

# 2021 University of Calgary Sustainability Awards: Terms of Reference

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### I. About the Awards

This year, we celebrate the 13<sup>th</sup> annual University of Calgary (UCalgary) Sustainability Awards. For over a decade, these Awards have honoured exceptional students, faculty and staff for their positive contributions to the sustainable future of UCalgary and our world.

#### Sustainability at UCalgary

UCalgary’s Sustainability Policy (2010) and the Institutional Sustainability Strategy (2016) define sustainability as it is articulated in the Brundtland Report (UNWCED 1987).

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

While this continues to be the formal definition embraced by the university, more recently the University has aligned its sustainability progress with the United Nation’s [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), also known as the Global Goals. This alignment helps the University to build even stronger connections with the many external organizations also working to advance the Global Goals and demonstrate our commitment to them. Aligning the annual University of Calgary Sustainability Awards to the SDGs will

provide a more inclusive approach to recognizing our diverse institutional efforts at local, national and international scales.

### United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals

[The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the [17 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. ([United Nations](#), 2020)



### Nomination, adjudication, and award granting process

- All nominations must be submitted using the applicable online forms found on the [UCalgary Sustainability Awards web page](#) by midnight on February 3, 2021.
- Awards will be adjudicated by a select panel of invited judges and will include representatives from the SU, Graduate Students Association (GSA), Academia and Administration.
- Winners and finalists will be announced in late March.

### Before you nominate

#### What do I need to know before I nominate?

- Self-nominations are welcome and encouraged.
- Nominators can submit multiple nominees across all award categories.
- Any undergraduate or graduate student, permanent or sessional faculty member, instructor, postdoctoral researcher, or staff member can be nominated for a Sustainability Award in the appropriate category.
- Award categories have similar but slightly different criteria by which each will be judged; read the criteria specific to the award you are nominating for and prepare the required information.

**About yourself (the nominator) and two references (the references):**

Please be prepared to share the following information about yourself and two references as part of your nomination. The Office of Sustainability may use the information you provide here to contact you and/or the references for confirmation of the nominees' initiative(s). References should be able to provide insight into the validity of the candidate's submission, particularly regarding the impacts. References could include a supervisor, partner, stakeholder, beneficiary of the project, etc.

- Name
- Contact information (email and phone)
- Organization
- Department or office
- Year of study (if applicable)
- Title (if applicable)

**Privacy**

Please note that all information submitted as part of nominations for the 2021 Sustainability Awards is collected under the authority of Section 33(c) and 34(1)(e) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. It is required to determine the suitability of nominees for the 2021 Sustainability Awards. If you have any questions about how these data will be managed or used, please contact the Office of Sustainability at [sustain@ucalgary.ca](mailto:sustain@ucalgary.ca).

**Nomination form**

Please fill out and submit an online nomination form by visiting the [UCalgary Sustainability Awards web page](#). Webforms cannot be saved – please fill out the form in one session. You may wish to prepare the submission in Word and then copy and paste the webform's answers.

For assistance, please contact the Office of Sustainability at [sustain@ucalgary.ca](mailto:sustain@ucalgary.ca).

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## II. Award Categories

### **Undergraduate Student Sustainability Award**

#### **Prize**

\$250 from UCalgary's Office of Sustainability

#### **Description**

The Undergraduate Student Sustainability Award recognizes an exceptional undergraduate student or group of students who have led initiatives that make positive contributions to the sustainable future of UCalgary and our world. These initiatives may be curricular and/or co-curricular in nature. Award criteria can be found [here](#).

#### **Eligibility**

- Nominees must be full or part-time students in good standing and currently enrolled in an undergraduate program at UCalgary.
- Individuals and groups are both eligible to receive this award.

### **Graduate Student Sustainability Award**

#### **Prize**

\$1500, awarded jointly by UCalgary's Office of Sustainability (\$250) and the Graduate Students' Association (\$1250). The winner of this award will be recognized at the Sustainability Awards and the GSA Awards.

#### **Description**

The Graduate Student Sustainability Award recognizes an exceptional graduate student or group of students who have led initiatives that make positive contributions towards the sustainable future of UCalgary and our world. These initiative(s) may be curricular or co-curricular in nature. Award criteria can be found [here](#).

### **Eligibility**

- Nominees must be full or part-time students in good standing and currently enrolled in a master's or doctoral program at UCalgary.
- Individuals and groups are both eligible to receive this award.

## **Staff Sustainability Award**

### **Description**

The Staff Sustainability Award recognizes an exceptional staff member or staff team who has made positive contributions to UCalgary's sustainability practices and our world's sustainable future. Staff nominees must have led an initiative(s) that has made a lasting and measurable impact at UCalgary. An initiative(s) that also advances sustainability in local or global contexts is considered an asset but is not required for nomination. Award criteria can be found [here](#).

