



Cornell University

March 1, 2018

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education  
2401 Walnut Street, Suite 102  
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Re: 2018 Cornell University STARS 2.1 Submission

I am pleased to endorse the AASHE STARS on-line assessment for Cornell University using version 2.1 reporting platform.

Sustainability is a signature area of excellence at Cornell University. Our Ithaca campus submits STARS annually to make our achievements and progress accessible and transparent to campus constituents, our peers, and the world. I am proud of the innovation and commitment our faculty, staff, and students display in addressing complex sustainability problems through operational improvement and living laboratory collaborations.

This year our STARS innovation credits highlight campus solutions which encourage appreciation and understanding of our sustainable campus landscapes, address student food insecurity, and utilize our campus and community as a living laboratory for truly innovative partnerships. We are also proud to report an overall reduction in our campus carbon footprint of 33% from our 2008 baseline, in pursuit of neutrality by the year 2035.

*Museum Energy Efficiency for Artistic Preservation and Sustainability*

Museums are some of the most difficult buildings to make energy efficient because many of the art pieces need specific humidity and temperature conditions to be maintained. The Johnson Museum of Art on Cornell's campus partnered with the campus's Energy Conservation Control Team to turn this challenge into an energy savings opportunity. Working together, the two teams identified and installed a space-specific air handling solution which now ensures each gallery and storage space receives only the precise temperature and humidity needed for comfort and the collection. The result is an overall reduction in energy use of 40% (and over 56% for heating). The remaining building upgrades also provide more curator control over individual spaces, reducing the amount of long-term maintenance needed as artistic exhibits change seasonally.

*The Sustainable Landscapes Trail*

The Sustainable Landscapes Trail highlights the sustainable design and ecosystems services of living laboratory designed natural spaces across campus. A digital map and physical trail features open spaces, natural areas, and landscapes with unique sustainability features which encourage community members to appreciate and understand the human and planetary wellness features of the natural campus landscape. Spots include bioswales designed by students which protect a parking area, and natural and native plantings across prominent academic spaces. With



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a combined emphasis on education and encouraging appreciation of nature, the trail highlights our campus commitment to creating a sustainability culture for people and planet.

*Sustainability and Environmental Communication Internship (COMM 3080)*

Sustainability and Environmental Communication: From the Lab to the World is a new program designed to accelerate applied environmental solutions discovered in the classroom to campus and community challenges. Undergraduate students partner with the Campus Sustainability Office, our local EcoVillage at Ithaca, and national organizations such as the Environmental Defense Fund, in engaged learning internship experiences to promote pro-environmental attitudes and engagement. Findings and projects led by students during the applied internship are captured in TedX style talks, to help accelerate solutions across our common challenges.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Kotlikoff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Michael Kotlikoff  
Provost