



Environmental, Social, and Governance Report

2023

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1. MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

I am proud to introduce SSOE's first Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) report. Certainly, this is a report, but more importantly, it is a demonstration of our commitment to environmental sustainability, social responsibility, and ethical business conduct. This framework and strategy will measure and assess the ESG impacts of our projects and practices.

For 75 years, SSOE has provided unparalleled client value and shaped a better future for our world. As we look forward, we honor this impactful history, and use it as the foundation for a new journey. A journey with renewed passion that recognizes the impact we can make on our environment, our communities, and the standards by which we work and hold ourselves accountable.

Our commitment to ESG is a direct output of our vision: Designing and Building the Future for our Clients, Colleagues, and Communities. A future that respects the environment. A future that encourages an inclusive community and diverse thinking. A future where ethical practices are foundational to all that we do. These are more than aspirational goals for SSOE. They are our most important core values and an integral aspect of everything we do.

In short, ESG is not part of us, it's who we are.

As you read this report, we will highlight important contributions to the AIA 2030 challenge that we have committed to. Big efforts such as \$1B in LEED-certified designed facilities, but also small efforts that have big impact, such as installing water filling stations in each office that have saved over 300,000 gallons of water used in plastic bottle production.

As a result of intentional efforts to be a more inclusive and diverse culture, our employee engagement scores have risen to the Top 10% in the U.S. The impact of this engagement has been an outreach of over 10,000 volunteer hours and doubling our financial commitment to our local communities.

100% of our employees receive annual training, and are tested in ethics, safety, and cybersecurity, contributing to an impressive 10% increase in our annual EcoVadis ESG score.

Lean principles, innovation, and collaboration are woven throughout our culture and are the common thread in these success stories.

We're proud of what we've done but have much more work to do! We know we can set new benchmarks, inspire positive transformation, and demonstrate ESG not only as a business imperative, but a global community imperative.

Thank you for reading this report. We look forward to working together to build a better world!

Vince DiPofi

Chief Executive Officer



2. ABOUT SSOE

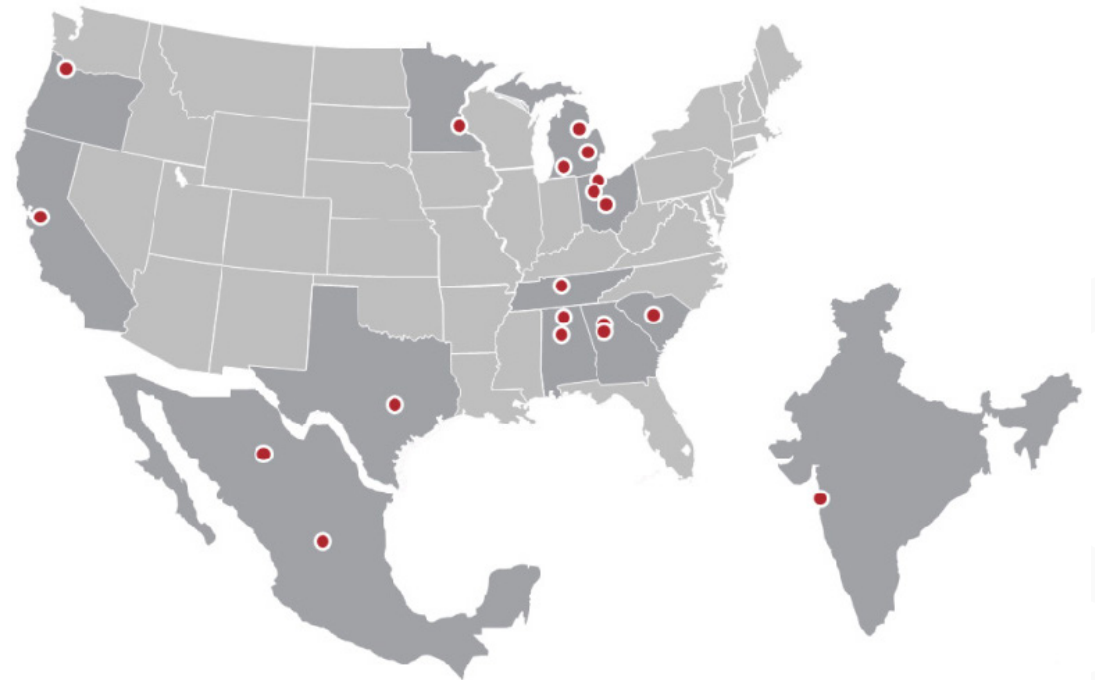
“ Providing the highest value to our clients through our core strength: excellence in design. ”

History

Founded in 1948 in Toledo, Ohio, SSOE is an internationally ranked architecture and engineering firm committed to delivering unparalleled value to our clients. What sets us apart is our emphasis on collaboration, which permeates every aspect of our operations—from internal interactions to project delivery methodologies.

LOCATIONS

- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Atlanta, GA (2) | Huntsville, AL | Nashville, TN |
| Austin, TX | Kalamazoo, MI | Portland, OR |
| Birmingham, AL | León, Mexico | Santa Clara, CA |
| Chihuahua, Mexico | Lima, OH | St. Paul, MN |
| Columbia, SC | Midland, MI | Toledo, OH |
| Columbus, OH | Mumbai, India | Troy, MI |



Our Core Values



Safety: Provide SSOE employees, visitors, and contractors with a safe and healthy environment



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Learning about, embracing, valuing, and including the full range of human differences



Social Responsibility: Making choices that acknowledge the best interests of our environment, communities, and stakeholders



Integrity: Being honest, moral, and ethical



Quality: The practice of utilizing standard procedures to achieve consistent deliverables while meeting or exceeding client expectations



Agility: The ability to rapidly and continuously adapt to market and environmental changes in productive and cost-effective ways



Collaboration: Working together as a team to create a superior outcome



Innovation: Employing creativity to develop new and fresh ideas that deliver maximum value

1,500

EMPLOYEES

We employ over **1,500** employees, in **19** offices across **3** countries

\$2B

IN SAVINGS

\$2B in documented savings for clients

9/10

RECOMMEND SSOE

9 out of 10 of our clients surveyed would recommend SSOE to their colleagues

150

CLIENTS

150 clients have been with us for over **20 years**

TOP

10

Ranked a **Top 10** design firm in several industries

Industry Rankings

BUILDING DESIGN + CONSTRUCTION

Building Design + Construction (BD+C)

- Top 10 Industrial Engineering Firm for more than a decade
- Top 15 Engineering / Architecture Firm for more than a decade



Engineering News-Record (ENR)

- Ranked #91 in the Top 100 Design Firms



3. OUR IMPACT

“ We design innovative spaces for our clients to impact the world. ”

Our ESG Approach

Our goal is to deliver design solutions that enhance value while embedding sustainable principles and methods that reduce overall carbon footprint, improve wellness, and build resilience.

Mission, Vision, and Core Values



Deliver unparalleled client value that advances the AEC industry.



Designing and building the future for our clients, colleagues, and communities.

FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS



Clients

Sustainable and Equitable Design Solutions
AIA 2030 Commitment
Innovation



Colleagues and Communities

Safety
Health and Well-being
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Learning and Professional Development
Community Engagement



Environment

Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions
SBTi Commitment
Environmental Management



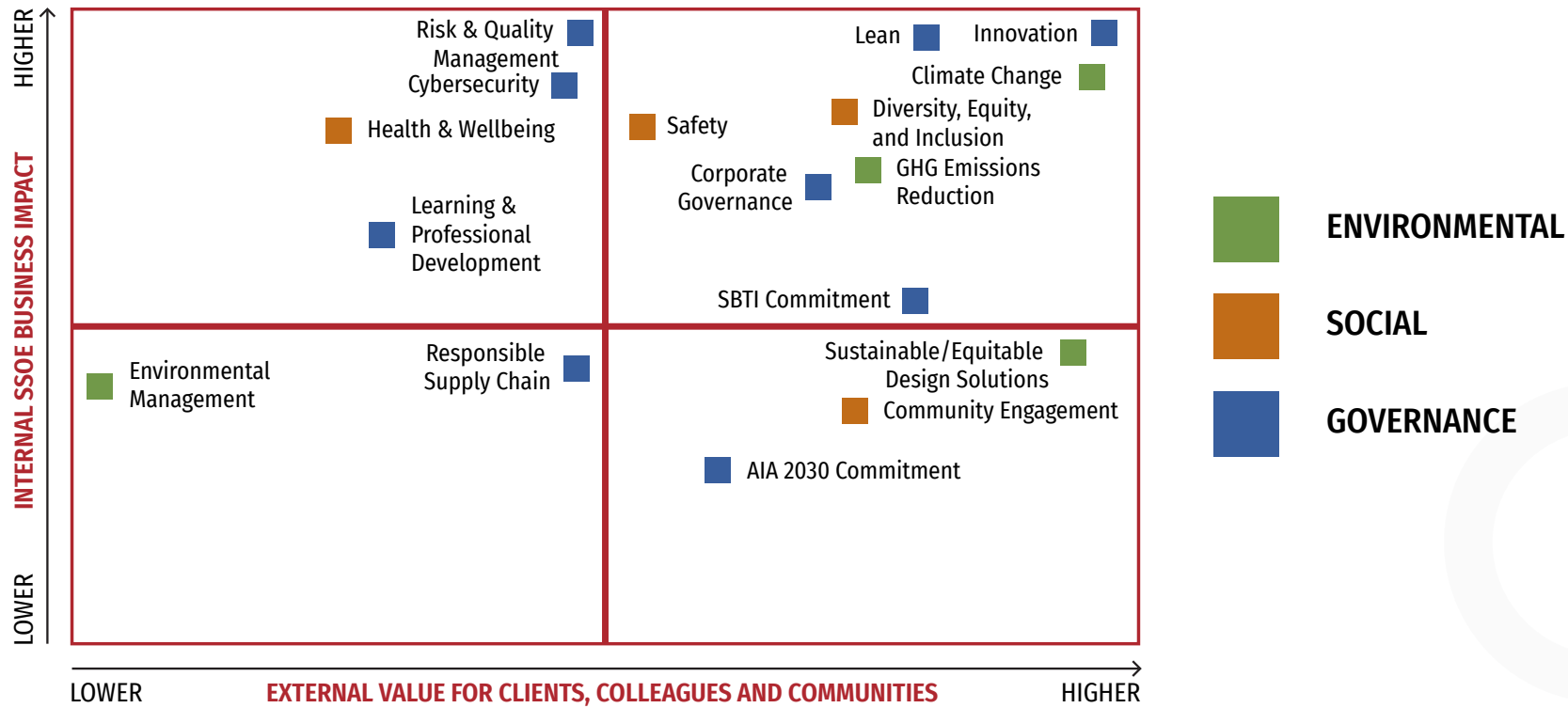
Governance

Corporate Governance
Risk and Quality Management
Responsible Supply Chain
Cybersecurity

Materiality Assessment Process



ESG ASPECT PRIORITIZATION



Materiality in ESG is inherently dynamic. Our ESG framework employs a range of key performance indicators (KPIs) across the foundational pillars, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of our impact. These metrics are assessed annually to capture the full spectrum of our operations' and projects' impacts.

