USGBC Excellence in Green Building Curriculum Incentive Grants
Questions and Answers

2008 is the inaugural year of the USGBC Excellence in Green Building Curriculum Incentive Grants. The goal of the program is to provide monetary support to develop innovative green building curricula across all educational levels and content areas. To foster innovative proposals, USGBC provided general submission guidelines, not a set of strict rules. USGBC received questions that merited further clarification. The questions and the corresponding answers are listed below.

1.) Can curricula be designed for professionals if they are delivered by a university or community college?

No. The program needs to be inclusive of curriculum for the following student populations: (1) pre-K to 12, (2) community and technical colleges (two-year institutions), and (3) colleges and universities (four-year institutions and graduate programs). The programs may not be professional development programs that are not associated with a degree. The intention of the Incentive Grants program is to build capacity at the student level.

2.) Is a non-profit working with pre-K to 12 schools, community and technical colleges, and/or colleges and universities eligible for the incentive grant?

Yes, as long as the curriculum is intended to be delivered through an educational institution.

3.) Could a college apply to develop projects within, or by enhancing, an existing curriculum?

The Incentive Grants program intends to seed new curricular efforts only. Schools are encouraged to submit an existing curriculum for review under USGBC’s Excellence in Green Building Curriculum Recognition Awards.

4.) Does USGBC consider green landscaping an eligible topic area under green building?

Yes. If landscaping relates to how buildings and communities are designed, built, and operated, it is an eligible topic.

5.) Does USGBC have a preference regarding residential and commercial building design?

There is no preference for projects dealing with residential or commercial building design.

6.) What exactly does USGBC consider to be “indirect costs”?

Overhead or indirect costs come about when a project uses the university’s resources. Examples include accounting, human resources and payroll (invoking, research account maintenance, preparation of financial reports, purchasing), research administration (drafting of research agreements, contract negotiation, review of research proposals, ongoing contract administration, maintenance of information on funding sources), support for the libraries, access to computer services, and the provision and maintenance of research facilities and office space.

7.) Do model buildings used for program educational components need to be LEED® certified?

The use of LEED® certified buildings is not a requirement.
8.) Besides deliverables and timelines, are there any other barometers of success that the winning proposal will be expected to meet?

No other benchmarks of success are stipulated. If the selected program achieves additional recognition during the course of the project, it should be submitted as part of the final report.

9.) Regarding the scope of the project’s outputs or outcomes, is USGBC looking for projects on a global, national or local scale?

Projects with clearly defined and validated outcomes at a global, national, or local scale will all be considered.

10.) The grant application indicated that there is no matching requirement, but will proposals with matched funds be favored?

There is no matching funding requirement. Proposals that suggest or commit to matching funding will not be favored over those that do not have matching funding. Project proposals must clearly describe their ability to achieve goals within the specified budget.

11.) Are we able to charge a nominal fee for student or school participation?

There are no restrictions as to whether fees are charged for various parts of the proposal. The rationale for charging the fee should be explained with comment on how it would affect future dissemination of the curriculum.

12.) Should references address the institution’s or an individual’s abilities (such as the program coordinator)?

The references should speak to the abilities of the program coordinator to carry out the goals of the proposed project under the auspices of the institution.

13.) After the curriculum is developed, does the educational institution maintain ownership of the curriculum or will it become the property of USGBC?

The educational institution maintains ownership of the curriculum. Key components of the curriculum will be outlined in a USGBC web-based catalog of educator resources to promote and disseminate best practices.

14.) Does the mode of instruction affect whether curricula “demonstrates significant creativity?”

USGBC cannot make a pre-determination of what constitutes significant creativity. If those submitting the proposal feel their mode of instruction is innovative, they need to cite their reasoning in their submission.

15.) Are schools, colleges, and universities outside the United States eligible to submit a proposal?

The Incentive Grants program is not currently an international program, but may be expanded in the future.