



# Strategic Plan

This plan was approved by  
the AASHE Board of  
Directors in August 2024.

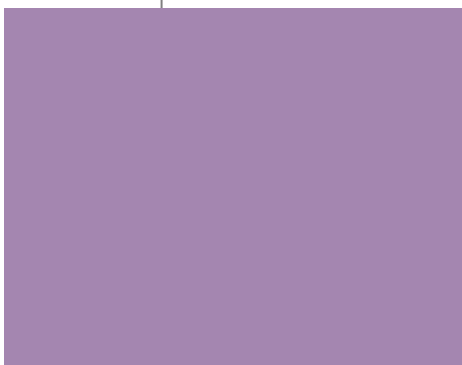


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# Definition of Sustainability

AASHE understands sustainability as a pluralistic concept encompassing human and ecological health, racial equity and social justice, secure livelihoods, and well-being for all now and in the future. Our understanding is informed by concepts of sustainability embedded in many Indigenous cultures as well as the Earth Charter and the U.N. Sustainable Development Goals.



# Mission

To inspire and catalyze higher education to accelerate the transition towards a just & sustainable world.

# Vision

We envision a just & sustainable world in which higher education:

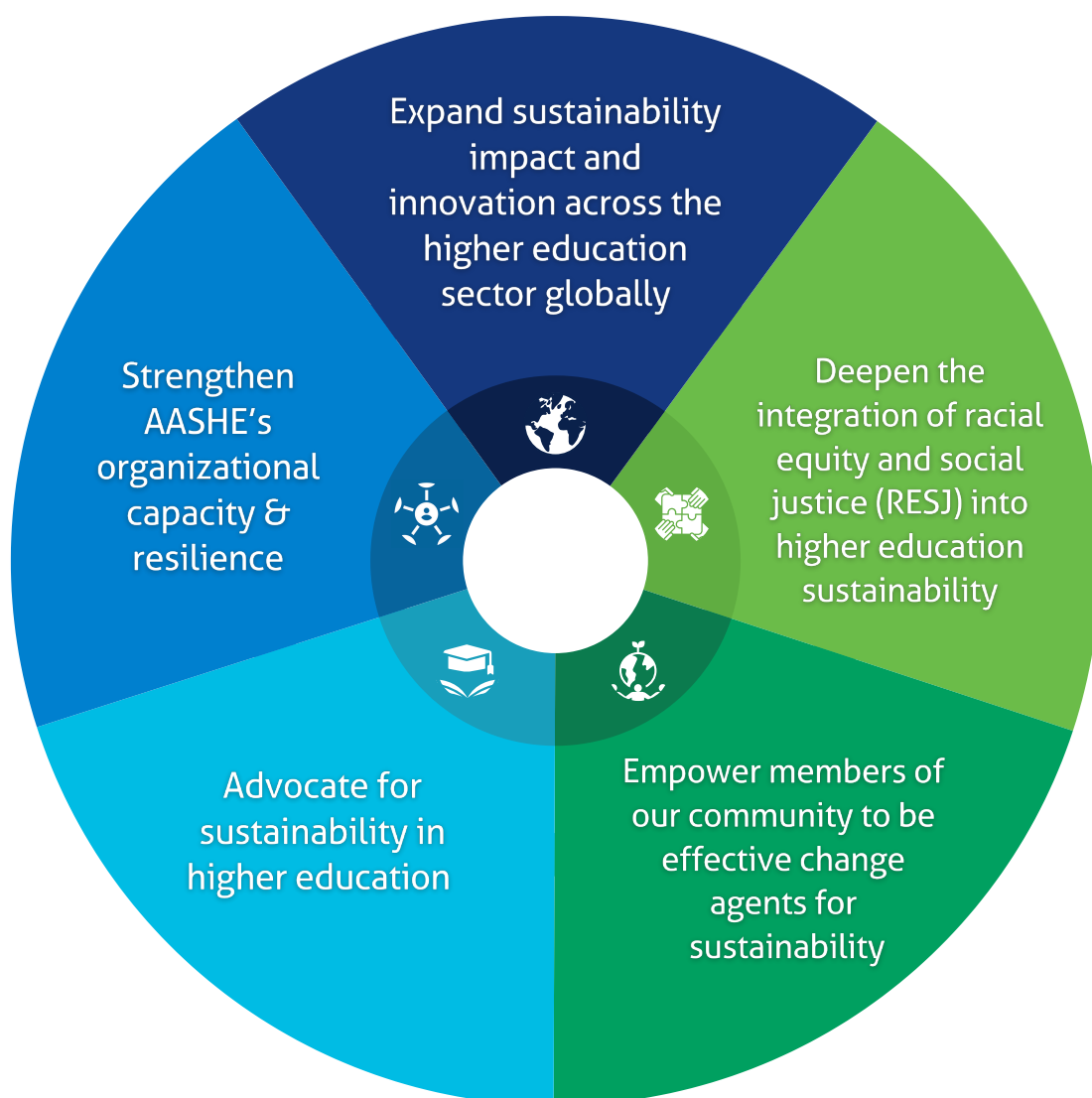
- prepares students to be responsible citizens who understand sustainability challenges and are ready to address them in their careers and personal lives;
- is a broadly accessible engine of social mobility that lifts up marginalized and under-resourced people;
- ensures student and employee wellbeing;
- operates as a model for sustainability; and
- collaborates with local communities to generate and implement sustainable solutions.





