

Higher Education Working Group: 2021 Mid-Year Update

June 2021

Introduction

We are pleased to share the Higher Education Working Group: 2021 Mid-Year Update which summarizes the progress made towards the Boston Green Ribbon Commission Higher Education Working Group Strategic Plan 2020-25.

The HEWG has hosted several virtual convening events and supported the GRC's ongoing GRCx series to engage the sectors across Boston in critical discussions about climate action in support of the City's goals. We'd like to thank the HEWG task force members for their continued support of this work.

In 2021, the Green Ribbon Commission launched it's Five-Year Strategic Plan, setting four goals: 1) Advance Climate Justice, 2) Strengthen Climate Resilience, 3) Accelerate Climate Mitigation, 4) Build A More Informed and Activated Citizenry. We look forward to continuing to forge connections between HEWG work at the GRC's larger mission and goals as we both implement strategic plans through 2025.

Finally, Jacob Glickel joined us as a co-chair for the HEWG in January 2021. Jaclyn Olsen will take a step back from this role, and we want to express our sincere thanks for the work that she's done in this leadership role over the past 10 years.

Higher Education Working Group Co-Chairs

Dennis Carlberg, Boston University

Jacob Glickel, Northeastern University

Jaclyn Olsen, Harvard University

Resources

[Boston Green Ribbon Commission: High Education Working Group](#)

[HEWG 2020 Strategic Plan](#)

[GRC Strategic Plan 2021-2026](#)

[City of Boston 2019 Climate Action Plan](#)

[GRCx Event Series Archive](#)

Carbon Free Boston Reports

- [Technical Reports](#)
- [Social Equity Report 2019](#)

Thank you, Jaclyn!



The Boston Green Ribbon Commission and members of the HEWG would like to thank Jaclyn Olsen, Associate Director of the Harvard Office of Sustainability, for her decade of service to the GRC as a working group co-chair since 2011.

Thank you, Jaclyn!

Green Ribbon Commission: Five Year Goals

- **Advance Climate Justice**

Climate justice will be acknowledged as a priority, widely understood, and measurably advanced through programs and projects that address it systemically.

- **Strengthen Climate Resilience**

The City of Boston will have the governance structure, financing mechanisms and regulatory requirements in place to manage the resilience investments needed to ensure a safe and climate-resilient Boston.

- **Accelerate Climate Mitigation**

The City of Boston will reach its interim Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction targets and have in place the necessary regulatory structure to be on a pathway to carbon neutrality by 2050.

- **Build A More Informed and Activated Citizenry**

Boston citizens and neighborhoods will be more proactive on climate change: informed and aware, prepared and connected, engaged and creative.

Overview of HEWG 2020 Strategic Plan Goals & Strategies



GOAL 1

SUPPORT CLIMATE ACTION PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

- STRATEGY 1.1** Provide climate leadership opportunities and incentives for institution-wide carbon-neutral buildings and campus operations
- STRATEGY 1.2** Set sector-wide carbon reduction goals, with periodic targets and rewards that align with the City's climate action plan
- STRATEGY 1.3** Share information and resources with higher education institutions to support the sector in creating and implementing climate mitigation and resilience planning



GOAL 2

FACILITATE COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH THAT LEVERAGES THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR'S CAPABILITIES TO PROMOTE SOLUTIONS FOR EQUITABLE CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND MITIGATION IN THE GREATER BOSTON AREA

- STRATEGY 2.1** Develop a formal cross-institution research collaborative to inform the implementation of the City's climate action plan
- STRATEGY 2.2** Create a research partnership between the City and the HEWG members to facilitate living-lab research with the City on CAP implementation
- STRATEGY 2.3** Assess carbon-neutral solutions for transportation in the region



GOAL 3

TRANSFER KNOWLEDGE TO OTHER SECTORS TO ACCELERATE CHANGE FOR EQUITABLE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLIMATE MITIGATION AND RESILIENCE

