



STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

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. 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.

Project Name: Rising Sprouts

Total Amount Requested from SSC: \$10,000

Primary Project Leader Name & Email: Meera Zukosky zukosky1@illinois.edu, (meerazukosky@gmail.com)

Project Abstract: In less than 100 words, briefly describe your project.

Rising Sprouts is a UIUC affiliated/ student started social venture that is working to address the problem of limited access to produce for individuals experiencing food insecurity. We address this issue by increasing the supply of local produce to organizations providing food assistance. Rising Sprouts has established connections to local farms and these agencies, and to date has delivered over 4,000 pounds of fresh produce to the Eastern Illinois Food Bank, as well as other community leaders and organizations. We are currently in the IVenture accelerator program (Cohort 5) here at UIUC.

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

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

Name	RSO/Department	Email Address
Meera Zukosky	UIUC iVenture Accelerator	zukosky1@illinois.edu
Kathryn Solorzano Lowell	UIUC iVenture Accelerator	slrznlw2@illinois.edu
Adnan Choudhary	Physics Department	adnanch@illinois.edu
Valeri Werpetinski (advisor)	Gies College of Business- Origin Ventures Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership	werpetin@illinois.edu
Noah Isserman (advisor)	Gies College of Business and the School of Social Work	nisserma@illinois.edu
Manu Edakara (advisor)	Gies College of Business	medaka2@illinois.edu

Questions	Yes	No
Is this a student-led project?	X	
If applicable, have you received approval from Facilities & Services and/or site manager?	N/A	
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

Project Timeline

SSC funding agreements remain active for two years. Please list your project's timeline and/or milestones.

First Year:

Our overall goal is to continue to bring fresh produce into local and UIUC food agencies, and secure additional partner farms to increase our produce transportation. In addition, we want to design ready-to-eat snack products that we can both sell and donate that is appealing to people and also well suited to the

needs of individuals who might receive it. This is to increase the financial sustainability of Rising Sprouts so we can fund our donations of produce to food agencies. We want to launch these products in the spring and begin using revenue from the sales to cover operating expenses including product production costs, overhead costs, and expenses related to the transportation of surplus produce.

In addition, we plan to apply for grants to augment the revenue allowing us to expand our operations and make more donations. We will conduct an assessment of food insecurity in the local area to inform a plan for expansion and growth that is responsive to pain points within the community. We will look into partnering with more experienced organizations to do this. We also plan to conduct an assessment of target retailers and market demographics in the local area.

Year 2 Goals:

In year 2, we plan to continue with the transportation of fresh produce. We want to increase the number of products that we donate. We also want to launch new products to add to the product line. We intend to apply for grants to augment this revenue.

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.

Rising Sprouts has a goal of addressing three specific problems. 1) We wish to address the problem of limited access to produce among food insecure individuals by supplying fresh local produce to agencies that provide food assistance, 2) We wish to address the problem of high quality food going to waste at local farms by collecting their surplus as our supply of fresh local vegetables, and 3) Fresh produce is perishable, and this limits the ways it can be stored and distributed. In addition to this, many fresh vegetables must be prepared first, which may be a factor in their limited consumption amongst both food secure and food insecure individuals. We wish to address both of these limitations by creating healthy snacks from local produce (purchased when in season) that have a long shelf life, high nutritional value, and require little to no preparation.

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.

This project will improve environmental stewardship at UIUC by reducing edible food waste at UIUC and in our community. Surplus produce affiliated with the university will be recovered and distributed to food agencies addressing food insecurity.

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.

This project will directly involve and impact students. Students have been, and will be, involved with identifying partner organizations and agencies to pick up food, identifying the partner agencies to distribute food to, and the actual distribution of the food. The actual operations will also directly benefit students (e.g.

food pantries such as Newman Shares Food Pantry, a Food Pantry that serves UIUC students directly, and Wesley Food Pantry, a Food Pantry that also serves UIUC students. The marketing, publicity, and outreach will also be conducted by UIUC students. In addition, students will be involved with the creation of Rising Sprouts community projects and engagement activities.