Meeting Summary
May 2, 2025

Council Members Present (via Zoom):

Scott Lupin — Assoc Dir., Environmental Safety, Sustainability & Risk; Director, Office of Sustainability
Dannielle Glaros — Assistant Vice President & Chief of Staff, Office of the Vice President
Bryan Quinn — Director of Technical Operation, Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering
Stephanie Yearwood — Professor, Environmental Science and Technology
Meredith Gore — Professor and Research Director, Geographical Sciences
Yueming Lucy Qiu — Professor, School of Public Policy, and Associate Dean, Research and Faculty Affairs
Eric Wachsman — Professor, Materials Science and Engineering, and Director, Maryland Energy Innovation Institute
Mark Addy — Executive Director, Systems and Networking, Division of Information Technology
Susan Corry — Director, Engineering and Energy, Facilities Management
Thomas McMullen — Special Assistant to the Provost, Facilities Management
Anushka Tandon — Undergraduate Student Representative

Guests Present:

Javiera King — Executive Assistant, Division of Information Technology

Meeting start time: 12:30 pm

Meeting Highlights

Sustainability Fund Grant Recommendations, April 2024 — *A. Tandon*

Anushka Tandon, Chair of the Sustainability Fund Review Committee (SFRC), presented recommendations for allocating funds from the Sustainability Fund, detailing project proposals, their goals, and the SFRC's rationale for funding decisions (Appendix A). An overview of the projects reviewed in the council meeting is below.

1. Sustainable Food Production Internships: This proposal requested $168,650 over three years for 21 internships to expand hands-on summer internships at UMD's Research and Education Centers (RECs) for training in sustainable agriculture and research. The SFRC recommended awarding

$40,154 for the first year of funding for five of the seven interns to pilot the first year of the project. A question arose about the inclusion of fringe benefits for the positions, which are required for all university positions. **The proposal was approved.**

2. Mesoterps: The SFRC recommended the full $31,314 requested for the project. The Mesoterps project is designed to expand UMD's student-run Micronet of weather and environmental sensors to collect campus-wide data for weather and air quality. A question regarding the accessibility of the data for the campus and surrounding community, resolved through referencing the project's commitment to transparency in integrating weather station data into the UMD app for community access. Dannielle Glaros mentioned the importance of this data for campus safety and operations, which allows real-time alerts from the network to help Facilities Management respond quickly to severe weather. The monitoring and alert system is especially valuable as more frequent and unpredictable severe weather events are expected. A discussion arose surrounding the cost of the network server and whether UMD's Division of IT (DivIT) could host the data on their servers for a comparable cost. **The project was approved conditionally, subject to exploring the potential to work with DivIT to host the station network servers.**

3. University School Park Elementary School Garden: The SFRC recommended the entire $52,000 requested for three years of project funding to design, install, and maintain a garden and outdoor classroom at University Park Elementary School (UPES) with UMD student collaboration. Some concern was raised regarding the maintenance of the garden during the summer months, planned to be covered by UPES staff and volunteers. The Council suggested asking the proposers to restructure the grant request to be a pilot project requesting a single year of funding, to ensure appropriate coverage of garden maintenance during the summer months. Additionally, by the time the project resubmits in the fall, there is the potential for a lower requested amount for garden infrastructure, since the project would likely hear back from other granting organizations by that time. **The Council agreed not to fund this project but encouraged the applicant to consider reapplying after incorporating provided feedback.**

4. Food Justice in the Immigrant Grower Community in PGC, Research in ENSP306: The SFRC recommended the entire $11,879 requested for the project to engage UMD students in qualitative research on food justice through interviews with immigrant and refugee farmers in Prince George's County. The Council raised some concerns about the small number of interviews planned (7-10), the significant amount of funding requested for participant compensation ($150/person), and the potential risk to participants. It was decided that the requester will be asked to reapply in the fall with the questions and concerns raised by the committee addressed. **The Council agreed not to fund this project but encouraged the applicant to consider**

reapplying after incorporating provided feedback and answering outstanding questions.

