



STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Funding Application – Student-Led Projects (Under \$10K)

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. This may be a direct impact or an 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 list.

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 funding requests for food and prizes but will consider proposals on a case by case basis that prove significant reasoning.
5. 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.
6. SSC can provide departments with loans for projects with a distinct payback on a case by case base. 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 for students beyond standard student employee wages.

Your funding application should include this application and any letters of support.

Please submit this completed application and any relevant supporting documentation by the deadline listed on the SSC website 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 & Contact Information

Project Name: Project 4 Less

Total Amount Requested from SSC: \$5,017.00

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

Applicant Name: Tara Entezar

Campus Affiliation (Unit/Department or RSO/Organization): RSO: Project 4 Less

Email Address: projectforless@gmail.com

Check one:

- This project is solely my own **OR**
- This project is proposed on behalf of (name of student org., campus dept., etc.): Project 4 Less

Project Team Members

Name	Department	Email
Rachel Scott	President- Project 4 Less	Rescott2@illinois.edu
Cameron Kleen	President-Project 4 Less	Ckleen2@illinois.edu
Tara Entezar	Treasurer- Projec t 4 Less	Tentez2@illinois.edu
Melissa Manetsch	Head of Outreach- Project 4 Less	Mtm9@illinois.edu

Student-Led Projects (Mandatory):

Name of Faculty or Staff Project Advisor: Keith Garrett

Advisor’s Email Address: kgarrett@illinois.edu

Financial Contact (Must be a full-time University of Illinois staff member)

Contact Name: Keith Garrett

Unit/Department: Student Dining

Email Address: kgarrett@illinois.edu

Project Information

Please review the proposal materials and online content carefully. It is highly recommended you visit a working group meeting sometime during the proposal submission process.

Please provide a brief background of the project, its goals, and the desired outcomes:

We want to know: What is your project? What does it concretely produce, accomplish, or solve? Why is this project needed on campus?

The concept of Project 4 Less arose in anticipation to the PUSH conference, or Presidents United to Solve Hunger. In 2014, the PUSH partnership was created to bridge together the goals of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and U.S land-grant universities. Inspired by PUSH, we were driven to make a real change on our own college campus to reduce both environmental and social injustice.

According to the Food Recovery Network, 22 million pounds of food are discarded from colleges in the United States each year (Natural Resources Defense Council 2015). At the same time, 50 million Americans suffer from food insecurity (US Department of Agriculture 2017). Project 4 Less is a RSO dedicated to fighting both these battles at the UIUC campus.

Our University spends large amounts of money each day to purchase and cook food that will ultimately be discarded. At the same time, thousands of people in the Urbana-Champaign community are food insecure. Project 4 Less works to solve both the waste and the want by diverting food from landfills into a food pantry. Each Wednesday evening, 4-5 Project 4 Less volunteers package pre-served food (trays of surplus food that have been prepared but not served) at Ikenberry Dining Hall. On a weekly basis, our operations divert about 260 meals from the landfill to Wesley Food Pantry. At the time of writing, Project 4 Less is the only RSO on campus to engage in food recovery in the student dining hall.

The ultimate goal of our organization is to minimize the amount of food wasted on campus and the number of food insecure individuals in our community. We are currently in the process of expanding our program to include another packaging night each week in partnership with Daily Bread Soup Kitchen in the spring semester, doubling the amount of saved meals. In the next twelve months, either in the upcoming spring or fall semester, we plan on solidifying our partnership with University Place Christian Church (UniPlace) to add a third packaging night as well. As we increase our financial resources, we envision our project connecting with more dining halls and food pantries, with multiple food packaging nights taking place each week.

Where will the project be located? Are special permissions required for this project site?

If special permission is required for this location, please explain and submit any relevant letters of support with the application. SSC cannot fund projects without prior location approval.

Project 4 Less has been packaging food at the Ikenberry Dining Hall kitchen for the past 2.5 years with previously received permission. The packaged food is distributed with the help of the Wesley Food Pantry at Wesley United Methodist Church.

