

2027 Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability

Application Deep Dive Section II: Institutional Context

June 2, 2026



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Application Overview
- Institutional Context: Section Questions & Best Practices
- Panelist Discussion
- Q&A
- Next Steps



Housekeeping

- Attendee microphones are muted to limit disruption
- Use chat to introduce yourself
- Use Q&A to ask and upvote questions
- Participate in the polls
- Recording will be sent to everyone who registered
- Thanks for being here!



Introductions



Anne Hayes

Executive Director of Global and
Interdisciplinary Studies & Sustainability Lead
Bennett College



Adrian Quijada

Director, Land Grant Office of
Sustainability
Tohono O'odham Community College



Tara Pike

Sustainability Coordinator
& Recycling Manager
University of Nevada, Las Vegas



Elizabeth Rowe
Founder & Principal
E Rowe Consulting



Amy Halvorson
Director for Sustainability
University of Colorado Boulder



Application Overview



Recognizing exceptional sustainability commitment at higher education institutions

Purpose

- Elevate **sustainability leadership**
- Foster **communities of practice** to drive innovation in the field
- Advance **individualized** campus sustainability identities

Approach

- Prestigious **recognition award**, applications accepted every 3 years, classification retained for 6 years
- Prioritizing institutional **diversity and inclusion**
- Launched in **partnership** between CU Boulder, American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation

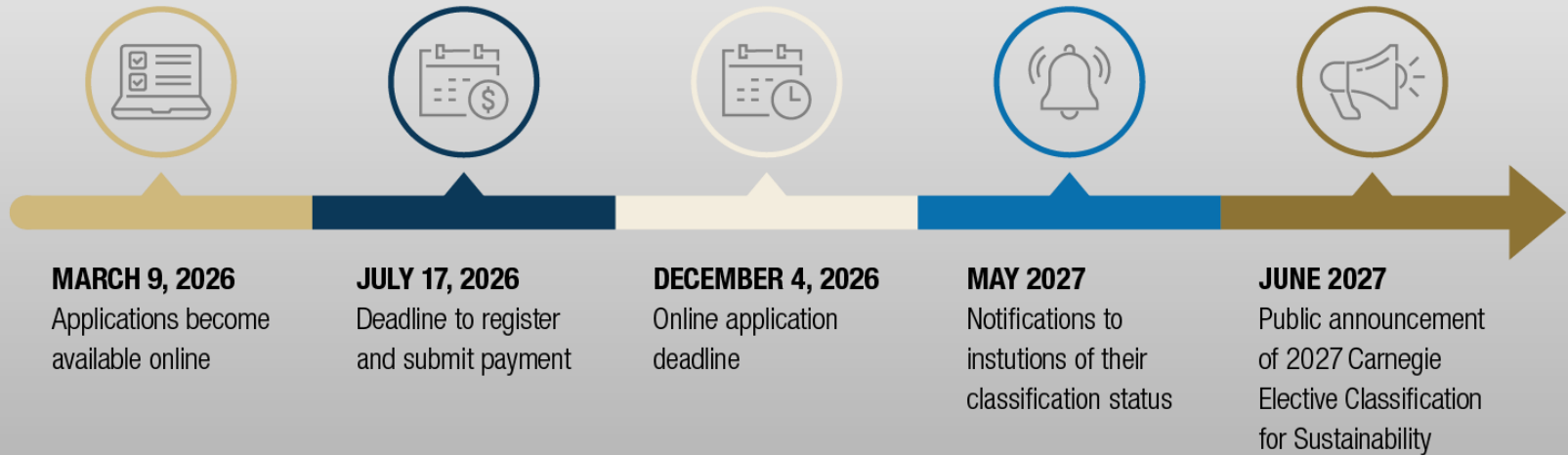


University of Colorado
Boulder



Carnegie Foundation
for the Advancement of Teaching

2027 Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability Application Timeline



2027 Carnegie Sustainability Application Framework

Context Definition Ecosystem Model

- I. Campus Information
- II. Institutional Context and Definition
- III. Ecosystem Model for Collaborative Community Partnerships

