

Sustainable Offices Getting Started Guide



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

This Getting Started Guide outlines the process for earning badges in the Sustainable Offices program. For frequently asked questions, see the *FAQ*.

Steps to certification

1 MAKE A COMMITMENT

<p>a. Review key tools and resources. Begin with this <i>Getting Started Guide</i>, the <i>FAQ</i> and at least one Sustainable Offices badge checklist.</p>	
<p>b. Meet with your direct supervisor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share key tools and resources with your supervisor. Tip: Depending on your office, it may be appropriate for your supervisor to initiate and/or facilitate this conversation with your leadership.
<p>c. Share the <i>Letter to Sponsors</i> with the most senior leader(s) responsible for your workplace. Initiate a meeting with or among your most senior leader(s).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the meeting, get your leadership's support to participate in the Sustainable Offices program. Review <i>What is a Sustainable Office?</i> with your leader(s). Use this resource to define the size and scope of your Sustainable Office. Review <i>Forming Your Sustainable Office Committee</i> with your leader(s). Use this resource to decide on your office's approach to committee formation and to identify key participants for success. Tip: If your office includes multiple leaders at the same level of seniority, it may be appropriate to include all of them in this conversation.
<p>d. Ask your sponsor(s) to circulate the <i>Sustainable Offices Welcome Email</i> to your entire office. This letter will inform them of your participation in the Sustainable Offices program. This letter will inform them of your participation in Sustainable Offices and invite volunteers to join your Sustainable Office committee.</p>	
<p>e. Complete and submit the Sustainable Offices Registration Form. Confirmation emails will be sent to your lead program contact, committee members and sponsor(s).</p>	

2 SET GOALS AND TAKE ACTION

<p>a. Meet with your Sustainable Office committee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which badge(s) you will earn first. Use the <i>Forming Your Sustainable Office Committee</i> to define clear roles and responsibilities for your Sustainable Office committee members. Use the <i>Taking Sustainable Action</i> resource to identify your priority items and set a reasonable timeline for success. Actions should be practiced for at least three months before being considered complete.
<p>b. Take action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Download and review the checklist, tools and resources for your first badge. Lead your colleagues to complete all <i>Required</i> action items on the badge checklist. Exemplary action items are not required for certification — but completing them earns your office a gold badge! Meet with your Sustainable Office committee as needed to assess your progress, coordinate your efforts and plan initiatives to complete your badge. Tip: Use the badge checklist to keep track of your team's successes as you go!
<p>c. Designate at least one committee member to attend Sustainability Coordinators Community of Practice meetings for support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet fellow sustainability enthusiasts, learn more about current sustainability initiatives and share your successes with colleagues across the university. Your lead program contact will be enrolled automatically, but anyone on your Sustainable Office committee can sign up to be a Sustainability Coordinator and attend Community of Practice meetings.

3 APPLY FOR YOUR BADGE

a. Gather signatures from 75 per cent of your office confirming that they have participated in all *Required* action items for your badge and seen the completed checklist.

b. Email your completed checklist and a scanned copy or photo of your signature page to the Sustainability Resource Centre (sustain@ucalgary.ca).

c. Within one week, a representative from the Sustainability Resource Centre will confirm the details of your certification and **award your badge**.

4 CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS

a. Display your badge! Show off your digital badge on your office's website. Post your badge decal in your office window or hang your Sustainable Offices certificate in a visible location.

b. Check your office's rank on the Sustainable Offices Leaderboard (ucalgary.ca/sustainable-offices).

c. Share pictures and stories from your office's sustainability initiatives with sustain@ucalgary.ca for social media recognition.

5 EARN YOUR NEXT BADGE!

a. Return to step 2.

b. When you have earned all five Sustainable Offices badges, your team will be recognized as a certified Sustainable Office at the annual Sustainability Awards.

c. Upgrade your badge.

- To upgrade to a gold badge, complete all Required and all Exemplary items in your badge checklist.
 - Resubmit your checklist and signature page to the Sustainability Resource Centre (sustain@ucalgary.ca) at any time to complete your upgrade.
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d. Recertify your office.

- Your badge is valid for three years from your date of certification or recertification.
 - To recertify your office, update and resubmit your checklist and signature page to the Sustainability Resource Centre at sustain@ucalgary.ca before three years have elapsed from your date of certification.
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What is a Sustainable Office?

At UCalgary, a Sustainable Office is a group of employees who share a common workspace and have made their daily practices more inclusive, environmentally conscious and socially responsible. Once your office earns all five Sustainable Offices badges -- *Waste, Meetings, Energy and Emissions, Purchasing and Health, Wellbeing and Community* – you will be recognized as a certified Sustainable Office.

