DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY | OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026



PUBLISHED FALL 2026

SDGs Expo attendees listening to opening remarks in the McInnes Room, SUB.

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Context

At Dalhousie University, we're committed to bold and transformative actions, creating a more sustainable, resilient, and low-carbon campus. Dalhousie's Office of Sustainability (OS) supports the operational side of this work — from decarbonizing our campus infrastructure to advancing sustainable food systems. In collaboration with partners across the university, we are developing and implementing innovative projects and programs designed to reduce waste, lower emissions, and conserve resources. Through education and engagement, our goal is to empower members of our campus community to take meaningful actions to create a culture of sustainability and achieve our shared goals.

The OS supports university-wide public sustainability reporting that includes the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), Sustainability Tracking Assessment Rating System (STARS) report, QS Sustainability Ranking, and the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking (THE IR).

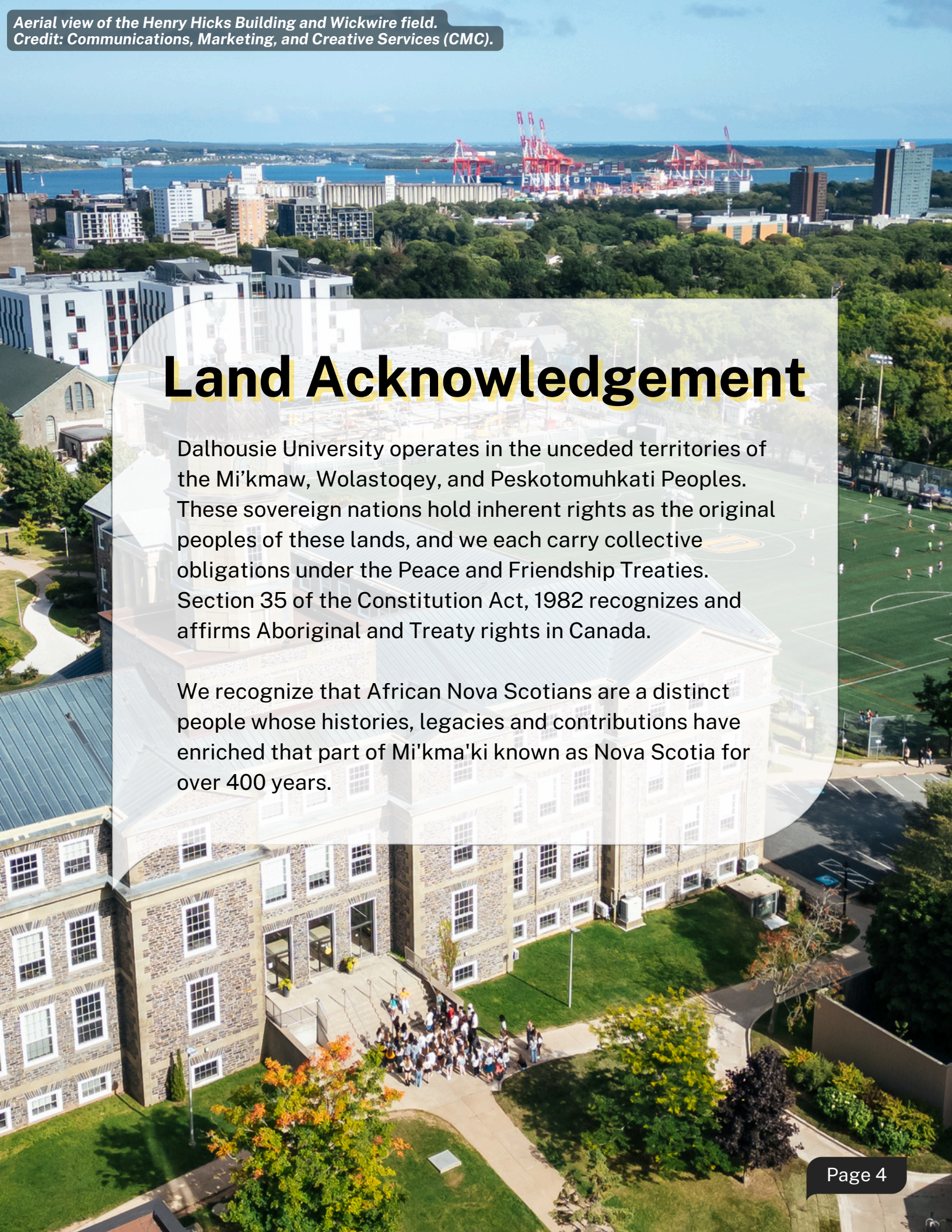
This Annual Report provides a snapshot of progress made on key operational sustainability efforts, as identified in the University Sustainability Operations Plan, during the 2025–2026 academic year. It showcases major initiatives, partnerships, and achievements that are helping move the university toward its sustainability commitments, while broader institutional performance continues to be reflected through international reporting frameworks such as STARS and THE Impact Rankings.



OS Team, Summer 2025.
Top (L to R): Bruce Porter, Alice Noble Irwin, Amy Dolland, Stephanie MacPhee. Bottom (L to R): Alexa Goodman, Vedika Bhardwaj, Chigozie Mbwake, Sau Fan Lee.



Location of OS with vibrant pollinator plants.



Aerial view of the Henry Hicks Building and Wickwire field.
Credit: Communications, Marketing, and Creative Services (CMC).

