

Sustainable leadership: Monterrey campus receives STARS gold medal



Initiatives focused on **saving electricity, wastewater treatment**, and **engagement** with businesses, governments, and the community have resulted in the [Tec's Monterrey campus](#) receiving a **gold medal** in the [STARS certification](#).

This certification is an initiative run by the **Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)** to focus on evaluating how educational institutions perform on sustainability.

Monterrey campus was one of **ten universities** evaluated nationwide from 2023-2024.

Scoring **66.8 points out of 80**, Monterrey campus received the highest score for an institution in Latin America and the **first gold medal awarded to a campus in Mexico**.



/> width="900" loading="lazy">

*“I want to recognize the work of the people who made this possible. It’s an achievement that strengthens our **commitment** and shows us how to continue on this path,”* said **Mario Adrián Flores Castro, Vice President of the Monterrey region and Director of Monterrey campus.**

The participating campuses were evaluated in **five categories**: Academics, Engagement, Operations, Planning and Administration, and Innovation and Leadership.

The following are some of the **projects and initiatives** implemented on campus in each category.

“We want to congratulate Monterrey campus for the incredible achievement of winning a gold medal.” – Monika Urbanski

Academics: Curriculum and applied research

Erik Martínez, Director of Physical Plant and Sustainability, said that Monterrey campus has several **research centers** which are focused on sustainability, such as the [Water Center](#).

“We also have the Institute of Advanced Materials for Sustainable Manufacturing and the Consortium for Energy Efficiency in Non-Residential Buildings (E3 Consortium),” he said.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DFnuFR-Pjxs/?hl=es-la>

Engagement: Co-curricular activities on sustainability

According to **Carlos Sánchez, Strategic Leader for Water and Environment**, one of the programs that have had a positive impact on the Tec community is [TecFood2Go](#), an initiative that promotes the **elimination of single-use plastics in cafeterias**.

“Student participation through [FETEC](#) has also been important, as they have a Sustainability Department that organizes various awareness-raising events for the students,” he explained.

He added that the campus has participated in the [Alliance for Climate Action Mexico](#), an initiative that aims to accelerate compliance with Mexico’s international climate commitments.

“I want to recognize the work of the people who made this possible. It’s an achievement that strengthens our commitment.” - Mario Adrián Flores

Operations: Green areas, water, and waste management

*“The EXPEDITION FEMSA building is currently **in the process** of obtaining LEED Gold certification.*

“Our library already holds this certification, which gives us a significant advantage in sustainability,” added Sánchez.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification recognizes buildings that meet sustainable design and energy efficiency **standards**.



/> width="900" loading="lazy">

Other actions implemented on campus are:

- Construction of **Núcleo**, a district center for functional services that use cleaner energy
- Changing street lighting to LEDs
- In 2023, 63% of the campus' energy came from renewable sources such as wind farms and solar panels, with the Federal Electricity Commission supplying the rest.
- *Circuito Tec*, which is a free transportation service for students and staff with six routes in Monterrey
- 12 electric chargers available in the parking lots
- Integrated waste management with recycling stations throughout the campus
- An internal collection center for managing waste, which is diverted from landfill by an authorized supplier

“The neighborhood committees and the projects with *distritotec* have helped a lot with us continuing to implement sustainable improvements.” - Carlos Sánchez

Planning and Administration

Carlos Sánchez said that in this category, which focuses on **governance and sustainable investment**, partnerships with private sector companies have allowed students to participate in developing sustainable projects with a positive impact.

“The Tec and the Xignux Foundation work together every year on the [Xignux Challenge](#), in which our students create initiatives to address various environmental problems,” he said.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DEVS9fxxZsZ/?hl=es-la>

He added that another of the main stakeholders they have worked with is [distrítotec](#).

“The neighborhood committees and the projects with **distrítotec** have helped a lot in us continuing to implement sustainable improvements,” he said.

Innovation and Leadership

According to Erik Martínez, one of the initiatives with the most significant impact on campus is a **Wastewater Treatment Plant with a capacity of 15 liters per second**.

“Sewage generated by the campus is sent to a tank and then to the treatment plant. All the water that is produced, around **3,000 m²**, is then used for irrigation,” he explained.



/> width="900" loading="lazy">

About the STARS certification

STARS uses a methodology to achieve **long-term sustainability goals** for educational institutions with a high-performance level.

It also recognizes those institutions that are beginning to implement initiatives focused on sustainability.

The ceremony to award certificates and medals was held last **November** on Monterrey campus.

“We would like to congratulate Monterrey campus for their incredible achievement in winning a gold medal and for their efforts in sustainability this year, which were demonstrated in their STARS participation,” said Monika Urbanski, AASHE’s Director of Data Quality, Resources, and Publications.

This certification is **valid for three years**, after which a renewal can be applied for.

READ MORE: <https://conecta.tec.mx/en/news/monterrey/institution/tec-boosts-innovation-district-expedition-femsa-opening>