

ACADEMIC INSTITUTION	Ontario Tech University
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PROJECT NAME	Refind
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NEED AND AUDIENCE

Refind as a project focuses on diverting coffee cups from landfills and into the hands of consumers once again as textiles and seed pods. Due to the polyethylene lining in single use coffee cups, they are unable to be recycled and over 4.9 billion cups are thrown into landfills every year in Canada. Through Refind we aim to give these cups a new life and reduce the impact of this problem and in turn create a dent in the overarching climate crisis. Refind collects cups from Hazelview properties and separates the lining from the paper. Refind then uses these separated materials to create polyethylene fibres for clothing and seed pods for the Hazelview community gardens. Through Refind we aim to bring attention to what is going to the landfills and make others aware of the lifetime of their coffee cups.

ACTION TAKEN

Refind has been working on the research component this year as our lab restrictions have kept us away from being hands on. Refind has kept up its Instagram presence by talking about sustainable engineering and has a seminar on sustainable engineering in the works currently. With this Refind has pivoted towards seed pods as it is a product that can be created currently without heavy funding. With this research Refind created partnerships with Sigma Innovation Lab and Hazelview Properties. The Sigma Innovation Lab is a space with skilled professors, equipment, and space which all have helped further Refinds work. This lab space has been used to start tests on the paper cups and validate our findings. The Refind team has also partnered with Hazelview to visit their properties and have set in place plans to run a paper cup drive. After visiting the properties, the location of the bins was mapped, and infographics and videos were created to send to residents once the drive starts.

IMPACT

Refind had an impact on various businesses which it reached out to talk about its mission. This ranged from coffee shops to waste management facilities. Through the initial testing's 100 paper cups were diverted from landfills by cups from Enactus members and their friends and family. The universities community was also educated on the issue with constant talks about the impact of paper cups on the Refind Instagram account. The largest impact was on the members themselves, Refind has had 10 team members work on the project in the past year. Dedicating over 1,500 hours of time to the team with a significant portion going into writing research reports and conducting experiments. This provided the members with tangible skills and heightened their environmental awareness.

STANDARD METRICS
 (These metrics are related only to the project presented and represent work done since March 1, 2021)

Individuals educated on climate action	120	Businesses educated on climate action	7
Litres of water conserved	0	Metric tonnes of waste diverted	0.001
GHG emissions diverted	11kg	Dollar value of waste diverted in CAD \$	20

PROJECT START DATE	2019
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IS THIS PROJECT WHOLLY-OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE TEAM?	Yes
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