Land Acknowledgement

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi’kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS IN 2025

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

43%
reduction in GHG emissions. Achieved and surpassed 2025 target!

20%
renewable energy including both on and off campus supply.

82%
Dal community members are using sustainable transit for commuting to/from Halifax campuses.

47%
reduction in water use from 2010 baseline.

40%
campus population engaged with OS online content.

53%
waste diversion rate.

DESIGNATIONS

FAIR TRADE CAMPUS

Since February 2024

Bee City CAMPUS

Since December 2023

BIKE FRIENDLY CERTIFIED

Since 2016

RANKINGS & AWARDS

THE IMPACT RANKINGS

Dalhousie ranked 90th out of 2,318 institutions in the latest Time Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings.

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

Dalhousie ranked in 107th globally in the QS Sustainability Rankings.

STARS a program of aashe GOLD

Renewed until February 2028



Sustainability Manager, Alexa Goodman, providing waste education at the 2025 International Student Orientation in the Emera IDEA Building.

CAMPUS ENGAGEMENT

Goal: Support academic and research efforts through our work with on-campus sustainability class projects, theses, and related research efforts. Employ students all year round to work in the OS.

PROGRESS

- Over 100 students worked with the OS through independent research, coursework (e.g. Campus as a Living Lab – ENVS 3502, and Solid Waste and Landfill Engineering – ENVE4460), and volunteering.
- Four summer interns supported projects and programs on sustainable food systems, reducing food waste, GHG inventory, Free Store coordination, waste audits and pollinator gardens.
- Organized events throughout the academic year covering thematic areas like Fair Trade, Cool (Low Carbon) Foods - plant based diets, and waste reduction, engaging 1,556 students , staff, faculty and community members.
- Online presence provided passive engagement reaching approximately 40% of the campus population through Instagram, with 2,455 followers, and 8,391 unique viewers through myDal News, where Sustainability content accounted for more than 7% of all updates in the FY.
- Sustainability Month programming in October included a Sustainability Trivia Night, keynote lecture with Dr. Elin Kelsey on eco-hope, green building tour, plant-based community meal, Fair Trade programming, EV and e-bike test rides with Next Ride and Bird Canada, clothing swap and Free Store donation drive, a recycling facility tour, and a community cleanup and planting event. Month long engagement opportunities included increased Bring Your Own Mug (BYOM) discounts at participating food service locations, climate-focused floor decal campaigns, Ecolympics challenges, and carpooling promotion.
- Worked with Residence Life during move out to divert 1,243 kgs of clothing and bedding to local charities, including Soul Habour Rescue Mission.

1,556 people
Engaged in events and workshops hosted by peer educators.

1,243 kgs
Of clothing and bedding collected from residences and donated to charities.

FEATURE PROGRAM: Sustainable Labs Program

Throughout this year, the OS visited 18 labs across the Halifax campuses, where 10 were certified through the Sustainable Labs Program, designed to align lab operations with Dal's sustainability goals. Participating labs engaged with the OS on a guided lab visit, followed by submitting a self-reported scorecard to measure their progress, while also identifying attainable measures for improvement within labs' direct control, including:

- Using free timers, provided to several labs by the OS, to automate equipment shut-off during periods of disuse, conserving energy.
- Adding 'Shut-the-Sash' stickers on fume hoods to encourage energy-saving behaviour.
- Adjusting ultra-low freezer temperatures from -80°C to -70°C where feasible, leading to energy savings of up to 1/3 of devices' former usage.

* The Anatomical Pathology Lab with Nova Scotia Health, led by Dr. Laurette Geldenhuys, was the first lab certified through the Program, achieving a platinum certification. The lab made several improvements to operational sustainability by upgrading lighting and equipment to conserve energy, updating sampling procedures to significantly reduce waste, and improving waste sorting behaviours through education and team discussions on sustainability.



Dr. Martell demonstrating new methodology for improved lab sustainability.

* The Dasog Lab, managed by Dr. Sarah Martell, received a gold certification for their efforts to improve operational sustainability by replacing energy-intensive, high-temperature chemical reactions with low-energy ball-milling methods conducted at room temperature. The lab also worked to reduce reaction times from hours to minutes, cutting power demand within the lab, and applied techno-economic and life cycle analyses to lab practices to optimize sustainability.



Dr. MacDonald holding a painted retort stand

* The First Year Chemistry Teaching Lab, led by Dr. Jennifer MacDonald, achieved a platinum certification for its innovative measures to improve sustainability, including developing a detailed inventory tracking system and minimal purchasing strategy to reduce chemical waste and storage demands. They also refurbished 120 retort stands to extend their lifespan, and eliminated needing filter paper for contrast in titrations, preventing the waste of ~4,500 filter paper circles each Fall term!



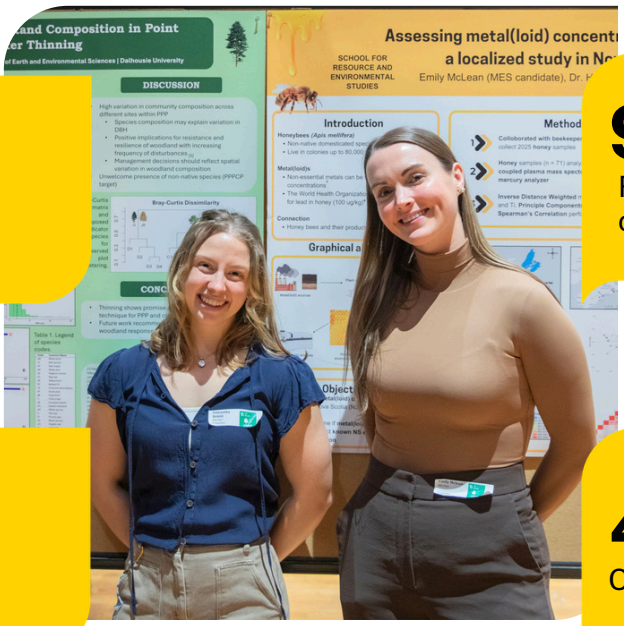
Poster presentation in the DSU McInnes Room. Credit Enzo Stimpson.

