

# Sustainability Fellowship: Writing Position Statements for Sustainable Tallahassee



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## Background

- FSU Sustainable Campus has offered me a unique opportunity to gain a better understanding of sustainability in the local Tallahassee community.
- Through this professional experience, I have learned about the need for Electric Vehicle expansion, the need for an increase of infrastructure to support Electric Vehicles, and the many benefits of electric lawn and garden equipment.
- This fellowship has enhanced my research skills, as well as my knowledge of the sustainable actions in effect in the city, as well as where more could be done.

## Goals

- As a Sustainability Fellow, my goal for the semester was to research various environmental topics and draft both position and policy statements for Sustainable Tallahassee.
- Furthermore, I wanted to help achieve Sustainable Tallahassee's goal of communicating environmental topics to the community through working with my community partner Shawn Youngblood.
- I also wanted my statements to provide solutions for the community to live more sustainably.

## Methodology for Position Statement #1: Expansion of Electric Vehicles (EVs)

- Each week as a Sustainability Fellow looked different, but it consisted of hours of research and multiple drafts.
- It took approximately 4 weeks, multiple drafts, and even more back-and-forth emails on tweaking the statement.
- Along with the statement, I had to create a board proposal for each statement.
- After going through the REA committee, it was successfully passed by all upper members of Sustainable Tallahassee.

