



Postsecondary Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

College or University Certifications

The signature of college or university President (or equivalent) on the next page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the institution’s eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority’s jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university is providing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a compliance review.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the college or university concluding that the nominated college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
5. There are no findings by Federal Student Aid of violations in respect to the administration of Title IV student aid funds.
6. The college or university is in good standing with its regional or national accreditor.
7. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Award

Name of President/Chancellor: Morton Schapiro

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official College or University Name: Northwestern University

(As it should appear on an award)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.



(President’s/Chancellor’s Signature)

Date: 2/8/2022

Nominating Authority’s Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the college or university’s eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority’s knowledge.

1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority’s jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety




requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: Illinois Board of Higher Education

Name of Nominating Authority: Ms. Ginger Ostro
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.



(Nominating Authority's Signature) Date: 2.22.22

SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications, narrative summary, documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars, and photos should be submitted online according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509
Expiration Date: December 31, 2023

Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.



Illinois Green Ribbon Schools Post-Secondary Application

Background

Thank you for your interest in completing the Illinois Board of Higher Education's application for nomination to U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Award. ED-GRS recognizes schools, districts, and postsecondary institutions taking a comprehensive approach to sustainability, incorporating environmental learning with improving environmental and health impacts.

Becoming a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School, District Sustainability Awardee, or Postsecondary Sustainability Awardee is a multi-step process. The first step is to complete and submit this form to be selected as a nominee by your state education agency or equivalent.

Once selected as a nominee by your state education authorities, the second step of the process requires signatures certifying compliance with all applicable civil rights, Federal Student Aid, health, safety, and environmental statutory and regulatory requirements. You may view the certifications that you will be asked to make in the Nominee Presentation Forms [here](#).

Finally, your nomination materials, including the signed Nominee Presentation Form, documentation of progress in all areas of the award, and several photographs, will be sent to the U.S. Department of Education (ED). ED notifies national selectees in the spring, inviting them to send representatives to attend a ceremony in Washington, D.C. in the fall. Selection is based on documentation of the nominee's progress in the three ED-GRS Pillars:

Pillar I: Reducing environmental impact and costs;

Pillar II: Improving the health and wellness of students and staff; and

Pillar III: Offering effective environmental and sustainability education.

Schools, districts, and postsecondary institutions demonstrating progress in every area will receive highest scores. It may help to assemble a team with expertise across these areas to complete the application. You may also wish to consult [Green Strides](#) for programs related to each Pillar.

Applications should be no longer than 18 pages.



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College & University Applicant Information

1. College/University Name: Northwestern University
 Street Address: 633 Clark St.
 City: Evanston; County: Cook
 Zip: 60208-1100
2. Website: <https://www.northwestern.edu/>
 Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/NorthwesternU>
 YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/NorthwesternU>
 Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/northwesternu>
 Twitter: <https://twitter.com/northwesternu>
3. President/Chancellor Name: Morton Shapiro
 President/Chancellor Email Address: nu-president@northwestern.edu
 Phone Number: (847) 491-7456
4. Lead Applicant Name (if different): Cria Kay
 Lead Applicant Email: cria.kay@northwestern.edu
 Phone Number: 847-467-4286

Size, Setting & Enrollment Profile

| | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public 4-Year <input type="checkbox"/> Public 2-Year <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Non-Profit | Graduation Rate: 94.9% Average Institutional Net Price: \$28,344 | Undergraduate Enrollment: 8,194 Graduate Enrollment: 13,878 | % of Undergraduates receiving Pell Grants: 19% Minority Serving Institution (specify all that apply): No |
|--|---|--|---|

1. Is your college or university participating in a local, state or national program which asks you to benchmark progress in some fashion in any or all of the Pillars?

Yes No Program(s) and level(s) achieved: AASHE STARS (Gold Ranking); ENERGY STAR Partner Of the Year Award (2018, 2019); ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year – Sustained Excellence Award (2020, 2021)

2. Has your college or university received any awards for facilities, health or environment?



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Yes No Award(s) and year(s): AASHE STARS (Gold Ranking, 2020; Silver Ranking, 2017); ENERGY STAR Partner Of the Year Award (2018, 2019); ENERGY STAR Partner of the Year – Sustained Excellence Award (2020, 2021); Illinois Sustainability Award (2018); Bicycle Friendly University (Silver Status, 2016); EPA Green Power Leadership Award (2015); Tree Campus Higher Education Recognition (2014, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021); Illinois Governor’s Sustainability Awards (2013); Citizens Utility Board Energy Saver Challenge, Outstanding Work to Promote Energy Efficiency Award (2012); LEED Certification of 23 buildings; AIA Chicago 2017 Distinguished Building Awards: Northwestern University Kresge Centennial Hall and the Kellogg School of Management Global Hub

Overview Summary Narrative for Highlights Report (Recommended 2 Pages)

Provide a narrative describing your institution’s efforts to reduce environmental impact and costs; improve student and staff health; and provide effective environmental and sustainability education. Include unique and innovative practices and partnerships. Be sure to cover every ED-GRS [Pillar](#) and underlying element in this overview of your work. See some examples in our past [Highlights Reports](#).

As one of the world’s leading academic institutions, Northwestern strives to be exemplary in addressing sustainability, climate change, and the opportunities and challenges they pose. The University is dedicated to creating a healthier, greener, and more sustainable campus both in its operations and culture.

Our efforts are guided by Northwestern’s 2017 inaugural Strategic Sustainability Plan, which identifies targets for reducing the University’s greenhouse gas emissions and waste; outlines strategies for increasing efficiency in energy, water, and resource use; offers measures for incorporating sustainability into university purchasing and operational practices; and sets goals for encouraging the participation of academic and operational stakeholders in the University community. As we move into 2022, we are setting our sights on the future. The next 5-yr plan is slated to be released by summer 2022 and we are developing an even more ambitious agenda for the coming years to ensure that sustainability is integrated into our operations, educational engagement activities, and community service endeavors. While we are encouraged by our progress, Northwestern understands there is more to be done to carry out our mission and ensure the environment remains a priority.

