

## 231013 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Yvette Garcia-Flores, James Linton, Jaasiel Alvarez, Kate Malecek, Ben Ben, Tasha Cammidge, Vijaya Kumar, RJ Chadha, Honami Tanaka, Adrian Colazo, Benjamin Yeh, Nadia Suryawinata, Clare Reynell, Shannon Park, Henry P, (Anne) Yeokyoung Kil

For lunch this month, due to popular demand, we are ordering from [Urban Plates Catering Menu](#) for this Friday's meeting! [In your RSVP](#), please indicate your preferred catered meal for Friday, including sides. If folks want, we can also share a half-gallon of a beverage, so vote on your favourite, and we will order based on popular demand! The deadline for submitting your order is Thursday night. For [bonus sustainability](#): folks can bring their own cups and/or utensils and/or plates as an alternative to our usual compostable ones!

- Note: catering needs to be ordered 24h in advance, will update our [Restaurant Guide](#) (released in October)!

### Introductions ...

#### [Million Advocates for Sustainable Science](#) Petition

- International Institute for Sustainable Laboratories (I2SL) along with My Green Lab are petitioning to change funding granting agency policy to promote sustainable research
- By signing the letter you can help transform how science funding organizations set expectations for efficiency, resiliency, and sustainability in the way scientific research is conducted
- KM: suggested we could promote this in our newsletters, and post posters, could promote over Earth Month

### Green Labs Monthly Tip:

- Lab Energy Score Tool from I2SL
- <https://www.i2sl.org/resources/toolkit/benchmark.html>
- Compare your energy benchmark to other labs!

### Updates!

- ELEVEN LABS ARE NOW CERTIFIED
  - BUT if you want to, please get CERTIFIED TODAY! To get certified, finish the easy, 30-minute [Green Labs Certification](#) and submit it to [sustainability@caltech.edu](mailto:sustainability@caltech.edu).
- Newsletter October 2023
  - <https://www.bbe.caltech.edu/resources/bbe-newsletter>
  - Update on Lomi and Fall Composting Competition
    - Leaderboard on our website
  - Sustainable Events Resources!
    - Coffee/dessert resource coming in November (?)
  - Genesee pipette box recycling program!
  - Pilot program funding

- Certification Competition
  - Resources (including stickers and recycling signage)
- Upcoming events
  - Green Labs Certification push for November
    - Social in December with hot chocolate!
- Lomi program
  - First [pilot program](#)
  - Purchased 3 Lomis for three floors of Chen, Bjorkman lab purchased their own for Broad
  - TC: Lomi composter turns food waste into dirt
  - Goes to our Caltech Gardens
  - Takes ~5h to run, second floor does the most runs (at least once per day) other ones about 2x a week
  - Leak-proof, doesn't get mouldy (or very little)
  - Made 54 gallons of dirt (205 L) from 270 gallons food waste (1022 L)!
  - [Composting Challenge](#)
    - [Leaderboard now on our events](#) page! 2<sup>nd</sup> floor is winning
- -70/-80 comparison project
  - More information below meeting minutes for those interested
  - [Call for samples posted](#), brought additional signs if anyone wants to take them back to their spaces
  - To date, only 2 labs have participated
  - JL: did one test after one week, will do one at 6 months, and another after 1 year then do the data comparison
    - JL will present this next time in the meeting!!
- Tip boxes recycling program (VK)
  - Genesee
    - From 9/2023 with help from Mary Tutty
    - Setup similar to TipOne
  - USA Scientific
    - Since May 2023 with help from Trinity Dorger
    - Locations: Alles, Braun, BI, Broad (2 bins), Chen
    - Diverted 1050+ gallons of plastic waste that would have otherwise not been recycled!
    - Found a new vendor so we no longer have to separate out clear and coloured plastics
  - Goal is to eventually collect data to show to BBE and get them to pay for better recycling program large-scale
- Pilot Programs
  - [Pilot programs](#)
    - Especially editing and testing submission forms
    - Created a "mock" submission as an example – Lomi composters
    - Coordinating submissions, coordinating with faculty sponsors
    - Reaching out to faculty sponsors and ensuring they have time to read submissions

