



# 2022 Sustainable Jersey Annual Report

THE TIME IS NOW

# A Message from THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**Thirteen years ago, we launched Sustainable Jersey. Working with our partners at The College of New Jersey, state agencies, the New Jersey League of Municipalities and the New Jersey School Boards Association, among many others, we have transformed a good idea into a major statewide movement and program. In 2022, we increased our technical assistance, released new resources, continued funding local projects and broadened our partnerships to increase our impact.**

With creativity and determination, we continue to advance our mission to empower local leaders and New Jersey communities as they pursue critical sustainability initiatives. In 2022, despite the lingering effects of the pandemic, Sustainable Jersey had its second highest number of municipal certification applications and towns achieving certification. We awarded our first Gold Stars in Water and Health to the municipalities that have reached high levels of achievement and we are beginning work on a new Gold Star in Resilience.

Sustainable Jersey for Schools has more than 1,000 participating schools. We celebrated the 158 schools that achieved certification in 2022, including all 17 of the schools in the Camden City School District and all 65 of the schools in the Newark Public School District. We welcomed the 13 schools that earned Digital Schools Star recognition as part of their Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification.

Sustainable Jersey has focused on providing more resources and assistance to help schools and municipalities make progress. Our staff provided technical assistance such as planning for and implementing complete streets, pursuing sustainable energy, advancing food waste solutions and more. In partnership with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, we worked with 24 overburdened municipalities to help develop their Community Energy Plans and launched the Sustainable Jersey-PSE&G Partnership Program to empower municipalities, residents and businesses to better manage energy use and access energy-efficiency programs and incentives.

Within this report, you will find examples of our results that were driven by our mission. Most importantly, you will be reminded that people from across New Jersey were supported and energized through grants, resources and the irrepressible Sustainable Jersey movement. From the City of Newark to Wildwood Crest Borough, we recognize the individuals who stepped up in 2022 and worked with us to positively impact communities and the state.

As we head into another pivotal decade for climate action and sustainability, we understand the urgency and responsibility of our goal to create a new era of sustainability in New Jersey—one that secures economic, environmental and societal well-being. To all of our partners, donors and volunteers—thank you for everything you do. Our focus is to reward, honor and support your work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Solomon'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter 'R' being particularly large and stylized.

**Randall Solomon**

*Executive Director, Sustainable Jersey*



# Our Work

## SUSTAINABILITY ACTIONS AND CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Issues such as water scarcity, climate change, racism and environmental degradation require broad-based sustainability literacy to ensure that people are equipped to recognize and respond to critical issues immediately. Collaborating with state agencies, non-profit organizations, foundations, academia and the business community, Sustainable Jersey researches best practices for what communities could and should do to contribute to a sustainable future. The program culminates in a prestigious certification award to municipalities and schools that have documented meeting a set of rigorous standards.

### Sustainability Actions

Since the launch of the Sustainable Jersey municipal program in 2009 and the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program in 2014, participants have successfully implemented and documented over 23,500 discrete actions from our list of best practices. Municipalities choose from 160 actions to complete, such as meeting targets for green fleets, implementing energy efficiency measures, conducting a waste audit for municipal buildings or completing a natural resources inventory, to earn points towards certification. Schools choose from 101 actions to complete, such as performing energy audits, creating a plan to provide equitable access to digital learning, incorporating sustainability concepts into curriculum, improving school grounds and facilities and boosting recycling efforts, to earn points towards certification.

## SUSTAINABLE JERSEY COLLECTIVE IMPACT

91%

of NJ Population Lives in a Registered or Certified Community

23.5K

Sustainability Actions Completed by Both Municipalities and Schools



82% OF NJ MUNICIPALITIES PARTICIPATING

223 NJ MUNICIPALITIES CERTIFIED



64% OF NJ PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS REGISTERED

354 NJ SCHOOLS CERTIFIED



“Our administration and remarkable volunteers strive day in and day out to create not just a sustainable future, but a more livable here and now for the residents of Bordentown City. Sustainable Jersey provides actions and serves as a continual reminder to strive for good governance in everything we do”

- **THE HONORABLE JENNIFER SCIORTINO**  
Mayor, Bordentown City  
Burlington County

# Local Solutions, Lasting Impact



## GRANTS, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING

Sustainable Jersey connects participating communities with financial and technical resources to complete actions and make progress towards a sustainable future. Multiple competitive grant and technical assistance opportunities funded by program underwriters and partner organizations are provided each year. In addition, trainings, workshops and webinars are made available to help participants move forward in the program.

