**Funding Criteria**

**A. General Rules**

1. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to submit requests for funding. Student-led projects require a faculty or staff sponsor in order to have funds awarded.
2. Funding can only go to university-affiliated projects from students, faculty, staff, and departments.
3. All SSC projects must make a substantial impact on students. All SSC funding is 100% from student green fees, so the projects funded by the students must benefit them.

**B. Things SSC Can Fund, On A Case-By-Case Basis**

1. SSC can fund feasibility studies and design work; however, it must work toward ultimately addressing a sustainability need on campus.
2. SSC can fund staff positions that are related to improving campus sustainability. Strong preference will be given to proposals receiving matching funding from departments and/or plans for maintaining continuity of the position after the end of the initial grant.
3. SSC can fund outreach events with a central theme of sustainability, provided their primary audience is the general campus community.
4. SSC discourages requests for food and prizes but will consider proposals on a case by case basis.
5. SSC can fund repairs and improvements to existing building systems as long as it works toward the goal of improving campus sustainability.
6. SSC can provide departments with loans for projects with a distinct payback. Loans will require a separate memorandum of understanding between SSC and departmental leadership pledging to repay the award in full and detailing the payback plan.

**C. Things SSC Will Not Fund:**

1. SSC will not fund projects with a primary end goal of generating revenue for non-University entities.
2. SSC will not fund personal lodging, food, beverage, and other travel expenses.
3. SSC will not fund any travel expenses.
4. SSC will not fund tuition or other forms of personal financial assistance.

**Instructions**

*Submit this completed application and one map, graphic, or picture to* [*Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu*](mailto:Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu)*. Please adhere to the session word counts. The committee holds the right to decline applications over the designated word counts. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the Student Sustainability Committee Coordinator at* [*sustainability-committee@illinois.edu.*](mailto:sustainability-committee@illinois.edu.)

**Project Name:**  Resuscitating Soil for Sustainable Futures

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** $9,500

**Primary Project Leader Name & Email:**  Adrian Wong, adrianw3@illinois.edu

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Abstract:** In less than 100 words, briefly describe your project. |
| We propose to develop a metric for monitoring and improving soil health with citizen science. We will train students and members of the community to determine and introduce appropriate mycorrhizal fungi, pollinators and beneficial insects into CU by testing soil and evaluating its health. This project will develop an educational program in conjunction with community partners to turn soil metrics and knowledge into concrete actions: increasing pollinator-friendly areas, introducing pollinators and insects, and expanding use of cover crops. This will address iCAP objectives 4.2.2, 4.3, and 4.4 directly, and strongly benefit the campus community. |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Education | Energy | Food & Waste | Land & Water | Transportation |
| Project Category | Primary |  | Secondary | Primary |  |

