



2024 Are You Ready to Submit for Certification?

February 13, 2024

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Housekeeping

- Housekeeping: All attendees are muted.
- Questions? Enter them into the Questions box or “raise your hand” and we will answer them at the end of the presentation.
- The presentation and recording will be posted on the [Webinars page](#) & [Green Team Resources – Working on Certification](#) by the end of the week.

The screenshot shows the Sustainable Jersey website with the 'Resources' menu item circled in red. The left sidebar contains a list of navigation items: Data Center, Publications, Green Team Resources, Presentations (circled in red), Webinars (circled in red), and Funding Database. The main content area is titled 'Webinar Recordings & Presentations' and includes a paragraph explaining the purpose of these resources. Below this is a 'Category Navigation' section with two columns of links: Arts & Culture, Brownfields, Certification & Recertification, Community Partnership & Outreach, Emergency Management & Resiliency, Energy, Grants Program, Green Design, Health & Wellness, Land Use & Transportation, Local Economies, Natural Resources, Public Information & Engagement, and Waste Management.

The screenshot shows the Sustainable Jersey website with the 'Resources' menu item circled in red. The left sidebar contains a list of navigation items: Data Center, Publications, Green Team Resources (circled in red), Working on Certification (circled in red), Presentations, and Funding Database. The main content area is titled 'Working on Certification' and includes a paragraph explaining the resources listed below. Below this is a 'Quick Start Resources' section with an 'Application User Guide' link and a 'Download Application User Guide' button.

Agenda

1. Certification Requirements & Timeline
2. Common Questions
3. Submission Tips
4. Q&A



Certification Requirements



- Total of at least 150 points
- Mandatory Green Team
- Implement 2 of 13 priority actions
- Actions completed in 6 of 17 categories



- Total of at least 350 points
- Mandatory Green Team
- Implement 3 of 13 priority actions
- Actions completed in 8 of 17 categories

2024 Certification Cycle

	FIRST ROUND	SECOND ROUND	THIRD ROUND
Submission Deadline	Feb. 25	May 10	July 31
Return Date	Early-April	Mid-June	Late-Sep.

- Municipalities can submit for the first time in any round, but it is recommended to submit in the **first two rounds** to receive feedback to help achieve certification.
- All documentation does not need to be finished for the February or May deadline, but will need to be complete by the final July 31 deadline.


Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet

Available on the [Actions Page](#)

Spreadsheet includes:

- Action name
- Submission requirements
- ***Look back period***
- Approval period
- ***Resubmission requirements***
- Points

