Assignment: Earth
FY24 Annual Report

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

Asgmt Earth USC
Working together
for a sustainable future

USC Sustainability

Assignment: Earth FY24 Annual Report Introduction

In 2022, USC President Carol Folt announced **Assignment: Earth**, USC's ambitious sustainability framework to guide its efforts through the LA28 Olympics and beyond. Assignment: Earth includes 27 goals organized under five domains; this annual report covers progress on the entirety of its scope.

Education   **Research**   **Inclusion**   **Operations**   **Engagement**

It's a big assignment. We're all in!

Photo Credit: Gus Ruelas

USC Sustainability
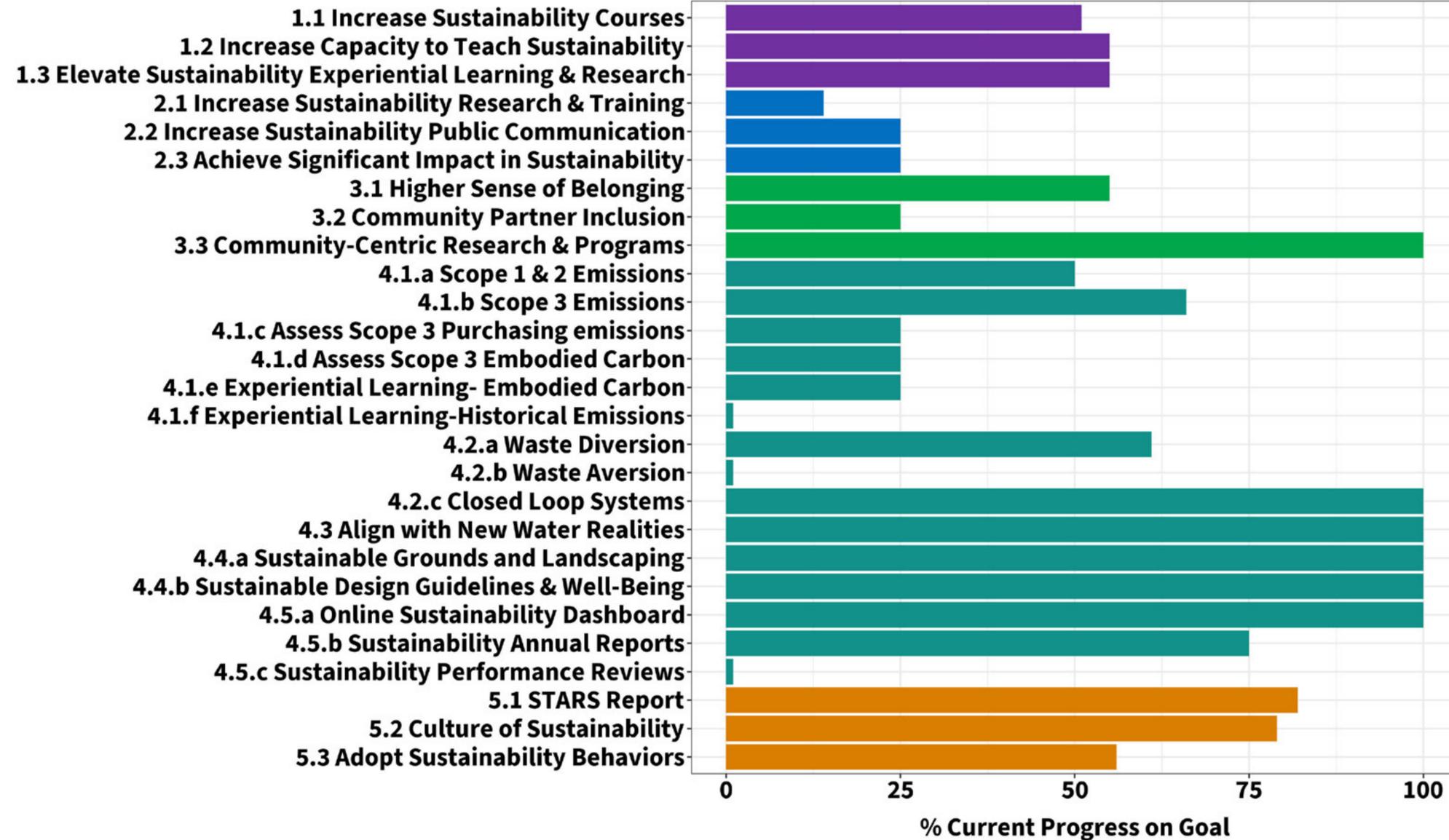
Table of Contents

Education

Photo Credit: USC

1. Education

Overview

1. Increase Undergraduate Courses	2. Increase Capacity to Teach	3. Elevate Experiential Learning & Student Research

51%*

102 Courses AY21 — 172 Courses AY28

Towards Increasing Sustainability-Focused Undergraduate Courses

*Progress (%) is based on the number of new courses added per year since the 2021 baseline. Current progress reflects AY24 course data
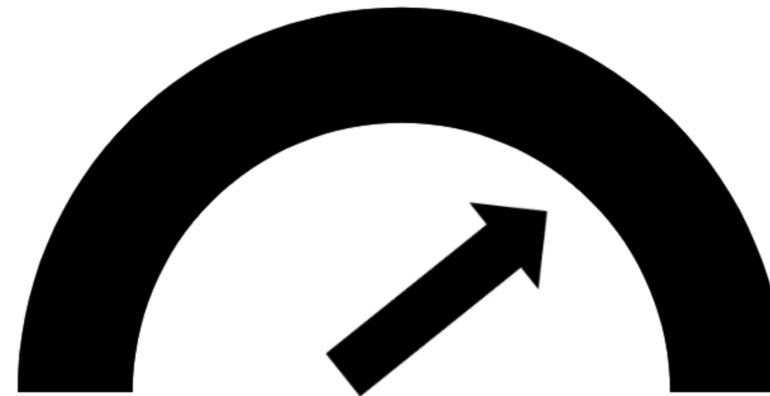
On Track: Increasing Capacity to Teach

*Progress is based on the implementation of programs, symposiums and workshops that facilitate the capacity of faculty to teach sustainability courses

On Track: Elevating Research & Experiential Learning

*Progress is based on the implementation of programs, symposiums and workshops that facilitate experiential learning and student research

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1.1 Increase Undergraduate Courses

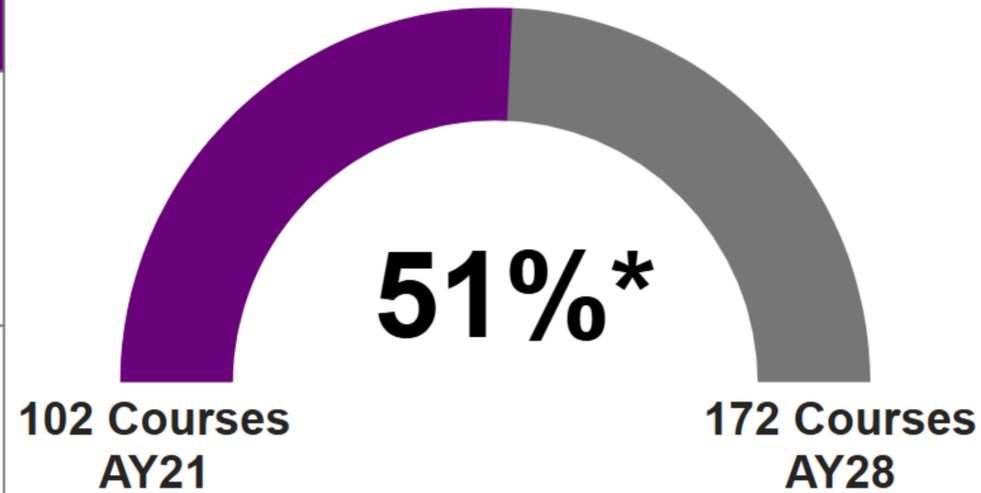## Overview

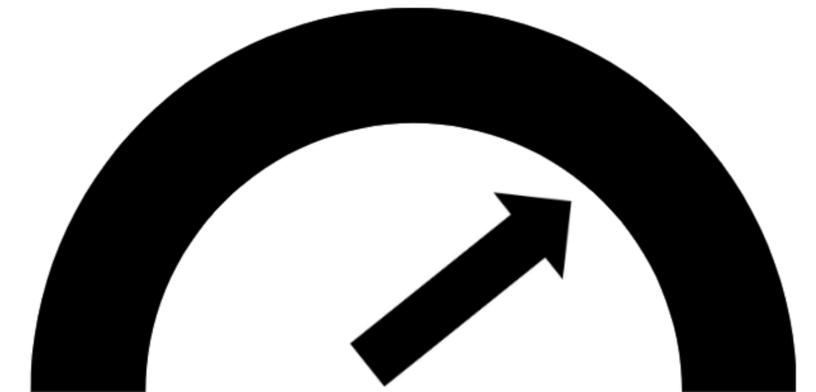| 1. Increase Undergraduate Courses | 2. Increase Capacity to Teach | 3. Elevate Experiential Learning & Student Research |

1.1 Goal: Increase core undergraduate **sustainability courses** by 10 per year through 2028, plus develop new interdisciplinary certificates, minors and majors.

Sustainability-Focused Undergraduate Curriculum at USC

Please select the metric:
- ⦿ Number of Courses (?)
- ◯ Number of Sections (?)

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ⦿ Sustainability-Focused (?)
- ◯ Sustainability-Inclusive (?)

(i) See our keyword list here

Check out USC's sustainability course finder here

Data Credit: USC's Office of Academic Records and Registrar and USC's Office of Sustainability

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1.1 Increase Undergraduate Courses

Overview

| **1. Increase Undergraduate Courses** | **2. Increase Capacity to Teach** | **3. Elevate Experiential Learning & Student Research** |

1.1 Goal: Increase core undergraduate **sustainability courses** by 10 per year through 2028, plus develop new interdisciplinary certificates, minors and majors.
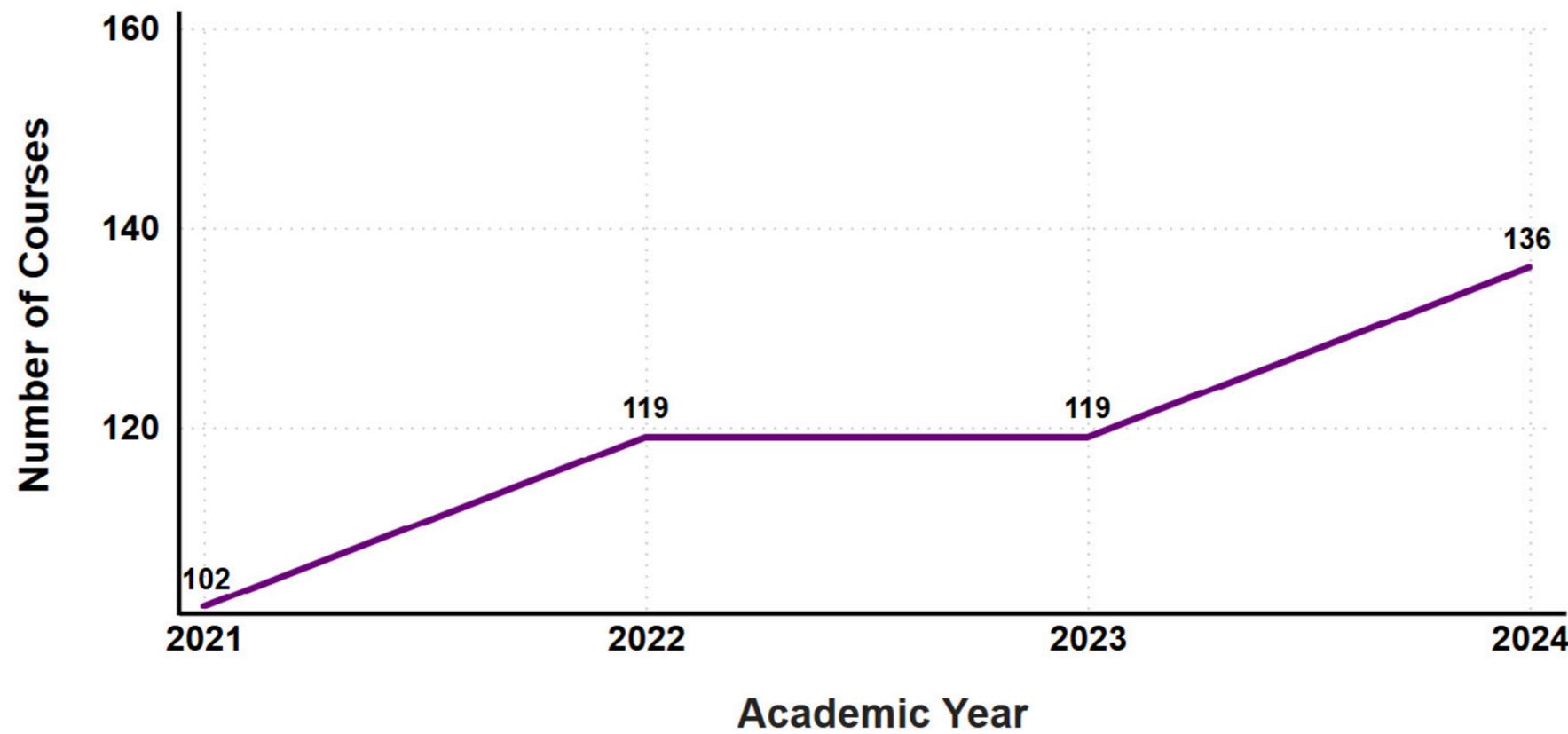
Sustainability-Focused Undergraduate Curriculum at USC

Line chart — Number of Sections vs Academic Year:
- 2021: 292
- 2022: 294
- 2023: 305
- 2024: 332

Please select the metric:
- ○ Number of Courses (?)
- ● Number of Sections (?)

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ● Sustainability-Focused (?)
- ○ Sustainability-Inclusive (?)

(i) See our keyword list here

Data Credit: USC's Office of Academic Records and Registrar and USC's Office of Sustainability

Check out USC's sustainability course finder here

Sidebar navigation: Home, Education, Research, Inclusion, Operations, Engagement

1.1 Increase Undergraduate Courses

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1. Increase Undergraduate Courses	2. Increase Capacity to Teach	3. Elevate Experiential Learning & Student Research

1.1 Goal: Increase core undergraduate **sustainability courses** by 10 per year through 2028, plus develop new interdisciplinary certificates, minors and majors.
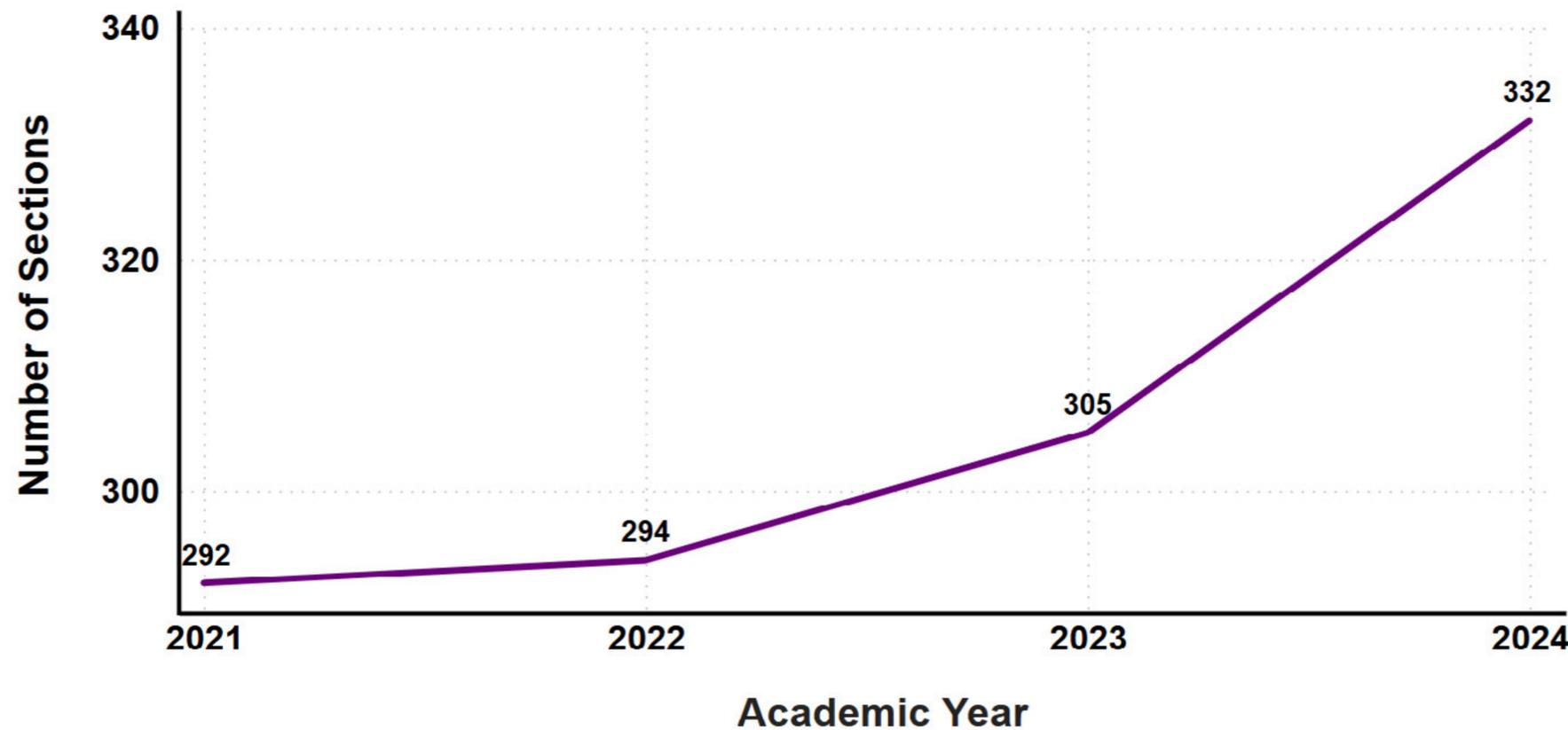
Sustainability-Inclusive Undergraduate Curriculum at USC

Please select the metric:
- ◉ Number of Courses (?)
- ○ Number of Sections (?)

