*Please submit this completed application and any relevant supporting documentation by the deadline listed on the SSC website to Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu.The Working Group Chairs will be in contact with you regarding any questions about the application. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the SSC at* *Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu**.*

# General Information

**Project Name:** Design for Democracy

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** U$10.000,00

**Project Topic Area(s):** [ ] Energy [x] Education [ ] Food & Waste

 [ ] Land [ ] Water [ ] Transportation

# Contact Information

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**Project Team**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
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| Stan Ruecker | Graphic Design | srucker@illinois.edu |
| Name | Department/Organization | Email Address |
| Name | Department/Organization | Email Address |

# Project Information

Please provide a brief background of the project, the goals, and the desired outcomes:

Sustainability has often been definied as how biological systems endure and remain diverse and productive. However, the 21st Century definition of sustainability goes far beyond these narrow parameters. Therefore, sustainability also includes the idea of a global society “founded on respect for nature, universal rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace”. Old models of comsumptions and industrialization will not support the world’s growing population. Because of that humans need to re-exame their polices on environmental protection, but also in social responsibility and economic practice. In 2015, countries adopeted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainability Development and its 17 sustainable development goals. These 17 goals expand the concept of sustainability for a more social and economic approach. Some of these golas are the development of health and well being, economic growth, sustainable cities and communities, quality education and the reduction of inequalities.

This project aims to unfold the problem behind the social and economical problems that we have been facing, and in particular the problems related to democracy. The purpose of the talks is to expand the concept of sustainability beyond “the green development” and to discuss the relationship between design (as an interdisciplinary field of practice) and democracy. Moreoever, the discussions will reflect on possible outcomes to enable more people to participate in the democratic process, the openness and transparency into institutions in ways that assure equality and justice, and the participation of society to shape our present and future in a more sustainable, inclusive and fair democratic model. This project will connect different schools around UIUC campus in order to discuss complex and wicked problems, that one single field cannot solve alone.

The funding from the Student Sustainability Comittee is specifically for three high visibility speakers, especially one keynote speaker, to elevate student engagement in the public discussions. This proposal funds the honorarium for (3) internationally recognized keynote speakers.

Please provide a brief summary of how students will be involved in the project:

Students will have the opportunity to participate in open discussions about the actual mode of democracy, expanding their previous knowledge about sustainability. Moreover, they will have the opportunity to rethink social problems and find possible space for action. In each talk, one student will be invited to participate as assistant mediator. This is a great opportunity to allow students to lead interdisciplinary discussions.

Please provide a brief summary of the project timeline:

The three different topics will be sequenced according to the availability of the guests.

Topic 1: Open Democracy

It focuses on the contribution and role of Internet science on the current and future multidisciplinary understanding of societies transformations, governance shifts and innovation quests. Its main objective is to allow an open and productive dialogue between all disciplines which study the Internet as a social-technical system under any technological or humanistic perspectives.

UIUC Host: Graphic Design

UIUC Department Guest: Informatics and/or Computer Science.

Guest: Manuel Castells http://sociology.berkeley.edu/professor-emeritus/manuel-castells

Topic 2: Redesign Democracy

What is the relationship between design and democracy? This discussion aims to understand and find possible spaces for action, in which design can act for the redesign of democracy, but also a be a democratic practice. Based on Manzini and Margolin (2017), design as democracy is “a stage on which diverse actors can toghether and democratically collaborate in shaping their future world”, and design for democracy is how “to increase the opportunities for citizens to participate in deliberative processes”.

UIUC Host: Graphic Design

UIUC Department Guest: Industrial Design and/or Sociology

Possible Guest: Ezio Manzini: https://mitpress.mit.edu/authors/ezio-manzini

Topic 3: Design, Urban Environment and Democracy

How to reimagine cities that operate in order to respond to the ecological and social challenges of current times? The primary goal is to discuss the role of different entities that form, respond to, and shape the urban environment network, in order to redesign their interactions to a more sustainable, livable, and social equity environment. Moreover, this topic also invites us to rethink the concept of urban commons, as a way to use neighborhood resources and develop the community engagement process.

UIUC Host: Graphic Design

UIUC Department Guest: Urban Planning and/or Architecture.

Possible Guest: Carlo Ratti : http://dusp.mit.edu/faculty/carlo-ratti

Additional comments

This project will collaborate in a worldwide initiative lead by professors Ezio Manzini and Victor Margolin to reflect about the role of Design, in order to help to conceive, develop and connect new possibilities for democracy. More than 10 countries are already part of this movement, including the most influential design schools in Europe. In the United States, the D.School at University of Stanford is currently the only participant.