



# SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS FUND

ANNUAL REPORT  
FISCAL YEAR 2017  
(5/1/2016 – 4/30/2017)

Report prepared by the  
McGill Office of Sustainability  
August 2017

Photo: Valeria Lau



# SUSTAINABILITY PROJECTS FUND

The Sustainability Projects Fund (SPF) was created to catalyze a culture of sustainability across the campuses of McGill University. The SPF is the largest dedicated campus sustainability fund of its kind in North America, and is uniquely committed to collaboration between students and staff in its financing, decision-making, and project leadership. Since its creation in 2010, the SPF has allocated almost \$6 million in funding and has approved 171 projects, which have yielded dramatic and lasting improvements to the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of McGill's sustainability performance.

## SPF AT-A-GLANCE

**171**  
PROJECTS

APPROVED SINCE 2010

APPROXIMATELY

**\$6** MILLION

IN FUNDING ALLOCATED

**87%** OF  
PROJECTS  
ARE  
**COLLABORATIVE**

FUNDED PROJECTS RANGE

FROM **\$150** TO  
**\$150,000 +**

MORE THAN

**2,200**  
VOLUNTEERS  
MOBILIZED

**300 +**

STUDENT JOBS CREATED





# FY2017: YEAR IN REVIEW

In Fiscal Year 2017 (May 1, 2016- April 30, 2017), the SPF:

- Won a **prestigious award from the City of Montreal** for innovative work in financing the transition to sustainability on McGill campuses;
- Reached **over 3,800 stakeholders** through its communications and outreach activities, a record number;
- Received **43 applications**, the most received during any year since FY2013;
- Successfully launched a **simplified application form for projects under \$5,000** and received 17 applications using the new form;
- Solidified **Working Group recruitment processes** for the different student societies;
- Mandated an **Independent Cyclical Review** of the Fund, which confirmed that the SPF is “meeting its mandate and has created a culture that promotes sustainability throughout the McGill campus”; and
- Expanded its **SPF Ambassador program** to include a more diverse group of students, as well as to provide training and leadership opportunities.



