



Engage with Youth on Community Sustainability

Action Updates

This action is available for the **current certification cycle** and was newly added in 2023.

Objective

Support youth-led sustainability initiatives and projects in your community.

What to Do

1. Support youth-led sustainability projects in your community. Each project supported under this Action is eligible for **5 points, up to 15 points**. Critical elements of this action include:
 - o Projects must align with a Sustainable CT action. For each Sustainable CT action completed as a result of a youth-led project, your town is eligible for points under this Action in addition to points for the action implemented.
 - o To earn points under this action, the youth leading the project must be 21 years old or younger.
 - o Projects may begin in a classroom setting or as part of a school assignment, but they must have an implementation element (i.e. should not just be a research report).
 - o Projects must be publicly accessible. Projects on school property, even if accessible to the wider community, are not eligible for points under this action.
 - o Youth leaders and projects do not need to be affiliated with a school or community organization.

Municipality must actively support projects. Examples of ways your municipality can support these projects are listed below.

- o Municipal staff work with youth to share their knowledge, expertise, or other relevant information that support the completion of a project.
- o Physical space for the project, such as municipal open space for the creation of a community garden.
- o Funding to support all or a portion of the project.

Submit: A completed [worksheet 1](#) and documentation of your municipality agreeing to support the project (this can be informal, such as an email or letter).

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit. This action falls under the action type "Implementation Projects" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you may not claim *New Action Credit* for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for *Rolling Credit* for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the “partners” box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. For additional information, please see the Partners Guidance Document.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from the Board of education or District schools; the public works department; the parks and recreation department; the town manager, selectman, or mayor's office; and representatives from local arts groups; local youth-oriented community groups; and community organizations, nonprofits or ad-hoc groups interested in sustainability could be helpful in implementing this action.

Why This Matters

Municipal support of a youth-designed, youth-led sustainability initiative can empower the young people involved. They may feel their ideas are valid and important, their work gives them a sense of ownership and responsibility over municipal sustainability, and they have the chance for a valuable, real-world, hands-on educational opportunity. Instilling in young residents early on that their contributions matter can set them up for a lifetime of civic and community engagement. In a state where aging populations are a concern for many municipalities, instilling community stewardship and engagement in youth may also help encourage young people to live in Connecticut long-term.

Benefits

In addition to the many benefits young people receive from having their ideas supported and nurtured, the municipality will enjoy the sustainability benefits of the finished product. These connections offer the chance to build deeper relationships between municipal leaders and schools or youth-focused organizations.

For a complete list of funding opportunities, implementation resources, and success stories specific to this action, please visit the full Action write-up on the [Sustainable CT Actions webpage](#).