2022 Sustainable Jersey Master Action Tracking Spreadsheet
Updated 11/30/2022



KEY								
MAIN CATEGORY								
Sub-Category								
Action	Action Category	Contributes to Energy Gold Star	Contributes to Water Gold Star	Contributes to Health Gold Star	Abbreviated Submission Requirements	Look Back Period (yrs)	Approval Period (yrs)	
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP & OUTREACH								
Create Green Team (MANDATORY)	Community Partnership & Outreach				In your certification application, upload: 1. Narrative Summary of what was accomplished & steps taken to do so. 2. A dated municipal government Resolution or Ordinance that formally established the Green Team -OR- Municipalities may also choose to adopt a Resolution or Ordinance that replaces the expired resolutions so long as it covers the period leading up to the application for certification. 3. A brief summary of Green Team activities taken place, and a list of names and affiliations of members of the current Green Team. 4. For expired Green Teams, documentation, such as a Proclamation or a letter of intent by the mayor or municipal council, is required, indicating that the Green Team is still supported by the Municipal Government.	Current or Previous Year	Application Year + 1	In your certification application, upload: 1. Update 2. Document 3. Update 4. Proclamation or letter of intent by the mayor or municipal council, if applicable.
Community Education & Outreach	Community Partnership & Outreach				In your certification application, upload: 1. Narrative Summary of what was accomplished & steps taken to do so. In-Person Events: 1. In-Person Checklist for each initiative & sample of promotional materials. Online/Print Initiatives: 1. Online/Print Checklist for each initiative & sample promotional materials.	Current or Previous Year	Application Year + 1	In your certification application, upload: 1. Update 2. Full document
Green Challenges	Community Partnership & Outreach				In your certification application, upload: 1. Narrative Summary of what was accomplished & steps taken to do so. 2. Documentation (pledge form, educational materials, etc.) that shows that the publicity and outreach for the Green Challenge Program have been active in the current or previous year. 3. Documentation that shows that at least 2.5% of the community has taken the pledge. If the challenge program is ongoing over many years, then the program must have at least 2.5% total, and new pledges from at least 1% of the population or households.	Current or Previous Year	Application Year + 1	In your certification application, upload: 1. Update 2. Document 3. Document new pledges from at least 1% of the population or households.
Green Fairs								
Hold a Green Fair <i>(Pre-Requisite for "Green" Your Green Fair)</i>	Community Partnership & Outreach				In your certification application, upload: 1. Narrative Summary of what was accomplished & steps taken to do so. 2. Documentation (advertisements, flyers, etc.) with the date of the event, indicating the event was held in the current or previous year. 3. Qualitative Self-Assessment questionnaire, available in the action on our website.	Current or Previous Year	Application Year + 1	In your certification application, upload: 1. Update 2. Full document
"Green" Your Green Fair	Community Partnership & Outreach				Pre-Requisite: Hold a Green Fair (refer to the action's requirements) In your certification application, upload: 1. Narrative Summary of what was accomplished & steps taken to do so. 2. Qualitative Self-Assessment questionnaire, available in the action on our website, including a description of the event.	Current or Previous Year	Application Year + 1	In your certification application, upload: 1. Update

Planning Tool

Submission Summary

Look Back Period

Resubmission Requirements



Common Questions & Answers

Common Questions

Q: How can I find out when our certification expired? How can I view previous certification reports and see what I earned credit for?

A: In your application, under details and history, there is an Applicant Reports section which lists your certification history and links to your certification report. Certification expiration and report information can also be found on the [Participants Map](#) under Applicant Profile.

Application – Details & History

Applicant Reports	CERTIFIED FEBRUARY 28, 2022 - DECEMBER 31, 2024 CERTIFIED DECEMBER 10, 2021 - DECEMBER 31, 2024 CERTIFIED JANUARY 26, 2021 - DECEMBER 31, 2023 CERTIFIED DECEMBER 8, 2020 - DECEMBER 31, 2023 CERTIFIED DECEMBER 10, 2019 - DECEMBER 31, 2022
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Participants Map



Common Questions

Q: My municipality is currently certified and not expiring in 2024. What happens if I submit for recertification and do not earn recertification?

A: If you are planning to recertify **BEFORE** your certification expires, and you do not attain recertification this year, your previous certification will NOT be impacted and you will still appear as a certified community.

Q: Does my municipality need to submit for the February 25 deadline to be included in the 2024 certification cycle?

A: **No**. Municipalities can submit for the first time in any of the three rounds. However, it is highly recommended to submit in February and/or May to use reviewers' feedback to help achieve certification for the final deadline.

Q: Can documentation and actions be added/removed throughout the cycle?

A: **Yes**. If you are uncertain about which actions you will complete, only submit enough to reach the minimum requirements for bronze certification for the first and second application deadlines.

Common Questions

Q: If the majority of my actions do not have documentation, what should I do to submit the application?

A: Only mark enough actions completed to meet the minimum requirements for bronze certification. Additional actions can be added throughout the cycle. This means you may need to change some action statuses from planned to completed for the Submit button to turn yellow.

Q: What is the difference between planned, completed and approved actions?

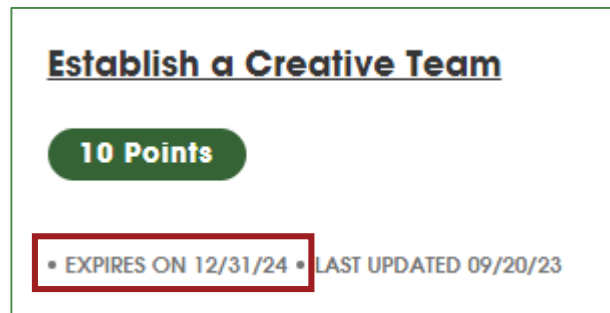
A: *Planned* – indicates action will be/has been worked on.

