

2027 Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability

Application Deep Dive

Section III: Ecosystem Model for Collaborative Community Partnerships

June 24, 2026



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Process and Framework Overview
- Ecosystem Model for Collaborative Community Partnerships:
Section Questions and Best Practices
- 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 and slides will be sent to everyone who registered
- Thanks for being here!



Introductions



Ilse Rojas-Hamilton, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Office of Sustainability
University of Arizona



Sarah Fortner, Ph.D.
Director of Sustainability
Carleton College



Cathy Avila-Linn
Principal Consultant
CMEA Collaborative LLC



Amy Halvorson
Director for Sustainability
University of Colorado Boulder



Hallie Nelson Garcia
Program Manager for Sustainability
University of Colorado Boulder

Process & Framework



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
- Prioritizing institutional **diversity and inclusion**
- Launched in **partnership** between CU Boulder, American Council on Education and the Carnegie Foundation

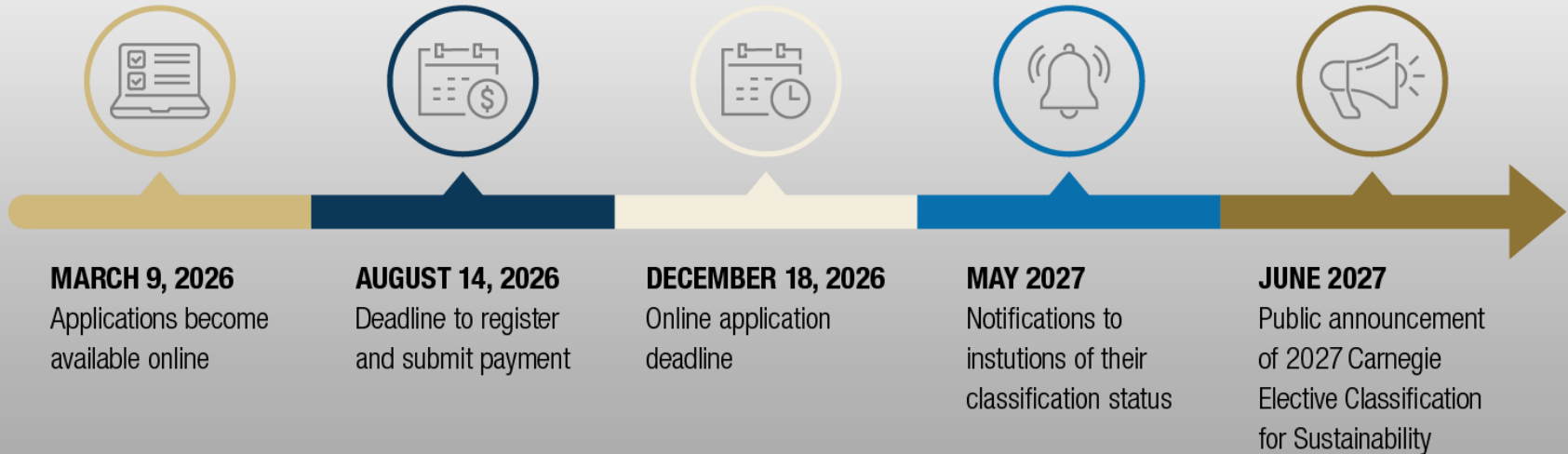


University of Colorado
Boulder



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

Poll #1

Is your institution planning to apply for the classification?



Section III: Ecosystem Model for Collaborative Community Partnerships

Ecosystem refers to the network of interdependent partners across the institution, community, industry, and government that advance sustainability and climate outcomes through shared governance and aligned goals. This model emphasizes the existence of mutual benefit, reciprocity, co-development, power sharing, and long-term goals.



Section III: Ecosystem Model for Collaborative Community Partnerships

- How does your institution use your ecosystem to advance sustainability partnerships?
- Where is your campus positioned in relation to community agencies, neighborhood initiatives, region, business, government, schools, etc.?
- How does your institution identify interdependence of community, industry, government, and academia to co-create impactful and scalable solutions?



Poll #2

Have you thought about your community partnerships as an ecosystem?



