

A Top University for the World



2018- 2020

**United Nations Global Compact Communication on
Engagement**

April 12, 2021



In September 2015, the 193 UN Member States adopted this set of 17 **Global Goals** and 169 targets to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all, as noted in *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

Respecting the **UN Global Compact Ten Principles** across all business operations and supply chains is a baseline for any organization aiming to help humanity to realize the Global Goals.

HUMAN RIGHTS

- 1) Support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights
- 2) Ensure that institution is not complicit in human rights abuses

LABOR

- 3) Uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining
- 4) Eliminate forced or compulsory labor
- 5) Work to abolish child labor
- 6) Eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

ENVIRONMENT

- 7) Support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges
- 8) Undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility
- 9) Encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

ANTI-CORRUPTION

- 10) Work against corruption in all of its forms, including extortion and bribery



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To Our Stakeholders:

I am honored to renew George Mason University's commitment to the Ten Principles of the United Nations in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment, and Anti-Corruption.

Since establishing our commitment to the Global Compact, Mason's institutional policies and practices continue to be guided by the four UNGC focus areas. In our last Communication on Engagement we described our actions to improve the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our identity as an institution. We highlighted the many academic initiatives to embed the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) into the Mason curriculum and our innovative efforts to continue reducing Mason's carbon foot print and serve as a leader for our sustainability efforts.

In this 2020 Communication on Engagement, we describe the most recent actions to strengthen our alignment with the SDG's through the commitments both academic and beyond. The University is dedicated to expanding our partnerships with like-minded organizations to support the SDG's in teaching, research, and service to society. George Mason is also committed to evaluating our internal policies and practices in order to align our strategy, operations, education, and thought leadership with the Ten Principles. The launch of new centers, offices, and campus wide initiatives such as Task Force on Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence center Mason's dedication to the work of the Global Compact and SDG's.

These challenging times call our institutions of higher education to be leaders in the efforts to expand human rights, protect our environment, eliminate inequalities, and move us towards a more sustainable and equitable future. We aim to expand the scope and reach of our impact over the next two years as we further develop our curriculum, collaborate with our stakeholders, and support and track our collective Global Compact and SDG outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Washington", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Gregory Washington

George Mason University Institution Profile

George Mason University is a public, comprehensive research university established by the Commonwealth of Virginia in the National Capital Region. We are an innovative and inclusive academic community committed to creating a more just, free and prosperous world. Our vision is to provide students with the preparation to become the “Mason Graduate”; an engaged citizen and a well-rounded scholar who is prepared to act.

About Mason

George Mason is a distributed university with locations in Fairfax, Arlington, Prince William and Loudoun counties, Virginia, as well as in Songdo, South Korea. Over 35,000 students currently attend Mason, with more than 6,000 students living on campus in residential halls.



More than seventy-five undergraduate programs and one hundred twenty-three graduate and professional programs are delivered face-to-face and through distance education. Many of our programs have received national and international attention including conflict analysis and resolution, education, the arts, and writing to name a few.

Our dynamic culture and innovative academic programs prepare Mason students for the careers of tomorrow. Our commitment to teaching excellence combines with cutting-edge research that enriches the academic experience and is literally changing the world. Mason is affordable, yet offers high value. Ideally located in the National Capital Region, students enjoy rich cultural experiences and access to the most sought-after internships and employers in the country.

Sustainability

Sustainability is one of Mason’s core values. As stated on our website, “We educate leaders, conduct interdisciplinary research, invest in sustainable infrastructure, and promote socially conscious entrepreneurship.”

Mason is also well-recognized as a sustainable development leader. In 2014, ours was the first Virginia university to earn a “Gold” distinction from the Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. The University scored notably high marks in campus engagement and public engagement in 2017. That year AASHE featured Mason among the top five performers globally with respect to sustainable purchasing practices. Students also benefit from access to **more than 150 “green leaf” designated sustainability courses** across two dozen academic programs.