2026 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Expo

A **conference-style event** showcasing **interdisciplinary efforts** to **advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** through **research**, **innovation**, and **community collaboration**. This expo brought together researchers, vendors, and organizations working towards a more sustainable future on and off Dalhousie campuses.

OUTCOMES

48 research posters
From all levels of study



9 disciplines
From natural and medical, to computer science

Poster presenters from the School for Resource and Environmetnal Studies (SRES), Samantha Rebitt (left) and Emily McLean (right).

32 booths
From innovative solutions to career opportunties

450+ visitors
Over the 6 hour event



Jeannine Boudreau, Most Innovative Research Award winner. Credit Enzo Stimpson.



Happy conference attendees. Credit Enzo Stimpson

OFF CAMPUS PARTNERSHIPS & FUNDING

Goal: Develop and support on-going networks, funding applications, and joint initiatives with community, government, and other external partners. This work supports our collective and University action.

PROGRESS

- The OS continues to contribute to Atlantic Universities and Colleges Sustainability Network (AUCSN), a subcommittee of Interuniversity Services Inc. (ISI), and is a member of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).
- The Executive Director sits as an Atlantic Canadian representatives of the Northeast Campus Sustainability Consortium (NECSC), and the Sustainability in Higher Education Across Canada (SHEAC) network.
- The OS collaborated with Johns Hopkins University and Dalhousie's College of Sustainability to support an experiential sustainability leadership course featuring site visits to Oberland Agriscience, Sustane Recycling, and a scallop aquaculture farm, alongside presentations from Dalhousie faculty on green financing in Canada and coastal adaptation.

External funds (cash and in-kind) were committed for a variety of projects and programs:

- Funding from the Low Carbon Communities program, through the Province of Nova Scotia. In total, $75,000 was received to complete a feasibility study on agrivoltaics at the AC.
- $33,954.39 in total was received to fund student internships. $11,738.39 was received from the Clean Foundation through their Clean Leaders Internship program; $5,320 was received from the Provincial Work Integrated Learning Co-Op Program; $4,396 was received from Canada Summer Jobs; $7,500 was received from Dalhousie's Student Employment Pathway program; $5,000 received through a SSHERC grant in partnership with the Agricultural Campus for the Food Impact Network Project.
- $2,800 funding from Pollinator Partnership Canada to expand native pollinator habitat across campus, and $2,000 from World Wildlife Fund's Go Wild Grant for a two-part Pollinator Garden outside of Cameron Hall (Howe Hall).
- $90,880 in rebates were received from Efficiency Nova Scotia for on-campus energy projects implemented across our campuses.
- The Recover Initiative provided funding support for deep retrofit feasibility studies on two campus residences – Shirreff Hall and Howe Hall.



Planting event as part of Sustainability Month, behind the LSC and NRC Building.



A van full of donations from Shirreff Hall move-out for Soul Harbour Rescue Mission.

SUPPORTING EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY (EDIA)

Goal: Support institutional EDIA efforts by increasing knowledge and experience of the OS team, integrating into programming, evaluating and identifying issues and opportunities.

PROGRESS

- Hires included representation from BIPOC and underrepresented communities (i.e. ethnic minorities).
- Clean Foundation's Clean Leadership Program provided funding to hire a student from the LGBTQ2IAS+ community to join our team for a summer internship; and the Low Carbon Communities funding supported hiring a student from an ethnic minority to support the Agrivoltaics Feasibility Study on the AC.
- Integrated accessibility design principles into planning interpretive outdoor signage for the Shirreff Hall Pollinator Garden. The late Kailey (KK) Simon, an Indigenous student artist, created Dalhousie-themed pollinator artwork (shown right) paying homage to L'nu culture, which is featured on the sign.
- Redistributed approximately $87,000 worth of gently used goods through the Free Store to students, removing financial barriers to accessing household goods, kitchenware, textiles and electronics by providing them at no-cost.





Students on tour of Sustane's Recycling Facility in Chester, NS, taken during JHU field trip. July 2025.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Goal 1: Increased diversion of solid, liquid, and hazardous waste from landfill disposal.
Target 1: 75% diversion from landfill by 2030.
Baseline: 2019 - 59% diversion from landfill; 2022 - 62% diversion from landfill.

Active Programs: Ongoing waste avoidance, reuse (Free Store, Surplus Materials Program), and recycling programs; residence move-out programs; organics, fiber, recyclables, metal, construction and demolition, electronics, appliances, bulb and battery recycling programs offered by Facilities Management. Residence and campus community educational workshops on waste sorting and contamination avoidance. Tours of HRM recycling, landfill, and organics facilities offered to members of the campus community. Updates to waste signage, education, and additional focus on waste and diversion in the laboratory environment.