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ○ Sustainability-Focused (?)
- ◉ Sustainability-Inclusive (?)

(i) See our keyword list here

Data Credit: USC's Office of Academic Records and Registrar and USC's Office of Sustainability

Check out USC's sustainability course finder here

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1.1 Increase Undergraduate Courses

Overview

1. Increase Undergraduate Courses	**2. Increase Capacity to Teach**	**3. Elevate Experiential Learning & Student Research**

1.1 Goal: Increase core undergraduate **sustainability courses** by 10 per year through 2028, plus develop new interdisciplinary certificates, minors and majors.
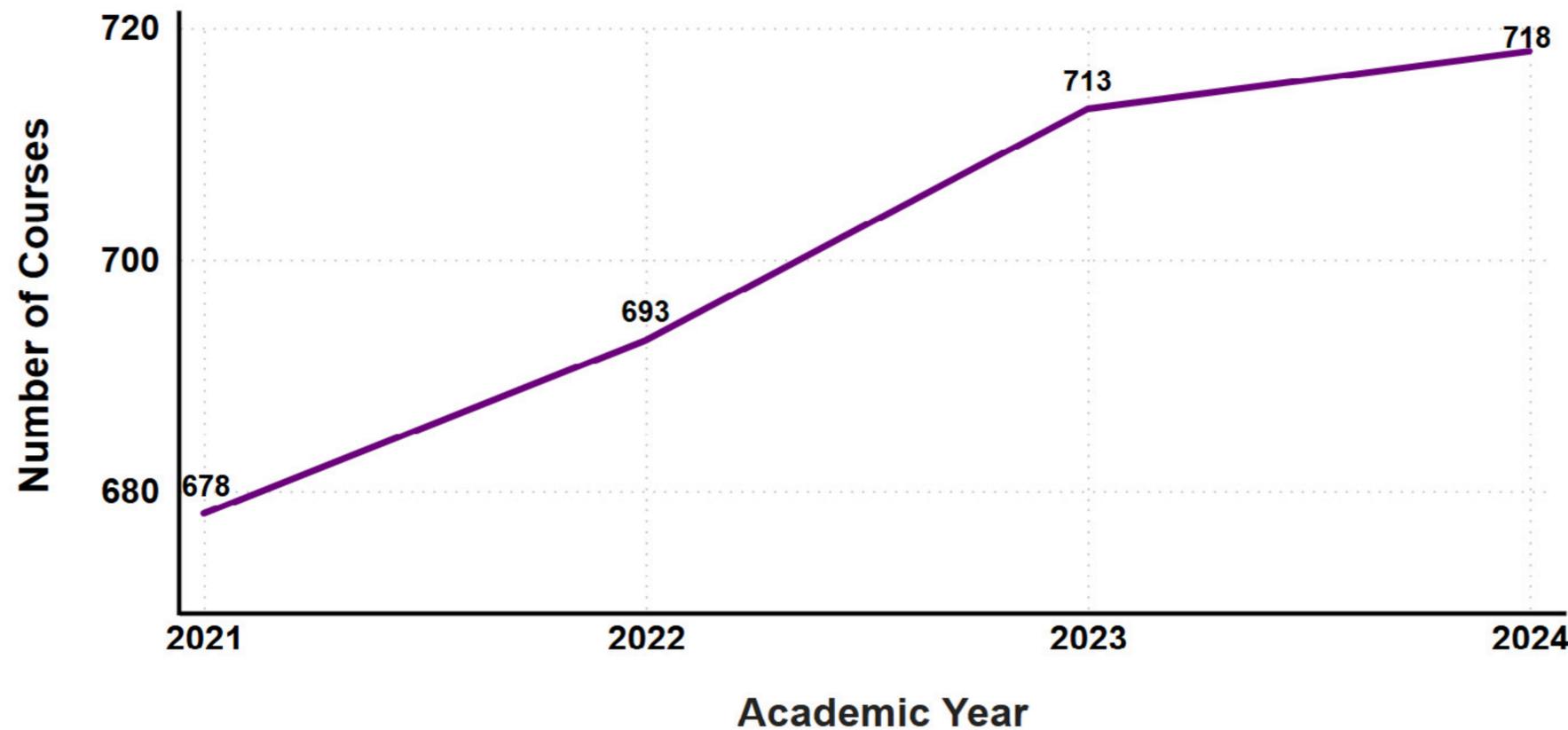
Sustainability-Inclusive Undergraduate Curriculum at USC

Please select the metric:
- ○ Number of Courses (?)
- ● Number of Sections (?)

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ○ Sustainability-Focused (?)
- ● Sustainability-Inclusive (?)

(i) See our keyword list here

Data Credit: USC's Office of Academic Records and Registrar and USC's Office of Sustainability

Check out USC's sustainability course finder here

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1.2 Increase Teaching Capacity

Overview

1. Increase Undergraduate Courses	2. Increase Capacity to Teach	3. Elevate Experiential Learning & Student Research

1.2 Goal: Increase **faculty** capacity to teach sustainability courses – both didactic and experiential – through a focused faculty hiring approach that increases the number of faculty with expertise in sustainability.

*A focused hiring approach does not currently exist, but other activities are advancing this goal.

USC Launched SACI: Sustainability Across the Curriculum Initiative

Sustainability Education Symposium (~60 attendees, SACI awardees presented their course materials)

Sustainability Minors Working Group Meeting (Faculty representatives from many USC schools gathered to discuss sustainability-related interdisciplinary minors)

SACI Faculty Development Workshop (25 attendees)

USC Sustainability Education Symposium

| Spring 2021 | Summer 2021 | Fall 2021 | Spring 2023 | Spring 2024 |

Data Credit: Dr. Jill Sohm, Director of the USC Environmental Studies Program and SACI Academic Director
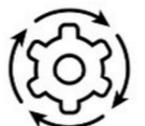
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1.3 Elevate Research and Experiential Learning

| Home	Overview		
	1. Increase Undergraduate Courses	**2. Increase Capacity to Teach**	**3. Elevate Experiential Learning & Student Research**

Education

1.3 Goal: Elevate sustainability-focused **experiential learning** and **research** through:
- **(a)** Implementation of a plan and pilot program for experiential course development
- **(b)** New sustainability research partnerships among students, staff and faculty

Research

Inclusion

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(a)

Experiential Learning in Sustainability Symposium (~70 attendees)

Faculty Learning Community for Experiential Learning & Sustainability (5 meetings, 10 faculty)

Spring 2022   Fall 2023
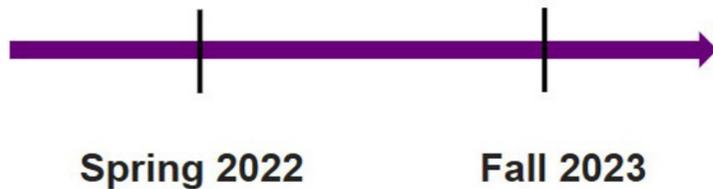
Data Credit: Dr. Chelsea Graham, Sustainability Experiential Learning Manager

Photo Credit: USC Dornsife Wrigley Institute

(b)

USC's President's Sustainability Internship Program (PSIP) connects students with co-curricular learning and research opportunities that advance university sustainability.

Also, check out these additional sustainability research programs for undergraduates:

Undergraduate Sustainability Grand Challenge Fellowship Program (USGCF)

Zinsmeyer Summer Research Program

Wrigley Institute Environmental Communications Internship Program

Wrigley Institute Summer REU

PSIP Photo Credit: USC Office of Sustainability

Research

Photo Credit: Philip Channing

2. Research

Overview

1. Increase Research & Training	2. Increase Public Communication	3. Achieve Significant Impact
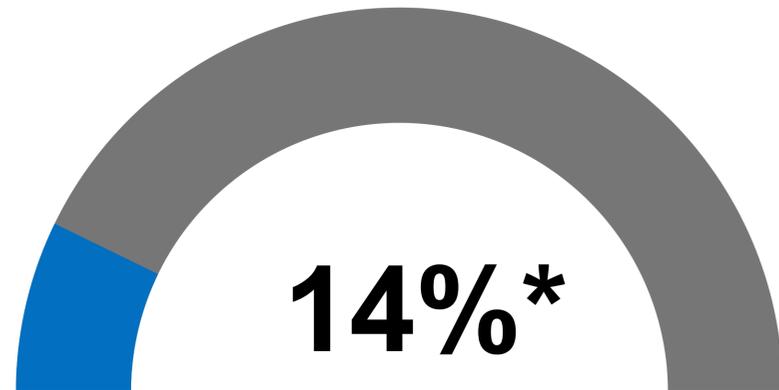
14%*

215 Publications
2020

430 Publications
2028

**Towards:
Increasing Research on
Sustainability**

*Progress (%) is based on the number of new publications per year since the 2020 baseline

**On Track:
Increasing Public Outreach,
Communication & Engagement**

*Progress is currently based on the number of new USC News articles per year that are focused on sustainability initiatives and research at USC. We are working on expanding this dataset
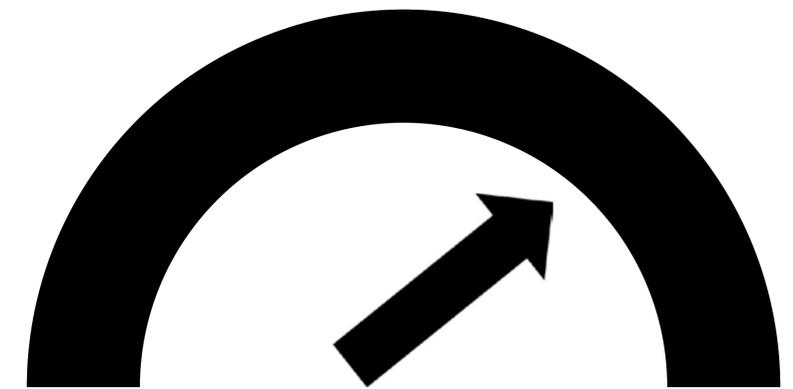
**On Track:
Achieving Significant
Impact**

*Progress is based on the number of research centers, programs and institutes that cultivate impactful sustainability research

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2.1 Increase Research and Training

Overview

1. Increase Research & Training	2. Increase Public Communication	3. Achieve Significant Impact

2.1 Goal: USC will substantially increase its **interdisciplinary research** and research **training** for sustainability and climate change solutions, empowered by world-class scholars in a wide array of disciplines.

Sustainability Research by Departments/Centers/Institutes

Bar chart — Number of Departments/Centers/Institutes by Year:
- 2020: 71
- 2021: 76
- 2022: 86
- 2023: 82

Data Credit: USC's Sustainability Research Finder

Please select the metric:
- ● Departments/Centers/Institutes
- ○ Publications
- ○ Scholars

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ● Sustainability-Focused ?
- ○ Sustainability-Inclusive ?

ⓘ See our keyword list here

Also check out our newly launched Postdoctoral Fellowship Program for Sustainability Solutions!

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2.1 Increase Research and Training

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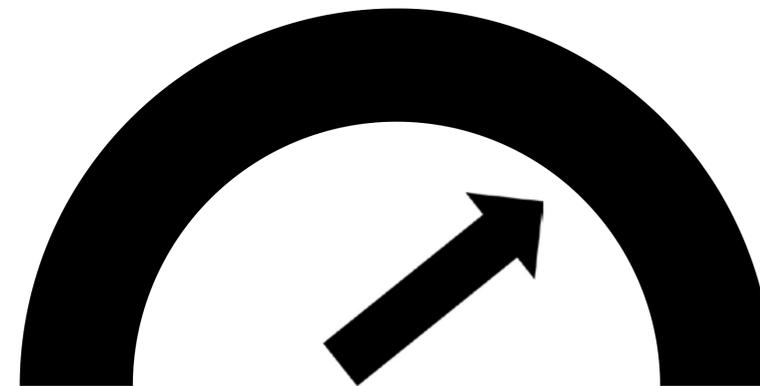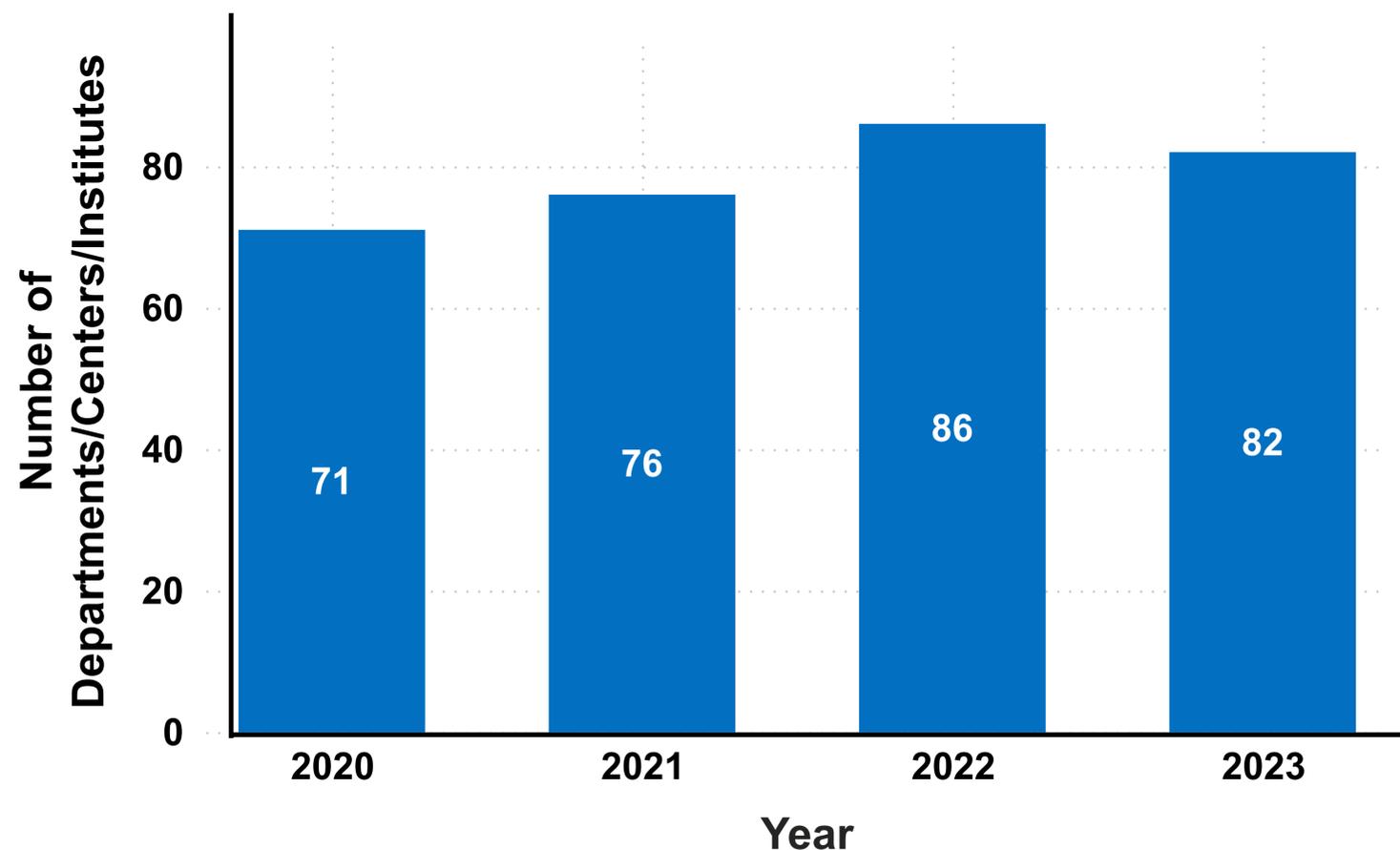| 1. Increase Research & Training | 2. Increase Public Communication | 3. Achieve Significant Impact |

