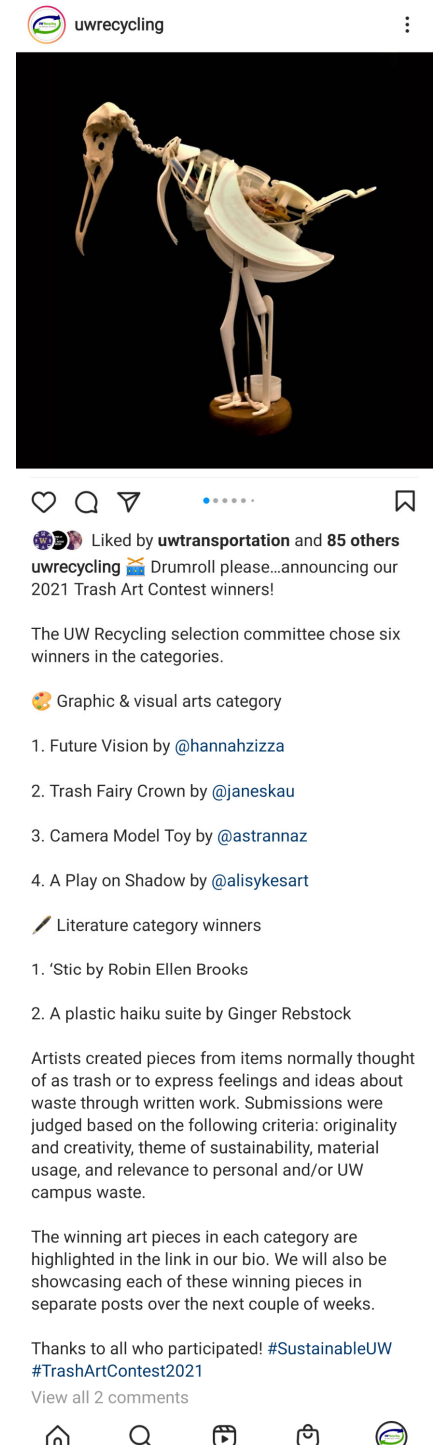
February 23rd Instagram post



March 3rd Instagram post



March 10th Instagram post



April 9th Instagram post



Liked by **uwtransportation** and **24 others**

uwrecycling We received a special entry in the Trash Art Contest this year from the UW West Campus Children's Center. Children ranging in ages from 3 months to 5 years combined their trash into these amazing classroom art pieces.

Every child helped make the final community art pieces and added a fun activity to their curriculum. While the artwork could not enter the contest officially per the guidelines that it had to be created by UW students, faculty, and staff, this was a welcome honorable mention! Thanks so much for participating! It showed that anyone can make treasure out of trash.

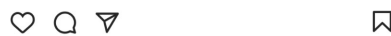
[#SustainableUW](#)

View 1 comment

April 9



March 22nd Instagram post



Liked by **seattle_public_utilities** and **12 others**

uwrecycling Last week to submit artwork for the Trash Art Contest! Winners receive \$100 or \$50 gift cards to a local art store or zero waste shop. Categories include:

- Literature
- Visual Arts
- Graphic Arts

We're excited to see your creation!

Contest is open until March 26 to UW staff and students. Submit your piece at the link in our bio. [#CRZW2021](#) [#SustainableUW](#)

March 22

