**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 Step 2 funding application should include this application, the supplemental budget form, and any letters of support.**

*Please submit this completed application and any relevant supporting documentation to* [*Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu*](mailto: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.*](mailto:sustainability-committee@illinois.edu.)

**General & Contact Information**

**Project Name:** Reusable Foodware Containers

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** $10,000

**Project Topic Areas:**  Land & Water  Education  Energy

Transportation **X** Food & Waste

**Applicant Name:** Michael Ponte

**Campus Affiliation (Unit/Department or RSO/Organization):** iSEE (CABBI)

**Email Address:** ponte1@illinois.edu

**Check one:**

**X** This project is solely my own ***OR***

This project is proposed on behalf of (name of student org., campus dept., etc.):

**Project Team Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Department** | **Email** |
| Michael Ponte | iSEE | ponte1@illinois.edu |
| Carter Phillips | FSHN | cphllps@illinois.edu |
| Name | Department/Organization | Email Address |
| Name | Department/Organization | Email Address |

*\*Additional assistance from campus members to be sought pending funding of project*

**Student-Led Projects (Mandatory):**

Name of Faculty or Staff Project Advisor:   
Advisor’s Email Address:

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

Contact Name: Michael Ponte

Unit/Department: iSEE

Email Address: ponte1@illinois.edu

\*\*please let me know if I cannot list myself

**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:**

*You may copy and paste your Step 1 application answer if nothing has changed.*

● Implement a multi-location program to find out the feasibility of a food vendor using reusable to-go containers (foodware) and silverware in order to reduce to-go container waste

● Model off success of Bevier Café’s in-house “Choose to Reuse” green container program

● Expand green container program to neighboring on-campus restaurants, cafés, and food trucks

● Initial trial will be free but next phase of program would include rolling out a paid opt-in program that would help to self-fund the program’s long-term continuity (cover the cost of buying replacement containers)

● Partnering locations will promote and offer green containers to customers as an alternative option

● Containers can then be returned to any of the partnering locations

● Partnering locations, all with dishwashing capabilities, will be responsible for thoroughly washing the containers for re-use

● Partners can ask to be re-stocked if more containers are needed since, as an initially free program, it is expected that some materials will be lost

● Important data such as # of food orders made/diverted containers, # of customers, # of washes, costs of utility, and potential amount saved by food vendors if switching from disposable containers will be collected and reviewed to determine feasibility to scale up at other locations (i.e. cities of Champaign and Urbana through external funding)

The primary timeline will be ongoing for at least a year to test the concept and adoption. Beyond that, additional funding from other sources will be sought after to continue the trial based on feasibility (or to convert to a permanent program).

Initial funding will primarily help to:

* + Order reusable plastic foodware containers to support use at multiple locations
  + Develop marketing materials to educate and promote the program
  + Support costs of setting up an organized system at each location as needed (ex. bins to facilitate collection, storage, etc.)

Major milestones include:

* + Getting buy-in from X number of restaurants, cafés, or food trucks to join the program
  + Seeing adoption by X number of customers
  + Diverting X amount of waste from landfill through the use of reusable containers
  + Receiving positive feedback from both businesses and customers, as well as criticisms
  + Generating participation interest from other venues not included in the initial trial

Future directions could include applying for a second round of funding (SSC or external) to support roll out of a paid opt-in program and support a student to develop a simple website and mobile application for program registration and tracking. Based on success of initial trial, external funding will be explored in the future to expand the program off-campus and target other food vendors in Champaign and Urbana.

**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.*

On-campus at various restaurants and food trucks near the Bevier Café area (places near Goodwin and Nevada)

**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.*

Carter Phillips of Bevier Café and his student staff will be consulted regarding their “Chews to Reuse” container program already in place at Bevier. Students, staff and faculty of the university could be =affiliated by the project by being exposed to it at local food establishments on-campus and decide to participate. Food vendors that choose to participate in the program will no doubt have a stake, as the program will increase their green behavior and public perception. Future affiliation with more food vendors outside of originally planned area, as well as the cities of Champaign and Urbana (and other neighboring towns), could eventually be affiliated as well.