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Sustainability Research by Publications

Bar chart — Number of Publications by Year:
- 2020: 215
- 2021: 235
- 2022: 251
- 2023: 246

Data Credit: USC's Sustainability Research Finder

Please select the metric:
- ○ Departments/Centers/Institutes
- ● Publications
- ○ Scholars

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ● Sustainability-Focused ⍰
- ○ Sustainability-Inclusive ⍰

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2.1 Increase Research and Training

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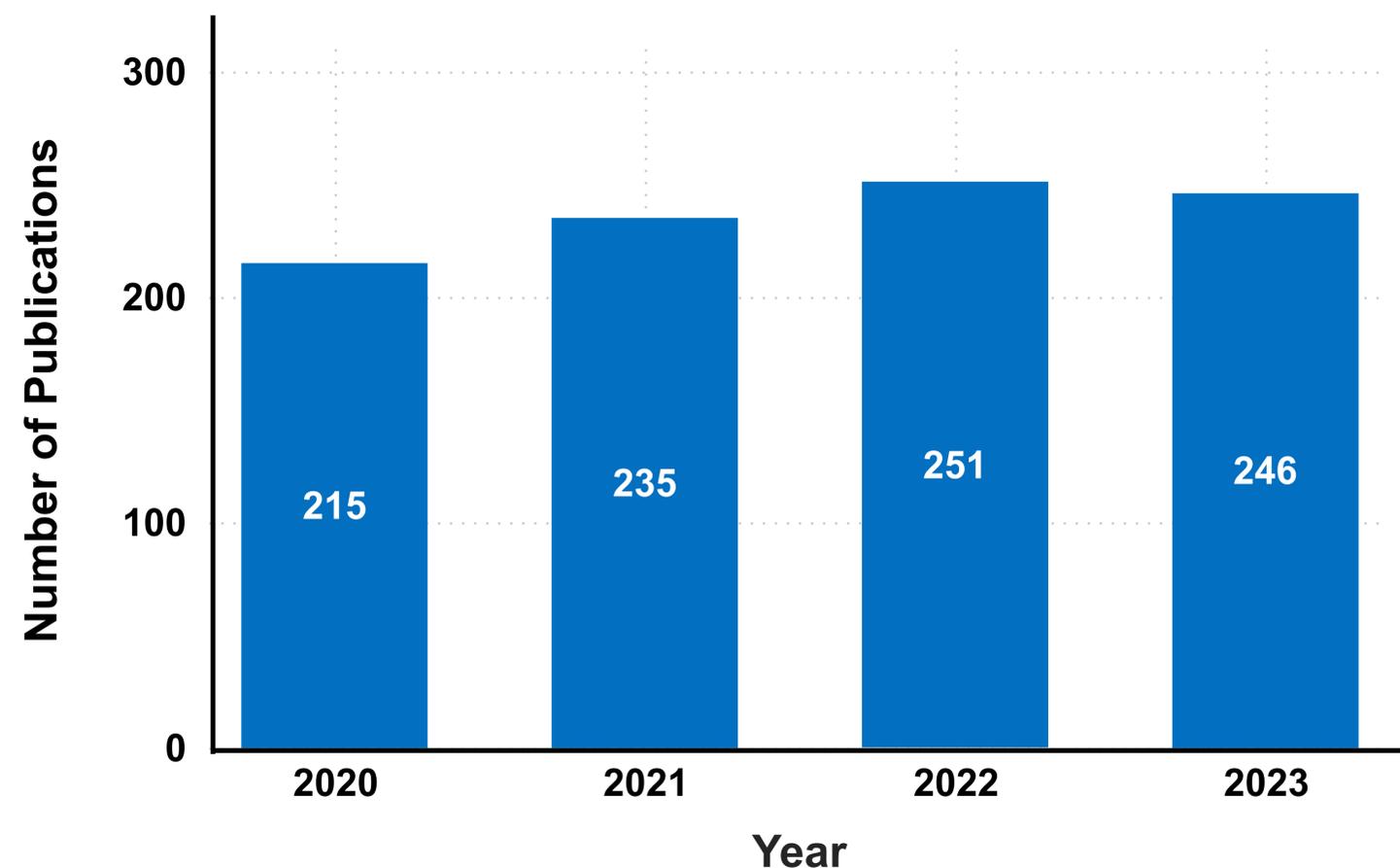**Engagement**

Overview

| **1. Increase Research & Training** | **2. Increase Public Communication** | **3. Achieve Significant Impact** |

2.1 Goal: USC will substantially increase its **interdisciplinary research** and research **training** for sustainability and climate change solutions, empowered by world-class scholars in a wide array of disciplines.

Sustainability Research by Scholars

Data Credit: USC's Sustainability Research Finder

Please select the metric:
- ◯ Departments/Centers/Institutes
- ◯ Publications
- ◉ Scholars

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ◉ Sustainability-Focused ⦹
- ◯ Sustainability-Inclusive ⦹

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2.1 Increase Research and Training

Overview

1. Increase Research & Training	2. Increase Public Communication	3. Achieve Significant Impact

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Sustainability Research by Departments/Centers/Institutes

Number of Departments/Centers/Institutes (y-axis)

- 2020: 85
- 2021: 94
- 2022: 89
- 2023: 80

Year (x-axis)

Data Credit: USC's Sustainability Research Finder

Please select the metric:
- ● Departments/Centers/Institutes
- ○ Publications
- ○ Scholars

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ○ Sustainability-Focused ?
- ● Sustainability-Inclusive ?

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2.1 Increase Research and Training

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Inclusion
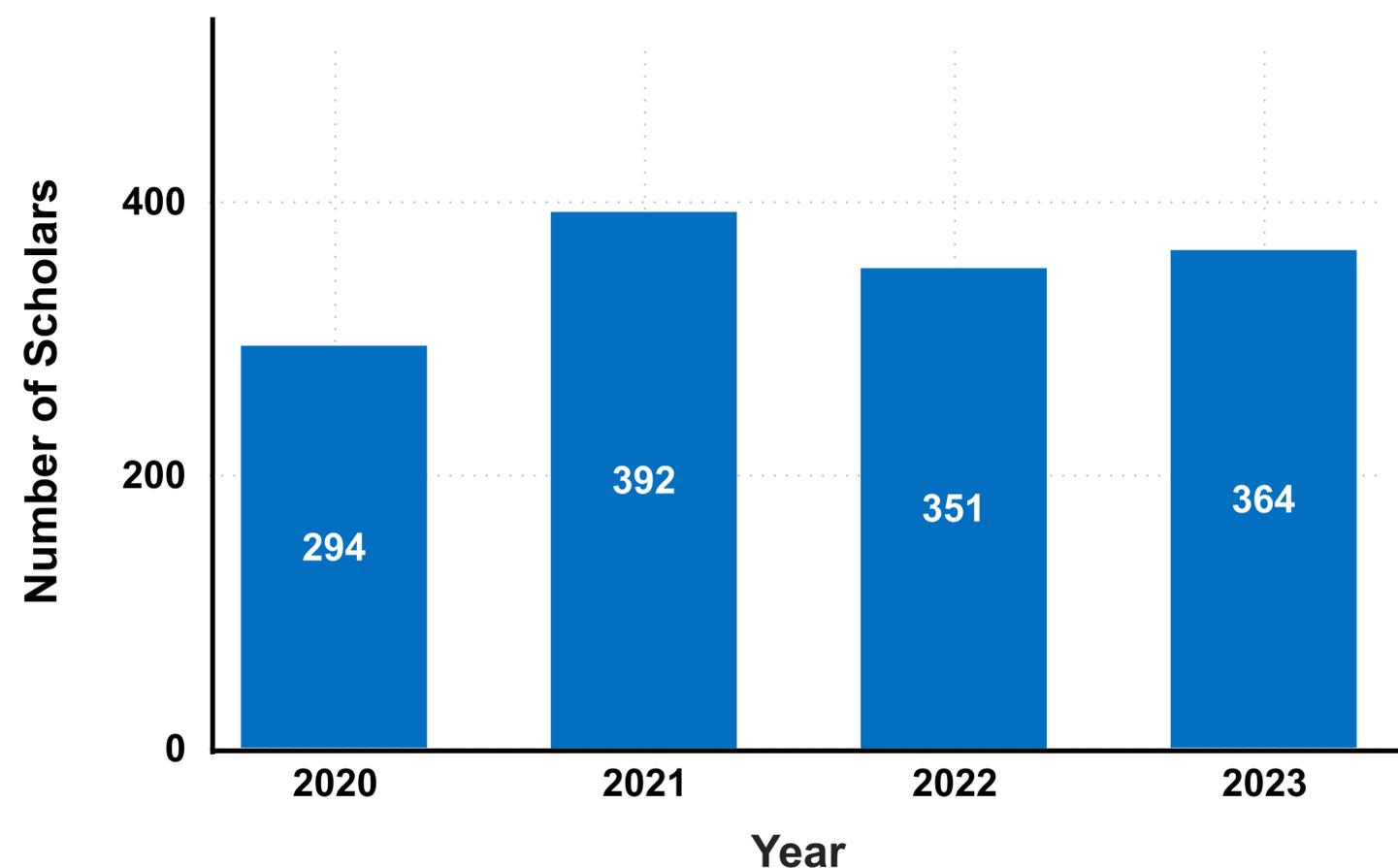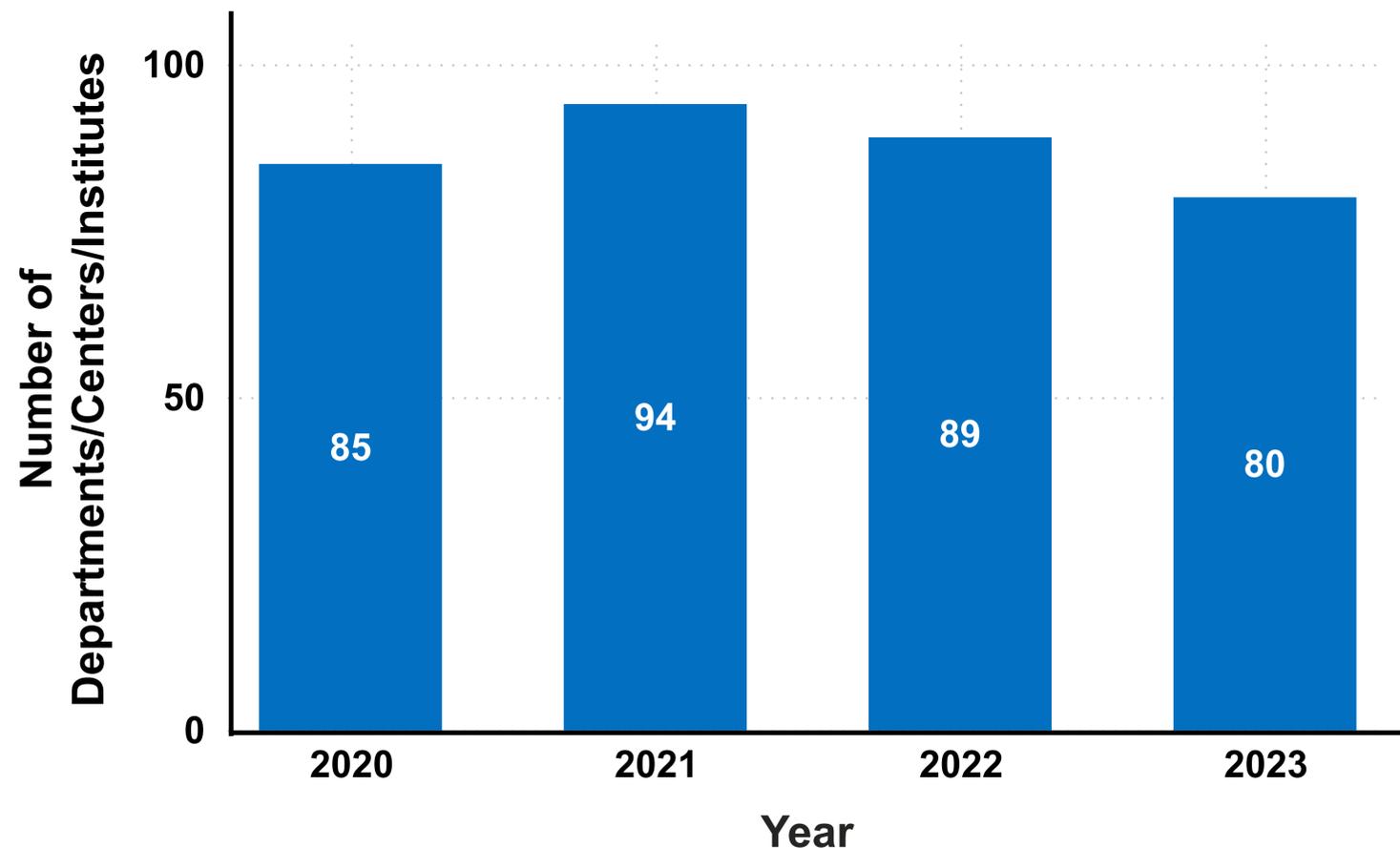
Operations

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Overview

| 1. Increase Research & Training | 2. Increase Public Communication | 3. Achieve Significant Impact |

2.1 Goal: USC will substantially increase its **interdisciplinary research** and research **training** for sustainability and climate change solutions, empowered by world-class scholars in a wide array of disciplines.

Sustainability Research by Publications

Number of Publications (y-axis): 2000, 1500, 1000, 500, 0

- 2020: 1696
- 2021: 2152
- 2022: 2245
- 2023: 1799

Year (x-axis)

Data Credit: USC's Sustainability Research Finder

Please select the metric:
- ○ Departments/Centers/Institutes
- ● Publications
- ○ Scholars

Please select the sustainability classification:
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- ● Sustainability-Inclusive ?

ⓘ See our keyword list here

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2.1 Increase Research and Training

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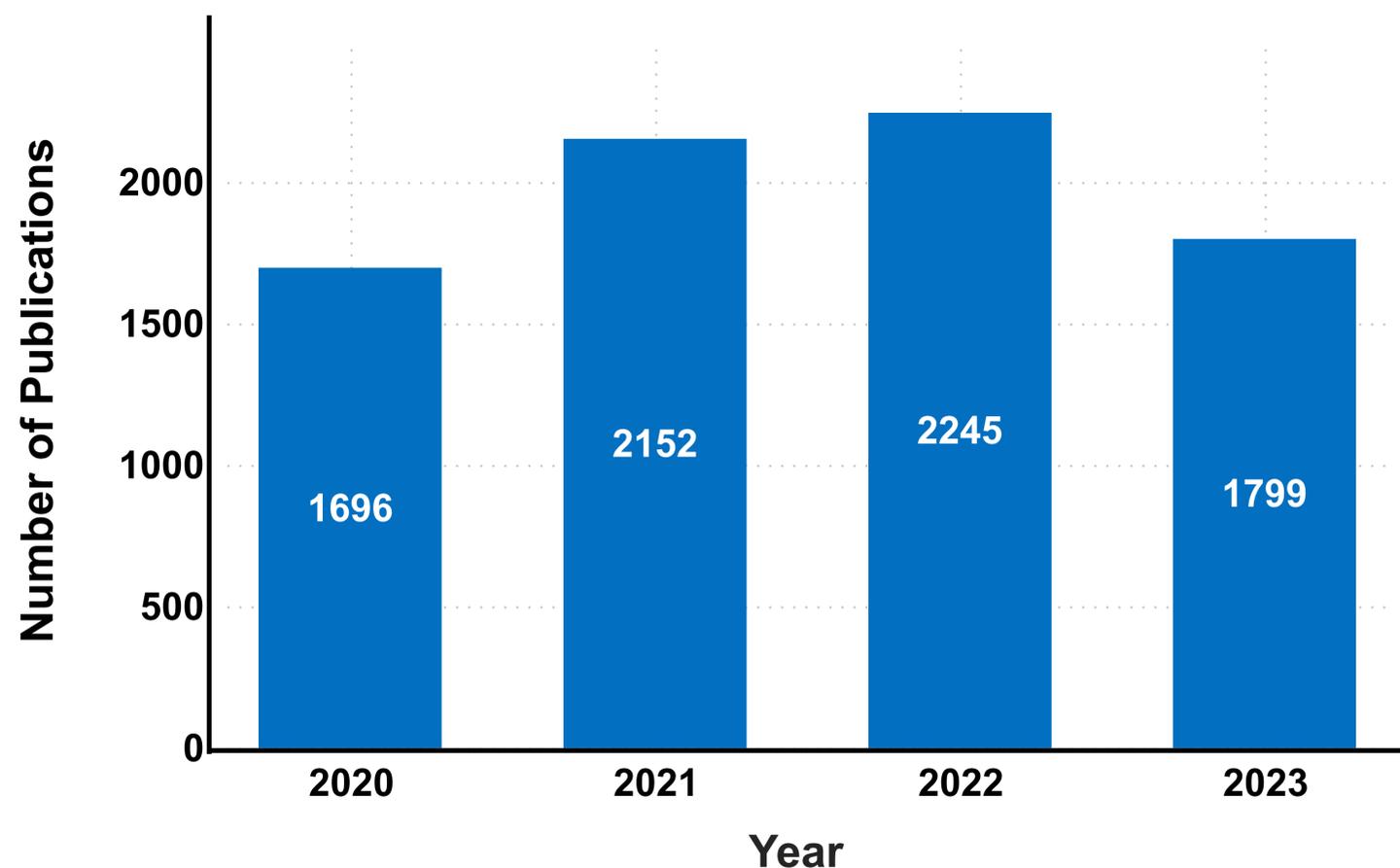**Inclusion**

Operations

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Overview

| 1. Increase Research & Training | 2. Increase Public Communication | 3. Achieve Significant Impact |

2.1 Goal: USC will substantially increase its **interdisciplinary research** and research **training** for sustainability and climate change solutions, empowered by world-class scholars in a wide array of disciplines.

