

View results

Respondent

8

Denver Merz

11:47

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.
- 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 (**student-led projects only**), 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 impacts
- Intended sustainability impacts
- Optional supporting documentation (e.g., Working Group presentation, letters of support)
- Detailed project budget information
- Information about changes to the Step 2 application submitted compared to the Step 1 application submitted

See our website for a sample application:

<https://studentengagement.illinois.edu/studentsustainability/illinoisgreenfund/funding>

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Today's Date *

11/5/2025



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Please tell us how you heard about the availability of SSC's funding for your sustainability project. *

- ☐ I Have Received SSC Funding Previously.
- ☐ Instagram
- ☒ MassMail
- ☐ SSC's Newsletter
- ☐ Departmental Newsletter
- ☐ Digital Signage
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☒ SSC Website
- ☐ SSC Board Member or Other Member of the Committee
- ☐ Other Project Teams that Received Funding
- ☒ Illinois Faculty or Staff
- ☐ At a Tabling Event
- ☒ General Word of Mouth
- ☒ Was general member in 2022-2023

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A follow up project presentation at a SSC Working Group meeting is *occasionally* requested of a project team prior to submitting their Step 2 application. Did someone from the project team present updates to their originally proposed Step 1 project at a SSC Working Group meeting this semester?

*

☐ YES

☒ NO

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Select the Working Group meeting you attended. *

☒ Energy + Transportation & Infrastructure Working Group Meeting

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

☐ Education & Justice Working Group Meeting

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Date of the Working Group meeting you attended. *

9/15/2025



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What is the name of your project? *

Illini Union Food Court Lighting Upgrade

8

Amount of funding requested from the SSC for this project *

The amount entered here must match the amount reflected in your detailed primary budget spreadsheet that you will be prompted to submit with this application.

\$231,818.40

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Category *

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

Project Abstract *

In approximately 100 words, describe your project.

The Illini Union Food Court Lighting Upgrade seeks to improve energy efficiency of lighting fixtures in a high traffic, high visibility campus space. The Illini Union is a campus institution with thousands of visitors throughout the building each day. The basement space serves as an ideal dining, studying, gathering, and relaxation space for countless students and faculty. Students and faculty that gather here would be greatly benefitted by higher efficiency LED lighting systems that would save students money overall and create a more dynamic and friendly environment.

What key changes are reflected in your Step 2 application compared to your Step 1 application, if any, and why? *

In this step of the application we provided 2 additional alternative project budgets. The alternative budgets that we have proposed split the project up by north and south rooms. We hope that this will provide you with more options when evaluating our project and determining fund allocation.

Describe your proposed project in detail. Ensure the SSC has sufficient details to be able to evaluate the merits and feasibility of this 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?**

The Illini Union as part of their several stage process to upgrade and improve the basement intends to replace the outdated low efficiency lighting system with modern systems. This upgrade will include the removal of existing fixtures, re-piping of new fixtures, furnishing 194 high efficiency LED fixtures, wiring, new switches and power packs, facilities laborers to complete work, roll off dumpsters, recycling bulbs and ballasts, rebuilding select ceiling areas as needed, new ceiling tiles as needed, and coordination of construction services. The LED system that is being installed will include a smart monitoring system that allows the union to control and collect data on energy usage for each individual light bulb being installed. This will allow us to demonstrate accurate metrics on energy savings compared to the previous lighting system. These new LED fixtures require far less maintenance and will save close to \$10,000 a year on repairs, replacement, and labor. This project has been led by the senior leadership of the Union as well as two cohorts of Interns that have engaged with the student population at the union to gather survey data on what students would like to see implemented in the basement space. This lighting upgrade also allows the union to create lighting schedules that maximize energy savings based on estimated traffic and usage of union spaces.

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.

The project timeline for the entire basement renovation started in April of 2024 and will continue until completion before June 30th 2026. The lighting upgrade phase of the project will be progressing soon as we are now at the final planning stage. Upon receiving funds we will begin demo of existing lighting systems in order to install the new lights with an estimated completion of January 26th. Based on wait times related to receiving funds we may shift our timeline slightly.