Sustainability may or may not be one of the nominee's defined job responsibilities. Strong nominations for the Staff Sustainability Award will demonstrate significant progress in advancing UCalgary's [operational sustainability goals and objectives](#) through high impacts projects and/or programs. This award category recognizes that most high impact projects and programs involve systems level changes that by nature include many contributors. Staff members from the Office of Sustainability or Sustainability Studies are not eligible for an individual award. However, cross-departmental teams and projects that they are part of are eligible.

At the judges' discretion, this award may be divided into individual staff and group staff award categories.

### **Eligibility**

- Nominees must be current employees of UCalgary.
- When filling out your nomination, please designate one member of the staff team as the primary contact. List all staff members with meaningful involvement in the initiative under "additional nominees."

## Criteria for

- [Undergraduate Student Sustainability Award](#)
- [Graduate Student Sustainability Award](#)
- [Staff Sustainability Award](#)

1. **Impact:** (Max. 4000 characters, or ~600 words.)

Describe the impact of the nominee's initiative. We are looking for responses that include answers to the following questions:

- a) What is the nominee's initiative and the issue(s) it is addressing?
- b) How is the initiative aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (please identify the specific goals)?
- c) STAFF AWARD ONLY: how is the initiative helping UCalgary realize its Institutional Sustainability Strategy?
- d) What outcomes have been achieved by this initiative including what changes have occurred at a local, regional, national and/or international scale(s)? Please include quantitative and qualitative data.
- e) What are the plans for this initiative in the future?

2. **Innovation:** (Max. 1500 characters, or ~250 words.)

Describe how the nominees' initiative is creative and sets a new precedent. We are looking for responses that include:

- a) What new, innovative idea, approach, process, or technology was used in this initiative?
- b) How does the project, approach or process set a precedent that could enable even greater positive impact elsewhere on campus or in the broader community?

3. **Engagement and Community:** (Max. 2000 characters, or ~300 words.)

Describe how the nominee's initiative engaged with stakeholders and the community and how the initiative was shared or promoted. We are looking for responses that include:

- a) Who (students, faculty or staff; local, regional or global community, industry, government or non-governmental organizations; etc.) did the nominee engage through their initiative and how (consult, involve, educate, serve, etc.) did the nominee engage with them?
- b) How did the nominee promote or share this initiative?

## **Sustainability Research Award**

### **Description**

The Sustainability Research Award recognizes exceptional faculty members, instructors and postdoctoral scholars conducting research that have integrated a transdisciplinary approach to their project(s) within which sustainability research or outcomes are embedded.

Strong nominations will demonstrate:

- Sustainability is explicitly embedded in the research or outcomes and advances multiple SDGs
- Transdisciplinarity
- Strategic partnerships
- Innovation
- Significant contributions at the local, regional, national and/or international scale(s).

At the judges' discretion, this award may be divided into local/regional and national/international award categories.

Finalists for the Sustainability Research Award may be asked to submit a current curriculum vitae for consideration by the Sustainability Awards judging panel.

### **Eligibility**

- Nominees must be active UCalgary faculty, instructors or postdoctoral scholars.
- This is an individual award.

### **Criteria**

#### **1. Impact:** (Max. 4000 characters, or ~600 words.)

Describe the impact of the nominee's research. We are looking for responses that include answers to the following questions:

- a) What is the nominee's research and the issue(s) it is addressing? (Please write for a general audience. Try to avoid the use of acronyms and highly specialized terms).
- b) How is sustainability embedded in the research and/or its outcomes? How does it advance the Sustainable Development Goals? Please explicitly state which goals the research advances.
- c) What outcomes have been achieved by this research, including the changes it has influenced at a local, regional, national and/or international scale(s)? Please include any quantitative or qualitative data.

d) What are the plans for this research in the future?

**2. Innovation:** (Max. 1500 characters, or ~250 words.)

Describe how the nominees' research is creative and sets new precedents. We are looking for responses that include:

- a) What is the new, innovative idea, approach, process, or technology in this research?
- b) How does the project, approach or process set a precedent that could enable even greater positive impact elsewhere on campus and in the broader community?

**3. Partnerships and Transdisciplinarity:** (Max. 2000 characters, or ~300 words.)

Describe any partnerships that the nominees' research initiated or is part of and how it showcases transdisciplinarity. We are looking for responses that include:

- a) What partnerships exist and what is their purpose?
- b) How is this research transdisciplinary?

## **Sustainability Teaching Award**

### **Description**

The Sustainability Teaching Award recognizes exceptional educators who have integrated sustainability into their classrooms and across the curriculum at UCalgary.