Pillar 1: Reduced Environmental Impact and Cost

Northwestern operates and owns over 16 million square feet of real estate across its Chicago and Evanston, Illinois campuses. Northwestern is committed to identifying innovative solutions to advance energy conservation and reduce the institution’s environmental footprint. In 2020 and 2021, Northwestern became the first university to receive the EPA’s highest honor for leadership in energy efficiency—the prestigious ENERGY STAR® Sustained Excellence award. Northwestern also received the second highest rating (STARS Gold) for collegiate sustainability from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) in 2020. Northwestern maintains its ranking as a Tree Campus Higher Education certified campus from the Arbor Day Foundation and is a Bike Friendly University certified campus from the League of American Bicyclists.

These recognitions are a testament to Northwestern’s unwavering commitment to sustainability. As part of its sustainability mission, Northwestern partners with forward-thinking organizations such as Clearway Energy, one of the largest developers of clean energy in the US, and Ameresco, Inc., a leading cleantech integrator specializing in energy



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efficiency and renewable energy. The partnership with Clearway Energy will create 16 local solar projects while Ameresco's work on campus will lead to significant reductions in the university's carbon footprint through infrastructure upgrades and retrofits. Additionally, all new campus construction is required to meet or exceed LEED Gold certification. The university currently hosts 23 high-performing, LEED-certified buildings. Campus buildings feature an array of sustainable design features including native landscaping, bird-safe glass, vacancy sensors for lighting, low flow plumbing fixtures, water bottle filling stations, electric vehicle charging stations, bioswales and retention basins, reflective and green roofing, and chilled water systems for equipment cooling and air conditioning. 40 percent of campus grounds are urban tree canopy, providing native habitat for wildlife. Grounds also include 6.3 miles of bike lanes, making non-vehicle transportation more accessible. Northwestern's waste and resource conservation efforts also include single-stream recycling, electronics recycling, and composting.

Pillar 2: Improve the Health & Wellness of Students, Faculty, and Staff

Northwestern understands that sustainability, health, and wellness are intricately connected. Northwestern community members have access to 12 athletics and wellness facilities, including outdoor and indoor sports fields, massage therapy, and coaching on fitness for the whole family. Student emotional and mental health are supported through the Counseling and Psychological Services program, which provides short-term individual counseling, group therapy, coaching, sleep health, and connections to local providers. Cultural support is fostered through the Campus Inclusion & Community Center, the Multicultural Student Affairs Office, the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center, and AccessibleNU. Each center serves the Northwestern community by fighting against racism, classism, ableism, sexism, and homophobia, providing opportunities for people to engage in and collaborate across lines of difference. Faculty and staff can participate in the YourLife Wellness Program, which features resources on physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing, ranging from daily virtual dance, kickboxing, yoga, or meditation breaks to coaching with registered dietitians. Additionally, the Employee Assistance Program offers free and confidential short-term counseling for all staff and faculty.

The University recognizes that outdoor activity benefits mental, physical, and emotional wellness. Northwestern encourages cycling and provides bike repair stations for students, staff, faculty, and community members. Divvy, the campus bike share program, provides discounted memberships for the Northwestern community. The Outdoors Club organizes kayaking, hiking, and climbing trips, and Norris Outdoors rents camping equipment to students at affordable rates. The Wild Roots student garden, the Plant-it-Purple Graduate Garden, and wildlife habitat gardens provide opportunities for students to spend time outdoors. Produce from these gardens is available to students and community members in need. For students with financial need, Northwestern's Purple Pantry also provides free groceries for a wide range of diets.

Pillar 3: Effective Environmental & Sustainability Education

Northwestern provides environmental and sustainability education through academic programs and experiential learning opportunities. Across all departments, over 100 courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels focus directly on sustainability, with an additional 140+ courses featuring sustainability-related content. Northwestern's Institute for Sustainability and Energy (ISEN) offers interdisciplinary graduate and undergraduate courses in the fields of sustainability and energy. Other departments offer environment and sustainability-related degrees and certificates, ranging from environmental engineering to environmental policy and culture.

Northwestern also offers experiential education opportunities. Programs such as the Global Engineering Trek in Sustainability and Chicago Field Studies give students opportunities to study abroad and/or work in the local community to gain experience in the sustainability field. The aforementioned Ameresco partnership supports annual funding for a student sustainability fellowship and two paid interns each quarter, enabling students to apply energy and sustainability



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concepts to real-world problems. Students can also work with the over 100 faculty members who are currently engaged in research related to sustainability through the University's mission-driven research centers. On campus sustainability programming, including lectures, films, discussion groups, and events are available throughout the year. For example, the One Book Northwestern program, hosted 35 events related to climate change, resource conservation, and environmental justice in the fall of 2021 alone. Students can also engage in the 19 student groups and clubs focused on sustainability. For students, faculty, and staff interested in helping shift campus culture, a Green Office Certification program empowers community members to evaluate and improve their office sustainability practices.

Pillar 1: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs (Recommended 3 Pages)

Describe how your college or university is reducing environmental impact and costs by reducing or eliminating greenhouse gas emissions; improving water quality, efficiency, and conservation; reducing waste production; and encouraging use of alternative transportation. Identify your institution's energy-efficient facilities and practices, ecologically beneficial uses of grounds, and methods of disposal for solid and hazardous wastes.

