

## SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to promote, encourage, and engage in Sustainability as part of Brock University's Strategic Plan, which serves to inform and strengthen the institution's actions. Sustainability advancement will support the realization of Brock University's four strategic priorities while aligning with the institution's guiding values. This policy aims to set a framework of sustainable, accountable, and transparent Stewardship practices that improve environmental, human, financial, and community resources within Brock University. We aim to do this by ensuring a strong academic foundation of teaching, learning, and scholarly excellence in order to promote Brock as a leading institution in the support of a sustainable society. Brock University is committed to being a leader of best Stewardship practices through upholding a high degree of Accountability toward our impacts on the health, well-being, and betterment of the environment, community, and society, while maintaining economic balance.

As committed to in November 2009, Brock University and the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) acknowledge the roles of Stewardship, advancement, and leadership of Ontario's universities with respect to all aspects of Sustainability and the creation a greener world, by outlining three encompassing platforms:

- To assist and lead in finding solutions for threats to environmental Sustainability;
- To grow, promote, and share knowledge about Sustainability, the environment, and climate change;
- To integrate sustainable practices into all aspects of our own operations wherever possible, and to be accountable for these practices.

In addition to Brock University's pledge through the COU, Brock University is also committed to demonstrating itself as a site of excellence through the support of the eight main characteristics and principles of UNESCO Biosphere reserves. These

characteristics and principles serve to integrate Sustainability through traditional, academic, and transdisciplinary practices in order to promote preservation, innovation, participation, and diversity.

## SCOPE

Sustainability requires the cooperation and active participation of faculty, staff, students, partners, volunteers, and the community working collaboratively. This policy applies to all activities, campuses, and facilities that are governed by Brock University. This policy is intended to guide Brock University, on both the Niagara region and beyond, in its daily operations and strategic directions.

## POLICY STATEMENT

1. Brock University, as an institution of higher education, strives to be a leader in environmental Stewardship to the highest degree possible, while continuing to contribute resources, knowledge, and leadership to the Niagara community and beyond.
2. Brock University commits to advancing sustainable practices as reflected and supported through Brock University's dedication to teaching and research excellence, and consideration of Sustainability across a variety of disciplines, fields, values, and responsibilities.
3. Brock University supports and strives for sustainable improvement across all activities, demonstrating Stewardship and responsibility throughout its governance, infrastructure, operations, academics, missions, and values.
4. Brock University is dedicated to maintaining local and global communal relations, and as such has a responsibility to acknowledge the impact it has made and continues to make on the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples and the communities it affects.
5. Brock University will continue to adapt, expand, and seek out opportunities for Stewardship and leadership by engaging with community partnerships, supporting innovation and best practices in the field of

Sustainability, as illustrated in the Brock Environmental Sustainability Plan (2018).

## DEFINITIONS

**Accountability:** An obligation to institutions that hold influence over decision-making for the management of all resources which requires them to accept responsibility for such decisions and actions, acknowledge the short- and long-term impact of their actions, and to uphold transparency with justifications for such actions.

**Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve:** A Biosphere Reserve designated by UNESCO in 1990 that recognizes the Niagara Escarpment as an internationally-significant ecosystem for its special environment and unique environmental plan that stretches 725 km from Lake Ontario (near Niagara Falls) to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula (between Georgian Bay and Lake Huron). The Escarpment corridor crosses two major biomes: boreal needle leaf forests in the north and temperate broadleaf forests in the south. It also includes wetland complexes, cliff faces, slopes, and aquatic ecosystems.

**Stewardship:** A position and mentality of responsibility, management, preservation, and protection over natural resources - including water, physical space, energy, food, materials, and pollution - that emphasizes taking shared responsibility by all who use the natural resources of, and exist in, a shared environment.

**Sustainability:** A practice that considers the preservation of present and future resources in a way that does not compromise the ability meet the needs of those using them. Practicing Sustainability involves acknowledging the limits of available resources; it is the ability to maintain a defined and balanced system indefinitely with a focus on the conservation of resources. Sustainability can refer to environmentalism, social equity, physical consumption, cultural preservation, and economic development.

**Sustainable Development:** The practice of choosing developmental pathways in response to the long-term goal of optimizing Sustainability. This refers to development that does not deplete natural resources as a response to human lifestyle improvement, but instead explores alternative methods to fulfill these needs in the future. Some examples of Sustainable Development include replacing monocultures with sustainable agriculture and forestry, replacing unethical resource production with sustainable production and consumption,

ethical and active government, and shared research, technology, education, and training.

**UNESCO:** The Paris-based United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization.

**COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING**

The Policy Owner will monitor compliance with the Policy, with advice and/or observations provided by the Steering Committee of the Project Charter between the Environmental Sustainability Research Centre (ESRC) and Facilities Management. Reporting will be included in the annual reporting on the University’s sustainability-related plans and activities.

Policy owner:	Senior Associate Vice-President, Infrastructure & Operations
Approved by:	Executive Team (President and Vice-Presidents)
Effective date:	October 4, 2021
Next review:	October 2023
Revision history:	Revision #2
Related documents:	<p>Brock University Integrated Strategic Plan</p> <p>Brock University Integrated Strategic Plan - Priorities to Actions</p> <p>Brock University Strategic Mandate Agreement</p> <p>Council of Ontario Universities -A Pledge from the Executive Heads, November 2009</p> <p>Brock Environmental Sustainability Plan (2018)</p>