STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE

Funding Application – Step II

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. 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: Red Oak Rain Garden (RORG) Sidewalk Phase
Total Amount Requested from SSC: $24,600

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

Applicant Name: C. Eliana Brown
Campus Affiliation (Unit/Department or RSO/Organization): ACES/Extension
Email Address: brown12@illinois.edu

Check one:
☒ 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
Katherine Gardiner	ACES/Extension	Kgardin2@illinois.edu
Kayla Myers	FAA/Landscape Architecture	kamyers2@illinois.edu
Layne Knoche	ACES/Extension	lknoch2@illinois.edu
Katrina Widholm		Email Address
Irenka Carney	ACES/Extension	

Student-Led Projects (Mandatory):
Name of Faculty or Staff Project Advisor: N/A
Advisor's Email Address: N/A

Financial Contact *(Must be a full-time University of Illinois staff member)*
Contact Name: Carla Pinaire
Unit/Department: ACES Extension
Email Address: carlac@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.

This application builds and updates the 2017 SSC Application. Please also see the attached PowerPoint for additional information.

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.

The Red Oak Rain Garden is a current 2017 SSC funded project. During the design phase, issues became apparent that require additional funding so that the project can go forward successfully. Namely, these are sidewalk additions/modifications that must happen before plant installation.

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.

The project is located just south of Allen Hall/LAR and west of McKinley Health Center (see map in PowerPoint). Facilities & Services (F&S) has been involved in this project (see attached letter from 2017 application). Our project team continues to work closely with them.

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.

University Housing
Red Bison
Facilities & Services
University of Illinois Extension

Please see attached letters from the 2017 application.

We are also working with the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering for a potential monitoring project. However, we are NOT seeking funding for this aspect and will not in the future.

How will this project involve and/or benefit students?

This includes both direct and indirect impact.

As was detailed in the 2017 application, this project began with students, has continued with students, and is designed for the benefit of future students. The garden was built by NRES students 10 years ago. In 2016, when the revitalization project began, Master's Candidate Cameron Letterly held two student-attended stakeholder meetings and did initial design work. Currently, the RORG project manager is Master's Candidate Kayla Myers. We are also forming an Advisory Committee for the garden which will include several student members. This will help us with ensuring that the garden is meeting students' needs and provides an opportunity for student leadership.

Once the sidewalk phase is completed, the rain garden can be planted. Students will have an opportunity to participate in building the garden side by side with experienced Master Gardeners and Master Naturalists during intergenerational work days. Once the garden is built, it will be a living learning laboratory – providing outdoor educational opportunities. Further, students will benefit from planned wellness programming that

will center on the garden. We plan to work with our "neighbors" McKinley Health Center and CRCE Campus Rec to encourage students to incorporate the garden into their fitness/wellness self-care routines. Even if they never attend these events, the garden will directly benefit students by providing a natural place where students can relax and recharge. The benches around the garden, which are paid for by F&S, will allow students to sit and be immersed in nature, by hearing birds singing, seeing attracted pollinators such as butterflies and bees, and smelling the flowering native plants. Students can learn about green infrastructure by reading the educational sign that will be placed near the sidewalk. Students may also feel their anxiety lifted as they engage with nature. Indirectly, students will become more aware of the benefits of green infrastructure by witnessing the changes between now and post-restoration of the garden.

Project team member Katrina Widholm is a Master's candidate in Art Education. She is creating watercolors of animals that will benefit from the garden. See the PowerPoint for an example.

Lastly, we are working with civil engineering PhD student, Reshmina William, on an opportunity to install monitoring equipment.

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

F&S, Housing, ISEE, SSC, and Extension will work together to publicize RORG activities via coordinated press releases, websites, and social media. Our team already brings awareness and publicizes our project using our three social media platforms - Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter - all with the handle @RainGardenUIUC. We have student, staff, and faculty followers on all three platforms and interact with them daily. Katherine Gardiner is running these platforms as part of her job duties within Extension. When the garden is complete, a ribbon cutting ceremony will bring the partners together to celebrate and tell the story across campus and in the larger community. In addition to the SSC, information about this project will be reported on the iCAP Portal, on social media, and in classrooms as the project gets incorporated into the curriculum.