Summary of 2018-2020 Progress

At the conclusion of our 2016-2018 Communication on Engagement, the team at George Mason University identified three primary goals for moving our commitment to the United Nations Global Compact into its next phase. These goals included:

1. Build and refine our **curriculum** dedicated to the UN Global Compact and Global Goals
2. Build meaningful **dialogue among faculty, students, and staff** around key areas of engagement for the Global Compact and Development Goals
3. Build stronger **infrastructure** to support and track Global Compact work being pursued

We are so pleased to share that through collaboration and continued commitment to the vision of the Global Compact, we have made steady and sustained progress towards each of these goals.

Build and refine curriculum

Building on the strong curricular foundation already in place, faculty have continued to develop innovative and rigorous courses connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Annually George Mason University awards Curriculum Impact Grants to interdisciplinary teams of faculty and students with the intention of helping faculty create scaffolded and intentional programs that incorporate experiential learning and build on strengths across Mason. For the last two grant cycles, we have solicited proposals that aim to address specific Sustainable Development Goals through curricular innovation.

Build meaningful dialogue

In the Fall of 2020, George Mason University President Dr. Gregory Washington launched the Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence Task Force. The Task Force is charged with building intentional systems and standards of anti-racism that will keep racial injustices from regenerating. In alignment with principles under both Labor and Human Rights, this task force has convened faculty, staff, and students in both dialogue and action planning to address injustice within our community.

Build stronger infrastructure

Over the last two years George Mason has announced the creation of several campus offices and institutes whose focus is directly connected to the work of the UN Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals. The **Institute for a Sustainable Earth** aims to connect the Mason community with other communities and organizations to effectively address the world's pressing sustainability challenges. The **Office of Community Engagement and Civic Learning** seeks to build connections between Mason and the greater community to develop reciprocal learning partnerships.

Courses and Degree Programs

The Mason Impact Initiative

The **Mason Impact** initiative seeks to offer all students the opportunity to participate in curricular and co-curricular activities that support their development as **Engaged Citizens** and **Well-rounded Scholars** who are **Prepared to Act**. Mason Impact builds on our institutional strengths and our location outside the nation's capital to offer our students real-life experiences in solving real-world problems.

Critical thinking, flexibility, creativity, and resourcefulness are essential to success in the world outside of academia. The University's Strategic Plan (Appendix D) responds to these needs by setting a goal for 75 percent or more of undergraduate students to pursue projects that deploy these soft skills in real-world challenges. Projects are intended to solve high-impact problems with large-scale consequences such as sustainability, urban resilience, and public health.









Funding for these projects is available through Curriculum Impact Grants – evaluated within George Mason University, and proposed by Mason faculty and students. Impact Grants illustrate George Mason University's supportive infrastructure and synthesize three of the institution's key Strategic Goals: Transformative Learning Experiences, Faculty Development, and Excellence in Research.

Embedding SDG's into Curriculum through the Mason Impact






Beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year, George Mason began an effort to embed SDG's into the curriculum by asking faculty teams to focus their Curriculum Impact Grant submissions on at least one of the Development Goals. The goal through this effort is to provide a space for faculty to create scaffolded, intentional programs that incorporate experiential learning and connect that learning to the SDG's through both local and global efforts.




In our 2020-2021 grant cycle we received 18 proposals for Curriculum Impact Grants and 17 of the 18 proposals successfully named a SDG in their narrative. Even with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the sudden shift to largely virtual learning and research spaces, we were able to fund eight proposals, all of which addressed at least one SDG through their work.

2019-2020 Curriculum Impact Grants

Curriculum Impact Grant	Faculty	Global Issues
Bonner Leader Program	Patty Mathison, Samuel Frye, Shauna Rigaud, Laura Poms, Julie Owen, Graziella McCarron, Nick Lennon	<p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>  <p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> 
Building Linguistic and Cultural Competence and Critical Consciousness: Exploring Pathways to Civic Engagement and Social Justice	Ellen Serafini, Caroline Sutter, Esperanza Roman-Mendoza, Carrie Bonilla, Molly Davis	<p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p>  <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> 
Conservation and Environmental Science Communication: Development of a Transdisciplinary Curriculum	Karen Akerlof, Jim Olds, Christopher Clarke, Katherine Rowan	<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 
Minor in Environmental and Ecological Consulting	Joris van der Ham, Megan Tucker	<p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p> 
Nutrition MS Dietetics Track Expansion	Tammy Wagner, Kerri LaCharite, Margaret Slavin, Sina Gallo, Constance Gewa, Lilian DeJonge	<p>2 ZERO HUNGER</p>  <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p> 