Feature Programs: The Free Store - In September 2025, the Back-to-School Shop during the move-in week redistributed 10,000 pounds of gently used items left behind from residence move-out to around 1,200 students, valued at over $66,000, in just four and a half days! The Free Store began regular weekly shop times in January 2026, which continued all winter long, serving 1,822 people, with an additional 3,395 pounds valued around $21,000 processed from October 2025 to March 2026.

Dalhousie has an active Surplus Materials Program, administered by the Procurement Department, that services the Halifax campuses and the AC. In 2025/26, equipment, furniture and supplies totaling more than 9 tonnes were redistributed to our campus community through this program.

PROGRESS

53%
Waste diversion rate.
This is a 6% decrease since 2019.

83%
Waste diversion rate if wood ash from the AC is included, which is used as farm fertilizer.



Free Store lineup on opening day in August 2025 outside the Mona Campbell Building.

FEATURE PROGRAM: Free Store Back-to-School Shop

A hub for redistributing free gently used goods such as household items, kitchenware, school supplies, and more, to reduce waste, save individuals money, and contribute to the circular economy.

OUTCOMES

1,200 visitors
Mostly incoming students

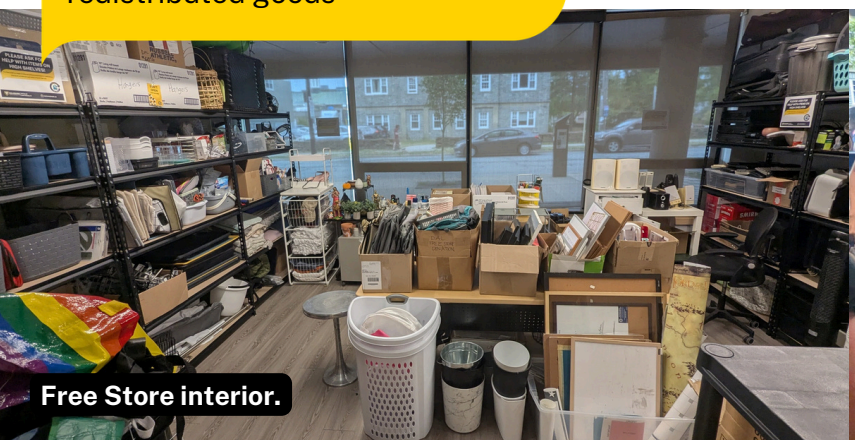


OS Staff Team celebrating a successful first day.
L to R: Bruce Porter, Alice Noble Irwin, Vedika Bhardwaj and Alexa Goodman.

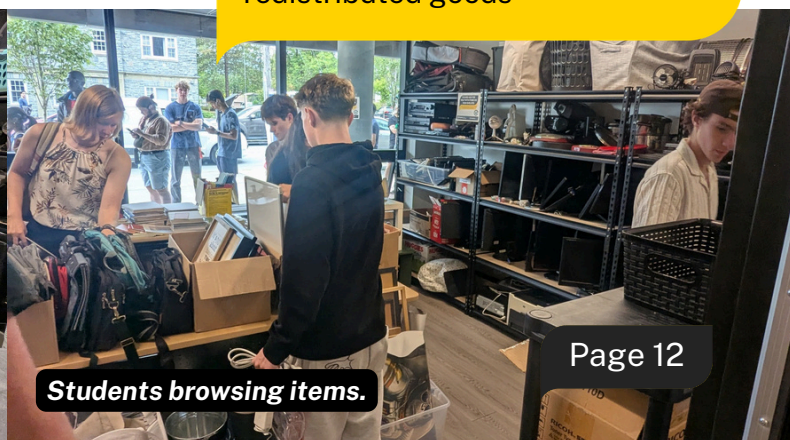
4.5 days
To clear all stock

$66k
Estimated value of redistributed goods

4.3 tonnes
Weight of redistributed goods



Free Store interior.



Students browsing items.



Engineering students conducting waste audit of items collected from residence. February 2025.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Goal 2: Minimize waste generation from all streams, including recyclables, paper and cardboard, organics including food waste, landfill, construction and demolition, universal waste including electronics, biomedical and hazardous; reduce the quantity of purchased materials being disposed of.

Target 2: Increase reduction in waste generated each year over baseline period.

Baseline: 2013 - 85 kgs waste generated/person/year (Halifax); 2020 - 79 kgs waste generated/person/year (Halifax)*

*AC data are estimations from hauler and lacks accuracy. Halifax Campuses represent 99% of the campus population.

PROGRESS

43 kgs/person
of waste generated in Halifax

50% reduction
in waste generated per person since baseline year



Food waste audit set up in Howe Hall. March 2026.

Active Programs: Reduction programs impacting total waste generation include working with Food Services to reduce single use disposable packing through reuse programs, like Fredric's Borrow Program, and embedding robust waste avoidance and reuse practices in flagship programs like the Sustainable Events Certificate (8 events certified) and Sustainable Labs Program (10 certified labs).

Feature Program: As part of the Food Impact Network Project, the OS completed a second post-consumer food waste audit in Howe Dining Hall, with analysis to help inform future strategies to reduce food waste and encourage plant-based meal choices in campus dining halls. Results from the first audit in March 2025 found that approximately 72% of photographed food waste was avoidable, representing an estimated 63 kg of avoidable food waste daily, while roughly 70% of diners appeared to produce little to no measurable food waste. You can read the full report online here. Automatic food waste scales were added to Halifax campus dining halls, complementing those at Jenkins Hall at the AC, and new table decals with environmental nudges were introduced to encourage reducing food waste and adopting more sustainable food choices.

