

Toronto Metropolitan University and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

2022 Highlights

Toronto
Metropolitan
University



About the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030.

This report provides a summary of highlights of Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU's) work to advance progress on the SDGs in 2022.





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



There are a total of 17 SDGs.

The following slides highlight examples of TMU programs and initiatives that relate to each SDG.

SDG 1: No Poverty



Student access and financial assistance

- Financial aid to support students in accessing postsecondary education:
 - [Student Access Guarantee](#) bursary assists with educational costs (e.g. tuition, books, supplies)
 - [Bursaries](#) to support first-generation students, Indigenous students, students with disabilities, and youth in extended society care
 - Other need-based and merit-based [financial assistance, scholarships and bursaries](#) are available to support TMU students

Proportion of students receiving need-based financial aid: 52%

SDG 1: No Poverty (*cont'd*)

Supporting socially sustainable businesses

- The [Social Ventures Zone](#) works with innovators to develop social ventures that create real impact, including issues as diverse as:
 - the environment;
 - urban poverty;
 - food security;
 - gender-based violence;
 - conscious consumption; and
 - accessibility.



SDG 2: Zero Hunger



Preventing student hunger

- [Good Food Centre](#): Provides access to food through a drop-in food bank, workshops and educational events.
- [Urban Farm](#): Rooftop farm that harvests over 3,000 kg of fresh produce and sells them at affordable rates to students.

Engaging with farmers

- The [Urban Farm](#) also brings together farmers, community partners and academics through interdisciplinary research that responds to the challenges of designing and operating a rooftop farm using green roof technology.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger (*cont'd*)



Sustainable food on campus

- [TMU Farmers Market](#): Weekly market (spring and fall) that features food, fresh produce and more from local farmers, producers, artisans and vendors.
- [Ted's Kitchen](#) and [The Met Dining Room](#) are both Feast On certified, meaning they use over 65 per cent locally produced food items. Both restaurants use top-quality ingredients at a fraction of the cost you would find anywhere else in the city.
- [Dining Hall at the International Living and Learning Centre](#): Features a vegan food station.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being



Proportion of graduates in health professions: 10%

Campus health services

- TMU's [Medical Centre](#) offers health services to students, staff and faculty, such as physicals, mental health assessments, assessments for common medical problems, immunizations and medical certificates.
- [Mental health services](#) on campus include the [Centre for Student Development and Counselling](#), the [Consent Comes First](#) healing-centred support for victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and the Wellbeing at Work initiative that offers resources to TMU employees.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being (cont'd)



Collaborations to support good health

- As a full member of the [Downtown East Toronto Ontario Health Team](#), TMU Student Wellbeing is committed to:
 - working collaboratively with students, the TMU community and our neighbours to cultivate well-being in our community,
 - contributing to abolishing health disparities and continuing to create the conditions for equitable access to care for all students, and
 - taking responsibility for making positive change and taking ongoing action to address all forms of racism and discrimination.
- National Institute on Ageing partnership with Egale Canada on the [National Resource Centre of 2SLGBTQI Aging](#)

SDG 4: Quality Education



Public access to TMU resources

- TMU provides access to [open educational resources](#) (OER) that can be used freely for educational purposes.
 - These resources include images and media files that can be used in teaching to presentations, lecture notes, assignments and free textbooks.

Community outreach

- [SciXchange](#) offers innovative outreach programs to a wide-ranging audience of youth and adults while actively addressing traditional imbalances in STEM disciplines, such as through its [Stoodis program](#) for Indigenous youth in Toronto.

SDG 4: Quality Education (*cont'd*)



Supporting lifelong learning

- The [Chang School of Continuing Education](#) offers 86 certificate programs and over 1,500 courses to 43,000 active learners. This includes programs designed specifically for [people aged 50+](#).
- Specialized professional instruction offered at TMU includes the Centre for Urban Energy's [Customizable Executive Education Program](#) and the Rogers Cybersecure Catalyst's [Corporate Training](#) and [Accelerated Cybersecurity Training Program](#).