Energy and Emissions

Northwestern's commitment to energy conservation is illustrated by its recognition from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ENERGY STAR program. Northwestern was the first university to receive the Partner of the Year— Sustained Excellence Award, the highest honor bestowed by the ENERGY STAR program. Awarded Sustained Excellence in 2020 and 2021, the recognition honors organizations that make long-term commitments to climate action and energy efficiency. Northwestern also received the STARS Gold rating for collegiate sustainability from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) in 2020. Northwestern is a Department of Energy Better Building Partner and consistently makes the EPA Green Power Partnership's Top 30 College and University rankings for green power purchases.

Since 2012, Northwestern's greenhouse gas emissions have decreased by 15.4%. Northwestern has also achieved a 24.9% reduction in building energy use compared to 2010. sustainNU, the university's sustainability program, publishes an annual sustainability report and comprehensive greenhouse gas inventory (covering scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions), which are available publicly to ensure transparency of our energy use and carbon emissions. Northwestern is committed to minimizing the university's impact on the environment and purchases renewable energy certificates (REC) as a strategy to mitigate impact while working towards greater carbon reductions on campus. RECs, representing 40% of the university's annual electricity consumption, are purchased annually. This is equivalent to offsetting the greenhouse gas emissions of more than 15,000 passenger vehicles driven for one year.

In 2020, Northwestern partnered with Clearway Energy, one of the largest developers and operators of clean energy nationally. The 15-year partnership with Clearway Energy will enable the development and construction of 16 solar projects across Illinois, supporting the state's transition to a greener economy. Once completed, the power generated from Clearway's project portfolio will be equivalent to removing 12,000 cars from the road each year.

In 2021, Northwestern executed a five-year agreement with Ameresco, Inc., a leading cleantech company specializing in energy efficiency and renewable energy, that will help the university significantly reduce its carbon footprint across both the Evanston and Chicago campuses while also providing learning opportunities for students. Several projects underway include lighting upgrades, laboratory control enhancements, mechanical systems retro-commissioning, and equipment retrofits. In addition to providing energy management, Ameresco provides an on-site energy manager, annual funding



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over the five-year period for a student sustainability fellowship, and employs two paid interns each quarter.

Northwestern operates and owns 220 buildings, totaling over 16 million square feet over both campuses. As such, energy savings related to buildings and infrastructure have significant impacts on the university's carbon footprint and bottom line. All new construction projects are required to achieve no less than Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification. Northwestern currently has 23 high-performing, LEED certified buildings. For example, the Louis A. Simpson and Kimberly K. Querrey Biomedical Research Center, which opened in June 2019, is Northwestern's newest LEED Gold certified building. The facility is the largest biomedical academic research facility in the U.S. Simpson Querrey's total annual energy savings are estimated to be ~\$800k or 15.5 million kWh, equivalent to removing more than 2,300 cars from the road each year. Another example is the LEED Platinum certified Kresge Centennial Hall, which has a 254-solar panel array on the roof that generates 81 kilowatts of electricity. The building incorporates many sustainability features including: a white roof design to reduce the severity of the urban heat island effect, radiant ceiling panels using chilled water to reduce the need for air conditioning, vacancy sensors to dim and turn off LED lights when not in use, low flow plumbing fixtures resulting in a 35% reduction in water consumption, native plant landscaping, and a highly efficient irrigation system to reduce water use on building grounds. Additionally, 41% of the total materials purchased were produced within 500 miles of the site and 93% of the waste generated during construction was diverted from landfills through recycling or reuse. These buildings are representative of the standard Northwestern holds its new and renovated buildings to, emphasizing the commitment to energy and resource conservation.

Water Quality, Efficiency, and Conservation

Water efficiency, conservation, and quality are similarly incorporated into construction through LEED accreditation. Campus buildings are outfitted with water efficient plumbing infrastructure. A 2009 project retrofitted 1,670 sinks, toilets, urinals, and showers on campus to low-flow models, resulting in an estimated 23,000,000-gallon savings per year. Mechanical system make-up water is provided through a water reclamation processes where possible. Custodial operations reduce water pollution by using only Green Seal Certified chemicals and materials that decrease water usage such as microfiber over traditional mopping tools. Northwestern's custodial operations use electrically activated water for cleaning, eliminating the need for many chemical cleaning products. Additionally, dining operations do not offer trays (saving one quarter gallon of water for each tray that would have been washed).

In select areas on campus, Northwestern maximizes the reuse of water on campus grounds. Above ground and underground "Daisy" basins placed throughout the Evanston campus capture rainwater and infiltrate the water slowly back into the ground to prevent stormwater overflow events. NU also has one cistern at Silverman Hall, and one, below-ground water capture drainage field south of the Ford Building that are used to capture water for irrigation use. In select areas, bioswales are used to slow the movement of water during heavy rainfall events and to filter out pollutants and debris before the water returns to Lake Michigan. Northwestern also has a small wetland at the lakefront that acts as a natural system water storage and filtration. Additionally, all new construction considers permeable paving to allow for more efficient stormwater filtration.

Northwestern is now in the preliminary stages of developing an Infrastructure Master Plan that includes a comprehensive strategy for stormwater, with the goal of creating more efficient ways to mitigate stormwater in the future. In addition, all new construction will continue to consider rainwater capture and reuse for on-grounds irrigation where feasible, and the plan will include solutions for retrofitting existing construction when funding becomes available.



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Northwestern uses its location directly adjacent to Lake Michigan to assist in systems efficiency. To lower energy costs associated with heating and cooling, Northwestern uses chilled water for equipment cooling and air conditioning. Rather than pulling from the municipal water source for these purposes, the university draws from the chilled outer waters of Lake Michigan. After the water has been used for on-campus cooling, it is sent to a human-made lagoon located next to the lake to be cooled before sending the filtered water back to Lake Michigan, creating a closed loop system.

