

# Social & Community Impact



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UTA★



# Initiative

Highlight UTA as an exemplar university for research in sustainability

**LEAD:** Office of Sustainability, CAPPA, and Division of Student Affairs

## Definition

To maximize social impact, initiatives aim to highlight existing sustainability research, rethink mindsets around sustainability, and effectively communicate its social implications. This involves establishing a shared vision of sustainability, enhancing communication with younger generations, and offering educational opportunities like walking tours and community engagement events.

## SOCIAL & COMMUNITY IMPACT

OVERVIEW



### Resilience Co-benefits



Grows Green Jobs & Opportunities



Supports Community Health



Enhances Environmental Quality



Builds Community Connections



Establishes UTA as a Regional Leader



### University Programming and Success

Since the 1990s, the University has been deepening its involvement in the sustainability movement, making progress in GHG emissions, waste management, campus engagement, and sustainability education. As part of these efforts, four sustainability-related programs have emerged, three of which are located within the College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs and one within the College of Engineering:

- MS Sustainable Building Technology (CAPPA)
- Minor Environmental and Sustainability Studies (CAPPA)
- BS Sustainable Urban Design (CAPPA)
- BS Resource and Energy Engineering (College of Engineering)

As a top tier research institution, UTA receives grant dollars from federal, state, and local sources that fund crucial research in science and technology. This funding supports the pursuit of innovative solutions to today's challenges, establishing a foundation for continued leadership in these fields.

### Total Research Dollars

by scale, as of 2022

Source: [Data USA](#)

**71.8M**  
FEDERAL



**20.6M**  
STATE



**534K**  
LOCAL







**Influential speakers at UTA-hosted events can inspire action toward addressing social and environmental challenges through sharing experiences and research**

Source: [UTA Flickr](#) | Brett Shipp at TEDxUTA

*Witnessing the best of humanity in the worst of times*

## Developing UTA's Influence

UTA can use the existing momentum toward becoming an international leader in research and innovation as a catalyst for future-focused change. Focusing funding and doctoral research on clean energy and sustainable development can ensure the university is first seen as a regional resource before extending its national- and subsequently its global-reach.

Increasing UTA's presence at conferences specifically focused on these topics, as well as providing widespread access to existing sustainability research by hosting published articles publicly, can help to attract faculty researchers who are trailblazing in areas of green innovation and graduate students who are hoping to expand upon the work of current faculty.

Broadening and highlighting this network of professionals will undoubtedly begin laying the groundwork for leadership in the green industry, attracting further funding and growth of UTA's student body, its faculty membership, and its influence on the local, state, federal, and ultimately, the international scale.

## Embedding Sustainability Across UTA's Core Curricula

Sustainability can most successfully be woven into the fabric of UTA's academic programming by aligning capstone and doctoral research projects with campus operations, allowing students to apply the concepts and principles they are learning in class through living laboratories, partnerships with local governments and businesses, and by becoming involved in the implementation of sustainability initiatives across campus. Combining hands-on learning experiences with capstone projects allows students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world contexts and develop practical skills relevant to addressing the challenges Texas faces in relation to energy and environment. Further, through these efforts UTA can encourage an interdisciplinary approach to sustainability research and education, utilizing cluster hires in sustainability to facilitate cross-campus dialogue and expand graduate offerings for sustainability curriculum which will foster collaboration between researchers from different disciplines, leading to innovative solutions and new research directions.

### MASTER PLAN ALIGNMENT

Outdoor research areas can provide space to implement these practices

### What this can look like:

- Onboarding and recruiting efforts for students, faculty, and staff
- Building courses into core curriculum, exposing opportunities for integrating sustainability into different fields of study
- Leaning into understanding how UTA can continue to grow the clean energy industry
- Seeking federal research grants to pursue innovative technologies
- Introducing life cycle assessment to architects and industrial designers
- Ensuring students in marketing and graphic design know how to communicate sustainability information
- Encouraging students in existing sustainability-focused programs to pursue PhD research and to engage in campus-wide education campaigns



Highlight existing sustainability research

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ACTION ITEMS 6

Group recent sustainability stories in a featured section on the UTA website

Be more explicit in communicating research related to sustainability

Align recruiting efforts with key hiring districts

Create a searchable catalog of faculty experts, projects, and sustainability efforts

Host walking tours with educational signage on trails

Ensure sustainability vision is integrated into on-boarding and recruiting efforts

Ensure widespread Research Access by hosting published articles on publicly available infrastructure

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ACTION ITEMS 2

Create a Sustainability category on UTA Libraries DAZL and the BrowZine library for easy access to related research

Ensure common keywords are being used in all published work to ensure UTA research is being cataloged and referenced effectively

Deepen connections for fostering a sustainable campus community

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ACTION ITEMS 2

Expand network of sustainability professionals by connecting with other institutions in the region with programs in sustainability or with environmental-focus (examples include University of Oklahoma, Sam Houston State University, University of Houston, Texas A&M)

Advocate for social justice and environmental sustainability at local, national, and international levels

Integrate sustainability initiatives into course curriculum

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ACTION ITEMS 2

Enhance capacity to implement action items by aligning class syllabi with relevant projects

Connect students with local businesses and government departments through coursework