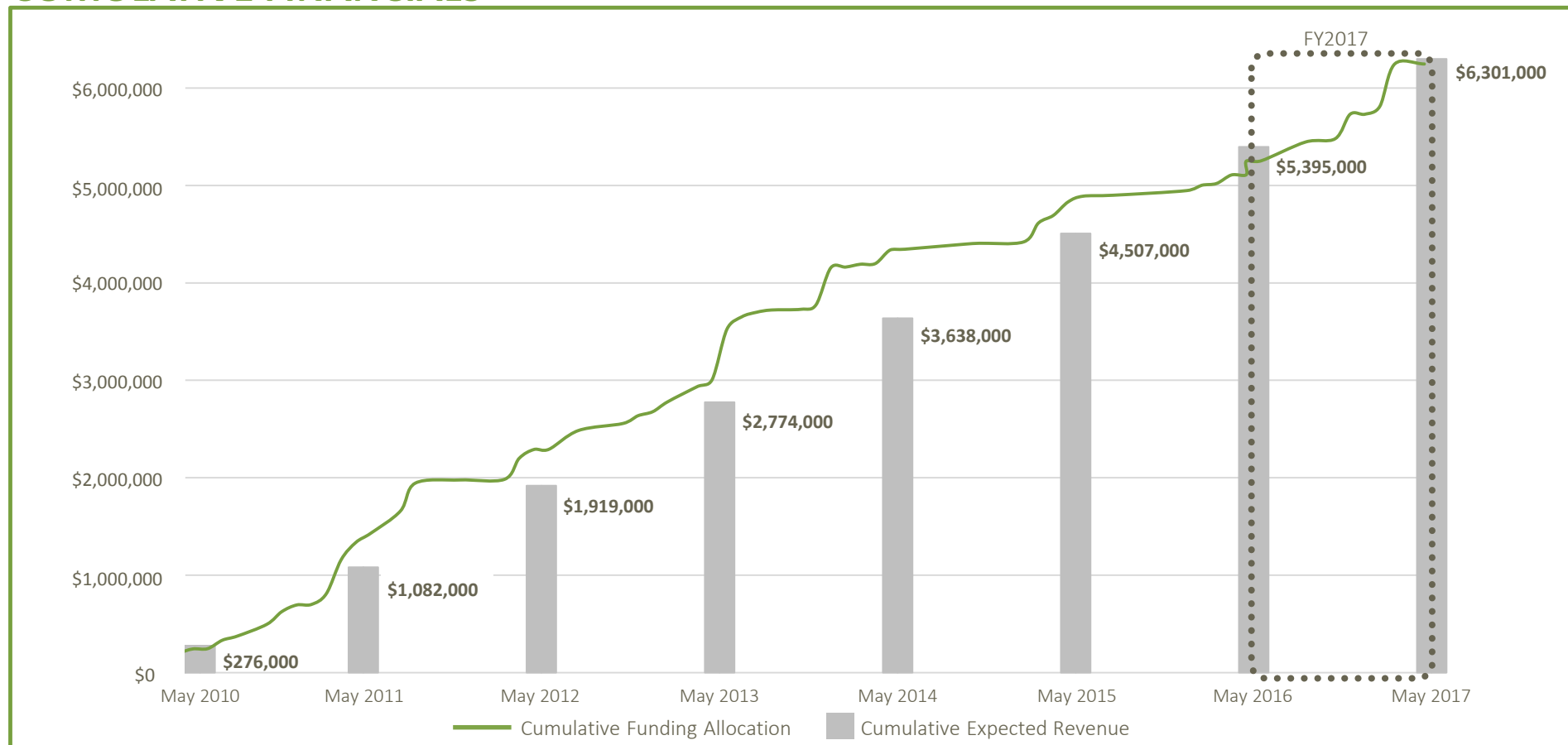
SPF Staff Kim McGrath and Krista Houser at the *Gala de reconnaissance en environnement et développement durable*. [Read more.](#)



# FINANCIALS

The SPF is funded through a student fee of approximately \$0.52 per credit, which is matched equally by McGill University. To date, the SPF has received close to \$3.1 million in student fees, which, when matched by the University, brings the Fund to a total value of approximately \$6.3 million. In FY2017, the SPF recognized \$905,000 in revenues, allocated \$835,900, and put \$300,000 on hold.\* All allocations are approved by the Working Group and any unallocated funding is carried forward. Since the Fund operates on a reimbursement basis, actual spending lags behind allocation. Similarly, the matching revenue is reimbursed at a delay based on Fund expenditures.

