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STARS Innovation Application
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This letter shall serve as affirmation that the Yale University Microloan Program meets the criteria necessary for an Innovation Credit for the AASHE STARS assessment.

"Success depends on the active contribution of every member of the Yale community." So states the cover of the Yale Sustainability Strategic Plan. The Yale Office of Sustainability has partnered with divisions, units, and schools throughout campus in the spirit of this line. In so doing, our team realized that the Yale community was rich with innovative ideas that would both diminish the university's environmental impact and help to save money. Frequently, the concepts we heard about were not capital-intensive, but in light of current budgetary restraints, sometimes even small catalytic amounts are not available – even for projects that promised relatively swift turn-around times. In light of this, the Yale Office of Sustainability partnered with the Yale administration to launch the Yale Sustainability Microloan program.

The Yale Sustainability Microloan Program is aimed at engaging all members of the Yale community in helping to enhance the culture of sustainability at Yale. It is intended to both foster positive change and help call attention to the connections between financial and environmental prosperity. Yale students, faculty, and staff are invited to apply for short-term loans between \$500 and \$100,000 in support of initiatives that will improve the University's environmental performance and generate real cost savings.

Twice annually, interested members of the Yale community are invited to submit applications that overview a sustainability concept, identify the capital investment required, and describe the expected cost savings or revenues that the initiative will generate. A panel comprised of representatives from Finance and Business Operations, Facilities, Investments, Office of Sustainability, and faculty reviews the proposals and selects winning projects.

To-date, on a basic level this program has proven to be a success in its capacity to leverage cost-saving ideas around campus. A surprising additional benefit was that nearly half of the proposed projects withdrew from the review process before completion because the application development highlighted the feasibility and benefits of the proposed initiatives. In this way, this program has been a double success.

With thanks for your consideration,



Melissa Goodall