Ecologically Beneficial Use of Grounds

The university's sustainable landscape practices extend beyond water conservation. Northwestern has been certified under the Tree Campus Higher Education program beginning in 2014. The Evanston campus landscape is over 40% tree canopy and habitat gardens are located throughout the campus to increase space for wildlife, particularly along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Northwestern also completed a multi-phased, multi-year shoreline protection assessment and implementation plan. The project evaluated shoreline resilience and installed both temporary and permanent shoreline improvements. Sustainable design features, such as bird-safe glass, are incorporated into new and renovated buildings and green roofs are considered to provide additional habitat space for birds and insects and ameliorate the urban heat island effect. For example, the LEED Gold certified Sailing Center, completed in the summer of 2014, maximizes the amount of open space on the property, with over 56% of the total site area being open space and about 51% of the dedicated open space being vegetated. All the materials used to construct the hardscape surfaces of the building and the roof reflect solar radiation and mitigate the urban heat island effect. The landscaping has been designed to minimize water use and potable water usage in the center has been reduced by about 42% with the use of efficient plumbing fixtures.

Waste Reduction

Waste reduction is a significant component of Northwestern's environmental efforts. Following an intensive waste audit, an Integrated Solid Waste Management Plan (ISWMP) was released in 2018. The plan highlights campus waste generation and composition and is aimed at reducing waste and informing an approach to waste management. The plan provides specific waste reduction strategies for all building types on campus. 40% of waste generated on our campuses is diverted from landfill disposal via composting or recycling. Prior to COVID, a robust end of the year reuse program was in place and in 2019, nearly 7,500 pounds of food, clothing and household goods were donated to Connections for the Homeless, an Evanston non-profit.

sustainNU supports single-stream recycling on campus, providing recycling bins to employees, departments, and campus residences at no charge. Electronics are also collected and recycled at no charge to individual departments, with over 6,800 pieces of electronic equipment and machinery recycled in 2021 alone. The university composting program is part of all dining operations. Kitchen staff collect compostable materials within the kitchen and dish room areas, while edible leftovers are donated to food rescue efforts. Northwestern Hillel supports the composting effort by hosting 'Cats who Compost, a free composting program available to students living on and off campus. In addition, campus dining promotes the use of reusable OZZI to-go containers, bans Styrofoam in retail dining outlets, purchases supplies made of post-consumer recycled content, and has a program for capturing and reusing used cooking oil. Northwestern also hosts a print management program, which involved upgrading printers and copiers to ENERGY STAR certified devices and eliminating abandoned print jobs to help Northwestern achieve a 10-15% reduction in paper copying. Filtered water stations are available in all resident dining locations and across campus buildings providing students with easy refill options for reusable water bottles.



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Hazardous Waste Disposal

Hazardous waste is managed by the Office of Research Safety and Risk Management Services. Northwestern's Hazardous Waste Management Program ensures that all departments understand their responsibilities for properly labeling, handling, storing, and disposing of their hazardous waste in compliance with the EPA's Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) standards. Northwestern contracts Hazardous Waste Disposal to a preferred vendor, Heritage Environmental Services. All hazardous waste containers must include a "Hazardous Waste" label that includes the specific contents and the date the materials began accumulating. All containers must be placed in secondary containment and must only be opened when adding hazardous waste. Waste storage areas include signage reading "Hazardous Waste Storage Area" or "Satellite Accumulation Area." Hazardous waste containers and storage areas are inspected weekly and documented via an inspection checklist. Upon disposal by Heritage Environmental, the company completes and maintains documentation regarding total quantities disposed of.

Alternative Transportation

A biennial transportation survey gathers commuting data from students, staff, and faculty. The 2020 survey was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic; however, the 2018 report highlighted that 62% of students chose walking when traveling on campus (with biking being the second most used transportation mode at 13%) and that 24% of faculty and staff report using public transit as their primary mode of commuting to and from campus. We also saw an 11% increase in student's use of biking during peak weather conditions, with a 2% increase in bike usage overall compared to 2016. Bike registration on campus similarly doubled from 2016 to 2018. The insights gained from the Transportation Survey guide ongoing efforts to improve the commuting experience while reducing the university's environmental footprint. The university supports a pre-tax commuter transit pass program, which provides a financial incentive for use of the local transit systems. All students, faculty, and staff have free access to the Chicago Transit Authority bus that extends across the Evanston campus. Northwestern has 16 electric vehicle charging stations that, in 2020, dispensed over 50,000 kWh of electricity allowing drivers to travel ~152,000 miles. Greenhouse gas savings associated with avoided vehicle fuel combustion in 2020 were equivalent to 17 metric tons of CO₂, the amount of CO₂ sequestered by 32 acres of U.S. forests in one year. Drivers of electric vehicles are offered 3 hours of free charging and discounted parking passes. The University also has an updated fleet of 27 all-electric vehicles further reducing the Northwestern's greenhouse gas emissions.

Northwestern campuses are bike and pedestrian friendly, with the Evanston campus recognized as a Silver Bike Friendly University by the League of American Bicyclists. The Northwestern campuses host over 6.3 miles of bike lanes and 15 bike repair stations to support campus cyclists. The Divvy Bike Share program is readily available to our campus community and Northwestern offers a discounted membership for students, staff, and faculty. In 2020, more than 1,300 Divvy trips were made across campus and through the community. To encourage bicycle use, Northwestern offers free registration, bike lights, helmets, and fittings as well as education on safety, local resources, and bike maintenance in partnership with certified League of American Bicyclist Cycling Instructors and local bike stores. Northwestern participates in the annual Bike to Work Challenge and won the 'Education with 5,000+ employees' bracket and placed second overall out of 141 participating teams in 2021. A sustainability map links to bike racks, bike repair stations and the EV charging stations to encourage the use of low or no emitting modes of transportation.

Pillar 2: Improve the Health & Wellness of Students, Faculty, and Staff (Recommended 3 Pages)

Describe how your college or university improves the health and wellness of students, faculty and staff by integrating a campus-wide environmental health program and promoting sound health and wellness practices.