Question 1

Describe how an ecosystem model is used to create interconnected, interdisciplinary partnerships focused on sustainability and climate action. Explain the integration of different sectors in developing shared goals. Include Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), joint funding initiatives, or co-created strategic plans. (750-word limit)

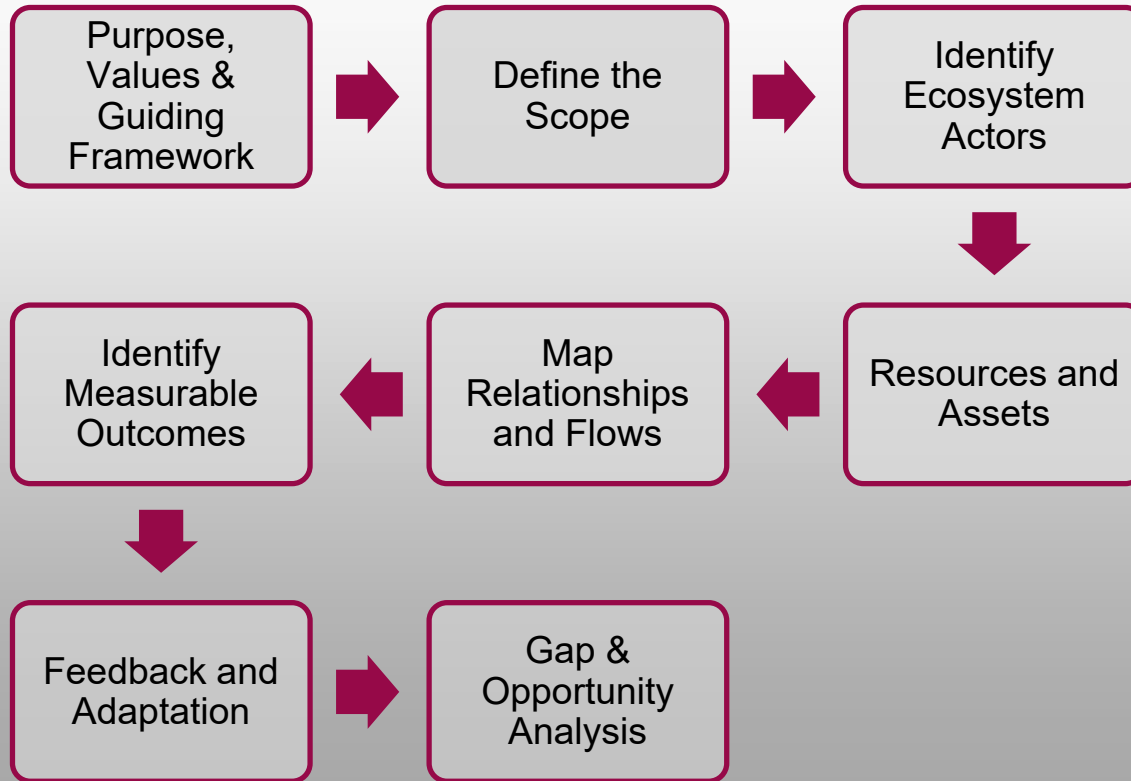
You are encouraged to upload an image (e.g., PDF, JPEG, PNG) that represents your campus' ecosystem model.

Best Practices



- Identify key internal and external partners involved in advancing sustainability at your institution
- Articulate how partnerships are interconnected
- Share how sustainability priorities are identified and shared across partners
- Describe how partnerships are formalized (e.g., MOUs, agreements, advisory boards, etc.)
- Share examples of how partners have jointly pursued grants, funding opportunities, or initiatives

