



## **Student Green Energy Fund FY2011-2012 Charter**

### **I. Introduction**

The [American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment](#), signed by USF President Judy Genshaft in 2008, obligates USF-Tampa to conduct an annual greenhouse gas emissions inventory and develop a long-term [Climate Action Plan](#) (CAP) to reduce and, eventually, eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from the Tampa campus operations and infrastructure. In 2009, the USF Office of Sustainability was established to oversee these requirements ([USF Policy 10-051](#)). Since then, the Office has created a greenhouse gas inventory (baseline AY 2007-2008) and a CAP. One of the major sources of greenhouse gas emissions identified by the CAP is energy consumption by the University. The CAP concludes that energy consumption must be reduced to lower greenhouse gas emissions and energy costs.

The Student Green Energy Fee is a nominal student fee (0.58 percent undergraduate resident per credit hour, 0.27 percent graduate resident per credit hour) that is used to assist the University of South Florida in conserving energy, reducing energy costs, lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and promoting renewable energy technologies. With approval from the Florida Board of Governors on March 24, 2011, students at each campus vote in a study body referendum every three years to determine if they support the fee and at what rate. The most recent referendum for the Tampa Campus took place on April 27-28, 2011. The referendum passed with 70 percent of students voting to approve the fee at the rate listed above. The next referendum will take place in the spring semester of 2014.

### **II. Fee Administration**

The Fee is collectively managed by the Student Green Energy Fund (SGEF) Council, which consists of 15 individuals: 12 regular (voting) members, two alternates, and one Chair.

The Student Government (SG) President nominates six student members and one student alternate from the USF Tampa Campus upon the recommendation of the SG University and Community Affairs Department or other administrative unit of the SG designated by the SG President. The Director of the Office of Sustainability (OS) nominates six faculty/staff members and one faculty/staff alternate from the USF Tampa Campus upon the recommendation of the Sustainability Initiative Steering Committee or other administrative unit of the OS as designated by the OS Director.

All appointments to the SGEF Council are made by the USF President or her/his delegate. Nominations from students, faculty, and staff are accepted by the SG President and OS Director each year in September, with appointments made no later than September 30. All SGEF Council appointments are limited to 10 months, ending August 1. SGEF Council members may seek additional (including consecutive) terms.

The SGEF Council is chaired by the OS Director, who convenes the council, oversees procedural matters, and may cast a tie-breaking vote. A simple majority of voting members (seven) is required to vote on SGEF proposals and amend the SGEF Charter. The simple majority must consist of at least three student members and at least three faculty/staff members. Vote casting by electronic means (e.g., e-mail) may be permitted as needed but is not preferred. Alternate members may be called upon to vote if a simple majority of regular voting members cannot be achieved.

### **III. Fund Management**

Fees are collected and maintained in a dedicated auxiliary account (“In the Auxiliary Trust Fund – Budget Basis”), and all expenditures for projects funded from the account are approved and paid from that account. The auxiliary fund is administered by the OS. The OS Director is the authorized signatory on the account. An objective cost review is conducted periodically in order to assure accurate estimates. Reports on project expenditures are made on a periodic basis. Unused funding for projects is returned to the fund for other projects.

Since the SGEF is maintained as an auxiliary account, a six percent withholding is required for administrative overhead. In addition, a minimum of five percent of the fees collected is held annually in reserve for contingencies and bad debt. A maximum of three percent of the fees collected can be used annually to fund a term-limited OPS staff position (“SGEF Manager”) to manage the fund, as approved by the SGEF Council. A maximum of 10 percent of the fees collected can be used annually to purchase energy monitoring equipment and related supplies and services, as approved by the SGEF Council, to ensure the efficacy of projects supported by the Fee.

### **IV. Fee Allocation**

All current and actively enrolled students as well as current employees of USF may apply for SGEF funds.

All proposals that seek to use SGEF funds must comply with the following criteria:

- proposals must address energy savings and/or renewable energy technologies that demonstrably lower energy consumption on the USF Tampa Campus,
- proposals must include an educational component that informs the USF community about the results of the project,

- all relevant university paperwork (e.g., Space Impact Request, Event Request, etc.) must be completed and approved,
- all proposed projects must have immediate application (i.e., should not be “pure” research),
- budgets cannot include salaries or stipends for USF employees but can include stipends for undergraduate students and salaries (but not tuition) for graduate assistants,
- proposals must demonstrate that funding alternatives (such as fees, grants, etc.) are not available/applicable, and
- all proposing and benefitting units must comply with the reporting requirements of the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment (<http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org>) and the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (<https://stars.aashe.org>).