- Make into small writeup/progress report/posters or similar format
- Another event in November? Posters? Talk?
- Form includes
  - Contact information/team members/student involvement
  - Title/project summary/objectives/location
  - Timeline (start date, end date, first installment of funds)
  - Funding history/budgetary requirements/budget
  - Budget management (on-going funding, repayment, cost-savings etc)
  - Example: Lomi project
- Include as part of the newsletter this month
- Grenova Tip Washer Pilot Project
  - KM: Grant due in October worth 150K, website has descriptions of old projects they have funded, metrics (like carbon, water, energy) are favoured, and they want to know what aspect this study offsets (even though tip washing is not necessarily research, we do move the needle on water and energy etc use)
  - KM: we are visiting a labcore in a few weeks to see operation in action, hopefully they can advocate for the machine, we want to hear about their experiences
  - We are looking into getting one like in the picture (below) with 2 storage units with UV sterilization, a washer below, and carboys on the bottom rack
  - KM, Jaziel, VK, TC contributed
  - RSI mostly for chemistry mostly for research,
  - Validated to wash tips, hope they will see it as applicable
  - Use liquid handler in BI during non-science hours to run the Grenova tip washer
  - Comments:
    - JL: Will want to demonstrate non-filters are fine
      - KM: Part of our campaign, test for qPCR
    - CR: change rhythms and rerack might need to be part of campaign, track time of putting them back in the rack vs dumping them,
      - KM: multichannel users might be easier to incorporate this for
      - KM: even folks who use liquid handlers might be a market
      - JL: need to be in racks not just dumped out?
        - KM: correct, need to be re-racked
    - KM: need to wash in batches of similar brands and types together to maximise washes, another factor in our campaign

### Action Plan

- Events/Restaurant Guide
  - Published in October, looking AMAZING! Thanks again to all those who contributed
  - Will be a living document, so will update semi-regularly with new choices and options
  - We will publish the drinks/desserts one in November in time for the holidays
- Pilot program presentations in Nov
  - No one has applied, so we won't do this event

- Form is available on our website
- Tentative plans for 2024
  - Lab Cleanup Event January – April
    - List of chores for labs to use
    - Resources available like magnets for freezer cleanout or inventory google sheets
    - Each participating lab will provide pictures of their cleanup by midnight April 31 to be eligible for lunch in May
    - Prizes will be given for biggest before and after difference, and for the “weirdest thing found”
    - Labs can also submit the “weirdest thing found” pictures for a prize
    - Sponsors for the event? USA Sci?
    - Lunch will be pizza (all vegetarian options!)?
  - Lightning Talks in April
  - Green Labs Certification push January – April (social in May/June)
  - Styrofoam Recycling Pilot
    - No updates
    - Sonita bringing our proposal to their leadership to see if we can use the stockroom for drop-off of Styrofoam
    - Also looking into aggregating order function through TM with TF and purchasing
    - Also found a vendor to pick up the Styrofoam, just need Caltech to approve a place to store it, hopefully hear something about this soon (from DW)
  - Anything else?

Plans for 2024 - Sending out an [anonymous Google Forms](#) sheet for folks to provide feedback also!

All answers here are anonymized and given in normal text. **Questions are bolded.** Feedback is left normal.

Notes from 230908:

- **Does anyone else want to give an update on an ongoing project?**
- **How do folks feel about our group?**
  - **Does it need a different structure?**
  - **Are emails effective? Are meetings?**
  - The group thinks monthly meetings are good, could make it every 6 weeks or skip one if needed though
  - Monthly meetings help everyone stay on track and remind them to get work done on projects
  - Updates at the beginning of the meeting are good, but we could prioritize them or chose a single one to focus on
    - This might give others a chance to present and have a more in-depth discussion of our ongoing projects rather than the surface-level of the updates
    - TC will email around the week before to see if anyone wants to present, take 15 mins or so to present it properly and then discuss