SDG 5: Gender Equality



Proportion of first-generation female students: 48.1%

Proportion of senior female academics: 34.0%

Proportion of female graduates: 58.1%

Graduation rate for female students: 79.2%

Preventing discrimination and raising awareness

- TMU's [Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy](#) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, gender identity or marital/family status.
- In November, advocacy and educational events celebrated, honoured and raised the visibility of the trans community during [Trans Awareness Month](#)

SDG 5: Gender Equality (cont'd)



Women in STEM

- The Cybersecure Catalyst launched [new training programs](#) to support the development of women executive leaders in cybersecurity, and to offer hands-on experiential learning in cybersecurity to women and other populations underrepresented in the discipline.
- The Faculty of Science has [several groups](#) that seek to support female-identified students in science disciplines including math, physics and computer science.

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation



Responsible water usage

- The Sheldon and Tracy Levy Student Learning Centre (SLC) and the Daphne Cockwell Health Sciences Complex (DCC) use [grey water collection systems](#) that collect, treat, and use water from showers, taps and rain to flush toilets.
- Vegetated landscaping and roofs help with stormwater management by reducing the runoff and absorbing most of it, before it gets to the city sewers.
 - Vegetated roofs exist on the Centre for Urban Innovation, DCC, George Vari Engineering and Computing Centre and SLC.

Water consumption per person: 5.37 m³

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation (*cont'd*)



Working with government and non-profits

- Through its CivicLabTO collaboration, TMU worked with the City of Toronto on a project to evaluate sewer blockage reports to the city to support better service delivery and public education.
- The Urban Water Research Centre and Facilities Management have partnered with WWF-Canada to reduce the university's use of road salt by one third (more than 6 tonnes). Reducing the amount of road salt applied to our urban surfaces is key to mitigating the impacts on water quality and aquatic ecosystem health.

SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy



Campus energy efficiency

- TMU's [Energy Conservation and Demand Management Plan](#) reports on the university's energy consumption and identifies the short and long-term energy conservation strategy for the campus.

Energy usage per sqm: 1.026GJ/m²

Working with industry

- The [Clean Energy Zone](#) is an incubator focused on clean, sustainable energy innovations including electric vehicles, renewable energy, energy storage and distribution, microgrids and net-zero city building.

SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy (cont'd)



Working with government

- TMU was a participant in the working group that supported the development of [Ontario's Low-Carbon Hydrogen Strategy](#).
- Dr. Bala Venkatesh, a professor in the Department of Electrical, Computer, and Biomedical Engineering and the founding academic director of TMU's Centre for Urban Energy, was awarded the [NSERC Synergy Award for Innovation](#) for his work with [Toronto Hydro](#).
 - This work has spanned 18 projects, addressing a variety of challenges related to electricity reliability, sustainability, accessibility and affordability.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH



Good employment practices

- TMU earned the top spot on the Forbes list of [Canada's Best Employers for Diversity 2023](#), a ranking of the top 150 organizations across the country promoting creative, diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces.
- [The Anti-Black Racism Campus Climate Review](#), the [Truth and Reconciliation Community Consultation Report](#) and [Access TMU](#) are examples of how the university aims to bring about sustained systemic change that is informed by the campus community.

Employee rights

- TMU has [collective agreements](#) with six unions that represent faculty and staff.

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure

Research income from industry and commerce: \$8,951,363



Incubators and Zone Learning

- [Zone Learning](#) provides support and resources for those who want to get practical experience in what it takes to build an initiative/venture from the ground-up.
 - There are [10 zones](#) that act as incubators for innovation – each with a focus on a different industry – that provide opportunities to shape initiatives from the ground up and gain real world experience.

SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (*cont'd*)



- The [DMZ](#) is a leading startup incubator equipping the next generation of leading tech entrepreneurs with the tools needed to build, launch, and scale highly impactful startups.
 - Since 2010, the DMZ has helped fuel, grow and graduate 815 startups. They've raised \$2.54 billion in seed funding and have fostered the creation of more than 5,029 jobs.