Academics Research & Innovation Workforce Development & Career Preparation

- IV. Academic Integration of Sustainability
- V. Research & Innovation for Sustainability and Climate Solutions
(Non-Community Colleges)
- VI. Workforce Development and Career Preparation
 - A. For Non-Community Colleges
 - B. For Community Colleges

Climate Action Plan Campus Infrastructure Resilience & Adaptation Reflection

- VII. Climate Action Plan
- VIII. Campus Infrastructure for Sustainability
- IX. Resilience and Adaptation
- X. Reflection and Additional Information

Data should
reflect AYs
2022-2023,
2023-2024,
2024-2025



Section II: Institutional Context

The Institutional Context section provides the foundation of the application by situating sustainability within:

- The institution's mission
- Leadership priorities
- Long-term goals

Together, these questions help demonstrate how sustainability is defined, governed, recognized, and resourced across the institution, and how it is advanced through academic, operational, and community engagement efforts.



1. Institutional Landscape, Mission, and Vision

Describe your institution in a way that provides clear context for understanding the campus sustainability landscape, leadership priorities, and long-term goals. Include an overview of the environmental and climate challenges facing both the institution and its surrounding region. Highlight relevant institutional characteristics – such as founding and history, institutional culture, demographics, campus setting (urban, suburban, or rural), connections to Indigenous communities or cultural traditions, climate and natural resources – and explain how these factors shape sustainability priorities and create unique opportunities for innovation.

BEST PRACTICES

- Identify if your campus sustainability program is Emergent, Developing, or Established to provide clarity throughout the application on program development
- Connect campus mission, leadership priorities, and long-term direction with campus sustainability strategy and decision making
- Reviewers may not be familiar with your campus, region, or context – provide background on institutional setting, environmental conditions, and community context



Institutional Landscape, Mission, and Vision

University of Nevada Las Vegas

UNLV's Top Tier 2.0 is an evolving strategic plan and a forward-looking roadmap. It builds on progress and recognizes opportunities to commit to sustainability. UNLV's vision of: "Improving the lives of our diverse students and transforming our communities through education and engagement," demonstrates the institution's strong commitment to social sustainability.

As a Carnegie Research 1: Very High Spending and Doctorate Production University in the heart of Las Vegas, UNLV is well positioned to lead climate change solutions through academic programs, interdisciplinary research, and community partnerships. The Rebel Climate Action Plan highlights the intersection of environmental sustainability and social justice, ensuring that climate resilience efforts benefit all communities, particularly marginalized populations. UNLV can serve as a model for desert sustainability and climate resilience, developing scalable solutions that address challenges faced by arid regions worldwide.



Institutional Landscape, Mission, and Vision

Tohono O'odham Community College

Tohono O'odham Community College (TOCC) is a tribal college established in 1998 located in the Sonoran Desert on ancestral tribal lands of the Tohono O'odham Nation. TOCC prioritizes sustaining the O'odham language and culture by integrating traditional initiatives supporting Indigenous sustainability. TOCC brings together students, faculty, elders, and the community to tackle climate resilience and preserve cultural knowledge. The college uses workshops, outreach, and partnerships to foster stewardship through both tradition and innovation, aiming for sustainable education that respects the land and empowers future generations.

TOCC is founded on Our Core Values... These values anchor TOCC's daily commitment to sustainability. They are woven into every course, program, and service, guiding how the college serves students, community, heritage, tribal sovereignty, and the future's viability.



Institutional Landscape, Mission, and Vision

Bennett College

Founded in 1873 by formerly enslaved people, Bennett College is a women's historically black college (HBCU) in Greensboro, North Carolina. Bennett is located in the Warnersville neighborhood of East Greensboro, a historically black community that has supported generations of segregated citizens in school, work, worship, and play.

