

Example Past Initiatives:

- Interpretive tours led by expert guides, focused on nature appreciation, compassion, and intentional curiosity.
- Therapeutic, low-intensity sessions aimed at sensor restoration and relaxation through nature connection.
- Outdoor accessible strength and mobility classes led by athletics staff.
- Attending free Arboretum Wednesday Noon walks, followed by group picnic.



Grant Program: Arboretum Activity

Description of Grant (\$500 max): Supports nature-based activity or educational workshops held in the Arboretum.

The Benefits

- Studies show that nature improves mental health, mood, and cognition. and time spent connecting with nature supports restoration, well-being, and reduces anxiety and depression. (Lackey et al., 2021).
- These benefits may reflect our evolutionary adaptation to natural settings, where our senses are attuned to multisensory cues (e.g., birdsong and other nature sounds) (Franco et al., 2017)
- A 2020 study by Essex's Green Exercise Research Team followed 1,252 participants engaged in activities like walking, and found that when it came to self-esteem and mood, the biggest improvements came in the first five minutes of exposure to nature.
- In a 2019 study of 20,000 people, a team led by the European Centre for Environment & Human Health found that people who spent two hours a week in green spaces were substantially more likely to report good health and psychological well-being than those who don't.

Key Considerations

- Consider accessibility and inclusion by confirming route surfaces, distance, grade, rest points, and washroom access, and by providing inclusive options such as seated/standing variations and low-intensity pacing options.
- Plan for weather considerations, seasonal options, first-aid coverage, emergency access points, and clear participant screening/waivers as appropriate.
- Consider necessary equipment and supplies, mobility supports, chairs, mats, bands, and hydration.
- Email arbor@uoguelph.ca to learn about their guided offerings and workshops.