**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:**  Foundations for Cultivating Indigenous Gardens within the Southern Arboretum Woodlands [SAW]

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** $149,320

**Primary Project Leader Name & Email:**  Kevin McSweeney – mcsween@illinois.edu

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| **Project Abstract:** In less than 100 words, briefly describe your project. |
| The project is a collaboration among Tribal and UIUC collaborators to establish forest gardens within the Southern Arboretum Woodlands. Activities will focus on establishing a shared vision and written plan among the collaborators, followed by site preparation, and then planting assemblages of selected native plants. The plant assemblages will include exemplars of those traditionally used by indigenous people for food, fibre, fuel, construction, and medicinal purposes. Outreach/instructional/research activities will focus on illuminating sustainable land management practices and providing a service to tribal partners in the recovery, preservation, and production of Native Knowledges related to plants, language, and cultural practices. |

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|  | Education | Energy | Food & Waste | Land & Water | Transportation |
| Project Category |  |  |  | **X** |  |

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

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | RSO/Department | Email Address |
| Kevin McSweeney | NRES/Arboretum | mcsween@illinois.edu |
| Jacki Rand | Chancellor’s Office/American Indian Studies | jacki@illinois.edu |
| Michael Ward | NRES | mpward@illinois.edu |
| Jamie Ellis | Il. Natural History Survey/Natural Areas Coordinator | jellis@illinois.edu |
| Joel Armas | Red Bison | Joelsa2@illinois.edu |
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| Questions | Yes | No |
| Is this a student-led project? |  | x |
| If applicable, have you received approval from Facilities & Services and/or site manager? |  |  |
| Do you have a plan for ongoing funding beyond SSC? (SSC cannot guarantee ongoing financial support) | x |  |
| Beyond SSC, do you have sources contributing funding or support (ex. staff time, external grants, etc.) to this project? | x |  |
| Have you applied for SSC funding previously? | x |  |

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| **Project Timeline** |
| SSC funding agreements remain active for two years. Please list your project’s timeline and/or milestones. |
| Spring 2023- onwards: Dialogue with Tribal partners, Rand-coordinator  Spring 2023- onwards: Site management, invasive species suppression, McSweeney & Ellis coordinators  Fall/Winter 2023- Phase I Installation Plant Assemblages, McSweeney, Ward & Ellis coordinators  Spring/Fall 2024- Phase II Installation Plant Assemblages, McSweeney, Ward & Ellis coordinators  Spring/Summer 2025- Phase III Installation Plant Assemblages, McSweeney, Ward & Ellis coordinators  Spring/Fall 2024-2025 On-site Workshops & classes incorporating indigenous knowledge, Tribal partners, Rand, Ward, McSweeney, Ellis and others, coordinators. |
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| **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. |
| Restoration of the Southern Arboretum Woodlands (SAW) has benefitted from two previous SSC grants. The initial grant provided funding for removal of a dense understory of honeysuckle and other invasive species. The current grant has focused on selective harvesting of trees, some of which are being milled to produce various lumber grade products. Along the way, prairie patches and understory native shrubs are being established and work continues on suppression of invasive species. This project is designed to build upon the current state of the SAW restoration and introduce elements of indigenous gardens within the SAW. Tribal partners will provide advice and guidance through all phases of the project. Vice Chancellor Rand will serve as the liaison with Tribal partners. The plant assemblages will include exemplars of those traditionally used by indigenous people for food, fibre, fuel, construction, and medicinal purposes. The assemblages will be located to match soil hydrology which trends from moderately well- to poorly-drained from east to west across the site and shade tolerance as influenced by canopy light penetration, which is patchy. Education/Outreach/Research is an important element of the project and will showcase indigenous gardening as a model for sustainable land management. Providing a service to Tribal partners in the recovery, preservation, and production of Native Knowledges related to plants, language, and cultural practices is a central project goal. We are optimistic that this initiative will build bridges between campus and native communities and foster opportunities for other ventures that respect and learn from indigenous knowledge. |

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| **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. |
| Partial capture of carbon stored in the SAW via salvage and reuse of lumber for sustainable building projects. Reuse of other woody debris for mulch. Establishment of new plantings to enhance biomass and soil capture of carbon dioxide. Improved and diversified ecosystem services via new plantings creating multistoried canopy architecture with expectation of improved habitat for animal, plant, and microbial communities. Anticipated enhancement of ecosystem services includes improved landscape hydrology, soil structure and reduction in soil erosion; more diverse, seasonally varied, and abundant food sources (fruits and berries) and pollen sources (flowering trees and shrubs) for fauna; richer and more diverse substrates/habitats for microorganisms, insects and small mammals and reptiles. Aesthetic improvement of the project area through transformation of the SAW towards a deciduous woodland with savanna openings. We anticipate this will result in an attractive naturalistic landscape in contrast to the adjacent row crop fields. It is anticipated that through documentation of the transformation process, lessons will be learnt that will serve as guide and a stimulus for improving ecosystem services in similar degraded woodlands in other urban and suburban areas of east central Illinois. |

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| **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. |
| We plan to involve students in all phases and elements of the project. Red Bison has its storage shed and gathering space at the SAW. Red Bison have been a key partner with the Arboretum since work commenced at the SAW over 6 years ago and will continue to work with us on this project. Student hourlies will be hired to assist with all aspects of field work including - logging, planting, invasive species management, mulching and monitoring of project objectives. Interested students will have the opportunity to obtain certification in chain saw safety and pesticide application, which are valuable ‘resume-builders’ for students focused on natural resource management. Students will learn about indigenous knowledge through our collaboration with Tribal partners. The project will improve the utility of the SAW as an outdoor laboratory and provide a portal for illustrating application of indigenous knowledge and a deeper appreciation about Land Acknowledgement. The SAW has seen an increase in use for UIUC classes in soil science, wildlife ecology, dendrology, and plant ecology, as well as for K-12 Summer programs in the last several years. The annual NRES Freshman Field Day is hosted at the SAW. |