THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
SUSTAINABILITY INSTITUTE

Ohio State Sustainability Fund

Funding Request Package

Overview

The Ohio State Sustainability Fund was established to support improvement of the sustainability profile of the university – through efforts that improve campus operations and lead to increased learning and innovation or more sustainable behaviors in the university community.

The Sustainability Institute (SI) manages the Ohio State Sustainability Fund (OSSF). All project proposals that meet SI's favorable evaluation are then presented to the President and Provost's Council on Sustainability (PPCS) for advice prior to any final funding decisions.

FY 2019 was the tenth year of the Fund, and marked a significant transition for the program. With the implementation of the university's historic partnership and academic collaboration with Ohio State Energy Partners (OSEP), the OSSF funding source moved from the university's utility reserve fund to a dedicated OSEP endowment. This change placed the OSSF into a predictable, secure funding mechanism, and enabled more flexibility of the funding (e.g. project funding may now straddle multiple fiscal years).

Following review of the enclosed application materials, applicants are encouraged to discuss the potential proposal with SI staff prior to submitting a formal application in order to further determine eligibility, address initial questions, and outline application review timing.

To schedule a time for that discussion, or to ask any further questions about the OSSF, please send an email to sustainability@osu.edu

Fund Governance
Funding applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the university's fiscal year until all funding is obligated. Unobligated funds are rolled into the following fiscal year's funding availability.

SI continuously reviews funding requests from the Ohio State community as they are received throughout the fiscal year. Upon receiving a funding request, SI conducts a pre-screen evaluation to ensure the request meets the Fund's eligibility and evaluation criteria. Following a favorable evaluation, SI will provide funding recommendations to the PPCS for further review and consideration. Projects receiving concurrence from the PPCS are then awarded funding.

SI will ensure that grant funding recommendations and priorities align with the sustainability goals and priorities of the university. SI will also ensure the accountability of all allocated funds, including:
- Requiring all grantees to document the project's environmental, social, economic, or other impacts; and
- Requiring all grantees to provide a final project report, and when necessary, an interim status project report.

Finally, SI will submit an annual detailed summary of the projects funded and their impacts to PPCS, Office of Academic Affairs and Office of the President. SI will also post the summary on the university's website for public review. When possible, SI will routinely communicate information about specific projects to interested audiences.

Project Funding Guidelines

Guidelines for the eligibility and selection of projects the OSSF supports are summarized below. Proposals are reviewed and considered individually and in light of all other funded projects and pending proposals. Proposed projects must address the eligibility criteria below. The individual projects that best meet the eligibility criteria are then evaluated for funding support in consideration and comparison to all previously funded projects and pending proposals.

Eligibility guidelines: Individually, does the proposed project meet the following criteria:

- ▶ *Contribute to sustainability –* Projects improve the sustainability of campus operations, improve the sustainability awareness of campus populations, or propel innovative sustainability research and learning opportunities.
- ▶ *Campus impact –* Projects are restricted to Ohio State campuses and must be led by a staff or faculty member.
- ▶ *Existing university operating budget –* Projects that are covered by an existing university operating budget are not eligible. Projects and project funding are not intended to be an alternative path to the normal annual budgeting process.
- ▶ *Partial funding support –* The Sustainability Fund should be used to seed, catalyze, or gap-fill funding on projects rather than be the sole funding source. The fund may be used to support the launch of a program but not for regular year-over-year programmatic funding.

Selection Evaluation Guidelines: Relative to previous projects and all other pending project proposals:

- ▶ *Feasibility –* Is the project likely to succeed? Has the project accounted for contingencies and major obstacles?
- ▶ *Sustainability Impact –* Does the project measurably improve or accelerate the sustainability of Ohio State's campuses or the realization of [Ohio State's Sustainability Goals](#) and priorities?
- ▶ *University Population Impact –* Does the project lead to increased understanding, greater engagement, or sustainable behavior change in the university community?
- ▶ *Economic Impact –* What are the financial benefits? What are the cost-savings, return on investment, or payback over time? Positive return on investment is strongly encouraged.
- ▶ *Innovation –* Does the project exhibit innovative technology, processes, or application of knowledge?
- ▶ *Institutionalization/Scalability –* Can the project become embedded in the University's routine operation? Does it need only start-up funding to then sustain itself over time? Can it be expanded to other campus locations if successful?

Project Selection Process

As previously described, SI reviews project application proposals on a rolling basis throughout the university's fiscal year, until all funding is obligated. All university campuses, colleges, departments, centers, faculty, staff, and student groups are eligible to apply, though all projects must be led by a faculty or staff member.