Proposed Bylaw Updates - Salaries/Stipends — *T. Brinks*

Taylor Brinks presented a proposed revision to existing language within the "Appropriate Expenses" section of the Sustainability Fund bylaws under Preferred Expenses related to salary and stipend requests (Appendix B). The goal of the revision was to address the discrepancy between the existing by-law language and grant decision-making by the SFRC and Council. In addition to changing the language, the proposal also included a supplemental form for projects that include salary and stipend requests (excluding undergraduate workers and contract labor). The form requires applicants to justify how the salary/stipend contributes towards the project goals, whether alternative sources of fundings have been pursued, the classification of the faculty who would be receiving the stipend, and an explanation of institutional support from the applicant's department. (Council faculty were engaged in drafting language around faculty stipends.) These changes aim to streamline deliberations, standardize justification for salary/stipend requests, and ensure fairness across applicants **The proposed bylaw updates were approved for implementation in FY26.**

Adjourn 2:00 PM

Appendices:

Appendix A: Sustainability Fund Grant Recommendations, April 2024
Appendix B: Proposed Bylaw Updates - Salaries/Stipends

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

sustainability fund

GRANT RECOMMENDATIONS MAY 2025

Sustainability Fund Budget for FY25-FY27

Summary of Total Requests		Recommendations for 4/7/25	
FY25 Requested	$1,390,492.16	FY25 Recommendations	$135,319.21
FY26 Requested	$498,756.51	FY26 Recommendations	$0.00
FY27 Requested	$296,219.11	FY27 Recommendations	$0.00
Total Requested	$2,185,467.79	**Total Grant Recommendations**	$135,319.21
FY25 Total Available	$1,060,284.27	Rollover into next year if recommendations are approved	$563,262.52

Projects Recommended for Funding

1. Sustainable Food Production Internships
2. Mesoterps
3. University Park Elementary School Garden
4. Food Justice in the Immigrant Grower Community in PGC, Research in ENSP306

Sustainable Food Production Internship

Total Requested	$168,650.37	**SFRC Recommended**	$40,154.85
Contingencies of Award	Awarding first year of funding for 5 student internships		

Purpose: To expand hands-on summer internship opportunities at UMD's Research and Education Centers (RECs), providing students with immersive training in sustainable food production, conservation practices, and applied agricultural research.

Summary: The proposal seeks $168,650 over three years to fund 21 summer internships (seven interns per year) at the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station (MAES)-supported RECs. Interns will gain experience in farming operations, sustainability practices, and field research across UMD's 3,000+ acres of working farmland. In addition to farm and research tasks, students will engage in virtual weekly reflections, contribute to outreach via social media, and present their experiences at campus symposia such as Undergraduate Research Day. The project builds workforce readiness and sustainability literacy while showcasing UMD's leadership in agricultural research and environmental stewardship.

Submitted by: Alan Leslie, Assistant Research Professor and Director

Sustainable Food Production Internship

- Primary Goal: To train undergraduate students in sustainable agriculture through immersive, hands-on internships at UMD's Research and Education Centers (RECs), bridging classroom learning with real-world experience.
- Expected Impact:
  - Develop student understanding of sustainable food production systems.
  - Prepare students for careers in agriculture, environment, and research.
  - Increase visibility of UMD's sustainability and agricultural research missions through outreach and presentations.
- Need: Funding these positions ensures access, flexibility, and experiential learning that complements classroom education and builds technical skills in a structured manner
- Proposed Activities:
  - Farming Operations (planting, tillage, mowing, pesticide application)
  - Research Support (Assisting researchers with plot layout, treatment applications, data collection)
  - Professional Development and Outreach (Zoom check-ins, weekly social media posts, presenting at events)
  - Animal & Crop Care (Tending to livestock and helping raise crops)
  - Technical Training (experience with heavy equipment, hands on skills like welding, carpentry, basic repairs)
- Relevance to UMD Goals: Supports UMD's sustainability, workforce development, and experiential learning priorities. Builds on successful models like Terp Farm and aims to secure additional external funding post-grant.

Sustainable Food Production Internship

	Cost Per Intern	Number of Interns	Total Costs
UMD student salary (10 weeks)	$7,508.00	5 students	$37,540.00
Fringe Benefits	$442.97	5 students	$2,214.85
Poster Printing	$80.00	5 students	$400.00
FY25 Recommendation			$40,154.85
FY26 Recommendation			–
FY27 Recommendation			–
Total Recommendation			**$40,154.85**

Mesoterps

Total Requested	$31,314.86	SFRC Recommended	$31,314.86
FY25 Requested	$31,314.86	SFRC Recommended	$31,314.86

Purpose: To expand and maintain a student-led network of weather and environmental sensors (Micronet) across the UMD campus, providing real-time climate data to support research, campus operations, safety, and long-term climate resilience.