- *Completed* - indicates action submission is finished including the uploading of supporting documentation OR changed to completed in order for Submit button to turn yellow. **Only completed actions are reviewed.**
- *Approved* – points currently included in application. Expiration dates may be applicable.

Common Questions

Q: Do I need to make any modifications to approved actions?

A: **No.** Approved actions that do not expire before your municipality applies for certification will contribute toward your 2024 approved point totals. No update is required for these actions. Check the expiration dates in your application.



The screenshot shows a card for the action "Establish a Creative Team". It includes a green pill-shaped button with "10 Points" and a red-bordered box containing the text "EXPIRES ON 12/31/24" and "LAST UPDATED 09/20/23".

Establish a Creative Team

10 Points

• EXPIRES ON 12/31/24 • LAST UPDATED 09/20/23

Q: I marked actions completed. Do I need to submit the application?

A: **Yes.** Completed actions are only reviewed after the full certification application is submitted.

Common Questions

Q: How do I know if our certification application has been submitted?

A: A confirmation email will be sent to all users on the account once the application is submitted. You can also check the top of your application to see the current status – once submitted the status will say “Submitted”. Reach out to us at info@sustainablejersey.com with questions.

Q: I’ve submitted my application. Can I keep working on other actions for the next submission deadline?

A: **Yes**. Approved and completed actions are locked from editing but you can still work offline on other actions, and make edits to actions that are not marked approved or completed in your application.

Q: When does everything need to be submitted to achieve certification and be recognized at the 2024 Sustainable Jersey Annual Luncheon?

A: July 31

Why Doesn't the Submit Button Turn Yellow?

Ensure you meet **all** the certification criteria. Some actions may be marked planned but need to be changed to **COMPLETED**

Certification Criteria		
Required	1	1
Priority	2	3
Points	150	350
Categories	6	8

Show requirements for:

BRONZE SILVER

Action Totals (Completed, Approved)	
Required	0/1
Priority	2/13
Total Points	155/2320
Categories	7/18
Total Actions	10/159

Submit Application for Review

Action Totals (Completed, Approved)	
Required	1/1
Priority	2/13
Total Points	165/2320
Categories	7/18
Total Actions	11/159

If all completed action submissions are approved, this application will qualify for BRONZE certification.

To achieve SILVER certification, see certification criteria above.

Submit Application for Review



Submission Tips

Submission Tips

- ❖ Draft the description of implementation (DOI) in a word document, then copy and paste that information into your DOI.
- **Remove sensitive information** – once certified approved actions and supporting documentation are publicly available in your certification report on our website.
 - Ex. Green team member email & mailing addresses, phone numbers, etc. should be removed

Submission Tips

- Remove old documentation that is no longer needed for your submission. Reviewers check to make sure that all documentation is current in relation to action requirements.
- ❖ Make sure documentation uploaded aligns with your description of implementation.
- ❖ Consider submitting one additional priority action than needed for the certification level you apply for. If applying for bronze certification, submit for 3 priority actions instead of the required two.

Reviewer Feedback

While under review, the status of actions will change but you will **not be able to view comments** associated with the actions until the application is sent back **Awaiting Updates.**

Feedback available at the bottom of the action submission page or top of the application.

- Make sure all relevant contacts are added to the account as either an owner or contributor.

