

SustainUS 2019-2022 Strategic Plan

OUR MISSION

SustainUS is a youth-led organization advancing justice and sustainability by empowering young people to engage in advocacy at the domestic and international levels.

OUR VISION

We are building toward a sustainable world free from systemic injustice.

OUR PRINCIPLES (BRIEFLY)

1. We are youth organizing in the US to demand a world free from systemic injustice.
2. We intervene at global spaces of power.
3. We translate the demands of the people's movements into action.
4. We show up as youth honoring indigenous sovereignty, recognizing there are no illegal people on stolen land, and through our work, we seek liberation for all people.
5. We build power by celebrating difference.
6. We are nonviolent in word and deed.
7. We take risks and challenge the limits of what is possible.
8. We show up as our full selves in community.
9. We are always learning and growing together.
10. We build toward a world where we can all thrive.

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE: Young people's lives are put at risk by systemic injustice --- including the overlapping crises of climate change, structural racism, and growing debt and economic immobility. At the same time, young people are a critical driving force for change in our collective pursuit of global justice. However, youth engaged in social movements in the United States can benefit from more resources, skills, and community to grow into effective change agents for the long haul.

WHO WE ARE: SustainUS is a community of young people from diverse geographies, identities, and issues that train one another in action, media, and community-building skills. We bridge local and national organizing for justice and sustainability with global movements. We organize, take action, and tell stories at domestic and international political forums and movement moments, learning through experience to become effective change agents. We nurture each other and our community to be able to stay engaged for the long haul.

2019-2022 SUSTAINUS GOALS

1. Support 3-5 delegations each year to train in media, action, and community-building skills and advance climate justice in solidarity and partnership with global movements at U.S. and international political forums and movement moments where we can strategically intervene for political impact.
2. Support 5-10 SustainUS members each year to deepen their skill as peer educators through Training for Trainers, mentorship and practice, each offering 1-5+ trainings to SustainUS delegations, their own communities, and the broader movement.

3. Together we will foster a diverse membership community of 100-150 U.S. youth movement leaders to be effective change agents for the long haul through peer mentorship, leadership development, and an inclusive, relational SustainUS culture.

Goal 1: Send 3 to 5 youth delegations per year that train in media, action and community-building skills over 4+ months to international political forums and movement moments (some in US, some abroad) where we can act in global solidarity while honoring local/regional issues. At the forums, the teams unite around a shared vision to further movement goals and practice and refine their skills.

- Objective 1: Develop a multi-year campaign to tie together all of our programs with a common political goal, by March 2019.
 - Partner with Corporate Accountability to “Kick Big Polluters Out” of international climate policy.
- Objective 2: Conduct a collective yearly assessment of possible delegations in order to determine 3-5 delegations (recurring or new) for the coming year.
 - January 2020: Assess delegation opportunities including a review of UN access (ECOSOC), strategic assessment of opportunities per a rubric to be developed, in deliberation with SustainUS leadership and relevant members. Each year, assess current delegations and emerging delegation opportunities.
 - Learn from past SustainUS delegations, including the now-defunct Agents of Change program, to inform our new programs.
 - Evaluate new delegation opportunities including G7, G20, World Trade Organization, etc.
 - February 2020: Outline strategic political and experiential value and potential goals for possible 2019-2021 delegations.
- Objective 3: Establish post-delegation debrief tools and processes, to ensure delegate’s feedback is taken into consideration with intentionality.
 - June 2019: Draw lessons from Callegory, COP21 Invoking the Pause, and COP23 delegation debriefs to develop a template for delegation debrief retreats.
 - October 2019: Create a training to guide delegates to turn their experience into action back home and remain accountable and grounded in their communities.
- Objective 4: Create a toolkit for delegations to measure/evaluate the impact of delegations on delegates, to facilitate fundraising - by July 2019.

Goal 2: Support 5-10 SustainUS members each year to deepen their skill as peer educators through Training for Trainers, mentorship and practice, each offering 1-5+ trainings to SustainUS delegations, their own communities, and the broader movement.

