**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:** Restoration of the Low Mow Area at Orchard Downs Housing Facility

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** $9,000

**Project Topic Areas:** [x]  Land & Water [x]  Education [ ]  Energy

[ ]  Transportation [ ]  Food & Waste

**Applicant Name:** Nicole Gamble

**Campus Affiliation (Unit/Department or RSO/Organization):** From the Ground Up- Students for Environmental Concerns

**Email Address:** ngamble2@illinois.edu

**Check one:**

 [ ]  This project is solely my own ***OR***

 [x]  This project is proposed on behalf of (name of student org., campus dept., etc.): From the Ground Up-Students for Environmental Concerns

**Project Team Members**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Department** | **Email** |
| Nicole Gamble | Students for Environmental Concerns (From The Ground Up) | ngamble2@illinois.edu |
| Emily Guske | Students for Environmental Concerns (From The Ground Up) | eguske2@illinois.edu |
| Brooke Witkins | Students for Environmental Concerns (From The Ground Up) | witkins2@illinois.edu |
| Abby Pstrzoch | Students for Environmental Concerns (From The Ground Up) | agp3@illinois.edu |

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

Name of Faculty or Staff Project Advisor: Brent Lewis
Advisor’s Email Address: bcl@illinois.edu

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

Contact Name: Brent Lewis

Unit/Department: Landscape Architect-Facilities & Services

Email Address: bcl@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:**

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

This project started with an idea a year ago when I was reading an article for my NRES 420 Restoration Ecology course. In that class, we always read about restoration projects, but no one ever talks about physically restoring land from start to finish. I wanted to know this process and gain hands-on experience in restoring a plot from the very start. I did not want to do this project alone, so I decided to make a committee to learn with others on the practices of restoration and its connection with the surrounding communities.

My goals for this project include successfully restoring the low mow site at Orchard Downs Housing Facility to prairie garden that has more function and biodiversity. This project will incorporate at least 25 native plant species, create habitat for wildlife and pollinators, and increase biodiversity overall.

My desired outcome for this project is to have a successful prairie garden in four years. Also, I want to end this project knowing that students have gained some hands-on experience and know how to restore a site. I want community members to be educated about restoration effort and encourage them to incorporate native plants in their yards. Last, I want to educate students and the community about land acknowledgment with Native American Culture.

**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.*

**This project will be located at Orchard Downs Housing. I have permission from the facility to preform restoraiton work on their property. Attached to this application is the agreement form.**

**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.*

Groups that have shown interest in supporting this project though labor include Red Bison, Horticulture Club, Students for Environmental Concerns (committees within the organization), Alpha Phi Omega, Bee Campus, Master Naturalists, and The Wildlife Society.

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

*This includes both direct and indirect impact.*

**This project will include students in every step of the restoration process. This includes seed collecting, weeding, identifying plant species, spreading the seeds, growing seeds in the greenhouse, planting the plugs, and hosting events in support of the project. Additionally, students will benefit by teaching them restoration skills needed if pursuing a career in restoration. This will also give students a chance to appreciate nature through the process of restoring the plot.**

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

The restoration project will be featured in Orchard Down's monthly newsletter. Our committee also plans to have booths at the Urbana and Champaign farmers market to educate the public about our project and how they can get involved. Social media pages for our group will document our progress throughout the four years for the public to see. Last, we plan to host some plant workshops for the community so they may learn about restoration and get involved.

# 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?**

I have not applied for funding before from SSC.

**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.*

I do not plan on needing ongoing funding. This prairie will be maintained by students for environmental concerns. After the project ends, is support from other organizations (Red Bison, Master Naturalists, Facility and Services) to maintain the plot. An issue I foresee happening is invasive/weedy species establishing in the plot, but with the yearly mow and easy access to herbicide through Red Bison, I do not see this becoming a huge issue.

**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.*

I have not obtained funding from any other sources.

# 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?**

This project will improve sustainability because the prairie will be self-sustaining and not need additional resources to keep in functioning. The cost can be kept low, and habitats for wildlife/pollinators will be continuous. The project fits with the goals of iCap by reducing costs and prairies are carbon sinks.

**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.*

**Throughout the four years, I will do a seasonal evaluation of what plant species are in the plot (nonnative, invasive, and native). I will also track by cameras the different mammal species we see present in the plot. Short term impacts would be increasing in native plant species, and long term would be habitats for wildlife and pollinators.**

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

**My specific outreach goals are to incorporate native plants in local community yards. This will be accomplished through various workshops about native plants and landscaping. This project will inspire change at UIUC because of the dedication students are going to put into this project. Already, there has been talking of turning all of the low mow areas on campus into prairies. I think having the first student-led low mow restoration will encourage other students to want to restore the other low mow areas on campus.**

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

**This project will impact environmental injustice by encouraging that we take care of our ecosystems in a dominated agriculture landscape. This plot we are restoring was an abandoned agriculture field. While agriculture is important, there are ways to protect native ecosystems while continuing agriculture.**