

View results

Respondent

5

Fisher Houston

221:37

Time to complete

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

1

**Please read and acknowledge the following:**

- SSC funding can take **\*\*1 MONTH OR LONGER\*\*** to receive after the SSC has voted to approve a project because it includes several steps:
  - the authorization of an award letter by SSC, iSEE, Division of Student Affairs, the project's advisor (*student-led projects only*), and the project lead;
  - the creation of the CFOP by the project team's departmental financial contact in conjunction with the project team;
  - the transfer of funds from SSC to the project's CFOP.
- If you are a project lead for a new project that is approved by the SSC, be sure to check your email regularly for the prompt to sign the award letter to help facilitate the efficiency of the process.
- Project teams for funded SSC projects do NOT receive funds directly. After a project's SSC funds have been transferred to the project's CFOP, the project team must work with the sponsoring department to purchase the approved budgeted items on behalf of the project team.
- If this project is funded, this application will be shared publicly on our SSC Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) portal so that others can learn from your project.
- Funded projects have grant reporting requirements. See our website for more information.

\*

☐ I acknowledge that I have read this information.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

**Prior to starting your application, make sure you have the following information available:**

- Project personnel including project lead, confirmed faculty/staff advisor, departmental financial contact, other team members
- Working Group attendance information
- Project title and abstract
- Project description including timelines, deliverables, detailed description about the project, project feasibility information
- Intended student impact(s)
- Intended sustainability impacts
- Optional supporting documentation (e.g., Working Group presentation, letters of support)
- Detailed project budget information

See our website for a sample application.

2

Today's Date

10/5/2025



3

Is the Project Lead a currently enrolled Illinois student? \*

**NOTE: Only currently enrolled Illinois students are eligible to be a Project Lead.**

☒ YES (by selecting YES, you affirm that the Project Lead is a currently enrolled Illinois student)

☐ NO

4

Project Lead's Name \*

**Project Lead must be a currently enrolled Illinois student.**

Robert Fisher Houston

5

Project Lead's University Email Address \*

rfh6@illinois.edu

6

Project Lead's Department \*

School of Integrative Biology

7

Has someone from the project team presented their proposed project at a SSC Working Group meeting this semester? \*

**If not, please attend one and present your project. After presenting your proposed project (and attendance has been documented by the SSC), please return here to complete your application. The Working Group meeting schedule can be found on the SSC website.**

☒ YES

☐ NO

8

Select the Working Group meeting at which you presented. \*

☐ Energy + Transportation & Infrastructure Working Group Meeting

☒ Food & Waste + Land, Air, & Water Working Group Meeting

☐ Education & Justice Working Group Meeting

9

Enter the date of the Working Group meeting you attended. \*

9/10/2025



10

What is the name of your project? \*

UIUC Student Pollinator Garden

11

Total funding requested from the SSC for this project \*

**This application is restricted to students requesting \$10,000 or less. The amount entered here must match the amount reflected in your detailed primary budget spreadsheet that you will submit with this application.**

9988.53

Please enter a number less than or equal to 10000

## Project Category \*

- ☐ Education & Justice
- ☐ Energy
- ☐ Food & Waste
- ☒ Land, Air & Water
- ☐ Transportation & Infrastructure

## Project Abstract \*

**In 100 words or less, briefly describe the project.**

The UIUC Beekeeping Club's Pollinator Garden will provide sanctuary and support for both natural and campus communities. By filling this greenspace with native Illinois Plants, we will provide endangered and declining native pollinators with essential food and habitat on campus. While uplifting our local pollinators, the space will raise awareness about the importance of native species, giving students hands-on and close-up opportunities to see endemic ecosystems in action. The natural beauty and harmony of native Illinois species has the power to enlighten and inspire ideas among students, who will draw from their university experiences when building a sustainable future.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Describe your project in detail. Make sure you include sufficient details about your project so that the SSC can comprehensively evaluate the merits and feasibility of your project. \*

**Be sure to address the following:**

- What are your project's goals and how do you intend to accomplish them?**
- What are your project's deliverables?**

Ongoing cultivation and development of the UIUC Student Pollinator garden aims to provide a sanctuary for students and pollinators alike to share and benefit from nature. Long neglected, this campus space has come under control of the UIUC Beekeeping Club to direct its future growth, with a recent MOU agreed upon by F&S, Ground, and the club to re-establish this greenspace. Its location on Clark Street, right across from the CIE and engineering quad will allow for close connection and exposure to the campus community. We plan to add accessible infrastructure such as seating and paths, while cultivating a native habitat to deliver a quality space for natural and human communities.