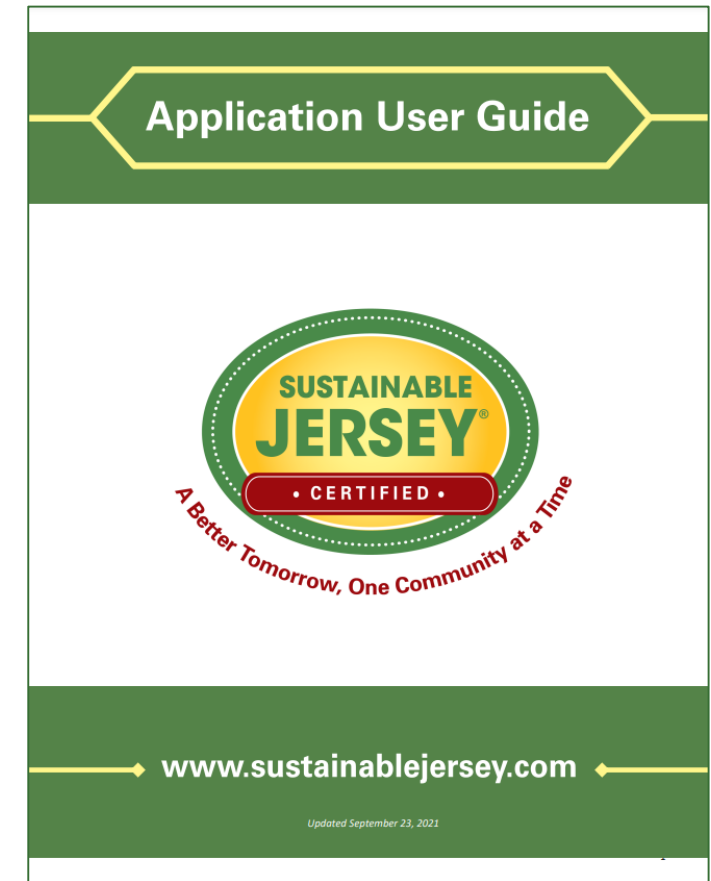
Automatic
Email

Approved or
Must Revise

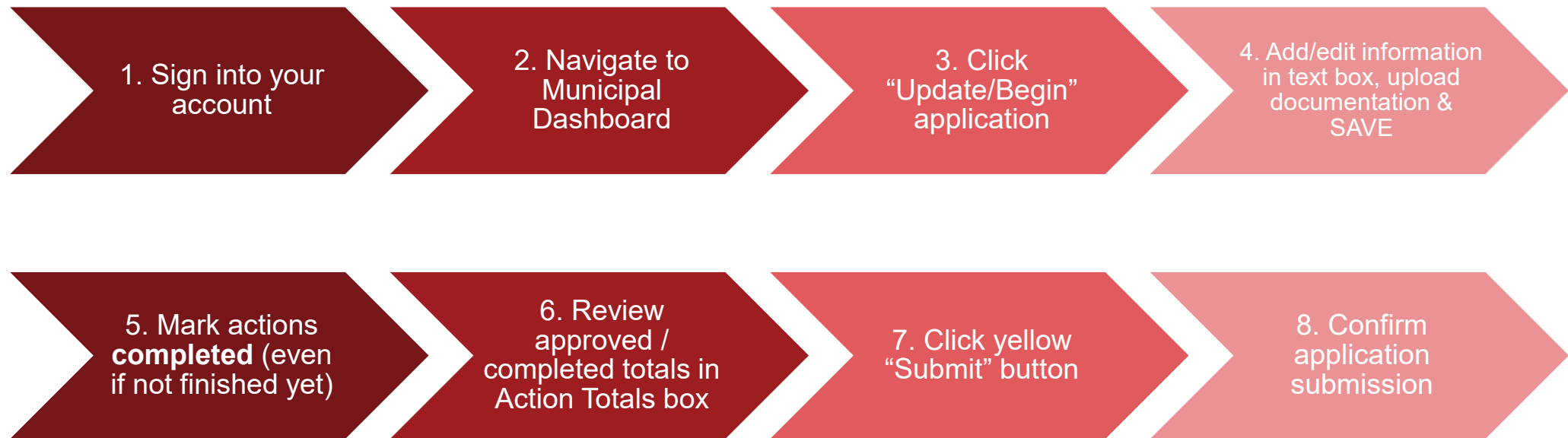
Archived
Comments

Confirm Contacts on Municipal Dashboard

- Check the primary and secondary contact information is correct.
- ❖ Make sure all members that should receive the automatic emails through the system regarding application status updates are added as owners/contributors.
- ❖ Review [Application User Guide](#) for instructions on making these updates.