### Sustainable Jersey Grants Program

Through our grants program, over \$7 million dollars in grants have been awarded to New Jersey municipalities and school districts since 2009. In 2022, a total of \$555,000 in grants was awarded to fund 100 municipal and school projects across the state. Grants ranged from \$2,000 capacity building grants for green teams to grants for high-impact sustainability projects with funding levels as high as \$20,000. Projects addressed a wide range of sustainability issues such as environmental stewardship, climate resiliency and planning, walkable/bikeable communities, access to fresh local food, food waste and recycling, sustainability and climate change education, and more. The grants program is an impactful benefit and incentive that drives municipalities and schools to participate in the certification programs while helping to jump start sustainability efforts with seed funding.

### Sustainable Jersey Technical Assistance

We offer technical assistance to New Jersey municipalities and school districts. In 2022, our staff responded to 1,445 technical assistance phone and email requests. In depth technical assistance opportunities are also funded by program underwriters and partner organizations each year. In 2022, we assisted over 79 municipalities and schools with in-depth assistance to implement projects in areas such as complete streets, energy efficiency, water management, local health, social equity, food waste solutions, fleet electrification and more.

*The Egg Harbor Green Team and I work hard to maintain our Sustainable Jersey certification and develop initiatives that reduce energy consumption and create a more sustainable future for our residents. As a small, economically challenged community, the work is challenging. Without the support of Sustainable Jersey, the grant program and its funders none of our accomplishments would be possible."*

- **THE HONORABLE  
LISA JIAMPETTI**  
Mayor, Egg Harbor City  
Atlantic County

## 2022 SUSTAINABLE JERSEY TRAININGS, WORKSHOPS AND WEBINARS

**152**  
EVENTS

**8,283**  
PARTICIPANTS

## 2022 SUSTAINABLE JERSEY GRANTS

**100**  
GRANTS AWARDED

**\$555,000**  
VALUE OF GRANTS AWARDED

# 2022 IN REVIEW

## HIGHLIGHTS

**New Jersey Sustainability Summit:** Our Sustainability Summit drew hundreds of changemakers from across New Jersey to Bell Works in Holmdel. A total of 13 sustainability sessions facilitated discussions on the climate crisis, community energy planning, electrifying municipal and school fleets, resiliency planning, the hidden impacts on health, reducing food waste and combating food insecurity, organic gardening, incorporating state climate education standards into classrooms, engaging youth, overcoming racial and social bias, and more.

**Community Energy Planning for Municipalities:** Working with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), we created the Guide for Sustainable Energy Communities to help municipalities engage in community energy planning. In addition, we worked with 24 overburdened municipalities to help them develop a Community Energy Plan as part of the NJBPU Community Energy Plan Grant Program. Technical assistance included team building, a review of the municipality's community energy data and help identifying initiatives for the Community Energy Plan.

**Partnership to Support Energy Efficiency:** We launched the Sustainable Jersey-PSE&G Partnership Program to empower municipalities, residents and businesses to better manage energy use and access energy-efficiency programs and incentives. Sustainable Jersey is providing customized technical assistance and implementation support for schools and municipalities.

**Climate and Resilience Planning for Municipalities:** We started working with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management and others to develop guidance and assistance for municipalities to plan for, and adapt to, climate change. We are creating model guidance for municipalities to meet new state mandates to address environmental justice, inland flooding rules and climate change in their Master Plan updates and local ordinances.

**Sustainable Jersey Regional Hubs:** Working through collective action between municipalities, county agencies and nonprofit partners, our regional hubs made progress on important issues such as group purchasing of renewable energy, energy efficiency outreach in overburdened communities and regional air quality improvement. By keeping towns connected to each other, green teams gained the opportunity to partner on projects with neighboring municipalities to boost limited resources.



