

February 15, 2012

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
1536 Wynkoop Street, Suite 100
Denver, CO 80202

Re: STARS Innovation Credit

Dear AASHE STARS Steering Committee:

The purpose of this letter is to affirm my belief that the suite of funding mechanisms for sustainability described in STARS Innovation Credit IN-3 meet the criteria for STARS Innovation Credits. Each of the three programs described have originated from different areas of the University, but they are all aimed at creating financial structures necessary to support sustainability on a continuing basis. As Manager of Sustainability Programs for the Darden School of Business, I have experience with both the difficulties inherent in financing sustainability, and the critical importance of solid financial analysis in implementing Darden's sustainability actions.

Each of these three programs features a unique financial element. The Shared Energy Savings Pilot utilizes economic incentives to promote building occupants to give greater consideration to their energy use. The Grounds Improvement Fund promotes engagement among the University community to consider their surroundings and identify opportunities for improvement. And, here at Darden, the produce purchase agreement with Appalachia Star Farm helps to support Darden's goals to source more foods locally while enabling a small, local farmer to expand operations.

Taken together, these programs represent a trend of innovative financial models to support sustainability at the University of Virginia. Better yet, each of these programs can be easily replicated at other colleges and universities.

Sincerely,



Erika K. Herz

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