The UIUC Beekeeping club plans to build a space that not only supports pollinators and other wildlife, but provides a peaceful outdoor environment facilitative of learning and appreciation. We envision RSOs using picnic tables to hold outdoor meetings, community members strolling flower lined paths, and students studying on benches. We hope to plant a variety of native plants that will support local wildlife, creating the largest island of pollinator habitat in the downtown area. Native plant populations are intended to provide a foundation for an ecosystem of native Illinois wildlife, supporting endangered and declining species such as the Rusty-Patched Bumblebee. Blending our community and environmental initiatives together will be mutually supportive: supporting pollinators through heightened environmental awareness, and using nature to enhance community experiences. It is the belief of the UIUC Beekeeping club that nature is a community that we are a part of. Land is something to be used in a way that benefits all members of the natural community that live there. The UIUC Student Pollinator Garden will support and enrich all of our local community, bringing our world closer together. Our project looks to provide a green space in the heart of campus that uses quality native plant propagation to build a garden that supports native pollinators through an open environmental dialogue between natural and human communities.

List your proposed project's timeline and major milestones. \*

**NOTE: SSC funding agreements remain active for two years. Thus, your timeline should reflect your activities over a two year period or less.**

Should the UIUC Beekeeping Club receive funding to support development of the UIUC Student Pollinator Garden, we intend to immediately begin work on the site. First, we plan to order seeds, plants, gardening and maintenance equipment, and materials to establish infrastructure such as paths and seating. As materials arrive, we plan to install them within the garden quickly, so they can begin benefiting the community. As soon as gardening hardware is made available, we plan to begin weeding and preparations for planting immediately. We plan to plant hardy cold-tolerant plants and seeds throughout fall and winter, while propagating young plants that might be temperature sensitive indoors. As spring arrives, we plan to ramp up planting through the fall. As the project continues work days will be hosted each week, where members of the campus community are invited to help move the project forward. Some initiatives may be delayed by inclement weather, or require approvals and collaboration determined by Facilities and Services availability.

We expect that within six weeks of funding, we can place orders for all materials, and begin installation of pathing and seating infrastructure. Within eight weeks or by the end of the spring, we plan to have plants in the ground and a regular workday schedule established. Maintenance of the project and continued volunteer-based development will continue with regular "Pollinator Garden Workdays" into the fall, with the majority of activity occurring during the school year, while some core members remain on campus to maintain the project over the summer. At this point, we hope to invite RSOs to host events, advertise the newly developed space as an educational resource for NRES and IB instructors, and continue planting, weeding, or moving plants as necessary. Continually, we will reassess successes and needs of the project. While gaining understanding of how the space is used by students and wildlife alike during its development, we will continue to adjust our goals to ensure our plants are finely tailored to native bees, and our vibe in sync with studious Illini. While our initial base of plants will thrive on their own in their native environment, growth, maintenance, and development will continue for years to come, powered by student-led efforts that will build future leaders in sustainability.

Has the project team spoken with UIUC's Division of Facilities and Services (F&S) personnel about the feasibility of the proposed project? \*

**NOTE: While this step is optional for many projects, all projects involving infrastructure (e.g., internal or external physical infrastructure of university buildings) or grounds (e.g., plantings, installing structures on campus grounds) must have F&S approval prior to receiving SSC funding. If you need assistance evaluating the feasibility of your proposed project, please reach out to [SSC-Advisor@illinois.edu](mailto:SSC-Advisor@illinois.edu) PRIOR to submitting your application.**

- ☒ YES
- ☐ NOT YET
- ☐ N/A

With whom in the Facilities & Services department did you speak and when did you speak with them? \*

We have a continuous dialogue with Bridgette Moen, the UIUC Landscape Architect. We met in person for a garden walkthrough on 9/12, and have continued regular contact since, with emails as recent as 10/3/25.

## STUDENT IMPACTS

How many students will be directly impacted by this project? \*

We expect around 100 unique student volunteers, and 50 beekeeping club members to be directly impacted by this project. Beyond this, we expect around 500 students to actively use the space for educational or community building purposes while the project is in progress.

How many students will be indirectly impacted by this project? \*

Over the lifetime of the project, we expect thousands of students to be indirectly impacted by the project, as it will provide an open green space for the entire campus community. With interest already expressed from student groups, instructors, and campus stakeholders, we expect that many RSOs will use the space for outdoor meetings, that classes use this as an instructional tool and that students will use it as a place to study outside, due to its proximity to vital education sites such as the CIF, Grainger Library, and other quad-side buildings. We can expect thousands of members of the campus community to indirectly benefit from seeing the beautiful blooms, wildlife, and greenery of this garden as they walk by on Clark, enjoy the garden, or participate in activities.

