



City of Phoenix 2022 Sustainability Challenge

About the Program

The City of Phoenix City Manager's Office of Sustainability (COP), Phoenix Union High School District (PXU), and the Arizona State University Sustainable Cities Network (SCN) are pleased to present the **2022 Sustainability Challenge: Fashion for the Future!** This year the COP will be challenging participating schools in PXU to engage with their communities to promote sustainability by spreading awareness on the effects of the fashion industry. High school is a prime period in one's life where people learn to express themselves, and this is often exhibited in the way they choose to dress. This challenge can provide the opportunity for students to invest early in clothing companies that are sustainable by educating them on how their clothes impact the Earth.

The COP Sustainability Challenge aims to create a culture of sustainability that engages and unites communities under a common cause. While this challenge focuses primarily on the fashion industry's environmental impacts, the overarching goal is to create a community that is aware of the intertwined social, environmental, and economic implications of their actions. It is also meant to highlight how sustainable practices support communities in and of themselves by creating social spaces that serve the purpose of bringing people together. Through this year's Sustainability Challenge, we want to inspire youth and their communities to protect not only the environment, but the life that it maintains and creates.

What is Sustainability and Fast Fashion?

Sustainability is the pursuit of a healthy environment, economic prosperity, and social justice to ensure the well-being of present and future generations. Without sustainability, we cannot maintain our quality of life as human beings, the diversity of life on Earth, or Earth's ecosystems. Sustainability is continuing to evolve, change and grow, representing different things to different communities. In many ways, sustainability is a way of thinking; it's about being mindful of how your actions impact your environment.



Fast fashion is a term used to define clothes that are mass produced rapidly and with cheap materials that are meant to meet current trends. Fast fashion companies are popular because the clothes sold are trendy and priced low, but there are huge concerns regarding the methods of manufacturing used to create these clothes. There are often massive amounts of waste created in production and after the items are purchased, as they are only meant to last a short period of time before the item wears down and the consumer is encouraged to purchase new items. The fashion industry is one of the largest producers of waste in the world, but what's more is that it impacts nearly every aspect of sustainability, from deforestation, to water consumption, to unethical labor, which is part of the social pillar of sustainability.

This challenge intersects with two of the City of Phoenix's 2050 sustainability goals, which are lowering the Phoenix air pollution rates to EPA standards and increasing water conservation. Schools that choose to participate in the challenge this year can not only help their global community by lowering their consumption of fast fashion, but their local communities as well in contributing to the COP's progression toward these goals.

Challenge Description and Guidelines

The 2022 Sustainability Challenge will take place over five weeks. The goal of the challenge is to educate students on the environmental and social effects that fast fashion has on sustainability, and encourage them to purchase clothes from more sustainable outlets.

There will be three main components to the challenge: weekly challenges, a clothing drive, and a fashion show. The weekly challenges and clothing drive will take place over the course of the challenge, while the fashion show will be on the final week to conclude the event.

Participation in each event will give points to schools. Points will be updated and posted at the end of each week on Friday on the Fashion for the Future Instagram page, [**@fashionforthefuturephx**](https://www.instagram.com/fashionforthefuturephx). The top three schools with the most points will earn their respective awards.

Weekly Challenges

Over the course of the challenge, a theme will correspond to each week. These themes will cover a different aspect of sustainability that the fashion industry is negatively impacting, in particular fast fashion. Each week, schools will hang posters covering a series of facts about the topic. Every poster will have a QR code displayed that links to a Google Forms quiz, which will display a short series of multiple choice questions based on the information on the poster. Entries will be tracked and tallied in relation to the population of the school, and points will be earned based on percentage points. Below are descriptions of each of the five themes:



Week One: Water

January 31 - February 4

The challenge kicks off with a focus on the fashion industry's impact on water conservation. The fashion industry is the second largest consumer of water, with one cotton T-shirt using the equivalent amount of water needed to sustain one person for three years. The fashion industry is also a known polluter of the water it uses, an issue that primarily impacts the developing countries fashion factories are based in.

Week Two: Deforestation

February 7 - February 11

Week Two highlights the rates of deforestation caused by textile production. The Amazon rainforest in particular is a region that's been targeted, so much so that in the course of one year, an area 13 times the size of New York City was deforested. The land is cleared to make way for agricultural production, ranging from livestock for making leather, to cotton for making socks.

Week Three: Waste Output

February 14 - February 18

Week Three of the Sustainability Challenge will be about waste output. Fast Fashion is a huge contributor of waste by nature. The clothes are meant to satisfy trends as they come and go at the expense of longevity and quality clothing. Therefore, these clothes often end up in the landfill prematurely because they either go out of style or wear down past functionality.

