



2027 Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability Call for Graduate Student Fellows

Deadline for submission extended to Friday, October 2, 2026

For its inaugural cycle, the University of Colorado Boulder will support a peer-review process for the [Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability](#). The goal of a peer review process is to make the classification of and by the field and increase the diversity of reviewers who both understand and represent the broader landscape of higher education institutions and sustainability.

The Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability uses a narrative-based application that allows each institution's unique strengths, priorities, and context to shine, rather than a one-size-fits-all model. It welcomes broad participation and offers equal recognition across the full spectrum of higher education from large R1 universities to community colleges and minority-serving institutions.

As part of this peer review process of the Sustainability Classification applications, 10-15 graduate student fellows will be selected to support peer reviewer teams during the first phase of reviews. Teams of three individuals will review 6-8 applications with the support of a graduate fellow. This professional development experience is intended to build graduate students' networks, provide exposure to a higher education peer review process, and increase understanding of institutional practices of sustainability and climate action.

Peer Review Process

The Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability utilizes a peer review process to evaluate and assess applications. This process consists of three tiers of reviewers:

Tier One: Peer Review Teams

Applications are reviewed by peer review teams consisting of three individuals per team and support from one graduate student fellow. These teams are intentionally assembled to include reviewers with a diverse range of perspectives, representing different types of institutions, professional experiences, and areas of expertise, helping to ensure a fair, comprehensive, and well-rounded review process. Each team is assigned a set of 6-8 applications to review. Teams are asked to provide their recommendations and feedback for each application.

Tier Two: Experienced Reviewers

Tier Two reviewers are experienced reviewers who conduct additional review of applications identified by Tier One reviewers as requiring further consideration. Considering the notes and evaluations provided by the Tier One peer review teams, Tier Two review teams may recommend that an institution be classified, not classified, or advanced for further review.

Tier Three: Carnegie Sustainability Staff

The Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability staff and experts conduct a final review of each application, considering the notes and evaluations provided by the peer review teams. Drawing on their expertise and knowledge, staff ensure that the assessment process aligns with the standards and objectives of the Carnegie Elective Classifications and supports consistent and well-informed classification decisions.

Eligibility Criteria for Graduate Student Fellows

- Be currently enrolled in a graduate program at an accredited institution of higher education.
- Have academic, professional, or research experience related to sustainability and climate action.
- Demonstrate strong writing, organizational, and communication skills.
- Be able to read and synthesize complex institutional materials.
- Be comfortable working collaboratively with reviewers and supporting review team processes.
- Be able to attend all required training sessions and commit to the review timeline and responsibilities.
- Not currently supporting your institution's Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability application (to be submitted in December 2026).

Graduate Student Fellows Expectations

- Attend all required reviewer and graduate fellow training sessions.
- Work collaboratively with the Team Leader to assist the team through the review process.
- Schedule and coordinate review team meetings and manage the review timeline.
- Read and review all assigned applications and supporting materials.
- Participate actively in review team discussions of applications.
- Take detailed notes during review meetings and upload them to GivePulse.
- Draft and edit feedback reports based on the review team's discussion and recommendations.
- Participate in regular check-ins with the Carnegie Sustainability Classification staff and communicate questions or needs related to the review process.

Time Commitment

Graduate Student Fellows should expect to commit approximately 52-96 hours between November 4, 2026 and April 30, 2027, including:

- Reviewer training: Three 1.5-hour virtual reviewer training sessions (4.5 hours total).
- Graduate Fellow/Team Leader training: Two 1-hour virtual training sessions (2 hours total).
- Application review: Approximately 3-4 hours to read and review each assigned application (18-32 hours total). As graduate fellows become more adept at evaluating applications, review time tends to decrease.
- Review team meetings: Approximately 1-1.5 hours per application, including preparation and follow-up (6-12 hours total).
- Scheduling, notes, and coordination: Approximately 1-2 hours per application, including scheduling meetings, managing the timeline, documenting meetings, and uploading notes to GivePulse (6-16 hours total).
- Feedback reports: Approximately 2-3 hours per application for drafting, incorporating team feedback, and finalizing reports (12-24 hours total).
- Team check-ins and communication: Approximately 4-6 hours throughout the review period.

Graduate Student Fellow Training

The Carnegie Sustainability Classification staff will select and train graduate students from diverse backgrounds, experiences, and institutions. Training sessions and regular check-ins are crucial

components of this program. Graduate Student Fellows will be trained in holistic review practices and approaches, reviewer documentation, and expectations for supporting reviewer teams. The initial set dates for training and consultations are scheduled as follows:

- Reviewer Training Session 1 - Choose one:
 - Wednesday, November 4th 1:00-2:30 p.m. MT
 - Thursday, November 5th 9:00-10:30 a.m. MT
- Reviewer Training Session 2 - Choose one:
 - Wednesday, November 18th 1:00-2:30 p.m. MT
 - Thursday, November 19th 9:00-10:30 a.m. MT
- Reviewer Training Session 3 - Choose one:
 - Wednesday, December 2nd 1:00-2:30 p.m. MT
 - Thursday, December 3rd 9:00-10:30 a.m. MT
- Team Leader/Graduate Fellow Session A:
 - Thursday, November 12th 1:00–2:00 p.m. MT
- Team Leader/Graduate Fellow Session B:
 - Tuesday, December 8th 1:00–2:00 p.m. MT

Compensation

Graduate fellows will receive an honorarium of \$1,000 upon completion of all requirements listed above (in April 2027).

Application Instructions

Interested applicants should fill out an [application form](#) by **Friday, October 2, 2026**. The form requests the applicant's CV/resume and a Statement of Interest (maximum 2500 characters) indicating: their suitability to serve as a graduate fellow, their motivation for participating in the review process, and how it connects to their professional interests. Please direct questions to CarnegieSustain@colorado.edu. Selected graduate student fellows will be notified by October 12, 2026.