



2023 Presidential Federal Sustainability Awards Award Nomination Guidelines

The White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is pleased to invite Federal personnel to participate in the Presidential Federal Sustainability Awards nomination process. The awards recognize and celebrate outstanding leadership, innovation, progress, and achievement of Federal employees toward the goals of President Biden's Executive Order 14057, *Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs through Federal Sustainability*, and the Federal Sustainability Plan.

- The nomination period will be open from **March 20 through May 19, 2023**.
- There is **no limit on the number of nominations** from an individual agency.
- **Agency Chief Sustainability Officers** must approve agency nominations and submit them to CEQ. Nominations received through other means will not be considered.
- CEQ will **notify agencies of finalists in late summer 2023**.
- Awardees will be invited to participate in an **awards ceremony** in Fall of 2023 in Washington, D.C.

Award Categories

Agencies are encouraged to submit nominations in the categories below, including nominations that exemplify an integrated approach that advances more than one goal and/or supports related Administration priorities in areas such as nature-based solutions, permitting, eliminating PFAS, cutting plastics waste, and achieving the goals of Justice40. Examples listed below each category are illustrative only.

1. **Advancing Carbon-Free Electricity:** advancing 100% carbon pollution-free electricity (CFE), including facilitating, procuring, producing, and deploying new CFE.
 - *Examples enabling whole-of-government collaboration in support of CFE goals; developing or implementing innovative procurement models; and supporting new CFE generation, storage, and delivery technologies, e.g., nuclear small modular reactors or large-scale batteries.*
2. **Electrifying the Federal Fleet:** advancing 100% zero emission vehicle (ZEV) fleets, including acquisition, deployment, and management of vehicles and charging infrastructure.
 - *Examples include actions to expand procurement of ZEVs and charging infrastructure (electric vehicle supply equipment or EVSE); and actions to support ZEV adoption through forward-leaning programs, policy, or management approaches to supply chains and financing.*

3. **Decarbonizing Federal Buildings:** reducing the climate impacts of Federal buildings and facilities, including improving energy efficiency, eliminating fossil fuel use, and advancing sustainable building practices.
 - *Examples include programs or projects to achieve aggressive energy and water efficiency through retrofits; leading approaches such as grid interactive buildings; new construction that utilizes innovative technology; an upgrade that uses all-electric or highly efficient equipment and appliances; and an innovation in leasing to advance decarbonization goals. Projects should demonstrate innovation in process, funding, and use of technologies.*
4. **Building Sustainable Supply Chains:** advancing net-zero emissions procurement and increasing sustainability of Federal supply chains, including acquisition planning, purchasing, and contracting to reduce supply chain emissions; expanding use of sustainable products and services; and reducing costs while advancing sustainability and climate goals.
 - *Examples include integrating consideration of climate risks and greenhouse gas emissions reductions into the procurement of products and services, acquisition planning, and contract development; building collaborations with industry or contractors to advance sustainability goals; and addressing specific sustainability issues such as food waste, single-use plastics, and PFAS.*
5. **Advancing Climate Adaptation & Resilience:** advancing agency planning, programs, or actions to reduce climate risk and build climate resilience.
 - *Examples include establishing exceptional Federal operations, policies, programs, and tools that assess and reduce climate risk; use of nature-based solutions; restoration of coastal habitats and building green infrastructure; expanding equitable access to high-quality green and blue spaces; combating urban heat and food insecurity; and restoring coastal habitats and building green infrastructure.*
6. **Advancing Environmental Justice:** centering environmental justice or advancing the goals of Justice40 as part of planning, programs, or actions for sustainable buildings, fleets, and operations.
 - *Examples include ambitious inclusion of environmental justice considerations in planning and decision making; actions to incorporate and address the needs or concerns of communities with environmental justice concerns; engagement of disadvantaged communities that are underserved or overburdened in sustainability projects; and investment in communities with environmental justice concerns as part of sustainability programs and projects.*
7. **Building a Climate-Ready Workforce:** integrating sustainability into human capital systems and fostering an agency culture of sustainability and climate action through employee engagement, education, training, and performance management.
 - *Examples include novel integration of sustainability goals and climate adaptation plans into human capital planning; innovative workforce development and training programs; and engaging federal employees on climate resiliency, sustainability, and environmental stewardship.*

8. **Leveraging Partnerships:** collaborating across the private, public, or non-profit sectors, with state or local governments, or with fellow agencies to accelerate progress, expand impact, or drive innovation to advance sustainability in Federal operations.
 - *Examples include advancing partnerships with the private and non-profit sectors to accelerate the achievement of sustainability goals within an agency or across government; and policies, programs, and tools that catalyze and accelerate action domestically or internationally.*
9. **Investing in Climate Smart Buildings:** expanding and leveraging performance contracting to decarbonize buildings, reduce GHG emissions, and deploy climate smart technologies.
 - *Examples include demonstrating ambition and creativity in performance contracting projects that support climate goals; exemplary projects involving electrification or deep energy retrofits; agency programs and initiatives to replicate successes in performance contracting to decarbonize buildings; and effective approaches to financing climate-smart objectives and results.*
10. **Buying Clean:** designing and executing programs and projects that expand the use, procurement, or funding of low-carbon construction materials for Federal buildings and infrastructure.
 - *Examples include projects that involve the use of low embodied emissions materials; innovation to drive buying clean through specifications or procurement policies; and efforts to catalyze buying clean through Federal programs, including Federal funding and grant-making programs.*

Eligibility

Federal agency programs, projects, facilities, teams, and employees are eligible. “Agency” includes all departments, as well as independent agencies.