**Project Team Member List** (student projects must include their faculty/staff advisor’s information)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | RSO/Department | Email Address |
| Dr. Esther Ngumbi (Asst. Professor) | Entomology and African American Studies | enn@illinois.edu |
| Adrian Wong (PhD student) | Institute of Communications Research | adrianw3@illinois.edu |
| Lila Dodge (PhD student) | Anthropology | lmdodge2@illinois.edu |
| Chibundo Egwuatu (PhD student) | Anthropology | egwuatu2@illinois.edu |
| Ken Salo (Clin Asst. Professor) | Urban Planning | kensalo@illinois.edu |
|  |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Questions | Yes | No |
| Is this a student-led project? | Yes |  |
| If applicable, have you received approval from Facilities & Services and/or site manager? | na |  |
| Do you have a plan for ongoing funding beyond SSC? (SSC cannot guarantee ongoing financial support) | na |  |
| Beyond SSC, do you have sources contributing funding or support (ex. staff time, external grants, etc.) to this project? | Yes |  |
| Have you applied for SSC funding previously? |  | No |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Timeline** |
| SSC funding agreements remain active for two years. Please list your project’s timeline and/or milestones. |
| 1. August 2021 – December 2021 = Train students and residents in soil sampling methods. Sample and test soil. Pre-evaluation of soil health, develop metrics for future monitoring and establish goals for future success. Determine best mycorrhizal fungi and insects by soil type to improve soil health. Pre-evaluation of soil health, abundance of pollinator-friendly areas, acres of cover crops, and healthy food production practices by students and community residents. 2. January 2022 – April 2022 = Education programs for students and community in soil maintenance and improvement techniques. Develop partnerships with local communities and organizations to increase pollinator-friendly areas, introduce pollinators and insects, and expand use of cover crops. 3. April 2022 – October 2022 = Expand and nurture pollinator-friendly areas, introduce pollinators and insects, expand use of cover crops, support students and community members in healthy food production practices; in partnership with organizations such as Hendrick House Farm and Randolph Street Community Food Garden. 4. November 2022 – May 2023 = Post-evaluation of soil health, abundance of pollinator-friendly areas, acres of cover crops, and healthy food production practices by students and community residents. Refine metrics for soil health that had not been incorporated into original design. Apply for outside and additional funding to continue project in Champaign County and extend project to other locales. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Project Description** |
| In 250 words or less, describe your project. What does your project hope to accomplish? What are your project’s deliverables? Bullet points welcome. |
| We propose a citizen science project for the UIUC community that will:   1. Train students and community members to take soil samples and monitor soil health. We will create metrics and goals in support of iCAP objective 4.4, which is currently lacking. 2. Expand pollinator-friendly areas, increase the abundance of mycorrhizal fungi, pollinators and beneficial insects and cover crops. Working in partnership with UIUC students, campus organizations and local community organizations such as Hendrick House Farm and Randolph Street Community Food Garden, we will target potential spaces and communities and apply this sustainability treatment. 3. Provide education programs in healthy soil stewardship and food production. We will train students and residents to better care for the soil ecosystem and to benefit from this ecology by producing healthy food options. 4. Monitor and measure the impact of this treatment via pre-evaluation/post-evaluation and treatment-control block randomization techniques. With these methods for research design, we aim to causally infer the impact of these interventions and run a cost-benefit analysis. 5. Should a large enough effect be inferred, we will share the methods, design and results of this project with others, so that others may replicate the project and share in the benefit of healthy soil, air, water and food. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Environmental Impact** |
| In 200 words or less, how does your project increase environmental stewardship at UIUC? If applicable, what is the carbon, water, waste, and/or energy savings? Does your project relate to the iCAP? Bullet points welcome. |
| This project directly addresses iCAP objectives 4.2.2, 4.3, and 4.4, strongly benefiting the sustainability and health of the campus community. Working with campus and community partners, we will increase pollinator-friendly areas on and off campus, in public spaces and in homes. We will expand the use of cover crops both on south farms and in local neighborhoods, which will reduce nutrient loss from drainage and overland runoff, reduce soil erosion, suppress weeds, increase water infiltration rates, contribute organic matter and provide grazing form livestock (Payne, 2019). We will establish metrics and benchmarks for soil health to be used by iCAP in the future and to increase nutrient richness and organic matter for food production. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Student Impact** |
| In 200 words or less, how will this project benefit students? How will students be involved with this project? What educational components are in your project? Bullet points welcome. |
| This project will:   1. Educate students in soil sampling and monitoring methods, teaching them to be stewards of healthy soil ecologies. We will also teach students about healthy food systems, the importance of pollinators, fungi and insects, and how to grow healthy food. 2. Support students in their development as sustainable community ambassadors, partners and liaisons. By creating partnerships with local community organizations and giving students responsibility within these relationships, we will train students to be civic leaders, able to communicate clearly and see participatory projects through to the end. 3. Improve the health and wellbeing of students by improving the soil, water and air ecologies around them. By developing iCAP metrics, setting soil health goals and increasing pollinator-friendly areas, cover crop use and sustainable food production, this project will improve the air we breathe, the food we eat and the land around us. |