View results

Respondent

41 Madelyn Craft

59:11
Time to complete

Instructions:

Please adhere to the session word counts. Project leads must attend one SSC working group meeting post step 1 application submission. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the SSC at Sustainability-Committee@illinois.edu.

1. Is This Project Student-Led? *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

2. Have You Attended an SSC Working Group Meeting? If Not, Please Attend One and Present Your Project. Once Your Attendance Is Complete, Please Return to Complete Your Application.

https://studentengagement.illinois.edu/student-sustainability/ssc/calendar/ *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

3. Please Select the Working Group You Attended. *

- ( ) Energy + Transportation and Infrastructure working group.
- ( ) Food & Waste + Land, Air, and Water working group.
- (●) Education and Justice working group.

4. Please Enter the Date of the Working Group You Attended: *

3/25/2024

5. Project Name: *

Red Oak Rain Garden Outreach and Enhancements

6. Total Funding Requested From the SSC. *

9708.2

Please enter a number less than or equal to 10000

7. Project Lead Full Name: *

Maddy Craft

8. Project Lead University Email Address: *

mcraft4@illinois.edu

9. Project Abstract: (In Less Than 100 words, Briefly Describe the Project.) *

Red Oak Rain Garden is campus' environmental demonstration landscape built by and for students, incorporating equitable design principles. Located next to dormitories and well-traveled pathways, it serves as an immersive educational tool, highlighting the role rain gardens play in managing stormwater, safeguarding water quality, and nurturing ecosystems. This proposal includes interpretive signage to tell that story, including Braille and multi-language audio tours, and enhancements that revitalize spots affected by two years of drought. With these strategies, the rain garden can continue to be a student respite that serves as a model for campus sustainable landscapes.

10. Project Category: *

- (●) Education & Justice
- ( ) Energy
- ( ) Food & Waste
- ( ) Land, Air & Water
- ( ) Transportation & Infrastructure

All Rolling Applications Require a Faculty/Staff Advisor.

Faculty/Staff Advisor

11. Full Name: *

Eliana Brown

12. Department: *

University of Illinois Extension

13. University Email Address: *

Brown12@illinois.edu

14. Do You Have Additional Members? *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Project Team Member

Additional Member

15. Full Name: *

Erin Schimenti

16. Campus Affiliation/Department: *

Student, Sustainable Design

17. University Email Address: *

Erinns2@illinois.edu

18. Do You Have Additional Members? *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

Project Team Member

Additional Member

19. Full Name: *

Layne Knoche

20. Campus Affiliation/Department: *

University of Illinois Extension

21. University Email Address: *

lknoch2@illinois.edu

UIUC Financial Contact:

Financial Contact (Must be Full-Time UIUC Employee Who Has the Authority to Manage the Financials on Behalf of the Project)

22. Full Name: *

Patti Welander

23. Department: *

University of Illinois Extension

24. University Email Address: *

pattiw@illinois.edu

Project Questionnaire:

25. Please Attach Any Letters of Commitment or Support Here, Along With Any Other Supplemental Media That Will Support Your Application (Presentations, Pictures, Etc.)

- Letter of support - RORG Signage - F&S_Madelyn Craft.pdf
- RORG PPT for SSC 2024_Madelyn Craft.pptx

26. Have You Spoken with UIUC's Facilities & Services (F&S) Division for Approval for Your Project? *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

27. Name of Facilities & Services Personnel Contacted *

Brent Lewis

28. Beyond SSC, Do You Have Sources Contributing Funding or Support (e.g. Staff Time, External Grants, etc.) to This Project? *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

29. If Additional Funding Is Required, Do You Have a Plan for Obtaining Additional Funding Beyond SSC? (NOTE: SSC Cannot Guarantee Ongoing Financial Support) *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

30. Has Your Project Applied for SSC Funding Previously? *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

31. Has Your Project Received SSC Funding Previously? *

- (●) Yes
- ( ) No

32. **Project Timeline:**
(SSC Funding Agreements Remain Active for Two Years. List Your Project's Timeline and Major Milestones.) *

SIGNAGE
Continue the development of content and graphic design with RORG Team, Student Team, DRES, and F&S 8/16/2024
Work with F&S and Sign Shop on design and location of signage 8/16/2024
Final draft of the graphic design of the signage. 8/16/2024
F&S Sign Shop print signage 8/16/2024
F&S Sign Shop installs signage 10/18/2024
PLANTS
Finalize plant order with Midwest Groundcovers 5/10/2024
Arrange storage space at greenhouses for mid-September 6/7/2024
Arrange RSO involvement in plant installation 8/26/2024
Plants delivery 9/16/2024
RORG Team, Student Team, CCMG, ECIMN, RSOs install plants 9/20/2024
Final Report to SSC 12/13/2024

33. **Project Description:**
Describe Your Project in Detail.
What Does Your Project Hope to Accomplish?
What Are Your Project's Deliverables? *