Other than the project team, who will have a stake in the project? Please list other individuals, groups, or departments affiliated directly or indirectly by the project. This includes any entity providing funding (immediate, future, ongoing, matching, in-kind, etc.) and any entities that benefit from this project.

Please attach letters of commitment or support at the end of the application.

Our project involves student volunteers and student board members. Students who volunteer to package the food become more educated on the presence of food insecurity on campus and more likely to decrease the

amount of food waste they produce. In addition, Project 4 Less board members are able to express their passion for environmental activism by creating real change in a significant way.

Perhaps most importantly, the individuals who receive our food are directly impacted by our work and are often students at our University or part of our community beyond campus. Each individual box of food delivered to Wesley Food Pantry accounts for around four meals that the recipient no longer need worry about.

Our partners, Wesley Food Pantry and Student Dining, are also an essential part of our operations. Wesley Food Pantry distributes our meals to food insecure individuals. Student Dining allows our volunteers into the kitchen once a week to package the food. They provide us with preserved food (surplus food that was not served), space to package, and transportation for our meals from Ikenberry Dining Hall to Wesley Food Pantry. In the past, Student Dining has also provided us with the necessary funds to purchase some equipment for packaging and storage. This support has been essential in allowing us to initiate our project at the scale it is now running. As we expand our program, we will require funds to purchase more refrigeration carts and boxes beyond what they are providing us.

This spring semester, we will add another packaging night in partnership with Daily Bread Soup Kitchen to provide more food for local food insecure individuals. In the next 12 months, we will be confirming our partnership with Uniplace. This means that in the next 12 months, we will triple our partnerships, outsourced food, and impact on food insecurity.

How will this project involve and/or benefit students?

This includes both direct and indirect impact.

According to Feeding America, Champaign County has the third highest poverty rate in the state. In fact, 15.7% of its residents, or 32,340 individuals, experience food insecurity on a monthly basis. Wesley Food Pantry is an essential pillar in the lives of many of these individuals, providing a stable source of meals and resources. More than a thousand people go to Wesley Food Pantry each week to get the food they need for themselves and their families. Wesley food pantry also has a Student-Only Pantry to provide food for our own students.

By providing meals that ultimately go back to our own students, we are supporting the campus that we love. UIUC thrives on the diversity of a student body that makes its individual and educational experience unique. There is an increasing number of first-generation and low-income students at the University of Illinois and many of these students struggle with rationing their budgets beyond their tuition, books, and rent. Supporting this diversity includes supporting students and other members of the community with lower incomes and food insecurities. There is also a clear connection between consistent food consumption and academic performance. Students who are able to receive more meals are more likely to excel in their studies and live healthier lifestyles. By providing meals and nutrients to these students, we lend a hand to our colleagues, friends, and family.

Students who volunteer with us are also able to benefit from our program. These students leave their experience with a different outlook on food waste and food consciousness. They better understand the amount of surplus food that is wasted and the change that can be made through simple actions. Knowing that one's hard work impacts others can increase empathy and provide a community bonding experience between individuals of different social and economic statuses.

What are your specific outreach goals? How will this project inspire change at UIUC?

Ultimately, the goal of Project 4 Less is to transform all pre-served campus food waste into meals for those in need in our community. At this time, we are able to pack a portion of the excess food from one dining hall, one night of the week. Our goal is to gradually expand to pack more evenings at our current location, Ikenberry Dining Hall, and eventually to pack at all other dining halls, eliminating all campus food waste. At the same time, we are reaching out to community organizations that are best suited to distribute the packaged meals to those in need. As previously discussed, we are achieving this through expanding our deliveries to Daily Bread Soup Kitchen and UniPlace, ultimately achieving a three fold increase in our food recovery efforts by the end of the next calendar year. After successfully executing these expansions, we plan to continue expanding to service other days at Daily Bread Food Pantry and other food distribution locations in the community.

As our campus progresses toward its zero-waste goal, the problem of preserved food waste cannot be ignored. Although some efforts have been completed toward composting this food, the most environmentally efficient and cost effective solution is to re-use the excess food. In order to attain the zero waste goal, our campus will need to make many economic and cultural sacrifices. Our efforts provide a solution to waste that creates a positive feedback loop, bolstering the local community and the campus community while supporting the goals of economic and environmental sustainability.