As one of two remaining women's HBCUs in the U.S., Bennett College's mission is to “prepare women of color through a transformative liberal arts education to lead with purpose, integrity, and a strong sense of self-worth. Bennett provides education access to students while promoting inquiry, civic engagement, social justice, lifelong learning, and equity for all.” Sustainability and environmental justice are foundational to the college's mission of promoting social justice, meaning this work is an extension of Bennett's mission. In practice, this translates to sustainability strategies such as prioritizing conservation of historic buildings and maximizing the use of existing resources, as well as centering all sustainability work within a community-driven ethos.



Discussion



2. Accessibility and Reach

Identify how sustainability practices address the context and the needs of vulnerable populations within your campus and surrounding community.

BEST PRACTICES

- Opportunity to expand on your institutional context and provide additional clarity on student body, surrounding community, and environmental changes impacting accessibility and reach
- Responses may draw from academic programs, co-curricular initiatives, campus operations, community partnerships, and/or policies
- Describe how these efforts are informed by lived experiences, community input, or quantitative data



3. Definition

Does your institution have institutionally approved definition of sustainability? If so, how was the definition developed and approved? If not, how is sustainability understood across different units and disciplines? How are the definition(s) applied across institutional policies, initiatives, and engagement?

BEST PRACTICES

- Describe how the definition informs decision-making, policy, planning, and implementation
- Opportunity to provide context on the language used at the institution to describe sustainability and the connection back to the institutional context
- Carnegie's definition is provided as a guiding reference rather than a prescriptive framework



Poll #1

Does your institution have an established sustainability definition?



Definition

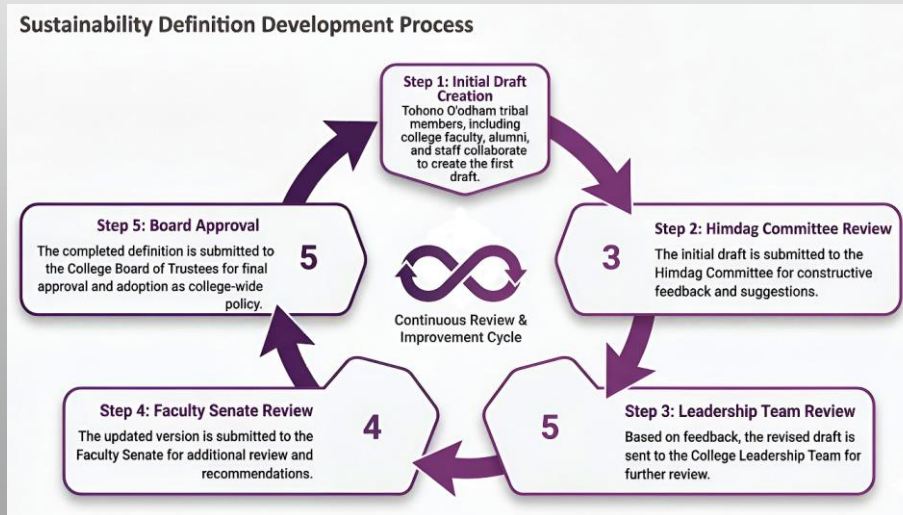
Sustainability as UNLV is a commitment to environmental stewardship, societal well-being, and scientific and economic innovation. We strive to integrate these principles into our teaching, learning, research, operations, and community engagement to foster a thriving and resilient future for generations to come.

Sustainability at Bennett College includes all efforts directed at the stewardship and conservation of natural resources as well as environmental justice efforts. We recognize that sustainable use of resources has a positive impact on ecosystems, marginalized people, and our institution's long-term financial stability.



Definition

Cem hekid 'am o himad (Always Will Continue) is rooted in the O'odham Himdag, which promotes harmony with nature, respect for elders, and the value of community, all essential elements for long-term well-being of both people and the environment. The college is committed to integrating culturally relevant sustainability practices and advancing transformative change by adapting Indigenous traditional knowledge to address emerging challenges, with an emphasis on resilience, reciprocity, and self determination.



4. Governance

Describe how sustainability is governed at your institution, how strategic and operational decisions are made, and how leadership, division, departments, institutes, and/or academic units coordinate to implement initiatives.

