

Building strategic city-university partnerships for sustainability workshop

This session focused on the concept of city-university partnerships for advancing sustainability. Specifically the presenters provided a framework for how we think about assessing our current partnerships with cities and then strategies for growing the health and impact of that partnership over time.

The participants took a short assessment of their partnership and then mapped out the major opportunities for growth. The opportunities were grouped together and used as discussion opportunities to highlight challenges and examples of good practices with partnership development.

There was considerable interest in developing strategic city-university partnerships for sustainability, and also significant activity in this space. The partnerships presented ranged in their level of development from very preliminary to multi-year.

Some takeaways from the session:

- Participants were interested in further engagement on the topic and working with other universities that have similar context
- Strategic partnerships require that collaborators invest in partnership development (such as the development of agreements, collaborative structures, etc.) as well as projects, but currently there is much more energy put into the projects.
- These partnerships present a tremendous opportunity to support innovation within the city and also advance university metrics such as student success, research excellence and community engagement.