# Strategic Goals Overview

Our strategic plan is centered on five interconnected goals that collectively drive our mission to advance sustainability in higher education. Represented in the graphic below, these goals reflect a holistic approach, focusing on driving impact and innovation, empowering leaders, advancing social justice, advocating for transformative change, and ensuring our organizational resilience.





# Strategic Goals and Objectives



- Strengthen the value of a STARS rating and reinforce STARS' role as the highest standard for sustainability assessment and reporting in higher education
- Expand access to STARS with an emphasis on under-resourced institutions
- Improve the quality, usability, and meaningfulness of STARS data and collaborate with other ranking/rating organizations to minimize the reporting burden
- Enhance the AASHE awards program and other opportunities to celebrate, promote, and encourage sustainability action in higher education



- Uplift and share the work of RESJ leaders and organizations with the AASHE community
- Develop resources and tools for the higher education sustainability community to advance racial equity and social justice in its work
- Ensure that limited access to resources is not a barrier to participation in AASHE
- Support the recruitment and advancement of BIPOC sustainability staff, faculty, and students in higher education
- Embed RESJ into AASHE's programs, resources, and services

# Strategic Goals and Objectives (cont.)



- Offer high-value, accessible professional development programs
  - Strengthen the annual conference and expo to be the marquee forum for the higher education sustainability community
  - Improve and expand resources and publications
- Enhance and broaden opportunities for networking and building community



- Raise the awareness and importance of sustainability in higher education (e.g., among higher education leaders, prospective students and public officials)
  - Support government and corporate policies and practices that advance sustainability in higher education
- Promote the integration of sustainability criteria into institutional and program-level accreditation requirements and recognition programs
  - Encourage sustainability action through networks and partnerships

# Strategic Goals and Objectives (cont.)



- Engage new audiences to increase membership and participation in programs and services
- Enhance organizational leadership and pursue equitable representation within staff and governance bodies
- Align AASHE's policies and practices with RESJ
- Optimize our digital infrastructure to improve internal efficiencies and user experience
- Strengthen AASHE's financial health and stability





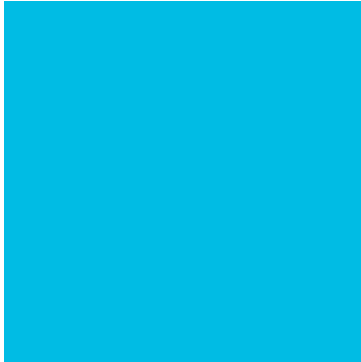
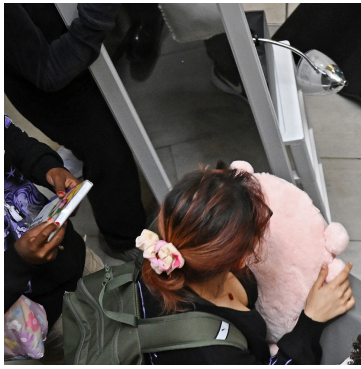
# Our Process

This plan was developed over several years of listening and learning with our members, engaging our Advisory Council, working with the Board & Staff, and engaging a consultant.

In 2023, our consultant helped us create an equity tool that we used to evaluate our goals and identify how to improve. In 2024, we surveyed our members to understand what they value in AASHE and asked our Board and Advisory Council members to identify ways AASHE could embed racial equity & social justice in everything we do. This process helped to affirm what our community values most, identify how we can be more impactful, and helped staff to hone the ideas and recommendations into the new strategic plan that was approved by the Board in August 2024.


With this new strategy, AASHE has renewed our commitment to our community and to advancing sustainability holistically through driving impact and innovation, empowering leaders, advancing social justice, advocating for transformative change, and ensuring our organizational resilience.





# Thank You

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed their time, expertise, and dedication to the development of this strategic plan. Your insights and efforts have been invaluable in shaping a vision and path forward that reflect our shared goals and aspirations. This plan is a testament to the power of collaboration and the massive potential within our community.

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