2020-2021 Curriculum Impact Grants

Curriculum Impact Grant	Faculty	Global Issues
Enhancing Cross-Cultural Engagement and Collaboration at Mason through Explorations of Global Health Challenges	Andrew Lee, Cortney Hughes Rinker, Laura Poms, Megumi Inoue, Michael Smith, Steven Anthony Scott	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 
From Exploring Pathways to Developing Opportunities for Community Engagement and Social Justice in an Interprofessional Micro-Credential Program	Caroline Sutter, Carrie Bonilla, Ellen Serafini, Esperanza Roman-Mendoza, Molly Davis	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 
The Activist- Artist: Art as an Engine of Social Justice	Matthew Dievendorf, Michael Nickens, Wendi N. Manuel-Scott, Jeremy Freer, Joan E. Fernandez, Joshua Cruse, Julie M Womble Trkula	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 
Climate Change Minor	Cristinia Stan, James Kinter, Juliette Shedd, Padmanabhan Seshaiyer, Sara Cobb	13 CLIMATE ACTION 
Preparing Rising Scientists to Navigate the Science Policy Interface: Developing a Cross-Disciplinary Minor in Science and Technology Policy	Jennifer Salerno, Jessica Rosenberg, Karen Akerlof, Lee Solomon, Peter Blair	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 

<p>Building a Highly Qualified, Creative, and Adaptable STEM Workforce through Collaborative Multidisciplinary Research in Data Science Graduate Programs</p>	<p>Harry Foxwell, Ioulia Rytikova, James Baldo, Mihai Boicu</p>	<p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> 
<p>Physical Activity in Public Health</p>	<p>Ali Weinstein, Charles Robison, Laura Poms</p>	<p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p> 
<p>STEM in Society Minor</p>	<p>Brian Platt, Cortney Hughes Rinker, Kamaljeet Sanghera, Larrie Ferreiro, Laura Poms, Padmanabhan Seshaiyer, Vita Chalk</p>	<p>17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> 

George Mason University Centers and Institutes

Spotlight: Institute for a Sustainable Earth

Prepared by Leah Nichols (PhD), Executive Director of the Institute for a Sustainable Earth

George Mason University's Institute for a Sustainable Earth (ISE) is one of three university level institutes that were recently created to advance Mason's strategic commitment to producing research of consequence. The mission of ISE is connect members of the Mason community with each other across disciplines – and with other communities, policy-makers, businesses, and organizations – so that, together, we can more effectively address the world's pressing sustainability and resilience challenges. By catalyzing partnerships and supporting transdisciplinary research efforts that advance solutions to local, regional, and global sustainability challenges, ISE works to put research and scholarship into action for a more just, prosperous, and sustainable world.

The ISE community consists of over 550 faculty who conduct research within all areas of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To leverage Mason's research strengths and maximize impact, ISE has identified the following six research themes that broadly align with the SDGs to serve as focal points around which to build transdisciplinary communities of research and practice.

- Human health, Well-being, and Capabilities
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities and Ecosystems
- Harnessing the Digital Revolution for Sustainability and Education for All
- Clean Energy, Decarbonization, and Climate Action
- Enhancing Equality, Equity, and Access to Basic Goods and Services
- Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions to Support Thriving Economies

By engaging with the global sustainability community, ISE aims to ensure that Mason's research and scholarship benefits from and continues to influence further progress toward the SDGs.