- STRATEGY 3.1** Provide workshops and share resources within and across key sectors to accelerate climate mitigation and resilience
- STRATEGY 3.2** Collaborate with cultural institutions, commercial building owners, and the healthcare sector on tools for building energy and GHG data tracking and reporting, as well as strategies for increasing resilience planning and implementation
- STRATEGY 3.3** Effectively communicate the urgency of climate change and opportunities for scaling climate mitigation and resilience progress



GOAL 4

DEVELOP THE HEWG AS A HIGH-FUNCTIONING COLLECTIVE OF DIVERSE INSTITUTIONS WITH CROSS-SECTORIAL IMPACT FOR THE CITY'S CLIMATE ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

- STRATEGY 4.1** Implement a shared governance model and working group process
- STRATEGY 4.2** Hire a HEWG coordinator
- STRATEGY 4.3** Expand the engagement of HEWG within the higher education sector in Boston

HEWG Working Group Activity



2021 HEWG Participants



Goal 1 Task Force



Goal 2 Task Force



Goal 3 Task Force

Lisa Tornatore BU

Jacob Glickel* Northeastern

David Timmons UMass Boston

Steve Lanou MIT

Jason Barcus Harvard

Mary Fischer ^ Brandeis

Jennie Stephens Northeastern

Jacqueline Ashmore BU

Tina Woolston Tufts

Nitsan Shakked Tufts

Laura Corlin Tufts

Joan Fitzgerald Northeastern

Jaclyn Olsen * Harvard

Amanda King ^ Bentley

John Cleveland GRC

Nicole Morell MIT

Maria Cimilluca Northeastern

Erin Tighe Harvard

Kristy Kime Emerson

Donna Brescia Emerson

Duncan Pollock Emerson

Dennis Carlberg * BU

Amy Longsworth GRC

Mary Fischer ^ Brandeis

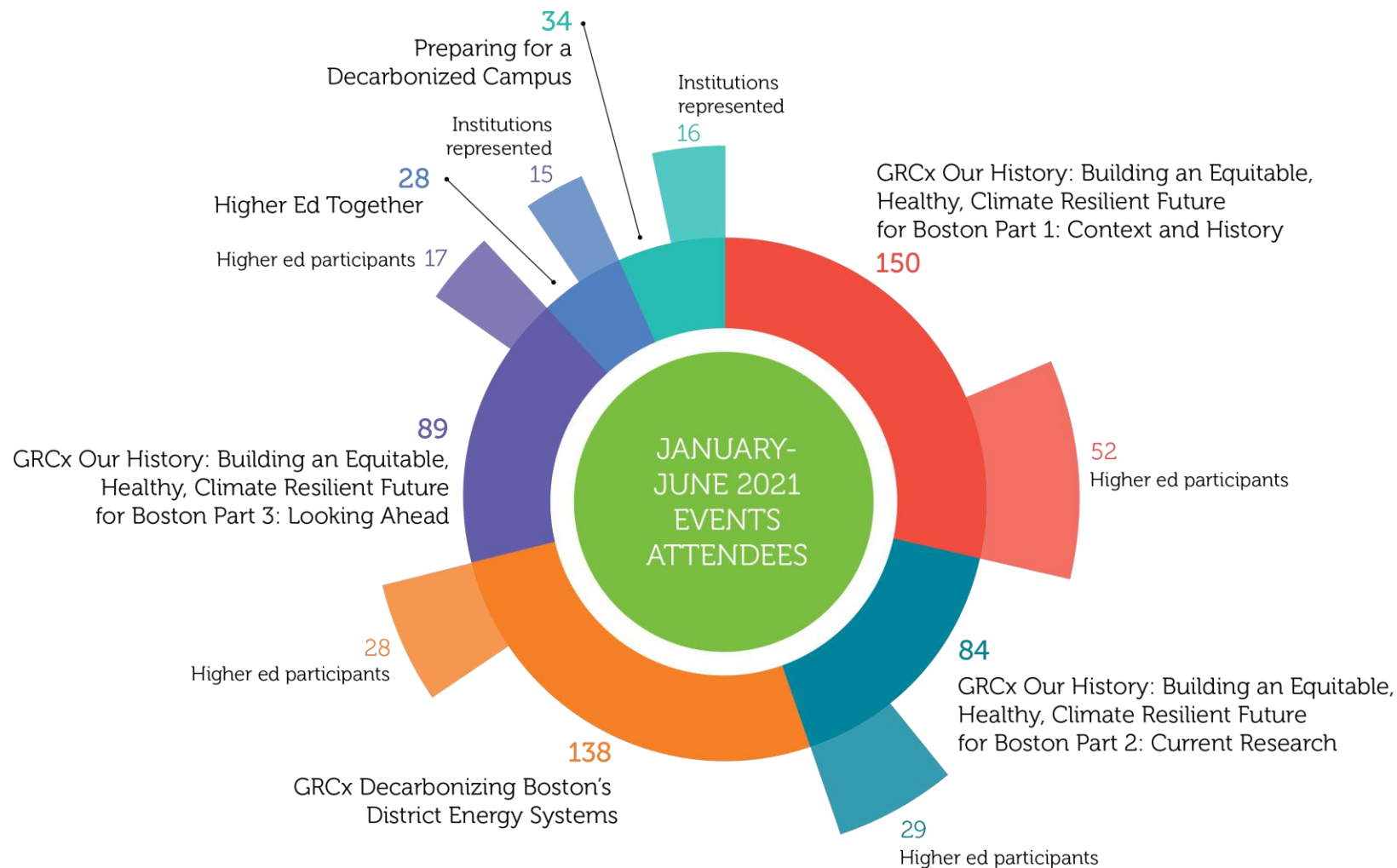
KEY

Bold indicates task force liaisons






































* Indicates co-chairs

^ New participation in 2021

Event Participation



Growth in Higher Education Outreach and First Participation

| Higher Education Participation at Launch of HEWG Plan <i>February - June 2020</i> | Higher Education Participation <i>July - December 2020</i> | Higher Education Participation <i>January - June 2021</i> |
|--|--|--|
| Level 1  HARVARD UNIVERSITY  EMERSON COLLEGE  Tufts UNIVERSITY  BOSTON UNIVERSITY  UMass BOSTON  Massachusetts Institute of Technology  NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY | |  BENTLEY UNIVERSITY  Brandeis UNIVERSITY |
