STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Micro Grant Application (Under $750)

Funding Criteria

A. General Rules

1. Undergraduate and graduate students are encouraged to submit requests for funding up to $750. All projects require stakeholder support in order to have funds awarded.
2. Funding can only go to university-affiliated projects on university property submitted from students.
3. All SSC projects must make a substantial impact on students. This may be a direct impact or an indirect impact through education and engagement. All SSC funding is 100% from student green fees, so the projects funded by the students must benefit them.
4. SSC encourages innovation and new technologies – creative projects are encouraged to apply.
5. Unless a type of expense is specifically listed below as having restrictions, SSC can generally fund it. The items referenced below should not be taken as comprehensive.
6. SSC generally won't fund reimbursement requests.

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 outreach events with a central theme of sustainability, provided their primary audience is the general campus community.
3. SSC can fund repairs and improvements to existing building systems as long as it works toward the goal of improving campus sustainability; however, a preference is shown to projects utilizing new or innovative ideas.

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 tuition or other forms of personal financial assistance for students beyond standard student employee wages.
4. SSC will not fund micro grant proposals that solely request staff, faculty, or student stipends.
5. SSC will not fund capital projects using micro grant funding.
6. SSC will not fund staff or faculty projects using micro grant funding.

Your SSC funding application should include this application and a detailed itemized budget.

Please submit this completed application and any relevant supporting documentation 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 Student Sustainability Committee at sustainability-committee@illinois.edu.

General Information

Project Name: *Restoration of Florida Orchard Prairie and South Arboretum Woods*
Total Amount Requested from SSC (≤ $750): *$750.00*

Project Topic Areas: ☒ Land & Water ☐ Education ☐ Energy
☐ Transportation ☐ Food & Waste

Contact Information

Applicant Name: *Omar Kazi (Treasurer)*
Campus Affiliation (Unit/Department or RSO/Organization): *Red Bison Ecological Restoration*
Email Address: *omarak2@illinois.edu*

Check one:
___ This project is solely my own ***OR***
_X_ This project is proposed on behalf of (name of student org., campus dept., etc.): *Red Bison Ecological Restoration (RSO)*

(Optional)
Name of Faculty or Staff Project Advisor: *N/A*
Advisor's Email Address: *N/A*
Advisor's Phone Number: *N/A*

Project Information

Please review the proposal materials and online content carefully. It is highly recommended you visit a working group meeting to talk through your proposal before you submit it.

1) Provide a brief background of the project, its goals, and the desired outcomes.

The South Arboretum Woods and the Florida Orchard Prairie are two locations on U of I's campus in dire need of restoration work. Ecological restoration will reduce the dominance of invasive species in these ecosystems, so that populations of native species will stabilize, and overall biodiversity will increase. Red Bison has been working in these areas for over five years, applying principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) to tackle common invasive species such as honeysuckle, buckthorn, garlic mustard, and others. The organization has also worked on planting native species in these areas as well.

Loppers are an absolute necessity for the removal of invasive plants, as they can quickly cut down plants or shrubs with small to medium sized stems. Red Bison employs the traditional cut-stump method, cutting a plant as close to the ground as possible first, following up with application of herbicide such as Gly Star or Triclopyr. This method has proven to be extremely effective for the control of several invasive species.

The ultimate goal is to restore these ecosystems to the way they were prior to the disturbance caused by invasive species. This will allow more native species to thrive, while also creating more habitat for niche animal and insect species in the ecosystem. Along with increasing the aesthetic beauty of these areas, these restoration efforts allow the student community at the U of I to learn about the principles of ecology while gaining hands-on experience in the field, while also gaining a sense of environmental awareness and responsibility.

While Red Bison is continuing to work on these areas, the organization would benefit from funding to purchase new permanent equipment. This funding would highly increase the efficiency of field work, while also allowing a greater number of members to gain experience and make a positive impact.

2) How will this project improve sustainability at UIUC?