Food Impact Network

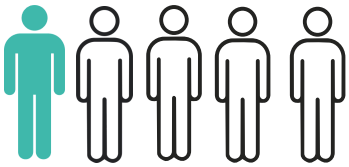
PLATE AUDIT SUMMARY

2025 & 2026

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A two-year post-consumer food audit in the Howe Dining Hall, in collaboration with Food Services.

How much plate waste was recorded?



Roughly **one** in **five** people wasted food



Two days of discarded food = **one reindeer's weight**!



Average **weight of waste per plate**, using proxy data

What foods went uneaten?



85% of food **could have been eaten.**



40% **Vegetables & Fruits**



27% **Meat & Alternatives**



18.5% **Grains**



14.5% **Mixed foods**

Wasted Chicken Has an Environmental Cost

Chicken was the **most-wasted food** in both years.



Drumsticks made up **86%** of wasted chicken.



73%

of discarded drumsticks still **had edible meat** left.

224 kg CO_2e

From discarded drumsticks in **just one night**.



That's like driving from Halifax to Montréal (**890 km in an average car**).



Solar PV array on Art Center.

ENERGY & WATER

Goal: Reduce electricity, fuel, water, and materials consumption

Targets: Electricity and fuel - Hold growth and reduce consumption; Water – 70% reduction from baseline year.

Baselines:

- Electricity: 2010 - 80,265 MWh (4 MWh per person); 2020 - 77,771 MWh (4 MWh per person)
- Fuels: 2010 - 190,000 MWhe (10 MWh per person); 2020 - 155,208 MWhe (7 MWh per person)
- Water: 2010 - 1,200,800 m^3 (62 m^3 per person); 2020 - 461,868 m^3 (22 m^3 per person)

PROGRESS

All reductions measured against the baseline year (2010).

Electricity

11% reduction

71,761 MWh

18% per person reduction

3.6 MWh /person

Fuels

32.7% reduction

127,968 MWh
weather normalized

42% per person reduction

5.8 MWh /person

Water

47% reduction

618,789

68% per person reduction

20m^3 /person

Active Programs: Each year several projects are in the planning, implementation or final measurement and verification stage to improve energy efficiency, decarbonize campus buildings and reduce water consumption. Projects in the study or planning phase include deep retrofit feasibility studies in Shirreff and Howe Hall, integrating sustainability into dining spaces, a recommissioning study in the Steele Ocean Sciences Building, and solar photovoltaic assessments for various campus buildings.

Projects approaching or in the implementation stage include LSC recommissioning and installation of mechanical insulation along the steam distribution system.

Several projects in the final or measurement and verification stage include the Killam Library Deep Energy Retrofit, geothermal system expansion at Sexton, and feasibility study on an agrivoltaics system in Agricultural Campus. Through our energy management information system (EMIS) we identify ongoing opportunities and issues.

GREENHOUSE GAS (GHG) EMISSIONS

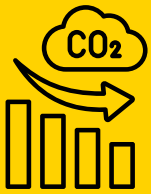
Goal: Reduce GHG emissions and implement climate adaptation strategies.
Targets (Scope 1 and 2): 30% reduction by 2025 from baseline; 55% reduction by 2030; 80% reduction by 2040; net-zero before 2050.
Baseline GHGs (Scope 1 and 2): 2010: 106,178 tCO^2e and 6.52 tCO^2e per person.

Project Highlight: The Killam Library, previously one of the top five energy consuming buildings on campus, underwent a deep retrofit aimed at reducing energy consumption, utility costs and GHG emissions by more than 50%. The retrofit, completed in December 2025, involved a comprehensive upgrade of the building's systems, including lighting and mechanical — two key drivers of energy use.

PROGRESS

43% reduction
61,156 tCO_2e

52% per person reduction
2.6 tCO_2e/person



Specifically, lighting was updated to modern LEDs with occupancy controls, the mechanical system was completely overhauled, and heating was converted from steam to hot water. The project was completed as an Energy Performance Contract with energy savings guaranteed by the service provider. Measurement and Verification (M&V) results indicate the building is outperforming expectations, achieving approximately 30% greater energy savings and 43% higher utility cost savings than originally projected.



Diagram of system that controls/monitors Killam HVAC system. Source: Dal News

RENEWABLE ENERGY

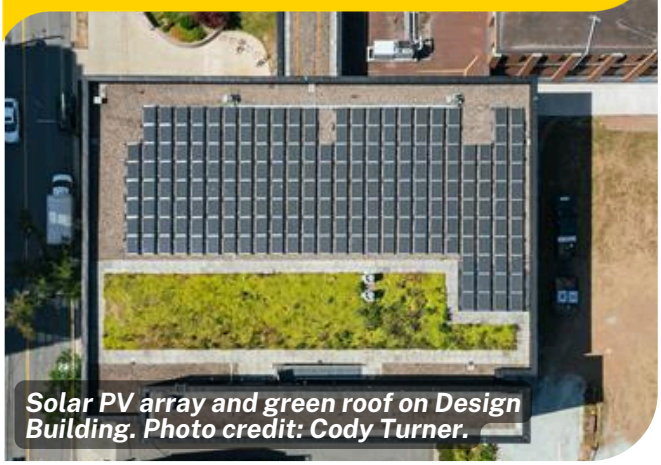
Goal: Increase renewable energy supply on and off campus.
Targets: 2020 - 20%; 2030 - 90-100% for electricity through off and onsite purchases.
Baseline: 2010 - 0% renewable energy on campus.