Ecosystem Mapping Tool



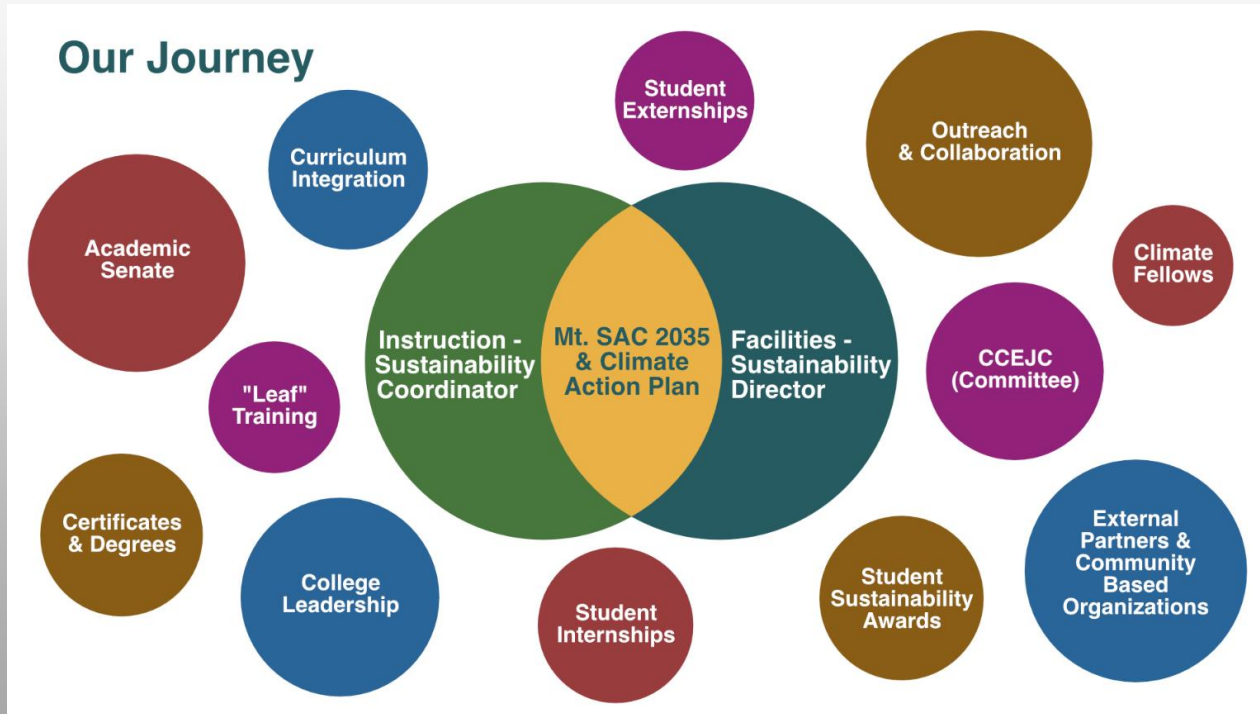
For Discussion

- How did your institution begin the process of mapping its sustainability ecosystem, and what practices, tools, or approaches were most helpful along the way?
- When you began mapping your sustainability ecosystem, which organizations, departments, and partners did you initially identify?
- Were there important stakeholders or relationships that were missing from your first draft, and how did you uncover them?



Sample Ecosystem Model - Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability

Mt. San Antonio Community College





Question 2

Provide specific examples of partnerships with local and/or regional governments, schools, non-profits, and small businesses that address sustainability challenges and how resources are shared.

Highlight specific achievements and how knowledge transfer occurs between partners to enhance collective capabilities. (500-word limit)

Best Practices

- Identify strong examples
- Illustrate resource sharing and knowledge transfer
- Share the challenge was addressed and what changed
- Articulate tangible outcomes for students, community members, staff, and faculty

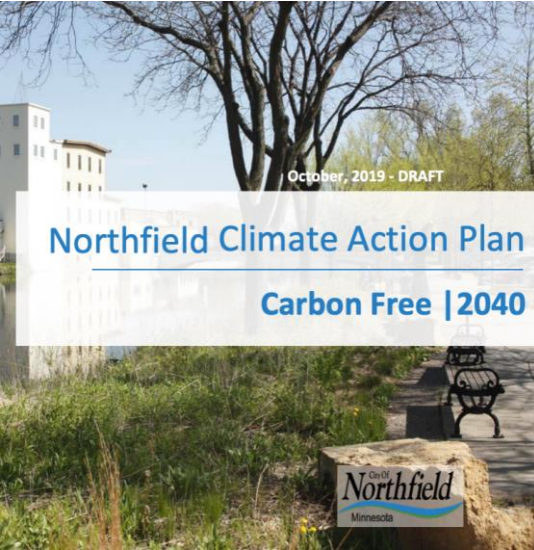
For Discussion

How did you identify and document the shared goals, resources, and outcomes that connected your partners, rather than simply describing individual activities?

How did you determine which relationships and connections to include in your ecosystem map?

What helped you move beyond simply listing partnerships to illustrating an interconnected network working toward shared sustainability goals?



