



February 1, 2012

To the STARS Review Committee:

I am writing in support of Princeton University's "Drink Local" initiative and recommend that Princeton be awarded an Innovation Credit for this program under the STARS framework. As a university sustainability officer, my professional experience has included investigating methods to reduce single-serve disposable plastic water bottles on college campuses. I have found Princeton's program to be innovative in several ways, as discussed below.

Launched in 2009, the Drink Local initiative has resulted in the installation of at least 150 water-bottle filling stations on the Princeton campus. Each station provides free filtered tap water from bottle-accessible spouts or taps to any user. As part of the initiative, Princeton has given one BPA-free water bottle, featuring their Drink Local slogan and a stylized map of filling-station locations, to all students and incoming freshmen since the program's launch.

Several aspects of Princeton's program make it unique and innovative, compared to other university efforts to reduce single-use disposable water bottles. First, the extensive physical reach of Princeton's initiative distinguishes it from other programs. While it's not unusual for a campus to install several showcase "hydration stations" or perhaps install several dozen filling stations, Princeton has installed or identified at least 150 stations across campus to date, maximizing convenience and accessibility for users. Second, Princeton's messaging and branding efforts have been innovative, comprehensive and far-reaching. Princeton's is one of the first – if not the only – campus tap water initiative to create and widely promote filling-station maps in its outreach effort. The maps, the simple and effective slogan ("Drink Local"), and the provision of free bottles to every student on campus comprise Princeton's uniquely comprehensive outreach effort, ensuring that all students will learn about the program to maximize the likelihood that students adopt the desired behavior and also the sustainability value.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Best,

Audrey Stewart  
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