Quick Step Guide to Submission



2024 Certification Cycle



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Questions & Support



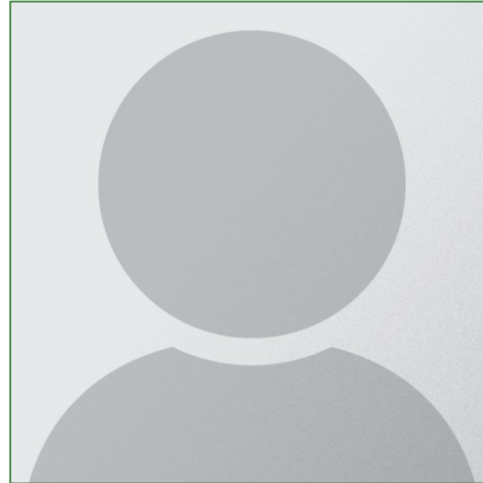
General Inquiries

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Events, Grants & Technical Assistance

sustainablejersey.com/nc/events/

sustainablejersey.com/grants/

Certification

Actions

Grants

Events

Resources

Get Involved

Sustainable Jersey Events

Sustainable Jersey and its program partners regularly host trainings and events that support progress toward Sustainable Jersey certification. In general, events posted on the calendar are FREE or of minimal cost.

Post an Event

You can post FREE events that are open to the general public that would be of interest to the Sustainable Jersey community. Sustainable Jersey staff review all event submissions and will follow up if more information is needed.

Post Event

NOTE: You must have a Sustainable Jersey website account and be signed into the website to post an event. [Sign-in](#) or [sign up here](#).

Filter Events by:

Location

All Locations

Range

Upcoming Events

Category

All Categories

Type

All Types



Energy Technical Assistance

Sustainable Jersey offers a variety of **free** energy technical assistance opportunities. Set up a consultation by completing the form [here](#) with the Sustainable Jersey Energy Team to learn more about the technical assistance options open to your municipality.



Sustainable Jersey-PSE&G Partnership Program

This program supports municipalities with technical assistance for municipal facilities and energy efficiency outreach campaigns for residents and local small businesses.

Eligible municipalities are served 100% by PSE&G for electricity and natural gas. Learn more & apply: sustainablejersey.com/grants/sj-pseg-energy-efficiency-partnership-program/

Informational Webinar

Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 12:00pm – 1:00pm; [Register](#)

Application Deadline: Friday, April 5, 2024

Community Energy Planning & Implementation Grants

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) is offering a new round of Community Energy Plan Grants for all New Jersey municipalities. For municipalities that have completed Community Energy Plans, The NJBPU has announced the Community Energy Plan Implementation Grant.

Sustainable Jersey has a wide range of resources to support municipalities in completing this process, including energy data for your municipality and template plans. Learn more: sustainablejersey.com/grants/community-energy-planning-implementation-grants/

Application Deadline Extended to: Friday, May 24, 2024





Save the Date: 2024 Sustainability Summit

May 3, 2024; 8:00am – 4:00pm; Bell Works, Holmdel, NJ

Registration coming soon!

Questions & Support



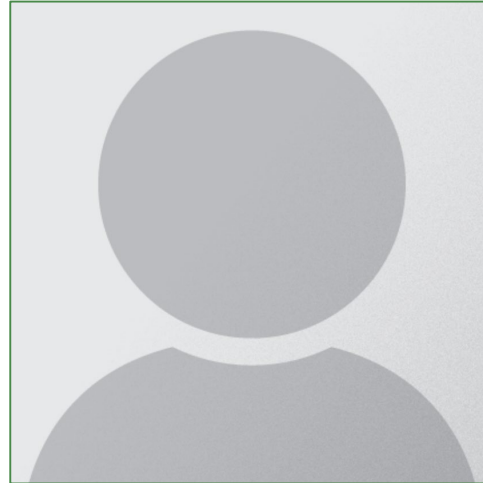
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