*Please submit this completed application and any relevant supporting documentation by the deadline listed on the SSC website to* *Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu**.The Working Group Chairs will be in contact with you regarding any questions about the application. If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the SSC at* *Sustainability-Committee@Illinois.edu**.*

# General Information

**Project Name:** Low Maintenance/Native Entrance Garden

**Total Amount Requested from SSC:** $19,400

**Project Topic Area(s):** [ ] Energy [ ] Education [ ] Food & Waste

 [x] Land [ ] Water [ ] Transportation

# Contact Information

Applicant Name: Ryan Pankau, Horticulture Educator

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**Project Team**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Department** | **Email** |
| Ryan Pankau | University of Illinois Extension | rcpankau@illinois.edu |
| Tabitha Elder | University of Illinois Extension | tabithae@illinois.edu |
| John Bergee | Master Gardener | jb\_99@comcast.net |
| Name | Department/Organization | Email Address |

# Project Information

Please provide a brief background of the project, the goals, and the desired outcomes:

Our project is to create a low maintenance/native planting Entrance Garden at the Idea Garden, which is an educational garden located within the university arboretum. A primary goal of this project is to advance the Idea Garden’s mission by helping others, such as the campus community to “learn to grow” through the use of environmentally responsible practices, such as incorporating natives plants species into the landscape. This specific project will take more than 3,100 square feet of lawn and convert it into a low maintenance garden incorporating native plant species. This garden will provide habitats for insect pollinators along with a variety of birds and other species. It will extend the feeding season for fauna by having early to late blooming native plantings. Additionally, this garden will improve drainage and permeability, increase carbon sequestration, and reduce input for managing the landscape. It will enhance the educational asset that the Idea Garden already is and further demonstrate sustainability.

Please provide a brief summary of how students will be involved in the project:

The Idea Garden is a campus destination for students, faculty and the larger community seeking education about “learning to grow” or a relaxing place to view beautiful plants. Thousands visit annually and benefit directly from the positive effects of greenspace on human health. The University of Illinois' very own Landscape and Human Health Laboratory (LHHL) researches these benefits.

Students benefit from the Idea Garden directly in an educational setting since classes use the Idea Garden for teaching about gardening, viewing plants that grow in our area, and a diversity of other educational uses. Each semester a variety of classes visit the Arboretum and/or the Idea Garden, specifically. During any of these visits, the Entrance Garden will be highly visible and will add to the educational value of the Idea Garden. In addition, the Idea Garden does have recreational benefit to students as many visit it in their free time or during campus events such as UIUC Family weekend. The Idea Garden may also be used for research conducted by students and faculty. This low maintenance/native Entrance Garden will have educational value to researchers using the site.

Students will have a role in the installation and planting of this garden. The student group Red Bison has offered volunteers along with another undergraduate student who contacted us to learn about creating this type of garden. These students will benefit greatly from the educational opportunity, along with the multiple sustainable practices already in use at the Idea Garden. Since the Idea Garden is open to the public and in close proximity to campus, it provides easy access for students to learn about many examples of sustainability right in their backyard.

Please provide a brief summary of the project timeline:

We would begin the garden area preparation this spring and summer of 2018 (conversion of 3,151 square feet of lawn). In fall and the following spring of 2019, we would plant out the prepared garden area.

Additional comments

Our project would make a positive and lasting impact toward sustainability along with providing continuous educational value. It would fulfill all the criteria under the Student Sustainability Committee’s Land category.