



December 2, 2015

TO: AASHE STARS

FROM: Michael J. Boehm, Vice Provost for Academic and Strategic Planning, The Ohio State University 

RE: AASHE STARS Innovation Credit endorsement for The Ohio State University Discovery Themes

The Ohio State University is committed to sustainability at every level of our enterprise. In particular, our Discovery Themes programs leverage Ohio State's special strengths to address the technological, social, and environmental stresses that define today's global world.

Specifically, Ohio State has selected three Discovery Themes programs to promote the research, teaching and engagement surrounding sustainability issues. These three programs are Food and AgriCultural Transformation, Materials and Manufacturing for Sustainability, and Sustainable and Resilient Economy.

The Food and AgriCultural Transformation Discovery Themes program (InFACT) seeks to be the worldwide leader in developing conceptual models and practical examples of climate-resilient, secure and equitable agricultural and food systems. Improved health and functioning of agroecosystems, socio-cultural institutions and human health, as well as sustainability, resilience, adaptation and equity at all scales are InFACT's goals. Food security for all, despite local constraints and global volatility, is the overriding aim.

The Materials and Manufacturing for Sustainability Discovery Themes program builds on Ohio State's interdisciplinary strengths in materials research, world-class facilities, strong industrial partnerships, nationally recognized centers of excellence and recent strategic investments. This program will enable discoveries that transform our world and position Ohio State to be a national and international leader in advanced materials and sustainable manufacturing.

The Sustainable and Resilient Economy Discovery Themes program advances research, teaching and engagement that will accelerate the development of production and consumption systems that promote the value and reduce the adverse impacts of material and energy flows through the economy and society. The science of sustainability is enhanced by developing more holistic approaches to sustainability and resilience assessment and applying these methods to foster innovations in sustainable technologies, policies and governance.

These three programs are up and running at the university. Each program is hiring faculty explicitly to enhance Ohio State's expertise and impact within and across the three areas. Collectively, these Discovery Themes programs are enhancing the teaching and learning of sustainability issues for our students, while advancing solutions to our global sustainability challenges.