



Partner with NSS to host our Annual Conference!

The National Sustainability Society is rapidly establishing itself as a premier professional organization dedicated to convening, curating, and amplifying research and application in the cross-sectoral and transdisciplinary field of sustainability. The robust and fast-growing membership of approximately 1,200 individuals spans the breadth of the sustainability ecosystem, including academia (faculty across all ranks, students, post-doctoral researchers, and campus staff); industry (professionals driving sustainability initiatives, products, and goals in the private sector); and the public sector (experts and policymakers working within government and non-profit organizations). This diverse membership underscores the NSS's foundational role in bridging disciplinary and professional silos, making it a critical hub for transdisciplinary dialogue and action. The NSS is an independent 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit, incorporated in Michigan.

As a young organization, the NSS actively engages in community building: listening to our members and making cross-sector and organizational connections, all while adhering to our mission and values. We convene an annual conference and engage with our membership through webinars, podcasts, a quarterly member newsletter, and LinkedIn with 1,500 followers.

The NSS annual conference facilitates knowledge sharing and cross-sector engagement around the science and practice of sustainability. Each year, we collaborate with a different institution, allowing us to travel across the country to enhance national accessibility and build our membership, reputation, and impact. Previous conference partners and themes include:

- 2024, with the University of Washington: *Innovation, Implementation, and Workforce Development for Sustainability*
- 2025, with the University of Notre Dame: *Transformative Change for a Just and Sustainable Future*
- 2026, with Colorado State University: *Courage, Credibility, and Collective Action in Sustainability*

Why partner with NSS?

Shape the conference agenda: Individuals on the planning committee will have the opportunity to shape the conference agenda and activities, aligning them with organizational expertise and showcasing your institutional and regional sustainability accomplishments.

Elevated institutional reputation: Being selected as the next conference partner for a fast-growing, cross-sector professional society signals both academic prestige and a genuine commitment to industry and public-sector partnerships.

Increased visibility and reach: Your institution will gain significant national visibility in cross-sector, transdisciplinary sustainability research and application, through 6-10 months of pre-conference advertising. During the conference, your faculty, researchers, and students will have direct access to the NSS network of sustainability professionals attending the conference.

Deepened collaboration: The partnership will offer new opportunities for your institution's existing sustainability and sustainability-adjacent units to collaborate directly with the NSS. This will deepen your institution's network, broaden its research scope, and amplify the real-world impact of its scholarship.

Co-hosting Criteria

1. Partners must form at least 25% of the conference planning committee membership (15-20 total committee members).
2. All partnering individuals and their organizations must align with the NSS mission and values and be committed to supporting the conference theme for that year.
3. Institutional co-hosts are expected to cover some of the conference costs, whether through in-kind or financial contributions, and/or discounted access to services. In-kind and financial support, totaling at least \$100K, is required to be a Foundational sponsor of the NSS. Foundational Sponsors receive: your logo on the conference website, mobile app, & registration desk; recognition in the opening remarks (for 10 years); 10 conference registrations, 5 workshop registrations, and 1 poster.

How to submit a co-hosting proposal

Send application to cristy@thenss.org

In your proposal, please describe how your institution meets the criteria for each NSS conference co-host component. Please specify which costs your institution will cover, indicating both the approximate dollar amount and whether the support is an in-kind donation, financial contribution, and/or discounted access to services.

- Institution
- Location (city, state)
- Point person name and contact details
- Venue description and capacity
- Catering options
- Services and support: point of contact, commitment to planning, development of local host committee, etc.
- Event management resources
- Marketing and promotion resources

NSS Conference Logistical Requirements

1. VENUE AND FACILITIES

Venue Description:

- 10-15 rooms for parallel session use. Minimum capacity per room: 30
- At least one large space for plenary sessions. Minimum capacity: 600 people.
- Space for coffee breaks. Minimum capacity: 200 people.
- Space for a reception: Minimum capacity: 600 people.
- Space and equipment (stands) for posters.
- Space for buffet-style lunch. Minimum capacity: 300 people.
- All spaces must be ADA accessible.

Other location considerations:

- Nearest airport and transportation options to and from the airport to the venue
- Accommodation options: variety and distance from venue

Technical Capabilities:

- All presentation rooms must have IT capabilities (either installed/permanent computers or hook-ups for laptops and screens).
- Ideally, plenary spaces would have recording capabilities.
- Tech support must be available. The NSS will organize student volunteer support, some of whom may be tech savvy, but an on-call venue technician is ideal.
- Internet connectivity must be available for all attendees

Catering and Amenities:

- Catering for coffee breaks and lunch.
- Access to sustainability-forward caterers (e.g. vegetarian fare and minimal waste buffet-style lunches. Must have gluten-free and vegan options as well.
- Water bottle refill stations or water fountains.
- ADA and gender neutral bathroom availability
- Mother's room (private lactation room) access.

2. SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Event Management:

- A key point of contact is essential, and will play a leading role in the NSS conference planning committee, as committee chair or co-chair. More people are welcome to be involved, especially those from a range of sectors.
- The key point of contact can also lead the local logistics committee, or they can invite better situated colleagues to join/lead. The planning committee and local logistics committees typically work in tandem and share updates as needed. Both committees work closely with NSS staff.
- The NSS will build a team of students and early-career volunteer resources to manage logistics throughout the conference. Partner input and oversight on the roles and responsibilities of this team is essential.
- Depending on the location, the NSS may need local assistance with supplies, such as signage printing and resource team snacks. Capacity to receive and store delivered materials (e.g., swag, rented equipment) may also be required.

Local host committee input

- The co-hosting partner should help curate and organize a local host committee, consisting of well-connected individuals in the area that can help with identifying unique opportunities (e.g., extracurricular offerings, special guests, local sponsor opportunities,

etc), engaging in conversation about what local practitioners and professionals would find valuable, and advertising the event locally. This committee does not meet regularly (or at all) but instead serves as a resource for the NSS.

Registration:

- NSS oversees the call for contributions, review process, registration, and all communications with conference attendees.

Marketing and Promotion:

- NSS runs the marketing and promotion campaigns for the NSS conference, however partners are highly encouraged to collaborate on materials and promote the conference through their network and media channels.
- The NSS will include the institutional logo on the conference website and materials.

3. Cost Breakdown and Co-Host Contribution

- A financial contribution to NSS, while welcome, is not a requirement for co-hosting.
- All in-kind contributions, such as venue, IT, staff time, etc, are welcome.
- All in-kind contributions count towards Foundational Sponsorship.
- While 100% of registration revenue will go towards NSS, we are open to fundraising and sponsorship arrangements that cover co-host costs.

Conference costs will vary depending on location, in-kind supports, and sponsorships.

- Inaugural conference, University of Washington (WA) 2024 cost \$164,000 (600 people)
- 2nd conference, University of Notre Dame (IN) 2025 cost \$105,000 (400 people)

4. Partner Expectations and Criteria

- **Key Partner Expectations:**
 - Professionalism and reliability. Willing to meet on a regular (frequently weekly) basis, especially in the planning stages.
 - High-quality venue and facilities, with strong sustainability practices.
 - Flexibility and the ability to adapt to changes.
- **Criteria for Selection:**
 - Cost-share proposal
 - Venue suitability and capacity
 - Technical capabilities and infrastructure
 - Catering quality and sustainability options
 - Accessibility for participants