ISE was launched in February 2019 and is initially working to achieve the following four goals: (i) ensure that Mason practices what we teach through the promotion of a sustainable campus, community, and region (ii) deeply engage ISE faculty in collaborations and the further development of the institute; (iii) build the foundation for an enduring and impactful institute; and (iv) catalyze curricular integration of sustainability and resilience. Highlights of ISE's initial accomplishments include:

Mason Sustainability Council

ISE partnered with Mason's Office of Sustainability to launch the Mason Sustainability Council (MSC) this year. The MSC is an institution-wide initiative that aims to integrate Mason's research and academic strengths in sustainability with campus operations to mitigate Mason's impact on the global climate, create a culture of sustainability at Mason, and enable our campuses to become learning laboratories. The MSC's Executive Leadership Board is chaired by the Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Provost with membership including Vice Presidents, Deans, and faculty and student representatives. This semester ISE and the OoS have worked with the MSC's Executive Leadership Board to develop a set of strategic goals that will guide the MSC work. In addition, the MSC has just established its first working group which will focus on developing circular economies and minimizing waste at Mason.

Building Community

To catalyze communities of research and practice at Mason, ISE has established a faculty affiliate program, centralized communications about sustainability, launched a faculty fellows program, and regularly hosts research round tables. Faculty affiliates are encouraged to post professional profiles on the ISE webpage and associate themselves with one or more of the six research themes to facilitate discovery of potential collaborators. ISE affiliates also receive weekly newsletters that highlight all of the current sustainability-focused events, opportunities, and news from across all of the colleges and schools. ISE's also competitively identified three faculty fellows who now serve as leaders in catalyzing communities around ISE's research themes. And ISE also regularly convenes roundtables for faculty interested in specific topics, issues, or funding opportunities. By showcasing the faculty members' research interests through a series of very brief, structured presentations and then facilitating dialogue, these roundtables are effective at generating new interdisciplinary research teams.

Student internships and curricular development

ISE has partnered with the Global Sustainability Scholars program (GSS) to create opportunities for Mason students to participate in both their undergraduate leadership program and their graduate student internship program. GSS is a national program that provides professional development and leadership training to rising young professionals from underrepresented groups who are interested in addressing sustainability challenges. ISE has also collaborated with Mason's Office of Graduate Education (OGS) to create internship opportunities with local businesses and organizations for recipients of OGS's High Impact Grants. And, for the past two years, ISE has supported Mason's Office of Undergraduate Education as they have focused their Curriculum Impact Grant program on engagement with the UN SDGs. These grants catalyze the development of innovative interdisciplinary curriculum that incorporate experiential learning.

Finally, ISE is currently working with the Brookings Institution to pilot their 17 Rooms-U protocol here at Mason. By coordinating a series of deep dive discussions into each of the SDGs, the 17 Rooms protocol is a proven catalyst for engaging, inspiring, and shaping an organization's mission around the SDGs. Faculty, student, staff, and stakeholder participants with diverse expertise and perspectives will convene in seventeen small groups and work together to identify actions the Mason community can collectively implement within the next year to make progress on the SDGs.

And, with the addition of a new Assistant Director for Strategic Engagement, ISE intends to next expand programing that will facilitate the engagement of Mason faculty and students with local, regional, and global partners. We aim to institutionalize partnerships, create opportunities, and find synergies that leverage Mason's resources in service of together addressing sustainability challenges and making progress on the SDGs.

Spotlight: Office of Sustainability

Prepared by Ben Auger, Sustainability Program Manager Education and Outreach

Introduction & General Overview

George Mason University's commitment to sustainability is real and it is supported by public commitments and extensive accomplishments. The University's public commitments began in 1996 when Mason's then-President Johnson [signed the Talloires Declaration](#) (TD), "the first official statement made by university presidents, chancellors, and rectors of a commitment to environmental sustainability in higher education."

In 2007, Mason made another historic commitment and pledged to achieve carbon-neutrality by 2050 as a [charter signatory](#) of the [American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment \(ACUPCC\)](#). This resulted in the creation of the Office of Sustainability, also in 2007. For 14 years and counting, the [Office of Sustainability](#) (OoS) continues to advance Mason towards carbon neutrality through ongoing operational improvements and the creation of a thriving institutional culture of sustainability.