ESG Governance

The governance of ESG and sustainability within SSOE is delineated among three key bodies, each with specific responsibilities:



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors establishes the overarching strategic vision of SSOE, ensuring that our key operating policies are integrated into our corporate goals and strategic planning, providing a broad framework within which all ESG initiatives must operate. Their leadership is crucial for aligning our operations with our ESG and sustainability vision.



Board of Directors' ESG Committee

This committee acts as the connective link between the Board's strategic vision and the firm's operational activities. It is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the ESG strategy, ensuring it aligns with the broader vision set by the Board. The committee reviews progress and compliance, provides guidance on ESG matters, and delivers regular updates to the Board on our ESG performance and any emerging ESG and sustainability issues that require strategic adjustments.



Sustainable Design Strategy Group (SDSG)

The SDSG is focused on embedding sustainability across our operations. It tracks our project ESG performance and updates the ESG Committee, helping SSOE meet its internal standards and external commitments. The SDSG is currently working on establishing a team that will take the lead on day-to-day management and execution of ESG policies and initiatives and reporting on our ESG performance. The SDSG will continue to grow a community of practice that provides operational support and pursues sustainable innovation in projects.

These structured roles allow us to maintain an integrated approach to ESG, ensuring that our strategic vision is effectively translated into actionable policies and that SSOE remains responsive to both internal and external ESG demands.

Reporting our Progress and Engaging Stakeholders

SSOE will report on our progress through our annual ESG reports, relevant market brochures, and industry engagement efforts. Additionally, we distribute quarterly internal memos highlighting our organizational advancements. Our immediate objective is to identify ESG and sustainability champions within our offices and departments. These champions will take on broader responsibilities to raise awareness and support the implementation of our ESG and sustainability initiatives.

Each year, we conduct client satisfaction surveys to gather feedback and refine our services. Building on this practice, we are developing ESG and sustainability-focused surveys initially tailored for select clients. These surveys aim to uncover specific sustainability interests and expectations. Our plan is to gradually expand these specialized surveys to encompass our entire client base, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of all their sustainability ambitions.

To deepen our engagement, we are exploring additional strategies such as:

- **Regular Updates and Newsletters:** Keeping stakeholders informed about our ESG and sustainability efforts and progress through periodic communications.
- **Collaborative Sustainability Initiatives:** Partnering with clients on sustainability projects that contribute to environmental conservation, social responsibility, or community development.
- **Stakeholder Workshops and Roundtables:** Organizing events where clients and stakeholders can discuss sustainability challenges and best practices, fostering a collaborative environment.





The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) represent a universal call to action to address the pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges facing our world. Comprising 17 interlinked objectives, the UN SDGs aim to foster global prosperity, safeguard the planet, and ensure peace and equity for all people by 2030. SSOE's ESG strategy and framework align with several of the UN SDGs, enabling us to contribute meaningfully to creating a sustainable and equitable world.

UN Sustainable Development Goals



While our sustainability-focused services, employee initiatives, and community engagement efforts contribute broadly across several UN SDGs, we have pinpointed nine priority SDGs that are particularly relevant and are impacted by our operational practices and project engagements.

SDG	Internal SSOE Impact
	<p>By investing in educational initiatives, particularly in STEM fields, SSOE supports the development of a skilled and diverse future workforce. This includes internships, scholarships, DEI, and community initiatives targeting underrepresented communities, all focused on fostering access to equitable, quality education.</p>
	<p>Through our DEI program, SSOE actively works towards achieving gender equality within SSOE and across the AEC industry. This involves implementing policies that promote equal opportunities and treatment, supporting women in leadership roles, and fostering a workplace culture that overcomes stereotypes and biases.</p>
	<p>SSOE's community engagement initiatives and governance policies play a crucial role in reducing inequalities. This includes diverse supply chain initiatives to provide women and minority-owned businesses equitable access to SSOE's supply chain, engaging in community-driven projects, and adopting inclusive hiring and promotion practices that reflect the diversity of the communities SSOE serves.</p> <p>SSOE aims to integrate Design for Equity and Wellness principles into our design services. This approach will enable us to create projects that are more equitable and inclusive, emphasizing a holistic design approach that prioritizes both equity and well-being.</p>
SDG	Internal and External Impact
	<p>SSOE focuses on reducing energy consumption across its offices and aims to meet all energy needs through renewable sources.</p> <p>SSOE is at the forefront of the transition to electric vehicles through its work with automotive and battery manufacturing clients. Additionally, SSOE has extensive experience in integrating alternative energy technologies into projects and is committed to designing energy-efficient buildings.</p>
	<p>SSOE has an internal group and multiple ongoing initiatives dedicated to innovation in Lean practices, AI, automation, and other fields. These efforts are focused on driving efficiencies and delivering optimal solutions to clients.</p> <p>SSOE aims to advance the development of innovative, resilient, and sustainable projects, particularly for clients in the automotive and advanced technology sectors. By innovating in areas such as Lean practices and integrated design and construction, SSOE meets the specialized demands of these industries and aims to raise the bar for sustainability and operational efficiency.</p>

SDG

Internal and External Impact



Through the SDSG, SSOE focuses on incorporating sustainability and resiliency in projects. SSOE aims to foster the development of sustainable, resilient, and inclusive urban environments. This includes designing buildings that prioritize sustainability and energy efficiency, integrating wellness and equity principles in planning and design, and ensuring accessibility for all.



SSOE prioritizes waste reduction, recycling, and reusing materials, alongside efforts to minimize energy and water consumption responsibly.

SSOE leads by example in implementing Lean and sustainable design and construction practices that reduce resource consumption and enhance operational efficiency in commercial buildings and industrial and manufacturing facilities. Since 2009, SSOE has documented \$2 billion in savings for clients.



SSOE is a Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) signatory. We understand the importance of rapid and deep emission cuts and are committed to halving our emissions before 2030 and achieving net zero before 2050.


Additionally, SSOE is an AIA 2030 Commitment signatory, actively evaluating opportunities to reduce carbon emissions in project design to mitigate the impacts of climate change.



SSOE implements robust risk management, safety, and cybersecurity protocols, ensuring thorough risk assessment and mitigation, and safe working conditions. Through investments in technology and a dedicated shareholder program, we enhance operational efficiency and deliver substantial benefits, fostering economic growth and promoting decent work for all.


By prioritizing equitable wage policies and actively recruiting STEM talent, SSOE supports sustainable economic development while upholding high standards of labor rights.

4. PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS




Clients


- 9 out of 10 clients would recommend SSOE
- 150 clients have been with SSOE for 20+ years
- \$2+ billion in documented Value Promise savings for clients since 2009
- \$1 billion of LEED-certified facilities designed since 2010
- Dedicated project technology team




12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION




13 CLIMATE ACTION




7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE




11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES




Colleagues & Communities


- 6x Great Place to Work
- 0 recordable safety incidents in 2023
- 20,800 employee training hours
- 205+ organizations supported from donations and volunteering
- 8,000+ employee volunteer hours in 2023
- 6 employee resource groups




4 QUALITY EDUCATION



5 GENDER EQUALITY




8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH




Environment


- Committed to reducing absolute emissions by 50% by 2030
- 8% reduction in Scope 1 emissions from 2022
- 100% Scope 2 emissions covered by Green-e Renewable Energy Credits (RECs)
- 50% reduction in employee commuting
- 95% office paper products are recycled



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

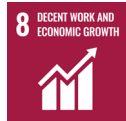


13 CLIMATE ACTION



Governance

- 24/7 ethics helpline
- 100% employees receive ethics, anti-corruption, and anti-bribery training
- 100% employees receive safety training
- 100% employees receive cybersecurity training
- EcoVadis ESG Score +10% overall improved score from 2022 to 2023



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

* [Learn more about the UN SDGs here.](#)

Value Promise Highlights:

- Heat mapping evaluation optimized a “timeshare” office plan, avoiding \$24 million in construction costs and 5-7 months of schedule impact for an office expansion.
- System designed to filter and reuse water for a client’s cooling process, saving almost 1 million gallons of water per day from going down the drain. The water and financial savings realized from this design has now become a prototype for multiple facilities.
- Through “Big Room” collaboration, SSOE iterated efficiencies for a large manufacturing facility “fit for purpose” resulting in a footprint reduction of 11% or 144,600 SF. This saved the client an estimated \$29 million in construction costs and 6,100 tCO2e in avoided embodied carbon emissions, equal to 14,000 barrels of oil.

Impact Stories

SSOE Founder's Award Project: Redwood Materials



SSOE has placed strategic focus on supporting clients navigating the global clean energy transition, and Redwood Materials is a client whose goal is to improve the circularity of the battery supply chain by recycling used batteries to recover materials such as lithium, nickel, copper, gold, silver, cobalt, and other minerals needed to make battery-grade material.

Redwood's vision to close the loop on the battery supply chain has a positive environmental impact for our communities. SSOE dove into supporting the emerging battery market, with this "first of its kind in North America" Battery Materials facility, a fast-paced, constantly evolving market. SSOE's agility and team of subject-matter experts helped Redwood realize a facility to meet their needs, resulting in a design that helped define their Plan of Record for all future production lines and expansions at the plant.

Redwood Materials is just one of many clients who value the expertise, dedication, and leadership SSOE brings to every project.



Clients

#chooseSSOE: José's story



SSOE is committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) through its development of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). These groups provide a platform for individuals from diverse backgrounds to collaborate and work toward common goals, shaping the company culture and driving positive change. José Carlos Arnal de la Peña shares his story below:

"As a former co-op at SSOE, I experienced firsthand the transformational impact of ERGs, particularly the PRIDE ERG for LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies. Being part of this group provided me with a platform to drive change, create a work environment where I could be my authentic self, and feel supported by my colleagues. Knowing that I can inspire change, contribute to a more inclusive workplace, and have a supportive and uplifting space motivates me to continue my career at SSOE. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of this positive transformation and contribute to a company that values and prioritizes authenticity, inclusion, and equality."



Colleagues

United Way/SSOE Toledo World Headquarters: Fostering mutually beneficial partnerships

The United Way of Greater Toledo (UWGT), our long-standing community partner, now shares its home within our SSOE Toledo Headquarters. UWGT recently sold their headquarters in downtown Toledo and were looking for a more appropriately sized space to lease to be good stewards of the donations that fund them.

SSOE's shift to a hybrid work model has resulted in under-utilized space in the Toledo office, which presented a perfect opportunity to support an organization that works to improve the quality of lives and the future of our community.

SSOE employees have been long-time supporters of the United Way with our annual campaign and involvement with events throughout the year, and this partnership has provided more opportunities for SSOE to give back to its community.



Communities

Impact Goals: 2025-2030



Mission

Deliver unparalleled client value that advances the AEC industry.



Vision

Designing and building the future for our clients, colleagues, and communities.