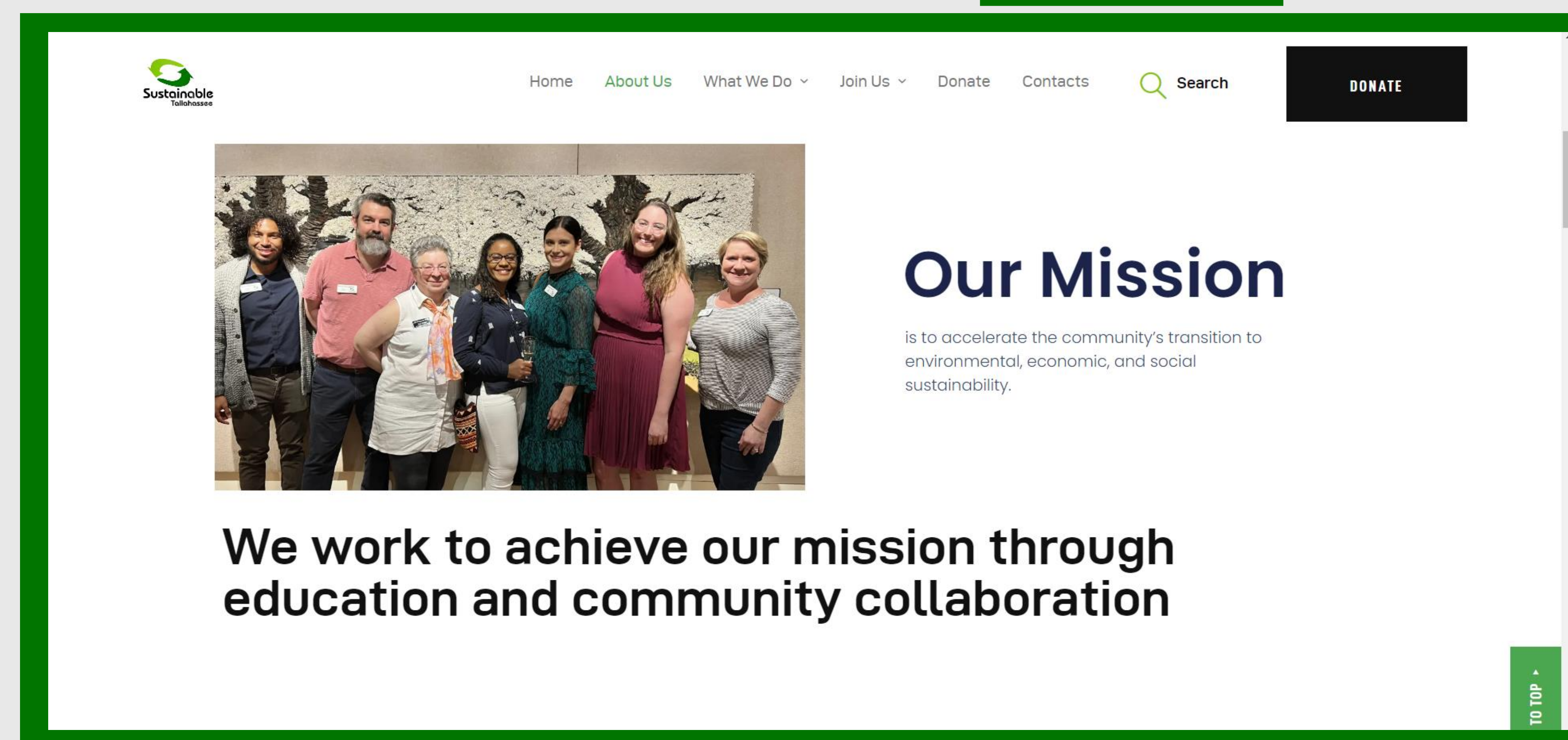
## Examples from Position Statement #1

- Automobile transportation accounted for 27% of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2020. The transition to electric vehicles (EVs) is necessary to reduce our impact on climate change. On average, a gasoline car produces an estimated 12,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually, whereas an EV produces an estimated 3,000 pounds of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions annually.
- Sustainable Tallahassee has in the past supported other forms of sustainable transportation, such as E-bikes and EV Expo, and will continue to show support in the expansion of EVs.

## Sustainable Tallahassee

- Sustainable Tallahassee is a volunteer-run organization that aims to serve The City of Tallahassee and Leon County.
- They focus on working with local government, businesses, and non-profit organizations to educate the community on sustainability and what steps they could take to live more sustainably.
- Sustainable Tallahassee sought out a fellow to research and draft position statements to be able to communicate the organization's perspective on various environmental topics to the public.

Sustainable Tallahassee's Website



## Methodology for Policy Statement #2: Electric Garden and Lawn Equipment

- Because I now understood the flow of researching and constructing a statement, this second statement took me approximately 2 weeks with multiple drafts, and back-and-forth emails on tweaking the statement.
- Along with the statement, I had to create a board proposal for the statement.
- After going through the REA committee, they came back with a few suggestions
- The drafting is currently ongoing and is expected to be approved by the Sustainable Tallahassee board within the next month.

## Examples from Policy Statement #2

- Transitioning to electric lawn and garden equipment (ELGE) will further reduce our carbon footprint and help mitigate climate change. City rebates for private individuals and businesses to purchase ELGE will accelerate the community's transition away from fossil fuels while reducing operating costs
- Reducing the initial purchase price of ELGE through municipal rebates will encourage more residents to make the transition
- These incentives paired with a municipal policy change to disallow contracts with GLGE operators will make our community healthier, wealthier, and quieter.

## Methodology for Policy Statement #3: Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Expansion

- This third statement took me approximately 3 weeks with multiple drafts, and back-and-forth emails on tweaking the statement.
- Shawn and I also had a meeting with City Manager Michael Ohlsen to discuss the statement draft and hear his thoughts on the direction of the city's electrical infrastructure.
- Along with the statement, I had to create a board proposal for the statement.
- After going through the REA committee, they came back with a few suggestions.
- The drafting is currently ongoing and is expected to be approved by the Sustainable Tallahassee board within the next month.

## Examples from Policy Statement #3

- With an increase in EV infrastructure, the city, and its citizens would spend significantly less amount of money on electricity than gasoline.
- Tallahassee is capable of this. The Leon County Commission adopted the EV Ready Ordinance in 2022, allowing Leon County to establish and facilitate EV use in the city and expand cost-effective infrastructure to host the growing use of Evs.
- For example, the Jacksonville Electric Authority company offers minimum rebates of up to \$1,000 per ChargePoint Level 2 home charger.

## Results

- Position Statement #1: Expansion of Electric Vehicles (Evs): Successfully passed by the Sustainable Tallahassee Board.
- Policy Statement #2: Electric Garden and Lawn Equipment: Nearing the end of the drafting stage with revisions from the board, with hopes of it being passed by next month.
- Policy Statement #3: Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Expansion: Nearing the end of the drafting stage with revisions from the board, with hopes of it being passed by next month.

## Conclusion/Recommendations

- This fellowship has enhanced my knowledge of sustainability, as well as community strides that need to be taken to reach a more sustainable future
- I thoroughly enjoyed this fellowship, and I would recommend this to anyone who is interested.

## References

- <https://sustainabletallahassee.org/>
- [https://qr.io/?gclid=CjwKCAjwitShBhA6EiwAq3RqAo6PBSaHUPHMeOzEZy-lXpX8JKGPpQdDePjCzbJooKfSOZKttieB2BoC2O8QAvD\\_BwE](https://qr.io/?gclid=CjwKCAjwitShBhA6EiwAq3RqAo6PBSaHUPHMeOzEZy-lXpX8JKGPpQdDePjCzbJooKfSOZKttieB2BoC2O8QAvD_BwE)