

## **SUSTAINABILITY FEE PROCEDURE**

In 2011, the Board of Trustees approved the UIC Sustainability Fee as a student-led initiative to improve the quality of campus operations, reduce UIC's environmental impact, and generate awareness about environmental and sustainable issues by creating opportunities for students' involvement.

Paid for by all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, the Sustainability Fee is a \$6 per semester fee. The Sustainability Fee supports the operations of student-focused programming run through the Office of Planning, Sustainability and Project Management Sustainability function. This include supporting the operational costs of a Program Coordinator. Budgeting of those costs will occur in concurrence with budgeting for the Sustainability function. Primarily, the Sustainability Fee program funds small, short-term projects, helps to subsidize larger, long-term projects, and funds student travel to campus sustainability-related conferences. The purpose of this document is to provide the procedure for allocating and dispersing those funds.

Grant funding from this fee is approved by the Sustainability Fee Advisory Board (SFAB). The SFAB is a 10-person board that is comprised of students, staff, and faculty that meets twice a semester. Any currently registered student, staff, or faculty member can request to join the board. Board membership is voluntary and at-will.

Funding is available to fund projects that aid in establishing a sustainable campus environment. Students, student organizations, faculty, staff, and departments are encouraged to submit requests for funding; funding can only go to university-affiliated projects. All SFAB projects must make a substantial impact on students; this may be a direct impact on facilities that serve them or an impact through education and engagement opportunities. Funding proposals must align with the goals of the [UIC Climate Commitments](#) and reflect the solutions of the [UIC Climate Action Implementation Plan](#).

## **REVIEW CRITERIA**

In addition to the quality and completeness of the proposal, the committee will evaluate projects based on the following criteria: Environmental impact, high visibility and educational exposure on campus, high incidence of student involvement or employment, long-term cost benefits, and interdisciplinary collaboration and research. The Board encourages piloting, innovation, and new technologies – creative projects are encouraged to apply.

## **TIMELINE**

### ***Fall***

Early October – LOIs due

Late November – final proposals due

Early December – funded proposals notified

### ***Spring***

End of February – LOIs due  
Beginning of April – final proposals due  
End of April – funded proposals notified

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **#1 Project Proposals Over \$5,000**

Project proposals over \$5,000 will be required to submit an initial Letter of Inquiry; SFAB will prescreen LOIs for appropriateness and feasibility and provide recommendations accordingly to the final proposal. If the LOI is approved, a final proposal will be required. Projects over \$60k should consider listing project components and priorities in case SFAB can partially fund, instead of fully fund, the project.

### **#2 Project Proposals under \$5,000**

Project proposals can be submitted at any point during the academic year and will be approved on a rolling basis.

### **#3 Student Internship Proposal**

Student internship projects are housed with the Office of Sustainability and interns must participate in the Sustainability Internship Program. Internship proposals can ask for student wages and supplies to complete the project. Internship proposals must be submitted in spring semester for inclusion in the summer internship program.

After the full proposal is submitted, grantees will be notified no later than the end of the current semester. The committee reserves the right to issue a second call, directly invite one or more proposals of interest, and/or to hold funding for future years.

## **RULES**

Students, student groups, and staff must be committed to seeing the proposal through until completion; this includes being a registered student at UIC for the duration of the project. Students who are graduating in the current semester of application are not eligible. Student-led projects require a faculty or staff sponsor in order to have funds awarded.

Funding is subject to any University restrictions including bidding process and site approval. All funding recommendations made by the SFAB may need additional approval from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Administrative Services (VCAS). If approved, the SFAB is permitted to post the entire proposal on its website, and/or publicly disseminate any and all information pertaining to the proposal.

## **DISPERSAL OF FUNDS**

Grant funds from the Sustainability Fee will not be directly dispersed to students. A home unit and Business Manager are required to be an approved project. If a home unit is unavailable and/or the approved project is an internship, it can be housed under the Office of Sustainability. Recognized UIC student organizations do not need a home unit.

Once approved, the home unit Business Manager will be required to setup a 4N account for the transfer of funds and will work directly with the Director of Business and Finance in VCAS. Instruction for setting up a 4N account can be found [here](#). Once transferred, the unit will have one (1) year to spend the funds; at the end of the year, any unspent funds will be returned to the Sustainability Fee account. Projects approved in spring semesters will have until June 1<sup>st</sup> of the following year and projects approved in fall semesters will have until January 1<sup>st</sup>. Special accommodations to this requirement can be made with 60 days advanced notice. Depending on the scope of the project, an [FM Billable Request or Estimate Request](#) must be submitted before any work on the project can take place. Additionally, an MOU between OVCAS and the home unit will be required once funding is approved.

## **PROJECT COMPLETION**

At the completion of the project, a status report and account statements detailing spending of awarded funds will be required. If the project is an ongoing or long-term project, periodic status updates will also be required. The unit carrying out the project is expected to acknowledge the board's support in any public communications, and carry out activities, as appropriate, to publicize the project. Any major changes in scope, timeline, or budget must be approved by the Sustainability Fee Advisory Board. Sustainability Fee funding can be withdrawn in cases of inadequate progress and/or lack of communication.

## **ADDENDUM**

Things SFAB Can Fund, On A Case-By-Case Basis (note that this specifically refers to Grants):

- SF can fund feasibility studies and design work; however, it must work toward addressing a direct sustainability need on campus.
- SF can partially fund graduate assistant and 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.
- SFAB can fund outreach events with a central theme of sustainability, provided their primary audience is the general campus community. Registered student groups should seek funding for events and activities from the Student Activities Funding Committee (SAFC) and the Student Org Funding Allocation Board (SOAFB) prior to or simultaneously with requesting SFAB funding.
- SFAB discourages funding requests for food and prizes but will consider proposals on a case by case basis that provide significant reasoning.
- SFAB can fund repairs and improvements to existing building systems if it works toward the goal of improving campus sustainability; however, a preference is shown to projects utilizing new and/or innovative ideas or bridging the incremental cost of making a project more sustainable.
- The items referenced above should not be taken as comprehensive list.

Things SFAB Will Not Fund:

- SFAB will not fund projects with a primary end goal of generating revenue for non-University entities.
- SFAB will not fund personal lodging, food, beverage, and other travel expenses, except for students travel to sustainability conferences. Inquiries regarding such funding should be made directly to [skonin2@uic.edu](mailto:skonin2@uic.edu).
- SFAB will not fund tuition or other forms of personal financial assistance for students beyond student employee wages.

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