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You should discuss integrated pest management, contaminant controls and ventilation, asthma controls, indoor air quality, moisture control, and chemical management. Address the amount and type of outdoor time that your students and staff have, as well as the types of fresh, local, and organic food that they eat. Other components you may want to include are: health education, health services, counseling, psychological and social services, staff health promotion and family and community involvement.

Health and Wellness for Students

Northwestern understands that sustainability, health, and wellness are intricately connected. The university provides comprehensive health services on both the Evanston and Chicago campuses. Students have access to university care including general medicine, dietitians, vaccinations, allergy shots, HIV and sexually transmitted disease testing, pharmacy services, radiology, sports medicine, transgender health care and resources, travel health, and gynecological health. Northwestern has an expansive recreation department, giving all students, staff, and faculty access to free or reduced memberships at 12 athletics and wellness facilities, in addition to in-house workout spaces in select residence halls. Students used these facilities over 450,000 times in 2018-2019, the most recent full year of data available pre-COVID-19. Over 460 intramural sports teams and 38 club teams used these facilities in the same period. Over 460 intramural sports teams and 38 club teams used these facilities in the same period. The Northwestern Wellness Suite offers fitness assessments for students and members, white light, and massage therapy treatments. Nearly 1,500 student sessions at the Wellness Suite were conducted in 2018-2019. In addition, the Wildcats Wellness Initiative encourages healthy lifestyles by providing tips, recommendations, and instruction in the areas of fitness, nutrition, and recreation. These tips include workout routines for the whole family, healthy and quick recipes, and unique ways to stay fit while social distancing.

Emotional and mental health is a cornerstone to a successful experience in the Northwestern community. Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS) provide a set of core services at no charge, including clinical services, educational workshops, and consultation with faculty, staff, and parents. Participants can access personalized care plans featuring short-term individual counseling, group therapy, connection to local community providers, coaching on stress management, sleep health, workshops, and educational programming. In the 2018-2019 school year, over 3,100 students were seen through the Northwestern CAPS program. Students also have access to Northwestern's mindfulness programs, including an 8-week mindfulness-based stress reduction program, weekly drop-in meditations, a four-part workshop on mindfulness, and the *Breathe* Program and App (a stress management resource created specifically for Northwestern students). The Dean of Students office offers the Administrator on Call (AOC) program to support after hours crisis concerns in partnership with Residential Life, CAPS, NUPD and the Office of Equity. In addition, the Student Assistance and Support Services (SASS) team assists students by coordinating campus and community resources to promote well-being for students dealing with complex issues. The team works with more than 800 graduate and undergraduate students annually—the vast majority of whom are managing either a chronic mental or physical health challenge.

The Northwestern Center for Awareness, Response, and Education (CARE) provides resources, assistance, and prevention education around sexual violence at the university. CARE's guiding principles are social justice, survivor centeredness, and sex positivity. The university also offers a Safe Ride program as a safe and free alternative to walking alone after dark. To fight against racism and classism on campus and support Northwestern's diverse student body, faculty, and staff, the university also hosts the Campus Inclusion & Community Center, the Student Enrichment Services Office, and the Multicultural Student Affairs Office. All three centers support intentional interactions across lines of difference, comprehensive support for first generation and low-income students, and work to enrich the cultural experience of Northwestern. Additionally, the Pell Grant Eligibility Initiative commits Northwestern to increasing access for academically qualified students, regardless of their economic background. This program resulted in the acceptance of a class of 20% Pell Grant-eligible students in 2018, two years before the program's stated goal of 2020. The



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Northwestern Religions and Spiritual Life office also provides resources for students to explore, practice, grow, and share their religious and spiritual practices. Additionally, the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center works to provide a safe and affirming space for all members of the Northwestern University campus and acts as a hub for organizations, resources, services, and programs of interest to the Queer, Transgender, and Ally communities. Lastly, AccessibleNU (ANU) oversees implementation of academic and programmatic accommodations for students with disabilities. Through ANU, students can arrange for testing accommodations, books in alternate format, assistive technology, Sign Language interpreting, and other accommodations.

Health and Wellness for Faculty and Staff

Faculty and staff are offered the YourLife Wellness Program, which features resources on physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing, including daily virtual breaks designed to increase physical mental health. 15- and 30-minute sessions offer stretching, meditation, yoga, kickboxing, Pilates, dance, and core conditioning. The program also provides free, short-term counseling, referrals for services, and executive coaching. All faculty and staff are eligible for free unlimited sessions with a registered dietitian nutritionist to assist in setting realistic nutrition goals, provide tips, and discuss chronic disease management as related to nutrition. YourLife Wellness Grants sponsored by Human Resources support the well-being of faculty and staff by providing funding for wellness activities and events. All faculty and staff are encouraged to submit applications, with past successful applications ranging from portable exercise peddlers to virtual painting workshops to items for office outdoor space. Northwestern also allows for alternative work strategies to allow for flexibility to fit employee's needs, including work from home and alternative workdays where appropriate. HR offers employees a competitive suite of health benefits, a retirement plan with up to 10% university match, and free complimentary financial advising.

Outdoor Experience

Northwestern encourages students, faculty, and staff to spend time outdoors. In addition to being a Bike Friendly Certified University and the cycling infrastructure and programming Northwestern offers, walking is encouraged. Northwestern enforces a walking zone, which outlines the area that students, faculty, and staff must reside outside of to qualify for a parking permit. Both the Chicago and Evanston campuses are located directly adjacent to Lake Michigan. Walking paths run throughout the campuses as well as along the lakefront, connecting the Evanston and Chicago locations. Northwestern also hosts two campus beaches, one of which includes a sailing center that offers sailing classes, windsurfing, and paddle boarding. To promote outdoor activities, sustainNU and Northwestern Wellness partner to host events such as the 2020 Green Movement Scavenger Hunt, which required participants to walk or bike in their neighborhoods to identify sustainability features, and Pause and Notice Nature, which provided a month of learning and mindfulness opportunities all based outside.

