

October 3, 2023

Dear STARS Steering Committee,

On behalf of the University of Southern California (USC), I am pleased to submit documentation for the University's sustainability self-assessment using the AASHE's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS). The information provided is complete and accurate to the best of the University's knowledge at the time of submission.

Since USC's last STARS submission in 2021, the University has significantly increased its focus on sustainability through the launch and implementation of [Assignment: Earth](#), USC's 2028 sustainability framework for creating a healthy, just and thriving campus and world.

[Assignment: Earth](#) was authored by [USC's Presidential Working Group on Sustainability](#) with input from teams across the University, and it clearly establishes the University's sustainability vision, aspirations and goals across five domains: Education, Research, Equity & Inclusion, Operations and Engagement. Specific [Assignment: Earth](#) goals include:

- 1) [Achieve climate neutrality](#) for Scopes 1 and 2 emissions by 2025, and for Scope 3 emissions by 2035,
- 2) [Become a zero-waste campus](#) by 2028, and
- 3) Increase sustainability educational opportunities via the [Sustainability Across the Curriculum Initiative](#).

Notable progress on [Assignment: Earth Goals](#) include:

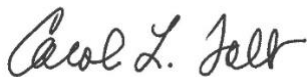
- 31% absolute reduction in greenhouse gas emissions (Scope 1 & 2) since 2014
- 7% reduction in single-occupancy vehicles commuting to campus
- 237 electric vehicle charging ports have been installed across both the University Park and Health Sciences campuses.
- 50% of USC Hospitality's food is purchased from sustainable sources.
- 47% campus-wide waste diversion rate
- Enacted a policy (as of July 2022) [to eliminate single-use plastic beverage bottles](#)
- 15% potable water use reduction per sq ft. of bldg. space since 2014.
- 79% progress made towards our sustainability literacy goal.
- 56% progress made towards University-wide practice of adopting sustainable behaviors.

- 323 sustainability-focused research articles were published in 2022.
- Activated a long-term plan for [sustainable grounds and landscaping](#)
- Launched [Sustainable Design and Construction Guidelines](#)
- Initiated biennial [sustainability literacy, culture, and behavior survey](#)
- Created a [Sustainability Course Finder](#) tool
- Launched the [Presidential Sustainability Solutions Fellowship](#) postdoctoral program.
- Implemented [Student Sustainability Training](#)
- Initiated the [President's Sustainability Initiative Awards](#) to seed research initiatives.

In addition to creating USC's Assignment: Earth, the University has hired seven new sustainability staff members, including USC's first Chief Sustainability Officer, Mick Dalrymple, and expanded the University's [President's Sustainability Internship Program](#). Furthermore, in September 2023, USC celebrated the grand opening of its first-ever [Sustainability Hub](#) in the center of campus, which serves as a dynamic home for all Trojans to come together, share ideas and collaborate on sustainability solutions.

These are just some of USC's notable achievements, and more are documented in the University's 2023 STARS report. The report is a collective effort by USC's Office of Sustainability, the Presidential Working Group on Sustainability, staff, faculty, and students across a broad range of schools, departments, and units. Thank you for allowing USC to be part of the STARS program, and for taking the time to review the information provided.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol L. Folt".

Carol L. Folt
President