

## UA Gets Gold for Sustainability Efforts

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The University of Arizona has been recognized for its sustainability efforts, earning a STARS Gold rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

AASHE, whose mission is to "inspire and catalyze higher education to lead the global sustainability transformation," administers the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System – or STARS – to "engage and recognize" colleges and universities that have undertaken sustainability initiatives.

Based on an in-depth self-reporting process, **STARS** <sup>[1]</sup> "is the most comprehensive approach to assessing our University's overall sustainability performance and encompasses the full spectrum of sustainability," said **Ben Champion**, director of the Office of Sustainability.

"We can really celebrate getting a gold," Champion said. "It represents a lot of effort by a lot of people across a big university."

Champion spearheaded efforts to gather the data for STARS, which took about 18 months and included departments and units such as Facilities Management, Academic Affairs, Planning, Construction and Design, and Parking and Transportation Services. STARS addresses areas of sustainability, not only in matters of environmental issues but also in areas related to campus engagement, innovation and leadership in regards to sustainability, investments and diversity.

"Sustainability is really people-oriented," said Champion, who advocates for a holistic approach to sustainability that takes into consideration not only the environmental conditions of an area but also the social conditions and the economic conditions. "It's about the future of society and about having a healthy society where all people are enabled to be the most of what they can become. And you have to have healthy environmental conditions, social conditions and economic conditions. All three of those areas are deeply intertwined with each other."

The UA scored 66.35 points overall, performing best in the category of academics, which includes curriculum and research. See the UA's full report [here](#) <sup>[2]</sup>.

The UA will hold the gold rating for three years. Champion would like to get the entire UA community involved to further enhance sustainability efforts so that the University reaches the STARS Platinum rating.

"Our carbon footprint and our renewable energy purchasing is a significant area where we could get some more points, but some other areas where we could really boost is doing a better job of reaching out to employees throughout campus," Champion said. "Everyone can do their part."

To find out more about the UA's sustainability efforts, visit [sustainability.arizona.edu](https://sustainability.arizona.edu) <sup>[3]</sup>. For some tips from Champion on being green at work, see this [LQP story](#) <sup>[4]</sup>.

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**Source URL:** <https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/ua-gets-gold-sustainability-efforts>

### Links

[1] <https://stars.aashe.org/> [2] <https://stars.aashe.org/institutions/university-of-arizona-az/report/2017-05-02/> [3] <http://sustainability.arizona.edu> [4] <https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/have-greener-spring-these-tips-office-sustainability>