**How will this project involve and/or benefit students?**

*This includes both direct and indirect impact.*

● Potentially lead to a scalable program that can be implemented on campus providing the right facilities and funding can be found

○ Local food vendors that cater to students on campus (food trucks, local restaurants and cafés) will be able to participate in such a program and help to reduce waste, thus leading to a cleaner and more environmentally friendly campus

● Further awareness for Bevier Cafe’s “Choose to Reuse” program

● Develop educational material regarding waste reduction, including statistics from the program about how much waste was diverted by replacing single use containers

● Student consultants will be sought out to provide suggestions for next steps based on the results of our trial

○ The primary end goal is NOT to generate revenue for non-University entities. However, it is vital to make the business case to commercial food vendors that a reusable container program can not only reduce waste and make the campus cleaner but can also save them money in the long run by not having to continuously purchase supplies. This is imperative to garner buy-in from businesses that may not fully believe in the sustainability goal of it all.

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

Information from this project could be reported by campus organizations such as iSEE and ISTC, among others. A website could be developed for information and also program metric tracking visible to the public. Social media accounts could be created (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) to reach out to the local community that have accounts. Once any branding is finalized, signs at participating restaurants will be made to promote and educate consumers.

# Financial Information

*In addition to the below questions, please submit the supplemental budget spreadsheet available on the Student Sustainability Committee* [*website*](http://ssc.sustainability.illinois.edu/?page_id=2087)*. Submission of both documents by the submission deadline is required for consideration of your project.*

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

Yes, last April for a Jumpstart Program opportunity for essentially this project, but it featured a different scope (off-campus) that was declined to due to concerns from legal.

**If this project is implemented, will you require any ongoing funding required? What is the strategy for supporting the project in order to cover replacement, operation, or renewal costs?***Please note that SSC provides funding on a case by case basis annually and should not be considered as an ongoing source of funding.*

Yes, potentially, if the project goes well and expansion is feasible. Outside funding sources and organizations, such as through the Lumpkin Family Foundation, will be sought for additional funding as needed. Partnership with the cities of Champaign and Urbana, and other neighboring towns, could be likely for future expansion, although the cities of Champaign and Urbana have indicated no current spare funding for such a project. Further, if expanded, next step would be a literal buy-in program where consumers pay a deposit or membership fee annually that would help cover the cost of purchasing more reusable containers.

**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.*

None yet. Will apply for additional funding in the fall from the Lumpkin Family Foundation, pending becoming a non-profit or associating with one, or working with SPA at U of I to be able to receive funding from them.

# Environmental, Economic, and Awareness Impacts

**How will the project improve environmental sustainability at the Urbana-Champaign campus? If applicable, how does this project fit within any of the** [**Illinois Climate Action Plan**](https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/) **(iCAP) goals?**

● Prove that local businesses that serve students can help be a part of the solution and help the community to reduce waste

● Promotes recycling or reuse of materials rather than disposable

○ Reduction or elimination of single-use containers from food taken to-go

○ Keeps waste out of landfills

○ Containers themselves are recyclable at the end of their life

The project will help improve environmental sustainability at the Urbana-Champaign campus by providing consumers with a new option for take-out food. Even if restaurants provide “greener” products, such as those that are compostable, this would remove some items from the waste stream entirely. By providing a new option rather than single-use disposable containers, customers can change their behavior to seek reusable options whenever possible. This could lead to them asking for reusable options when frequenting other, non-participating businesses, leading those businesses to seek options to then provide the customer with.

In regards to the Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) goals, this project would fit within the Zero Waste Goals, involving purchasing, waste, and recycling efforts. Specifically part 2 of this particular goal, which would Reduce MSW Landfill Tonnage, including "Reducing Nondurable Goods Purchases" of single use foodware containers, and "Reuse Materials" by providing an option for reusable, washable containers at participating vendors.

**How will you monitor and evaluate the project’s progress and environmental outcomes? What short-term and long-term environmental impacts do you expect?**

*Some examples include carbon emissions, water conservation, green behavior, and reduced landfill waste.*

Major environmental milestones include:

* + Diverting X amount of waste from landfill through the use of reusable containers
    1. An initial consumer traffic study could be performed prior to project launch to work with participating vendors to get an idea of the average number of customers, sales, and consumed single-use materials to then compare to the numbers once program is fully implemented

Weight of single-use materials could be collected and converted into pounds or tonnage of waste diverted from landfill.

Green behavior can be tracked by number of participating consumers, number of returned containers, etc.

Long-term, this similar project could be expanded to more food vendors on-campus and eventually off-campus, to track similar metrics to evaluate community effort

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

Based on success of initial trial, expansion of the program on-campus, as well as off-campus, will be explored to target other food vendors in Champaign and Urbana. My hope is that more and more businesses will realize the importance of such a program and offering, not just by being more environmentally sustainable, but due to consumer preference from those that participate. If businesses see the success of this at various places, along with positive feedback from consumers, behavior from many parties could inspire change in the community for the better.

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

N/A