## CUMULATIVE FINANCIALS

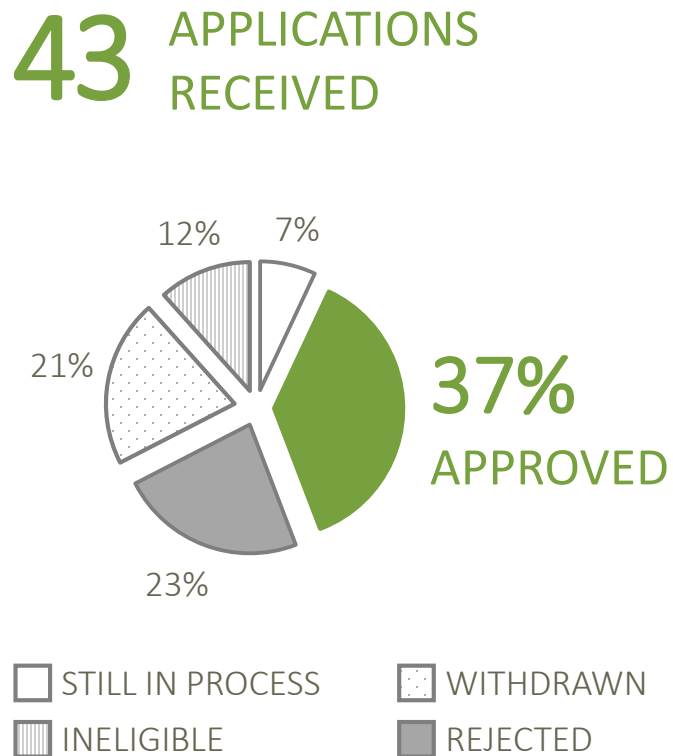


\*Allocations include approved project budgets, budget amendments awarded to teams, FY2016 hold releases, and SPF operations expenses. In FY17, \$300,000 was put on hold for an application that is approved with minor revisions needed. The funding will be released if the revisions are satisfactory. This on-hold amount is reflected in the chart above.

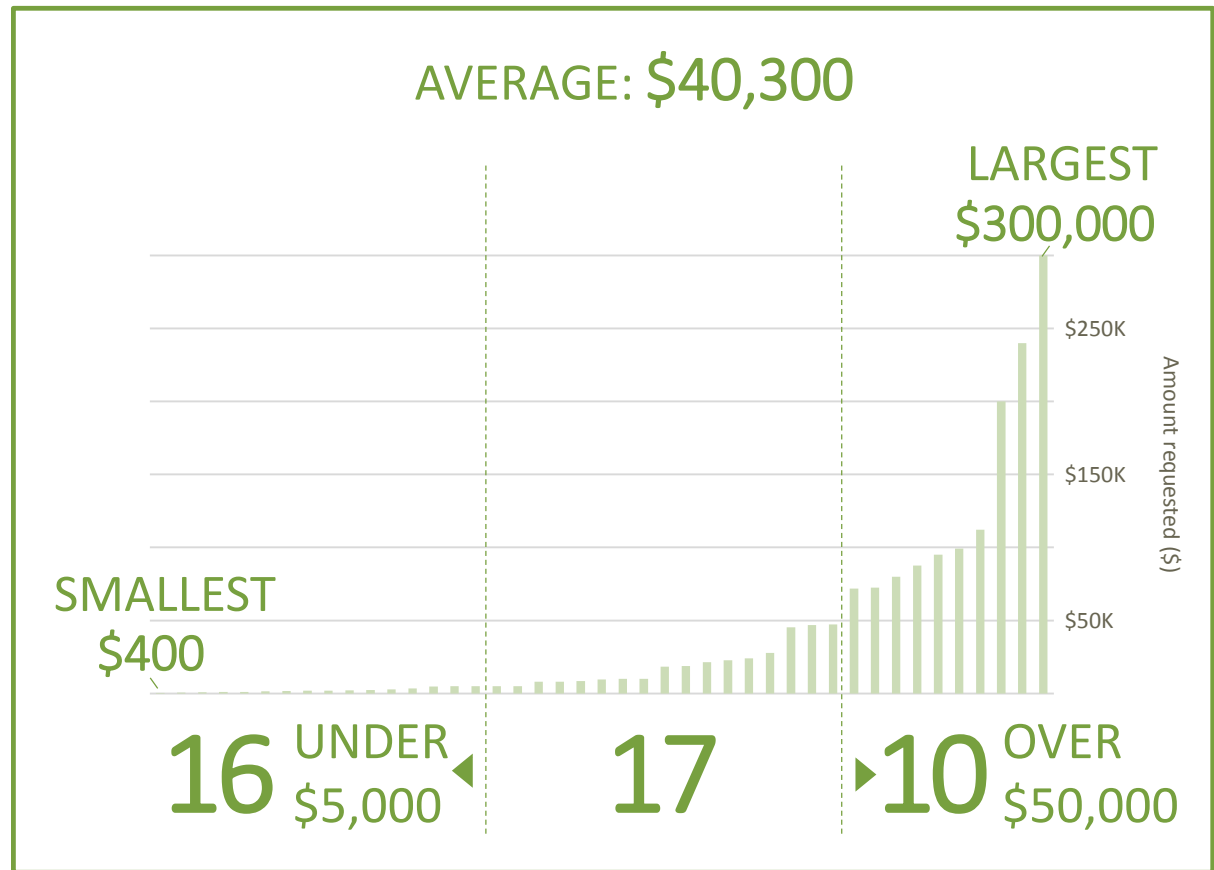
# APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

During FY2017, the SPF had three application deadlines for projects over \$5,000 and accepted applications for projects under \$5,000 on a rolling basis. This year, the SPF received the highest number of applications since 2013, which is likely a result of increased communications and outreach. Over the lifetime of the Fund, 339 applications have been received; of those, 50% have been approved. Details on FY2017 applications are below.