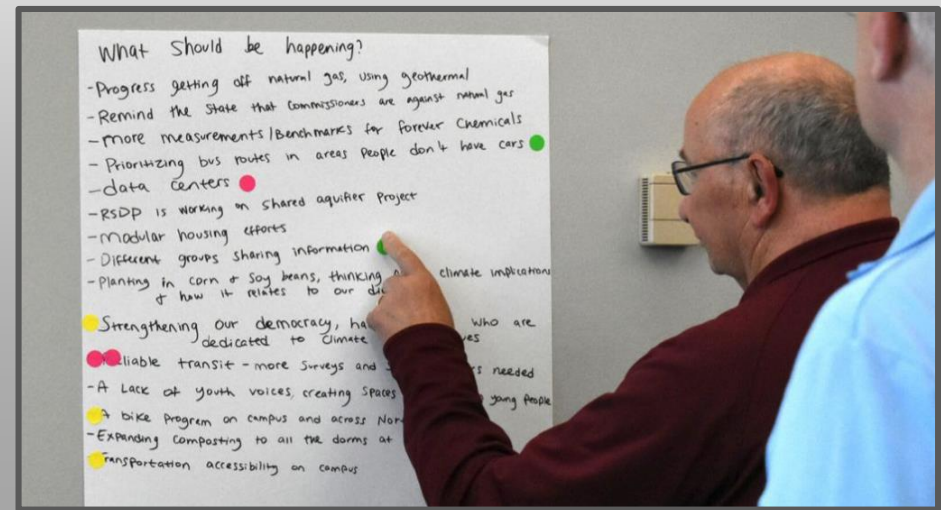


Minnesota's Climate Action Framework

cc-maf-01

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES

In the face of an urgent climate crisis, Carleton's bold new [Sustainable Futures framework](#) advances the College's leadership in emissions reduction with a focus on collective action, education, and infrastructure investments.





Why Treaties Matter

Self-Government in the Dakota and Ojibwe Nations

Treaties are agreements between self-governing, or sovereign, nations. The story of Native nations within Minnesota is the story of making treaties—from the time before Europeans came to this land, through treaty-making with the United States, to the growth of tribal self-determination in our time.

A collaboration of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Center, the Minnesota Historical Society, and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian, this project is funded in part with money from the first year of the National Heritage Fund that was created with a vote of the people of Minnesota in November 2008, and The Patrick and Sherry Smith Family Foundation.

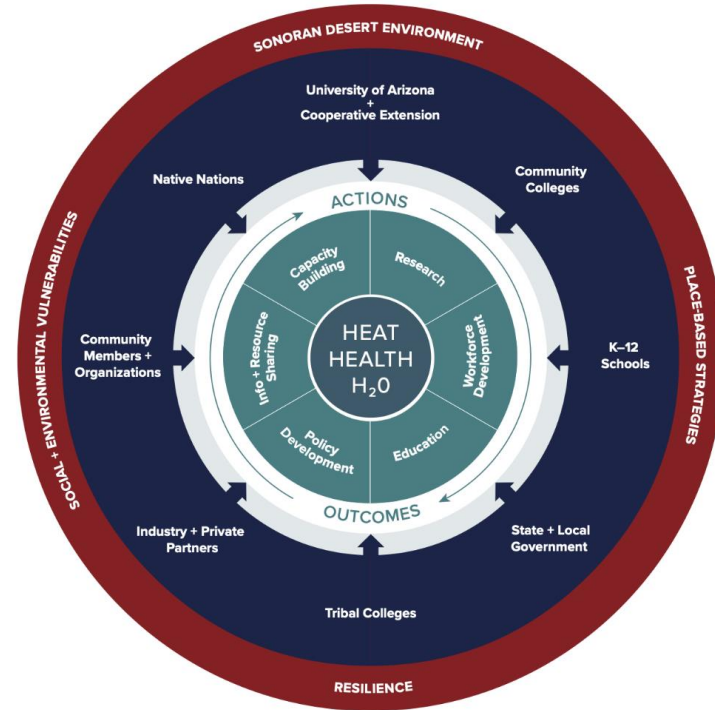
Minnesota National Museum of the American Indian

Native Affairs Council



Sample Ecosystem Model - Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability

University of Arizona



-  Ecosystems Lenses
-  Key Partners
-  Key Interactions
-  Key Issues



Question 3

Describe how the institution measures the success of ecosystem partnerships, including environmental, economic, and social indicators, explaining mechanisms for collecting feedback, resolving conflicts and adapting partnerships to new challenges and opportunities. Provide examples of measurable impacts, such as energy saved, emissions reduced, or community engagement rates. (500-word limit)

You will be asked to upload three (3) letters of support from community partners for this section.

Best Practices

- Define success
- Articulate metrics and evidence
- Share how feedback is utilized to improve practice
- Share the long-term impact, what has increased (capacity, knowledge, resources)

For Discussion

What did you learn about your institution's sustainability ecosystem through the mapping process that surprised you or changed your understanding of how sustainability work happens across campus and in the community?



Poll #3

Where are you in the process of mapping your sustainability ecosystem?



Q&A



Next Steps & Closing



Staying Connected and Building Capacity

- Download the [application and guidebook](#)
- [Sign up for our mailing list](#)
- Join a [Community of Practice](#) – interest from due June 26
- Check out our [Resources](#) page, includes crosswalks and [office hours](#)

Register for Upcoming Webinars

- July 14 – Application Deep Dive: Campus Infrastructure for Sustainability
- July 28 – Academic Integration, Research and Innovation, and Workforce Development for Non-Community Colleges
- July 30 – Academic Integration and Workforce Development for Community Colleges
- August 12 – Climate Action Plan, Resilience & Adaptation



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





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

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