PROGRESS

Active Programs: Currently Dalhousie has nine solar installations, a geo-exchange field, and uses sawmill waste for creating heat and electricity at the AC. Work is underway in preparation for participation in the Province's Green Choice Program, which will enable customers like Dalhousie to purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) related to renewable energy projects based in Nova Scotia. The OS is actively working on applying for funding to install more solar PV on our campuses and has expanded the number of buildings connected to the geo-exchange system at Sexton. A feasibility study was also completed to assess opportunities and costs for an agrivoltaics installation at the AC.

5% onsite renewable energy

20% including both on and off campus supply



Solar PV array and green roof on Design Building. Photo credit: Cody Turner.



Agrivoltaics example. Source: Canva.



Electric vehicles charging at the Sexton station on Norma Eddy Lane.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

Goal: Increased travel (commuting and business) through sustainable modes.
Targets: 2020 – 80% of commuting trips made by walking, cycling, transit, carpooling, or remote work; 2030 target - 85% of trips made using sustainable modes of transit.
Baseline: 2010 - 66% of commuting trips made by walking, cycling, transit, carpooling, or remote work.

Active Programs: Active transportation and sustainable mobility initiatives continued throughout 2025–2026, including the employee bus pass (EPass) program, run in partnership with the HRM, which grew by 5% this year to reach over 300 active members. Other activities included safe cycling sessions, active transportation planning, annual commuter surveys, and education on low emission and efficient vehicle use. Bike engagement remained a priority through e-bike test rides with Next Ride and Bird Canada, Learn to Ride and Learn to Repair sessions with the Dal/King's Bike Centre, and expanded promotion of secure bike parking areas (SPAs). A Complete Streets summer bike tour and Chain of Lakes Trail ride were also organized to increase community engagement on biking in Halifax. In partnership with HRM and Bird Canada, e-mobility parking zones (outside the Dalplex, by the SUB bus station, and on Norma Eddy Lane adjacent to the Design Building) were introduced across Halifax campuses to support responsible shared micromobility use, with over 20,782 trips started and 20,618 trips ended on Dal's campuses. The Bike Centre project on Sexton Campus (Norma Eddy Lane) is now advancing through planning and implementation with Facilities Management.

PROGRESS

82%
Dal community members who use sustainable transit for commuting to/from Halifax campuses.

44%
AC community members who use sustainable transit for commuting to/from the AC.

Dalhousie University Commuter Survey

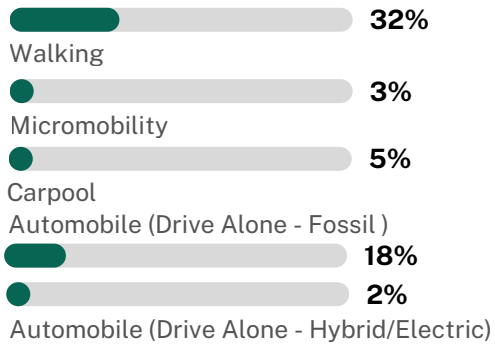
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

2025-2026

Data is sourced from annual sustainability survey, DalTRAC reports, and commuter GHG emissions data.

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
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How does our community commute to and from Dalhousie?



82%

Use Sustainable Transport

On Halifax campuses and 44% on the Agriculture Campus.

All campus transportation methods, excluding single-occupancy fossil fuel powered vehicles, are considered sustainable.

How do people travel between Halifax campuses?



62%

Prefer walking

As the primary option for travelling between campuses in Halifax, including Studley, Carleton, Sexton, and off-campus health facilities.

How about **secondary modes** (less than 30% of the time) for daily commuting?

This question helps us understand the different ways respondents use transportation in their daily lives.



Public Transportation

Was the **top secondary mode**, used by **27%** of respondents.



Walking

Ranked **second** as a secondary mode at **21%**.

Secondary modes are a great way to introduce sustainable options to your commute.
Try choosing a sustainable option for your next trip!

Calls to Action: How Can We Inspire Sustainable Transportation Choices?

Ideas for sustainable transportation came from 289 survey respondents.



Improve Public Transit

Roughly ⅔ of suggestions asked for improved wait times, direct bus routes, and less time spent stuck in traffic.



Improve Bike Infrastructure

Respondents asked for expanded cycling infrastructure to increase safety and messaging to improve driver attitudes towards cyclists.



Bee enjoying a flowering plant on the IDEA green roof.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Increase campus biodiversity and maintain and increase natural spaces.

Active Programs: Each year, the OS works with Facilities Management (Environmental Services), academic departments, and students to maintain and enhance biodiversity across campus through our Pollinator Program. These efforts support hands-on learning and engagement, which are key elements of being a Bee City Canada campus. Ongoing collaboration with Environmental Services continues to strengthen the program, with planning underway for future expansions.

PROGRESS

- Leveraged WWF Go Wild funding to increase diversity and seasonal availability of native flowering species in the Shirreff Hall Pollinator Garden and installation of new interpretive signage for the site.
- Utilized Pollinator Partnership funding to plant native trees won the AC, and two new pollinator beds on the Studley campus were created behind the NRC Parkade near LSC Biology and at the Rowe Building, alongside succession planting in existing beds to gradually replace cultivars with native species.
- The OS participated in a panel discussion with Friends of the Halifax Public Gardens (attended by ~200 people), distributing 24 native seedlings to community members.