Strong nominations will illustrate how the nominee's classroom teaching, course design and/or assignments engage their students and prepare them to make positive and innovative contributions towards a sustainable future.

### **Eligibility**

- Faculty Sustainability Teaching Award nominees must be active UCalgary faculty, instructors or postdoctoral fellows.
- This is an individual award.
- For this award, SUST core courses (i.e. SUST 201, SUST 401, etc.) will not be considered as part of the nominee's contributions to sustainability education at UCalgary. However, sustainability-related or focused courses affiliated with the [Sustainability Certificate](#) are eligible.

## Criteria

1. **Impact:** (Max. 4000 characters, or ~600 words.)  
Describe the impact of the nominee’s teaching. We are looking for responses that include answers to the following questions:
  - a) What is the curriculum, course and/or assignment(s)?
  - b) How does the curriculum, course and/or assignment(s), advance, relate to, or align with the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals? (please identify the specific goals).
  - c) What outcomes (student learning, student feedback, skills developed, competencies developed, etc.) have been achieved by this curriculum, course design and/or assignments? Please include any quantitative or qualitative data.
  - d) What are the plans for the curriculum, course and/or assignments in the future?
  
2. **Innovation:** (Max. 1500 characters, or ~250 words.)  
Describe how the nominees’ teaching is creative and unique. We are looking for responses that include:
  - a) What new, innovative idea, approach, process, or technology was used in the curriculum, course and or/assignments?
  
3. **Community and Interdisciplinarity:** (Max. 2000 characters, or ~300 words.)  
Describe any community connections that the nominees’ teaching involved and how the teaching showcases interdisciplinarity. We are looking for responses that answer the following questions:
  - a) How is the teaching connected with the community (UCalgary, local, regional, national, international)?
  - b) How is the teaching interdisciplinary?

## Sustainability Experiential Learning Award

### Description

The Sustainability Experiential Learning award recognizes exceptional curricular or co-curricular programs or projects related to sustainability that uphold UCalgary’s definition of experiential learning:

“Experiential learning (EL) is learning-by-doing that bridges knowledge and experience through critical reflection. EL activities are intentionally designed and assessed. As such, they empower students to enhance individual and collaborative skills such as complex problem solving, professional practice skills, and teamwork. Reflecting critically on these activities helps students develop higher order thinking to challenge and advance their perspectives. The EL process prepares students to take on roles as active citizens and thrive in an increasingly complex world.” (EL Working Group, 2019)

## Eligibility

- Experiential learning falling within any category of the [UCalgary Experiential Learning \(EL\) Framework](#) are eligible for nomination. This includes co-curricular EL, community-engaged learning EL (including knowledge keeper-guided and land-based education), curriculum-integrated EL, research-based EL and work-integrated learning.
- When filling out your nomination, please designate one member of the project or program team as the primary contact. List all members with meaningful involvement under “additional nominees.”

At the discretion of the judges, this category may be divided into sub-categories.

## Criteria

1. **Impact:** (Max. 4000 characters, or ~600 words.)  
Describe the impact of the nominee’s program or project. We are looking for responses that include answers to the following questions:
  - a) What is the nominee’s program or project and the issue(s) it is addressing?
  - b) How does the program or project support or advance the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals? (please identify the specific goals)
  - c) What outcomes have been achieved by this program or project including what changes have occurred at a local, regional, national and/or international scale(s)? Please include quantitative and qualitative data.
  - d) What learning has been realized by the student(s) through critical reflection of the experience?  
  
Please include any of the six foundational competencies as outlined in the Institutional Sustainability Strategy: Anticipatory thinking and long-term foresightedness; empathy and understanding of different worldviews and relationships; capacities for stakeholder engagement and group collaboration; action-oriented leadership skills and change agency skills; Critical thinking and decision-making capacity within complexity; systems thinking and an understanding of connectedness.
  - e) What are the plans for this program or project in the future?
2. **Innovation:** (Max. 1500 characters, or ~250 words.)  
Describe how the nominees’ program or project is creative and sets a new precedent. We are looking for responses that include:
  - a) What new, innovative idea, approach, process, or technology was used in this program or project?
  - b) How does the program/project, approach or process set a precedent that could enable even greater positive impact elsewhere on campus or in the broader community?

3. **Partnerships and Interdisciplinarity:** (Max. 2000 characters, or ~300 words.)

Describe any partnerships that the nominees' program or project initiated or is part of and how it showcases interdisciplinarity. We are looking for responses that include:

- a) What partnerships were created through this program or project? What was the role of each partner?
- b) How is this program or project interdisciplinary?