## STATUS OF APPLICATIONS



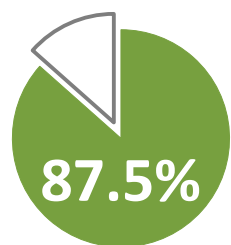
## BUDGETS REQUESTED



# PROJECTS APPROVED

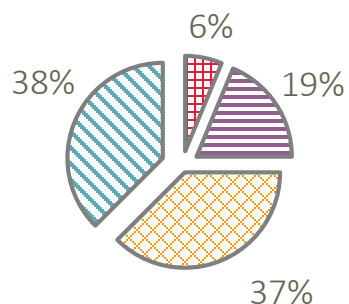
Throughout the academic year, the Working Group meets regularly to review applications and approve project funding. To date, the SPF has awarded funding to 171 projects. In FY2017, 16 projects were approved: SP0156-SP0171, which are detailed on the following page. Highlights of collaboration, alignment with McGill's Vision 2020 Sustainability Strategy, and funding amounts are shown below.

## FY2017 PROJECTS



COLLABORATIVE  
BETWEEN  
STUDENTS & STAFF\*

ALIGNED WITH  
VISION 2020  
CATEGORIES



RESEARCH

EDUCATION

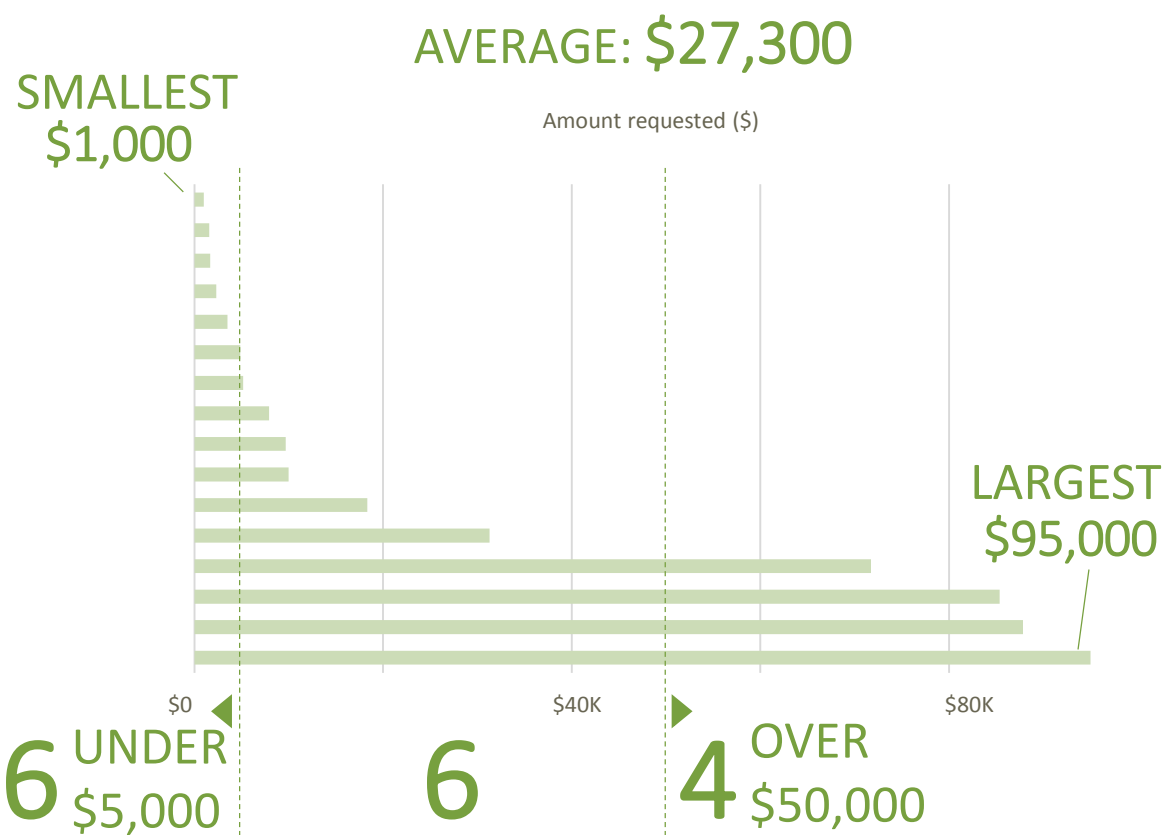
CONNECTIVITY

OPERATIONS

GOVERNANCE &  
ADMINISTRATION

\*For FY17. Over the lifetime of the fund, 86.5% have been collaborative.

## BUDGETS APPROVED



# PROJECT LIST

The SPF proudly supports a diverse selection of projects, which address many dimensions of sustainability in their purpose, planning, and management. The following projects were approved during FY17:

SP0156

**LEEDING OPERATIONS  
& MAINTENANCE**

\$95,000

SP0160

**THOMSON HOUSE  
COMMUNITY GARDEN  
UPGRADE**

\$9,666

SP0164

**RIGHT TO CAMPUS  
TOOLKIT**

\$31,304

SP0168

**MSEG COMPOSTING**

\$1,586

SP0157

**SSMU COURTYARD  
GARDEN**

\$10,000

SP0161

**MCGILL SUSTAINABLE  
EVENTS**

\$7,910

SP0165

**SUSTAINABLE  
ORIENTATION**

\$87,830

SP0169

**MACBITES FARMING**

\$4,881

SP0158

**SUSTAINABLE RAINWATER  
& FLOOD MANAGEMENT**

\$71,732

SP0162

**MACDONALD SHOWCASE  
PERMACULTURE GARDEN**

\$18,320

SP0166

**THE LITTLE FREE  
LIBRARIES PROJECT**

\$2,333

SP0170

**KOHLRABI COLLECTIVE  
UNHEATED GREENHOUSE**

\$3,502

SP0159