Have you spoken with anyone in UIUC's Facilities & Services (F&S) department regarding the feasibility of your project? *

NOTE: While this step is optional for many projects, all projects involving infrastructure (e.g., internal or external physical infrastructure of university buildings, etc.) or grounds (e.g., plantings, installing structures on campus grounds, etc.) 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 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? *

Wade Franklin | Assistant Director of Facilities | Illini Union --- Joe Logan | Construction Project Coordinator | Facilities and Services --- Eva Sweeney | Engineer | Facilities and Services --- Marijke McQueen | Xtra Help | Facilities and Services --- Brad Kelm | Electric Subforman | F&S

STUDENT IMPACTS

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

Thousands of students from every corner of the university every day.

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

The total amount saved is around \$9,000. This is money that is derived directly from student purchases at the Illini Union Bookstore, Quad Shop, TechZone, ID Center, Doc services, IUB Digital Store, etc. This money is intended to benefit students as much as is feasible. Investing in a project that will allow less money to go towards maintenance, and even less to go towards energy, means more money going back to student organizations campus projects.

What is the intended student impact? *

Be sure to address the following:

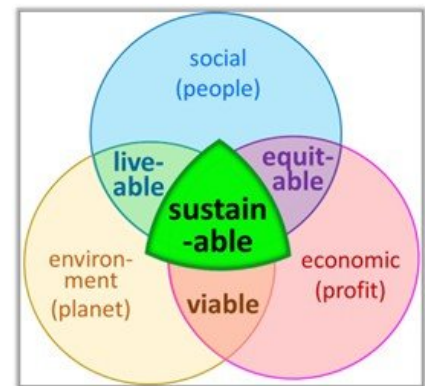
- How will this project benefit students?**
- How will students be involved with this project?**
- What educational components are in your project?**

This project will benefit students by providing higher quality lighting while saving money on repairs, labor, replacement, and energy costs. This is in the best interests of the Union and students as the Illini Union serves as an institution dedicated to supporting and uplifting students in their academic and professional journeys. This is at its core a student centric project that has consulted the student population at several points for their input on what they want to see done at the Union. This project is also worked on and supported by the Illini Union Director's Office Interns that have invested their time into making this project a reality. Upon installation of the LED lighting fixtures, the Illini Union will be able to monitor and observe energy usage down to each individual light bulb. Utilizing this data allows a more comprehensive understanding of where the energy coming into the building ends up. Strategizing more efficient lighting schedules and adjusting wattage will be an important part of future work here at the Union.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACTS

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

Describe how your project addresses sustainability. *



Replacing old fixtures with LED or other high-efficiency lighting dramatically reduces electricity consumption, lowering greenhouse gas emissions tied to campus energy use. This directly supports UIUC's iCAP goals by decreasing Scope 2 emissions from purchased electricity. Proper disposal and recycling of old fixtures prevent hazardous materials like mercury from entering landfills. Furthermore, modern fixtures last longer, reducing material turnover and resource extraction over time.

Improved lighting enhances visibility, safety, and comfort in shared spaces. Upgrading underlit, or inefficiently lit spaces, promotes inclusivity and equitable access to safe functional environments. The wide range of social and environmental impacts concentrated in a high visibility campus space allows the project to serve as a living lab, engaging students with sustainability in a well-known common space.

Lower energy bills and reduced maintenance costs free up funds for other campus initiatives. This upgrade is without a doubt fiscally responsible as the overall savings in energy, materials, and labor will mean the project will eventually pay for itself.

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.

LEDs consume up to 75% less energy than traditional fluorescent fixtures. In a highly trafficked area like the Union basement this translates to dramatic reductions in energy usage, carbon emissions, and electricity demand. By lowering overall emissions, we directly contribute to UIUC's iCAP by targeting Scope 2 and taking one step closer to carbon neutrality. Less frequent disposal of environmentally hazardous lighting materials will also reduce landfill waste that the University contributes to. By pairing this project with energy monitoring systems, this project creates opportunities for educational signage, student engagement, and promotes important conversations that could lead to similar projects being pursued elsewhere in the future.