Roles and responsibilities

Within every Sustainable Office, there are four different roles:

- **Sponsor(s):** Sponsor(s) must be the most senior leader(s) in the office space. Depending on the office, this person could be a Vice President, a Dean, a Director, etc. If there are multiple leaders at the same level of seniority in your office, all of them must sponsor your office's participation. Sponsors approve their office's registration in the Sustainable Offices program and circulate the *Sustainable Offices Welcome Email* to all members of their office.
- **Lead program contact:** This person registers their office in the Sustainable Offices program, submits completed badge checklists to the Sustainability Resource Centre and attends meetings of the Sustainability Coordinators Community of Practice for program support.
- **Committee members:** The Sustainable Office committee coordinates their office's efforts to earn badges and get certified as a Sustainable Office. Committee members set goals, establish timelines, plan initiatives and track progress. See the *Forming Your Sustainable Office Committee* resource for more information.
- **Office members:** Everyone else! Office members participate in Sustainable Offices initiatives, work to change their daily practices and confirm that they have contributed to all action items required to earn badges by signing their office's signature sheet.

Defining your Sustainable Office

Every workplace at UCalgary is unique and different workplaces will define their Sustainable Office differently. Before beginning the certification process, initiate a conversation about the **space** and **structure** of your office with the most senior leader(s) in your faculty, business unit, department or office.

During the discussion, consider the following questions:

Space

- What are your workspaces?
 - Do all office members work on the same floor, on multiple floors or throughout an entire building? If you occupy multiple workspaces, how will you coordinate your certification efforts across these spaces?
 - Is there a kitchenette and/or a common area?
 - Do you share workspaces with people from other offices? How will your office work with other groups to make your shared spaces more sustainable?
- Is your office located in a building managed by the University of Calgary or by a third party?
 - If your building is managed by a third party, what is under your control?
 - How will you communicate with that third party to advocate for change?

Structure

- How many people are included in the space you have defined for your Sustainable Office?
- How many are students, faculty and/or staff members?

TIP: While a Sustainable Office must include **at least two people who share a common** workspace, ideally, all people who share common workspaces will be involved in your office's efforts to get certified. To make our working environments as sustainable as possible, it is important to build partnerships with as many of our colleagues as we can.

- Who is the most senior leader in the space you have defined (or if there are multiple leaders at the same level of seniority, who are your most senior leaders)? They will be your sponsor(s).
- Who will be your lead program contact?
- Who will need to be involved in your committee's certification efforts to ensure that your office is successful?
 - How will you recruit representatives from different groups or work areas in your office?
 - Who administers or manages the physical space of your office?
 - Who purchases supplies on behalf of your office?

By discussing these questions with your leadership before your office begins the certification process, you will set your office up for long-term success in the Sustainable Offices program.

If you have any questions or comments about how to define your Sustainable Office, please contact the Sustainability Resource Centre at sustain@ucalgary.ca.



Sustainable Offices: Welcome Email

The *Sustainable Offices Welcome Email* informs your colleagues that your faculty, unit, department or office will be participating in the Sustainable Offices program. It also invites them to volunteer for your Sustainable Office committee. Once you have support from your sponsor(s), they should send this email to every member of your office. Please feel free to use and adapt this template as needed.

From: Sponsor(s)
To: All office members

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to announce that the [FACULTY, BUSINESS UNIT, DEPARTMENT, OR OFFICE'S NAME] will be working towards certification as a Sustainable Office.

Sustainability is a core value at the University of Calgary and one that we can all reinforce through the decisions we make every day. The [Sustainable Offices program](#) offers simple tools and resources to help us take action to make our workplace more inclusive, environmentally conscious and socially responsible. I am excited to see how we will rise to meet this new challenge and model the way for others on our campus.

Our first step will be to form a Sustainable Offices committee to coordinate our certification efforts. This committee is being formed with my endorsement. I would like to encourage each of you to contribute by joining the committee or volunteering to implement their initiatives in our offices. While committee members will devote more time to our certification efforts, all office members can support their work by participating in the committee's initiatives and making sustainable choices on a daily basis.

[LEAD PROGRAM CONTACT'S FULL NAME AND ROLE] is our lead program contact and point person for all Sustainable Offices-related inquiries. Please contact [LEAD PROGRAM CONTACT'S FIRST NAME] at [LEAD PROGRAM CONTACT'S EMAIL ADDRESS] to express your interest in joining the committee or volunteering for their initiatives. If you would like more information about the Sustainable Offices certification process, please consult the [Getting Started Guide](#) available on the [Sustainable Offices website](#).