Number of active spin-offs: 10

- Spin-offs are registered companies that are at least three years old that are set up to make good use of intellectual property that has originated from within TMU.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities



First-generation students: 43.6%

Proportion of students with disabilities: 6.0%

Proportion of employees with disabilities: 7.3%

Supporting underrepresented groups

- The [Tri-Mentoring Program](#) offers spaces for students who identify as part of an equity-deserving group to connect and share their experiences.
 - Students have the opportunity to explore their identity, join a community and gain knowledge of resources.
 - Group mentoring sessions support students in finding a sense of belonging and empower them to discover what they need to be successful in their post-secondary journey.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



Public performances/local arts

- The [Act II Studio](#) and [The Theatre at The Creative School](#) host performances open to the public throughout the year.
- [The Image Centre](#) is Canada's leading institution for the exhibition, research and collecting of photography, with a collection of nearly 400,000 photographic objects.
- The Creative School hosts a year-end showcase called [Mass Exodus](#) featuring fashion and design work from 100 students

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (cont'd)



Sustainable commuting and pedestrianized space

- The [Campus Public Realm Plan's](#) Campus Core Revitalization provides a vibrant and engaging configuration of public spaces, with Nelson Mandela Walk and parts of Gould Street and Victoria Street designed to prioritize pedestrians.
- According to a Sustainability Office 2021 survey, more than 90% of the campus community choose sustainable modes of transit for their daily commute.
 - TMU received the top rank globally in the 2021 [Sustainable Campus Index](#) for its campus transportation mix.
- TMU supports sustainable commuting with secure bike parking, a bike repair station, Bike Share stations, and electric vehicle charging on campus. Multiple subway and streetcar stops also border the campus.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities (*cont'd*)



Building standards

- Our [Sustainable Building Guidelines](#) ensure our commitment to carbon reduction and environmental sustainability is reflected in the design and creation of our spaces.
 - The guidelines include robust energy and emissions performance targets, waste reduction and diversion goals and other requirements that promote sustainable building design.
 - The guidelines apply to all capital projects (new construction, additions and major renovations) and minor renovations with carbon and energy implications.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production



Minimizing waste

- To encourage responsible consumption habits, TMU's Sustainability Office organizes events on campus throughout July to support [Plastic Free July](#).
 - Students, staff and faculty participate in a series of challenges, leading to thousands of individual actions to reduce plastic consumption.
- TMU Eats introduced the [OZZI reusable to-go container program](#) to the Pitman and ILC dining halls to reduce waste and single-use food packaging by encouraging students, faculty and staff to forgo disposable containers for a more sustainable takeout option.
 - Each reusable to-go container is 100% recyclable and can be used up to 300 times.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production



Reducing consumption

- The TMU [Free Store](#) is a pop-up store dedicated to helping TMU students reduce their environmental impact and save money.
 - Choose from a variety of gently-used items like office supplies, electronics, home decor, kitchen supplies, books and more, all for free.
- The [Branded Materials Transition Project](#) provides an opportunity to reuse, upcycle or recycle a wide range of Ryerson-branded materials, including merchandise, apparel, stationery, and keepsakes.
 - As part of the university renaming process more than 5000 kg of materials were collected for reuse, recycling or upcycling.

Volume of recycled and composted material: 102.93 metric tonnes

SDG 13: Climate Action



Proportion of energy from low-carbon sources: 50.3%

Environmental education

- TMU's [The Dais has received funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada to engage 270,000 young Canadians about climate change](#), on post-secondary campuses and in communities across the country.
 - This project addresses awareness and misinformation surrounding climate challenges and solutions amongst young Canadians.

SDG 13: Climate Action (*cont'd*)



Working with government

- TMU is a member of the [Green Will Initiative](#), a City program that seeks to accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from buildings in Toronto to support the City's target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 or sooner.

Research

- The [Toronto Metropolitan Resilience Engineering Lab](#) (TMREL) explores human interaction with the environment focusing on the basics: food, water, shelter, health and well-being.
 - Recognizing that the global environmental crisis threatens these basics, TMREL strives to navigate a path to a more stable relationship between immediate human needs and environmental sustainability.