- Objective 1: Develop training curriculum for delegations.
 - June 2019: Survey current SustainUS members on training skills and capacities, to build up a roster of training support for all SustainUS programs. Also to be public-facing on sustainus.org/training.
 - October 2019: Consolidate delegation trainings on topics including:
 - Facilitation
 - Traditional and social media
 - Action planning
 - Jemez principles & best practices for active solidarity
 - Personal narrative & storytelling
 - History of SustainUS & internal policies/practices

- History of the space (e.g. UNFCCC)
 - Anti-oppression
- Objective 2: SustainUS will facilitate organization-wide training in order to increase understanding of race, gender, and class and improve organizational culture.
 - April 2019: Begin partnership with Wildfire Project
 - May 2019: Invite movement mentors/elders to offer in-depth day(s) of training at each annual gathering, on skills that support us to strengthen our culture: Topics including white supremacy, Indigenous sovereignty/solidarity, Jemez principles/frontline accountability, restorative justice, nonviolent communication, ontological coaching.

Goal 3: Together we will foster a diverse community of 50-100 U.S. youth movement leaders to be effective change agents for the long haul through peer mentorship, leadership development, and an inclusive, relational SustainUS culture.

- Objective 1: SustainUS will actively recruit and support the leadership of members who represent historically underrepresented identities and/or are rooted in frontline communities.
 - May 2019: Create a paid part-time Outreach & Community Coordinator position for a SustainUS member to:
 - Lead outreach to frontline communities & individuals;
 - Support members in their delegation and SustainUS experiences;
 - Support the creation of a more inclusive SustainUS culture; and
 - May 2019: Begin partnership with Wildfire Project to support transition of SustainUS culture towards embodiment of our principles.
 - By October 2019, work with Wildfire to develop resources that retain institutional memory of the work we have done with them, to ensure long-lasting benefit and share learnings with new members, including:
 - Finalize a restorative justice and conflict resolution process to support transformative, long-lasting relationships through conflict
 - Develop an [anti-oppression fabric](#) that lays out practices to recognize and address white supremacy culture in SustainUS
 - July 2019: Develop 1-2 new partnerships each year to support outreach for leaders from frontline communities.
- Objective 2: We will invest in paid staff to build a stronger organizational backbone, including fundraising capacity.
 - May 2019: Hire two paid part-time Grant Writers at 5 hours per week for 6 months.
 - May 2019: Hire paid part-time Outreach & Community Coordinator position 10 hours per week.
 - May 2019: Survey current volunteer leadership to assess financial needs and create a plan for stipended compensation.
 - September 2019: Hire paid part-time Development Lead at 15 hours per week.
 - September 2019: Hire part-time Training Coordinator at 10 hours per week.
 - January 2020: Hire part-time Media Coordinator at 10 hours per week.
 - September 2020: Hire full-time Executive Coordinator at 40 hours per week.
- Objective 3: Develop external facing SustainUS materials that reflect our current programming and vision (inc. website, flyer, graphics).
 - May 2019: Update the “Our Work” description (and homepage) on our website to, alongside Our Vision, Mission, and Principles, express our near-term vision and identity

- to SustainUS members and partners, while allowing flexibility for delegations to shape their strategic goals and tactics.
- Objective 4: SustainUS leadership and members actively integrate strategic plan, as a “[living document](#),” into day-to-day work and long-term planning. Improve internal communications to foster and strengthen the SustainUS community, identity, and collaboration.
 - August 2019: Institute in-person (or virtual, if necessary) quarterly leadership strategy retreats.
 - Based on the Strategic Plan, coordinating body members / team coordinators create personal work plans (before the first quarterly leadership strategy retreat).
 - Discuss work plans on coordinating body calls and get peer-to-peer support on work plans from coordinating body members.
 - September 2019: Strengthen alumni network, by increasing overall engagement and communication with past delegates.