Welcome to our community! We wanted to briefly introduce you to the many sustainability initiatives at LSA and across the University of Michigan.

Planet Blue Ambassador Training
Becoming a Planet Blue Ambassador is a great opportunity to learn about sustainability across our campus, including our sustainability goals, our progress to date, and how each of us can contribute. To become an Ambassador, complete either the online training or attend a group training.

LSA Specific Resources
LSA Sustainability Fund ($500-25K): The goal of this fund is to empower individuals and/or small teams within LSA to pursue ambitious projects aimed at helping LSA meet its carbon neutrality goals and/or improving sustainability awareness and practices on campus. This fund is specific to U-M LSA departments, units, student groups, staff, and/or faculty (both tenure- and non-tenure track).

LSA Sustainability & Campus of the Future Call for Proposals: Every semester, students enrolled in LSA courses ideate, design, and plan projects – often with one or more campus partners – to improve or inform an aspect of campus sustainability. Instructors are encouraged to submit students' final projects. Students may optionally remain involved after the term ends, but it is not required. This initiative is funded by LSA and the Provost's Office through the Year of Life Changing Education. Available only for Fall 2026 and Winter 2027 semesters.

Office of Campus Sustainability and Innovation (OCSI) Resources
Zero Waste Events: If you'd like to host a zero-waste event, reach out to this program to get access to compost service, event assistance ("bin watchers"), compostable serviceware (plates, bowls, utensils, cups, etc.), and technical assistance. You can request these materials and services for *free*.

Where to Throw Waste Search Tool: Unsure what bin something goes in? Look it up here to know "where to throw" on campus. You'll help ensure that recyclables can be remanufactured into new items and compostable items become quality soil!

Campus-as-Lab Project Ideas: Thinking about a campus-as-lab project? U-M recognizes the importance of fostering living-learning lab opportunities on campus. These opportunities expand learning experiences outside the classroom through "real-world" lessons associated with developing and managing sustainability projects. Email Campus-As-Lab-OCSI@umich.edu early in the development phase or with questions.

If you are setting up a research lab and want to be more sustainable, check out the ideas below.

Sustainable Lab Certification: Are you unsure what actions to take in your workplace for the biggest sustainable impact? The Sustainable Lab certification is for you! This self-guided form will allow you to identify opportunities, benchmark against other labs, and connect to resources.

This program will ultimately earn you a sustainability rating (from Bronze to Platinum) and public recognition for your efforts! Wet Lab Certification Form or Dry Lab Certification Form

Lab Reuse: The Lab Reuse Program supports U-M labs and U-M's waste reduction goal by enabling surplus chemicals, lab equipment, and materials to be used in other campus labs rather than being sent out for disposal. Labs may get materials for their research for free. The program has three branches.

- ***Door-to-Door Delivery Service*:** If you need lab equipment, materials, or chemicals, or have usable items to donate, our door-to-door service makes it easy! Simply request items for delivery or arrange a donation, and we will pick them up.
- ***Lab Swap Shop*:** Located in the North University Building on Central Campus, the Lab Swap Shop offers an opportunity for in-person browsing of free lab materials. Other U-M labs donated the inventory because they no longer needed it. Most is in used condition.
- ***Lab Swap Events:*** OCSI will work with departments or buildings to coordinate internal swap events to help labs clear their spaces of unwanted/unneeded goods and instruments and rehome them with other labs that want/need them. Reach out to sustainable-labs@umich.edu to get started.

Sustainable Supplies Use: Prioritize reusable supplies over disposables. The impact of reusables is significantly lower, especially when they are sterilized in fully loaded autoclaves or dishwashers. Check out the Ditch the Disposables Guide: Lab Edition to learn some simple switches!

Sustainable Equipment: Find shared equipment instead of buying a device for your own lab (unless needed). Check out our Equipment Sharing: Dos and Don'ts. Use a Research Core Facility to get expert support and training for equipment. Before purchasing new, check Lab Reuse or Property Disposition to get used equipment at a lower price (or free). When going to purchase, review procurement's Sustainability Purchasing Guide.

Lab Waste and Specialty Programs: Labs typically produce a lot of waste, especially plastic. If this bothers you, you're not alone! We regularly hear from lab staff who want to reduce waste. See also this Reuse & Recycling Guide for Laboratories

- ***Specialty waste programs for labs***: Styrofoam and Packing Peanuts, Pipette Tip Boxes and Inserts, Ice Packs, Non-hazardous Bottle Caps, Writing Utensils, Small Clear Rigid Lab Plastics. Note that OCSI does not recommend purchasing specialty recycling for nitrile gloves at this time.

Lab Energy: Labs use 5-10x the more energy than a standard office space. There are a variety of small actions you can take to reduce the load in your space.

- The University of Michigan participates in the International Freezer Challenge every winter and spring. This challenge encourages labs to audit current cold storage practices and make sustainable changes. OCSI has a freezer defrost kit to support annual defrosts. LSA also has a roaming freezer with an attached kit. EHS Safe Freezer Defrost Guide

- Shut your fume hood sashes! Fume hoods are the single most energy-intensive piece of equipment in labs, using the same amount of energy as 3.5 US households! By shutting that sash, you can reduce the unit's energy consumption by more than 40%. Free Reminder Sticker
- Turn off your Biosafety Cabinet at the end of the day. Doing so reduces energy consumption by 99%. Just run the blower for 5 minutes and decontaminate when restarting the unit. Email sustainable-labs@umich.edu for reminder stickers.

As you settle into your new role here, if you have questions or ideas about how to make campus more sustainable, reach out to sustainable-lsa@umich.edu.