Clients

- Improve ENR Top 100 Ranking to 75
- Increase energy modeling on building designs by 25%
- Increase Life Cycle Assessments measuring embodied carbon on building designs by 25%



Colleagues & Communities

- Maintain SSOE's Great Place to Work Designation
- Maintain OSHA Total Recordable Incident Rate below industry standards
- Increase diversity in our talent pool and talent management pipeline



Environment

- In 2025, establish a business travel emissions reduction plan
- In 2025, reduce Scope 2 energy use -10% from 2022
- In 2025, encourage and incentivize Suppliers to set science-based targets



Governance

- In 2025, improve EcoVadis ESG Score +10% overall from 2023
- Review and update all internal policies; set a 2-year review cadence
- Draft and implement a Supplier Engagement Policy

5. SSOE'S IMPACT FRAMEWORK

5.1 CLIENTS

“ Coupling strong design principles with emerging technologies to create sustainable projects that have a lasting and positive impact on the communities we serve. ”

9+ MM

SF of LEED-certified projects designed through 2023 contributing significant savings in water, energy, and construction waste

\$94 MM

in savings accumulated from 2010 through 2023 resulting from SSOE's LEED-certified projects



Water

SSOE is committed to reducing the volume of water utilized in the built environment. We track usage on all of our LEED-certified projects:

46%

water saved annually per project (average 2010-2023)

11.8 MM

gallons of water saved annually

124 MM

gallons of water saved to date over lifecycle of designed facilities



Waste

SSOE encourages Construction Waste Management Planning on LEED-certified projects. Every ton of waste diverted from the landfill prevents nearly three tons of CO2 equivalent from being released into the atmosphere

GOAL

75%

construction waste diverted (LEED projects)

RESULTS

79%

23,467 tons of construction waste diverted to date



Energy

Saving energy reduces greenhouse gas emissions which benefits both the environment and business operations.

29%

average energy saved annually per LEED-certified project

\$8.3 MM

annual documented energy savings

664,587 MMbtu

total energy saved annually

7,921,488 MMbtu

energy savings accumulated to date over lifecycle of designed facilities

Sustainable Design Services

At SSOE, we aim to implement sustainable design principles in all our work, balancing operating costs while meeting quality, process, safety, and security requirements, regardless of whether a sustainability certification is pursued. Utilizing cutting-edge technology and data analysis, our sustainable design approach integrates key sustainability elements into project design and construction, including resource conservation, energy and operational efficiency, indoor quality, environmental management, and resilience.



72

LEED® Accredited Professionals

3

WELL Accredited Professionals™

1

Certified Energy Procurement Professional - CEP®

3

Certified Energy Managers - CEM®

6

LEED® Green Associates™

LEED Platinum® Projects



Volkswagen's \$1 Billion Automotive Production Facility

First and only LEED Platinum® automotive assembly plant in the world. Through innovative design concepts, benchmarking common practices, and scheduling, SSOE offered VW a savings of more than **\$44 million**.



NIEHS Net Zero Energy Warehouse and Distribution Center

LEED Platinum® and first Net Zero Energy Building in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Through energy modeling services, SSOE offered NIEHS a savings of more than **\$12,380 per year**.

AIA 2030 Commitment



SSOE is a signatory to the AIA 2030 Commitment, aiming to design zero carbon projects by 2030. The AIA 2030 Commitment calls on AEC professionals to design and construct new buildings to achieve a 90% predicted Energy Use Intensity (pEUI) reduction by 2025, and 100% reduction by 2030 (50% reduction in existing buildings). It addresses a wide range of commercial, institutional, and residential building types, ranging from offices, schools, and hospitals to residential homes and other types of structures.

Our expertise and core competencies, however, extend well beyond the conventional building typologies designed for human occupancy.

Every day, we help a wide variety of clients plan, design, and build industrial, manufacturing, and advanced technology facilities that also include buildings designed for human occupancy. As such, we decided to broaden our AIA 2030 Commitment and include any type of occupied building and facility we help design and build in commercial, industrial, manufacturing, and advanced technology projects. This decision aligns with our holistic approach to ESG and sustainability, ensuring a meaningful impact across as many sectors and projects as possible.

Through the AIA 2030 Commitment, we build upon our practices and find new ways to foster innovation and efficiency in sustainable design and construction. We have developed an internal sustainability action plan (SAP) that specifies several initiatives to support meeting our AIA 2030 Commitment goals and enhance our sustainable design capabilities, aligned with our ESG and operating strategies.

2023 AT A GLANCE: DATA - SSOE GROUP

42%

overall predicted Energy Use Intensity (pEUI) reduction

0

whole-building projects are predicted to be zero net energy

0%

of reported whole-building GSF has reported embodied carbon

24.2 million

Gross Square Feet (GSF) included in analysis

0%

of reported whole-building GSF meets the 80% pEUI reduction target

0.9%

of reported whole-building GSF has been energy modeled

41

projects reported

69%

of reported interior-only GSF meets the 25% predicted lighting power density (pLPD) reduction target

Innovation



Implement digital transformation strategy



Established a dedicated design technology group consisting of virtual design and construction professionals



Organize digital transformation roundtables facilitating meaningful discussions with a select group of non-competing clients on technology and innovation

“ Harnessing creativity to generate innovative ideas that maximize value. ”

At SSOE, innovation is one of our most important core values.

We have created a digital transformation strategy with an overarching strategic objective to enhance project delivery efficiency. Supporting this effort is our dedicated full-time technology and innovation group, empowering our employees to foster collaboration through creative and innovative methodologies and tools. These include AI, reality capture, modularization, off-site prefabrication, virtual reality, and BIM.



SSOE's Project Technology Group

The Project Technology Group utilizes existing technology to develop new processes, integrating them with BIM and CAD modeling techniques to find new ways to improve efficiencies in our projects. Our teams engage in creating collaborative, integrative models starting from the early planning project phase. By optimizing processes and enhancing collaboration, we can minimize costly and inefficient modifications and maximize quality and value.

A notable example is our work to automate and optimize processes with the Autodesk Construction Cloud (ACC) and Autodesk Build suite of tools to enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and minimize non-value-added tasks. We have developed streamlined automations and integrations between ACC, Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), and other software applications to extend the capabilities of ACC, enhancing productivity and improving the user experience.



Engaging Our Clients on Technology and Innovation

Through our digital transformation roundtables, we facilitate meaningful discussions with a select group of non-competing clients. These sessions provide the opportunity to delve into our technology and innovation initiatives, sharing insights into our strategic directions, the tools we currently employ, and potential areas for future investment. By actively involving our clients in these discussions, we foster collaborative partnerships and better align our efforts with their evolving needs.

Breakthrough Market Highlights



Electric Vehicles and Battery Manufacturing

SSOE has served the automotive market for 75 years and is at the forefront of the transition to electric vehicles. We work with the world's largest and most innovative automotive and battery manufacturing companies to retrofit facilities for electric vehicle production, design and construct greenfield electric vehicle plants, and to support the battery manufacturing process at every point in the supply chain.

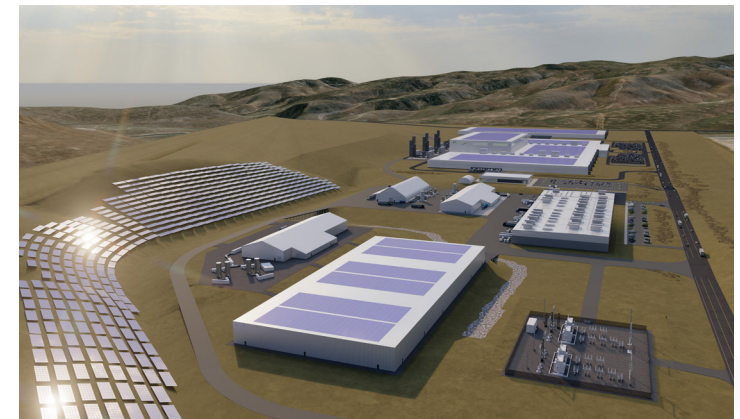
Our combined expertise and experience in the automotive, chemical, process, and advanced technology markets brings a unique perspective to designing electric vehicle and lithium-ion battery manufacturing facilities. SSOE has engaged in over 50 battery and electric vehicle projects in North America and has designed more than 28 million SF of battery plants.



Alternative Energy

SSOE has wide-ranging experience in integrating alternative energy technologies into projects. Whether it is developing manufacturing systems and the facilities for them, or designing installations to reduce operational costs, our experience encompasses biodiesel, fuel cells, solar PV, and waste to energy systems.

Our team brings a wealth of experience from diverse manufacturing industries including food, glass, petroleum, automotive, and from their associated research and development sectors. Whether working with manufacturers or consumers, we use our expertise to provide our clients with optimized designs that balance their economic and environmental goals.

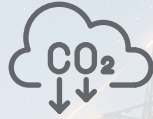


Project Highlights

Ford Motor Company's Tennessee Electric Vehicle Center (TEVC) in BlueOval City in Stanton, Tennessee



4 million SF design



Carbon neutral operations



Zero freshwater withdrawals



Zero waste to landfill



Historic Preservation of Atlanta Public Schools' David T. Howard Middle School Renovation and Addition Project in Atlanta, Georgia



Transformed a previously abandoned historic building into a state-of-the-art middle school



Received the 2021 AIA Georgia Honor Design Award in Renovation/Restoration and Adaptive Reuse Over \$1M



Implemented energy-efficient mechanical systems, enhancing both energy efficiency and indoor environmental quality



Received the 2021 Atlanta Urban Design Commission Award of Excellence in Historic Preservation



Innovation in Action: The Ascend Elements Electric Vehicle Materials Manufacturing Facility in Hopkinsville, Kentucky



500,000 SF design



Significantly reduced rework during construction despite challenges posed by a fast-track schedule and global supply chain shortages



Centralized over 11,600 project files, facilitating real-time problem-solving and collaboration among more than 250 users



Received the 2023 Design & Make AEC Best Construction Project Award at Autodesk University 2023



Continental AG's Manufacturing Facility in New Braunfels, Texas



LEED Gold® certified
215,000 SF design



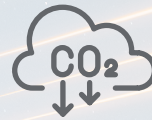
GHG emissions from construction reduced by 16%



Annual energy consumption reduced by 12%



Annual potable water use reduced by 60%, resulting in anticipated savings of \$246,800 over a 20-year lifecycle



Embodied carbon from construction reduced by 10%



5.2 COLLEAGUES AND COMMUNITIES



Safety

“ Safety Always. ”



Formal safety policy and training program



Emergency Action Plans specific to each office with annual training for employees



All employees attend training on safety per OSHA recommendations and client requirements



Zero recordable incidents in 2022 and 2023

To uphold our safety commitment, we have established a strategic goal to keep annual Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recordable injury/illness rates below the industry average for Standard Industrial Code (SIC) Engineering Services and Architectural Services. We actively pursue this goal by implementing a comprehensive Occupational Safety and Health Program, overseen by a dedicated Safety Manager. A Safety Committee comprised of employees from each office is tasked with identifying opportunities to refine our health and safety policies, training initiatives, and long-term strategy, ensuring that well-being of everyone involved in our projects remains our top priority.



Safety Performance Highlight: Highwire Platinum Safety Award

SSOE has received the Highwire Platinum Safety Award from Highwire multiple times, underscoring our commitment to implementing comprehensive safety management systems. Highwire’s Safety Assessment Program reviews a company’s historic safety performance and current safety management systems. The results provide a strong indicator of how a vendor or contractor values safety and a reliable predictor of future performance.

