

Sustainable CT starts new fund

EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

WILLIMANTIC — Connecticut residents are poised to lead the way toward a climate-resilient future through projects making change at the local level.

Sustainable CT, an initiative run by the Institute for Sustainable Energy at Eastern Connecticut State University, recently launched the Community Match Fund.

The fund is helping to bring projects across the state to life by providing funding as well as fundraising coaching and support to residents and organizations with ideas to make their communities more sustainable.

Connecticut residents can access that funding and support by crowdfunding on Ioby ("In our backyards"), a national crowdfunding platform. Projects will receive dollar-for-dollar matches from Sustainable CT's Community Match Fund for every dollar that they raise.

Among projects already leveraging the support of the Community Match Fund is a project working to remediate a contaminated former industrial site in Hartford. Working together with local students, the project's leaders will decontaminate the site and turn it into a garden and community space.

In addition, Windham residents are leading projects to plant trees and to develop an agriculture-based youth entrepreneurial program.

Other projects include hosting a film festival in Norwalk, building community gardens in New London, establishing a food recovery program in Hamden, creating outdoor classrooms in Bristol and promoting historical/recreational points of interest in Thompson.

Projects are planned in more than 10 cities and towns statewide, with more to come.

"What's so exciting about this partnership is that it recognizes the power of people working together to make change in their communities," says Lynn Stoddard, executive director of Sustainable CT. "We are excited to support locally led projects that build strong, inclusive communities while making a big impact on the state."

Sustainable CT provides a roadmap of sustainability best practices for towns, technical assistance, funding and recognition through certification.

Forty-seven towns and cities across Connecticut have earned the Sustainable CT certification, demonstrating accomplishments in nine impact categories including inclusive and equitable communities, cleaner transportation, vibrant arts and culture, natural resource stewardship and affordable housing.

As part of the Community Match Fund opportunity, residents play a leading role in creating a more vibrant and resilient Connecticut and municipalities will be eli-

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gible to earn points toward Sustainable CT certification for all projects that take place in their communities.

The Sustainable CT Community Match Fund is supported by the Smart Seed Fund, the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation and the CT Green Bank.

To start a project, visit ioby.org/sustainablect or reach out to Sustainable CT's Community Outreach Manager Abe Hilding-Salorio at hildingsalorio@easternct.edu or at 860-465-0256.

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