- **Program, project, facility, or team** nominations may include efforts in coordination with a Federal partner, such as a contractor, Tribal, state, or local agency, or non-profit organization, but only Federal employees are eligible to receive the award.
- **Individual** nominations must be of a Federal employee.

Nomination Process

- Federal employees who wish to propose a nomination should follow their **agency’s instructions** for agency review, approval, and submission. Contact your agency sustainability leads to learn more about agency-specific process and guidelines.
- A nominee may be proposed for **one or two** award categories. If making a nomination in two categories, the nominator should clearly demonstrate how the nominee meets criteria in both categories.
- The Agency Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO) (or equivalent if no CSO exists) must approve and submit all agency nominations. Individual nominations sent to CEQ will be not considered.
- The nomination form must be completed, and the structure and the format of the nomination form may not be altered.

- The narrative sections may include a limited number of hyperlinks to publicly available materials relevant to the nomination, *e.g.*, a program website, project overview, agency announcement, or press release. However, the narrative section should include all the information supporting the nomination and stand on its own. It will be at the discretion of the judges whether to consider supplemental materials.

Completing the Nomination Form

- **Section 1. *Nominee*.** Provide the requested information on the group or individual nominated for the award.
- **Section 2. *Nomination Point of Contact*.** Provide the requested information on the individual proposing the nomination.
- **Section 3. *Agency Review and Approval*.** This section is for the Agency's CSO to affirm their approval of the nomination for submission, and that the agency has reviewed the facility's environmental compliance record, if applicable (see section below, "Facility Environmental Compliance.") **The nomination point of contact proposing the nomination should leave this section blank.**
- **Section 4. *Team Member Information*.** For program, project, facility, or team nominations, identify the team lead and list up to 5 key members of the team (for a maximum of 6 individuals total).
- **Section 5. *Narrative*.** The nomination narrative should address the content below within the context of the criteria for the award category or categories:
 - **Summary Statement (Max 50 words):** Succinctly describe why this program, project, facility, team, or individual ("nominee") has been selected for nomination for a Presidential Federal Sustainability Award. The summary should highlight leadership, innovation, impact, key results, and other factors that distinguish the nominee.
 - **Nomination Overview (Max 750 words):** Describe the program, project, facility, team, or individual ("nominee") and their role in advancing Federal sustainability in the relevant award category or categories. Narrative should address and include:
 - Background that illustrates objectives, scope, scale, and size of the program, project, effort, etc.
 - Relevant dates and timelines, for example: program/project/initiative inception, launch, and completion date(s).
 - Specific elements and criteria referenced in the award category/categories in the [Nomination Guidelines](#).
 - Where applicable, cross-agency, cross-government, or other key coordination and collaboration.
 - **Leadership and Innovation (Max 500 words).** Describe how the nominee has demonstrated initiative, creativity, and/or early action on sustainability goals and priorities. This may include, where applicable:
 - How the nominee exemplifies "leading by example" in the category
 - Contribution to reinvigorating sustainability within the agency
 - Examples of developing or implementing new and/or leading approaches and solutions;
 - Use of new, innovative, or cutting-edge technologies;

- Demonstration projects or where the nominee is “first of its kind” within an industry, agency, or government-wide; and
- Examples where the nominee has catalyzed or inspired action beyond their specific program, project, etc., for example contributing to a whole-of-government approach; replication or action by other agencies, programs, teams, individuals, or external partners or governments.
- **Impact and Outcomes (Max 750 words).** Describe the nominee’s results, impact, and achievements, which can include projected future outcomes. Narratives should address and include:
 - How the nominee has advanced Federal sustainability, achievement of E.O. 14057 goals, and related Administration priorities;
 - Quantifiable impacts (bulleted list preferred), for example energy, water, or GHG reductions; number of employees, partners, or community members engaged; budget savings; and
 - Integration with other E.O. 14057 goals, and ways this effort advances complementary Administration priorities, for example environmental justice, equity, permitting improvement, incorporating nature-based solutions, actions to reduce plastic waste, or addressing PFAS.

Facility Environmental Compliance

Recognizing that compliance with environmental regulatory requirements is a fundamental responsibility of Federal agencies and Federal employees at all levels, **each application that involves activities at a Federal facility or installation** will be subject to a review of environmental compliance status.

- Evaluation of nominations will include consideration of information in the Environmental Protection Agency’s Enforcement & Compliance History Online (ECHO) (formerly OTIS).
- The application should confirm that the compliance information for the relevant facility or installation is on the ECHO system, the nominating agency has reviewed it, and indicates whether the agency concurs with the information presented.