The mission of OoS is to use the strengths of George Mason University – innovation, responsiveness, flexibility, and community strength – to provide leadership in environmental, social, and economic stewardship on our campuses and throughout the local and global communities of which we are a part. OoS operationally defines sustainability as "a holistic and collaborative, people-driven process, defined by environmental and social justice, that centers Mason's institutional needs in an innovative and evolutionary response to the most pressing challenges of our time." This informs the work the office does, how it approaches that work, and most importantly, why it advances Mason towards a more sustainable future for all.

Mason continues to make progress towards a sustainable future with an extensive number of accomplishments. For example, in 2014 Mason became the first university in the state of Virginia to earn a '[Gold](#)' rating from the [Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's \(AASHE\) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System \(STARS\)](#). We have maintained a STARS Gold rating ever since. And in 2019, Mason launched the [Institute for a Sustainable Earth](#), fulfilling a key research component of [Mason's vision](#) for sustainability in academic endeavors that brings more than 500 faculty together to create a sustainable future for all.

We're serious about sustainability at Mason, and here's the proof.

- 9 features in Sierra Club's '[Cool Schools](#)' ranking
- 11 consecutive features in the Princeton Review's [Guide to Green Colleges](#)
- [Active participant](#) in the [United Nations' Global Compact](#), "the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative."

- Co-founding member and ongoing participant in the [University Global Coalition](#), which mobilizes higher education to integrate and actualize the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in pursuit of a sustainable future.
- 3 consecutive '[Gold' ratings](#) (2014, 2017, 2021) from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System (STARS), "...a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their [institutional] sustainability performance."
- 7 features in AASHE STARS "Sustainable Campus Index" as a "Top Performer" for institutional performance in "Purchasing" (3), "Water" (3), and "Waste" (1).

Campus Efficiencies

The Campus Efficiencies team advances Mason towards its [carbon neutral commitment](#) by implementing and advocating for sustainable infrastructure improvements, integrating zero waste practices into all operations, and incorporating circular economies across Mason's campuses while building strong partnerships to scale impact. In addition, the team coordinates Mason's institutional reporting with the [Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education](#), [Second Nature](#), and many other organizations to ensure sustainability progress is maintained and transparently reported.

Greenhouse & Gardens

The Greenhouse & Gardens team manages the comprehensive operation of three sustainable food production sites: the [Innovation Food Forest](#), the [Potomac Heights Vegetable Garden](#), and the [Presidents Park Hydroponic Greenhouse](#). Each year, the team hosts hundreds of in-person and virtual volunteers who complete thousands of hours of service-learning and volunteering with a custom-designed [Sustainable Sign-Ups](#) portal created in partnership with Facilities Information Technology Services. In addition, the [Academic Internship Program](#) in partnership with the [School of Integrative Studies](#) provides dozens of students with experiential learning about many topics, including permaculture and the business of food.

Patriot Green Fund

The Patriot Green Fund is a \$100,000 per year annual fund provided by Mason Facilities that is used to support sustainability-focused infrastructure and student-led research projects. The PGF has successfully funded more than 90 projects since its inception in 2011 and it is certified as a "[Mason Impact](#)" co-curricular activity. It boasts unique partnerships, like serving as a sponsor for Mechanical Engineering students' Senior Design Capstone Course and provides a funding pathway for student projects from the [Business for a Better World Center's](#) annual Sustainability Contest.












Education & Outreach





The Education & Outreach team engages the Mason Nation to provide educational opportunities and resources about sustainability while promoting sustainable behavior changes at the individual and institutional scale. To do so, the team integrates sustainability as a core pillar of the Mason brand in collaboration with Mason communicators. In addition, the team co-leads Mason’s annual Earth Month and Campus Sustainability Month celebrations with the [Institute for a Sustainable Earth](#). The team coordinates the [Environment & Sustainability Learning Community](#) with [Housing & Residence Life](#), implements the [Green Residence](#) program, and connects students to sustainable opportunities and resources with [University Career Services](#).