SDG 14: Life Below Water



Water education

- [Apathy to Empathy](#) is an interdisciplinary curriculum that provides basic education about Indigenous communities in Canada and the challenges they face to attaining safe drinking water (delivered in courses across a variety of disciplines at TMU).
- The [Geoffrey F. Bruce Graduate and Postdoctoral Fellowships](#) are designed to support the next generation of freshwater leaders, policy researchers and practitioners and increase excellence in public policy to ensure the sustainability of Canada's freshwater resources.

SDG 14: Life Below Water (*cont'd*)



Supporting aquatic ecosystems

- In November 2022, [City Building TMU](#) hosted an event called [Healthy Water, Healthy City: New Studies in Water Management and Freshwater Science](#) about impacts of modern urban life on water systems.
- [Urban Water TMU](#) has numerous projects to find solutions to pressing issues related to wastewater and environmental pollution.

Reducing pollution

- The [Emerging Contaminants Lab](#) is studying plastic pollution from wastewater and working with the Ontario Ministry of Environment to determine if these contaminants are entering the environment.

SDG 15: Life on Land



Protecting biodiversity and wildlife

- The [Ecological Design Lab](#) (EDL) successfully campaigned to [amend a city by-law](#) to protect natural biodiversity in Toronto.
 - The EDL is part of the technical advisory team to the National Wildlife Federation on the visionary Wallis Annenberg Wildlife Crossing in Los Angeles – the world’s largest – aimed at reconnecting an integral wildlife corridor in the California’s Santa Monica Mountains.

Waste management

- TMU has [battery recycling stations across campus](#) to safely dispose of all dry cell batteries, as well as small mobile devices.

SDG 15: Life on Land (cont'd)



Campus food

- The Pitman Dining Hall is a [3 Star Certified Green Restaurant](#) under the Green Restaurant Association's rigorous standards in categories like water efficiency, waste reduction, sustainable food, and chemical and pollution reduction.
- TMU Eats is working with the [Ocean Wise](#) conservation program to source and offer more sustainable seafood options on campus.
 - The Ocean Wise logo on dining hall menus identifies products that ensure the health of our oceans for generations to come.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



University governance

- TMU has a bicameral governance structure consisting of a [Senate](#) and [Board of Governors](#).

Community engagement

- TMU worked with the City of Brampton to [consult the local community](#) on plans for the university's School of Medicine, scheduled to open in 2025.
- The Lincoln Alexander School of Law offers a [legal clinic](#) in which students work with lawyers to provide free legal services to community members.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (*cont'd*)



Working with government

- Through CivicLabTO, [TMU partners with the City of Toronto](#) and other higher education institutions on research projects for the municipal government.
- David Amborski from the School of Urban and Regional Planning was a member of [Ontario Housing Affordability Task Force](#) established by the provincial government to provide expert advice on the housing crisis facing the province.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



Policy and dialogue

- The Yellowhead Institute has published research on [Indigenous inclusion](#) related to climate adaptation plans in Canada.
- The CERC in Migration and Integration [hosted an event](#) on planning for a sustainable policy for the Ukraine refugee emergency.

Research and collaboration

- The TMU Library participated in [Open Access Week 2022](#) with the theme “Climate Justice” by organizing events and encouraging sharing of research and information to tackle the climate crisis.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals (*cont'd*)



Education and outreach for SDGs

- The Sustainability Office organized sustainability-focused events during [Orientation Week](#) to promote climate action and awareness on campus.
- City Building TMU's [Urban Innovation Café](#) series convenes diverse leaders, researchers and policy makers in panels to discuss current urban innovations and their potential to solve big problems.
- The [Reconciliation in Business](#) event brought together hundreds of people to celebrate Indigenous peoples and culture in business & entrepreneurship.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals (*cont'd*)



Sustainability-focused courses

- The Ted Rogers School of Management (TRSM) was recognized by the Corporate Knights Better World MBA Ranking for integrating sustainability into curriculum, placing 2nd in Canada and 8th internationally.
- TMU offers sustainability-focused courses, degrees and certificates across disciplines and faculties, providing undergraduate, graduate and adult education students the opportunity to identify, articulate and take action on challenges facing our world today.