### SUSTAINABLE JERSEY REGIONAL HUBS

Atlantic-Cape May Counties Hub

Sustainable Bergen County Hub

Sustainable Essex Alliance

Sustainable Hunterdon Hub

Sustainable Hunterdon Schools Hub

Mercer County Sustainability Coalition

Monmouth County Hub

Ocean County Sustainability Hub

Somerset County Green Leadership Hub

Tri-County Sustainability  
(Camden, Burlington, Gloucester)


Union County Hub

Urban Sustainability Hub

## MAKING AN IMPACT ONLINE: 2022 SNAPSHOT

 **126,015** FACEBOOK  
REACH

 **191,197** TWITTER  
IMPRESSIONS\*

 **602,053** WEBSITE  
PAGE VIEWS\*

*\*From both Sustainable Jersey  
and Sustainable Jersey for Schools*

## 2022 GRANT UNDERWRITERS

PSEG Foundation

New Jersey Education Association

## 2022 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PARTNERS/FUNDERS

Elizabethtown Gas

Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation

Environmental Defense Fund

First Energy Foundation

Gardinier Environmental Fund

The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation

New Jersey American Water

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

New Jersey Natural Gas

North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority

PSE&G

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

South Jersey Gas

**Gold Star Standards in Health and Water:** We awarded our first Gold Stars in Health to Princeton and Woodbridge, and our second Gold Star in Water to Readington Township. Municipalities receive Gold Star recognition for reaching high levels of achievement in key dimensions of sustainability. The Gold Star in Water identifies specific actions and levels of performance for municipalities to achieve improvements in water quality, quantity and use. The Gold Star in Health identifies specific actions and levels of performance for municipalities to demonstrate how they have effectively incorporated health in municipal decision-making and addressed certain social and environmental determinants of health within their communities.

**New Jersey Student Climate Challenge:** We administered the New Jersey Student Climate Challenge for public schools serving students in grades 6-12 across the state. High school and middle school student team winners and their teacher mentors were honored by New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy for their Student Climate Challenge action projects at an awards ceremony hosted by the Drumthwacket Foundation. The program partners are the Drumthwacket Foundation, Atlantic City Electric and Exelon.

**New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub:** To help the school community successfully navigate the incorporation of climate change education into New Jersey's Student Learning Standards, Sustainable Jersey co-led the Climate Change Education Thought Leader Committee and launched the New Jersey Climate Change Education Hub (NJClimateEducation.org). The Hub equips educators with teaching materials aligned to the new Climate Change Education Student Learning Standards. The program partners are New Jersey School Boards Association, The College of New Jersey, New Jersey Audubon, National Wildlife Federation and SubjectToClimate.

**Sustainable and Scalable Food Waste Solutions for Schools:** To address food waste in K-12 New Jersey schools, Sustainable Jersey and Rutgers Cooperative Extension have been implementing a project, funded by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), to complete a comprehensive food waste pilot study of three schools. The results of this program will be used to build on the NJDEP's Food Waste Guidelines for Schools and create a food waste toolkit for K-12 schools.



# What's Ahead

The planet and its inhabitants are reaching a crucial point. Sustainable Jersey can help. This is our mission. Sustainable Jersey will continue to empower New Jersey communities to build a better world for future generations with the tools, training and financial incentives necessary to pursue critical sustainability initiatives. There is opportunity right now, everywhere we look, to do good for people, the planet and our collective prosperity. We are seizing every chance we can.

## Advancing Equity

Sustainable Jersey is striving to become more equitable, more inclusive and better prepared to do the work of advancing social justice while supporting municipalities and schools in New Jersey to do the same. In doing so, our organization commits to take anti-racist action and to oppose oppression in all forms. In 2022, we provided technical assistance to municipalities interested in advancing social equity, diversity and inclusion. This work will continue as a priority in 2023.

## Focusing on Sustainable Energy

Sustainable Jersey will support municipalities and schools in completing energy actions at a high level of effectiveness. Our targeted outreach and technical assistance will help municipalities and schools in establishing energy tracking and management systems and applying for state and utility incentives for energy upgrades on facilities.

