
University of Illinois at Chicago
Sustainability Fee
2012-2013 Annual Report



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Sustainability Fee History

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

\$3 fee per semester paid by all professional, graduate, and undergraduate students:

1. Fully funds small, short-term student-initiated projects
2. Subsidizes larger, long-term student-initiated projects
3. Supplements student travel to sustainability-related conferences
4. Research prizes for students at the annual Student Research Forum
5. Subsidizes annual student memberships to the Divvy Bike Sharing program
6. Opportunity for students to work on grant-writing and project management skills

Sustainability Fee Advisory Board

The 2012-2013 board is comprised of 6 students and 4 faculty/staff.

The board meets approximately twice each semester to:

- Review proposals
- Suggest collaboration/feedback
- Approve final proposals
- Follow up with current and past projects
- Mentor students throughout the semester

Request for Proposals

- High visibility and educational exposure on campus
- High levels of student involvement, engagement, and/or employment
- Long-term cost benefits
- Interdisciplinary collaboration and research
- Incorporation of the **three pillars of sustainability**: environmental protection, social justice, and economic benefits

Additional considerations include:

- Direct energy and sustainability impact
- Budget effectiveness, cost sharing, and leverage of external funds
- Likelihood for success
- Creativity

Who Applies for Sustainability Fee Funding?

All UIC students or recognized student groups can apply for this funding

Student Organization

- College of Cycling
- EcoCampus
- Zeta Psi Fraternity
- Mental Health and Disability Alliance
- Mexican Students de Aztlan
- Urban Planning & Policy Student Organization
- Public Health Student Association

Students

- Engineering
- Psychology
- Urban Planning
- English
- Philosophy
- Earth and Environmental Science
- Management

HERITAGE GARDEN

The Heritage Garden is a year-round, paid internship program that has created eight (8) satellite gardens around east campus in conjunction with the Centers for Cultural Understanding and Social Change. Student interns work with faculty, staff, and community members to connect horticulture with environmental sustainability, cultural diversity, and social justice. Budget: \$50,000



DRYING RACKS

This student-led project introduced drying racks into the student dorms on east campus. Students had the option to check out wooden drying racks as opposed to using the dorm provided dryers.

Budget: \$10,000



PROJECT ATP

Project ATP retrofit 4 elliptical machines in the Rec Center on east campus; these machines allow students to generate electricity when working out on the machines. The carbon free electricity that is generated is fed back into the buildings grid. Budget: \$16,000



OFF GRID BUS SHELTER

The off-grid bus shelter project retrofitted an existing UIC bus shelter utilizing a transit shelter security light; the shelter is on the northeast intersection of Harrison and Morgan street. Budget: \$5,000



BICYCLE TOOLKITS

Bicycle for UIC introduces two new biking assets to the campus. The first is a Bicycle Repair Station and the second is a Bicycle Tool-Kit. The repair stations can be found outside both of the Student Centers, while the toolkits can be checked out at the front desk of the Student Centers. Budget: \$4,000



Additional Student Funds

- **STUDENT RESEARCH FORUM:** Every year, the Sustainability Fee gives up to three monetary awards to students at the annual Student Research Forum (\$750/year)
- **CONFERENCE FUNDING:** The Sustainability Fee also helps to fund students who attend and/or present at sustainability related conferences. During the academic year, the fee sponsors up to three students who attend or present at conferences. These conferences include, AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher education), the Clinton Global Initiative, and the Climate Reality Project. (\$2,250/year)
- **DIVVY STUDENT DISCOUNT:** Over 1000 students benefitted from an additional \$10 discount on an annual Divvy membership discount. (\$5,000)

Request for Additional Funding

- **Green Power Partnership:** One of the original stipulations of the Sustainability Fee requires UIC's participation in the EPA's Green Power Partnership, which requires UIC to purchase 3% of energy from "green" sources. UIC is currently a member of this partnership due to an energy purchase from VCAS in 2014. However, this one-time purchase is not guaranteed in the future and the Sustainability Fee will need to factor in additional \$60,000/year into the budget.
- **Continuing funding of ongoing projects:** Heritage Garden depends on the yearly \$40,000 grant from the Sustainability Fee to remain viable.
- **Funding larger/more impactful projects:** Although the Sustainability Fee has funded several large and visible campus projects, the Sustainability Fee Advisory Board has had to turn down multiple projects due to a lack of funds. Two examples are the retrofitting of bathrooms with water-saving devices (\$150,000) and the development of a campus shuttle run on alternative energy (\$250,000).

***In 2014, UIUC conducted a nationwide study of Sustainability Fees across the country. The results of the study shows that for urban, public universities with student with populations over 15,000, the average fee is \$15/year. UIC currently has the lowest fee for this group.