Sustainability Research by Scholars

Number of Scholars vs Year:
- 2020: 2.2K
- 2021: 2.5K
- 2022: 2.6K
- 2023: 2.4K

Data Credit: USC's Sustainability Research Finder

Please select the metric:
- ○ Departments/Centers/Institutes
- ○ Publications
- ⦿ Scholars

Please select the sustainability classification:
- ○ Sustainability-Focused ⑦
- ⦿ Sustainability-Inclusive ⑦

ⓘ See our keyword list here

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2.2 Increase Public Communication

Education

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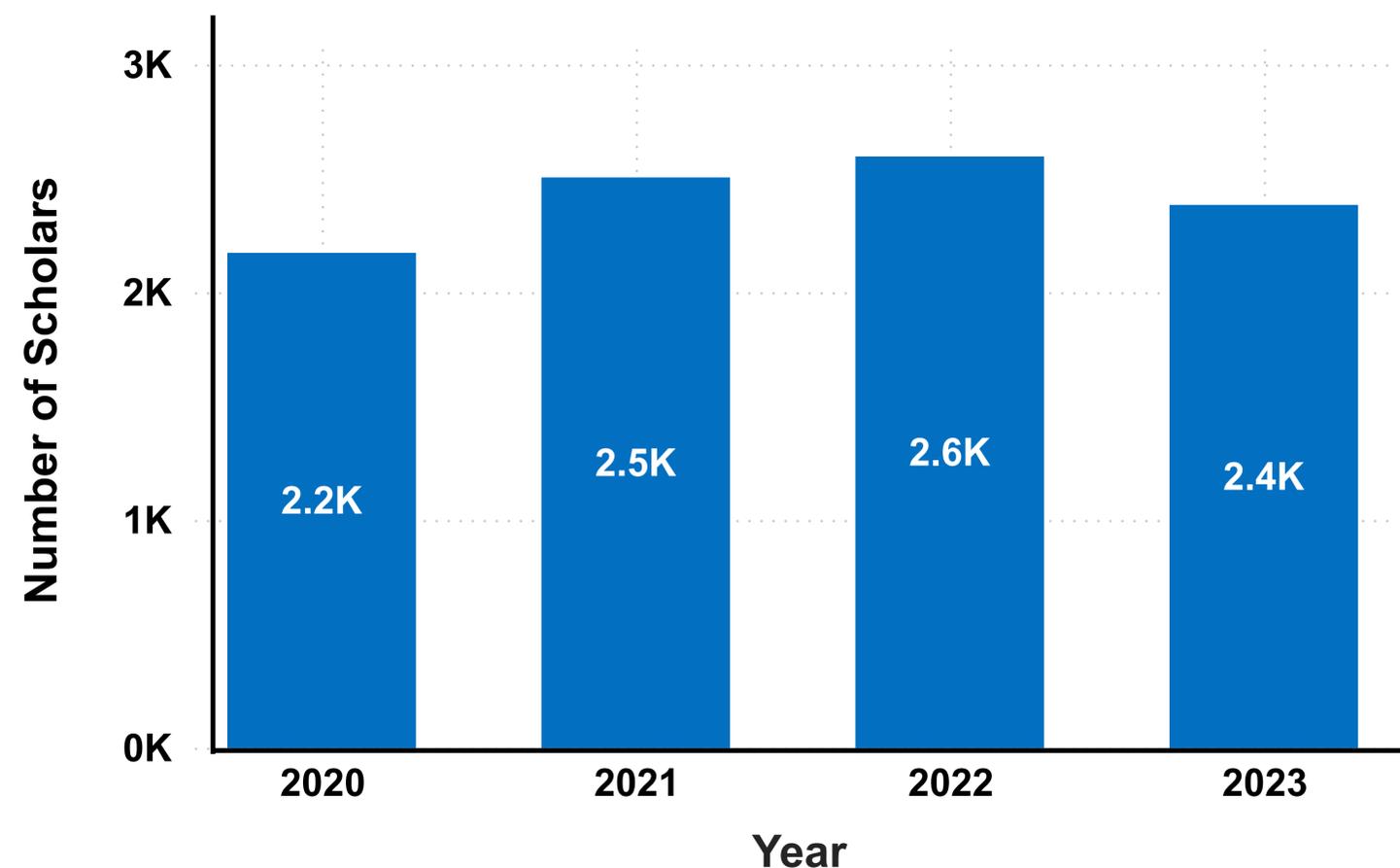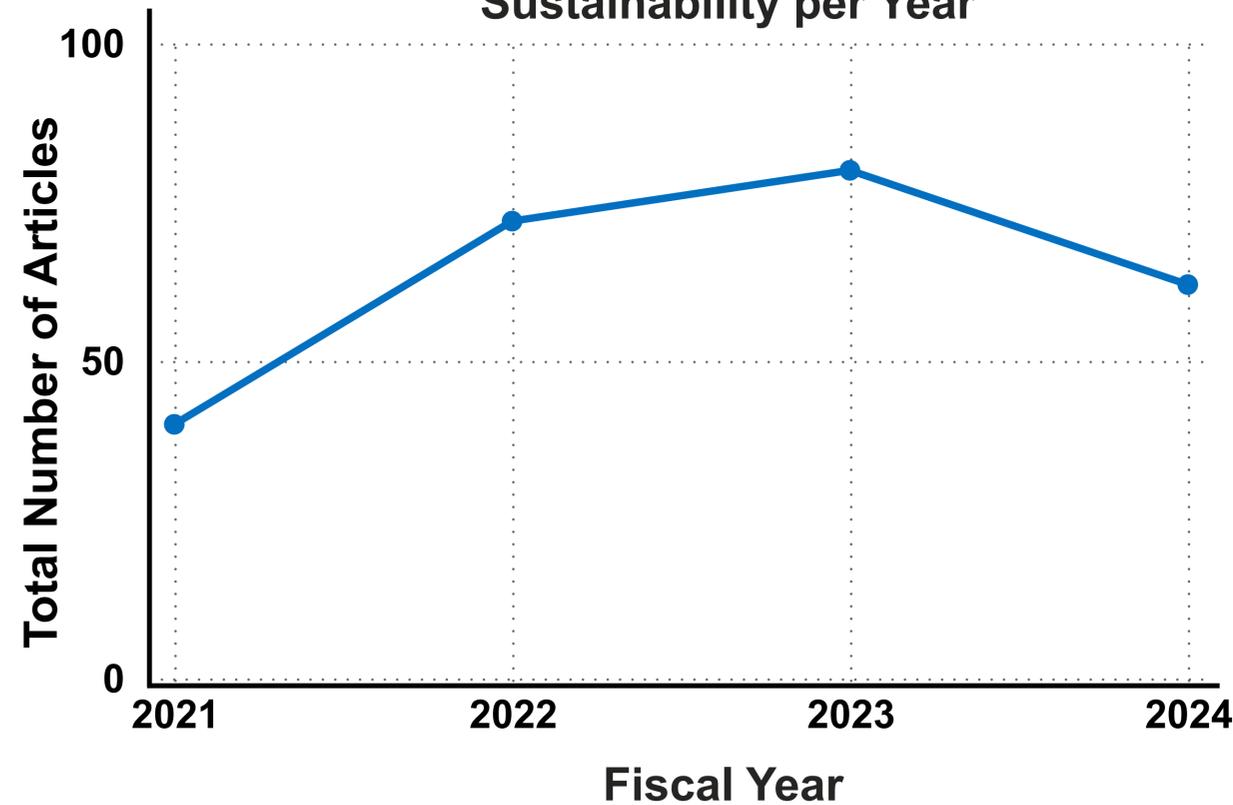**Operations**

Engagement

Overview

| 1. Increase Research & Training | 2. Increase Public Communication | 3. Achieve Significant Impact |

2.2 Goal: USC will substantially increase its **public outreach, communication, and engagement** regarding sustainability and climate change solutions. This will build on USC's strong ties to stakeholders in city and state government, business and industry, non-governmental organizations and to surrounding communities in developing scalable models of equity-based solutions.

Number of USC News Articles on Sustainability per Year

X-axis: Fiscal Year (2021, 2022, 2023, 2024); Y-axis: Total Number of Articles (0, 50, 100)

Number of Views of USC News-hosted Articles on Sustainability per Month*

X-axis: Month (Fiscal Year 2024) (Jul 2023, Oct 2023, Jan 2024, Apr 2024); Y-axis: Views per Month (0K, 5K, 10K)
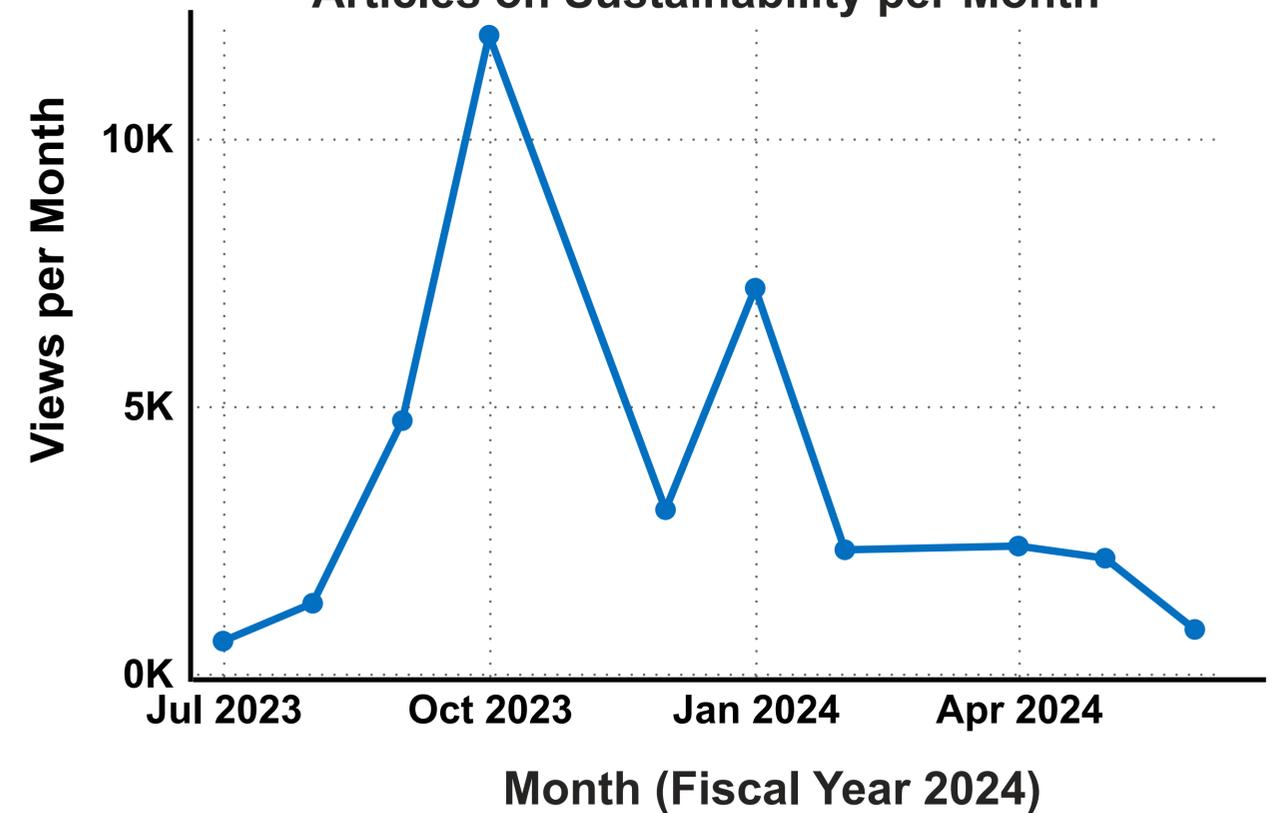
*Views represent the total views during a 30-day period following each article publication and do not include the number of views on redirected articles. We are currently working on expanding these data to all public events and media outlets regarding USC Sustainability.

Data Credit: USC Communications

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2.3 Achieve Significant Impact

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1. Increase Research & Training	2. Increase Public Communication	3. Achieve Significant Impact

2.3 Goal: USC research will have significant **real-world impacts** and address societal needs though solutions that are replicable and scalable.

> 25 Research Programs, Institutes and Centers

AirPollBrain Group	Center for Risk and Economic Analysis of Threats and Emergencies	MADRES Center for Environmental Health Disparities	USC Behavioral Science and Well-Being Policy	USC Equity Research Institute (ERI)
Annenberg Center for Climate Journalism and Communication	Ershaghi Center for Energy Transition (E-CET)	Mind and Society Center	USC Center for AI in Society (CAIS)	USC Institute on Inequalities in Global Health
Arid Climates and Water Research Center	Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West	Public Exchange	USC Center for Sustainability Solutions	USC Schwarzenegger Institute for State and Global Policy
Center for Advanced Transportation Technologies	iLab- Innovation in Integrated Informatics	Southern California Earthquake Center	USC Center for the Political Future	USC Sea Grant Program
Center for City Design	Leonard D. Schaeffer Center for Health Policy & Economics	The METRANS Transportation Consortium	USC Change Making Media Lab	USC Spatial Sciences Institute
Center for Intelligent Environments, Technology and Society (CENTIENTS)	Loker Hydrocarbon Research Institute	The Southern California Environmental Health Science Center	USC Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research	Wrigley Institute for Environmental Studies and Sustainability

Data Credit: USC PWG Research Committee

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Inclusion

Photo Credit: Gus Ruelas

3. Inclusion

Overview
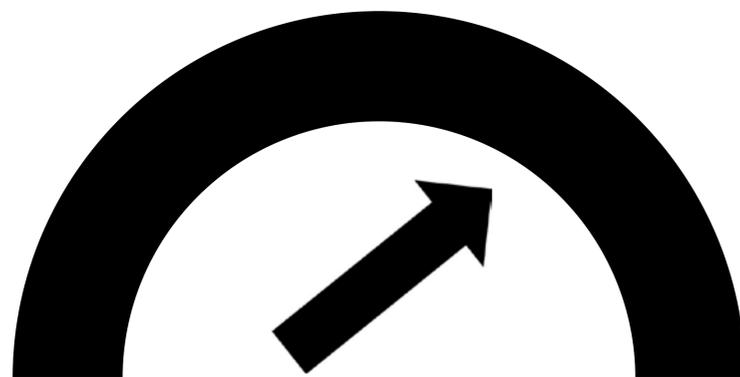
1. Higher Sense of Belonging	2. Community Partner Inclusion	3. Community-Centric Research & Programs
	Data in Progress	100% 0% 100% 2022 2023
On Track: Toward a Higher Sense of Belonging for All	**Increasing Community Partner Inclusion**	**Completion of Creating Research & Program Catalogs**

3.1 Higher Sense of Belonging

Overview

1. Higher Sense of Belonging	2. Community Partner Inclusion	3. Community-Centric Research and Programs

3.1 Goal: Provide comprehensive support and services for all students, faculty, staff and alumni to **enhance their sense of belonging** and being valued, as measured by periodic surveys.

*% Sense of Belonging responses. Sample sizes (N) are the total number of responses for each respondent role for this survey question.