We have a future goal of creating a website that educates vistiors about the garden and also how to apply the lessons of the garden to improve local water quality. Extension has recently hired Irenka Carney who will be tasked with developing this website.

Financial Information

In addition to the below questions, please submit the supplemental budget spreadsheet available on the Student Sustainability Committee website. 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, our team applied for funding for the Red Oak Rain Garden restoration last year. The funding was granted for the restoration project and during the design process we discovered critical issues with the existing sidewalks that must be resolved before continuing.

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.

If this project is implemented, it will NOT require any ongoing funding from SSC. Ongoing funding will come from Illinois Extension and Facilities & Services. Illinois Extension Master Naturalists provide $150 annually. Facilities & Services will be responsible for replacement, operation, and renewal costs above this amount (per the attached MOU). Any monitoring equipment costs including purchase and maintenance are beyond the scope of this project and, if obtained, these will be from other sources.

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.

Please see the Supplemental Budgetary Statement for more details. The overall cost of the sidewalk phase – including wages – is $59,950 (without monitoring equipment or salary of project lead). We have sought funding from the Bike Fee and Illinois Extension. We are receiving in kind support from Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant and Illinois EPA for personnel salary and wages. We are working with Facilities & Services and asked them for funding; per the attached MOU they are willing to support the garden via maintenance. Further, they are providing benches. This brings the amount applied for from SSC down to $24,600.

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 (iCAP) goals?
This application addresses the sidewalks, which is an essential preliminary step in the rain garden restoration project. The original application details the numerous environmental sustainability benefits of the garden. Below is additional information:

Campus has very few rain gardens. In fact, the Red Oak Rain Garden is the campus' only visible rain garden. The project is currently listed on the Illinois Climate Action Plan Portal: https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/project/red-oak-rain-garden.

The project team is working with several SWATeam members. These include Water and Stormwater SWATeam's Art Schmidt and Keith Erickson. Project leader, Eliana Brown, is also a consultant on that team. Other SWATeam member collaborations include: Agriculture, Land Use, Food, and Sequestration (ALUFS) SWATeam members Reid Christianson and Brent Lewis and Transportation SWATeam member Lily Wilcock.

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.
We are working with a civil engineering PhD student, Reshmina William, to install monitoring equipment in the garden. This would track the grounwater levels and infiltration rates so we can measure the amount of water being captured by the garden. As mentioned elsewhere in this application, we are not seeking SSC funding for this portion of the project.

What are your specific outreach goals? How will this project inspire change at UIUC?
Extension is the flagship outreach effort of the University, offering practical education to help people, businesses, and communities solve problems, develop skills and build a better future. As such, our team is developing outreach materials that showcase the Red Oak Rain Garden's native plants and help people choose ones that work for their landscapes. We are partnering with University Landscape Architect Brent Lewis to ensure we have a design that passes the F&S Architectural Review Committee's standards. We want to lead by example to show the University of Illinois and all who visit that landscapes can be pollinator/wildlife-friendly, successfully manage stormwater, and be beautiful in all seasons. By doing this, we hope to inspire the campus to incorporate more native plants and green infrastructure projects.
We plan to coordinate garden events with partners such as the dormitories and health centers. Social media will coincide with these events. It will also highlight what is in bloom and feature special visitors (a.k.a. wildlife). Please see the PowerPoint for examples of the kinds of outreach materials expected for the project.

If applicable, how does this project impact environmental injustice or social injustice?
This project strives to use universal design principles. Raising the sidewalk will eliminate flooding on on a major entry into campus near the public dormitories. Flooding remains several days after rainstorms. In an informal conversation with a representative from the disabled student population, our team learned that many students that use wheelchairs avoid flooded sidewalks when possible to prevent getting their hands wet, which is unpleasant and potentially unsanitary.

An additional feature that uses universal design principles are the bench pads. These include an extension so students that use wheelchairs are welcome to use them too. The Red Oak Rain Garden is for everyone.