What are the intended student impacts? \*

**At the minimum, be sure to address the following:**

- How will this project benefit students?**
- How will students be involved with this project?**
- What educational components are there in this project?**

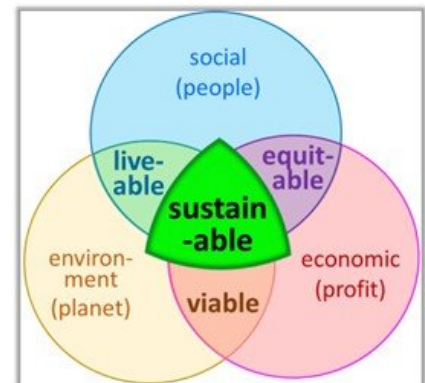
The UIUC Student Pollinator Garden will impact students by providing a quality green space near campus for students to utilize, simultaneously improving wellness and increasing environmental awareness and education. Having a green community space will provide an outlet for students to engage with, and relax in nature. Through volunteering and community events at the garden, collaboration with others will provide opportunities to relax, while getting involved with the local community, performing fulfilling service, and gaining leadership and collaborative work experience. All students will be welcome to join us for our work days maintaining plant health and composition, utilizing compost piles, and other activities, with the opportunity to decide their own level of direct involvement. All students will have the opportunity to get their hands dirty building something beautiful for our community.

By providing a green space in nature for students to enjoy, it connects students to nature and generates awareness of our role as members of the natural community. Simply spending more time in nature is an education in itself: providing opportunities to observe both the beauty and detriment of our natural world. Signage will provide an educational component for students, offering information on the garden, its intentions, and importance. Adding plant identification tags with information on how they support the local ecosystem can share the value of native species. Beekeeping club will continue to host club meetings focused on discussion of the garden, and its value in supporting sustainability on campus. Through enhanced exposure to nature in its native state, and educational postings, the garden will enhance student awareness and knowledge about key sustainability issues and contexts.

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPACTS

Authentic sustainability consists of the overlapping area of 3 spheres: Environment, Society, and Economy.

Describe how your project addresses sustainability. \*



Insect populations around the world have witnessed sharp declines in recent years, and unfortunately, pollinators have not been left out of this global disaster. 16% of vertebrate pollinators and 40% of insect pollinators are currently endangered. There are many factors contributing to this decline, but one area of study is the impact industrial agriculture has on the biodiversity of the area. In Illinois, 27 million acres are currently used as farmland: roughly 75% of total land in Illinois. With most of this land being solely maize or soybean crops, there is little biodiversity in these areas, threatening local ecosystems. Our garden would be an island of habitat, working to support biodiversity and native Illinois species. Beyond the initial impact of directly supporting the native ecosystem, it would serve as a space to grow awareness and educate the community on the value and importance of biodiversity and sustainability in Illinois.

Our pollinator garden here on campus will be a haven for pollinators and other wildlife right on campus, and in the heart of Urbana-Champaign. Simultaneously, the garden will serve as a nexus for student involvement, volunteering and learning. There are many University of Illinois students that are passionate about promoting sustainability, and this garden will provide another educational opportunity to experience hands-on work to protect our pollinators, while also building community among sustainability-minded students. Additionally, as the garden develops, we plan to add picnic benches to the space so RSOs, classes, or other student groups can host social events to bring the community together in the garden. The garden would also be open to students taking breaks between classes, meeting their friends for lunch, or getting fresh air while studying outside.

The garden will grow as a space to foster Champaign-Urbana connections, socialization, and community across different campus groups. As it builds a stronger, prettier, and more environmental campus and town, it will attract and support business and economic activity in the area. Supporting these initiatives and growing awareness is key to building a sustainable society and avoiding unsustainable dangers facing humanity today such as food-chain collapse, reduced crop yields due to pollinator decline, and climate change.

How does your project promote and increase environmental stewardship at UIUC? \*

**If applicable, also address what the carbon, water, waste, and/or energy savings is associated with your project.**

The UIUC Student Pollinator Garden is a collective effort of environmental stewardship at the University of Illinois. Restoring a native environment takes the highest level of appreciation and care for native ecosystems, demanding careful planning and understanding of the local environment. Hands-on, student-led efforts to restore this garden will directly provide opportunities for students to not just learn about environmental stewardship, but directly practice it themselves. These experiences help develop stewards, allowing them to share experiences and knowledge in future endeavors.

Native Illinois prairie plants grow exceptionally deep and complex root systems, allowing them to sequester significant amounts of carbon in the soil. Unlike wood from trees, this carbon is absorbed into the soil, rather than decomposed back into the air, making prairie ecosystems globally exceptional carbon sinks. Prairie plants' deep root systems also allow them to directly tap the aquifer, reducing or eliminating the need for landscaping water use, especially when compared to grass or non-native cultivars. Restoration and use of compost bins already in place at the site will encourage diversion of garden waste from landfills, and will simultaneously teach members about the importance of home composting. Utilization and cultivation of these sustainable gardening practices, will offer through practice for budding environmental stewards here at UIUC, giving them the confidence and skills to continue these practices after they leave Illinois, empowering them to inspire others to become environmental stewards too.