Data Credit for Students, Staff & Faculty: 2024 Culture Survey   Data Credit for Alumni: USC's 2023 Alumni Survey
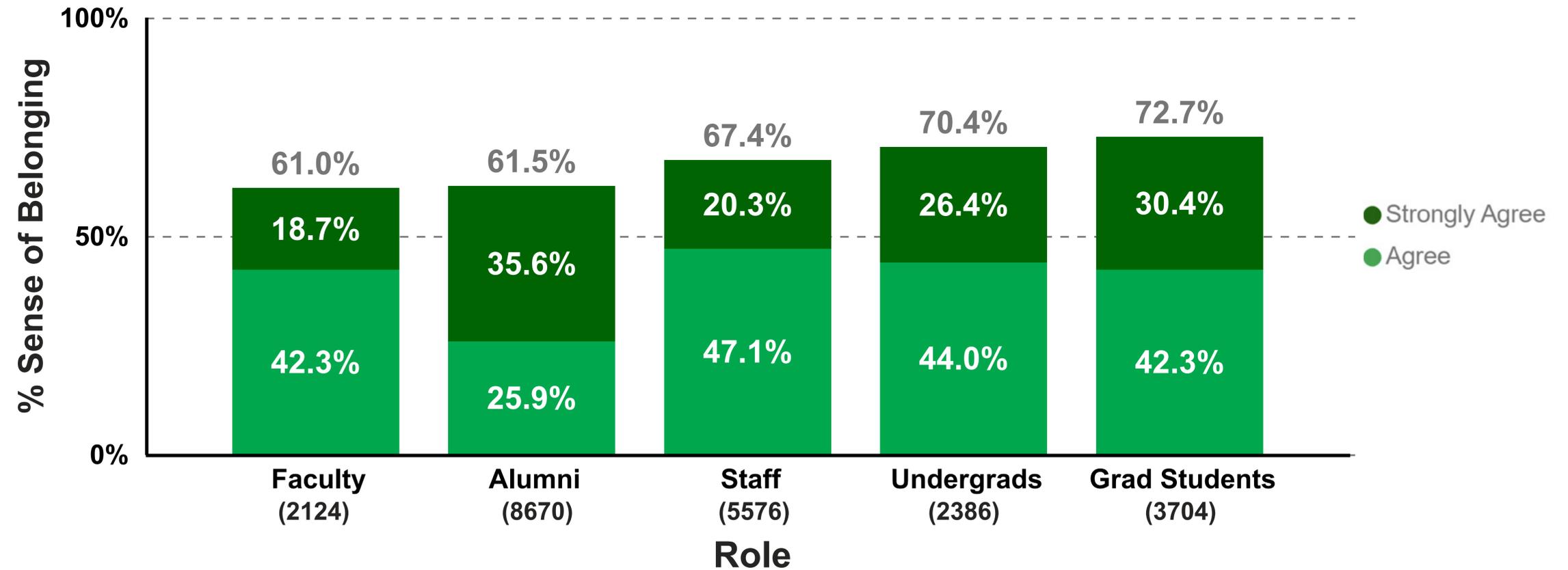
3.2 Community Partner Inclusion

Overview

1. Higher Sense of Belonging	2. Community Partner Inclusion	3. Community-Centric Research & Programs

3.2 Goal: By fiscal year 2028, **community partners** from the neighborhoods surrounding USC will be included in joint programming, planning and decision-making processes at USC, as measured by periodic surveys.

57 Community Partnerships

38,174 Lives changed through education outcomes

65,345 Volunteer hours empowering community

15,600 Healthier families
2023–2024 Program Impact

Timeline:

- **PWG Discussions** — June 2023
- **PWG Engagement Committee Discussions** — February 2024
- **Development of Survey for Community-Centric Programs at USC** — April 2024
- **Outreach to Community-Centric Programs at USC** — May 2024
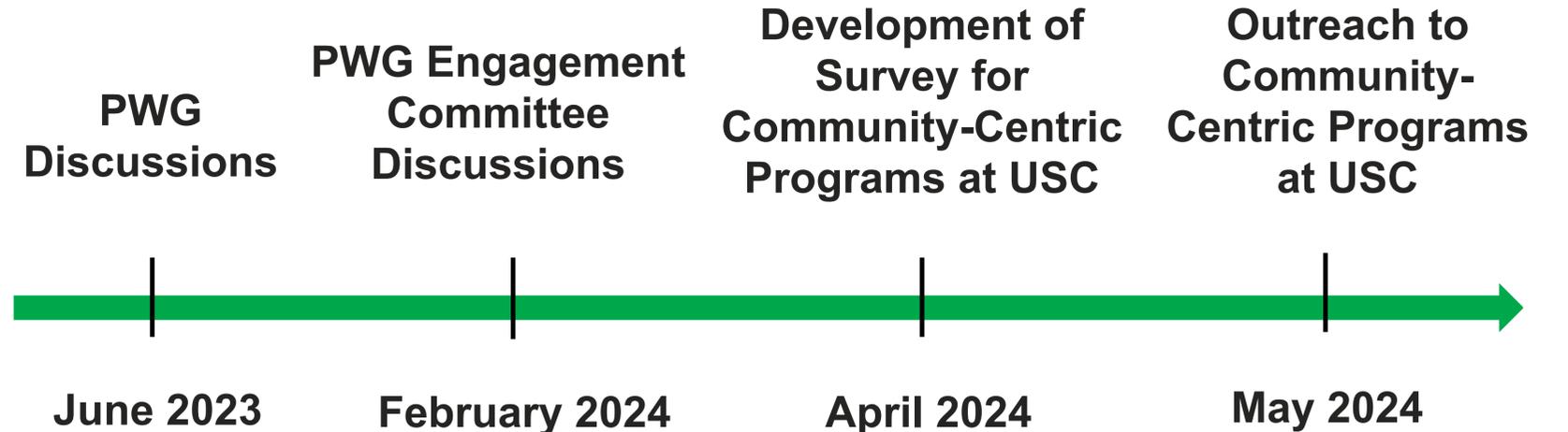
Data Credit: USC Good Neighbors Campaign

Data Credit: USC PWG and Engagement Committee

3.3 Develop a Local Research Catalog

Overview

1. Higher Sense of Belonging	2. Community Partner Inclusion	**3. Community-Centric Research & Programs**

3.3 Goal: By June 2023, develop and publish a comprehensive catalog of the sustainability research and programs at USC that engage with local communities disproportionately impacted by environmental disruptions and risk exposures. Updates to the catalog will be conducted annually.

Research Catalog

> 135 USC scholars published scholarly work between 2020-2023 from USC sustainability-focused research programs working with local communities in Los Angeles

USC Sustainability Research Finder

About

FAQ

USC Research: SDGs by Year

USC Research: SDGs by School

View USC Scholars and Schools by SDGs

Find SDGs and Research by USC Scholar

Sustainability Research in Los Angeles

Click to see our research catalog

Data Credit: USC's Sustainability Research Finder

Program Catalog

See our Community Partnerships Catalog here

Data Credit: USC University Relations

PUBLIC EXCHANGE

Urban Trees Initiative

Executive Summary

USCDornsife — Spatial Sciences Institute | USC School of Architecture | CARBON CENSUS at USC

Check out one of our featured programs:

USC's Urban Trees Initiative

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Operations

Photo Credit: Gus Ruelas

4. Operations

Overview

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

50%

140K Tons FY14 — 0K Tons FY25

Towards Climate Neutrality for Scopes 1 & 2 Emissions

61%

27% FY19 — 90% FY28
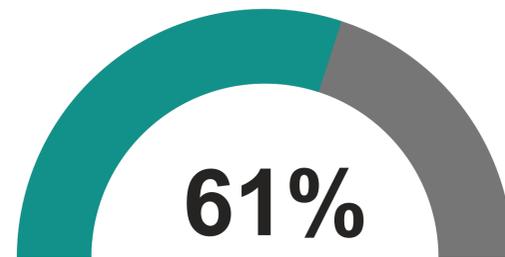
Towards 90% Waste Diversion

100%

0% FY14 — 20% FY28

Towards 20% Water Reduction

100%

0% FY22 — 100% FY24

Completion of Updating Design Guidelines

100%

0% FY22 — 100% FY23

Completion of Establishing an Online Dashboard

*The progress dials show achievements for only some of the FY28 Operations Goals. To see more data and progress, click on the tabs at the top of the dashboard.

4.1 Mend Our Climate

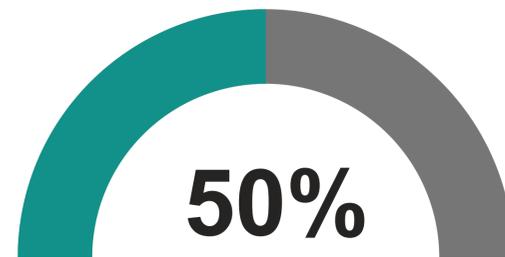| 1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

1. a,b Emissions	1. c,d Assessments	1. e,f Experiential Learning

4.1 Goals: **a)** Achieve **climate neutrality** for annual **scopes 1 and 2** emissions for FY25 and beyond while seeking to minimize the use of carbon offsets.
b) Achieve **climate neutrality** for annual **scope 3** emissions (air travel, commuting, waste, T&D losses) for FY35 and beyond (achieving a 50% reduction by 2028, using 2014 as the baseline).

(a) GHG Emissions for Scope 1 & 2

● Scope 1 ● Scope 2

Total Emissions (Total Absolute Tons)

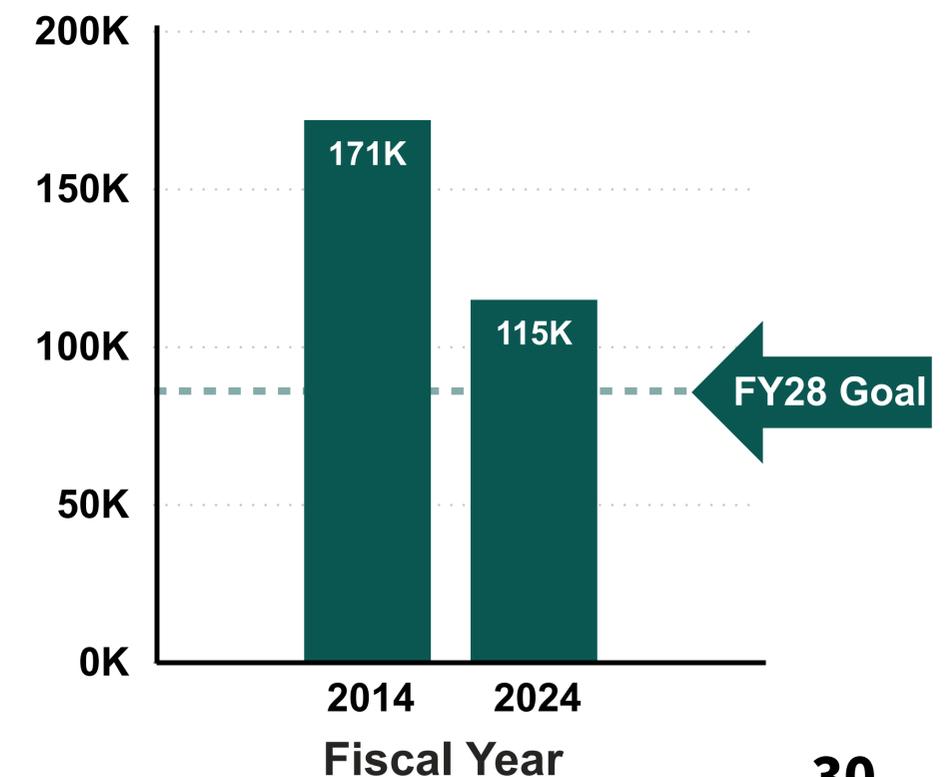| Fiscal Year	Scope 2	Scope 1
2014	112K	28K
2015	117K	21K
2016	86K	25K
2017	80K	27K
2018	87K	28K
2019	86K	34K
2020	64K	34K
2021	53K	31K
2022	54K	35K
2023	46K	35K
2024	34K	36K
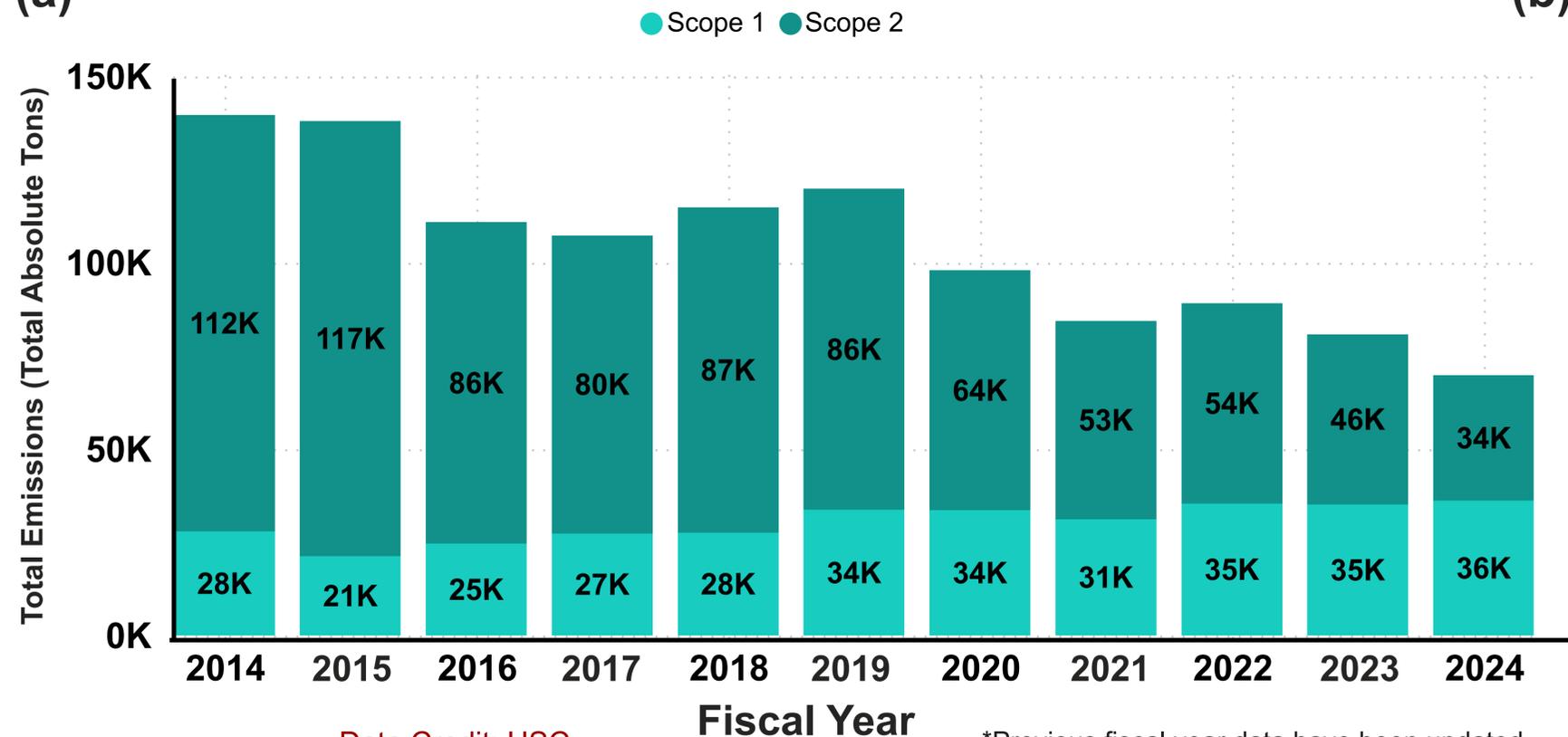
Data Credit: USC Greenhouse Gas Report

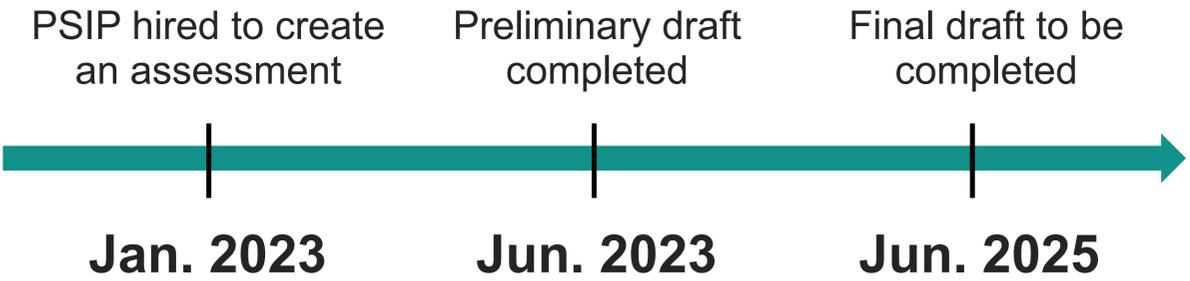*Previous fiscal year data have been updated (3/6/25) due to expanded institutional boundaries

(b) GHG Emissions for Scope 3

Fiscal Year	Emissions
2014	171K
2024	115K

FY28 Goal

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4.1 Mend Our Climate

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

1. a,b Emissions	1. c,d Assessments	1. e,f Experiential Learning

Education

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4.1 Goals: **c) i.** Complete an assessment of **purchasing**-related scope 3 **emissions** by FY24.

  ii. Set a related reduction goal by the end of FY25.

d) i. Complete an assessment of scope 3 embodied carbon in all new major **construction and renovation** projects beginning construction documents in or after FY23 & pursue design and construction strategies for reducing that embodied carbon.

  ii. Projects beginning construction documents in or after FY25 will offset any remaining embodied carbon.

c) i.

