

Quarterly Update

October 2020



Higher Education
Working Group

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



Current updates

- Throughout the summer and into the fall, the task force has completed 12 interviews with key contacts about climate action planning in the Boston's higher education sector to 1) cultivate connections with HEWG and confirm best contact at the institution, and 2) gather information about climate action planning. The task force has been in contact with others and will be continuing interviews through November.
- Outcomes of these interviews will be compiled and shared during a future HEWG hosted event.
- The task force is exploring frameworks for supporting the higher education sector to set and reach goals for carbon neutrality by connecting with GRC cultural sector partners.

Future projects

- The group will be compiling case studies and best practices from universities, including information on climate justice planning initiatives.

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. The task forces have both been discussing opportunities to support equity- and resiliency-focused climate action planning and research.



With task force 3:

- Supporting the creation of a platform that provides tools, case studies, and research initiatives that support climate action planning in higher education. The desired goal of the group 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

- The task force has been connecting with researchers focusing on climate change and public health about future collaborations with the HEWG. The task force has connected with Aaron Bernstein from C-CHANGE on climate crisis impacts on public health, Madeleine Scammell (BU) on environmental health and air quality, John Levy (BU) on air quality, and others.
- The task force supported the GRCx event in October on Participatory Climate Justice. Joan Fitzgerald from Northeastern presented on a panel with updates on her most recent research on urban, justice focused climate action planning.

Future projects

- The task force will be preparing for a second collaborative research event in January 2021 focused on connections between public health and climate change. This group will gather researchers, community members, and representatives from the City of Boston at the event.

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. The task forces have both been discussing opportunities to support equity- and resiliency-focused climate action planning 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

- The task force hosted an event in September with Alison Brizius, Director of Climate and Environmental Planning for the City of Boston, about the Building Emissions Reporting and Disclosure Ordinance (BERDO). More than 25 attendees from Boston's higher education sector attended.
- The task force is supporting the Green Ribbon Commission's GRCx event series, including a panel focused on resilience and emergency planning organized by MIT.

Future projects

- The task force will be developing a clear strategy for engaging university leadership. The task force is in conversation with Healthcare Without Harm (HCWH) to identify ways to better engage with senior leadership across higher education in Boston.

Collaborations



With task force 1:

- 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

- Task forces have been defining what success looks like for their individual groups and aligning actions and events with HEWG Strategic Plan Goals.

Upcoming Events & Resources

Key dates

- November 19 – GRCx Clean Heat – The Potential of Networked Geothermal
 - [Register here](#)

Resources

- [Boston Emissions Reporting Disclosure Ordinance \(BERDO\)](#)
- [GRCx Climate Action Exchange](#)
- Carbon Free Boston Reports
 - [Technical Reports](#)
 - [Social Equity Report 2019](#)