## Preparing the Next Generation

Sustainable Jersey supports schools and school districts as they provide students with the tools they need to fight for a sustainable planet. By equipping students with the knowledge and skills needed to understand climate change, we help build the next generation of climate literate leaders, including policymakers, scientists, teachers, entrepreneurs and more, who will develop solutions and lead the green economy. Sustainable Jersey will continue to grow our work in climate change education.



Sustainable Jersey is unique because participants care about the sustainability work being done. From the green team members to the staff and Board, everyone believes in the mission and is striving to make a difference.”

– ANNE-MARIE PERACCHIO

*Managing Director of Marketing and Energy Efficiency, New Jersey Natural Gas*



The work of Sustainable Jersey is truly remarkable. As an organization, it has had a positive impact that is unique in New Jersey and across the country. The actions that municipalities and schools complete are impressive and the results are beyond what I could have imagined. It has truly moved the needle for sustainability at the state, national and planetary level.”

– **DR. LAWRENCE S. FEINSOD**

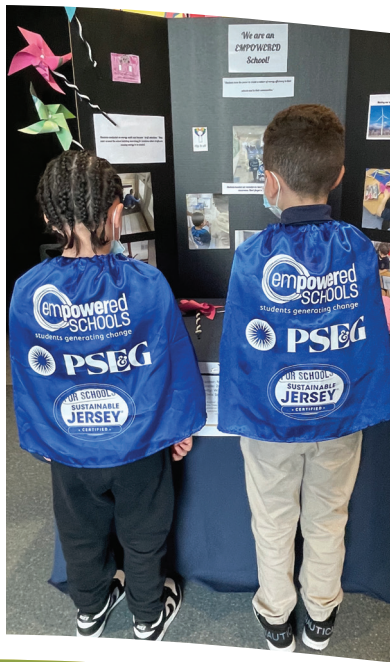
*Former Executive Director, New Jersey School Boards Association*

## VISION

To achieve a sustainable New Jersey, one community at a time.

## MISSION

Empower New Jersey communities to build a better world for future generations with the tools, training and financial incentives necessary to pursue critical sustainability initiatives.

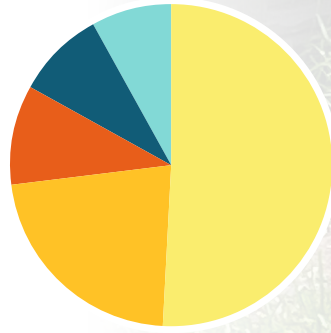




# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

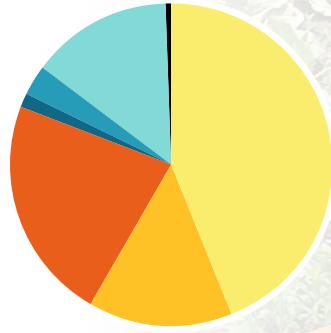
## FY2022 FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

Certification Programs	\$1,820,243
Small Grants Program	\$783,058
Other Programs	\$356,993
Management & General	\$317,164
Fundraising	\$285,297