All proposals that seek to use SGEF funds should comply with the following criteria:

- proposals should specify or estimate the return on investment (e.g., KWH reductions, GHG emissions reductions, and/or cost savings realized by the institution),
- project management teams should include a combination of faculty/staff and students,
- projects should seek internal/external funding matches or cost sharing with other units,
- proposals should show how the projects align with the USF Strategic Plan and/or Master Plan,
- proposals should demonstrate the sustainability of the project after the budget period has ended (e.g., a statement from the benefitting unit committing to maintain the project after the budget period has ended), and
- projects should enhance student success and contribute to institutional sustainability.

## **V. Proposal Process**

Project proposals can originate from any source within USF-Tampa as they pertain to the USF Tampa Campus, including individuals, groups, and formal and informal bodies. It is anticipated that most awards will not exceed \$100,000, unless exceptional circumstances require additional funding. Proposals must be submitted online via <http://www.usf.edu/sustainability>. There are two funding cycles during the academic year, with proposal deadlines in the first week of October (for the fall cycle) and March (for the spring cycle). Specific due dates and times for each cycle are advertised annually at least eight weeks in advance of the deadlines.

Proposals may be submitted at other times and may be recommended for funding if evaluated favorably and funds are still available. These interim projects should have a high return on investment or provide great benefit from immediate implementation. Generally, such interim cycle projects should be time sensitive or less than \$50,000 in budget.

All proposals must include:

- project title;

- PI, Co-PI details;
- organizations that will implement the project (to help determine any additional costs and resource restraints).
- project description;
- a detailed budget and budget justification documenting existing human and financial resources for the project as well as projected ongoing resource needs (total cost of ownership for the life of the project) including major equipment, contracts/services (commissioning, monitoring, etc.), and personnel costs;
- resource matching that might be provided by organizations (with appropriate commitment authority documentation);
- proposed timeline for the project with major milestones and project end dates;
- metrics on how success will be measured;
- estimated or calculated return on investment (energy, GHG emissions, cost savings), if possible; and
- plan for sustainability of the project beyond the initial project period, if applicable.

## **VI. Evaluation Process**

Proposals are first reviewed by members of the ad hoc SGEF Technical Advisory Group (SGEF TAG), an informal group of 10-20 scientific experts representing energy technologies and related fields. Members of the SGEF TAG are appointed by the Director of the USF Patel School of Global Sustainability, upon the recommendation of the OS Director. SGEF TAG members provide commentary and advice, but not funding recommendations, for submitted proposals. SGEF TAG commentary usually accompanies each proposal as they are evaluated by SGEF Council members. All SGEF TAG members must identify any conflicts of interest for any project reviewed.

The SGEF Council develops its own evaluation metrics, in concert with the SGEF Criteria, which are used in the development of proposal recommendations and prioritization. All SGEF Council members must identify any conflicts of interest for any project under review, and must refrain from voting accordingly. It is expected that the SGEF Council will complete its evaluations and forward their recommendations to the OS Director by November 1 for the fall cycle and April 1 for the spring cycle. Award recipients are notified within approximately one week of the SGEF Council's funding recommendations. The SGEF Council may, at its own discretion, award funding to projects on a contingency basis. Any contingencies must be addressed by the PI(s) of the proposed project before funding is allocated.

## **VII. Project Management**

The OS, through a dedicated SGEF Manager, provides administrative and budgetary oversight on all projects. The Principal Investigator (PI), in conjunction with the SGEF Manager and OS

Director, is responsible and accountable for all project components, including scale/scope, monitoring, maintaining, and metric measurements. Project changes that necessitate 10 percent or greater alterations to any budget category must be approved by the SGEF Council and/or the OS Director before proceeding.

Project reporting by the PI is required on a quarterly basis, mapping actual to identified success criteria with established metrics. Reports are due to the SGEF Manager by January 7, April 7, July 7, and October 7 each year of the project. A final project report is required within one month of the end of the project, unless otherwise determined by the SGEF Manager. Projects must be closed out with all accounting entries at the conclusion of the project. It is expected that an appropriate level of project management will be applied by the implementing organization.

### **VIII. Charter Agreement**

The SGEF Charter was drafted, reviewed, and approved by the Student Green Energy Fee Task Force on June 22, 2011 (with subsequent updates based on counsel from USF Provost and Executive Vice President Ralph Wilcox and USF Vice Provost Graham Tobin). The members of the Task Force include:

Christian Wells, Director [Task Force Chair]	Office of Sustainability
Kalanithy Vairavamoorthy, Director	Patel School of Global Sustainability
Lelia Proctor, Director	Facilities Planning and Construction
Siva Prakash, Associate Director	Physical Plant
Matthew Diaz, President	Student Government
Zachary Johnson, Vice President	Student Government
Brian Goff, Attorney General	Student Government
Lindsay Lewis, Director of Governmental Affairs	Students Government
Samantha Toro, Chair of Sen. Com. on Judiciary & Ethics	Student Government
Nakita Kiger, Chair of Senate Committee on Rules	Student Government

### **VIII. Charter Amendments**

The SGEF Charter was amended on January 26, 2012, by majority vote of the SGEF Council.