**MCGILL RACIALIZED  
STUDENT SUPPORT**

\$85,351

SP0163

**SOLAR GREENHOUSE  
HEATING**

\$5,173

SP0167

**SOLAR OVEN**

\$1,000

SP0171

**EDUCATIONAL  
HONEY BEE HIVE**

\$1,665





# A FEW PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

During FY2017, several exemplary active projects were highlighted on our blog. Click on the links to learn more.

## ▼ SSMU COURTYARD GARDEN

The SSMU Courtyard Garden project is transforming an unused space near the University Centre into a campus garden that will promote collaboration and education amongst community members. [Read more.](#)



Courtyard Garden Coordinators Avital Li and Shania Squires

## RACIALIZED STUDENT SUPPORT ►

Newly launched, the McGill Racialized Student Support Project aims to further equity and inclusivity on campus by raising awareness of and responding to discrimination against students of colour. [Read more.](#)



Project Leader Louise Lockhart

## ◀ SPIN BIKE GARDENS

Approved in FY2016, the Spin Bikes Gardens project made significant progress this year in designing and creating the spin bike garden spaces. Soon, the gardens will be ready for community members to take enjoyable mental and physical health breaks! [Read more.](#)



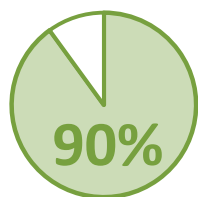
Community Projects Manager Malek Yalaoui & Project Member Adrienne Piggott



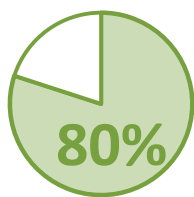
# PROJECT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The SPF offers the unique opportunity for McGill community members to develop project management skills. This experiential learning is a great complement to classrooms and workplaces across campus. In FY2017, the SPF received 10 Final Reports from projects. The learning outcomes from those reports are summarized below.

