CENTER FOR
SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

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CSS Guidance for External Engagement

The Center for Sustainable Systems (CSS) is committed to using our expertise to accelerate sustainability transformations through research collaborations and other stakeholder engagement. To foster productive partnerships and clarify expectations while safeguarding the integrity of relationships and research, the Center has developed the following set of guidelines.

The Center also relies on existing resources and best practices at the University of Michigan, including those in place at:

- Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP)
- Business Engagement Center (BEC)
- Program for Education and Evaluation in Responsible Research and Scholarship (PEERRS)
- School for Environment and Sustainability (SEAS)

Guiding Principles for Stakeholder Engagement

1. Engagement shall align with our mission, vision, and core values.[i]
2. We practice scientific integrity, comprehensive analysis, and transparency throughout our research collaborations, engagement, and in reporting dissemination of research findings.
3. Our goal is to create new knowledge and understanding to enhance sustainability performance and decision-making. This includes advancing tools and methods and demonstrating their application.
4. We engage with stakeholders who shape, influence and/or implement technology, design, markets, policy, and behavior to accelerate sustainability transformations.
5. We promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in all engagement activities with students, staff, faculty, and both internal, and external stakeholders.
6. As a research Center at the University of Michigan, we follow University of Michigan guidance and best practices, including grant policies, PEERRS training, Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA), Conflict of Interest, and Institutional Review Boards (IRB).
7. Project timeframe must be clear and meet expectations and constraints of faculty, research staff, and students.
8. Engagement activities shall provide learning and training opportunities for Sustainable Systems students and staff, and funding support whenever possible. These include Graduate Student Research Assistant (GSRA) packages, hourly wages, and summer internship research funding.
9. We expect to disseminate research findings through peer-reviewed publications. We recognize that there may be proprietary information shared under an NDA that cannot be published. In some cases (e.g., some MS projects), research is published in the form of a capstone report (which is publicly available but not peer-reviewed).
10. To help disseminate our findings and to achieve wider impact of our research, SEAS Communications and University of Michigan News prepare press releases and other information for the media.

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[i] http://css.umich.edu/about/mission-history