



**New England
Botanic Garden**
AT TOWER HILL

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

New England Botanic Garden's Horticulture Operations Take a Major Step Toward Climate Neutrality

Supported by Tern Foundation and Massachusetts Cultural Council

BOYLSTON, MA, November 6, 2023 – [New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill](#), a 171-acre botanic garden in Boylston, MA, announced today that it has completed a significant solar installation project made possible by grants from the [Tern Foundation](#) and the [Massachusetts Cultural Council](#). The project, motivated by the Garden's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability, represents a major step in efforts to decarbonize horticulture operations, and it allows the organization to redirect cost savings afforded by solar energy into other mission-focused activities.

The new solar array was installed on the roof of New England Botanic Garden's horticulture barn, a space that houses tools and equipment for all horticulture operations. The solar array will generate 17,522 kWh of power, which represents 121% of the organization's current usage for that building. This is significant as New England Botanic Garden has replaced nearly all of its gas-powered horticulture equipment and utility carts with electric models. This electric equipment now charges in the horticulture barn without reliance on fossil fuels.



"Sustainable values are woven through the Garden's five-year strategic plan, so we consider the solar upgrade of our horticultural barn as a major milestone toward our goals," says Mark Richardson,

Director of Horticulture at New England Botanic Garden. “We are extremely grateful to our funding partners, the Tern Foundation and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, as well as individual donors who have contributed to the project. Their support is invaluable as we take on a leadership role in our field and demonstrate the potential for climate-neutral landcare operations.”

New England Botanic Garden’s efforts to decarbonize its horticulture operations have already garnered national attention. Last year, the organization earned recognition by the [American Green Zone Alliance \(AGZA\)](#) as the first AGZA Green Zone certified botanic garden in the nation. Since then, Garden staff with expertise on making electric equipment transitions have spoken on national stages to peers in the industry. As a botanic garden with 11,000 member households and over 200,000 visitors per year, the organization sees many more opportunities to offer programming and education on issues of sustainability and climate change in future.

New England Botanic Garden’s solar project was made possible by a \$112,000 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council’s Cultural Facilities Fund and a \$50,000 grant from the Tern Foundation’s TernSOLAR Challenge Grant Program. Tern Foundation’s TernSOLAR challenge grant program is designed to expand renewable energy use in Massachusetts communities, making solar technology more accessible to nonprofit organizations. Grants are offered to dynamic nonprofits whose leaders engage creatively with their communities and also consider future generations and the natural environment in their strategic priorities and sustainability planning. Since 2010 Tern Foundation has funded 25 solar projects and associated environmental education initiatives. In addition to these funding partners, the Garden also extends thanks to individual donors to this project, John C. Amoroso and Bruce Fishbein and Sara Shields.

For more information about New England Botanic Garden and its sustainability initiatives visit <https://nebg.org/sustainable-initiatives/>.

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About New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill is a nonprofit organization located at 11 French Drive in Boylston, Massachusetts. A regional destination, the Garden is operated on 171 acres by the Worcester County Horticultural Society, one of the oldest of its kind in the country, and is open to the public for garden viewing, trail walking, educational programs, private events, weddings, exhibitions, and more. This year New England Botanic Garden was voted "Top Botanic Garden in the U.S." by *TravelAwaits*. New England Botanic Garden is an [AAM-accredited](#) museum that includes an irreplaceable collection of plants and creates opportunities for visitors to experience the wonder of plants, learn about the natural world, and make joyful connections. Learn all about New England Botanic Garden including its history, mission, and its staff at www.nebg.org.

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