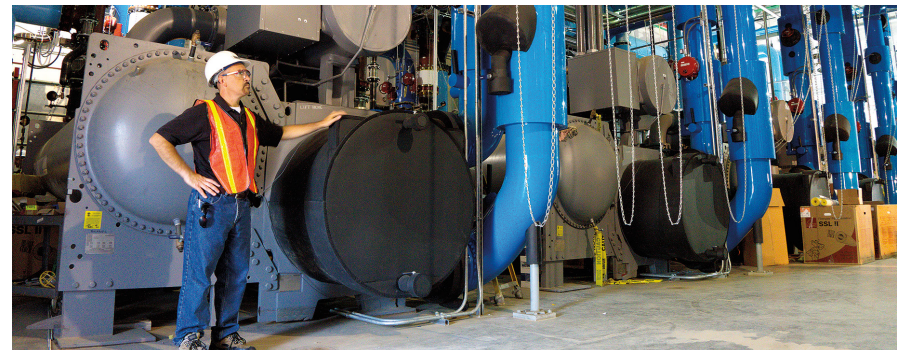


Protecting the SSOE Team

Our commitment to safety starts with our people. Our employee handbook outlines employee safety rules, each office has a specific Emergency Action Plan, and our emergency alert system, Informacast, promptly notifies employees of any emergencies occurring within their respective offices.

Regular worksite safety analyses and emergency evacuation drills are conducted to identify and correct unsafe conditions and work practices. We have established a formal Safety and Health Training Program to ensure our employees are adequately prepared to conduct work assignments at client sites, while safety training and orientation is prioritized for all new employees. A standing committee meets regularly to review our training program, making sure it provides the required level of training that aligns with our goals and the priorities of our clients.

Our goal is to achieve zero recordable accidents, but in the event of an incident or near miss, we consider it an opportunity for learning and improvement. We encourage our employees to generate and submit incident and near miss reports within 24 hours after occurrence, so we can assess the necessary changes and implement training to prevent similar incidents in the future.



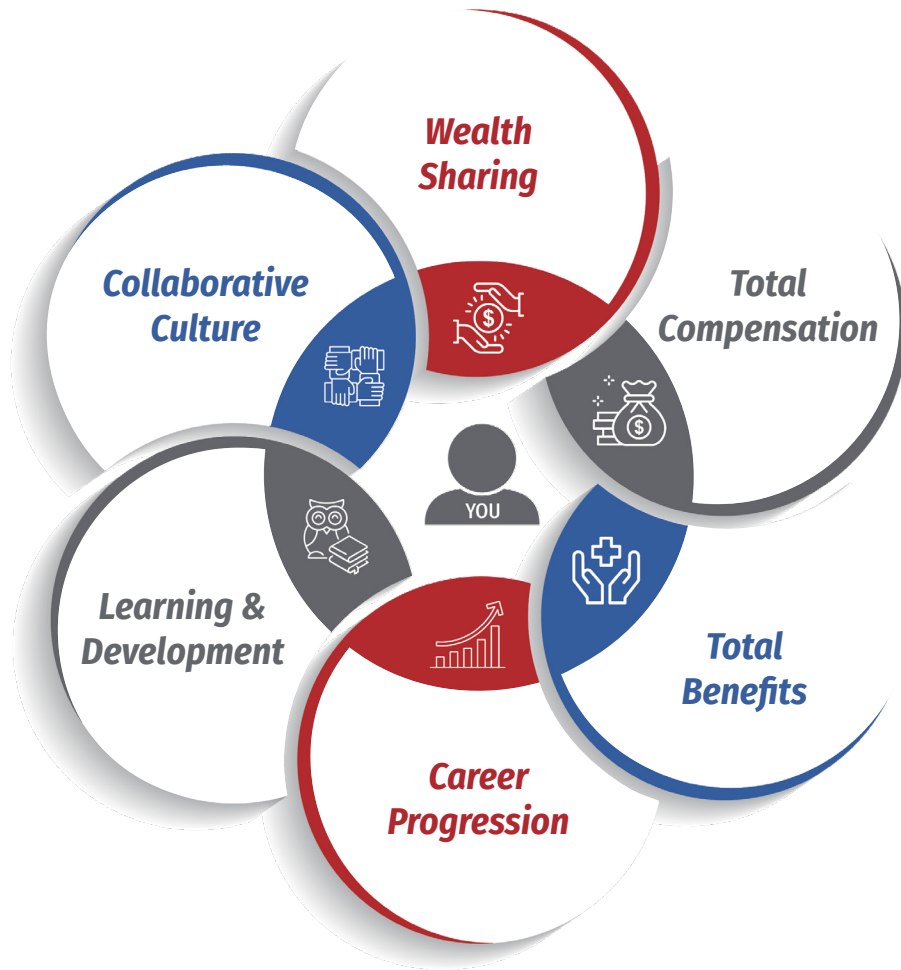
Protecting Our Clients and Projects

Our project and department managers are tasked with ensuring that client safety needs are addressed while aligning with the requirements and specifications of regulatory agencies. Our field employees consistently undergo mandatory training in safety compliance, awareness, and hazard recognition. This proactive approach ensures they are prepared to execute tasks and complete projects safely.

Our protocols specify that our employees should speak up in cases where they have to conduct work in an environment exposed to hazardous situations. We make it clear that employees are not permitted to work in any environment exposed to hazards without having been trained to address such hazards. A key responsibility of our project and department managers is to identify the employees needing specific training and make sure sufficient budget and time is available to conduct the required training.

Health and Well-being

“ Engaged in growth, empowered for success. ”



SSOE is committed to providing an attractive and compelling Employment Value Proposition in order to form a foundation for employee success - prioritizing employee well-being, experience, and engagement. Our People & Culture team oversees our wellness program and benefits package to enhance physical, mental, and financial wellness, encourage healthy work-life balance, and empower personal and professional success.

Fostering a Healthy, Engaged, and Active Workforce

We have established several initiatives to maintain high-value, competitive, and cost-effective health and wellness plans that address the needs of our employees. Our benefits program aligns with our holistic approach to employee well-being and is designed to be a foundational component of our rewards package so we can foster a healthy, engaged, and active workforce.





Medical Benefits

We offer a comprehensive range of insurance and medical plans. To enhance financial flexibility, we support pre-tax flexible spending savings accounts (FSA) and health savings accounts (HSA), allowing for strategic allocation of resources for needs such as healthcare and dependent care.*

* U.S. Benefits Program



Lifestyle and Wellness

We provide various benefits to encourage our employees to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle, which are available at no cost. These include annual health screenings, subsidies for gym memberships and/or diet plan programs, flu shots, a walking program, and online programs with HSA and medical FSA incentives.

Additionally, we have established a formal Hybrid Work Model policy and provide travel, parking and/or transit reimbursement, and various types of leave and paid time-off programs, including parental leave and bereavement policies.*



In 2023, 41% of SSOE employees used the Wellness Works digital platform to access and track personal and wellness goals



Employee Assistance



In 2023, 108 employees used our Employee Assistance Program



Well-being Performance Highlight: 2023 Great Place to Work Certification

SSOE has earned the “Great Workplace” credential from Great Place to Work **six times**. In 2023, 93% of U.S. employees rated SSOE as a great place to work, with people cited as the number one response to what makes SSOE a great workplace.



Our employees and their families have 24/7 access to our Employee Assistance Program (EAP), offering expert counseling via phone and online. Additionally, a work/life specialist assists with various challenges, from childcare to financial management. In 2023, 108 employees utilized the EAP services.



SSOE Employee Clubs

To further promote employee interaction and team building, we support company-funded, employee-driven Employee Clubs in offices with more than 10 employees. These clubs organize educational, social, and recreational activities to cultivate intra-office fellowship.





Employee Recognition

SSOE proudly champions employee recognition initiatives aimed at celebrating excellence, fostering a culture of appreciation, and inspiring continued dedication across all levels of our organization.

Clients, Colleagues, and Communities (C³) Awards: The C³ Awards program recognizes employees, individuals, or teams, that consistently demonstrate and uphold SSOE's values, drive our organizational goals, and significantly contribute to the success of our organization.

SSOE Founders & Leadership Awards: SSOE launched the internal Founders and Leadership Awards program in 2008 to recognize and reward exemplary achievements and contributions that reinforce our core values and leadership in project execution. The Founders Award recognizes exemplary execution of SSOE's core principles including innovation, quality improvements, value-added solutions, great client service, and diversification. The Leadership Award recognizes and reinforces leadership across various categories ranging from technical excellence to community involvement. In 2023, the Founders and Leadership Awards program recognized 101 recipients for their contributions and achievements.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion



“Creating an inclusive and equitable world includes being responsible in our practices and how they impact the communities we serve. Sustainability in this industry has a direct and important connection to our DEI efforts.”

- Candice Harrison, Director of DEI

In 2023:



Women comprised 25% of our employee base and 24% of our top leadership (Director and above)



Minorities comprised 19% of our employee base and 10% of our top leadership (Director and above)



15% of our procurement came from diverse and/or disadvantaged businesses



Formed our first six employee resource groups



Launched the Blueprint for Equity podcast to evaluate DEI challenges in the AEC industry



100% of SSOE employees attended training on DEI

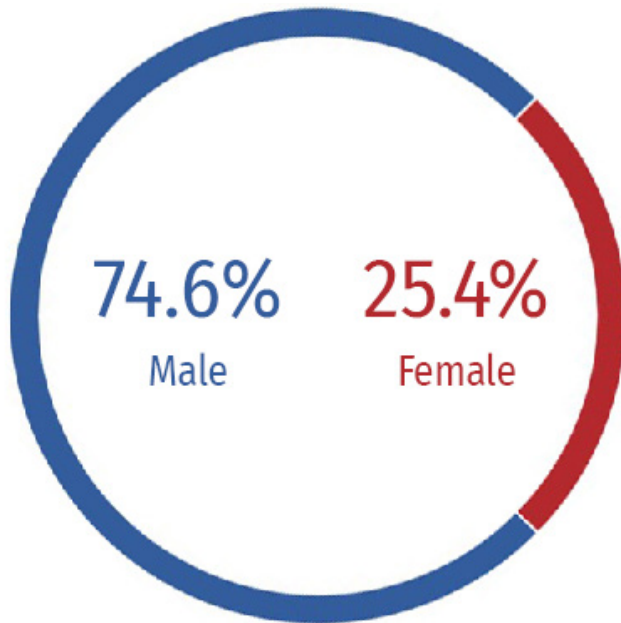
At SSOE, we strongly believe that our people are our greatest asset and collaboration serves as our most powerful tool. Recognizing the unique contributions of each individual, we foster a working environment where everyone feels respected and safe, enabling them to thrive personally and professionally.

“Diverse in Thought, United in Action.”