Entering its fifth successful year, the Red Oak Rain Garden is a 10,000 square foot demonstration landscape on the Urbana-Champaign campus. Interpretive signage is crucial to connectthe rain garden's environmental significance with public understanding. A 2023 student led pedestrian survey showed that, on average, 180 people pass by the rain garden hourly, highlighting its impact along two major thoroughfares. Signage will educate passersby about the rain garden's role in stormwater management, water quality improvement, and local ecosystems. The survey identified main entry points, allowing for strategic placement where most visitors enter the garden space.
The Red Oak Rain Garden is dedicated to fostering diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion. Our Team adheres to Universal Design principles, ensuring the garden is accessible to all, regardless of age, size, or ability. We collaborate with the University's Disability Resource Education Services (DRES) for guidance. In designing interpretive signage, we prioritize vision-impaired individuals by incorporating Braille, which would point readers to where on the sign a QR code is that connects them with an audio tour. This audio feature not only aids those with visual impairments but also enables multilingual support, benefiting a historically underserved population of non-English speakers and those for which English is a second language. An additional sign design feature that DRES is assisting with is the selection of fonts suitable for various ages and visual abilities, ensuring widespread accessibility and readability.
The rain garden has faced challenges with droughts during the summers of 2022 and 2023, placing strain on some of the initially planted species. Despite the natural resilience of many native plants to drought, severe conditions can impact their viability, especially when grown from plugs in a garden setting. The long-term rain garden maintenance plan incorporates the principle of "adaptive management," recognizing that not all species will perform precisely as expected over time. This approach ensures the sustained health and effectiveness of the rain garden, aligning with a commitment to environmental stewardship and the promotion of resilient, sustainable landscapes. These lessons, emphasizing adaptive management, will help inform public outreach, highlighting the dynamic nature of ecological projects and engaging students in supporting the rain garden's ongoing evolution.
Replacement plants are needed to ensure the continued proper functioning of the garden and enjoyment of passersby enjoying the garden's mental health boost. The need to replace 10% of the rain garden's plants arises from recent drought conditions, with it serving as a valuable case study. Our experience underscores the importance of accounting for precipitation extremes in plant design, especially crucial amid climate change challenges. Lessons learned are integrated into outreach materials, including a popular brochure series, benefiting community members who are designing rain gardens. The Red Oak Rain Garden has active social media with more than 700 followers on Facebook and Instagram each, expanding the reach even further.

34. **Environmental Impact:**
How Does Your Project Increase Environmental Stewardship at the UIUC?
If Applicable, What Is the Carbon, Water, Waste, and/or Energy Savings? *

This project improves campus environmental stewardship by being on the forefront of exemplary sustainable landscapes that engage students in service-learning events. The garden can hold and soak in 450 bathtubs of rainwater in a single storm, replenishing groundwater while improving downstream water quality.

35. **iCAP Objective Correspondence:**
Does Your Project Aim to Advance One Or More Of The Illinois Climate Action Plan's (iCAP) Objectives? If So, How?

A full list can be found here: https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/objectives

Although the Red Oak Rain Garden touches on no less than 12 iCAP objectives, for the purpose of this proposal, I will focus on one: Key Objective: 4.2 Implement Resilient Landscape Strategy. This project's educational aspects and plantings promote resilient landscapes that support a campus-wide strategy. Traditional landscape practices such as mown lawns, traditional low-mow sites, chemical applications, etc. must be reconsidered in favor of exemplary sustainable ones with accessibility for all. By enhancing a beautiful example of exemplary resilient landscapes at the heart of a campus home to over 50,000 people, we hope to inspire both current and future generations to rethink landscapes (on campus and in their own backyards).

36. **Student Impact:**
How Will This Project Benefit Students?
How Will Students Be Involved with This Project?
What Educational Components Are in Your Project?
How Many Students Will Be Directly Impacted by This Project?
How Many Students Will Be Indirectly Impacted by This Project?
*

I'm RORG's volunteer coordinator and work with approximately 10 RSOs representing more than a hundred students that have participated in our workdays. As such, they will be asked to participate in the plant installation in fall of 2024. University classes in Landscape Architecture, Horticulture, and Civil and Environmental Engineering will also be invited. Students will gain training and experience by installing native plants in a friendly environment with Illinois Extension experts. I also have pioneered a docent program for the rain garden for which the proposed interpretive signage will enrich, providing education with accessibility in mind. Typically, we have more than 200 students attend tours annually but this project will also educate passersby about rain gardens and their multitude of ecoservices. Further, it benefits the greater student body by enhancing RORG, which is a place of well-being and restoration.

37. **Please Complete the Attached Budget File:**
Please Be Very Descriptive When Filling Out the Budget and Timeline Excel Sheet. Then Submit It Below.

https://studentengagement.illinois.edu/student-sustainability/ssc/docs/SSC-Supplemental-Budget-Timeline.xlsx

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SSC-Supplemental-Budget-Timeline_Madelyn Craft.xlsx