- Could leave more time to float ideas and discuss, don't want to be too rigorous, folks like that the meetings are fluid and we have time to talk about the projects in depth, don't over-structuralize it
  - Emails
    - Sometimes too long
    - Might put a TL;DR at beginning, then keep rest of the email since some folks are interested
    - Could work on underlining or colour-coding emails
    - Highlight main point at beginning then move on to larger email below
    -
- **What projects from 2023 worked well? Which ones need some work?**
  - Lomi
  - Pipette box
    - Need to make it apply to more vendors, in 2024 may take data collected and see if BBE/facilities is willing to incorporate this into their workflows and take responsibility for this waste, asking the reps to do it indefinitely seems like a bad plan
    - Want to get more vendors on board as well (as discussed above, with Rainin etc)
    - Make it accessible to all of campus
  - -70/80
    - Only know how it is going after 1 year, so working on getting samples
  - Certification (discussed below)
  - Grenova (discussed above)
  - Keeping a line to DW is useful, talk to him twice a year or so to keep him updated, metrics on these projects crucial so TC will continue to monitor and report
  - MC on board for initiatives but he has more of a facilities angle, try to get him on board with taking these projects to the next level
- **What can we do better to encourage Green Labs Certification?**
  - **What has held folks back?**
  - Need to maintain certification, so focussing on re-up project to keep labs engaged in years after initial certification
  - Could have program where they submit new form (or same form) and get a sticker of participation to show they have done it year after year
  - Try for representatives in each lab, related to safety training/safety officers
    - DW didn't like this idea, but we want to broach it again, those members could come to the meeting and incorporate changes into their labs
  - Should try to target safety officers in each lab to incorporate sustainability, point them to recycling etc, promote green behaviours
  - Could make a flip book (like the emergency response guide) for every lab, or a postcard version of the Guide
  - Events useful to keeping up engagement of new labs, barrier low, good amenities to labs that are certified
  - Trainees may be intimidated about participating, especially if they are not involved in purchasing, and Lab manager might be busy

- Line to senior staff crucial, if they are behind it it is more likely to succeed, reach out to them more directly and make it clear that junior researchers can participate
  - **What do folks want to focus on for 2024?**
    - Getting safety officers involved in this process
      - Folks really liked the postcard idea!
      - Lab manager can assign that job to someone,
    - Want more EHS involvement, incorporate GL into safety training somehow (maybe reach out to Breena since sometimes folks have trouble reaching other EHS members)
    - More PI involvement
      - Presenting to PIs, probably next Feb, need to make more signage and make them more aware of the program to decrease barrier or disinterest
      - Targeted emails to PIs
    - Expand the program, especially to Chemistry
      - Want to post signs in Crellin, Noyes, Church etc
      - Present to PIs in Chem (and in BBE) and maybe elsewhere?
      - Maybe present to Chem GSA?
      - Contact Paula Martinez for getting into the Chem newsletter
      - Use the Admins network (who do they report to?) maybe Ann Mao
    - RSI involvement
      - Capitalize on the fact that the building is opening in 2024
      - Make them walk the walk
      - Talk to faculty in RSI, having a person in their organization involved with GL will get us a seat at the table? And also get the word out about our work
      - Talk to Dianne Newman, and others, to spread the word also
      - Come to them with DATA, especially those related to costs, energy audit needs to be made available and put at the forefront
- (ran out of time, so next questions saved for next time!)

Notes from 231013

- **What goals should we have for our group in 2024? What about in our labs?**
  - Sustainability Committee
    - We need to be more involved, BY knows someone on the council and might be a good advocate/connection, BY will reach out
    - Discuss things like the social cost of carbon?
      - We are still using 30% coal power to power campus, new buildings are on fuel cells
    - Tyrrell not willing to commit to percentage reduced , but we could advocate for that in our recommendations (discussed below)
  - [Sustainability report](#)
    - Has lots of our pictures and programs but we are not cited 😞
    - Follow up with Max about this
    - Caltech is riding our coattails and virtue-signalling, taking credit for our work
  - Sustainability survey! For anyone