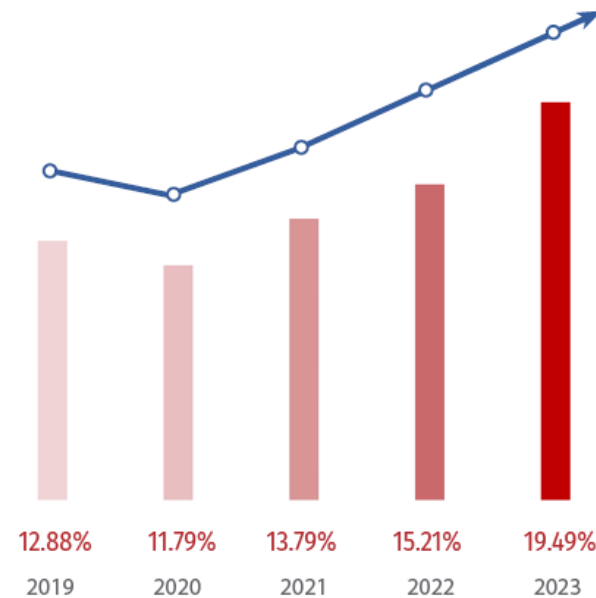


Fostering an Inclusive, Equitable, and Collaborative Culture

Gender Demographics



% of SSOE Employee Population that is an Underrepresented Minority



SSOE is an equal opportunity employer, committed to preventing discrimination and ensuring fair hiring and advancement opportunities. Inclusion and diversity are part of our core values and a key aspect of our learning and development initiatives.

Over the past years, we have marked significant milestones in our DEI journey. In 2020, we appointed the first woman President and Chair of the Board, and in 2022, we appointed our first Director of DEI. We held roundtable discussions and engaged our employees to better understand the DEI aspects SSOE should focus on and the challenges that might arise in implementing DEI initiatives. These discussions helped establish our strategic DEI priorities and management approach.

DEI Governance

The Director of DEI oversees our DEI initiatives and reports directly to the CEO. This includes setting goals and conducting ongoing, in-depth assessments of our DEI initiatives, ensuring that the principles of equity and inclusivity are integrated into every aspect of our organization. The Director of DEI works closely with our ESG Committee to align our DEI priorities with our strategic goals and provide recommendations on the performance aspects and indicators we are evaluating.

To gain momentum and strengthen our DEI strategy, we have established dedicated DEI Champions. The Champions engage with and listen to the needs and concerns of our employees. They create internal support channels, holding our leadership accountable for acting on our commitment to DEI by formulating actionable initiatives. Additionally, the Champions are instrumental in measuring, documenting, and sharing our progress on DEI.

Employee Resource Groups

In 2023 we established our first Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). The ERGs provide dedicated spaces for our employees to connect and contribute to a more inclusive and supportive workplace environment at SSOE. ERGs have their own mission statement and charter, with goals ranging from recognizing holidays and inviting guest speakers to address specific DEI aspects to proposing changes to company policies and practices. A notable example is designating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a holiday and a day dedicated to community service for our employees.

Each ERG has an executive sponsor, a senior-level executive who supports network activities, ensures that all ERGs have access to senior SSOE leadership, and provides strategic advice to align the goals of the ERG with SSOE's organizational goals.

Our ERGs currently include:

People Respecting Identities, Diversity, and Equality (PRIDE)

PRIDE is an inclusive community of LGBTQIA+ people and allies. Its vision is to promote a positive and inclusive work environment and community while providing opportunities for education, networking, collaboration, and career development.

Black Leaders and Collaborative Changemakers (BLACC)

BLACC works to move forward the mission and values of SSOE, while representing the interests of Black/African Americans within SSOE's overall DEI goals.



SSOE Women Allies Network (SWAN)

SWAN is an inclusive community of women and allies. Its mission is to provide professional and personal development opportunities for women, while raising awareness around challenges women may face, sharing resources, providing mentorship, and equipping people to support their women colleagues.

Hispanic and Latin Allies (HoLA)

HoLA works to empower and support Latin and Hispanic employees and allies and promote cross-cultural understanding.

Interfaith Alliance

Interfaith Alliance brings together those who practice different religions, have different faiths, and/or come from different spiritual backgrounds to facilitate learning and promote inclusion.

Young Professionals (YP)

YP connects young professionals to mentors, creates networking opportunities and licensure support, provides a platform for young professionals to push innovative approaches, and uplifts young professional voices.

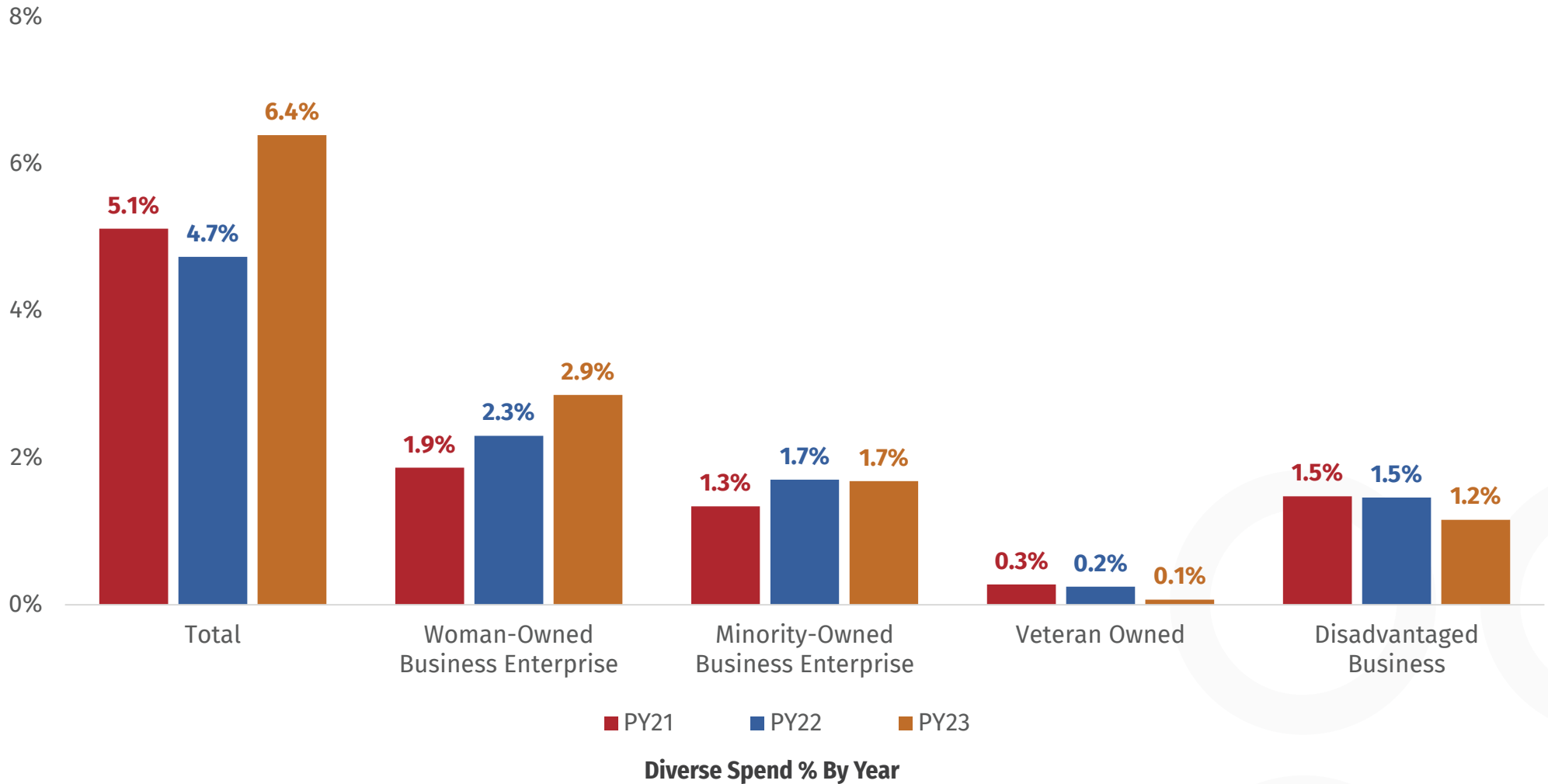
Spotlight - A Blueprint for Equity: SSOE's Podcast on DEI

In 2023, we launched "A Blueprint for Equity", a podcast to explore challenges, uncover opportunities, and highlight successful DEI initiatives and strategies in the AEC and related industries. Hosted by SSOE's Director of DEI, the podcast brings together thought leaders, educators, subject matter experts, and technical professionals to discuss key issues and approaches to developing a more inclusive AEC community.



Vendor and Sub-Contractor Diversity

In 2023, 15% of our annual procurement came from diverse and/or disadvantaged businesses. We acknowledge that minority-owned businesses encounter barriers that hinder their opportunities to grow and engage in projects compared to other businesses. To address this, we have set a strategic goal to collaboratively work with our qualified diverse and women-owned partners, aiming to understand and overcome these challenges. Currently, we are assessing initiatives to enhance the integration of diverse and minority-owned businesses into our supply chain.



Expanding Our Recruitment Strategy to Embrace Underrepresented Communities in the AEC Workplace

Our commitment extends to building a strong and equitable workforce that is reflective of our local communities. To achieve this, we aim to establish impactful partnerships with community organizations, high schools, colleges, and universities, so we can attract talent from communities that have historically been underrepresented in the workplace. In 2023, we launched SSOE's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) scholarship to support students attending historically black colleges and universities and help them prepare for a successful career in the STEM fields. The HBCU scholarship provides financial assistance, mentoring, and networking opportunities with SSOE professionals and leaders.

Learning and Professional Development

“Facilitating the continuous growth of our employees to enhance individual capabilities and contribute to the overall advancement of SSOE.”



Learning and Development Program



Formal learning and professional development, mentoring, and leadership development programs



Individual Learning and Development Plan required for every employee, specifying their career goals and priorities for learning and development



Budget approximately \$8 million for learning and development, including technology, software, and training expenses



In 2023, SSOE logged 20,800 hours of training across our employee base, averaging approximately 19 hours of training per employee

Our Learning and Development Program is designed to empower our employees with diverse skills essential for their personal and professional growth. Every employee creates an Individual Learning and Development Plan that specifies their career goals and evaluates areas for improvement. Available learning and development courses cover a broad spectrum. The Learning and Development Plans undergo regular reviews to ensure they stay relevant and align with the evolving aspirations of our employees.

Educational Assistance

Our Educational Assistance Reimbursement Program aims to ensure that the educational endeavors of our employees directly contribute to both their career aspirations and our strategic goals. This program offers eligible employees the flexibility to pursue two-year, four-year, or advanced degree programs, as well as support for individual courses. Degree programs or individual courses must align with the employee's Individual Learning and Development Plan.

SSOE encourages our employees to participate in seminars, conferences, and workshops. Each SSOE department is allocated an annual budget for training to ensure that employees have opportunities to attend seminars, conferences, and workshops that align with their professional development needs.