Summary: This proposal requests $31,314.86 to purchase and deploy additional weather stations and sensors—including CO_2 monitors and wet bulb globe thermometers—and to replace an aging server critical to data collection. The expanded Micronet will enhance UMD's ability to monitor localized climate conditions, inform Facilities Management decisions (e.g., stormwater response), and improve student access to real-time weather and air quality data through platforms like the UMD app. The project is fully student-managed with faculty oversight and engages students in research, communication, and technical skill-building.

Submitted by: Katie Lehman, Student Project Manager, Mesoterps – Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Science (AOSC)

Mesoterps

- **Primary Goal**: To expand UMD's student-run weather station network (Micronet) to monitor temperature, air quality, precipitation, and wind patterns across campus—informing research, Facilities Management operations, and public safety..

- **Expected Impacts**:
  - Campus Safety and Operations: Real-time alerts from the network help Facilities Management respond quickly to severe weather (e.g., flash flooding, high rainfall). In contact with Donald Hill, Assistant Director of FM
  - Student Experience and Skill Development: Students lead station installation, data collection and analysis, instrumentation — gaining skills in atmospheric science and hardware integration
  - Air Quality and Health: Sensors track CO_2 and particulate matter. Data will be integrated into the UMD app for community access.
  - Public Outreach and STEM Education: Data will be able to be integrated into the UMD app (in progress).

- **Proposed Expansion of Existing Infrastructure**:
  - Deploy 10 new Davis Vantage Pro2 weather stations (in addition to 5 in storage)
  - Install additional CO_2 sensors and wet bulb globe thermometers
  - Replace failed server to restore data logging and analytics capacity

- **Sustainability and Long Term Maintenance:** Equipment is low-maintenance (10+ year lifespan), Data backed up and monitored remotely with Healthchecks.io, Ongoing support from AOSC IT team and FM partnerships

- **Metrics for Success**:
  - Total number of weather stations and other sensors deployed, Total amount of data collected over time and across space
  - Coverage and accuracy of data compared to nearby sensors or trusted references
  - Number of real-time alerts that Facilities Management receives from our dashboard
  - Number of research publications, class projects, and student outreach presentations
  - Number of students who participate and skills gained (via pre/post surveys)

Mesoterps

Item	Cost Per Item	Total Cost
PowerEdge R6615 Server	$12,713.26	$12,713.26
Davis Vantage Pro2 Weather Station (x10)	$995 x 10	$9,950.00
Raspberry Pi 5 SC1112 single board computer (x10)	$80 x 10	$800.00
SenseCAP S2103 LoRaWAN CO2 (x3)	$129 x 3	$387.00
SenseCAP Gateway - LoRaWAN US915 (x3)	$399 x 3	$1,197.00
QUESTemp Heat Stress Monitor:	$2,269.20 x 3	$6,807.60
FY25 Recommendation		$31,314.86
Total Recommendation		**$31,314.86**

University School Park Elementary School Garden

Total Requested	$52,000	**SFRC Recommended**	$52,000
3 years of funding	Requesting all 3 years up front		

Purpose: To create a sustainable, outdoor classroom garden at University Park Elementary School that provides hands-on ecological education, healthy food access, and experiential learning opportunities for both UPES and UMD students.

Summary: The proposal seeks $52,000 over 3 years to design, install, and maintain a school garden at UPES. The garden will include raised vegetable beds, a pollinator garden, and a shaded outdoor classroom. Led by UMD faculty, students from ENSP, the Sustainability minor, IAA, and ENGL 398V will co-lead design and educational activities. The garden will produce fresh, culturally relevant food for donation to students and families, support interdisciplinary learning, and serve as a model for other PGCPS schools. Interns and volunteers will maintain the space with long-term sustainability supported by PTA partnerships and community engagement.