The Northwestern University Outdoors Club provides the opportunity for students to get outdoors through organized trips based around kayaking, hiking, and climbing with the overarching theme of sustainability. Other clubs, such as the NU Wildlife Club, the Plant-it Purple Graduate Garden, and the Wild Roots Student Garden provide opportunities for students to spend time outdoors gardening. Norris Outdoors, located in the Student Center, rents camping equipment to students at affordable rates to make camping and outdoor activities more accessible to all. Outdoor facilities on campus are also available to students, faculty, and staff, including the outdoor tennis center, the Northwestern beach and sailing center, and multiple sports fields.

Fresh, Local, and Organic Foods

Northwestern's dining program provides healthy, local, organic food with accessible options for all diets. The university works directly with local farms to find new sources of local food. In the fall of 2019, the dining program worked with 19



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local food vendors. By spring 2020, the university had more than quadrupled that number to 90 local vendors. The kitchen ensures that all meat is raised on vegetarian feed and is free from routine antibiotic usage; that all eggs are produced cage-free and are certified Animal Welfare Approved; and that fair trade organic coffee is used in all resident dining and retail locations on campus. Meatless options are widely available in all campus dining operations to encourage a plant-based diet. In 2020, during Northwestern's 21-day Plant Forward Challenge, 300 students reduced their carbon footprint by 5,770 pounds CO₂ equivalent by prioritizing plant-based meals. Additionally, some food is grown locally on Northwestern grounds. The produce from the Wild Roots student garden is shared free of charge with the Northwestern Community via harvest distribution. A hydroponic indoor garden on the Evanston campus also grows greens that are served on-site. For students struggling with food access, the Purple Pantry provides free snacks and groceries for a wide range of diets free of charge to students in need.

Integrated Pest Management

The University has used an Integrated Pest Management landscape approach on both campuses for over 30 years, which encompasses campus grounds as well as all athletic fields. The grounds team plants varieties of trees, shrubs, and turf that are best suited for Northern Illinois conditions. All trees and shrubs are regularly pruned to remove dead or decaying branches and promote vigorously growing plants. Additionally, leaves and debris are removed around planting areas to reduce insect and fungal issues. All plantings and trees are mulched to assist with the retention of water and to limit competition from weeds. In a very limited fashion, Northwestern grounds teams apply fertilizer to assist the plants that are struggling to survive, although, in most cases, plants are allowed to recover from minor disease and insect problems naturally with no chemical applications. If the grounds crew identifies a pest that is expanding and damaging plants on a large scale, they first utilize biological treatments, and will apply targeted insecticides as a last resort. Turf is aerated at least once a year, areas that are thinning are replenished to deter weed competition, and it is treated with organic fertilizer. If weeds become an issue in high profile areas, the individual weeds are spot sprayed, and if the weed infestation is too large to control with spot spraying, a fertilizer/pesticide combination is applied to control the infestation in specific turf areas.

Northwestern contracts with Smithereen Pest Management Services for indoor pest management. This company follows Integrated Pest Management practices in all Northwestern buildings, prioritizing habitat modification above use of chemical treatments. Smithereen conducts thorough assessments of potential pest issues and provides Northwestern Facilities with recommendations for structural and sanitation deficiencies and repairs that need to be completed to exclude the animals in question. Following repairs and cleanup, Smithereen monitors the area to ensure pests are no longer able to breed and thrive in the space. If a pest issue cannot be addressed through exclusion, baiting and monitoring paired with selective pesticide use is used in accordance with IDPH and EPA regulations.

Air Quality and Chemical/Contaminant Management

Northwestern's design guidelines are applied to all new construction and major renovations on campus. These extensive guidelines detail health and safety regulations related to sustainability, accessibility, security, and safety, planning and site development, design and structure, signage, elevators, fire protection, plumbing, and more. Ventilation systems are designed to provide code-required outdoor air volumes and incorporate filtration (generally ranging from MERV-8 to HEPA depending on program requirements). Where the original system architecture allows, fan systems incorporate CO₂ and enthalpy economizer controls to improve energy efficiency while prioritizing space conditions. Northwestern uses Aircuity, a system that monitors air quality in lab spaces and adjusts ventilation levels as needed. This system can also read when a lab is unoccupied and adjust accordingly to save energy.

Northwestern follows a Green Cleaning Policy, put into effect January 1st, 2017. The policy is intended to minimize adverse social and environmental effects related to the production, transportation, use, and disposal of cleaning materials. This plan requires the use of sustainable and safe cleaning products and establishes procedures for effective



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and safe cleaning, training, and use of chemical concentrates and dilution systems.

The Green Cleaning Policy applies to cleaning procedures, material purchases, equipment purchases, and services in all buildings and areas within the Northwestern University campuses.

Pillar 3: Effective Environmental & Sustainability Education (Recommended 3 Pages)

Describe how your college or university provides effective environmental and sustainability education.

Provide examples of interdisciplinary learning about the key relationships between dynamic environmental, energy, and human systems. Demonstrate how your institution uses the environment and sustainability to develop STEM and civic content, knowledge, and thinking skills. *Note that STEM and civics work discussed should be described in relation to environmental and sustainability learning.*

Academics and Research

Northwestern offers majors, minors, and graduate programs in environment and sustainability, civil and environmental engineering, environmental policy and culture, earth and planetary sciences, and transportation systems. Across all departments, over 100 courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels focus directly on sustainability, with an additional 140+ courses featuring sustainability-related content. Northwestern's Institute for Sustainability and Energy (ISEN) offers graduate and undergraduate courses, a certificate, and a master's degree in the fields of sustainability and energy. ISEN is dedicated to advancing global sustainability and energy solutions through transformational research, interdisciplinary education, and public engagement. ISEN provides an interdisciplinary approach involving faculty from diverse departments throughout the University. In the 2021-2022 academic year, ISEN offered 34 courses focused on energy, lifecycle systems, climate change and ethics, and more.