Professional Licenses, Certifications and Memberships



SSOE offers growth opportunities at all stages of careers

In 2023, 52 SSOE employees obtained professional licenses and certifications



Our policies on Professional Licenses, Certifications, and Memberships offer incentives and bonuses to support employees pursuing professional licensures and accreditations with preparation classes, exams, and membership fees. In 2023, 52 SSOE employees utilized our policies to obtain professional licenses and certifications. Additionally, we emphasize the significance of active engagement in professional organizations, as it provides opportunities for professional development and growth, while keeping us well-informed about technological advancements and industry trends. We have established targeted incentives to encourage our senior leaders to pursue roles such as senior associates or board members, fostering their growth as leaders and contribution to our industry.

Mentoring

We are committed to fostering a culture of mentorship, supporting our employees in expanding their leadership capabilities, and exploring new areas for personal and professional development. To support this, we offer a structured Mentoring Program designed to connect employees either within the organization or with external mentors. This program includes access to a robust set of resources to help our employees get started and ensure a fruitful mentoring experience.

Leadership Development



Transformational Leadership Initiative:
10 - 20 employees annually



Team Lead Initiative:
135 employees since 2022



New Supervisor Initiative:
20-30 employees annually

Professional Roundtable Series

We offer a number of roundtable sessions on a monthly or bi-monthly schedule to further enrich professional development. Participating employees share lessons learned, review best practices, and gain insights from guest speakers and subject matter experts who discuss thought-provoking topics. Roundtable session examples offered include our Women in Leadership, Project Manager, and Department Manager.



Community Engagement

“ You can do something to better your world. Pessimists do not build a better world. Be an optimist. A do-er. A builder. ”

Al Samborn, Founder, SSOE Group



Formal community engagement and volunteering program, encouraging every employee to complete 20 hours of volunteerism



In 2023, SSOE employees completed 8,045 hours of volunteerism



In 2023, SSOE supported 205 organizations through community engagement and volunteerism



Community Service and Volunteerism

SSOE has a legacy of contributing to sustainable and equitable community development, dating back to our founder Al Samborn's extensive work with community organizations in the early 1980's.

We promote community service and volunteering, encouraging every employee to contribute 20 hours annually. For each employee who performs 20 hours of volunteerism, we have committed to making a \$100 donation to the organization of their choice each year.

In 2023, in recognition of our 75th anniversary, we challenged our employees to volunteer a total of 7,500 hours and committed to donating \$7,500 to a charity selected by our employees once our goal was achieved. Our employees managed to surpass our goal, logging a total of 8,045 hours of volunteerism. In recognition of our employees' contributions, we made a \$7,500 donation to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. St. Jude provides life-saving care and treatment to children as well as meals, lodging, and support services for their families. For Earth Day, SSOE donated \$7,500 to The Solutions Project, which funds and amplifies climate justice solutions created by black, indigenous, immigrant, women, and communities of color building an equitable world.



In 2023, we supported 205 organizations and educational institutions



63 community and economic development organizations



57 organizations providing critical human services



17 health organizations that provide education, care, and support



10 animal welfare and wildlife rehabilitation organizations



6 organizations that support military veterans



4 human and civil rights organizations



48 educational institutions that benefit students of all ages

Investing in the Future of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)



Actively engaging students at the high school/pre-college level

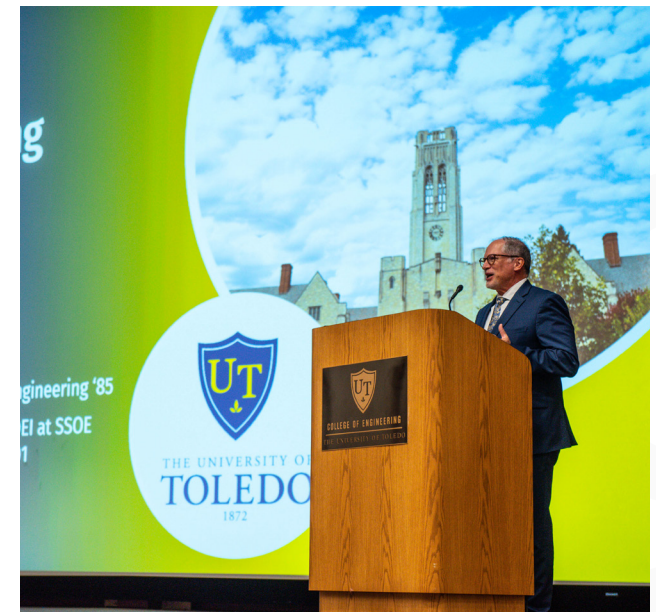


Annual Engineer for a Day Program



Student Co-Op/ Internship Program

At SSOE, we prioritize fostering the next generation of AEC professionals. We achieve this through our student internship program and partnerships with multiple high schools, colleges, and universities. Additionally, we actively participate in events aimed at engaging and inspiring students to pursue their passions, thereby contributing to a brighter future for both SSOE and our industry.



SSOE's Student Co-op/Internship Program

\$615K

in Scholarships

We've rewarded students with close to \$615,000 in scholarships since implementing our scholarship program

\$100K+

in Tuition Reimbursement

SSOE has invested more than \$100,000 in tuition reimbursement since 2015

42

Co-ops/Interns

We employ an average of nearly 42 co-ops/interns at any given time

200+

Co-ops/Interns Hired

In the past three years, we've hired more than 200 co-ops/interns for full-time positions

Program Participant Quote:

“ I really benefited from the fact that SSOE is on the cutting edge in terms of using technology. In the course of my internship, I went from drafting in 2D to modeling 100% in 3D. I also saw for myself how important communication is when you are part of an interdisciplinary team, and I had many opportunities to improve my skills in this area. Everyone encouraged me to ask as many questions as possible. That says a lot about what it's like to be part of SSOE. ”

Conrad, Project Controls



Corporate Partnerships

SSOE actively supports and participates as a member or corporate partner in several organizations, reinforcing our dedication to community service and engagement. This involvement not only enhances our ability to contribute positively to our communities but also aligns with our broader mission to foster a spirit of collaboration and affect meaningful change in our industry.



United Way and SSOE: Working Together to Make a Difference

SSOE has been a major supporter of United Way for four decades. United Way is a human services non-profit dedicated to strengthening education, financial stability, health, and housing resources for every child, adult, and family. SSOE has worked with United Way to support various events and activities and houses the United Way of Greater Toledo within our World Headquarters in Toledo, Ohio.



**CEO ACTION FOR
DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

**CEO Action for Diversity
and Inclusion**



**Society of Women
Engineers**



**National Organization of
Minority Architects**



United Negro College Fund

elevateHER®

ElevateHER



Catalyst



**National Society of Black
Engineers**



Hiring Our Heroes



**Engineers Week and Engineer
for a Day Program**



**Multiple Engineering
Cooperative Program**



DE LA SALLE
NORTH CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL

**Work Study Program
De LaSalle North Catholic High School**



**Imagination Station's Girl
Power Initiative**

5.3 ENVIRONMENT

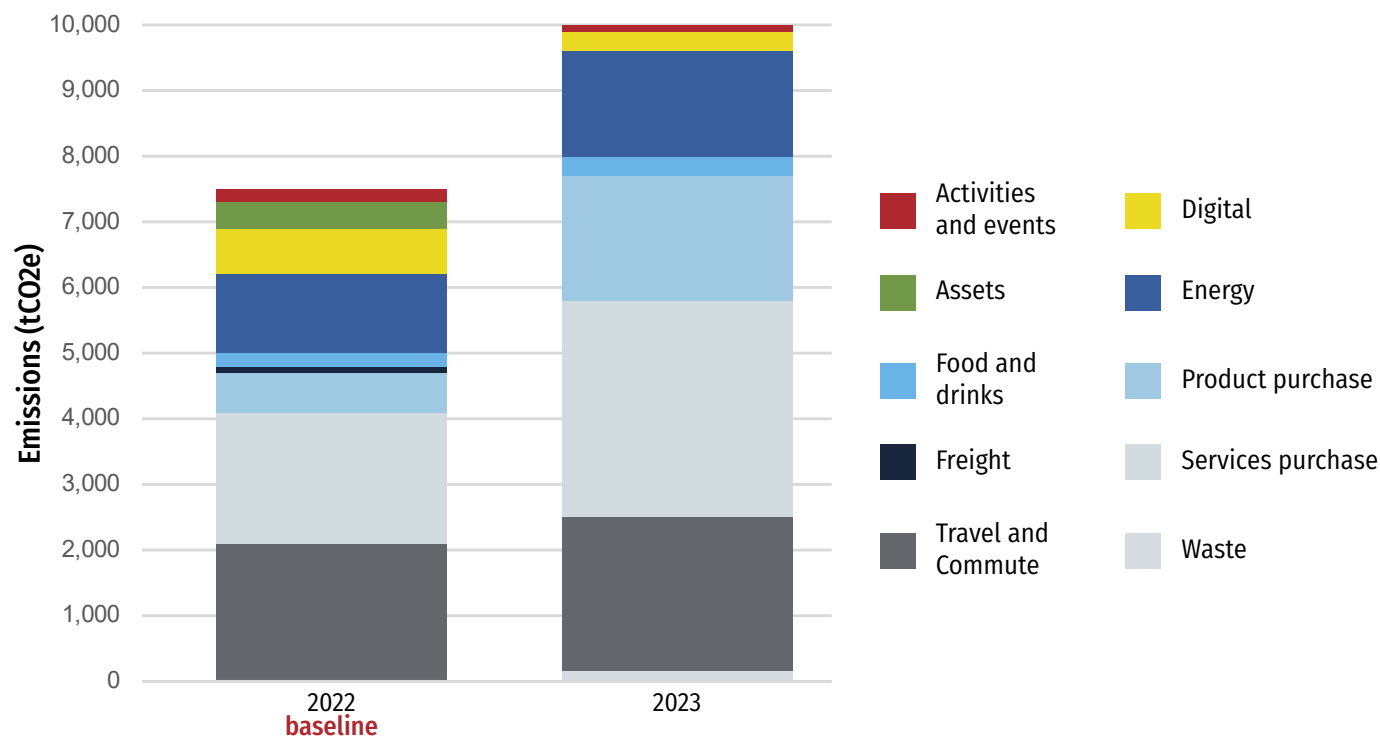
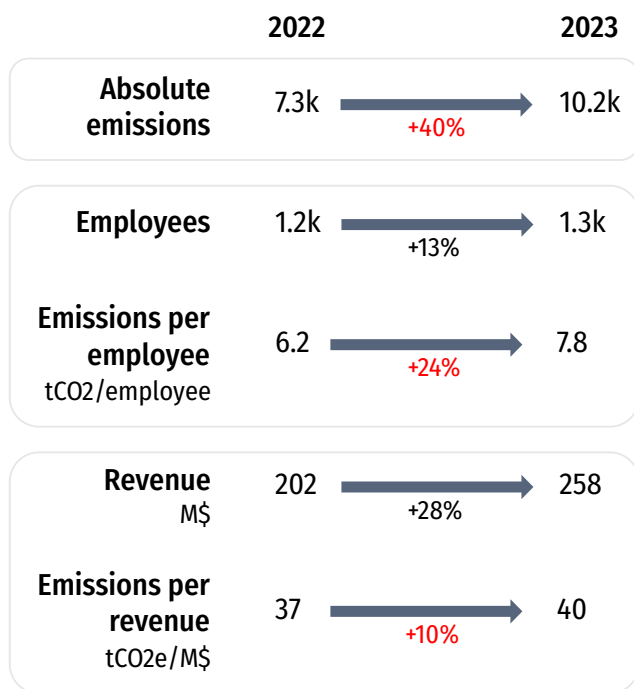


“What does sustainability mean to us? At SSOE, we want to create a blueprint for efficient, resilient, and responsible design, where purpose and profit are not exclusive, and seemingly small steps can equal a big impact - building a better future for our clients, colleagues, and communities.”