How will the project improve environmental sustainability at the Urbana-Champaign campus?

Currently, our process produces an average of around 65 individual boxes of food to be redistributed each week, but often we pack enough food into each box to supply four meals for the recipient and/or their family. This large amount of food would otherwise have been wasted by the University and sent to landfills. In the upcoming two semesters, we plan on adding two more packaging nights and solidifying partnerships with two more food pantries, Daily Bread Soup Kitchen and UniPlace. This will increase the meals produced and food saved by a factor of three. By diverting this food into food pantries, we are able to decrease the waste that our campus produces.

If applicable, how does this project impact environmental injustice or social injustice?

According to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, one third of the food produced for human consumption gets lost or wasted. That is 1.3 billion tons a year. This food waste takes up 21% of landfills, contributing to the degradation of earth and build-up of greenhouse gases (EPA). Of this food waste, 22 million pounds is coming from U.S college campuses each year, and our campus is certainly adding to that statistic. There is no reason why we should be wasting so much food while millions go hungry without it. The fifteen million people in our nation (USDA) and 32,340 individuals of our county (Feeding America), should not be food insecure when the rest of the world and our campus is wasting so much. This is social injustice.

Project 4 Less is working to provide meals to the food insecure while diverting food waste from landfills. We are expanding our process to produce three times as many meals and work with three times as many food pantries in the next year. In doing so, we hope to impact more individuals on a consistent basis. By providing meals for the food insecure, we hope to be doing our role in supporting our college campus and our environment. Food insecurity and food waste aren't separate issues, but solutions to one another.

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.

Current project implementation and packaging for Wesley food pantry will be ongoing. In the beginning of the Spring 2020 semester, we will be adding another packaging day each week to provide meals for Daily Bread Soup Kitchen. In either Spring 2020 or Fall 2020, we will be adding a third packaging day each week in partnership with UniPlace. Each of these steps of expansion is a significant milestone, and any final reports or recaps will be made at the end of the semester.

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.

We will require Two Compt, Half Size Catering Pans for packaging the food that we provide to Wesley Food Pantry and UniPlace. We have 60 packaging days for these two locations per academic year, and use an average of 60 boxes on each day. This will sum to \$3708. For packaging the food we supply to Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, we require 10 metal tins (Choice Full Size 4" Deep Anti-Jam Stainless Steel Steam Table / Hotel Pan - 24 Gauge) for \$110 (\$11 each). We also require one refridgerator (Centaur CSD-1DF-EC 30.5" Single Section Reach-In Freezer, (1) Solid Door, 115v) to store our packaged food before they are transported to their location. This will be \$1,199.

If the project is implemented, will you require ongoing funding? What is the strategy for supporting the project in order to cover replacement, operation, or renewal costs?

SSC provides funding on a case by case basis and should not be considered as an ongoing source of funding

The tins and refrigerator will be reused consistently and will not require ongoing funding. The boxes we require will only need to be resupplied after one year of use. Any replacement and further purchasing of boxes will be covered by fundraising efforts.

Please include any other obtained sources of funding. Have you applied for funding elsewhere?

Please attach any relevant letters of support as needed in a separate document.

Student Dining has provided us with the boxes and cold carts that we have been using thus far. As we expand, we will require further funding for refrigerated storage space and more packaging materials. We have not applied for funding elsewhere.

Have you applied for funding from SSC before? If so, for what project?

We have not applied to SSC for funding before.

How will you bring awareness and publicize the project on campus? In addition to SSC, where will information about this project be reported?

This spring, our project will become an established partner organization under the Wesley umbrella, providing us with a platform upon which we can raise awareness for our cause and our events. As we expand, we will also continue to use more of our own social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram. In order to publicize our efforts for volunteer recruitment, we have an ample supply of volunteers through our partnerships with volunteering RSOs like APO, and through events such as various Quad Days.

In addition to SSC, we will report our progress and expansion to our partners: Student Dining, Wesley Food Pantry, Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, and UniPlace.