

Microgrants for students to show support for nature and a strong Environment Bill

1. Background

The Government is currently shaping a new Environment Bill, the first in more than twenty years. It will set out a legal framework for the government's promise to leave the environment in a better state over the next 25 years. Although created as a result of Brexit, to cover the gap left by the loss of our EU environmental legislation, the Environment Bill will likely proceed even if the UK remains in the EU. Campaigners are calling for it to be ambitious, world-leading legislation that sets legally-binding targets for the restoration of nature and the environment, covering things like biodiversity, air quality, peatlands, etc. For the legislation to be successful it will need an independent committee that holds the Government to account. As with the Climate Change Act, this committee should have the power to take the Government to court if it does not meet its own targets. This is what has been discussed, but we now need to ensure that it is not watered down or kicked into the long grass. All the main UK environmental charities are working together to help make the Environment Bill as strong as possible, working together through the new [Greener UK](#) coalition. NUS is playing a part in this, working with The Wildlife Trusts and WWF-UK and ten students' unions to arrange campus debates with local MPs on the Bill in May and June 2019. We are also going to be funding student projects through microgrants that actively and practically supports the creation of a strong Environment Act.

2. Microgrants

From mid-April to the end of the academic year we will run a micro-grants scheme that funds students to run their own events to raise awareness of the need for urgent action for nature and support for the Environment Act to help achieve this. We plan to fund 40-60 student-led projects, **between £50 and £150 each**. The microgrants will fund student activity, events, creative responses and campaigns that show student support for nature and biodiversity and raise awareness of the Environment Bill. The funding can also be used for events on campus or for activity and travel associated with the [mass parliamentary lobby](#) in London on 26 June 2019. We are not prescribing what we want to fund as we want students to come up with fun and creative ideas that will help them engage their friends, peers and MPs in nature and the Environment Bill, especially nature. The funding is there to help unlock creativity and the cover costs of activity. The application process is very light touch and we promise a very quick turnaround from application to notification so as not to delay action. Individuals can only apply for one microgrant each.

3. Application process

Send the following information in an email to sustainability@nus.org.uk with Microgrant and your name in the email subject. We are accepting applications from **15 April to 15 June 2019**. Funding will be allocated on a first come first serve basis, so don't leave it too late or we might have given all the money out!

- Your name

- Where you are studying
- How you heard about the microgrant scheme
- What you are planning to do to show student support for nature and/or raise awareness of the Environment Bill
- What date(s) will you do it on
- How many people you think you will engage
- How will you prove your success to us (e.g. tag @NUS_sustainable on twitter)
- How much are you applying for (min £50, max £150, inclusive of VAT), and what you will spend it on
- Your bank name, account name, account number and sort code so we can BACS the money to you if you are approved for funding (you can send this after we confirm funding if you prefer)
- That you agree to feedback to us how it went and send us receipts to prove you spent the microgrant as agreed

4. Payment

If your application is successful, then we will email you and then transfer the funding by BACS. This might take between one and three weeks.

5. Promotion

We will work with The Wildlife Trusts and WWF-UK to promote and publicise the activity we are funding through the microgrants, to show MPs that students care about nature, and want a strong Environment Bill. We assume this will be Ok with all those we fund, but please say if not, and please do ensure that people you photograph are aware that we might share the photos in this way.

6. Questions

If you have any questions then please email Jamie and Michelle at sustainability@nus.org.uk