# *From time to time unforeseen challenges or opportunities can affect the planned budget, timeline, or overall goals of a project funded by the Student Sustainability Committee. Past examples of these situations include projects coming in under budget but having additional opportunities available, or inclement weather delaying the planting of agriculture projects.*

# *Below please include a brief project summary and your requested changes. Attach additional documents as needed. If you have any questions, please contact the Student Sustainability Committee at sustainability-committee@illinois.edu.*

# General Information

**Project Name:** Diversity and Inclusion Center

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** $20,000

# Contact Information

Applicant Name: Shawna Patterson-Stephens

Unit/Department: Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations

Email Address: sps19@illinois.edu

# Project Information

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

Under the umbrella of OIIR and along with several partners throughout our community, we seek to explore the feasibility of a multifunctional space which will allow for in-depth examinations of the complex layers of diversity, equity, and inclusion using an interdisciplinary lens. Said space will accommodate our interest in building upon existing campus conversations and knowledge sharing with regard to sustainability and environmental justice. We aim to integrate several functions which will enrich our focus on the cultural significance of environmentalism across cultures, functions that include (1) environmentally-friendly materials, (2) rooftop gardens with plants indigenous to the region, (3) solar panels, (4) natural lighting, (5) composting, (6) reverse osmosis water filters, (7) rainwater harvesting, (8) composting toilets, as well as affording space for wellness and study lounges, ritual observances, student organizations, classrooms/courses, and large-scale lectures, films, and performances. From dialogue on land rights and food diversity, to the importance of green space and serving as water protectors, this physical structure will support campus efforts to enhance the natural and built environment in which we learn, work, and live.

With the completion of this project, we aim to:

* 1. engage our constituencies in a feedback collection process in efforts to create educational opportunities that truly reflect their needs.
  2. identify and contract a LEED-certified architectural firm with a specialized expertise in cultivating culturally significant designs and floor plans.
  3. identify ways to incorporate OIIR’s commitment to sustainability and environmental justice in design, and in a manner that supports our desire to utilize sustainable praxis in our day-to-day operations.
  4. draft a final report which captures a student-centered approach to the construction of structure supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives from an intersectional, interdisciplinary perspective.

Please provide a brief summary of how students will be involved in the project’s changes:

Students have remained involved in the project throughout the course of the year, as it is the focus of this year’s Solar Decathlon competition.

Student involvement in the Feasibility Study will include:

- Student groups seeking additional support will have high-touch access to faculty and staff representative of several academic units and departments across campus.

- Student groups will also have direct access to meeting space, office space, programmatic space, administrative services, and budgetary support.

Students will be included in the building committee, with specific representation from affinity-based RSOs, SECS, and the ISG Sustainability Chair. Throughout the completion of this feasibility study, focus groups, interviews, surveys, and student meetings will be conducted to ensure student feedback is included in the development of floor plans and structural design.

Please provide a brief summary of your requested scope change. How is your request different from your original plan?

Unfortunately, Covid-19 slowed the project’s progress. We lost a significant portion of our funding from institutional partners due to financial shortfalls associated with Covid-19 losses. We required an additional year to accrue the remaining funding required to implement the project. We therefore request an amendment to the previously established timeline:

* 1. **Selection of architectural firm (Summer 2021).**
  2. **Implementation of feasibility study (Fall 2021-Fall 2022).**
  3. **Completion of study and final draft of report/schematics (Spring 2023).**

Additional comments (Optional)

We are currently engaged in several meetings with our partners to begin implementing the feasibility study process. We are happy to share that the project is back on track, though slightly delayed.