Director of University Sustainability









The Office of Sustainability’s Director of University Sustainability co-coordinates the [Mason Sustainability Council](#) (MSC) with the Executive Director of the [Institute for a Sustainable Earth](#). The Mason Sustainability Council (MSC) is an institution-wide initiative that works to integrate Mason’s research and academic strengths in sustainability with campus operations to mitigate Mason’s impact on the global climate, enables our campuses to become learning laboratories, and further establishes Mason as an institutional leader in higher-education sustainability. In addition, they are a member of the [Master Plan](#) Steering Committee, and work to inject operational and academic sustainability into that planning process. They also serve on the planning committee for a new “green” building on Mason’s Arlington Campus and are hosting one of Mason’s “[17 Rooms](#)” events to help the university plan for sustainability in alignment with the United Nations’ [Sustainable Development Goals](#).







2018-2019 Patriot Green Fund Recipients

Curriculum Impact Grant	Faculty	Global Issues
<p>Mason Sun Tracker: (Infrastructure) Design and build a construct that sustains a self-sufficient device charging station that will contain a solar panel that can autonomously position itself to orthogonally face the sun.</p>	<p>L. Huang</p>	<p>9 INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE  13 CLIMATE ACTION </p>
<p>Smoking Urns: (Infrastructure) Signage for smoking urns at the Johnson Center</p>	<p>D. Sklarew</p>	<p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING  12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION </p>
<p>Microorganisms as Biological Indicators (Research) Evaluation of the use of aquatic communities as bioindicators of aquatic habitat quality in the Potomac River.</p>	<p>J. Salerno, B. Van Aken</p>	<p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER </p>
<p>Ecological Impacts of Microplastics: (Research) Study of microplastics as micropollutants in the Potomac watershed.</p>	<p>G. Foster</p>	<p>14 LIFE BELOW WATER  15 LIFE ON LAND </p>
<p>Assessment of Building Envelope: (Research) Project continued with progress from previous year. Development of software that interprets thermal images to determine the energy loss of various building materials.</p>	<p>R. Gallo</p>	<p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES  9 INDUSTRY INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE </p>
<p>Waste Diversion Measurements: (Research) Sensor package capable of transmitting waste data from campus containers to Facilities Management.</p>	<p>R. Gallo</p>	<p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION  13 CLIMATE ACTION </p>

<p>Rain Barrel Repair: (Infrastructure) Restoration of existing rain barrel at the Potomac Heights vegetable garden.</p>	<p>D. Sklarew</p>	<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p>  <p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> 
<p>Crushed Glass Filtration: (Research) Examine how a crushed glass filter compares to a traditional sand filter that is used in wastewater treatment.</p>	<p>A Close</p>	<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 
<p>Campus Turf Improvements/Testing: (Research) Determine a mixture of turf grass varieties/cultivators that can be grown organically and maintain the same level of growth and appearance of current campus turf.</p>	<p>A Wingfield, D. Nolan</p>	<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 

2019-2020 Patriot Green Fund Recipients

Curriculum Impact Grant	Faculty	Global Issues
Storm Drain Robot: (Research) To Improve upon the design and creation of a storm drain robot to monitor Mason's storm water systems	N. Kathir	 
Waste Diversion Measurements for Campus Verti Pack Compactors: (Research) Sensor package capable of transmitting waste data from campus containers to Facilities Management	N. Kathir	 
Greenhouse Automation: (Infrastructure) A system of autonomous control of Mason's hydroponic greenhouse	D. Nolan	
Mason Pond Bathymetry: (Infrastructure) A unmanned surface vehicle for inspection of Mason's storm water structures	F. Zhang	
Piedmont Rain Garden Storm Water Runoff: (Research) Study of microbial communities as bio-indicators of soil erosion in storm water	J. Salerno	 
Compost Tumblers: (Infrastructure) Improve visibility and capacity for campus composting	D. Nolan	