BEST PRACTICES

- Describe how strategic and operational sustainability decisions are made, and how leadership and departments work together to implement initiatives
- Focus on governance structures, processes, and roles rather than listing individual projects
- Can include formal and informal mechanisms that support coordination



5-6. Recognition and Rewards & Professional Development

Describe any policies, practices, or rewards from all levels of the institution (campus, college, school, department) that specifically recognize and/or:

- a. Faculty, instructors, and/or staff efforts in sustainability
- b. Students, alumni, and/or community members for efforts in sustainability.

What sustainability-related professional development opportunities are available to faculty, instructors, and staff at your institution? Provide one illustrative example.

BEST PRACTICES

- Indicate if sustainability-related awards or recognitions are formally acknowledged by institutional leadership
- May include recognitions beyond just formal campus awards



7. Funding & Investments

List the financial contributions made by the institution budget toward sustainability efforts, including budgets for facilities, research, and education.

- a. Internal Funding & Investments
- b. External Funding Sources
- c. Alumni & Student-Driven Funding

BEST PRACTICES

- Financial investment is a key indicator of institutional commitment to sustainability
- Interested in understanding how sustainability prioritized with available resources and recognize each institutional has varying levels of financial capacity
- Demonstrate the breadth of investments across the three funding categories
- Responses should reflect data from AY23, 24, or 25



Poll #2

What is one takeaway you have about the Institutional Context section of the application?



Discussion



Discussion Questions

1. What changes or modifications would you make to starting your application in hindsight?
Any best practices would you recommend?
2. Who is someone you recommend an institution has on their team to complete the application?
3. What departments did you work with to gather your campus funding and investments data?
4. What difficulties did you face in this process?

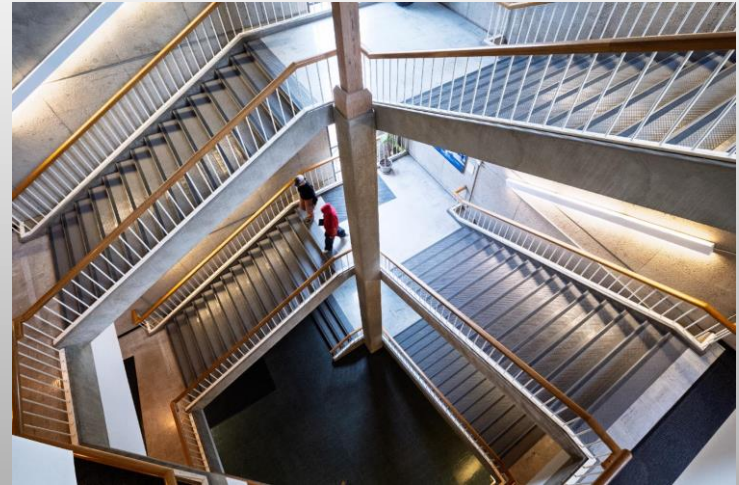


Q&A



Staying Connected and Building Capacity

- Download the [application & guidebook](#) from our site
- Sign up for our [mailing list](#)
- Register for upcoming [webinars](#)
 - **Application Deep Dive: Ecosystem Models for Collaborative Community Partnerships** on June 24th
- Join a [Community of Practice](#) – interest forms due June 12th
- Check out our [Resources](#) page, includes crosswalks and [office hours](#)



Carnegie Sustainability Communities of Practice

1. Advancing Sustainability as an Institutional Priority
2. Community Partnerships
3. Curriculum and Teaching
4. Sustainability and Campus Operations
5. Comunidad de habla hispana para la Sostenibilidad (Spanish-Speaking Community for Sustainability)
6. Southeast Regional Network: Institutions Preparing the Carnegie Sustainability Application
7. Community Colleges Preparing the Carnegie Sustainability Application
8. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)s Preparing the Carnegie Sustainability Application



Poll #3

Is your institution planning to apply for the Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability?





www.colorado.edu/sustainability/carnegie-elective-classification-sustainability

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