Step 1:   SI informal consultation with project applicant (recommended).

Step 2:   Project applicant submits funding proposal to SI.

Step 3:   SI conducts eligibility and selection evaluation review.

   (May require additional dialog between SI and project applicant.)

Step 4:   SI provides funding recommendation to PPCS.

Step 5:   PPCS provides review and consensus feedback to PPCS.

   (Generally, all project applicants are expected provide an in-person presentation at a regularly scheduled PPCS meeting, which occur bi-monthly during the university's academic calendar. However, if the requested funding amount for the proposed project is under $100,000, PPCS may review the proposal's materials electronically in lieu of an in-person presentation.)

Step 6:   SI notifies project applicant of final funding decision.

   (May include additional guidance, direction, or requirements)

Project Reporting Requirements

The Sustainability Institute is dedicated to advancing education, research, innovation, and resource conservation related to energy, the environment, and sustainability. SI relies upon grantee reporting to evaluate progress toward the university's sustainability goals and effectiveness of investments supported by the Ohio State Sustainability Fund. Reports enable SI to:

1. Maintain a detailed historic record of the impacts of the Ohio State Sustainability Fund;

2. Keep the President and Provost's Council on Sustainability informed as that Council provides review and advice on the use of the Sustainability Fund;

3. Communicate news of the Sustainability Fund and its grantees throughout the university as appropriate; and

4. Ensure that there is a detailed and visible financial record, thereby promoting good stewardship of those funds.

For these reasons, funding recipients are required to provide reports on both the financial and implementation status of their projects. Actual reporting requirements may be adapted to the specifics of each project supported by the Sustainability Fund. However, in general, the following reporting requirements should be submitted to SI by the grant recipient. For ease, a template final report form is provided on the next page.

Minimum Reporting Requirements and Reporting Form Template:

1. A brief email with the date the project commences and the estimated date of completion

2. A mid-range report for project durations over six (6) months

3. A final report within thirty (30) days of project completion. Final reports should follow this reporting form template:

Final Project Reporting Form Template

Ohio State Sustainability Fund
Final Project Report

Project Name:

Primary Project Contact:
Name:

Email: Phone:

Project Funding Details
Approved Grant Funding Amount:

Grant Funding Amount Utilized:

Unused Grant Funding Amount to Return to Fund (if any):

Match Funding Amount Provided:

Match Value of In-Kind Services Provided:

Cost Savings Project Achieved (if applicable)
One-time University Cost Savings:

Annual Cost Savings Amount (based on first year experience):

Project Accomplishments
Please provide/attach a narrative of what the project accomplished, including:

A.   Which Ohio State Sustainability Goals the project helped achieve,

B.   A detailed project budget, including use of this grant funding and identification of all other funding sources,

C.   Whether, and which, university stakeholders were involved with or affected by the project,

D.   What were any challenges encountered, or lessons learned that will affect programmatic or organizational changes, and

E.   Project images that can be used to demonstrate/promote the project's successes.

Please submit completed forms to the Sustainability Institute at sustainability@osu.edu

Project Application Cover Sheet (on page 6)

In order to apply for an Ohio State Sustainability Fund grant, please complete the following Project Funding Request cover sheet, with the requested project narrative, and submit completed forms to the Sustainability Institute at sustainability@osu.edu.

Ohio State Sustainability Fund
Project Funding Request

Project Name: _____

Funding Period: _____

Funding Requested (Amount not to exceed): $_____

Receiving Campus Unit: _____

Unit Financial Contact:

Name: _____

Email: _____   Phone: _____

Project Chartfields:

Org: _____   Program: _____

Fund: _____   Project: _____

Account: _____   User Def: _____

Primary Project Contact:

Name: _____

Email: _____   Phone: _____

Project Description

1.   Please provide/attach a narrative of the proposed project including how the project meets the eligibility criteria outlined in the Ohio State Sustainability Fund Guidelines (Page 3), a project budget breakdown and identification of all funding sources and their uses.

2.   The provided budget was created
        Internally by _____ Date budget was created_____
        Externally by _____ Date budget was created_____

3.   Will the project work involve external contracts /contractors?
        ☐ No, (if NO, proceed to Question 5)   ☐   Yes

4.   The provided budget is
        ☐   Pre-contract estimate   ☐   From an approved contract

5.   Is the decision to proceed with the proposed project contingent upon funding from the Sustainability Fund?
        ☐   Yes   ☐   No