

ACADEMIC INSTITUTION	Seneca College
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PROJECT NAME	Seneca Eco-Weaving
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NEED AND AUDIENCE

Seneca's School of Fashion produces approximately 650-800 pounds of textile waste each year. Following that, in Canada, just 9% of plastic waste is recycled each year, with the remaining 91% ending up in landfills.

Our project is modelled from MILK BAGS Unlimited. To elevate the milk bag mats, we are incorporating a padded layer made from shredded textile to provide insulation and enhance comfort overall. These mats will be delivered to Canadian Food for Children who will then distribute them to individuals in homeless shelters and disaster areas across the world. Plastic Milk Bags are extremely durable, mildew resistant, fungal resistant, UV resistant and can be easily washed.

The winter months are always the most difficult for homeless people because a small space in a temporary shelter is not always reserved or guaranteed. As a result, our mats will not only provide an additional layer of comfort on the concrete but will also be of great assistance on those cold, wet nights.

Our project addresses the following UN SDG Goals:

- Goal 3:** Health life and well-being
- Goal 12:** Responsible production and consumption
- Goal 13:** Climate Action

ACTION TAKEN

Our project is currently in the prototyping phase. In February 2022, our team came together to work on developing a completely functional prototype for our new design mats. This process involved the production of two 6-loop mats, each of which required 600 milk bags and 6 hours of manpower. Our next phase will begin in mid-March which will involve sewing our padded textile layer using shredded textile from Seneca School of Fashion.

Seneca Eco-Weaving has built a partnership with Milk Bags Unlimited. The social enterprise will be our primary resource provider and will deliver our mats to Canadian Food for Children, who will distribute them to homeless shelters and at-risk locations around the GTA and the world. Furthermore, our project has secured support from Seneca College faculty members and departments, including Sustainable Seneca, Seneca School of Fashion, Seneca Environmental Association, and Seneca Residence. We are currently in the process of extending our collaboration with Rivera Glynnwood – Retirement Living to involve seniors as volunteers to weave mats.

IMPACT

Our team arranged a Plastic Milk Bag collection drive at the Seneca Newnham Residence to support Seneca College in moving towards a circular economy future. We collected over 130 Milk Bags and educated 5 students and residence team members on our initiative and the benefits of community involvement and social entrepreneurship during our 2-week collecting campaign. Moreover, we have diverted over 1200 milk bags by developing two 6-loop mats in February 2022.

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

Individuals educated on climate action	5	Businesses educated on climate action	1
Litres of water conserved	-	Metric tonnes of waste diverted	0.144
GHG emissions diverted	0.25 metric tonnes	Dollar value of waste diverted in CAD \$	\$36

PROJECT START DATE	October 15, 2021
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IS THIS PROJECT WHOLLY-OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE TEAM?	Yes
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