| Level 2 |  WENTWORTH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  Simmons UNIVERSITY  URBAN COLLEGE of Boston  Lesley UNIVERSITY  BOSTON ARCHITECTURAL COLLEGE  Berklee |  BENJAMIN FRANKLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  MASSART  BABSON |
| Level 3 |  LINCOLN INSTITUTE OF LAND POLICY  Cornell University  JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY  University of Massachusetts Amherst  Duke UNIVERSITY  Yale |  NEW ENGLAND LAW BOSTON  PACE UNIVERSITY  JMU  Williams College  WELLESLEY  UCSF  CLARK UNIVERSITY  ITHACA COLLEGE  Hampshire College  UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA  ENDICOTT COLLEGE  UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON  JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY |

TASK FORCE 1: Support climate action planning and implementation across the higher education sector



| Strategy | Description | Highlights |
|----------|--|--|
| 1.1 | Provide climate leadership opportunities and incentives for institution-wide carbon-neutral buildings and campus operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hosted <i>Higher Ed Together</i> networking event in early March to strengthen an emerging community of Boston-area colleges and universities working together to build the expertise needed to address climate change on campus.• The event had 28 participants representing 15 institutions |
| 1.2 | Set sector-wide carbon reduction goals, with periodic targets and rewards that align with the City's climate action plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gauged interest from event participants in setting sector wide goals – growing interest in collaborative CAP w/ sector wide goals |
| 1.3 | Share information and resources with higher education institutions to support the sector in creating and implementing climate mitigation and resilience planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hosted “Preparing for a Decarbonized Campus” event in May 2020 with presentations from UMass Boston, Brandeis University, and Northeastern University• Planning a series of events in Summer/Fall 2021 to expand the HEWG network and share best practices amongst peers |