Submitted by: Dr. Heidi Scott, Associate Clinical Professor, GEOH/ENGL

University School Park Elementary School Garden

- **Primary Goal**: To create a sustainable outdoor garden and classroom space at University Park Elementary School that will serve as an interdisciplinary learning environment and site for community-supported food justice.
- **Expected Impact**:
  - Provide a replicable, sustainable community garden model for Prince George's County Public Schools
  - Supply culturally relevant fresh vegetables for donation to the UPES community
  - Improve environmental literacy in PGCPS and provide service-learning opportunities for UMD students
  - Support UPES in its application to become a Maryland Green School
- **Proposed Activities**:
  - Install raised beds, pollinator plantings, and educational signage in the UPES garden
  - Facilitate weekly visits and service-learning by students in ENSP, Sustainability Minor, IAA, and ENGL 398V
  - Involve UMD interns and volunteers in garden design, outreach, harvest donation, and collaborative curriculum development
- **Relevance to UMD goals**: Advances UMD's sustainability and education goals through interdisciplinary student engagement and a community-based learning model
- **Sustainability Plan:** Ongoing maintenance by UMD interns, UPES staff, and volunteers; educational programming integrated into UMD coursework
- **Key Partners:** UPES PTA, PGCPS Green Schools Program, UMD ENSP, Sustainability Minor, IAA, ENGL 398V, Campus Pantry (potential donation recipient)

University School Park Elementary School Garden

School Garden Internship	$8k/yr x 3yrs	$24,000
Garden Designer Contract- Renaud Beauchard)	$65/hour for 30 hours; co-lead ENSP 400 design capstone	$2,000
Garden Infrastructure	Deer fence, raised bed veggie garden, shade garden plantings, pollinator garden	$34,000
GFA sponsorship		-$8,000
Total Recommendation		**$52,000**

Food Justice in the Immigrant Grower Community in PGC, Research in ENSP306

Total Requested	$11,849.50	SFRC Recommended	$11,849.50
FY25 Requested	$11,849.50	FY25 SFRC Recommended	$11,849.50

Purpose: To engage undergraduate students in a community-based research project on food justice by conducting qualitative interviews with immigrant and refugee farmers in Prince George's County through the ENSP306 course.

Summary: This project will involve students in all stages of a qualitative research study: designing interview questions, conducting 7–10 in-depth interviews, analyzing the data, and producing two public displays of findings — a physical exhibit at a UMD library and a digital living archive. The research will explore how gardening and farming affect food access, cultural identity, and community-building among immigrant and refugee populations. The work is embedded in ENSP306 and fulfills UMD's goals of community engagement and reimagined learning. Students gain experience in qualitative methods, cultural competence, and environmental justice research.

Submitted by: Dr. Caroline Boules, Senior Lecturer, Environmental Science and Policy (ENSP)

Food Justice in the Immigrant Grower Community in PGC, Research in ENSP306

- **Primary Goal**: To investigate how gardening and farming impact food access, cultural identity, and community-building for immigrant and refugee growers in Prince George's County.
- **Expected Impact**:
  - Raise awareness of immigrant and refugee grower perspectives on food systems and sustainability
  - Support undergraduate training in qualitative research, cultural competency, and community-based scholarship
  - Produce both a library exhibit and publicly accessible digital archive
  - Offer UMD students a hands-on, community-engaged learning experience
- **Need:** addresses an important gap in environmental justice by elevating the experiences of immigrant and refugee communities. There is a need to understand how community gardens and farms serve not just as food sources, but as cultural, social, and political spaces..
- **Intern Duties**: Coordinate project logistics and scheduling, Support interview organization and transcription workflow, Assist with exhibit content and digital archive uploads, Help plan and execute the public presentation of findings
- **Student Responsibilities (ENSP306)**: Design and conduct 7–10 interviews, Transcribe and analyze qualitative data, Develop content for the exhibit and archive, Present findings through a public event and online platform
- **Project Outputs:** 7–10 interviews with immigrant and refugee growers, Rotating physical exhibit at a UMD library, Publicly accessible digital living archive, Public presentation of findings

Food Justice in the Immigrant Grower Community in PGC, Research in ENSP306

RA stipend, 2025-2026 school yr (40wks)	$17/hr, 5 hrs/wk, 40 wks	$3,400
RA stipend, summer 2026	$17/hr, 10 hrs/wk, 12 wks	$2,040
Participant compensation	$150/person, 10 participants, $4.95 fee per person	$1,549.50
Cost for materials	Room rentals for interviews, flyers for ads, etc	$500
Cost for physical display materials + Software cost (Atlas.ti)	Atlas.ti = $30/month, 12 months $1000 + $360	$1,360
Dr. Boules Stipend	Coordinate interviews, curate exhibit content, develop the digital archive, and organize the public presentation.	$3,000
Total Recommendation		**$21,535.00**

May 2, 2025

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO UNIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY FUND BYLAWS CONCERNING SALARIES AND STIPENDS

Preferred Criteria Language Update

There is currently a disconnect between language in the University Sustainability Fund bylaws and decision-making on Sustainability Fund grants. The preferred criteria section of the bylaws states proposers cannot request salaries or stipends, yet salaries and stipends have been funded in the past. Revisions to the current language for Appropriate Expenses are proposed on page 2 of this document.