PSIP hired to create an assessment

Preliminary draft completed

Final draft to be completed

Jan. 2023   **Jun. 2023**   **Jun. 2025**

Data Credit: USC Office of Sustainability

d) i.

JULY 2022

USC Sustainable Design & Construction Guidelines

USC FPM

Assessments of Scope 3 embodied carbon will occur in all new major construction and renovation projects as per USC's Sustainable Design and Construction Guidelines

Data Credit: USC Facilities Planning and Management

c) ii.

Not started pending completion of 4.1.c.i

d) ii.

Not Started

4.1 Mend Our Climate

| 1. a,b Emissions	1. c,d Assessments	**1. e,f Experiential Learning**

4.1 Goals: **e) i.** Complete an experiential learning project to model the **embodied carbon** of the existing physical campuses by FY24.

    ii. Create a goal by FY26 around removing historical embodied emissions.

  f) i. Complete an experiential learning project to model USC's historical scope 1 and 2 emissions by FY24.

    ii. Create a goal by FY26 around removing historical embodied emissions.

e) i. Phase I of the embodied carbon assessment completed in AY23

Data and Image Credit: Tishya Rao (PSIP intern) and FPM developed an embodied carbon catalog for 400+ USC buildings and structures

e) ii.

Not Started

f) i. Complete an experiential learning project to model USC's historical scope 1 and 2 emissions by FY24
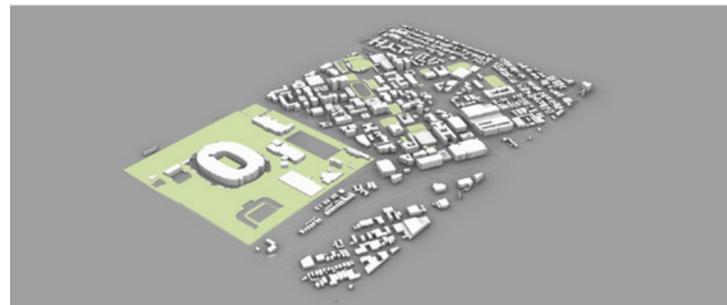
On track to complete by end of FY25

f) ii. Create a goal by FY26 around removing historical operating emissions

Not Started

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4.2 Build a Circular Economy

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

2.a Waste Diversion	2.b Waste Aversion	2.c Closed loop systems

4.2.a Goal: Achieve **Zero Waste** (90% diversion rate) by FY28.

Overall Percent Waste Diversion

Goal by FY28: 90%

- 27% (2019)
- 34% (2020)
- 48% (2021)
- 47% (2022)
- 55% (2023)
- 55% (2024)
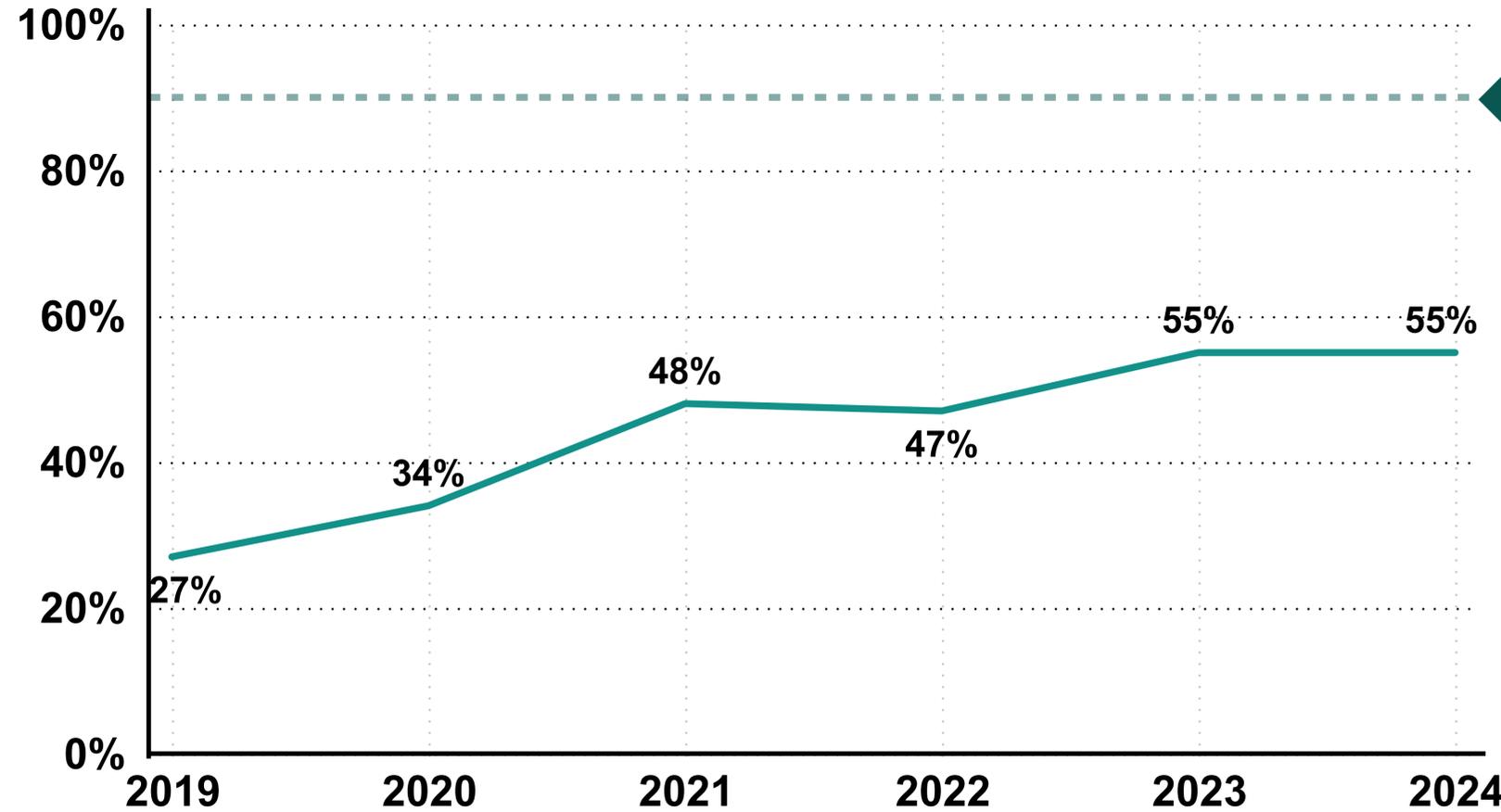
View our detailed waste diversion by location (FY24)

View our gameday waste diversion (FY24)

Data Credit: USC Facilities Planning and Management

Navigation sidebar: Home, Education, Research, Inclusion, Operations, Engagement

4.2 Build a Circular Economy

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

2.a Waste Diversion	2.b Waste Aversion	2.c Closed loop systems

Waste Diversion Rate (FY24)
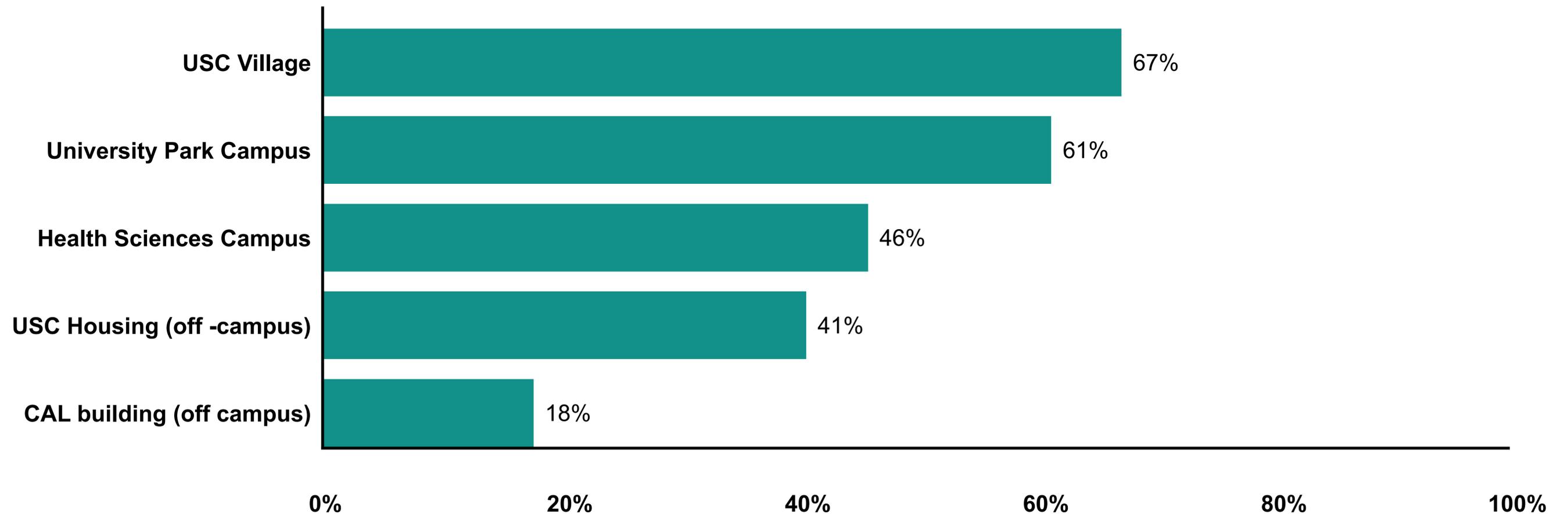
Campus	Rate
USC Village	67%
University Park Campus	61%
Health Sciences Campus	46%
USC Housing (off -campus)	41%
CAL building (off campus)	18%

Data Credit: USC Facilities Planning and Management

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4.2 Build a Circular Economy

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

2.a Waste Diversion	2.b Waste Aversion	2.c Closed loop systems

% Waste Diversion on Football Gameday

90% Waste Diversion Goal
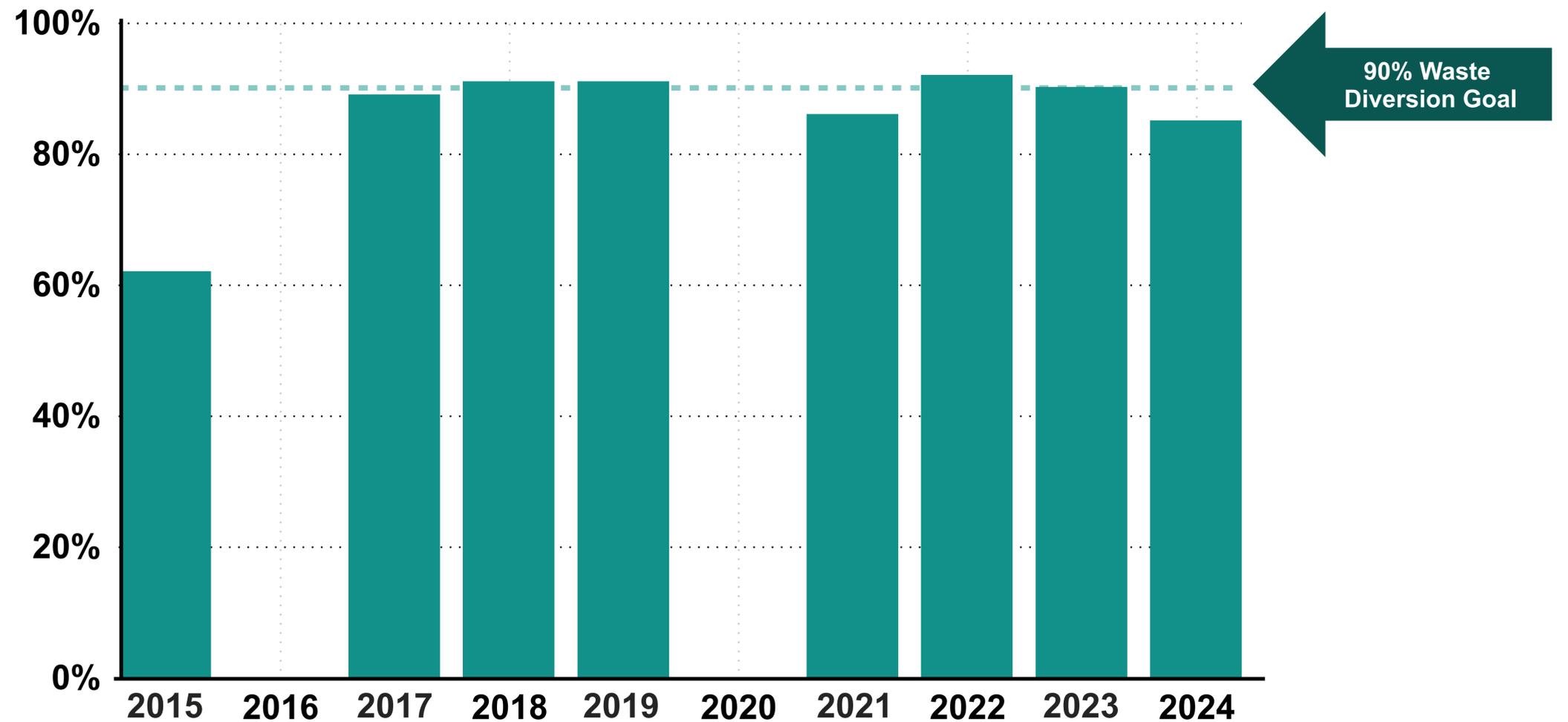
Data Source: LA Coliseum Staff

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1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

2.a Waste Diversion	2.b Waste Aversion	2.c Closed loop systems

4.2.b Goal: Achieve **30%** aversion (reduction in total municipal solid waste generated, using a fiscal year 2022 baseline) by fiscal year 2028.   *reduction in total municipal solid waste is currently based on landfill waste only due to data constraints

Data in Progress*

*Data for Waste Aversion will be updated when possible.

4.2 Build a Circular Economy

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

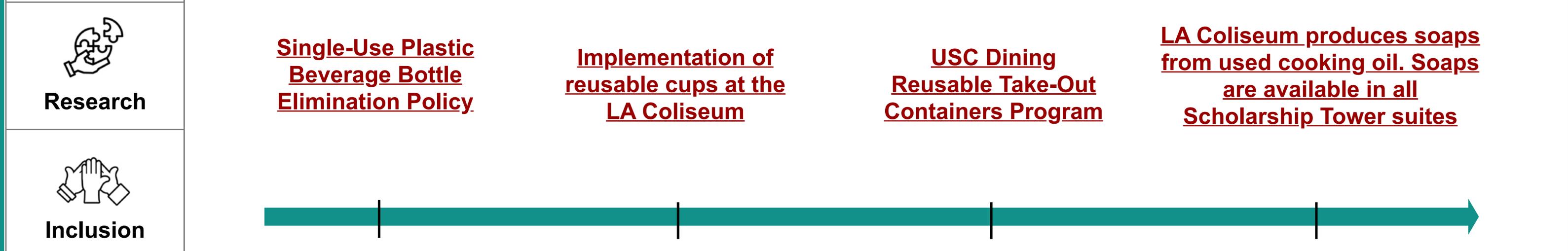| 2.a Waste Diversion	2.b Waste Aversion	2.c Closed loop systems

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4.2.c Goal: Convert at least two additional material streams annually to more-circular or **closed loop systems**.

Single-Use Plastic Beverage Bottle Elimination Policy

Implementation of reusable cups at the LA Coliseum

USC Dining Reusable Take-Out Containers Program

LA Coliseum produces soaps from used cooking oil. Soaps are available in all Scholarship Tower suites

July 2022　　　**August 2023**　　　**October 2023**　　　**August 2024**

Data Credit: USC Office of Sustainability

Data Credit: LA Coliseum

Data Credit: Auxiliary Services- USC Hospitality

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4.3 Align with New Water Realities

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

4.3 Goal: Achieve a 20% potable **water use reduction** per square foot of total campus building space by FY28 (FY14 baseline).

