

FGM ARCHITECTS

July 27, 2011

Mr. Paul Rowland
Executive Director
Association for the Advancement of
Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

Dear Mr. Rowland;

In March of 2011, the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) convened a Sustainability Partners Summit to launch the IIT Sustainability Partners Program. This event was attended by over sixty-five companies that offer products and services to support campus sustainability efforts, and it was the **first** effort by any higher education institution in Illinois to create on-going relationships with private-sector businesses and companies. The Office of Campus Energy and Sustainability (OCES) at IIT organized the summit with support from other campus organizations. IIT's Vice President for Business and Operations discussed their desire to create partnerships with vendors in order to have access to ideas, creativity, technology and financing not available within the knowledge base of IIT. OCES leadership provided an overview of the IIT Sustainability Plan focusing on their major themes: Culture of Sustainability; Living Laboratory; Constant Improvement; Strength in Numbers; and Professional Commitment. They also shared their campus-wide sustainability targets: Transportation; Storm Water/Landscape; Material Flow; Green Buildings; Food; Energy; and Emissions. Attendees were then allowed to ask questions of IIT and OCES representatives to better understand the short-term opportunities for their products and services at IIT and to seek clarification on how to best respond to the IIT Sustainability Partner RFQ.

The IIT Sustainability Partners RFQ process is unique in that all the responses are to be in electronic format (no paper or brochures) and that every respondent will be granted access to meet with IIT's OCES and Purchasing Department to discuss synergistic relationships for providing solutions to campus sustainability issues. In addition, vendors must demonstrate they "walk the talk" by providing information on the environmental impact of their business operations via a Corporate Sustainability Report (or other documentation). I meet with colleges and universities all across the state of Illinois (and in neighboring states), and this is the **first** time my company was ever asked to demonstrate our commitment to corporate sustainability. As a direct result of IIT's Sustainability Partners RFQ, FGM Architects calculated our carbon footprint and is

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now investigating strategies to offset our carbon emissions. We previously had created an internal Sustainability Team and a corporate Environmental Responsibility Plan, but we had not determined our company's carbon footprint. As an officer of the US Green Building Council Illinois Chapter, I applaud IIT and OCES in seeking Sustainability Partners that actually "walk the talk" with corporate sustainability programs and initiatives.



Edward Choklek
Associate
USGBC Illinois Chapter Officer