

# Sustainability Working Group (SWG) Report

As of July 2020

## Introduction

### Mandate and Purpose

To provide strategic direction and recommendations for the evaluation, planning, development, communication and implementation of initiatives aligned with the university's sustainability goals and the carbon reductions targeted by the [Queen's University Climate Action Plan](#).

### SWG Composition

The SWG is co-chaired by Donna Janiec, Vice-Principal (Finance and Administration) and Teri Shearer, Deputy Provost (Academic Operations and Inclusion). SWG members include a diverse representation of the Queen's community including staff, faculty, students and alumni. The 2020 member composition can be found on the [Sustainability Working Group website](#).

## Progress To Date

- Partnership with [Sustainable Kingston](#)
  - A new partnership between Queen's University and Sustainable Kingston's [Green Economy Leader Program](#) was announced on October 1, 2018, and provides an opportunity for all members to learn and share best practices. The Queen's Sustainability Working Group was also announced at this event, with its inaugural meeting taking place on October 26, 2018.
- [Terms of Reference](#) approved by the SWG
- Sustainability @ Queen's learning module
  - This module was presented to the SWG and launched to the Queen's community in early 2019. It provides staff and faculty with an overview of sustainability initiatives at Queen's and highlights opportunities to get involved in creating a culture of sustainability on campus and beyond. These sessions have been offered regularly through the HR Learning Catalogue.
- University Climate Change Coalition (UC3) Membership and Cross-Sector Forum
  - Extending its commitment to combating climate change, Queen's joined the [University Climate Change Coalition \(UC3\)](#) in February 2019. The UC3 is a group of leading North American research institutions united in a collaborative effort to accelerate local action against climate change.
  - The [Queen's UC3 forum](#) was part of the university's participation in the group and was developed with input from the SWG. The event brought together experts and

community members for a daylong discussion of climate change and the university's role in protecting the environment.

- Sustainable Queen's Brand Refresh
  - The goal of the new [Sustainable Queen's rebrand](#) is to connect sustainability activities across our campus in a fruitful way, with a view that sustainability is a core component of the university's identity. This new approach was developed with input from the Sustainability Office and Sustainability Working Group members. The brand was launched during the 2019 Sustainability Week.
- Collaboration with Sustainable Kingston on 2020 Kingston Climate Change Symposium
  - Leveraging the partnership with Sustainable Kingston, Queen's was one of the sponsors for the Climate Change Symposium and actively promoted participation in the event.
- Sustainability Reserve
  - With the support of the Provost, a sustainability reserve was created. The funding is derived from in-year utility budget savings, and is used to support sustainability initiatives endorsed by the SWG.
  - Funding allocations/contributions towards projects: West Campus boiler project, engineering design and feasibility study for the Strategic Lab Revitalization project, bird/window strike film project, new secure bike storage campus sites, [NetZero app](#).
- Alternative Transportation Sub-Working Group
  - The [Alternative Transportation sub-group](#) was launched in early 2020 and is exploring processes to encourage more up-take of alternative transportation options including carpooling, transit, cycling, and walking.
- Hospitality Services for Sustainable Kingston Organizational Champion Award
  - Sustainable Kingston recognized the efforts of Queen's Hospitality Services to make its carbon footprint smaller by naming it the 2019 Organizational Sustainability Champion. At one of the SWG meetings, group members had an opportunity to learn about the range of initiatives that Hospitality Services offers to lessen environmental impact. The successful nomination was submitted by the Office of the VP (Finance and Administration).
- Responsible Investing: QBACC Endorsement Statement
  - The SWG supported QBACC's conversation with the university on sustainable investing practices. The endorsement statement was as follows "The Sustainability Working Group strongly supports QBACC's engagement with the Board of Trustees to ensure that the university transforms its investment criteria to actively pursue sustainability."

## Upcoming Initiatives

- Launch of the Sustainability in the Curriculum Sub-Working Group
  - [Draft terms of reference.](#)
- Launch of the Campus and Community Engagement Sub-Working Group
  - [Draft terms of reference.](#)
- Launch of Sustainable Living series
  - This initiative focuses on the incorporation of sustainable practices into our everyday lives. Pilot learning sessions are being offered in May (Sustainable Living Through Food) and June (Low Impact Living). The full series is expected to launch in Fall 2020 and will include session themes such as home energy tips, Indigenous worldviews, sustainable holidays, eco-anxiety and gardening basics.

## Conclusion and Looking Ahead

- The SWG has been active and successful in furthering sustainability initiatives that advance the Climate Action Plan and create a culture of sustainability at Queen's University. Over the coming year, it will leverage the engagement of the sub-working groups to expand sustainability initiatives and impact in the academe and in the community.
- The SWG will align its priorities with the Principal's vision once released.