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## **IU Office of Sustainability, Office of the Provost announce new Sustainability Innovation Fund**

In a complex and rapidly changing world, innovation is essential. That's why the Office of Sustainability and the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice President are teaming up to launch a new Sustainability Innovation Fund.

"We've seen incredible progress towards campus sustainability come out of the 2020 Transitions Lab," university director of sustainability Bill Brown said, citing IU Bloomington's living-learning lab that has resulted in projects like the ongoing campus tree inventory project.

Students, with faculty and staff guidance from the IU Office of Sustainability's Environmental Quality and Land Use Working Group as well as from 2020 Transitions Lab director Andrew Predmore, are using smart phones to collect campus tree data, map tree canopy cover and quantify the many benefits of IU's iconic woodland campus now and in the future. IU professors and local high school teachers are using the tree inventory project to engage students in hands-on learning, all while solving a campus sustainability problem.

While the tree inventory represents a good example of collaboration between faculty, operations and the community for enhanced student learning experiences, Brown said innovative solutions to campus sustainability needs are needed from multiple perspectives, not just traditional environmental sectors.

"The Sustainability Innovation Fund is designed to give diverse teams of faculty, staff and students an opportunity to discover solutions to today's most pressing problems, working across multiple disciplines to bring research, teaching and operations together," he said.

Goals for the new fund include:

- Create and fund at least one major innovation per year that will measureably advance campus sustainability
- Improve IU Bloomington's score in at least one category of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's rating system
- Provide high-impact learning experiences for students
- Make measureable progress towards one or more of the university's Bicentennial Strategic Plan goals
- Provost and Executive Vice President Lauren Robel, sees the IU Bloomington campus as an emerging leader in sustainability efforts, with a campus-wide internship program, an increasing number of LEED-certified buildings, new minors and degree programs and a strong research component, that spans disciplines.

"We all are responsible for addressing sustainability in everything we do. The applied, solutions-oriented ideas that are generated through the Sustainability Innovation Fund will improve both our campus and the other campuses and organizations with whom we share our findings," Robel said. "Those who work on these projects will leave the campus a better place than they found it."

All IU Bloomington faculty, staff and students are encouraged to contribute their best ideas and work collaboratively to develop proposals. Each proposal submission, however, must name both a faculty and staff lead. See the [proposal guidelines](#) for more details.

An open orientation event is planned from 4 to 5 p.m. Sept. 16. Letters of intent are due Nov. 18, and full proposals will be due Feb. 10. Projects for the 2016-17 academic year will be announced at the spring sustainability symposium on April 7, 2017.

[Complete information about the new fund and how to submit a proposal](#) is available online.