



February 26, 2024

AASHE STARS Review Team

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

Dear STARS Review Team:

On behalf of Seattle University, I present our 2024 submission to AASHE's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) and affirm that the version 2.2 report we are submitting has been accurately compiled. The report is representative of our current sustainability efforts and was completed with the participation of faculty, staff, and students from across campus. Our fourth Seattle University STARS report once again demonstrates how we strive to prioritize all facets of sustainability through our academic, engagement, operational, and planning activities.

I would like to highlight some major achievements since our previous STARS submission in 2021. In the Fall of 2021, in response to Pope Francis's invitation to higher education institutions, Seattle University committed to institutional participation in the "*Seven-Year Journey Toward Integral Ecology through the Laudato Si' Action Platform (LSAP)*." This papal initiative was launched to envision sustainability in the holistic spirit of integral ecology and to redefine and rebuild our relationship with each other and our common home. We adopted the LSAP commitment as a university strategic goal. An LSAP Executive Committee has been created to oversee, facilitate, and coordinate the implementation and infusion of *Laudato Si'* into what we do across all campus areas. In February 2023, the Executive Committee adopted Seattle University's first sustainability action plan (the *Laudato Si' Action Plan*), which includes four main priorities and 27 goals that span across campus operations, departments, and partnerships.

In 2022, Seattle University's Board of Trustees adopted an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) amendment to its Investment Policy with the goal to advance ESG considerations in the selection of investment funds and managers. In June 2023, Seattle University fulfilled its commitment to fully divest its endowment

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from companies owning fossil fuel reserves. Seattle University is the first university in Washington State and the first Jesuit Catholic university in the country to be fully divested from fossil fuels.

Another major area of focus is academics. It is a university strategic goal to reimagine and revise the curriculum with an emphasis on three major challenges facing our society: sustainability and climate change; racial injustice and widening economic inequity; and rapid technological change and its attendant social and economic impacts. In 2021, a cohort of five faculty fellows was appointed to focus on the area of sustainability and climate change in this broader, strategic curricular effort. The goal is that every student will graduate from Seattle University with an understanding of those concepts.

Seattle University is committed to advancing its sustainability efforts. The STARS report serves as a key tool to identify our university's areas of improvement and it is actively used by the LSAP Executive Committee in our sustainability planning. I look forward to working together with the Seattle University campus community and in partnership with other institutions to continue to improve our sustainability practices and to live out our commitment to sustainability in the holistic spirit of integral ecology.

Sincerely,



Eduardo M. Peñalver
President