<p>Pollinator Turf: (Research) Study of changing composition of turf grass lawns for native bee habitats</p>	<p>J. van der Ham</p>	<p>15 LIFE ON LAND</p> 
<p>TerraCycle Waste: (Infrastructure) Pilot to increase the recycling of 3-D printing filament, beauty product containers, and snack/chip wrappers</p>	<p>D. Sklarew</p>	<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 
<p>Masonvale Geogrid Installation: (Infrastructure) To prevent the clogging of the impervious pavement in the Masonvale community</p>	<p>B. Claudio</p>	<p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> 
<p>Arboretum Signage: (Infrastructure) Creating 106 new tree signs that connect to a virtual map to document trees on Mason's campuses to establish an Arboretm</p>	<p>A Weeks</p>	<p>9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p> 
<p>Beverage Capsule Recycling: (Infrastructure) Pilot to increase the recycling of pre-packaged single-use beverage products</p>	<p>D. Sklarew</p>	<p>12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> 
<p>Bike Fix-It Station: (Infrastructure) To provide bike tools and a portable bike stand for the MIX for bike repair workshops and accessibility</p>	<p>J. Walker</p>	<p>11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> 

Institutional Policies and Initiatives

Spotlight: President's Task Force on Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence

In the Fall of 2020, George Mason University President Dr. Gregory Washington announced the creation of the Anti-Racism and Inclusive Excellence Task Force (ARIE). The ARIE Task Force is comprised of over 100 members of the Mason community with three significant goals:

- Identify systems, practices, and traditions of racial bias at George Mason University so that they can be eradicated
- Build intentional systems and standards of anti-racism that will keep racial justices from regenerating
- George Mason University to become a local, regional, and national beacon for the advancement of anti-racism, reconciliation, and healing

Over the course of the last academic year committees met to evaluate curriculum and pedagogy, campus and community engagement, university policies and practices, research, and training and development. The entire university community has been engaged in this effort through town hall events, listening sessions, survey responses, and subcommittee membership to reimagine our institution and address instances of racism and replace them with anti-racist practices.

The goals of the ARIE Task Force are significant and position Mason to address ***Sustainable Development Goals related to inequality, decent work, strong institutions, and partnerships for the goals.***

We look forward to sharing outcomes and progress of the ARIE Task Force during the 2020-2022 reporting period as the Task Force will move into an Implementation Team with the charge of seeing the aspirational vision come into fruition.

More information on the full details of the task force are available here:

<https://www2.gmu.edu/news/2020-07/president-washington-announces-task-force-anti-racism-and-inclusive-excellence>.



Spotlight: Quality Enhancement Plan: Transformative Education through Anti-Racist Community Engagement

In the fall of 2020 George Mason announced its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) titled “Transformative Education through Anti-Racist Community Engagement.” The QEP seeks to contribute to institutional change at Mason by leveraging the strengths of community engaged pedagogies to address areas of the ***Sustainable Development Goals like reduced inequalities, quality education, strong institutions, and partnerships for the goals.***

The vision for the work of the Anti-Racist Community Engagement plan is that by embedding critical service-learning and civic engagement into academic and co-curricular experiences, we will equip students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to understand themselves as agents of change, identify and disrupt racist practices, and work collaboratively towards positive social change.

Goals of the Quality Enhancement Plan

1. Building Mason’s infrastructure to support community engagement and civic learning
2. Expanding students understanding of anti-racism through community and civic engagement
3. Increasing the opportunities for students to participate in community engaged courses and research opportunities by investing in faculty training and curriculum development

Since October of 2020, a group of more than 30 Mason students, faculty, and staff, have collaborated on the vision and details of the QEP. The Development Committee’s work has been focused on community engagement, student experiences, assessment, and staff and faculty development.

Partnerships for the Goals

A significant focus of the Quality Enhancement Plan includes engagement and collaboration with community partners. The success of the QEP cannot be realized without meaningful and reciprocal partnerships with nonprofit organizations, governmental organizations, and collaborators outside of Mason. We look forward to sharing more about the way our partnerships have grown and evolved through this important work in the 2020-2022 Communication on Engagement.

More on the QEP

More information on the Quality Enhancement Plan effort at George Mason University can be found at:

<https://provost.gmu.edu/administration/academic-affairs/accreditation/qep-quality-enhancement-plan>.



