

“Make Irchel More Sustainable!” Grant

Sustainability Committee of the Faculty of Science

The “Make Irchel More Sustainable!” (MIMS) Grant supports members of the UZH community who want to improve sustainability at the Irchel Campus. It is joint initiative of the Dean and Sustainability Committee of the Faculty of Science to promote active citizenship and social and environmental awareness in our Irchel community. Successful applicants can receive up to 5,000 CHF to implement small-scale sustainability projects. Previous grantees include the Irchel Nature Trail team and the Irchel Student Garden team.

i) Background

What is sustainability? We understand sustainability as the decisions, processes and actions aimed at improving resource management (e.g., reducing consumption, reducing emissions, increasing efficiency), while keeping high or improving people’s well-being (e.g., working conditions, health, education). In the long term, sustainability leads to sustainable development. Our definition stands on three pillars: environmental protection, social equity and economic sustainability. Projects aimed at being improving sustainability should take a conscientious approach towards these three components, though a project could certainly specialize in just one component. We invite projects from varying academic and social domains, such as ecology, economy, politics and culture.

The Irchel Campus is primarily an academic campus, but it is also connected to the forests of the Zürichberg and the ponds and fields of the Irchel park. The campus fosters a diversity of visitors and activities, in close connection with the surrounding community. The campus will also undergo vast expansion and renovation in the next 30 years. In this time of great change, it is critically important to keep our eye on campus sustainability not only to conserve the biodiversity and ecosystem services presently on campus but also to take advantage of change and renovation to improve campus life for both people and nature.

The goal of the MIMS grant is to foster collaboration and to catalyze action. We invite anyone in connection with the Irchel Campus, in particular students and non-academic staff, to be creative and submit proposals for projects that improve sustainability and/or make it visible.

ii) Eligibility

All bachelor, master and PhD students, postdocs, and scientific and non-scientific staff of the University of Zurich are eligible to apply. It is favorable to show a connection to the Faculty of Science, as the project should take place at/around the Irchel campus.

iii) Project specification

We are looking for well-designed projects that:

- Highlight a current issue of interest, problem or shortfall in the management and usage of the Irchel Campus or in the campus life of students and staff
- Are feasible and compatible with campus regulations (we can advise you here) and can be implemented with at least partial results within a year
- Include systems for continuation of the project beyond the applicants’ time at Irchel

- Would have a clear benefit for the Irchel Campus community (biotic or abiotic!)

iv) Application

- Applications should include:
 1. Short email introducing yourself and the project
 2. A project outline attached to the email
- The project outline should be sent as one single document containing:
 1. **Problem to be addressed:** description of the issue of interest, how it relates to sustainability and what is currently being done about it
 2. **Solution proposed:** goal of the project, statement on positive outcomes it would bring, technical aspects on how it would be implemented
 3. **Budget:** Approximate expenses and incomes, including other sources of funding already applied for or secured
 4. Tentative **schedule** for implementation
 5. Name, affiliation and role in the project for all **participants** involved.

v) Submission

Applications will be accepted throughout the year. An email and attached project outline should be sent to:

Mrs. Sara Petchey
MNF Sustainability Committee
sustainable@mnf.uzh.ch

vi) Award

The MIMS can allocate a maximum of CHF 5,000 per year to worthy projects. The grant money should be used for expenses associated with the project and cannot cover salaries, personal expenses or items and equipment not justified for the purpose of the project.

The members of the MNF Sustainability Committee can be asked for advice at any time, as needed. A member will be assigned to assist each awardee, according to their background and expertise. Further resources will be suggested for development and implementation of the project.

vii) Jury

The members of the MNF Sustainability Committee are professors, staff and students, who work voluntarily to improve the sustainability of people and processes in our faculty. Our work has strong support from the MNF Dean's office and the Sustainability Commission UZH. Current members of the committee are named in our website, <https://www.mnf.uzh.ch/en/fakultaet/policies/nachhaltigkeit.html>.