This project will work towards establishing more biodiverse ecosystems across the campus at the U of I. By the removal of harmful invasive species and the support of native plant growth, our efforts can alleviate some of the damage caused by human activities on our natural areas. These steps can create better habitat for struggling or endangered populations of native species. These efforts will also work towards a greener campus via the carbon sequestration which will increase as more native plant populations can reestablish themselves in these natural areas.

3) Where will the project be located? Do you need special permissions to enact the project at this site? If so, please explain and attach a letter of support to your application.

The projects will be located at the Florida Orchard Prairie and the South Arboretum Woods. No special permissions are needed.

4) Other than the project team, who will have a stake in the project? Please list other individuals, groups, or departments indirectly or directly affiliated to this project. This includes any funding entities (immediate, future, ongoing, etc.) and any entities that will be benefiting from this project

N/A.

5) How will you ensure the sustained existence/maintenance of this project (including reporting requirements) once you are no longer involved? If the project will conclude while you are involved, what will happen to the materials purchased for the project and how will you return the project site to its original condition?

The tools and permanent equipment which Red Bison uses are stored in a shed at the South Arboretum Woods. The restoration projects on campus are long-term efforts, which I hope will continue far beyond my time on campus. By engaging with members during workdays and teaching them the techniques and strategies necessary to make environmentally sound decisions, leadership roles in these efforts will be passed along seamlessly in between academic years.

6) Please indicate how this project will involve or impact students. What role will students play in the project?

Students are the driving force in progressing the quality of the ecosystems on campus through their volunteered time and efforts. Red Bison meets every weekend (weather permitting), with most weekends focused on the restoration of the South Arboretum Woods or the Florida Orchard Prairie. At the beginning of each semester, student members can gain herbicide certification by attending a training session for free. This will allow students to use herbicides such as glyphosate and triclopyr to control invasive plants which have been cut down. Students will also gain experience in identifying native and invasive woodland and prairie plants, and how to use common field tools to manage invasive species (e.g. loppers, hand pruners, etc.).

The outcomes of this project will benefit students as well, as the entire campus community can enjoy healthier prairie and woodland ecosystems to explore and study, and students will be able to see their hard work come to fruition. Students will also gain knowledge about restoration ecology and can find a diverse community of students from across campus who share a passion for environmental sustainability.

7) Have you applied for funding with SSC previously? If so, for what project?

Red Bison applied for funding from SSC several years ago for restoration work in the South Arboretum Woods.

Scope, Schedule, and Budget Verification

What is the plan for project implementation? Describe the key steps of the project including the start date, target completion date, target date for submitting a final report, and any significant tasks or milestones. Please be as detailed as possible.

By the end of Spring 2019, Red Bison would like to have reduced honeysuckle down to 5% cover at the South Arboretum Woods. This project would begin on January 20, 2019 (weather permitting) and continue until May 5, 2019. This is a project which has been worked on previously but would require funding to progress the efforts through the purchase of new permanent equipment. A report will be submitted following the end of the Spring 2019 semester by May 17, 2019.

List all budget items for which funding is being requested. Include cost and total amount for each item requested. Please be as detailed as possible. You are welcome to submit a separate budgeting document.

See attached budget document.

If the project is implemented, will there be any ongoing funding required? What is the strategy for supporting the project in order to cover replacement, operation, or renewal costs? (Note: SSC provides funding on a case by case basis and should not be considered as an ongoing source of funding)

The permanent equipment purchased should last for approximately five years and will not require immediate replacement. Herbicide stocks also have long shelf lives (lasting several years) but must be replaced when stocks run out or expire. Gloves must be replaced once the supply has run out.

Please include any other sources of funding that have been obtained or applied for, and please attach any relevant letters of support.

Funding has been applied for from SORF.

What is the plan for publicizing the project on campus? In addition to SSC, where will information about this project get reported?

This project will be publicized through the Red Bison Ecological Restoration Facebook page, where updates following weekly workdays are posted. Red Bison also takes advantage of other relevant opportunities on campus (e.g. ACES Fall Festival, Environmental Quad Day, etc.) to spread information about this project and opportunities for more students to get involved. Information about this project will also be reported to the University YMCA, as Red Bison is a student organization of the YMCA.