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>

2.2 Improve Energy Efficiency:

LEDs installed will consume 75% less energy while providing higher quality light.

2.2.1 Improve Space Utilization:

A separate aspect of this project already underway includes the overall renovation of the basement space. This project includes redesigning the entire space and bringing in new furniture that promotes better wayfinding and free use. Allowing for more variety in activities to take place at the Union. We also have added recycling/trash receptacles to the space where only trash receptacles were used previously.

2.2.2 Reduce Building Level Energy:

LEDs installed will consume 75% less energy. This will have an overall reducing effect on building energy usage.

PROJECT LEAD

Project Lead's Full Name *

Tod Petrie

Project Lead's Department *

Illini Union | Sr Associate Director of Retail Operations

Project Lead's University Email Address *

tpetrie@illinois.edu

The Project Lead must be a UIUC faculty, staff, or currently enrolled student. Which category describes the Project Lead's primary role at the university? *

- ☐ Currently enrolled UIUC student
- ☐ UIUC faculty
- ☒ UIUC staff

PROJECT'S FINANCIAL CONTACT

The project's Financial Contact must be a full-time Illinois employee who has the authority to make university purchases, manage the project's financials, and generate financial reports on behalf of the project.

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Financial Contact's Full Name *

Julie Jervis

27

Financial Contact's Department *

Illini Union | Accounting Office

28

Financial Contact's University Email Address *

jjervis1@illinois.edu

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Are there additional members of your project team? *

☒ YES

☐ NO

ADDITIONAL TEAM MEMBER

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Team Member's Full Name:

Becki Salzman

31

Team Member's Department/Campus Affiliation:

Illini Union | Executive Director

32

Team Member's University Email Address:

rsalzman@illinois.edu

33

Do you have additional team members? *

☒ YES

☐ NO

ADDITIONAL TEAM MEMBER

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Team Member's Full Name *

Christina Uhall

35

Team Member's Department/Campus Affiliation *

Illini Union | Assistant Director of Strategy and Projects

36

Team Member's University Email Address *

cptomlin@illinois.edu

37

Do you have additional team members? *

☒ YES

☐ NO

ADDITIONAL TEAM MEMBER

38

Team Member's Full Name: *

Clint Cissell

39

Team Member's Department/Campus Affiliation: *

Illini Union | Assistant Director of Food and Beverage Operations

40

Team Member's University Email Address: *


ccissell@illinois.edu

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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

 [2025 BDG-0023 FoodCourtLighting_IFP-REV12_Denver Merz.pdf](#)

 [Christina Uhall Letter of Support_Denver Merz.pdf](#)

 [Extended Faculty Involvement Sheet_Denver Merz.docx](#)

 [F&S Lighting_Proposal Purchase Order_Denver Merz.docx](#)

 [Illini Union Food Court Lighting Upgrade Brea_Denver Merz.pdf](#)

 [Lighting Systems Manufacturers Quote_Denver Merz.pdf](#)

 [Lighting Upgrade Fixtures Comprehensive Catal_Denver Merz.pdf](#)

PROJECT FINANCES

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Describe in detail 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.

This project will require funds for the demolition and recycling of existing fixtures, replacement LED fixtures, Roll of dumpsters, F&S construction fees, and installation of smart LED monitoring systems.

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If you receive SSC funding, will your project require additional sources of funding to achieve your project's overall goals? *

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

☐ YES

☒ NO

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

☐ YES


☒ NO

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Download, complete, and submit the **SSC-Budget-Timeline_NEW APPLICATION_template** file linked below. Please be very detailed so that the SSC can fully evaluate the merits of your funding request. **We STRONGLY recommend providing alternate budgets in addition to your main budget in case SSC cannot fully fund your project. There are alternate budget tabs in the template.**

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

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 [SSC-Budget-Timeline-PHASE 2 Denver Merz.xlsx](#)