**iCAP Portal Quick Writing Guide**

**General Tips for writing in the iCAP Portal**
Write this to an audience which understands basic concepts of sustainability and related technology, but which is not familiar with the project or its affiliated organizations. When writing a person’s name, include the full name and title at the first occurrence. Spell out organization names at the first instance (in any Project or Project Update) and include the abbreviation in parenthesis if it is used later. You do not need to spell out abbreviations for iCAP, iSEE, SWATeams, and UIUC.

Use absolute time references instead of relative ones: i.e, instead of “last year”, write “2015”. If you must use future tense in a project such as an upcoming event, remember to update it to past tense as soon as the event is over.

Write professionally in the first person (i.e. don’t write in a negative tone, don’t be overly critical, put forward the outcomes of a discussion instead of individual opinions etc.) and use the background information as well. For example, “The SWATeam met today and we agreed to each read the chapter and get comments by next week”. We want to be personable, and telling some stories from the first person, like a note in a diary, can be more engaging.

**Description Tips**Get straight to the point in explaining what the project is. Do not preface the description with justifications or statistics- if truly necessary, these can be added later or in the Background. The bulk of the description should be the project’s relation to campus.

In a specific project, do not explain well-known technologies such as solar panels; uncommon or experimental technologies can be given longer explanations. The parent project “[Solar Energy on Campus](https://icap.sustainability.illinois.edu/project/solar-energy-campus)” would be a reasonable place to describe solar technology and provide links to solar related resources.

The description should be updated as necessary to show the latest status of the project. Historical information should be archived in a project update.

**Background Tips**
This can include any relevant information from either before the project started or while it was in progress. This can draw from the project updates section. Was there a significant change of direction midstream? Were we inspired by projects at other universities? If the project is scheduled to happen on an annual basis, this is the place to say so. Are you waiting on a piece of information or a big meeting?

**Conclusion Tips**
Use this section only if the project status is “Completed” or “Cancelled.” If it was cancelled, who cancelled it and why? If it was completed, what were the results? The advantages, disadvantages, challenges faced, and lessons learned should be described here. Any possible new opportunities for the future can also be included in this section.

**Updates Tips – this is the same as Project History**
Updates should still be written to a public audience unfamiliar with the project or the people involved in it. When describing a change to the project, try to include what it was changed from: for example, instead of “We decided to move the event to the Illini Union,” consider “The event was moved to the Illini Union from the original location of Foellinger Hall.”

A project update could be written in the future tense, however, use it minimally and **always** follow up with the results update. Need to **not ignore** updates for ‘In Progress’ projects. For ‘In Progress’, request an update every month from project leader or primary contact. For projects that occur annually, indicate that no updates will happen until next event.