Salaries & Stipends Supplemental Questions Form

Because salaries and stipends are so often debated amongst the Sustainability Fund Review Committee (SFRC) and the Sustainability Council, it would be helpful to proactively address many of the common questions raised to better inform deliberations. These questions have been incorporated into the proposed supplemental "Salaries and Stipends: Additional Information Request Form" on pages 3-5 of this document. The "Salaries and Stipends: Additional Information Request Form" would also provide a more equal opportunity for applicants seeking salaries or stipends to justify their request, as not all applicants are currently asked follow-up questions during the deliberation process.

The University Sustainability Council requested modifications to the bylaws to clarify criteria for faculty stipends. However, these same challenges exist for other salary and stipend requests, including graduate assistant stipends and staff salaries.

PROPOSED CHANGES TO BYLAW LANGUAGE- PREFERRED CRITERIA

CURRENT LANGUAGE FROM THE BYLAWS

Appropriate Expenses - The proposer requests Sustainability Fund money to cover the costs for materials and/or skilled labor to implement the project and not salaries or stipends. Furthermore, Fund money would cover only one-time costs and not ongoing costs.

DRAFT REVISED LANGUAGE FOR THE BYLAWS

Appropriate Expenses - The proposer requests Sustainability Fund money to cover the costs for materials and/or skilled labor to implement the project. Furthermore, Fund money should cover only one-time costs and not ongoing costs beyond the award end date. Proposers seeking salaries or stipends must complete and attach the "Salaries and Stipends: Additional Information Request Form" (below) to their application. This includes compensation for graduate assistants, faculty members, and full-time staff positions. This does ***not*** *apply to undergraduate intern hourly wages nor to contracted, skilled labor.*

Salaries and Stipends: Additional Information Request Form

Instructions: This form is only required for applicants requesting salaries or stipends. This includes requests for graduate assistant stipends, faculty stipends, and salaries for full-time staff positions. This does **not** include requests for hourly wages for undergraduate interns nor payment for one-time skilled labor contractors.

The questions on this form are aligned with the preferred criteria within the University Sustainability Fund bylaws, listed on pages 4-5 of the University Sustainability Fund application.

Please complete this form, download it as a PDF, and attach it to your grant application.

Project Name:

Project Outcomes

How would the salary or stipend directly help achieve the project outcomes outlined in the University Sustainability Fund bylaws? Please be specific.

Would the project be feasible without the salary or stipend? Please provide a detailed explanation for how the project would have to change (if at all) without the stipend or salary, including how this would impact the anticipated project outcomes and impact.

Appropriate Expenses

Have you explored alternative funding sources? If so, what sources and why is alternative funding not available or accessible? If you have applied for alternative funding and are awaiting a decision, please share the funding source, the amount requested, and the expected timeline for a decision.

For faculty stipend requests, please identify whether the requesting faculty is a Professional Track Faculty (PTK) or Tenure Faculty. (*Leave blank if you are not requesting a faculty stipend.)*

- ☐ Professional Track Faculty
- ☐ Tenured Faculty
- ☐ Pre-Tenure Faculty

For faculty wage support, please clarify how the funding will be used. (*Leave blank if you are not requesting faculty wages.)*

- ☐ Summer wages for faculty on a 9- month appointment
- ☐ Buyout to free up faculty time from teaching
- ☐ Overload pay
- ☐ Other (please specify):

Note: The Sustainability Council generally avoids funding buyouts and overload pay.

If you selected “Buyout to free up faculty time from teaching” above, please attach a letter of support from your department chair. *(Omit if this does not apply to you.)*

Feasibility and Institutional Support

For faculty stipend requests for overload pay, please confirm this project is in alignment with your department's workload policy. Please attach or link to the current policy. (*Leave blank if you are not requesting faculty overload pay.)*

Please explain how the fringe benefit cost is calculated for your department. Please be specific.

Research

For research projects, does your project align with the research criteria listed on page 5 of the University Sustainability Fund application? Please identify areas where it does and does not align and elaborate on any reasons for divergence. *(Leave blank if you are not pursuing a research project.)*