Potable Water Use by Year

Portable Water Use (gal/sq.ft) — axis 0 to 35

Reduction Goal

Fiscal Year — 2014 to 2024
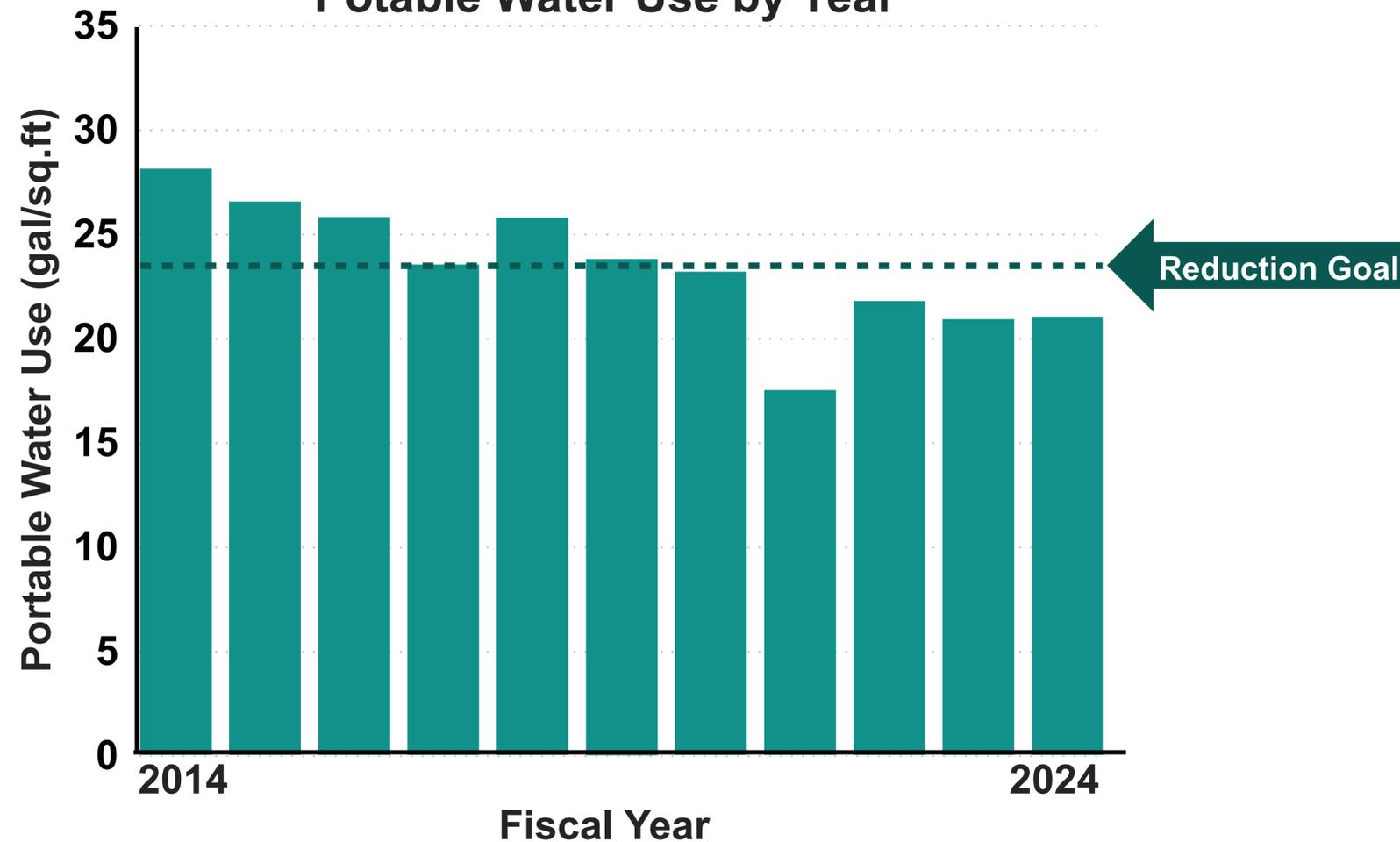
FY24 Water Use Breakdown

13% — 12% — 7% — 2% — 66%

- Buildings (Incl Coliseum)
- Central Plants
- Unmetered
- Fields, Landscape & Fountains
- Stand-Alone Chillers
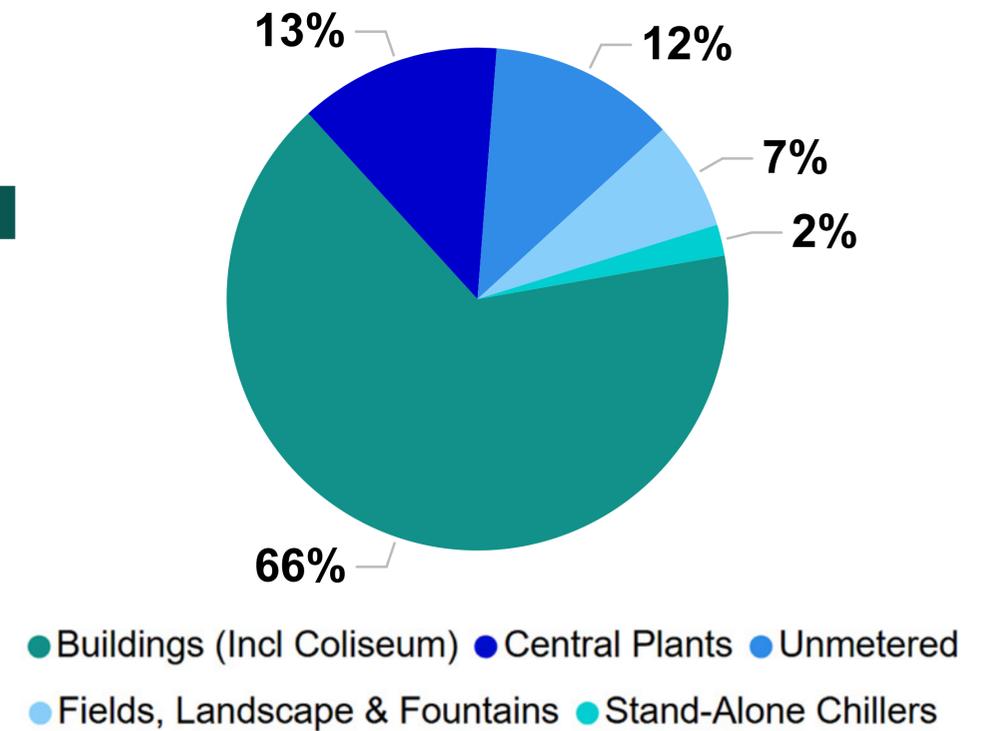
*Unmetered data includes water usage from irrigation, fountains, and buildings

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4.4 Develop Healthy Ecosystems

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

4.a Grounds and Landscaping	4.b Design Guidelines and Well-Being

4.4.a Goal: Develop and begin implementing a long-term plan for **grounds and landscaping** and strategic planting standards by FY24.
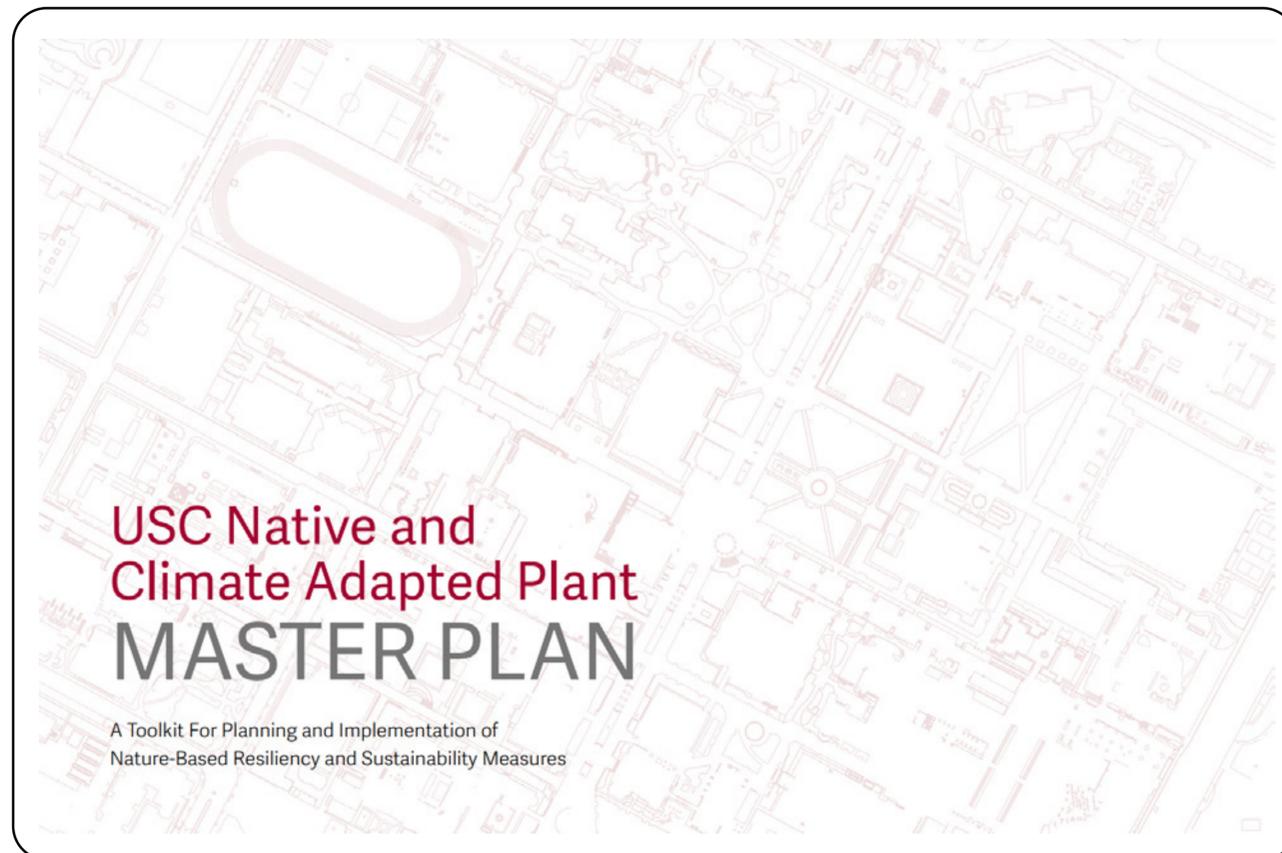
USC Native and Climate Adapted Plant MASTER PLAN

A Toolkit For Planning and Implementation of Nature-Based Resiliency and Sustainability Measures

Data Credit: USC Facilities, Planning and Management

4.4 Develop Healthy Ecosystems

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

4.a Grounds and Landscaping	4.b Design Guidelines and Well-Being

4.4.b Goal: USC will update its **Design Guidelines** to incorporate health and wellness strategies into facilities designs by FY23.

USC Sustainable Design and Construction Guidelines were finalized in July, 2022 to meet the goal:
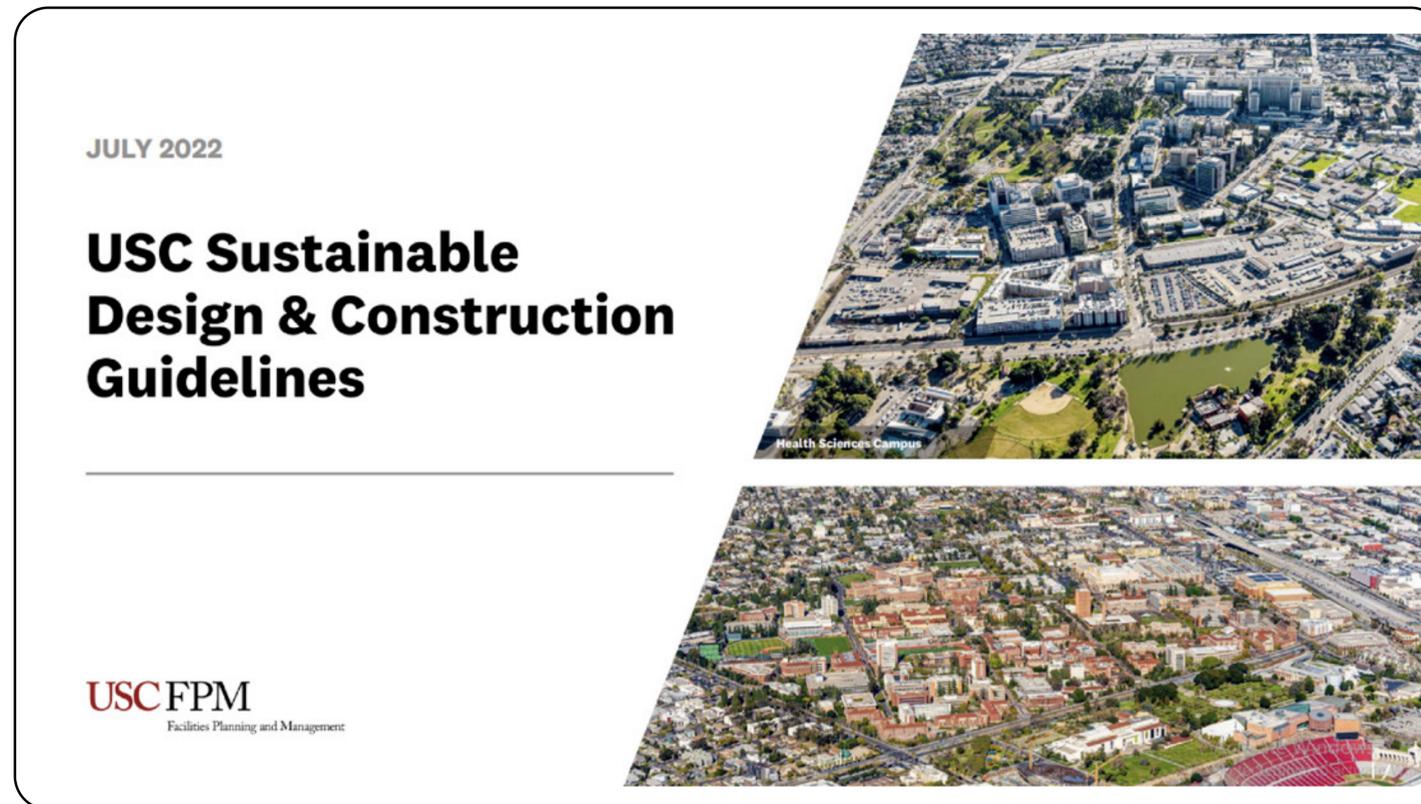
JULY 2022

USC Sustainable Design & Construction Guidelines

Health Sciences Campus

USC FPM
Facilities Planning and Management

Data Credit: USC Sustainable Design and Construction Guideline

4.5 Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

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4.5.a Goal: Establish a **publicly accessible online dashboard** to track sustainability resource metrics by FY23.
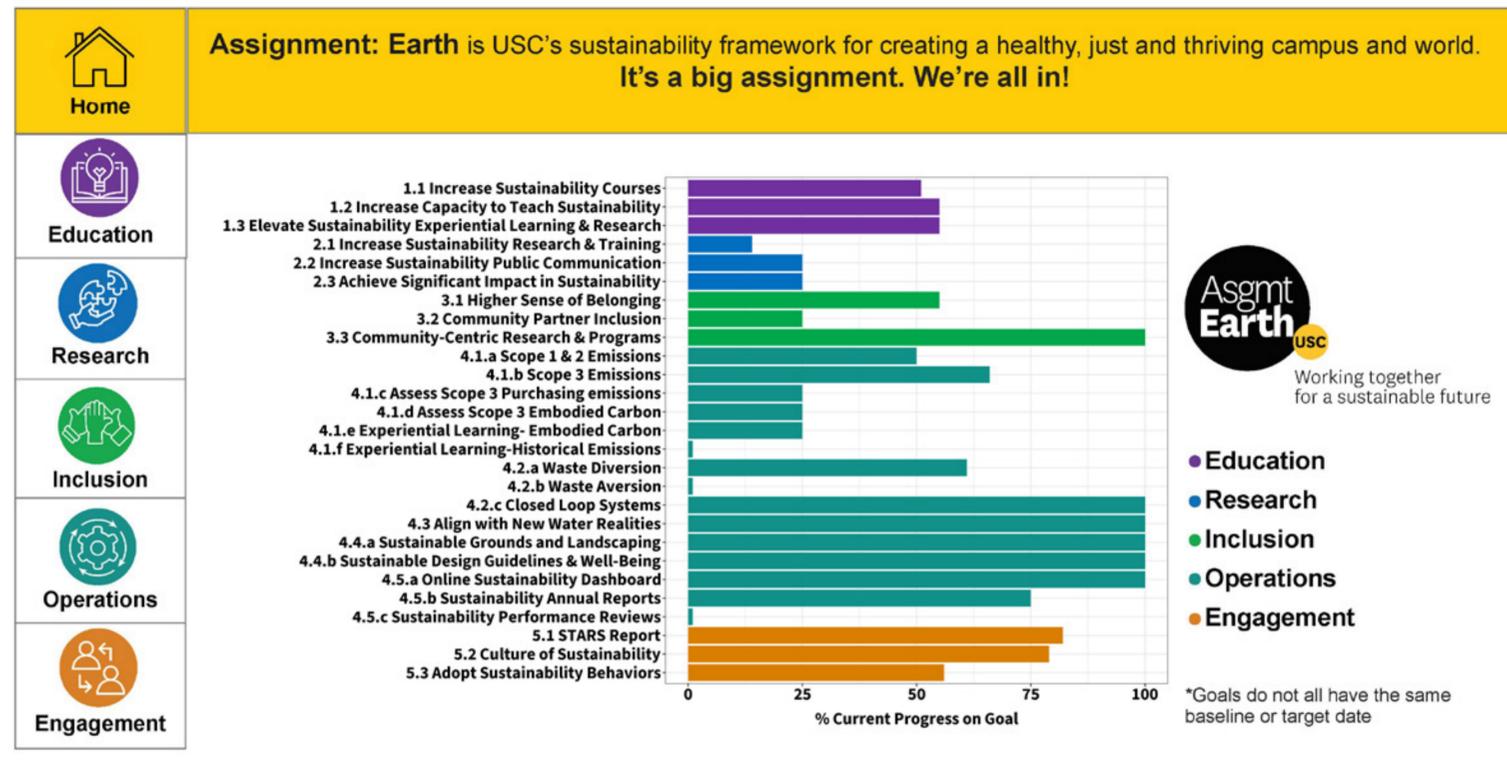

Welcome to the Assignment: Earth Dashboard

Assignment: Earth is USC's sustainability framework for creating a healthy, just and thriving campus and world. It's a big assignment. We're all in!

