



**Sustainable
Libraries
Initiative**

For Immediate Release
March 10, 2022

Clarkson University Libraries are Certified Sustainable

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative recognizes Clarkson University Libraries as leaders in sustainability.



Suffolk County, NY – March 10, 2022 – [Clarkson University Libraries](#) in Potsdam, New York has been certified as a “Sustainable Library” through the [Sustainable Libraries Initiative’s](#) award-winning Sustainable Library Certification Program. Clarkson University Libraries are the first Academic Library to reach this distinction through the ground-breaking, step-by-step process that infuses triple bottom line sustainable decision making into a library’s policies and practices.

Becoming certified involves the completion of Action Items such as assessing the library’s energy use, taking a close look at materials in the collection for content and format, and reaching out beyond the university into the surrounding community. These actions are designed to establish and reinforce the university library as a resource and leader in the resilience of the broader campus and community. Dean of Libraries, Michelle Young, leveraged her participation in the extensive sustainability efforts of the broader Clarkson University campus to provide new services to students through campus collaborations. Their partnership with the Institute for a Sustainable Environment uses the libraries’ cataloging systems to streamline the inventory and checkout process of the student bike rental program on campus. Reflecting on the certification process, Ms. Young states “This certification brought renewed excitement about the University Libraries and a revitalized realization about the Libraries’ connection to sustainability and related initiatives.”

Clarkson University's environmental sustainability efforts have consistently earned them AASHE Gold Star Ratings. Clarkson University Libraries have expanded on the environmental stewardship of the broader campus efforts to include the social equity and economic focus of the triple bottom line definition of sustainability used by the Sustainable Libraries Initiative. To achieve this, they have taken actions such as including topics of equity and access in the two Digital Citizen undergraduate classes taught by library staff, creation of an anti-discrimination reading list for students and using sophisticated data analysis to select and purchase the materials most relevant to their students and faculty.

International Impact

Clarkson University Libraries are the first Academic Library to be certified through the Sustainable Library Certification Program, the first of its kind in the world. This benchmarking program, was developed to assist libraries of all kinds - public, academic, and individual school librarians - to create opportunities to make better choices on behalf of the local and global community.

The program has been recognized by the International Federation of Library Associations at their 2019 World Congress in Athens, Greece, becoming the first program in the United States to be honored through their "Green Libraries" Award.

Comprehensive Approach

With thirteen categories of actions focusing on each of the three pillars of triple bottom line sustainability such as Community Engagement, Social Well Being, and Energy Management, this comprehensive process leads a library toward institutional change that shifts the rationale for every decision to consider the local and global impacts. The path to certification through the Sustainable Libraries Initiative Academic Library Certification Program is designed to be flexible for libraries of different sizes and budgets and guided by the campus, students, and communities they serve. Each library that completes the program will select the benchmarks that best fit the needs of their library and campus, resulting in a uniquely sustainable organization.

Find out more information through our website (<https://sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org>), or contact sliadmin@suffolknet.org.

The Sustainable Libraries Initiative is expanding to enroll libraries throughout the United States, with nearly fifty libraries currently enrolled in the Sustainable Libraries Certification Program. Clarkson University Libraries is the first academic library to be certified through this program.

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