## 100% OF PROJECT TEAMS REPORTED IMPROVED KNOWLEDGE OF **SUSTAINABILITY**



REPORTED  
PERSONAL  
GROWTH



REPORTED  
PROFESSIONAL  
GROWTH

## REPORTED IMPROVEMENT IN SKILLS/ATTRIBUTES:

Project Management  
Planning

**100%**

Mentoring  
Leadership  
Teamwork

**90%**

Time Management  
Problem Solving  
Listening

**70%**

Stakeholder Engagement  
Negotiating

**60%**



Matt McCormick of the [Kohlrahi Collective](#), a project reporting in FY17. Read more about the Kohlrahi Collective's efforts to create a better local food system [here](#).

# KEY IMPACTS

The SPF tracks several key success indicators for governance and administration activities, as well as key success indicators for projects through Final Reports. Selected impacts from reports received in FY2017 are listed below.

**234 VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED**

**1,054 PEOPLE TRAINED**

**27 STUDENT JOBS CREATED**

**\$35,628 RAISED BY TEAMS  
FROM OTHER FUNDING SOURCES**

**104 PARTNERSHIPS OR  
COLLABORATIONS DEVELOPED**



Students and staff participate in an action team meeting as part of the Vision 2020 Action Teams project. [Read more.](#)



# SPF WORKING GROUP

In the spirit of staff-student collaboration that drives the SPF, the SPF Working Group consists of eight voting members: four students (two SSMU, one PGSS, and one MCSS representative), two academic staff, and two administrative staff who provide decisions and feedback on project applications by consensus. Additionally, non-voting SPF staff members chair and facilitate the meetings. To find more information about the Working Group and to view current members, please visit the SPF [website](#).

## FY2017 MEMBERSHIP

### STUDENTS



Alec Angle  
SSMU



Annie Dahan  
SSMU



Ruoyu (Connie) Sun  
MCSS



Amir Nosrat  
PGSS (through 12/16)



Megan Wylie  
PGSS (from 12/16)

### STAFF



Nii Addy  
Academic Staff



Chris Barrington-Leigh  
Academic Staff



Oliver de Volpi  
Administrative Staff



Mark Michaud  
Administrative Staff



# SPF AMBASSADORS

The SPF Ambassadors are a group of approximately 10 volunteers who champion the SPF to increase visibility and student engagement. The Ambassadors played an essential role in FY2017 in spreading the word about the Sustainability Projects Fund, reaching over 2,000 students through classroom presentations, tabling at events, as well as hosting their own SPF idea generation event.



SPF Ambassadors and Sustainability Programs Coordinator, Shona Watt.

## 2016-2017 AMBASSADORS

LOUISE COURCHINOX - MANAGEMENT  
OCÉANE DAKEY - ARTS  
SHIVSANTHOSH DAMODHARAN – M.ENG  
JULIANA FANOUS – M.SC  
PETER GARBER - SCIENCE  
KALLI GLANZ - SCIENCE  
FIONA MCRAITH - SCIENCE  
CHI PHAM - SCIENCE  
KAREEM SHAALAN – SCIENCE  
TANNER ZEKONIC - SCIENCE





# LOOKING AHEAD

The SPF looks forward to an exciting year in FY2018. Most notably, the SPF fee levy will be up for vote by all three student societies: SSMU, MCSS, and PGSS, and the University's commitment for matching funds is also set to be renewed. Communications and outreach activities will be increased this year and several events held to raise awareness of the SPF. Additionally, the SPF will launch a new application process for "tiny" projects in its continuing efforts to make funding accessible for smaller projects. The SPF will also work to encourage several large-scale, marquee projects throughout the year.

Join us in the movement to create a culture of sustainability on our campuses—one project at a time!

