



For Immediate Release
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San Diego County Library joins the Sustainable Library Certification Program
Sustainable Libraries Initiative welcomes San Diego County Library's enrollment in the Sustainable Library Certification Program.

Suffolk County, New York – March 14, 2022 – San Diego County Library has enrolled in the Sustainable Libraries Initiative's one-of-a-kind Sustainable Library Certification Program. San Diego County Library is the first library outside of the state of New York, where this program originated, to enroll. With their experience demonstrating that libraries can be part of the climate solution, the Sustainable Libraries Initiative welcomes the infusion of ideas and practices that San Diego County Library's membership in the Certification Program will bring to their member community.

Sustainability is already an important focus throughout San Diego County, California. In 2020, the County's 26 climate action measures reduced enough greenhouse gases to equal the emissions from nearly 35,000 passenger vehicles for a full year. It is also developing an ambitious [Regional Decarbonization Framework](#) that will move the region to be zero carbon emissions by mid-century. Migell Acosta, Director of San Diego County Library, shares this commitment in positioning San Diego County Library as part of the climate solution:

“During 2021, the San Diego County Board of Supervisors took steps toward making the County of San Diego a more sustainable and transparent organization. The County's commitment to sustainability is captured in the new vision for the County: “a just, sustainable, and resilient future for all.” The San Diego County Library embraces this vision and that of the Sustainable Libraries Initiative. We are eager to begin the certification process and share our efforts with the rest of the sustainable library community. I believe it's time for all libraries to begin to focus on creating a zero carbon library as a critical goal for the 21st century. I honor and respect the work of our colleagues in New York and believe it is time for public libraries throughout the nation to join and strengthen their efforts.”

Enrollment in the Sustainable Library Certification Program is open to public libraries nationwide. This flexible program is available to libraries who are seeking help getting started in their sustainability efforts and those, like San Diego County Library, that are already making

substantial efforts. For all libraries in the program, the mentor-guided step-by-step benchmarking format and collaborative, member-driven resource sharing is a way to find community within the library profession in addressing these critically important issues.

International Impact

San Diego County Library is among the first libraries to participate in 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 for making 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 categories of actions focusing on each of the three pillars of triple bottom line sustainability such as Energy, Indoor Spaces, Social Cohesion, and Resilience Planning, this comprehensive process leads a library toward institutional change that shifts the rationale for every decision to consider the local and global impacts. Through this program, libraries work with their communities to listen and learn, allowing local needs to be identified and addressed. Strengthening the relationship between the library and the community they serve builds resilience through stronger connections with many organizations and increased access to information.

The path to certification through the Sustainable Libraries Certification Program is designed to be flexible for libraries of different types, sizes, and budgets and guided by the communities they serve. Each library that completes the program will select the benchmarks that best fit the needs of their library and community, resulting in a uniquely sustainable organization.

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. Ten public libraries have been certified through this program along with an academic library and a school librarian.

For more information, see the Sustainable Libraries Initiative website (<https://sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org>) or contact:

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