Week Four: Unethical Labor

February 21 - February 25

The picture of sustainability shifts a little as this week talks about the social pillar of sustainability that is highly impacted by fast fashion: unethical labor practices. Fast fashion factories prey on developing countries, where jobs are created and the economy is stabilized at the cost of moral employment. This week will focus on garment workers, who are often working in dangerous conditions and paid unlivable wages, and the presence of forced/child labor in this industry.

Week Five: Make the Switch

February 28 - March 4

At the conclusion of the Fashion for the Future Sustainability Challenge, we ask students to consider making the switch, away from fast fashion and toward more sustainable outlets. This includes buying from stores that use ethically and sustainably sourced materials, buying second hand items, or even buying high quality items at a lower frequency. This week wraps up all the information that students have learned and initiates a call to action to stop the cycle of fast fashion.



Fashion Show

At the end of the Challenge, during Week 5, an online fashion show will take place. Each school participating in the Challenge is required to have a team with a minimum of 2 people, which may include the Sustainability Officer (SO). SOs should encourage other students to join the team and promote student engagement. The **criteria for the fashion show** is that none of the items can be worn as they would be traditionally. For example, a shirt could be worn as a scarf, or necklaces as belts. The goal is to promote creativity. Students are free to cut, sew, and manipulate garments however they desire, so long as the final product is not worn the way it was originally intended.

Each school's team will submit a photo or video of their design to the *Fashion for the Future* Instagram page, **@fashionforthefuturephx** by **Friday, February 25th**. To keep submissions anonymous, please submit photos without school logos in the frame. Please provide in writing which school the design is representing in the same message.

The Fashion Show will have two forms of judging: a panel of judges provided by the Arizona State University Sustainable Cities Network (SCN), and a popular vote.

The popular vote will be conducted on the *Fashion for the Future* Instagram page, **@fashionforthefuturephx**. The voting window will open on **Tuesday, March 1st** and close at 11:59 pm on **Thursday, March 3**. The school of the winning team will be awarded 10 points.

The SCN panel will judge outfits on creativity and how well they fit the criteria of using clothing in unexpected ways. The school of the winning team will be awarded 20 points.

Winners of both the popular and SCN panel will be announced by the end of **March 2022**. Schools can win one or both categories, depending on judges' discretion and results of the popular vote.

Clothing Drive

One of the best ways to divert from fast fashion and support more sustainable methods of shopping is to buy second hand clothes. Therefore, to both benefit the community and diversify the clothing selection in the Metro Phoenix Region, there will be a district-wide clothing drive taking place through the entire challenge. At the end, the clothes will be combined and dropped at a donation center in Phoenix.

Ten bonus points will be awarded in this category by showing proof of using the Greening Events Guide (specifically the promoting/fundraising category) in the planning process of the clothing drive. Schools must use a minimum of one of the actionable steps listed in the Guide to earn points. Creativity is encouraged. The Greening Events Guide will be available via link on the Fashion for the Future Instagram, **@fashionforthefuturephx**, as well as on the City of Phoenix's website Sustainability page.



Eligibility

In order to participate, Phoenix Union schools must do the following:

- Have an identified **Sustainability Officer**
 - The sustainability officer will ideally be a representative who holds a seat on student council, though any student on campus can adopt the title if there are no elected representatives available.
- Coordinate a team consisting of a minimum of 2 people to participate in the Fashion Show
 - This team may include the Sustainability Officer, however, it is encouraged that the team be made up of other students on campus.

Challenge Dates

The challenge will take place over five weeks, from **Monday, January 31st to Friday, March 4th**. Point entries will stop being counted Friday, March 4th at 11:59pm. The challenge will end the Friday before Spring Break, and a winner will be announced by the end of March 2022.

Prizes

School Prizes:

First Place: \$2,500

Second Place: \$1,500

Third Place: \$500

The winning schools will be announced by the end of March. The winners will be recognized by City of Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego.

Contact

For information on sustainability, please visit www.phoenix.gov/sustainability. **If you are a student with questions about the challenge, please divert to your school's Sustainability Officer.** If you are a Sustainability Officer with questions or want to request information about the challenge, please email Student Engagement Coordinator Emma Collins at emma.collins@phoenix.gov, or Sustainability Specialist Darice Ellis at darice.ellis@phoenix.gov. You may also DM the [@fashionforthefuturephx](https://www.instagram.com/fashionforthefuturephx) Instagram page, which is managed by Emma Collins.



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