TASK FORCE 1: Support climate action planning and implementation across the higher education sector



| | | Completion scale | DESIGN | | | | | IMPLEMENT | | | | | MEASURE | | | | |
|--------|--------------|------------------------------------|--------|---|---|---|---|-----------|---|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| GOAL 1 | Strategy 1.1 | Climate leadership opportunities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strategy 1.2 | Sector wide carbon reduction goals | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strategy 1.3 | Share information and resources | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

STRATEGIC PLAN PHASES



DESIGN

FLESHING
OUT
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DETAILS



IMPLEMENT

OPERATIONALIZING
COMPLETING
TASKS



MEASURE

CHECKING
REFINING
IMPROVING
EVALUATING

| Progress before January 2021 | Progress since January 2021 |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | |
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TASK FORCE 2: Facilitate collaborative research that leverages the higher education sector's capabilities to promote solutions for equitable climate resilience and mitigation in the greater Boston area.



| Strategy | Description | Highlights |
|----------|---|--|
| 2.1 | Develop a formal cross-institution research collaborative to inform the implementation of the City's climate action plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss opportunities to form a research collaborative to work on specific research questions that support City priorities, building off the Collaborative Research Event with over 20 researchers from the Boston area hosted in July 2020 |
| 2.2 | Create a research partnership between the City and the HEWG members to facilitate living-lab research with the City on CAP implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosted three-part GRCx series: Building an Equitable, Healthy, Climate Resilient Future for Boston between March - June 2021. Featured panelists from higher education, industry, non-profits, and local community representative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part 1: Our History – Understanding the Context Behind Today's Climate Injustices Part 2: Current Research and Opportunities for Progress Part 3: Future Building an equitable, healthy, climate resilient future for Boston |
| 2.3 | Assess carbon-neutral solutions for transportation in the region | |

TASK FORCE 2: Facilitate collaborative research that leverages the higher education sector's capabilities to promote solutions for equitable climate resilience and mitigation in the greater Boston area.



| | | Completion scale | DESIGN | | | | | IMPLEMENT | | | | | MEASURE | | | | |
|--------|--------------|---|--------|---|---|---|---|-----------|---|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GOAL 2 | Strategy 2.1 | Formal cross-institution research collaborative | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strategy 2.2 | Research partnership with the City | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strategy 2.3 | Assess transportation solutions | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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TASK FORCE 3: Transfer knowledge to other sectors to accelerate change for equitable implementation of climate mitigation and resilience



| Strategy | Description | Highlights |
|----------|---|---|
| 3.1 | Provide workshops and share resources within and across key sectors to accelerate climate mitigation and resilience | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Develop a social media marketing toolkit with Slowey McManus to coordinate and amplify communications about GRCx series and other Green Ribbon Commission Events. |
| 3.2 | Collaborate with cultural institutions, commercial building owners, and the healthcare sector on tools for building energy and GHG data tracking and reporting, as well as strategies for increasing resilience planning and implementation | |
| 3.3 | Effectively communicate the urgency of climate change and opportunities for scaling climate mitigation and resilience progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Work to establish HEWG as a foundational resourceIdentify key communications contacts in the sector to announce events and collaborative opportunities |

TASK FORCE 3: Transfer knowledge to other sectors to accelerate change for equitable implementation of climate mitigation and resilience



| | | Completion scale | DESIGN | | | | | IMPLEMENT | | | | | MEASURE | | | | |
|--------|--------------|-------------------------------------|--------|---|---|---|---|-----------|---|---|---|---|---------|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GOAL 3 | Strategy 3.1 | Provide workshops & share resources | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strategy 3.2 | Collaborate across sectors | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Strategy 3.3 | Effectively communicate | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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