Tree planting event on the Agricultural Campus thanks to Pollinator Partnership funding.



Bumblebee on Joe-Pye weed in the Shirreff Hall Garden.

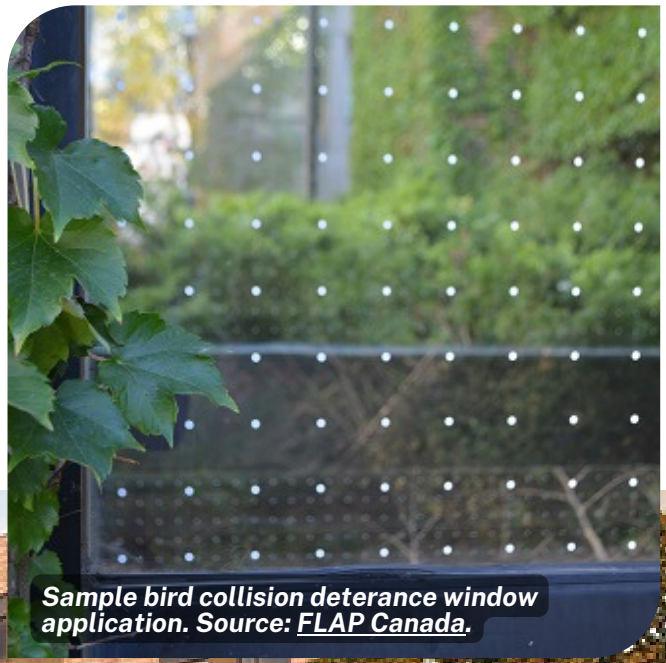
GREEN BUILDINGS

Goal: Buildings achieve high performance green building standards.

Active Programs: New buildings strive to achieve comprehensive green building certifications such as LEED® Gold or higher and may also pursue specific certifications related to carbon and energy. Existing building upgrades follow high performance building standards. New Sustainable Building Design Guidelines are under development and will be published in late 2026. They include ambitious yet achievable energy performance targets and focus on sustainability features that must be considered and integrated into the design and construction of new buildings and major and minor renovations. The OS is working with the ReCover Initiative, Atlantic Canada's deep retrofit accelerator, to complete deep retrofit feasibility studies on two on-campus residences – Shirreff Hall and Howe Hall. The studies will identify measures that can be implemented to improve energy efficiency, occupant comfort and reduce GHG emissions by 50% or more.

PROGRESS

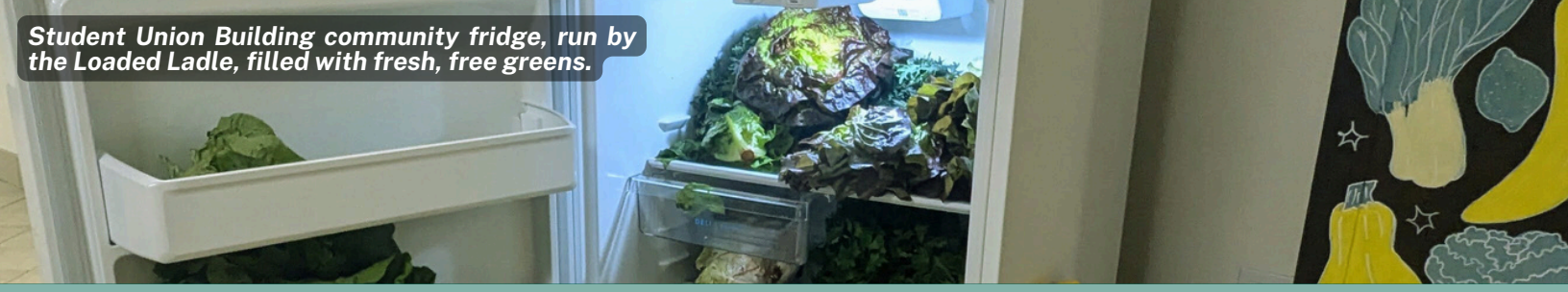
- The new 6-storey student housing project located between Henry Street and Seymore Street is striving for LEED Gold certification. The building, which is expected to open in 2028, is fully electric, with a heat recovery system, bird collision deterrence integrated into windows, a robust construction and demolition waste management program and more.



Sample bird collision deterance window application. Source: FLAP Canada.



Renderings of the upcoming housing complex on Dal's Studley Campus in Halifax, as viewed from the main entrance on Henry Street. Source: Dal News



Student Union Building community fridge, run by the Loaded Ladle, filled with fresh, free greens.

SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS

Goal: Transition to more plant-based food offerings.

Active Programs: Plant-based options are offered across catering, retail, and dining halls, with vegan and vegetarian items as standard offerings. Reporting currently tracks plant-based purchasing through food spend, with alternative metrics under review (plate, sales, weight, or volume).

Food Services, with OS support, continues promoting the Cool Foods Program, highlighting plant-forward, lower-carbon meals. With Aramark's contract with Dal Food Services finalized and now expanded to include the AC campus, sustainability initiatives will continue to be advanced including the Green Restaurant Association (GRA) certification; currently Howe Hall has a 3-star GRA certification (out of 4). Food Services launched a Borrow Program at Fredric's on Sexton Campus, which had 47 unique users and 269 cup reuses.

