



Funding Sustainability Projects: A Guide Prepared by the Grants Resource Center at AACSCU

The “greening” of the campus, involving energy efficient and environmentally responsible development, is at the top of the agenda for institutions of higher education throughout the country. The importance and ramifications of this movement are only going to increase over time. Colleges and universities have clearly stated their ambitions to support sustainable and renewable energy practices, leading to a greatly increased demand for financial support for such projects. These green efforts on the campus typically are classified into three approaches: agricultural practices, environmentally sound construction and remodeling, and alternative energy applications.

On the agricultural front, efforts are being made to ensure the maximum safe output of useable produce and the use of environmentally appropriate landscaping. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has several grant programs geared toward this end.

Perhaps the single most popular green project for higher education has been the design and construction of sustainable and energy efficient buildings. From the smallest to the largest institutions, CEOs have pledged to increase dramatically the number of new green buildings and the rate at which old buildings are modified to reduce their carbon footprint. To power those green buildings, regional energy companies have shown an interest in partnering with institutions in the purchasing of alternative energy credits. And by serving as models of energy efficiency, institutions may find state government support to help others in the region go green.

For the sciences, alternative energy research is a top priority and has some of the most significant support from the federal government. The U.S. Department of Energy, the National Science Foundation, and the Environmental Protection Agency are all providing substantial assistance to wean the country off fossil fuel use. Many corporations are also contributing their support; Google, for one, has recently announced it will greatly expand its commitment to renewable energy research.

All of these initiatives require funding and strategic decisions to promote their chances of success. Three sources are most evident to provide the fiscal impetus for institutions of higher education: the federal government has added to the number of grants available in these areas as part of the America COMPETES Act, which the incoming presidential administration has vowed to fund fully as part of its priority for an energy revolution; private foundations interested in the sciences and education have created programs to encourage green projects; and, creating the largest initial commitments, private industry has invested heavily in this area, with local business commitments accounting for the majority of all green buildings constructed to date.

Recent Reports on Sustainability in Higher Education

The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Digest 2007 Review of Campus Sustainability News (<http://www.aashe.org/resources/pdf/aashedigest2007.pdf>) provides the country's most comprehensive analysis of sustainability activity at colleges and universities according to the Environmental Leader (<http://www.environmentalleader.com/2008/07/01/aashe-releases-annual-review-of-sustainability-in-higher-education/>). The document includes a section on finance and administration, with additional chapters on awards won by institutions, financial practices to further green agendas and green building projects, curriculum development, and research. The October 2008 issue of *Sustainability: The Journal of Record* (<http://www.liebertonline.com/toc/sus/1/5>) has a focus on efforts in higher education and includes an article detailing AASHE's most recent Campus Sustainability Leadership Awards.

AASHE is not the only organization keeping track of environmentally friendly actions on college campuses. AASCU's Division of Government Relations and Policy Analysis issued a June 2008 policy brief (<http://www.aascu.org/media/pm/pdf/pmjune08.pdf>) on the role of state institutions of higher education in advancing environmental sustainability through policy, programs, and practices.

In addition, the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment group issued this summer its 2007 annual report (http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/reporting/documents/ACUPCC_AR2007.pdf), and the Sustainable Endowments Institute released its College Sustainability Report Card 2008 (<http://www.endowmentinstitute.org/sustainability/CollegeSustainabilityReportCard2008.pdf>), revealing that two of every three higher education institutions have improved their green practices and polices during the last year.

The Chronicle of Higher Education provides consistent coverage to green and environmentally responsible funding sources (subscription required):

U. of Illinois Starts Construction of Sustainable Supercomputer Center

(The Wired Campus)

http://chronicle.com/wiredcampus/index.php?id=3435&utm_source=wc&utm_medium=en

U. of California at San Diego and U. of British Columbia Strike a Deal to Study Green IT

(The Wired Campus)

http://chronicle.com/wiredcampus/index.php?id=3431&utm_source=wc&utm_medium=en

Colleges to Get Help Financing Energy Savings

(Money & Management)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v54/i12/12a02602.htm>

In Search of the Sustainable Campus

(Special Report)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i09/09a01001.htm>

Gore's Nobel May Bring Even More Attention on Campuses to Environmental Issues
(*Research*)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v54/i09/09a01401.htm>

Is College Landscaping Green Enough?

(*Money & Management*)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v54/i07/07a02801.htm>

People, Profit, and Planet

(*The Faculty*)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v54/i02/02a01401.htm>

A Roadmap for Creating the Global Campus

(*The Chronicle Review*)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i43/43b01201.htm>

A Global Approach to Engineering

(*International*)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i39/39a03301.htm>

'Sustainability' From A to Z: a Round-Table Discussion

(*Campus Architecture*)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i25/25b01801.htm>

Most Colleges Get C's in Sustainability

(*Money & Management*)

<http://chronicle.com/weekly/v53/i22/22a02305.htm>

All of these reports serve as resources for identifying potential partners and finding models for launching successful green programs.