Thank you, and all best wishes,

[SPONSOR'S NAME]

Sponsor

[SPONSOR'S SIGNATURE]



Forming Your Sustainable Offices Committee

The Sustainable Office committee coordinates their office’s efforts to earn badges and get certified as a Sustainable Office. Committee members set goals, establish timelines, plan office-wide initiatives and track progress.

How do we form our Sustainable Office committee?

- Before forming your committee, initiate a conversation with your office’s most senior leader(s) to discuss the best approach for committee formation in your office. Your sponsor(s) will identify key participants whose support will be necessary for program success, including:
 - Representatives from each subgroup or work area in your office;
 - The person or people who administer(s) or manage(s) the physical space of your office;
 - The person or people who purchase(s) supplies on behalf of your office.
- Work with your sponsor(s) to invite these key participants to work with your committee.
- Ask your sponsor(s) to circulate the *Sustainable Offices Welcome Email* to your entire office. This email informs your colleagues of your participation in the Sustainable Offices program and invites them to volunteer for your committee.
- Once you know who will serve on your committee, submit the [Sustainable Offices Program Registration Form](#).

What are the roles and responsibilities within our committee?

Based on the action items outlined in the Sustainable Offices badge checklists, it will be useful to assign the roles and responsibilities below to your committee members. Individual committee members can take responsibility for one or more role(s) at a time.

Role	Description
Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schedule regular meetings of the Sustainable Office Committee ○ Draft and circulate meeting agendas to committee members ○ Facilitate committee meetings ○ Update sponsor(s) on progress
Lead program contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use badge checklists to track the office’s progress towards certification ○ Submit badge checklists/signature pages to the Sustainability Resource Centre ○ Attend Sustainability Coordinators Community of Practice meetings
Communications officer(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Update office members about the committee’s goals, activities, and sustainability initiatives ○ Answer office members’ questions about the Sustainable Offices program ○ Post and share Sustainable Offices resources with office members ○ Collect data (using surveys, etc.)
Engagement officer(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Planning and executing engagement and outreach initiatives ○ Involving as many office members as possible in engagement and outreach initiatives
Purchasing officer(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sourcing, making, and advocating for more sustainable purchasing decisions in the office
Volunteer(s)-at-large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting engagement and outreach initiatives ○ Advocating for sustainable actions in the workplace on a daily basis ○ Recognizing and celebrating office members’ sustainable actions

If you have questions or require further support, please contact the Sustainability Resource Centre at sustain@ucalgary.ca.



Taking Action: SMART Planning for Sustainable Change

Use this resource every time you start working towards a new Sustainable Offices badge to help your committee identify priority items, create a timeline and set SMART goals for taking action.

1. Review the Checklist

- Choose which badge you want to work on. Review the relevant checklist with your Committee.
- Discuss:
 - Which action items are already part of your office's daily practice?
 - Which action items could your office achieve most easily?
 - Why do you think that these items will be easy to complete?
 - Which action items will require the most time and effort for your office to achieve?
 - Why do you think that these items will be more challenging?

2. Establish a timeline for success

- Depending on your office's unique strengths, different badges will take more or less time to earn. Use your responses to the questions in part 1 to create a timeline for taking action.
- Discuss:
 - How much time will your office need to complete each action item?
 - Which action items are most important to address first? Which can you address later?
 - How much time do you think your office will need to complete all Required action items needed to earn your badge?
 - How often will your committee meet? When will you meet next?

3. Set at least one short- and long-term SMART goal for your committee to work towards before your next meeting.

- You may wish to discuss some or all of the following questions as you set your goals:

S - Specific

- What do you need to do to complete this action item in your office context?
- How can you break this item into steps to make it more manageable?
- Who needs to be involved in each step?
- Who will make sure this action item is complete?

M: Measureable

- What data are you already tracking in this area (ie. Purchasing records, service requests)?
- What data will you need to track to assess your progress in this area?
- How will you know when you have completed this action item?

A: Achievable

- What barriers could you encounter (ie. low engagement, unclear relationships, environmental or financial barriers)?
- How will you address these barriers?

R: Relevant

- Why is this action item relevant to your office?
- How will you persuade your coworkers that this action item is relevant?
- What additional benefits could your office anticipate from making this change?
- How will you be creative in your approach?

T: Time-Oriented

- How long will this goal take to achieve?
- What milestones will you need to meet along the way?
- How does this timeline fit into your overall timeline for earning this badge?

4. At your next committee meeting, assess your progress towards completing these goals. Set new goals and adjust your timeline as needed. Have fun!