



# Cornell University

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*President*

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Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education  
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2022 Cornell University STARS 2.2 Submission

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased to endorse the 2022 AASHE STARS Assessment for Cornell University using the 2.2 reporting platform. Sustainability and climate leadership are signature areas of excellence for our university, and we are proud to have received three consecutive years of the STARS Platinum Rating.

Our students, faculty, and staff continue to advance sustainable operations, curriculum, research, and community partnerships. I am especially proud of the work outlined in our innovation credits, which stand as a testament to our dedication in pursuing solutions that scale beyond our campus:

**Cornell University Borehole Observatory (CUBO):** In summer 2022, the university drilled a nearly two-mile deep exploratory borehole enabling researchers to study subsurface rock conditions and heat output. Data will allow the university to determine whether it can move forward with Earth Source Heat: Cornell's version of a deep geothermal system that would use the earth's internal heat to warm the Ithaca campus without the use of fossil fuels. The project is a unique collaboration across academic departments and campus facilities staff. CUBO research could radically transform the energy sector.

**Refurbishing Damaged Solar Panels:** Cornell University Sustainability Design students are using various methods to repair damaged solar panels to find an optimized refurbishing method. This living-laboratory, circular-economy project also partners with local farmers to discover suitable uses for the refurbished panels. Some of the panels have been given to Ithaca Re-Use Center, an affordable reused goods store that serves the entire Ithaca community.

**BirdCast Dashboard Reveals Migration Path of Billions of Birds:** The Cornell Lab of Ornithology created the Migration Dashboard, which presents data that can be used to guide decisions about bird hazards. As an example, on nights that are predicted to have high-intensity migration, certain areas can issue an order to turn off building lights and wind turbines, to avoid killing migrating birds. This is especially helpful for vulnerable, endangered, and critically endangered species.

**Virtual Reality Urban Farm Tour:** Cornell researchers created a virtual reality urban farm tour. The platform expands access to agriculture education to populations that are typically excluded, including low-income urban communities.

Cornell is a proud participant in the STARS program. Our Ithaca campus submits annually to make our achievements and progress accessible and transparent to campus constituents, our peers, and the world. Thank you for your leadership and support in advancing higher education sustainability.

Sincerely,

Martha E. Pollack