**Provide a brief background of the project, the goals, and desired outcome.**

Background

Ground to Ground is a network of businesses offering nutrient-rich coffee grounds for use by consumers. Businesses involved in this program collect their used coffee grounds and offer them to consumers rather than throw them in the landfill. University Housing would like to create a similar coffee ground network on the Urbana-Champaign campus to repurpose the large volume of coffee grounds being created at the dining halls.

Goals

The project has two main goals. First, the project would further minimize the amount of food items being directed to the landfill from University Dining Halls. Second, and more importantly, the program is an educational tool to demonstrate to our students how nearly every item they dispose of has an alternative use as opposed to being sent to the landfill.

Desired outcome

Our desire for this program is to become a teaching tool in the classrooms on our – as well as other campus across the country – on the repurposing of food waste. We want the coffee grounds to be used by Orchard Downs residents on their garden plots, and as a research tool for the Sustainability Living-Learning Community and Planeteers. We already have commitment from the Sustainable Student Farm to include the coffee grounds in their vermin-culture composting program starting this spring, but also want this to be a catalyst for expanding the farm offerings to mushrooms. We would like to see the coffee grounds utilized on the test permaculture plots to create a closed loop food system.

**Describe how the project will improve the sustainability of the Illinois campus and how the project goes above and beyond campus standards.**

Spent coffee grounds can easily be dumped into any of our three EnviroPure digesters, turned into grey water, and sent into the sewer system. However, this is not visible to our students, and we strongly agree with i-CAP that our sustainability efforts present an educational opportunity. The real benefit of this project isn’t the diversion of food waste from the landfills, but an opportunity to build the knowledge base of how food affects human societies and ecosystems.

**Where will the project be located? Will special permissions be required to enact the project on this site? If so, please explain and attach any letters of support at the end of the application.**

The coffee grounds collected for this project would be gathered from the six University Housing Dining Halls; Busey-Evans, Illinois Street, Lincoln/Allen, Pennsylvania Avenue, Florida Avenue, and Ikenberry Dining Hall as well as the catering operations at Illini Union and Housing Food Stores (HFS). The main process is for each of the facilities to send their used coffee grounds to HFS where they will be stored until requested for redistribution. However, we understand that in certain cases it may be easier for students or a department to pick up the coffee grounds at one of the different dining halls. In this case, special arrangements can be made to facilitate such a request. University Housing Dining Services has operational control over the facilities and vehicles that will be used to transport the materials. No special permission is needed to enact this program.

**Other than the project team, who will have a stake in the project? Please list other individuals, groups, or departments affiliated directly or indirectly by the project. This includes any entity providing funding (immediate, future, ongoing, matching, in-kind, etc.) and any entities that will be benefitting from this project. Please attach letters of commitment or support at the end of the application.**

University Housing Dining Services has the largest stake in this project. However, the residents of Orchard Downs, students enrolled in the Sustainability Living-Learning Community, members of the Planeteers student organization, the Sustainable Student Farm, the Permaculture Plot at the south farm, and the Food Preservation Lab, among others, have a stake in the overall success of this project.

**Please indicate how this project will involve or impact students. What role will students play in the project?**

Collection and redistribution of coffee grounds will be handled by existing Dining Services staff, some of whom are student employees. Students will have a larger role in this project as they drive the repurposing efforts by requesting coffee grounds for use on the garden plots at Orchard Downs, for vermin-culture composting at the Sustainable Student Farm, or the herb garden at Allen Hall for example. As the program becomes more established, we anticipate this becoming a teaching tool for different academic units on campus such as the Food Preservation Lab.

**Have you applied for funding from SSC before? If so, for what project?**

Yes, University Housing has previously applied for grants through the SSC. Along with this submission, we applied for grant funding for bicycle racks around the Student Dining and Residential Programs Building (SDRP). In the spring of 2013, we applied for funding to re-zone the lights inside SDRP.

**If the project is implemented, will there be any ongoing funding required? What is the strategy for supporting the project in order to cover replacement, operation, or renewal costs? (Note: SSC provides funding on a case by case basis and should not be considered as an ongoing source of funding)**

Annual funding is not required for the long term success of this project. University Housing Dining Services has the infrastructure in place to collect and transport the coffee grounds. The grant request for this project is to offset the initial purchasing of collection and transportation containers and promotional materials. Labor costs, replacement containers, and future promotional materials will be absorbed by Dining Services.

**In this section, please describe the impact this project will have on this campus. Which aspects of sustainability will the project address? Does the project fit within one of the iCAP goals? If so, please describe. Does the project go above and beyond current university standards and policies? Please describe.**

If successful, this project will impact many areas of i-CAP. The use of the coffee grounds at the Sustainable Student Farm will further establish organic agricultural practices on campus through the expansion of the vermin-culture composting program and mushroom growing projects. By no longer feeding used grounds into the EnviroPure digesters, we will reduce the water consumption needed to biodegrade the waste. If our annual goals are achieved, more than 7 tons of food waste will be diverted from the landfill on an annual basis. The educational and research opportunities on the uses of spent coffee grounds are endless.

**Please include any other sources of funding that have been obtained or applied for, and please attach any relevant letters of support.**

Aside from this submission to the SSC, no additional funding sources have been sought out for this project. University Housing will cover any expenses not covered by the grant from the SSC.

**What is the plan for publicizing the project on campus? In addition to SSC, where will information about this project get reported?**

Publicizing

Our initial publicizing of the project will be directed towards Orchard Downs residents who operate a garden plot, the Sustainable Student Farm for their vermin-culture composting program and the students of the Sustainability Living Learning Community and Planeteers group. For our residents at Orchard Downs we will produce an educational flyer to explain the benefits used coffee grounds will have on their garden plots and how they may attain the coffee grounds. For the greater student population we will be running ads on digital signs located throughout University Housing residence halls, and placing fact sheets in the sustainable napkin holders at each of the Dining Halls.

Reporting

In addition to reporting to the SSC, we feel this project should be documented in the i-CAP portal. Also, pending success of the program, we will submit for a Sustainability Award through the National Association of College & Universities Food Services (NACUFS).

**Please list specific outreach goals and ways in which the outreach can be measured.**

University Dining Services orders just over 40,000 pounds of coffee annually. Considering demand for used grounds during the winter months will be less than during the summer months, our goal is to collect 20,000 pounds of coffee annually for this program. Additionally, we have set a goal of redistributing 75% of the coffee grounds that are collected.