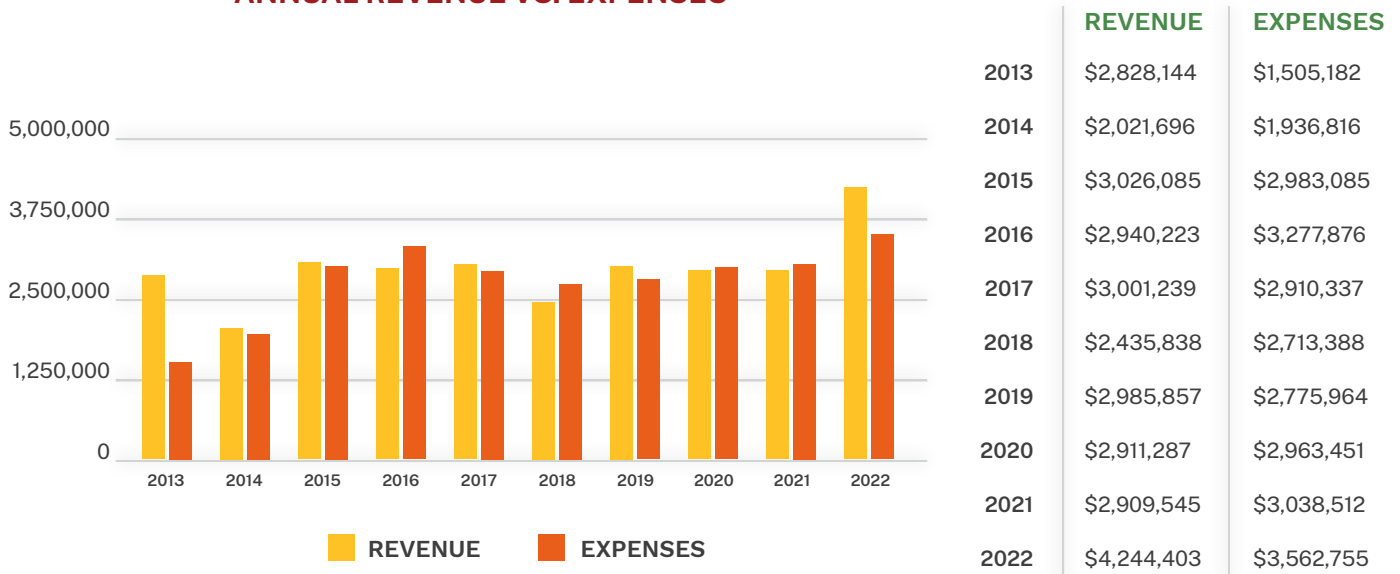
## FY2022 REVENUE

Grants with Donor Restrictions	\$1,869,034
Grants without Donor Restrictions	\$615,512
In-kind Revenue*	\$945,996
Special Events	\$62,498
Contributions	\$131,547
Program Income	\$602,633
Other	\$17,183



\*Reflects grants awarded to The College of New Jersey to support the Sustainable Jersey programs

## ANNUAL REVENUE VS. EXPENSES



Source: Sustainable Jersey financial statements for fiscal year ending June 2022 audited by Sobel & Co. LLC.

# THANK YOU SUPPORTERS

Sustainable Jersey is grateful to the foundations, state agencies, professional associations, corporations, individuals and other organizations that generously support our mission to build a more sustainable New Jersey – one community at a time. We are proud to acknowledge the following program underwriters and funders.

## PROGRAM UNDERWRITERS



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation



## GRANTS PROGRAM



## CORPORATE SPONSORS



### CORPORATIONS

Atlantic City Electric  
 Bryan Electric  
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 Drop the Beet Farms  
 EZenergy  
 Green Team Worldwide  
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### FOUNDATIONS

Conserve to Preserve Foundation  
 Educational Leadership Foundation of New Jersey  
 The Drumthwacket Foundation  
 Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation  
 The Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation  
 Jon Ben Snow Memorial Trust

### NONPROFITS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education  
 Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center (Rutgers University)  
 Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions  
 New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center (Rutgers University)  
 New Jersey Future  
 New Jersey Healthy Communities Network  
 New Jersey Institute for Disabilities  
 New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association  
 New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association  
 New Jersey Public Health Association  
 NJIT Center for Community Systems  
 North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority  
 Rutgers Cooperative Extension  
 The Nature Conservancy

### GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Atlantic County Utilities Authority  
 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission  
 New Jersey Department of Community Affairs  
 New Jersey Department of Education  
 New Jersey Department of Health  
 New Jersey Department of Human Services  
 North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority

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# SUSTAINABLE JERSEY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

An independent, volunteer Board of Trustees, supported by staff, governs Sustainable Jersey. Sustainable Jersey is grateful to collaborate with such an experienced team of leaders whose vision and expertise guide and advance our strategic objectives.

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### DR. TIMOTHY PURNELL+

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Harmony Township Board of Education



\* Term expired December 31, 2022

+ Term began January 1, 2023

**Sustainable Jersey**  
encompasses the three equal, interrelated  
components of sustainability.



## PEOPLE

Contribute to a strong civil society  
that provides opportunity for all



## PROSPERITY

Support local economies and  
use community resources




## PLANET

Practice responsible environmental  
management and conservation



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