



# SOUP STOCK

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**Project Summary (150 words):**

“I went to the store. I bought a wastebasket. The cashier put it in a bag. I brought it home. I took it out of the bag. I crumpled up the bag and tossed it in the wastebasket.” -Lily Tomlin

Paper or plastic? How about neither.

REFUSE is a project to raise awareness about the wastefulness of shopping bags, be it paper, plastic, or the cheap reusable sort. This community-based project will enlist local artists to create stickers that ask consumers: Do you really need that bag? These stickers will be distributed to businesses, and/or circulated gorilla-style in check out lanes of stores where bags are readily used. This project is not about which is better, paper or plastic? This project is about the fact that most of us have pockets, purses, and backpacks to carry items home with us. Why use plastic bags in the produce section for just one lemon or a few apples? Sometimes no bag is necessary! Sometimes the most sustainable decision is limiting use of the product, rather than using resources to make an alternative. Yes, reusable shopping bags are best when a bag is absolutely necessary. But, accumulating tons of reusable bags can also add to unnecessary production of materials. The stickers will provide a subtle reminder for consumers to ask themselves: Do I really need a bag?

**How will you use the Soup Grant to realize this project? (50 words):**

The money provided by SOUP STOCK will be used for the production and material cost of the stickers. All promotion of REFUSE will be handled on a volunteer basis. Sponsorship by a screen-printing company will be sought in order to get more bang for our buck. The greater number of stickers means that our reach can spread farther into the community. Three or so artists will create the sticker designs, attempting to communicate REFUSE’s mission in the most creative and straightforward way. The design will be chosen by popular vote on our website.

**How will this project benefit the community? (100 words):**

The REFUSE project attempts to add one simple concept to our collective consciousness: “Paper or plastic? How about neither.” Most retail employees automatically bag an item when bought, but our goal is to simply prompt consumers to ask themselves at the checkout line if a bag is absolutely necessary. Hopefully, “No Bag Please” will become second nature, and our consumption of bags will decrease, saving money, trees, resources, and the environment. REFUSE also urges businesses to train employees to ask, rather than assume that the customer wants a bag. REFUSE benefits the community in a variety of ways, by reducing our impact on the environment, saving money, as well as uniting people for one very simple cause.

**How will you document this project? (100 words):**

A website will be created to track the progress of REFUSE, and a list of stores will be provided to show what businesses are supporting the project. Documentation includes photographs of the stickers in use, as well as community feedback. The website will also be used to pick the chosen sticker design.