Does your project aim to advance one or more of the Illinois Climate Action Plan's (iCAP) objectives? If so, indicate which and describe how. If not, enter N/A. \*

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

The UIUC Student Pollinator Garden advances several of the Illinois Climate Action Plan's objectives. These include goals under objective 4.2: Implement Resilient Landscape Strategy, objective 4.2.1: Increase Number of Trees, 4.2.2: Increase Pollinator-Friendly Areas, objective:5.2: Reduce Landfilled Waste, and objective 6.1: Broaden Sustainability Education.

## FACULTY/STAFF ADVISOR

**All student-led projects require a Faculty/Staff Advisor. NOTE: Project teams must obtain confirmation from faculty/staff PRIOR to listing them as an advisor.**

24

Faculty/Staff Advisor's Full Name \*

Pamela Leiter

25

Faculty/Staff Advisor's Department \*

Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences

26

Faculty/Staff Advisor's University Email Address \*

leiter@illinois.edu

## PROJECT'S FINANCIAL CONTACT

**The project's Financial Contact must be a full-time Illinois employee who has the authority to request a CFOP, manage the project's expenditures, and generate financial reports on behalf of the project.**

27

Financial Contact's Full Name \*

Lori Torigian Rogers

28

Financial Contact's Department \*

Campus Honors Program

29

Financial Contact's University Email Address \*

rogers4@illinois.edu



30

Are there additional members of your project team? \*

☒ YES

☐ NO

## ADDITIONAL TEAM MEMBER

31

Team Member's Full Name \*

Josh O'Dell

32

Team Member's Campus Department \*

Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences

33

Team Member's University Email Address \*

jodell3@illinois.edu

34

Are there additional members of your project team? \*

☒ YES

☐ NO

## ADDITIONAL TEAM MEMBER

35

Team Member's Full Name: \*

Dhenu Patel

Team Member's Campus Department: \*

Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences

Team Member's University Email Address: \*

dpate442@illinois.edu

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

OPTIONAL: Please attach any letters of commitment or support here, along with any supplemental media that will support your application (Working Group presentations, photos, etc.).

 [Support letter Fisher Houston.pdf](#)

 [Pollinator Garden Funding Fisher Houston.pdf](#)

## PROJECT FINANCES

Describe how SSC funds will be used in your project.

**NOTE: Only address the use of SSC funds, specifically, even if the project will be funded by multiple sources.**

Funds from the Student Sustainability Committee will be used to cultivate a student-led pollinator garden in the heart of campus, utilizing native non-cultivar plants that build the foundation to support our local ecosystems. Funds will be directly spent on long-lasting wooden and metal tools to remove any reliance on plastic and ensure purchases can be reused for generations of stewards to come. Funds will also be used to purchase educational signage and improve garden infrastructure to allow for greater student interaction. Awarded finances will also be used to purchase a variety of native non cultivar plants from local nurseries, The Illinois Extension Plant Sale, or resources such as the Champaign-Urbana Park District. While it is difficult to predict which exact plants will be available when funds are awarded, we are confident in selecting native species that will not only thrive in the garden, but will best support pollinators and avoid disturbing native plant populations with introduced or human-influenced genetic material. Funds have also been set aside for the removal and replacement of two hazardous and invasive tree species based on quotes and requirements from F&S.

40

If additional funding is required to achieve your project's goals, do you have a plan in place to obtain additional funding from other sources? \*

**NOTE: SSC cannot guarantee financial support beyond that provided in an approved funding agreement.**

- ☒ YES
- ☐ NOT YET
- ☐ N/A

41

Has your project team or department previously been awarded funding from the SSC for the same or a similar project? \*

- ☐ YES
- ☒ NO

42

What is the total amount of SSC funding received to date for the same or similar projects by the project team/department submitting this project? \*

N/A

43

Download, complete, and submit the **SSC-Budget-Timeline\_NEW APPLICATION\_template** file linked below.

<https://studentengagement.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/2024-09/SSC-Budget-Timeline-NEW-APPLICATION-template.xlsx>

\*

**Please be very detailed so that the SSC can fully evaluate the merit of your funding request. Your proposed budget should total the amount you are requesting and should correlate well with the the description of how you will spend SSC funds on your project on this application. The budget template allows you to also submit alternative budgets in addition to your main budget.**

 [SSC-Budget-Timeline-NEW-APPLICATION-UIUCSPG\\_Fisher Houston.xlsx](#)