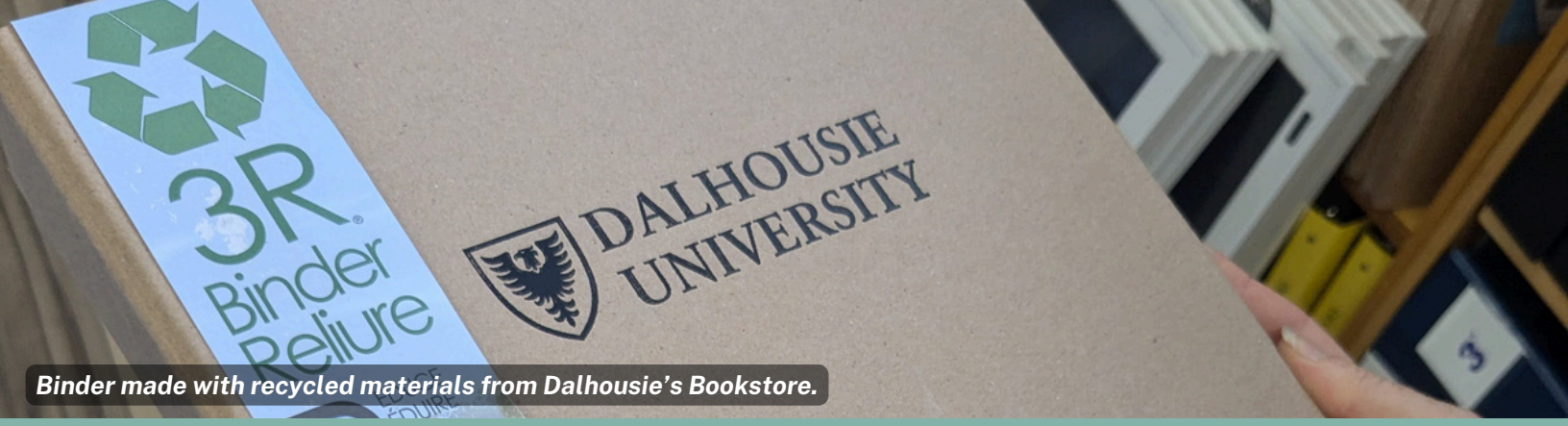
Using Howe Hall food audit data from FIN, two Research Associates analyzed plate waste by food group, with full results here. This was paired with a satisfaction and behaviour survey and study, developed and analyzed by a project team member. Findings, combined with broader research, will inform recommendations to increase student uptake of plant-forward options and efforts to reduce food waste in dining halls.



Plant-forward behaviour nudging decals in Howe Dining Hall.



Conducting plate waste audits in March 2026 in Howe Dining Hall.



Binder made with recycled materials from Dalhousie's Bookstore.

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING

Goal: Increase sustainably and ethically sourced products.

Active Programs: Each year, commodity work is being done to increase sustainable and ethically sourced products such as food, travel/fleet, IT/Telecom/AV, stationary, textiles, appliances, professional services, furniture, custodial, energy/water, and building/supplies. The OS connects with Procurement on new strategies and system opportunities.

PROGRESS

- Dalhousie maintained its designation as a Fair Trade Campus, offering ethically sourced coffee, tea, and chocolate across dining halls, food outlets, and catering services. The Fair Trade Campus Steering Committee will reconvene early next fiscal year to develop a plan to work towards a Silver Fair Trade Campus designation and further expand product availability.
- Dalhousie's Sustainability Policy outlines the requirement around sustainable paper purchasing where 100% post-consumer recycled (PCR) content, third-party certified (if available by suppliers) is encouraged.



Fair Trade chocolate available in campus vending machine in the LeMarchant Place atrium.

34%

Of paper purchased was FSC-certified with 100% PCR content, while the remaining 30% was FSC-certified with 30% PCR content.


Decomposition notebooks and refillable pens made from recycled materials from Dalhousie's Bookstore.

IN SUMMARY

This past year brought continued progress across sustainability initiatives at Dalhousie, alongside new opportunities to strengthen long-term impact across our campuses. From expanding the Free Store into a recognized year-round campus program and growing native pollinator spaces, to advancing sustainable food initiatives and completing major energy efficiency projects such as the Killam deep retrofit, there is much to celebrate.

LOOKING AHEAD

The dedication and efforts of staff, faculty, students, and campus partners remain central to creating a culture of campus sustainability and advancing institutional sustainability goals and climate action at Dalhousie. Looking ahead to the 2026–27 academic year, key focus areas include:

- Continued expansion of the Sustainable Labs Program
- Reviewing priorities and opportunities under the evolving STARS 3.0 framework, including future workplace engagement programming
- Continued implementation of energy efficiency and decarbonization projects across campus infrastructure
- Applying for funding for sustainability project development and implementation
- Completion of deep retrofit feasibility studies for student residences
- Expansion of native pollinator and biodiversity initiatives across campuses
- Strengthening waste reduction and education initiatives, including the redevelopment of campus waste signage to improve sorting accuracy and reduce contamination
- Advancing research, engagement, and behaviour-change initiatives that support lower-carbon and plant-forward food choices
- Ongoing collaboration with campus and external partners to support sustainable transportation and active commuting initiatives

As we move into the next academic year, Dalhousie remains committed to fostering a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive campus community through continued collaboration, innovation, and action.

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