Conclusion and Recommendations

George Mason University remains committed to the United Nations Global Compact and the advancement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The last year of unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and taking active steps to address racism and structural inequities further situates universities as needed leaders, researchers, and visionaries as we prepare to continue addressing the challenges of our global society.

As George Mason University looks forward to our commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we look forward to deepening our curricular commitments to the SDG's, expanding opportunities for our faculty, staff, and students to engage with the goals, and clarifying our tracking and reporting mechanisms to better share our progress.

1. Form a UN Global Compact Working Group

In order to enhance the amazing work happening at Mason connected to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, one of our priorities is to form a UN Global Compact Working Group with representatives from the Office of Sustainability, Institute for a Sustainable Earth, Office of Community Engagement and Civic Learning, Human Resources, and many of our academic units connected to research, policy, human rights, and other Global Goal areas.

The goal of this working group will be not only to coordinate and track the work happening for our bi-annual Communication on Engagement, but also to serve as a planning group and central point for strategy, planning, and communication around our commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The working group will create outcomes to track over the course of each bi-annual reporting period and develop appropriate mechanisms for tracking, sustaining, and deepening our institutional commitment and priorities.

2. Continue building the UN Global Compact and Global Goals into the curriculum

The inclusion of the UN Global Goals in our Curriculum Impact Grant process has highlighted the many interdisciplinary connections between academic programs at Mason and the Global Goals. The Mason Impact Initiative is a useful tool for expanding the reach of the Global Goals in our curriculum and we also want to increase the connection of the goals through the exploration of minors and experiential learning opportunities for students.

3. Expand opportunities for faculty, staff, students and community partners to engage in programs connected to the Global Compact and Sustainable Development Goals

The Institute for a Sustainable Earth is hosting a 17 Rooms Event at Mason during the Fall of 2021, and in many ways this event will serve as a large-scale kickoff to greater engagement between faculty, staff, students, and community partners and the Global Compact and Sustainable Development Goals. We look forward to using the momentum from this event and the intentional efforts of the Office of Sustainability and other campus collaborators to continue the reach of this work. In the Office of Community Engagement and Civic Learning we will be exploring connections between the SDG's and student civic engagement at the undergraduate level.

George Mason University Strategic Plan through 2024

Our strategic plan, 2014-2024, commits us to serving as a “university *for* the world,” guided by values including: our students come first, diversity is our strength, innovation is our tradition, we honor freedom of thought and expression, we are careful stewards, we act with integrity, and we thrive together. In our revised fall 2017 plan, we affirmed our commitment to 12 Strategic Goals, each with a corresponding set of metrics to measure impact:

1. **Innovative Learning:** Deliver a transformative Mason Learning Experience that is experiential, global, and technology rich.
2. **Accessible Pathways:** Provide multiple pathways and delivery formats to serve the needs of different students.
3. **Return on Investment:** Enable all graduates to pursue meaningful lives and successful careers.
4. **100,000 Career Ready Graduates:** George Mason University will help meet the demands of the commonwealth, the region, and the world for dynamic, creative, collaborative thinkers, doers, and problem solvers.
5. **Innovation Engine:** Contribute to the economic and civic vitality of the region by driving entrepreneurship and innovation and by creating learning partnerships with private and public organizations.
6. **Community Builder:** Contribute to the cultural vitality of our community through regional partnerships and commitments to the arts, athletics, and community engagement.
7. **Well-Being:** Become a model well-being university that supports and enhances well-being for all of its members.
8. **Diverse Academic Community:** Create an inclusive and diverse academic community that reflects the diversity of the National Capital Region.
9. **Support Teaching and Scholarship Excellence:** Mason will provide an environment and resources to support faculty and encourage academic innovation and excellence.
10. **Elevate Research:** Strengthen Mason’s research and scholarship portfolio to solidify the institution’s position as a public research university of the highest caliber.
11. **Research of Consequence:** Enhance Mason research in domains of great academic, societal, and economic consequence.
12. **Global Learning:** Expand opportunities for global learning by creating partnerships and programs to support student and faculty mobility and collaboration.