



Sustainability at UW-Madison: Spring 2022

Strategic Initiatives

- UW-Madison submitted its second Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) [report](#) in spring 2022. The university improved in the categories of research and scholarship, student orientation, continuing education, and construction and demolition waste, though it will maintain its Silver rating.
- Over 20 renewable energy and energy efficiency projects are underway or in the planning stages thanks to the Physical Plant's \$3.2 million strategic allocation for FY21. Many of the projects involve students thanks to collaboration with the [UW-Madison Green Fund](#).
- UW-Madison and Alliant Energy will partner on a [solar and agricultural research project](#) at the Kegonsa Research Station near Stoughton, Wisconsin. At maximum output, the project is expected to generate enough energy to power more than 450 homes. UW-Madison will receive renewable energy credits generated by the solar project.

Research

- Students from the Climate Action Planning: Sustainable Transportation course, taught by Professor Carey McAndrews, teamed up with the Office of Sustainability and Transportation Services to [develop recommendations for UW-Madison's transportation fleet](#).
- Office of Sustainability-sponsored researcher Henry Hundt is working with Professor Morgan Edwards's [Climate Action Lab](#) to impact renewable energy deployment in Wisconsin using satellite data.
- UW-Madison graduate student Seth Spawn-Lee has been assisting with an effort to map and identify worldwide carbon sources that are vulnerable to release from human activity.

Student Involvement

- The Class of 2022 chose the UW-Madison Green Fund as the [recipient of the Senior Class Gift](#). The Green Fund supports student projects that address the environmental footprint, social impact, and operating costs of campus facilities to bring about long-standing impactful change.



Student members of Slow Food UW prepare one of their weekly meals in celebration of Earth Week in April 2022.



76
departments
that conduct
sustainability
research at
UW-Madison



329
sustainability courses
offered during
the 2020-2021
academic year.

- UW-Madison celebrated its fifth annual [Earth Week](#) in April, with events organized by the Office of Sustainability alongside 20 partners from across campus.
- Graduating Badgers and their families experienced a greener commencement in May 2022, including digital programs, updated recycling information, and integrated messaging about UW-Madison's sustainability efforts.

Green Fund

The [Green Fund](#) offers support for student projects that make campus more sustainable. With additional funding from the utility carryover budget, 2021-2022 projects included:

- Adding additional panels to complete the solar array on Gordon Dining & Event Center.
- Identifying [47 bus shelters for solar-powered bus route mapping](#); 20 panels will be installed over summer 2022.
- Proposing projects to collaborate with the Physical Therapy Department to optimize campus lighting and promote wellness, and to collaborate with the Grounds Department to electrify their equipment.



Wisconsin Experience

- In March, UW–Madison [participated in a worldwide teach-in on climate and justice](#). Faculty and staff from a range of departments presented concurrent sessions on topics like global climate wisdom, climate change and the Midwest, and food justice and climate change.
- Co-led by a student from UW–Madison, the [Midwest Climate Collaborative Student Systems Conference](#) hosted students from all the Big Ten schools, UC Berkeley, Johns Hopkins, Cornell, and others.

Staffing

- This summer, the Office of Sustainability will welcome 18 new undergraduates into its [student intern program](#) for 2022–2023, the largest cohort in Office history. The cohort will include rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors from many majors, including psychology, conservation biology, engineering, computer science, political science, economics, math, physics, chemistry, dance, legal studies, philosophy, and communications, as well as environmental studies and sciences.

Alumni

- Several UW–Madison alumni were highlighted in a [recent article](#) that summarized the ongoing progress on their Green Fund lighting projects.
- John Daugherty '09 of SunVest Solar is part of the project team that will help create UW–Madison's first [agrivoltaics solar research site](#) at the Kegonsa Research Campus.



27%
reduction in total
waste generated
per campus user
between 2007-2020

- Office of Sustainability interns are [leveraging their campus sustainability experience beyond graduation](#). Outgoing seniors plan to attend graduate school, join nonprofit food justice efforts, and work in sustainability and energy analysis consulting.

Honors & Mentions

- UW–Madison's Director of Sustainability Education & Research, Andrea Hicks, won the [Laudise Medal](#) in recognition for her outstanding achievements in the field of industrial ecology. Hicks was also [awarded the Fulbright Award](#) to spend the spring 2023 semester at the University of Limerick, researching sustainable batteries.
- Staff, faculty, and students from UW–Madison participated in the [UW System Board of Regents meeting](#) in April to share strategies for more effective, coordinated, and committed engagement in sustainability system-wide.



“We are positioning UW–Madison to take its rightful place as a leader in sustainability, not only in the conventional sense of reducing our environmental impacts and improving our operations, but also in leveraging our truly world-class faculty involved in climate research as well as channeling the passion and talents of our remarkable students. We also want to be sure that our efforts pay particular attention to “social sustainability,” including how we honor and engage members of our Native Nations, how we address environmental injustices, and how we examine issues of diversity and inclusion in the environmental movement.”

–Chancellor Rebecca Blank