

Green Office Innovations

An innovation is a unique, original procedure or program implemented by your office that furthers your sustainable impact in a way not already covered on the checklist. Your office can describe innovations and mark self-assigned points on the last tab of the checklist, and the Office of Sustainability will determine the final points following submission.

What qualifies as an innovation?

- Not already covered on the checklist
- Already covered on the checklist, but vastly exceeds the point's requirements
- Occurs within your office or involves interaction within your office community
 - "An office member has a home garden" DOES NOT qualify
 - "Several office members are home gardeners and exchange their fruits and veggies in the office" DOES qualify
- Currently in effect in your office (i.e. not a planned action)
- Implemented within the past three years

How are points awarded for innovations?

- Innovations are measured in terms of **effort** by your office (low or high) and **impact** on sustainability (low or high).
- On the checklist, offices can indicate if they view their action as low or high effort and low or high impact. However, the Office of Sustainability reserves the right to change the awarded points based on its own evaluation of the innovation.
- Include **as much detail as possible** (for example: costs, pages of paper saved, etc.) about the effort and impact when describing the innovation so that accurate points can be assigned.
- Maximum points policy: An office cannot advance more than one certification level on innovation points alone. The maximum points awarded in a given cycle is 16.
- Examples:
 - Low **effort**, low **impact**: "We save leftover food in our office kitchen from catered events, which occur 3-4 times a year." (1 point)
 - Low **effort**, high **impact**: "Our department eliminated the production of a 14 page brochure and made it only available electronically. The brochure was previously mailed to approximately 12,000 people." (2 points)

- High **effort**, low **impact**: “We have purchased a set of reusable mugs, cups, dishes, etc. to be shared by our departmental kitchen to eliminate the need for disposable plastic cups and paper plates.” (2 points)
- High **effort**, high **impact**: “Our 30 person office has developed a Green Team of 3 members who are responsible for coordinating sustainability in our office and organizing quarterly sustainability-focused events for the entire office.” (3 points)

	Low Impact	High Impact
Low Effort	1 point	2 points
High Effort	2 points	3 points

Do recurring innovations receive points?

- As long as innovations continue to have a sustainable impact, innovations continue to receive full points for three years, regardless of continued effort.
- **After the third year, an innovation will no longer receive points**, unless it has been significantly altered or expanded.
- Include the year of implementation of each innovation on the checklist.
- The three-year timeline for innovation points is not intended to discourage offices from continuing their original sustainable practices. Rather, we want to encourage offices to continue developing innovative practices and procedures for years into the future.