- Jennifer Breault, Sustainable Design Strategy Group Chair



Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions

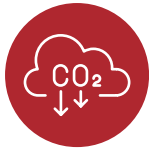


In 2022, SSOE committed to set near-term company-wide emission reductions targets in line with climate science with the SBTi.

Businesses that commit to meeting science-based targets commit to reducing their GHG emissions 50% by 2030 and achieving net zero before 2050. Based on our current emissions, SSOE needs to achieve a 5.9% reduction each year (602tCO2e) to meet our 50% reduction goal by 2030.

SSOE has partnered with Greenly, a carbon accounting platform to better understand our emissions footprint. Based on structural changes to our business, 2022 was identified as the most accurate year to use as our emissions baseline year. However, as SSOE continues to grow, baseline recalculation may be necessary.

This first step of measuring and transparency has helped to prioritize and define actions needed to support our commitment to reducing our emissions.



Reducing our GHG Emissions

Scope 1 and Scope 2 Emissions

Our Headquarters in Toledo, Ohio accounts for over 50% of our owned or purchased energy consumption used to operate our offices. We are evaluating GHG emissions reduction strategies to improve our energy efficiency.

We have established the following targets to reduce our Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions:

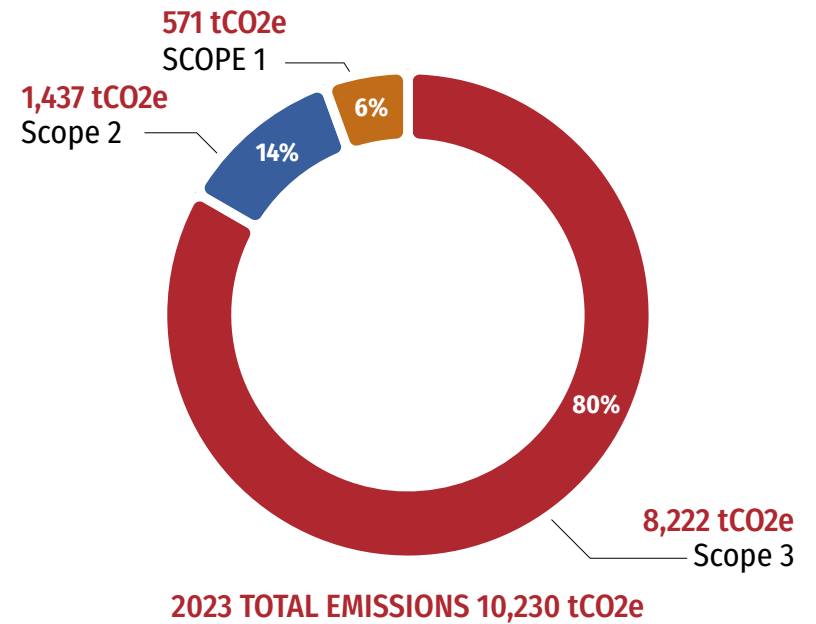
- Reduce energy consumption by 50% in our SSOE World Headquarters Office in Toledo by 2030, in line with AIA 2030 Commitment and SBTi.
- Create a Net Zero Energy Roadmap.
- Purchase Renewable Energy Credits (REC) to cover 100% of Scope 2 emissions across our offices by 2030.
 - ✔ 100% Scope 2 emissions covered with Green-e Certified RECs in 2023. Scope 2 emissions account for 14% of SSOE's total emissions.

Scope 3 Emissions

As SSOE continues to grow its business, we will need to be vigilant about implementing actions to aggressively combat the increase in our Scope 3 emissions. As a consequence of our growth, we have seen an increase in our emissions related to Business Travel, Services Purchases, which include subconsultants and intellectual work - and Product Purchases.

We have set aggressive reduction targets for 2030 from our 2022 baseline year, in line with climate science, which include:

- Reduce employee commuting 50% by 2030. Achieved in 2023 through SSOE's Hybrid Work policy. Employee commuting accounts for a total of 2.5% of SSOE's total emissions.
- Reduce business travel emissions 50% by 2030.
 - Business travel accounts for 25% of SSOE's total emissions. In 2025, SSOE will establish a business travel emissions reduction plan.
- Engage 68% of our Supply Chain to commit to setting science-based targets as part of our Procurement Process.
 - Suppliers (Professional & Intellectual Services and Product Purchases) account for 51% of SSOE's total emissions. Our Procurement Group is modifying our Vendor Qualifications and Contracts to encourage and incentivize our Suppliers to set their own science-based targets.



EcoVadis Assessment Scorecard

Our EcoVadis assessment identifies our strengths and areas for improvement.

Immediate Improvement areas identified:





- Documenting and communicating our policies in an approved format
- Policies must be reviewed minimally every two years
- Documentation must include company logo
- Policies need to be accessible and properly communicated

Goals for 2025:

- Improving overall score to 50/100
- Environment - 50/100
- Labor & Human Rights - 50/100
- Ethics - 60/100
- Sustainable Procurement - 40/100

Proposed Actions:

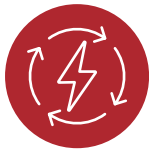
1. Review and update existing ToPPs (Tool, Policy, and Process System) documents
2. Create a review cadence and Responsibility Matrix
3. Create a Corporate Sustainable Procurement Policy
4. Create a Corporate Environmental Policy
5. Create communications plan for new and updated policies

Overall score ↗ 40/100	 Environment Medium impact	 Labor & Human Rights High impact	 Ethics Medium impact	 Sustainable Procurement Low impact
Indicator scores	Theme scores			
Policies High impact	● 0 Insufficient	● 50 Good	● 100 Outstanding	● 0 Insufficient
Endorsements Low impact	● 25 Partial	● 0 Insufficient	● 0 Insufficient	● 0 Insufficient
Measures High impact	● 75 Advanced	● 75 Advanced	● 75 Advanced	● 0 Insufficient
Certifications Medium impact	● 0 Insufficient	● 0 Insufficient	● 50 Good	● 0 Insufficient
Coverage Multiple impact	● 25 Partial	● 25 Partial	● 25 Partial	● 25 Partial
Reporting Medium impact	● 50 Good	● 25 Partial	● 0 Insufficient	● 25 Partial
360° Watch High impact	● 75 Advanced	● 75 Advanced	● 75 Advanced	● 75 Advanced
Summary from the full report based on weighted KPIs	↗ 40/100	→ 40/100	↗ 50/100	→ 20/100

Environmental Management

We aim to promote environmental stewardship within our offices by focusing on reducing energy consumption, implementing waste recycling initiatives, and conserving water resources.

As part of our approach, we are reviewing our leasing agreements to identify opportunities for improving energy efficiency, waste management, and water conservation upon renewal. Additionally, we implement computer power-saving policies, reduce printing by delivering our work electronically, and utilize digital markup and collaboration tools. Over the next two years, we plan to assess environmental stewardship best practices implemented across our offices and gain a deeper understanding of our environmental footprint. This will enable us to develop targeted recommendations for our offices, allowing us to effectively mitigate our environmental impact.



Energy Consumption

In 2023



100% renewable electricity in offices through the purchase of RECs



Drafted the Net Zero Energy Study of Toledo World Headquarters

We have committed to powering our offices with at least 80% renewable electricity by 2025 and 100% by 2030. Our assessment of operational energy consumption shows that our headquarters in Toledo, Ohio, accounts for over 50% of the total Scope 2 energy we consume. That's why we chose our Toledo office for our first net zero energy assessment.

The assessment helps us identify cost-effective measures to reduce energy consumption, which we can use to formulate recommendations that can be applied to our other offices. The initiatives we are currently evaluating include investments in LED lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system upgrades, and advanced and intelligent mechanical systems controls. The anticipated impact of these initiatives is a 30% reduction in energy consumption.



Waste Management



Display office waste management posters with recommendations in each office



Specify proper disposal procedures for documents and technology equipment in the Document and Technology Equipment Disposal policies



Install bottle-fill stations in every office to minimize the use of single-use plastic water bottles

Our formal Document and Technology Equipment Disposal policies outline recommendations for our employees on properly disposing and recycling documents and computer or technology equipment. A significant portion of the paper utilized in our offices undergoes shredding and subsequent recycling. When feasible, we collaborate with community organizations to donate used paper products and equipment. For example, at our World Headquarters in Toledo, Ohio, cardboard paper rolls are donated to the Toledo Zoo, contributing to animal enrichment before being composted post-use.

We aim to minimize usage of single-use plastics by encouraging the use of reusable utensils and food containers for meals and by installing bottle-fill stations in every office. Each office has designated waste management posters with information and recommendations on recyclable items.

Through these initiatives, we estimate that we remove approximately 200 water bottles per employee from waste streams each year. This results in over 300,000 water bottles being diverted from waste streams across our organization annually.



Water

We install water filters in all offices and conduct water quality tests following established testing and analysis to maintain a safe and reliable drinking water supply. Our efforts to reduce the use of single-serve plastic items help us indirectly mitigate our water impact, as single-serve plastic water bottles are water-intensive to produce, requiring over one gallon of water per bottle. During office renovations that involve plumbing fixture upgrades, we ensure to specify efficient systems to help decrease our water consumption.

5.4 GOVERNANCE



“ SSOE’s Board-appointed ESG Committee, for which I am Chair, is chartered to develop expectations and actionable goals to push ESG practices throughout the organization, into our projects, and within our communities. This Committee will engage governing bodies such as the Board of Directors, the Audit Committee, and other ancillary groups that will provide challenging dialogue and focused engagement as we move SSOE to the forefront of ESG practices. ”

Jeanne Cormier, External Board Director

Corporate Governance



Our sustained success and our commitment to delivering on our value promise depend on cultivating trust among our employees, clients, vendors, subcontractors, and the communities where we work. That’s why we have made integrity one of our core values, highlighting that our business strategy, operational goals, and our projects and actions are driven by ethical and responsible business practices.

The Board of Directors serves as our highest governing body, responsible for setting our strategic priorities and overseeing the direction of our organization. Its responsibilities encompass the successful implementation of our strategic plan, advancing key initiatives, and maintaining effective operations in compliance with national and international laws and regulations. The Board is comprised of eleven executives from SSOE and four external members. The inclusion of both firm executives and external members on our Board of Directors fosters a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, enhancing decision-making processes, and promoting comprehensive strategic planning.