ISEN is not the only university program offering educational experience in sustainability. The Civil and Environmental Engineering department offers a major, minor, and graduate program in environmental engineering; the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences offers a major, minor, and PhD graduate program in both earth and planetary sciences and environmental sciences and a second program and minor in environmental policy and culture; and the Transportation Center offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in transportation systems and logistics. These programs offer opportunities for students to both learn in the classroom and through experiential opportunities ranging from expanding the campus shuttle system to evaluating the most effective locations for on-campus electric vehicle infrastructure. Additionally, Northwestern's Brady Scholars Program in Ethics and Civic Life offers the opportunity for undergraduate and graduate student to explore issues around values, ethics, and justice with humanities faculty. This three-year program centers on civic engagement in and around Northwestern, with opportunities for sustainability-minded students to engage in environment and sustainability-related projects. Students in the program complete a senior service project that is meant to have a lasting impact in the Evanston community. They identify a problem or an area for improvement in Evanston or in the Northwestern-Evanston relationship and spend their year implementing solutions to that problem. Past projects include bolstering local food systems through gardens and supporting at-risk youth through agriculture-based mentorship programs. Additionally, the McCormick School of Engineering offers the Global Engineering Trek in Sustainability. This ten-day program sends first year students to Germany for a cleantech immersion program. Students visit startups and corporations for a look into global sustainability work and opportunities. This shortened study abroad program helps students gain a broad understanding of the applications of environmental technology. Northwestern also offers the Chicago Field Studies program, which connects students with internships in the Chicago area for course credit. One of the internship tracks is Environment, Sustainability & Renewable Energy. This track allows students to engage in the community through the lens of policy, energy, and sustainability and gain real world experience in these fields.



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In addition to classroom and internship experience, Northwestern University's commitment to sustainability is exemplified by its funding opportunities for students. One such opportunity is through the university's five-year partnership with Ameresco, Inc. This partnership not only reduces Northwestern's carbon footprint, but it also creates experiential education opportunities for Northwestern students interested in sustainable energy management. These opportunities include funding towards an annual Sustainability Fellowship program that provides a tuition stipend for up to 16 students annually as well as two paid, full-time co-op-style internships enabling students to apply energy and sustainability concepts to real-world problems and grow as leaders in sustainability. Upcoming Fellowship projects include a new effort focused on food inequity and the role of indoor agriculture in the Chicago area as well as the continuation of "Project Green Bus," an ongoing initiative aimed at evaluating the electrification of Evanston School District 65's bus fleet. Additionally, the Summer Internship Grant Program provides funding for students with financial need who secure unpaid internships. In 2021, 339 students received grants to fund unpaid summer experiences, including in energy and sustainability.

As a top-ranking research facility, Northwestern offers a diverse range of opportunities for students to engage in research with the university's world-renowned faculty. Over 100 faculty members are currently engaged in research related to sustainability. Northwestern's Office for Research includes mission-driven research centers focused on sustainability and energy, including the Center for Light Energy Activated Redox Processes (LEAP), the Solar Fuels Institute (SOFI), the Center for Catalysis and Surface Science (CCSS), and the Center for Advanced Materials for Energy and Environment (CAMEE). ISEN provides core operations services for these centers, freeing their scientists to focus exclusively on their research. An agile enterprise framework provides needed flexibility for the rapid integration of future centers of discovery. ISEN also manages an 8,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art Flex Lab space in the Technological Institute designed to accommodate a wide range of collaborative research projects. This lab allows for the engagement of scientists, engineers, economists, and policy experts from academia, industry, and the public sector in global partnerships that provide pathways to prototype, test, and deploy sustainability innovations to market.

Engagement with Peer Institutions

Northwestern has further committed to environmental and sustainability education through its partnerships with peer institutions. This is exemplified by Northwestern's election as the first secretariat of the U7+ Alliance of World Universities, a global coalition of higher education institutions seeking to find solutions to the greatest global challenges by coordinating with G7 governments and beyond. In October 2021, Northwestern joined 28 universities from 12 countries declaring their commitment to supporting the implementation of climate goals coming out of COP26. These include ensuring student access to courses related to sustainability, climate and biodiversity and working to reduce university related GHG emissions.

Additionally, the Ivy+ Sustainability Collaborative is composed of 30 campus sustainability programs across leading U.S. research institutions. This Collaborative works to inform institutional strategic priorities through forecasting of emerging trends, sharing best practices and collective impact data-reporting. This effort responds to an acknowledged need across higher education to better communicate critical updates to policymakers and executive leadership who have the ability to influence institutional decisions and resource allocation. This Collaborative work was initiated by and is supported by the administrative structure of the Ivy+ Sustainability Consortium, formed in 2004, that works to leverage sustainability expertise and to accelerate evidence-based decision-making and leadership in higher education and beyond. The Ivy+ Sustainability Consortium is unique among Ivy+ groups in its governance model, modest pooled financial resources, and a collective strategic planning framework that includes a priority to share learnings and scale impact broadly.

Northwestern is a founding member of the Midwest Climate Summit and Collaborative. With support from Bloomberg Philanthropies, Northwestern along with a group of over twenty leading Midwestern higher education institutions, non-profits, local governments, and businesses partnered in 2020 with the goal to develop a coordinated Midwestern



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response to the climate crisis. A two-part summit that took place in Fall 2020 and Fall 2021 brought together leading Midwestern organizations from various sectors to drive measurable, regional action on climate change by leveraging the partnerships, innovations, and talent from each of these sectors. The two-part Midwest Climate Summit launched the Midwest Climate Collaborative: A collective movement to accelerate climate action in the Midwest by creating evidence, catalyzing action, informing public knowledge and public policy, and developing the future leaders needed to sustain and expand this work.

