

Example Past Initiatives:

- Creating a shared, accessible garden for growing seasonal nutritious produce such as tomatoes, peppers, kale, etc.
- Creating a pollinator garden with indigenous plants to support with biodiversity.
- Set up an indoor plant wall or hydroponic wall to bring additional greener and nature indoors.
- Construct indoor or outdoor herb planters, followed by drying left over herbs at the end of the season and distributing it amongst program participants.



Wellness @Work

Grant Program: Community Garden

Description of Grant (\$2000 max): Create, maintain, or improve workplace green spaces to promote calmness and support stress reduction by improving connection to the land and supporting biodiversity.

The Benefits

- A number of studies describe improvements in nutritional health, resilience, and social well-being, along with increased optimism and connection to nature through community gardening.
- Supporting the integration of community gardens into campus wellness strategies is an important nature-based health intervention that contributes to stress reduction and an overall sense of well-being (Brooks et al., 2025; Egli et al., 2016; Koay et al., 2020; Sainers, 2019).
- Interacting with plants has been shown to reduce psychological and physiological stress.
- In addition to increasing air quality, evidence in the literature has shown that the presence of greenery indoors is linked to higher positive emotions and reduced stress levels.

Key Considerations

- Ensure intended space for outdoor garden or indoor plant wall has been approved by senior leadership, relevant facility management and Physical Resources.
- Control all health and safety hazards during relevant activities that could increase risk such as but not limited to building, lifting materials or using gardening tools.
- Identify the intended well-being outcomes, such as how the garden will promote mental health and resilience through time in plants, mindful breaks, social connection and a shared sense of community.
- Incorporate time spent building, maintaining and enjoying the garden in the midst of demanding schedules.
- Manage planting to ensure it is completed during the warmer weather for outdoor gardens to allow for completion of the program before the end of the grant cycle.
- Organize a garden launch or wrap up party to celebrate the beginning or closure of the season.