“ Operating with integrity: being honest, moral, and ethical. ”

Ethical and Responsible Business Conduct



Integrated a Formal Code of Ethics and Standards of Business Conduct into our Employee Handbook



100% of employees attend training on ethical and responsible business conduct



Established an AI Governance Committee to ensure responsible integration of artificial intelligence across our organization



Implemented a Large Language Model Policy to govern the ethical and responsible use of Generative AI

We have established a Code of Ethics and Standards of Business Conduct and an AI Ethics Policy, offering comprehensive information to assist employees in making ethical decisions in their work assignments. In cases where employees are unsure whether an action they are considering or have observed in a project is permitted by law or by a specific SSOE policy, they are encouraged to consult a technical expert, manager, or a member of our human resources team.

Each year we implement mandatory training on ethics. Our learning and development program includes courses on the basic principles of anti-corruption and anti-bribery awareness, honest and ethical behavior, and whistle-blowing.



Embracing Artificial Intelligence

We are actively exploring how AI can enhance the efficiency and quality of our work, and our workplace environment. To guide these efforts strategically, we have formed an AI Governance Committee to prioritize opportunities that deliver maximum value. Moreover, we have implemented a Data Ethics Policy and strategy, are developing an AI Language Model Policy, and are evaluating initiatives to enhance automation and standardization across project processes and tools.

Conflicts of Interest

Our Code of Ethics and Standards of Business Conduct emphasizes conflicts of interest through a distinct policy, aiming to ensure the ethical management and timely reporting of both actual and perceived conflicts. The policy is formulated to address a wide range of potential situations that may trigger a conflict of interest, providing clear recommendations for our employees to navigate complex scenarios that may arise during their work.

The policy also addresses aspects such as self-employment, gifts and contributions related to our business, financial interests in competitors, clients, or vendors, and taking personal advantage of business opportunities. By addressing potential conflicts of interest with transparency and integrity, we uphold the trust placed in us by our stakeholders and maintain an ethical framework that guides our decisions and actions.

Anti-Corruption and Bribery

SSOE strongly prohibits any activities that could be construed to be a bribe, kickback, or payoff in compliance with the U.S. Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and other applicable laws and regulations in every location where we operate and complete projects. Our Code of Ethics and Standards of Business Conduct highlights several activities that are prohibited under our anti-bribery and corruption protocols. These include gifts to management executives or employees of competitors or public agencies, secret commissions, discounts, compensation, and unreasonable payments, among others.

Whistleblower Procedure and Anonymous Ethics Helpline

We strive to promote individual responsibility and organizational accountability by not only maintaining a working environment in compliance with good governance standards but also by encouraging our employees to speak up and report unethical and fraudulent behavior. Managers are responsible for cultivating a supportive workplace where employees feel comfortable and safe to raise concerns related to ethics and business standards. It is highly beneficial to our organization when employees act to report any mistakes or wrongdoing, so we can make the necessary changes to address them.

Our Code of Ethics and Standards of Business Conduct prohibits threats or retaliation against employees reporting a violation of our Standards of Business Conduct or any relevant law and regulation. We have established proper communication channels for our employees to report potential ethics violations, as well as a 24/7 anonymous ethics helpline. The helpline is monitored by a third-party and is available to everyone with concerns on potential ethics violations, including our vendors and subcontractors.



We offer a 24/7 anonymous ethics helpline, monitored by a third-party, which is available for our employees, vendors, and subcontractors to report potential ethics violations

Risk and Quality Management

“ Risk and quality management: an integral part of every workday and every project. ”



Implemented a Risk Assessment Policy, ensuring all employees receive hazard identification and mitigation training



Established SSOE's Lean Community of Practice and Lean Operating Strategy, dedicated to fostering efficiencies and innovation throughout SSOE and its projects

Managing Risks

Risk assessment and management are key aspects of our strategic business planning process. Our Board of Directors provides strategic oversight on managing risks, helping our CEO, CFO, and COOs integrate risk assessment into our strategic business plan. Additionally, our department and project managers are responsible for identifying and reporting on risks and hazards associated with their service lines and project work.

We have a formal Risk Assessment Policy to ensure risks and hazards are identified, evaluated, and mitigated or eliminated in projects. Prior to the start of any work assignment, our policy mandates a risk and hazard assessment. The identified risks and hazards are then mitigated or eliminated.

SSOE's Lean Operating Strategy: Integrating Lean Principles to Achieve Optimal Quality

SSOE implements Lean design and construction principles to deliver on our value promise to our clients through high-quality projects completed on schedule, with fewer problems, and at a lower cost. Over the last decade, we started formalizing our Lean design and construction initiatives to better integrate Lean principles in our operating strategy and further drive value and collaboration.

In 2020, our Lean Operation Strategy (LOS) was launched: a Key Corporate Initiative that drives us towards operational excellence and client satisfaction, marking a pivotal shift in our company's approach to business. By focusing on continuous workflow efficiency improvements through the lens of individual accountability, communication, and collaboration, we move closer to being, and staying, a trusted business partner of our clients.

The accompanying visual illustrates the foundation and structure of our journey toward Lean principles. It demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement, highlighting the origins of our Lean principles and their alignment with our company values. Although the tools in our LOS toolbox are continuously growing, two things remain constant: our principles and values, which guide our actions and decisions. With the evolution of the initial LOS core team expanding into a Community of Practice, we are advancing our culture one project, one team, and one individual at a time.



Responsible Supply Chain

“ Respecting human rights, promoting integrity, and fostering responsibility throughout our value chain. ”

Developing an Ethical and Responsible Supply Chain

Respecting Human Rights

Promoting Sustainability and Resilience

We are committed to engaging with vendors, suppliers, and subcontractors that follow the same high standards of ethics and business conduct that we demand of ourselves.



Developing an Ethical and Responsible Supply Chain

A summary of our Code of Ethics and Standards of Business Conduct is available on our website, informing our suppliers, vendors, and subcontractors about our standards on ethical and responsible business conduct. Furthermore, in the terms and conditions of every contract we formalize our expectations by including specific sections covering ethics and standards of business conduct.

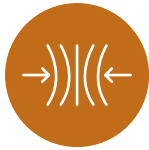


Respecting Human Rights

Since our founding, SSOE has been a strong supporter of human rights. We require our vendors and suppliers to respect human rights and commit to avoiding discrimination against qualified individuals based on their status as protected veterans or individuals with disabilities, and discrimination based on their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Furthermore, we require that our contractors and subcontractors foster an environment of equal employment opportunity, explicitly prohibiting discrimination in hiring, promotions, and daily operations based on these criteria.



Zero-tolerance against human rights abuses within our supply chain



Promoting Sustainability and Resilience



Report on the sustainability performance of our organization and supply chain through EcoVadis



Set a goal to start reporting to CDP Worldwide beginning in 2024

We actively collaborate with our clients and suppliers to enhance the sustainability of our supply chains, fostering a collective approach to environmental stewardship. We report the sustainability performance of our organization as well as our supply chain through the EcoVadis platform, ensuring transparency and driving continuous improvement in our practices. Additionally, we have set a goal to start reporting to CDP Worldwide beginning in 2024, as part of our SBTi commitment.

To drive further improvements, we are evaluating several strategic actions:

Enhanced Supplier Engagement: We plan to deepen our collaboration with suppliers by regular engagement, and by potentially implementing sustainability-focused training sessions. This will not only increase awareness but also empower suppliers to implement sustainable practices within their operations.

Expansion of EcoVadis and CDP Worldwide Reporting: We will encourage a greater number of our suppliers to participate in EcoVadis assessments and CDP Worldwide reporting. Increased participation will enhance the overall transparency of our supply chain and further incentivize our suppliers to implement sustainability standards.

Partnerships for Sustainable Innovation: We will seek partnerships with our clients and suppliers to develop innovative solutions to our supply chain challenges. These partnerships will enable us to identify innovative practices that can transform the sustainability performance of our supply chain.

Strengthened Sustainability Criteria in Procurement: Moving forward, we are actively exploring ways to refine our procurement policies to better integrate sustainability criteria. This includes adopting measures such as purchasing more energy-efficient equipment and forming partnerships with suppliers who have secured recognized environmental certifications.

Cybersecurity

“ Ensuring secure, reliable, and efficient information technology systems. ”



Maintain Permissions Control measures to prevent unauthorized access or disclosure of confidential third-party data and information



Implement enhanced security and authentication protocols to safeguard our internal systems and servers



Conduct an annual independent Information Technology Audit to evaluate the effectiveness of our systems and processes



In 2023, 100% of our employees attended training on cybersecurity

As we embrace an increasingly digitized operating environment that depends on cloud-based technology and data-intensive applications, identifying and managing cyber risk has become a primary concern.

We have implemented multiple measures to safeguard the security and confidentiality of both our own and our clients' information, incorporating various tools to ensure data protection, backup, and emergency recovery measures. We have a dedicated Director of Computer and Information Systems responsible for overseeing the effectiveness of our information technology systems and cybersecurity protocols.



Our Strategic Roadmap

The Big Picture



Mission

Deliver unparalleled client value that advances the AEC industry.



Vision

Designing and building the future for our clients, colleagues, and communities.



1-2 years: Understand, Educate, and Build the Foundation

- Focus culture on client value and inclusion and diversity
- Educate clients and staff on AEC changes
- Enhance client-facing career paths
- Define Lean Operating Strategy
- Develop technology roadmap for the future
- Implement Lean process and train staff
- Prioritize investment strategy

2-5 years: Integrate and Optimize

- Align people, process, and technology plans
- Implement Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and create a common data environment
- Improve ownership and compensation model for future leadership
- Increase workflow efficiency → Improve project delivery and commitments
- Achieve growth and profitability through competitive client value

5+ years: Build the Future

- Deliver unparalleled client value that advances the AEC industry
- Selecting work → Predictable project delivery.
- Attracting—not recruiting—talent
- Next generation leadership in place
- Big data → Artificial intelligence
- Impact our communities through projects and personal commitments

6. LOOKING FORWARD

This year marks a pivotal moment for ESG and sustainability at SSOE. Our ESG strategy is a transformative initiative aimed at advancing our sustainability practices and exploring new ways to become better stewards of the environment, our colleagues, and our communities, delivering on our promise to provide unparalleled value to our clients.

To ensure that our initiatives lead to tangible and positive outcomes, we are committed to maintaining an open line of communication with our colleagues, clients, and stakeholders. By actively seeking feedback and engaging in continuous dialogue, we aim to gain valuable insights that will help us refine and evolve our ESG strategy in alignment with their needs and priorities. Throughout 2024-2025, SSOE will take proactive steps to update or create policies that embed ESG and sustainability principles into our corporate culture.

Recognizing that today's challenges require collective action, we emphasize the importance of collaboration. While individual efforts are crucial, we understand that meaningful change occurs when we unite our efforts. SSOE values collaboration and actively participates in global initiatives such as the AIA 2030 Commitment and the SBTi. Through these efforts, we aim to contribute to broader collective actions that promote sustainability, innovation, and positive global impact.

With our ESG strategy guiding our endeavors, we are more determined than ever to invest in our people, collaborate with our clients and peers, and together, make a lasting and meaningful impact.

Forward-looking Statements

This report may contain statements that are forward looking. These statements are based on current expectations and assumptions that are subject to risks and uncertainties, which may cause actual results to differ materially.

 **SSOE**[®]e