- **From BY: GSC sustainability survey: <https://forms.gle/sDD8BcBGHr5sE57o6>. This survey will be open from Monday, 10/9, through end-of-day on Sunday, 10/22.** Anonymous summary statistics from this survey will be shared publicly, including with the [Caltech Sustainability Advisory Council](#) to inform campus planning efforts.
    - In the email summary TC will include language if we want to coordinate, put language below also
- Green Labs will send David Warren recommendations at end of year
  - NS: Getting PIS to sign the recommendations will make a huge difference
  - Ask Dianne Newman, Pamela Bjorkman, David Prober...
- RSI – CGSC mailing list?
  - Slow start, no new labs joining, just shared lab spaces for existing professors
  - Could talk to Nate Glasser – scientist at RSI, Newman Lab, will direct the center
  - Dianne Newman also good contact
  - Are events for the opening being planned and how can we help? We should capitalize on this!!
- What is the status of normal Caltech recycling
  - Especially plastics recycling
  - TC: Caltech struggling to pay custodians, so recycling is not happening as reliably as it should, custodians overwhelmed (not just custodial, but also facilities, OLAR, etc)
  - We can advocate for better pay and more hires
  - We can also advocate to get a better vendor to accept our waste, one that prioritizes recycling
- BY: EHS handling surprise inspections in Chem – same in BBE?
  - TC: no, we get notice
  - KM: Could be there are previous violations they are checking up on
- BY: Chemistry use guide – being developed in some labs
  - GL could make something, but it is a lot of work! Specific to labs
  - KM: redundant maybe with the resources on the EHS websites?
- Want to collaborate with getting better safety training for officers esp for green practices
  - Can advocate for every lab to have a sustainability officers and incorporate and engage certified labs especially
  - JL: Joan has a list for sending out stuff to target safety officers, can use that to reach safety officers
- Green Labs flipbook (similar to the Emergency Response Guides)!!
  - See notes from last time, JA suggested these for posting in labs
  - KM: Good 2024 idea
- Certification
  - BY: Links are broken in the cert form 😞
  - TC: we will work on updating it in 2024

- **Is the Green Labs Guide useful? What do we want to add to the 2024 version?**

- **Is the website useful? What things do we want to add/change in 2024?**
- **Final thoughts/comments/suggestions?**

**Suggested Responses for the [GSC Sustainability Survey](#): due before 10/22**

**Do you have any other comments/thoughts/suggestions related to sustainability in housing and energy?**

1. How are you going to ensure rehousing or recycling of old stoves if they are replaced with electric stoves?
2. Could buildings on campus could increase temperatures slightly during the summer, and decrease slightly during the winter so that it is less of a burden to heat/cool (and rooms aren't FREEZING all summer!)
3. Does Caltech have commitments to zero carbon/carbon neutrality also?
4. Are there other sustainability commitments or climate action plans Caltech has committed to? (For example: LEED certification requirements for new buildings, reducing scope 1 and scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions, reducing SOV commutes to campus, etc)

**Do you have any other comments/thoughts/suggestions related to food sustainability?**

1. It would be nice to host events that are more sustainable or zero-waste at Caltech. Could this be a service that can be made available in the future?
2. Could we partner with local restaurants to encourage sustainable events on campus that do not use Caltech catering?
  - o (For example: we could partner with sustainable restaurants nearby. We could ask them to offer us a discount for Caltech employees/staff/faculty. We could also ask that when they deliver our food we they use only sustainable/compostable cutlery or containers? Could there be a container return program with some of these restaurants?)
3. Can Caltech commit to purchasing food from local or sustainably certified sources (including ethically sourced coffee beans etc)?

**Do you have any other comments/thoughts/suggestions related to waste and composting?**

1. We would like to recycle Styrofoam and other shipping waste.
2. If we are able to get compostable cutlery, are there places on campus where we can easily access compost bins? If not, could this be made more readily available across campus?
3. How does campus deal with plant waste from the gardens/grassy areas? Is it composted?
  - Personal note about carbon offsets: I do not believe these are effective. Recent [studies](#) ([studies](#)) (and [shows!](#)) indicate that this is a way for large companies to be "let off the hook" instead of actually changing their habits and making workflows more sustainable,



since they are relying on a third-party organization to plant trees or something else, which many do not end up doing.

