

# Planning Framework: Six Steps to Creating a Local Plan

A suggested path for the leaders of academic, administrative, and research units at MIT to prepare and implement their own carbon footprint reduction and sustainability plans.

## STEP 1

Review [Fast Forward: MIT's Climate Action Plan for the Decade](#) and the [Fast Forward Impact Goals for Food, Water and Waste](#) to understand how *your* plan fits into the big picture at MIT.

Progress on some of MIT's goals require action from every part of campus.

## STEP 2

Embed this effort into the work of your unit. Identify champions or create a committee structure.

Consider how important projects and initiatives succeed in your unit and seek to emulate those processes. Identify champions and have them map out a calendar using these steps to break the work into manageable components to be achieved through the academic year. Identify individuals within your unit who can work closely with leadership on your planning and implementation process: undergraduate and graduate students, exempt and non-exempt staff, postdocs, faculty, research scientists, lecturers, etc.

Identify and establish clear leadership roles and responsibilities to support this effort.

Be mindful that your team has broad representation—made up of students, staff, faculty, and postdocs, from different levels of authority, identity characteristics, time at MIT, etc.

## STEP 3

Review and document current processes related to the action plan.

To understand our progress, we need to understand where we are starting. Consider starting with the Baseline Assessment Summary section of the template. Evaluate your current practices related to procurement, space allocation, event planning, and travel.

Focus on what you can observe and influence. For many things we might like to measure, data is not available at a local level at MIT. The Office of Sustainability now has a tool to help estimate unit-level baselines, including Scope 3 (e.g. purchased goods, business travel and waste) emissions. Meaningful progress is possible even without perfect data. Reach out to our team for support.

## STEP 4

Determine local actions that align with the priorities of Fast Forward and are feasible in your local context.

Your plan does not need to create an array of new initiatives. The goal is to upgrade what we are already doing, embedding this work as we would upgrade our teaching, research, or administrative practice to reflect new knowledge. The template draws on many existing tools, methods, and programs to identify feasible and impactful actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, build resiliency and strengthen climate-related education.

Using the template as a starting point, reflect on your internal priorities and how they can contribute to Institute goals. We do not assume to know everything that is happening on campus (because we don't), or that we have captured every good idea (we certainly haven't). This is a framework for working together and for setting a shared direction and shared goals. No matter how imperfect the process, or how much it evolves, we hope that each unit will make a good-faith effort and do its part.

Customization is encouraged. Some of the proposed actions in the template involve complex, multi-step processes. Your community's task is to identify exactly how your unit can contribute to the goal the action seeks to support—so if you have questions about how to interpret the proposed action, look at the goal it is designed to support: if there's a more immediate way that you and your unit can contribute to the goal, describe it in your own plan.

## STEP 5

Do the work to create your plan.

Making a plan isn't the same thing as selecting a set of actions and filling out a form. You will need to budget resources and assemble a team committed to implementing your plan. Use the worksheet provided to plan out each action included in your plan. If your department, lab, or office has a set of standing meetings or convenes on an annual basis to discuss strategic or directional issues, think about repurposing some of these gatherings or devoting a portion of them to your plan.

It is not the goal to create more work for a very busy community. We are especially interested in helping units look carefully enough at themselves to find things they are already doing that can be done a little differently to be more sustainable and reduce their carbon footprint.

## STEP 6

Email your plan or questions to: [sustainablemit@mit.edu](mailto:sustainablemit@mit.edu)