Creating a Green Labs Program at MSU

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What is Sustainability

A balance between what’s best for society, the economy, and the environment.

Montana State University’s zero-waste target is a diversion rate of 90%. This percentage is based off the internationally recognized standard that zero-waste means achieving a diversion rate of 90% or higher.

Carbon neutrality is achieved when the amount of greenhouse gases released is equivalent to the amount sequestered or offset. Montana State University aims to achieve this target by 2040.
Many Reasons Why

Labs are ~20% of building space at research universities,
Labs consume approximately 1/2 to 2/3 of total campus energy

Laboratory spaces have great potential to reduce energy consumption, conserve water, and minimize waste

By practicing and developing a better understanding of sustainability, labs can be at the forefront in helping MSU achieve carbon neutrality by 2040
Sustainable Research ~ Sustainable Operations

Nearly every department at MSU is engaged in sustainability related research.

Green Labs aligns with faculty values in support of sustainability research and operations.
Strong Financial Incentive

• ~40% of F&A funds allocated to “Building Expenses”
  – Leases
  – Campus O&M
  – Overhead Costs
  – Off-Campus Leases
  – Off-Campus O&M
  – Renovations
  – Equipment
Stakeholders

- Labs and Lab Departments
- Office of Research and Economic Development
- Safety and Risk Management
- Office of Sustainability
- Procurement
- Facilities Services (Recycling)
- National Networks
Green Lab Assessment Categories

- Fume Hoods
- Freezers
- Lighting
- Computers & Other Electronics
- Climate Control
- Water Conservation & Efficiency
- Materials Management
- Chemical Use and Disposal
- Green Purchasing
Green Lab Certification

The Certification Process

1. The Office of Sustainability will hold an introductory meeting to review the certification benefits and process.

2. Get approval from laboratory leadership

3. Schedule a walkthrough of the lab space to identify opportunities through the Green Labs Assessment Form.

4. Assign a Green Labs Leader and/or team The lab must have an active Green Labs leader and, if possible, a team of 2+ members who communicate and lead green initiatives with your lab.
Certification continued

5. Host a staff presentation

6. Complete at least 75% of applicable sustainability practices in the Green Labs Certification Guide.

7. Receive Certification Plan a Green Labs celebration and presentation of your certification materials.

8. Ongoing: Maintain an active green leader and/or team and continue the sustainability practices implemented through this program.
Additional programs

• Freezer rebate programs
• Water rebates
• Streamlined purchasing
• Recycling programs
• Coordination with campus Energy Performance Contract / Building Energy Efficiency
• Vendor discounts
Thank you!

The Green Labs Program is adaptable and the Green Labs team is here to work with labs to ensure the process is effective and relevant for a variety of lab environments on campus.

Have a question?

Reach out to us at sustainability@montana.edu