

Quarterly Update

July 2020



Higher Education
Working Group

TASK FORCE 1: Support climate action planning and implementation across the higher education sector



Current updates

- Interviewing key contacts at approximately 50 colleges/universities in the Boston area to (1) cultivate connections with HEWG and confirm best contact at the institution; and (2) gather information about climate action planning. These interviews are scheduled to be completed by the end of August.
- Connecting with Eric Friedman from the [Leading by Example Program](#) to explore future collaboration opportunities with state schools.

Future projects

- Hosting Yve Torrie from [A Better City](#) at a task force meeting to discuss overlapping projects that support Boston's higher education and business sectors with achieving City climate action goals.

Collaborations



With task force 2:

- Goal 1's interview initiative and Goal 2 Collaborative Research event have supported the creation of a comprehensive contact list for climate action partners at Boston area higher education institutions. Goal 1 and Goal 2 have both been discussing opportunities to support equity and resiliency focused climate action and research.

With task force 3:



- Discussing the need for an equity lens in this work, especially when considering financial resources, bandwidth, and diversity of communities served by different sectors.
- Supporting the eventual creation of a platform that provides tools, case studies, and research initiatives that support climate action planning in higher education. The desired goal would be to serve as a resource for the higher education sector to connect with other institutions and GRC about climate action planning.

TASK FORCE 2: Facilitate collaborative research that leverages the higher education sector's capabilities to promote solutions for equitable climate resilience and mitigation in the greater Boston area.



Current updates

- Hosted the HEWG's first Collaborative Research Event on July 16, convening 20 researchers and sustainability professionals from eight institutions to discuss the possible collaborative research opportunities centering on climate action, racial justice, and public health. Alison Brizius, Director of Climate and Environmental Planning for the City of Boston, also attended to provide insight on how her research could inform and enhance current and future initiatives. The event was well-received with participants showing strong interest in future events.

Future projects

- Determining best next steps based on the outcomes and feedback from the Collaborative Research Event. In particular, the task force will discuss scheduling a second event for researchers to meet and formulate research partnerships and initiatives.

Collaborations



With task force 1:

- Goal 1's interview initiative and Goal 2 Collaborative Research event have supported the creation of a comprehensive contact list for climate action partners at Boston area higher education institutions. Goal 1 and Goal 2 have both been discussing opportunities to support equity and resiliency-focused climate action and research.



With task force 3:

- Determining how collaborative research can support outreach and information sharing to other sectors.

TASK FORCE 3: Transfer knowledge to other sectors to accelerate change for equitable implementation of climate mitigation and resilience



Current updates

- Kicking off the Green Ribbon Commission's GRCx event series on July 28 with a panel and Q & A session called "Urban Geothermal to Electrify Heating and Cooling." GRC's John Cleveland will serve as moderator. Panelists include Dennis Carlberg of Boston University, Jacob Knowles of BR+A Engineers, and Kate Bubriski of Arrowstreet.

Future projects

- Supporting a future GRCx event this fall focused on topics connected to Boston's climate action goals that the higher education sector is uniquely positioned to share insights and information.
- Contributing the creation of a communication and engagement tracking framework on HubSpot to keep track of HEWG outreach and support for higher education institutions in the Boston area.

Collaborations



With task force 1:

- Discussing the need for an equity lens in this work, especially when considering financial resources, bandwidth, and diversity of communities served by different sectors.
- Supporting the eventual creation of a platform that provides tools, case studies, and research initiatives that support climate action planning in higher education. The desired goal would be to serve as a resource for the higher education sector to connect with other institutions and GRC about climate action planning.



With task force 2:

- Determining how collaborative research can support outreach and information sharing to other sectors.

ALL GOALS

Current updates

- All task force members are invited to attend a session with Alison Brizius, Director of Climate and Environmental Planning for the City of Boston, to provide feedback on a draft policy for existing buildings emissions performance standards.
- Task forces have been defining what success looks like for their group and aligning actions and events with HEWG Strategic Plan Goals.

Other announcements

Events

July 28 | 8:30–10 a.m.

GRCx event

Urban Geothermal to Electrify Heating and Cooling

[Register here!](#)

August 13 | 9–10 a.m.

HEWG & Alison Brizius

Feedback session: building emissions performance standards policy draft

Resources

- Collaborative Research Event materials
 - [Event Outcomes](#)
 - [Slide Deck](#)
- Carbon Free Boston Reports
 - [Technical Reports](#)
 - [Social Equity Report 2019](#)