Northwestern is also a member of the Big Ten & Friends Sustainability Network. The purpose of the Big Ten & Friends Sustainability Network is to create a community of practice for sustainability professionals and partners in institutions who share the common challenges, unique opportunities, and particular interests of a large, complex, multi-site research university to further sustainability at member institutions and in higher education more broadly. The Big Ten & Friends Sustainability Network is also part of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Affiliate Group Affiliates Program, which facilitates the promotion of Affiliate events and activities while minimizing duplication of effort, among other things.

Campus Learning

Northwestern also works to educate students, faculty, staff, and the broader community about how they can contribute to a more sustainable campus through on-campus initiatives. Communication and outreach activities encourage actions such as waste reduction, recycling, energy conservation, and sustainable purchasing. The University offers events ranging from the annual Bike to Work Challenge, to lecture series focusing on a range of environmental and sustainability issues, to annual service-learning projects focused on tree planting and local ecological health. Events such as the Northwestern Community Picnic and campus participation in the Evanston Green Living Festival extend the University's sustainability message beyond the campus to the local community. One Book One Northwestern, a campus-wide common read program, focused on the *Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go From Here* by Hope Jahren for the 2021-2022 academic year. A free electronic copy of the book was offered to every first year and transfer student. Throughout the academic year, lectures, films, activities, and discussion groups focused on climate change, environmental justice, and sustainability have been offered. One Book Northwestern hosted 35 events related to climate change, resource conservation, and environmental justice in the Fall 2021 quarter alone.

Communications also highlight the importance of sustainability on and off campus. The sustainNU email newsletter list reaches nearly 5,000 subscribers and achieved an average open rate of 30 percent in 2021, which is significantly above the industry average. sustainNU shares updates with more than 2,500 social media followers, and other Northwestern departments amplify sustainability messaging. In addition to weekly messaging through social media, Northwestern releases annual sustainability report cards to keep the community up to date on achievements and progress towards the sustainability goals and carbon footprint reduction. Northwestern's sustainability efforts have been featured in national trade publications and presentations at conferences including the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education conference. To engage students, faculty, staff, and alumni in novel ways, Conversations with sustainNU, a 2020 podcast series with Director of Sustainability Greg Kozak features interviews with environmental experts and their work. Additionally, the Buffett Institute for Global Affairs hosts a podcast, Breaking Boundaries, with stories of successful collaborations fueling progress toward reaching the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Episodes spotlight idea catalysts and innovators working across borders of all kinds to address complex global challenges ranging from the climate crisis and food insecurity to poverty and inequality. Additionally, all new University employees must complete an online orientation course, which includes a sustainability module. In 2021, 646 new employees completed the training.



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Students at Northwestern have multiple avenues for engagement in local and global sustainability efforts outside of the classroom. 19 student groups and clubs focus on sustainability, from the NU Wildlife Club to the Fossil Free Northwestern organization. Opportunities such as campus sustainability tours offer real-world examples of sustainability strategies from LEED certification and beyond. The Associated Student Government Executive Board includes a Sustainability Chair. This Chair leads a student sustainability committee. The committee develops and leads projects related to on-campus sustainability work, advocates for greater access to sustainability-related education across departments, and hosts environment-themed events for the Northwestern community.

Northwestern engages with faculty and staff offices across our Chicago and Evanston campuses through our Green Office Program. This program empowers community members to adopt environmental best practices in the workplace and lead their office in a cultural shift through their Green Team. The program offers guidance on conserving energy and water, reducing waste, and increasing environmental awareness on campus. Green Office Certification has engaged over 600 employees in sustainable work environments since its inception. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most faculty, staff, and students worked from home for the majority of 2020-2021. As such, our Green Office program was expanded to accommodate a work-from-home environment. Over 60 home offices were certified under this program. As the Northwestern community transitions back to in-person work on campus, the Office of Sustainability is reengaging with the 48 offices involved in the Green Office Certification Program, while revamping the certification process to accommodate a hybrid work environment. The Green Office Program continues to engage offices through virtual and in-person programming and a dedicated Green Office newsletter.

Supporting Materials

Attach a minimum of three photos and a maximum of five photos with your application. Please save your photos using descriptive language. For example, “Students conduct water quality tests in outdoor classroom with science majors from nearby university x” would be more helpful than “Photo 1.” **Photos should be action shots, not posed.** By sending these photos, you are giving Illinois Green Alliance and the U.S. Department of Education permission to use them.

Please provide a brief description (300 characters) for each:

Image 1: Intercampus Shuttle & Biking. Northwestern's intercampus shuttle is free to members of the University community and provides bike racks to support cyclists on campus.

Image 2: Green Living Fair. Members of sustainNU, Northwestern's campus sustainability program, speaking with students at the Off-Campus Green Living Fair. This fair connected students to local sustainability organizations, deepening relationships between the University and broader community.

Image 3: Tree Planting. Students, staff, and faculty join together to plant trees on Arbor Day in support of Northwestern's Tree Campus Higher Education Certification.

Image 4: Natural Features on Campus. A snapshot of the Evanston campus, with pedestrians and bikers enjoying the lake, lagoon, and tree canopy.



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Image 5: Student Participation in Bike Repair. A student participates in one of Northwestern University's free bike repair stations during the annual Bike Challenge.

Submit Your Application

Applications must be received by 5:00 PM on Monday, January 24, 2022. Applications are being collected by the Illinois Green Alliance on behalf of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). *Applications should be no longer than 18 pages.*

For an application to be considered, it must be **submitted via email** to info@illinoisgreenalliance.org. Submittals via other methods will not be accepted.

Questions? Contact Illinois Green Alliance at 312-245-8300.