**Do you have any other comments/thoughts/suggestions related to transportation?**

**e.g., feedback about ZipCars, mobility/accessibility concerns, etc.**

1. Are there initiatives to reduce SOV commutes to campus?
2. Are remote workdays being encouraged? If PIs expect workers/students to come in, are there resources we can provide to show that Caltech is promoting a hybrid/remote workplace?
3. I understand not everyone can take transit to work, especially those with accessibility issues -- are there programs available to help those who must drive due to these mobility/accessibility issues?

**Any final suggestions / comments? Ideas for sustainability improvements on campus?**

1. I am part of Caltech Green Labs and many of our goals align with yours, can we collaborate?
2. Reach out or check out Caltech Green Labs!
3. Can we encourage better recycling practices at Caltech? Currently, not very much of our waste is recycled as the vendor we work with does not support recycling of many products.
4. Can we get Styrofoam recycling on campus?

#### For next time

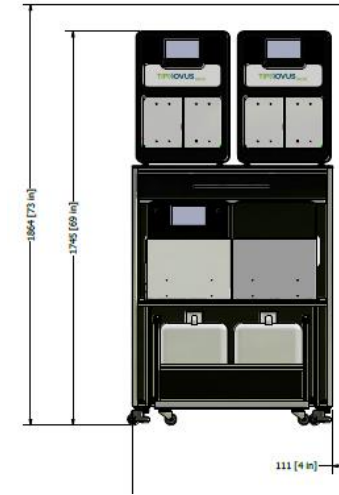
- Certification
  - o Takes ½ hour
  - o Very simple!
  - o See <https://greenlabs.caltech.edu> for the form
  - o Get a plaque!
  - o Green Labs will give you bins and signage for your lab!
- Photos!
- Work on Action Plan
- Slack?
- Anything Else?

**Next Meeting November 10th 12pm-1:30pm Chen 240**

**Bring a friend and get a RocketBook!**

## More information:

### - Genova model



### - -70°C/-80°C Comparison Pilot

- From Lightning Event - Manisha Kapasiawala
  - Collect samples from several interested labs
  - Determine a robust way to compare samples
  - Store in both a -70°C and a -80°C and compare over multiple years
  - Gradinaru lab has a -70°C?
  - From last meeting
    - JL: he raised this idea with David Warren at the BBE event, we could present the data to the community to convince them with data, using machines with similar ages and same location
    - KM: Jesse Flores may have ability to look at tracking to account for blips in temperature
    - NS: Maz lab would be interested in supplying samples
    - JL: could use sterlings in Freezer Farm (TC, JL, and NS offer their -80s)
    - JL/KM: could keep samples in -20 for a control, use a TX/TL control, do protein, DNA etc, every 6 months take a sample and test it, and just extrapolate data from there
- We moved on to add to the Drive document
  - Testing
    - Need controls of things that will fail
    - Ask about timing for failure protection
    - Schedule testing schedule for samples (some once a month for 6 months, once in 6 months, and once on year) depending on sample type
    - Include results for 6 months tests in 2024 second quarter newsletter
    - Possibly work into a publication for lab managers or something, help convince PIs, but political
  - Series of magnets or posters for advertisement
  - Make a figure for cost savings on website

- Ben Bekey found resources online that he will share with group
  - (TC thinks it was this)
- TC will share resources to group and ask that folks continue to plan out the project so it can be underway by August?

Lab	Samples	Timeline	Confirmation Tests
Elowitz	Protein (stored at -80)		Binding on reporter cell lines
Elowitz	Glycerol stocks (perhaps several samples for freeze-thaw)		Plate same volume from same prep for each condition
Elowitz	Cell lines (slow freeze) with replicates (4 for each condition)		Thaw and count viability
Murray	Cell lysate		TX/TL assay
Murray	DNA		TX/TL assay
Sternberg	Worms samples		
Mazmanian	Fecal samples		Sequenece
Prober Lab	Competent cells (perhaps several samples for freeze-thaw controls, do one tube no thaws for 6 months, one tube thaw every month for 6 months)	One tube every 6 month for 6 months and then after 6 more months, one tube at 6 months and one year only, one tube at one year only	Plate on LB and count, could transform
Karethikeyan	Metabolites? DNA/RNA, soil samples, environmental samples? Kept at -70		
Beacon	Kept at -70, different brand than Sterlings		



# FALL 2023

## GREEN LABS COMPOSTING CHALLENGE

**Date:** SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER    **Who:** CALTECH LABS

Each floor in Chen and the third floor in Broad will compete to turn the most food waste into compost dirt during Fall 2023.