Federal Programs Supporting Green Projects

The federal government provides financial assistance for environmentally sensitive and energy efficient programs and research through several agencies. The following list was drawn from GRC's proprietary database, *GrantSearch*.

National Science Foundation

Environmental Engineering and Sustainability: Energy for Sustainability, Environmental Engineering, Environmental Implications of Emerging Technologies, and Environmental Sustainability

http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=501033

Next Deadline: 3/1/09

Environmental Protection Agency

Environmental Education Grants

<http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/pdf/solNotice2009.htm>

Next Deadline: 12/18/08

Environmental Education Division Staff, 202/564-0443

Research on the Design of Policies for Pollution Control Using Market Mechanisms, and Data Gathering for Dissertation and Early Career Research on the Pollution Control Aspects of Environmental Economics

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/ee/epa/eed.nsf/webpages/GrantSolicitations.html>

Next Deadline: 12/5/08

NCEE@epa.gov

Sustainable Skylines Initiative (SSI)

<http://www.epa.gov/air/grants/08-08.pdf>

Next Deadline: 12/17/08 Yvonne Johnson, Johnson.yvonnew@epa.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI)

http://www.csrees.usda.gov/business/reporting/stakeholder/an_stakeholder_afri

Next solicitation expected 1/09

Gail McLean, gmclean@csrees.usda.gov

U.S. Department of the Interior

Green Energy Parks Program

<http://www.energypartnerships.org/>

Last Deadline: 1/31/08

Terry Brennan, terry_brennan@nps.gov

U.S. Department of Energy

Solar America Initiative

http://www1.eere.energy.gov/solar/solar_america/funding_opportunities.html

Next Deadline: 1/7/09

Enhanced Geothermal Systems Research Development and Demonstration

http://www1.eere.energy.gov/financing/solicitations_detail.html?sol_id=173

Last Deadline: 8/12/08

Faculty/Staff Exchange Program

<http://www.inl.gov/education/faculty.shtml>

No Fixed Deadlines

Cheri Miller, 208/526-8868

Research, Development and Demonstration of Fuel Cell Technologies for Automotive, Stationary and Portable Applications

http://www1.eere.energy.gov/hydrogenandfuelcells/advanced_fc_technology.html

Last Deadline: 8/27/08

Stephanie Carabajal, stephanie.carabajal@go.doe.gov

Energy Frontier Centers

<http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=LGzfp19Q1b9CqfpFH5hrXMLTdlCpMyBhR6tFMfmJwlrJbLMyCq!>

66001986?oppld=17381&flag2006=true&mode=VIEW

Last Deadline: 10/1/08

Vicki Phillips, Vicki_Phillips@ch.doe.gov

National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL) Solicitations / Funding Opportunity Announcements

<http://www.netl.doe.gov/business/solicitations/index.html>

Multiple Programs and Deadlines

Used Energy-Related Laboratory Equipment (ERLE) Grant Program

<http://erle.osti.gov/erle/>

No Fixed Deadlines

Vera O'Connor, vera.oconnor@science.doe.gov

Private Sources of Green Funding

Environmental Defense, Inc.

Grants for Community-Based Green Projects

<http://www.environmentaldefense.org/>

Global Green USA

Grants to Stem Global Climate Change

<http://www.globalgreen.org/>

Google.org

RE<C and RechargeIT Initiatives

<http://www.google.org/rec.html>

John Merck Fund

Environment Program

<http://www.jmfund.org/>

Kresge Foundation

Environment Program

<http://www.kresge.org/>

Lindbergh (Charles A. and Anne Morrow) Foundation

Grants for Balancing Nature and Technology through Research and Education

<http://www.lindberghfoundation.org/>

MacArthur (John D. and Catherine T.) Foundation

Conservation and Sustainable Development

<http://www.macfound.org/>

Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Inc.

Sustainable Development

<http://www.rbf.org/>

Wallace Global Fund

Natural Resources

<http://www.wgf.org/>

Wal-Mart Foundation

National Giving Program - Environmental Sustainability

<http://walmartstores.com/CommunityGiving/8781.aspx>

The *Foundation Center* (<http://www.foundationcenter.org/>) has compiled a [table] (http://www.aascu.org/grc/resources/fc_top50environment.pdf) of the top 50 environmental funders among philanthropic organizations. This list is useful in identifying the range of private sources that offer assistance.

Written and compiled by Malcolm Furgol, GRC Program Advisor, November 2007. Revised November 2008.