Acknowledgements:

This dashboard was created by Xinyi Zhang (USC PSIP program), Julie Hopper and USC's Office of Sustainability.

We thank the USC community for their contributions to the dashboard, including but not limited to: Alumni Association, Office of Institutional Research, USC Culture Journey Team, Presidential Working Group and the PWG committees, University Relations, Facilities, Planning and Management, Auxiliary Services, USC Communications, Well-Being Collective, WorkWell Center, Admin IT, Alison Chen, Blanca Linares, Bhavna Sharma, Boon Lim, Brian Tinsley, Christopher Kalaw, Ernesto Padilla, Feiyang Wang, Gina Whisenant, Jane Frey, Jill Sohm and Zelinda Welch.

Data Sources and Methodology

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4.5 Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

5.a Online Dashboard	5.b Annual Reports	5.c Performance Reviews

4.5.b Goal: Publish **annual reports** on operational sustainability goals progress within six months of the close of each fiscal year.

Assignment: Earth
FY23 Annual Report

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 USC Sustainability Data

USC Sustainability

Asgmt Earth USC
Working together for a sustainable future

Data Credit: USC Office of Sustainability

4.5 Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

1. Mend Our Climate	2. Build a Circular Economy	3. Align with New Water Realities	4. Develop Healthy Ecosystems	5. Strengthen Transparency and Accountability

5.a Online Dashboard	5.b Annual Reports	5.c Performance Reviews

4.5.c Goal: Incorporate sustainability criteria into operations **performance reviews** by FY24.

Administrative conversations initiated

Incorporate sustainability criteria into operations **performance reviews**

July 2023 ──────────── *FY24

*(partial implementation to-date)

Data Credit: USC Office of Sustainability

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Engagement

Photo Credit: Gus Ruelas

Asgmt Earth usc   **USC** Sustainability

5. Engagement

Overview

1. STARS Report	2. University Culture of Sustainability	3. Adopt Sustainability Behaviors

82%

0 pts
FY20

85 pts: Platinum
FY28
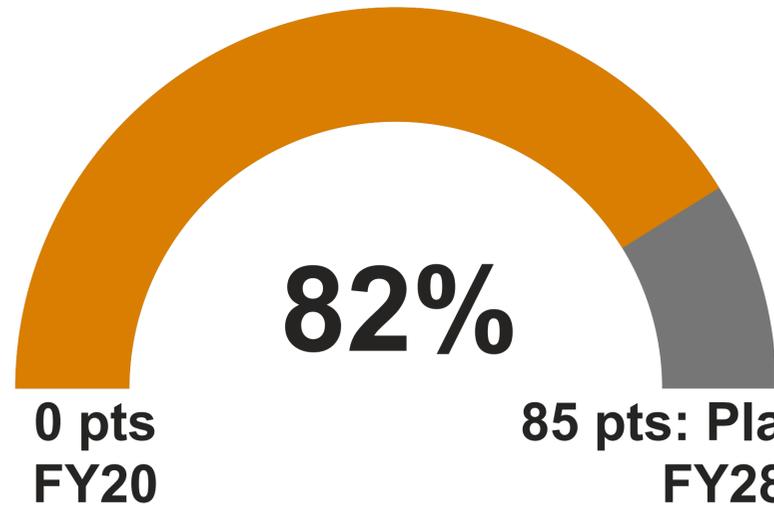
**Towards STARS
(Sustainability Tracking
Assessment Rating System)**

Progress is based on the 69.91 points received in 2024 for USC's Gold STARS rating

79%

61.5%
FY22

80%
FY28
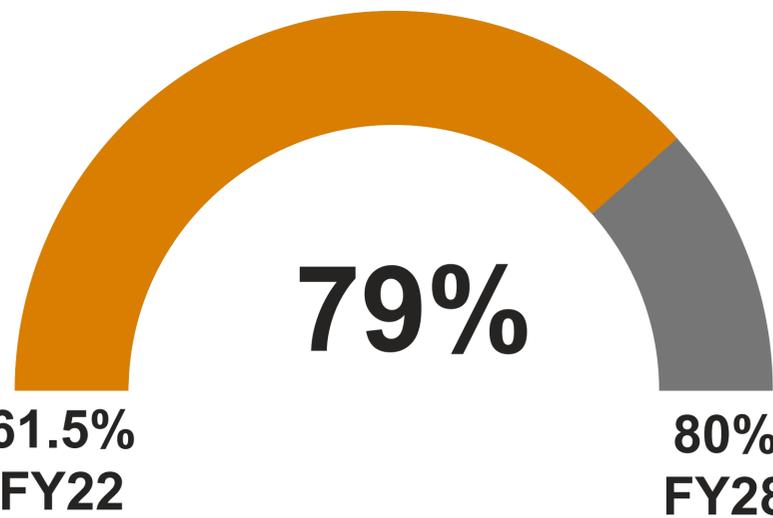
**Towards 80% Understanding
of Sustainability**

*Progress for subgoal 5.2a is based on an average literacy score across all literacy questions and sustainability survey respondents from 2023

56%

47.6%
FY22

80%
FY28

**Towards 80% University-Wide
Practice of Adopting
Sustainability Behaviors***

*Progress is based on an average score across all sustainability-behavior frequency questions and sustainability survey respondents from 2023

5.1 The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System Report

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1. STARS Report	2. University Culture of Sustainability	3. Adopt Sustainability Behaviors

5.1 Goal: Achieve **STARS Gold** by 2025 and **STARS Platinum** by 2028 by engaging all departments, schools, and students on their role in advancing sustainability at USC, and empowering them to take actions that support **Assignment: Earth**.

Awarded in 2021	Awarded in 2024	Goal by 2028

USC's 2021 STARS Report

USC's 2024 STARS Report

On Track

(STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance

Data Credit: USC Office of Sustainability and AASHE STARS

5.2 Understanding of Sustainability

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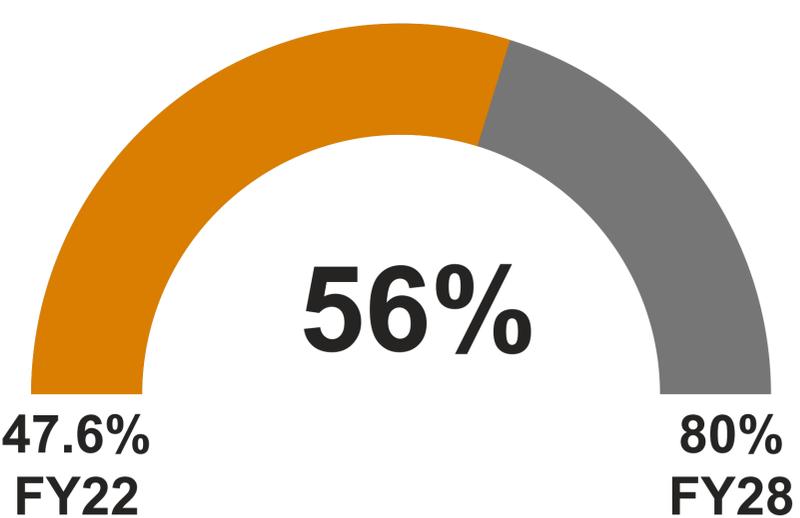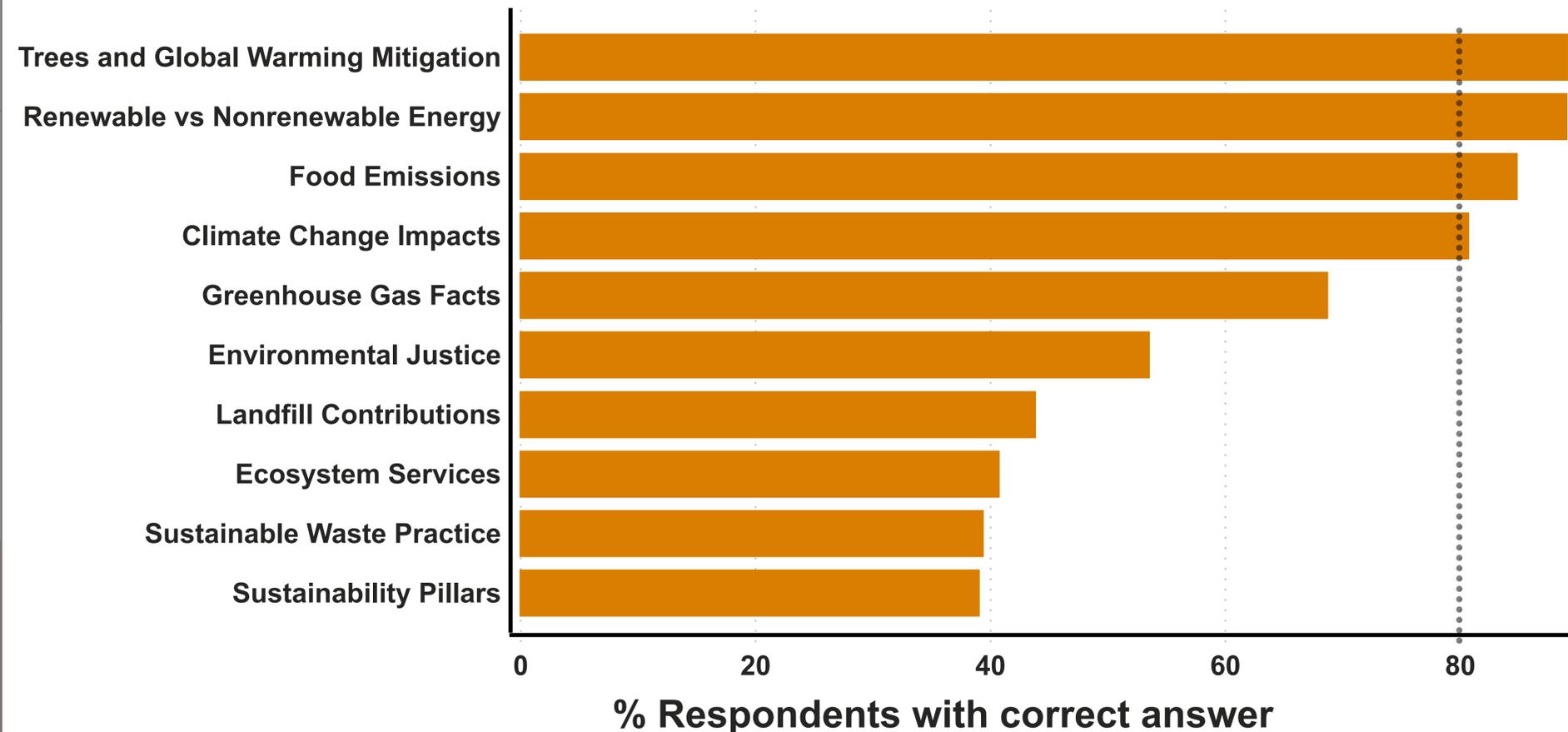| 1. STARS Report	2. University Culture of Sustainability	3. Adopt Sustainability Behaviors

5.2 Goal: Achieve a **university culture** of sustainability by 2028, defined as 80% of students, faculty, and staff:

a) Demonstrating an understanding of sustainability

b) Perceiving USC as having a culture that cultivates sustainability

a) Sustainability Literacy Results from USC's 2023 **Sustainability Survey Report**

b)

Not Started

Chart: % Respondents with correct answer

- Trees and Global Warming Mitigation
- Renewable vs Nonrenewable Energy
- Food Emissions
- Climate Change Impacts
- Greenhouse Gas Facts
- Environmental Justice
- Landfill Contributions
- Ecosystem Services
- Sustainable Waste Practice
- Sustainability Pillars

X-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80

% Respondents with correct answer

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5.3 Adopt Sustainability Behaviors

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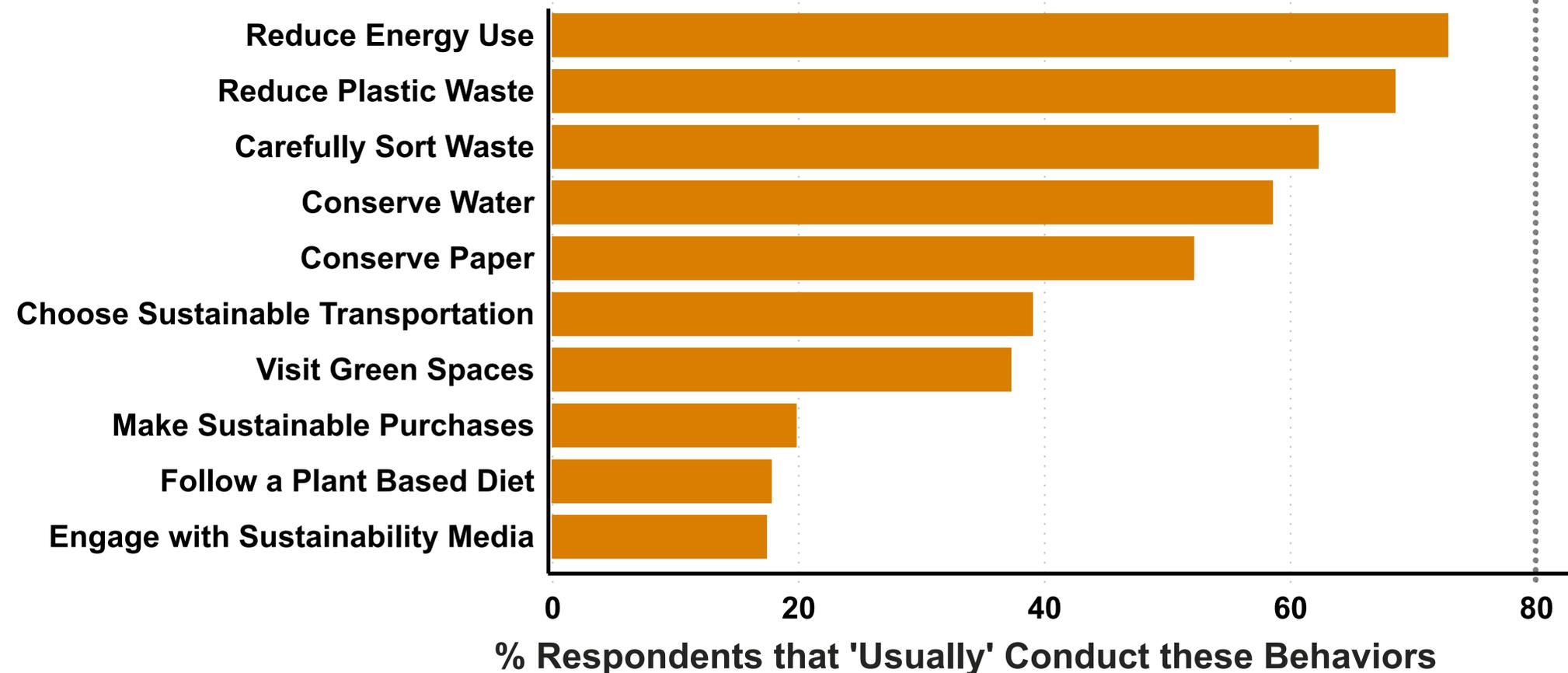
Overview

1. STARS Report	2. University Culture of Sustainability	3. Adopt Sustainability Behaviors

5.3 Goal: Achieve university-wide practice of **sustainability behaviors** by 2028, defined as an average of 80% of students, faculty, and staff self-reporting engagement in various behaviors "usually" or "always."

Sustainability Behavior Results from USC's 2023 Sustainability Survey Report

Bar chart: **% Respondents that 'Usually' Conduct these Behaviors**

- Reduce Energy Use
- Reduce Plastic Waste
- Carefully Sort Waste
- Conserve Water
- Conserve Paper
- Choose Sustainable Transportation
- Visit Green Spaces
- Make Sustainable Purchases
- Follow a Plant Based Diet
- Engage with Sustainability Media

X-axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80

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Acknowledgments

We thank the USC community for their contributions to the annual report, including but not limited to: Alumni Association, Auxiliary Services, Facilities, Planning and Management, Office of Sustainability, Office of Institutional Research, Presidential Working Group and the PWG committees, University Relations, USC Communications, USC Culture Journey Team, Alison Chen, Blanca Linares, Bhavna Sharma, Christopher Kalaw, Ernesto Padilla, Feiyang Wang, Gina Whisenant, Jane Frey, Jill Sohm, Julie Hopper, Matthew Buswell, Xinyi Zhang and Zelinda Welch.

Asgmt Earth usc   USC Sustainability