Green Labs will provide a lunch party for the floor that makes the most compost dirt! Second and third prizes will also be provided!



**BEFORE** → **AFTER**

**Download the 30-minute Green Labs Certification Form today and submit it to [sustainability@caltech.edu](mailto:sustainability@caltech.edu) to get Certified today!**

**Add your food waste or coffee grounds to compete and start composting today!**

**Or check our website for more information about the Lomi, or find Green Labs tips to make your lab more sustainable!**

Sustainably printed on 100% recycled paper!



# NOV. 30TH

## GREEN LABS CERTIFICATION CHALLENGE

**Date:** FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>    **Who:** CALTECH LABS

Certified labs will be rewarded with a Certified Green Labs Plaque, and access to exclusive events and swag (including free recycling bins and efficiency signage and stickers).

If your lab is Green Labs Certified by FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30<sup>TH</sup>, Green Labs is inviting your lab to have a tasty treat and enter a fun raffle at a top-secret location only given to those most excellent and certified green labs.




**Download the Certification Form today!**  
Event Date: Top-secret  
Event Location: Top-secret  
All Certified Labs are welcome!

**Start your Green Labs Certification today!**

**Or check our website for more information about this event or find Green Labs tips to make your lab more sustainable!**

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# CALL FOR SAMPLES

## TO COMPARE -70°C AND -80°C FREEZERS

**Dates:** August 1 – December 31 (and beyond!)    **Who:** ANY CALTECH LABS

Green Labs is calling for samples for a student-led study comparing samples held at -20°C, -70°C and -80°C in the Chen Freezer Farm. Samples from various labs will be tested and compared at intervals over a period of up to 5 years.

We hope that by conducting a controlled study at Caltech, we can provide evidence for labs to change their -80°C freezers to -70°C, ensuring an energy savings of up to 30%! Below are some additional resources suggesting that -70°C is a safe storage temperature for many kinds of samples. Use the QR code below to sign up to contribute a sample!



**Sign up to contribute samples here. All labs are welcome to contribute samples for our long-term study!**

**Want to make your lab sustainable? Check out our website or download the Green Labs Certification Form!**

**Here are some resources suggesting that -70°C is a safe storage temperature for many kinds of samples!**

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# JAN - APRIL

## LAB SPRING CLEAN COMPETITION

**Competition: JANUARY - APRIL** Participants will compete to clean their labs top to bottom by cleaning out freezers, organizing storage spaces, and taking inventory of lab supplies!  
**Lunch Party: MAY 1**  
**Who: CALTECH LABS**

Each participating lab will provide pictures of their cleanup by **midnight APRIL 31ST**. Prizes will be given for the biggest before and after difference, and for the "weirdest thing found".

**The day after the competition ends, Green Labs is inviting all participating labs to have a sustainable lunch on us!**



RSVP your lab by **Sept. 15!**  
All Labs are welcome!



Or check our **website** for more information about this event or find Green Labs tips to make your lab more sustainable!



Download the Certification Form today!

Sustainably printed on 100% recycled paper!



# SPRING 2023

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## STYROFOAM RECYCLING GUIDE

Follow EH&S Guidelines for biohazardous, radioactive, chemical, and electronic waste

ONLY CLEAN, WHITE #6 EPS FOAM





PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE:



TAPE



PACKING PEANUTS



FOAM INSERTS



STYROFOAM CUPS OR PLATES



PACKING LABELS



CARDBOARD OR INSULATION



ICE PACKS



Check out the Green Labs website for more tips and tricks to make your lab more sustainable!



Sustainably printed on 100% recycled paper!

