July 2020 - June 2021 Annual Report

Letter from the Chair

Dear EPIC-Network Members and Friends,

The past year and a half have obviously challenged communities and universities in unprecedented ways: their safety, their finances, even their self-conception. But through all the personal and social upheaval and pain of this period, I'm happy and proud to report that EPIC Model programs and their Network, often with fewer resources and more responsibility, have stayed true to our mission and persevered.

Indeed, we've done better than that. By adapting to changed circumstances with better use of technology and more active engagement with stakeholders, we've actually grown our positive impact. The number of EPIC programs has grown nationally and internationally. The Network's service to member programs, and theirs to their community partners, have both improved. We've collectively adopted the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for all our project work, permitting better comparison and transparency among ourselves and to donors. We've underscored and highlighted our commitment to social inclusion and equity—in the US, especially, along lines of race—along with sustainability and democracy. We engaged many more members in helping each other and welcoming newcomers through more regular network meetings and workgroups. We improved program reporting on community results, and the experience of students, faculty and staff, and community participants in the work. We've promoted

the Network's existence and usefulness at countless venues. We've improved our internal communication and vastly improved our website. And we've sought out and made many new friends, allies, and partners in our work (and clarified the terms of those external relations), which has vastly increased our visibility and leveraged our reach.

To catalyze members' efforts in response to the challenges of the past year and ease the financial burden it placed on most of them, we also suspended membership fees during the Covid crisis. This strained our own finances, but we're confident it was the right thing to do. Now, with more external money becoming available, and an explosion of external interest in our work, we're also confident we can soon return to members sharing in the cost of network options without undue burden on them.

But as detailed in the report herein, we've certainly survived the year, and have much to celebrate in it. We expanded membership both in the US and abroad. We increased the quality of our services to members while adjusting our delivery to meet you where you need us to be. We matured and deepened as a network, with many more of our members contributing time and expertise to our twin goals of increasing both the number of programs and their quality.

Continuing with all of this, in May 2021 we resumed our international expansion launching EPIC-Asia. We began to publish tools to assist in local

implementation of the SDGs and strengthen the number of relations with organizational "friends" of EPIC-N. We plan to deepen our commitment to our current members by securing funding, increasing brand awareness, and improving the consistency and quality of support we provide our programs and the communities they serve.

We have much more work to do to increase the reach and quality of our work, and to document and communicate that more effectively. But EPIC-Network's past year's record of commitment, innovation, and courage are strong evidence that we can weather whatever the rest of this year and succeeding ones throw at us. I hope the rest of this report will remind you of our shared successes while energizing you for the future. I know it's good work, and that it is still urgently needed.

For those of you who have tirelessly committed time and energy to the success of your own program, and thus the Network that services and unites your efforts with others like you, THANK YOU! It's a privilege and honor to serve as your Chair. Your tenacity and goodness inspire me. I hope they inspire you as well.

"By adopting new technologies and engagement methods, your individual efforts continued to grow the positive impact of our network."


**Joel Rogers,
EPIC-N Chair**

Successes

"*This program is an incredible example of what higher education can do for our community. Not only does this give students a unique hands-on learning opportunity, it provides the city with the opportunity to complete valuable projects that we would not have been able to otherwise.*"

—Largo Wales, Deputy Mayor, The City of Auburn, Washington
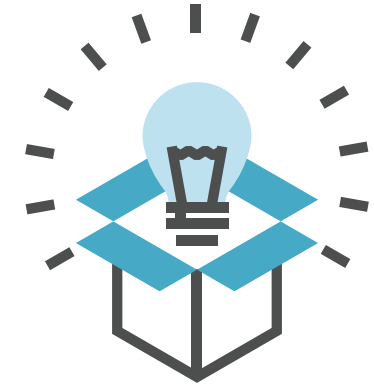
EPIC-N developed new ways to advocate for members internationally, federally, regionally, and locally.
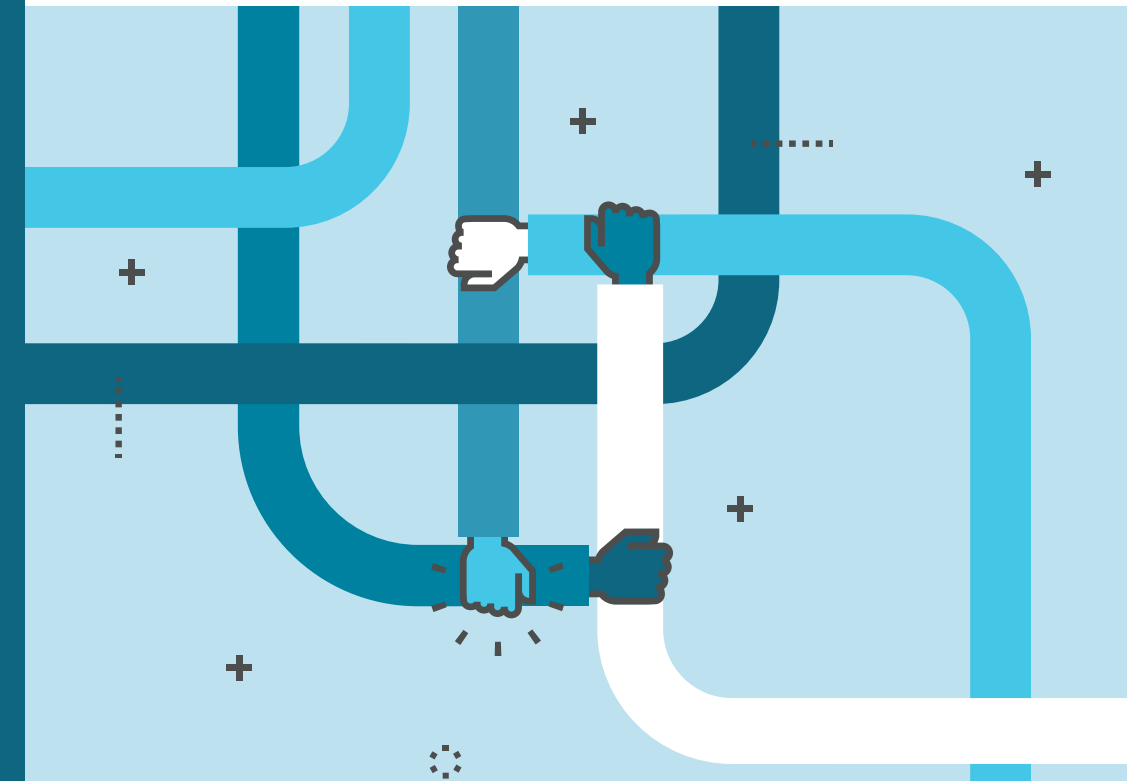
EPIC-N embraced the Black Lives Matter movement and the responsibility to ground our work in dismantling broken structures and rebuild new systems that support our EPIC-N partners and programs to act in ways that deconstruct institutional and structural racism.

Our Member Commons and membership was made free for all interested parties to catalyze response and recovery to COVID.

EPIC-N successfully conducted a virtual webinar series and annual awards to continue progress, onboarding, and training despite the pandemic.

To increase the level of communication, professionalism, and outreach efforts, EPIC-N procured a new Public Relations/Communications firm.
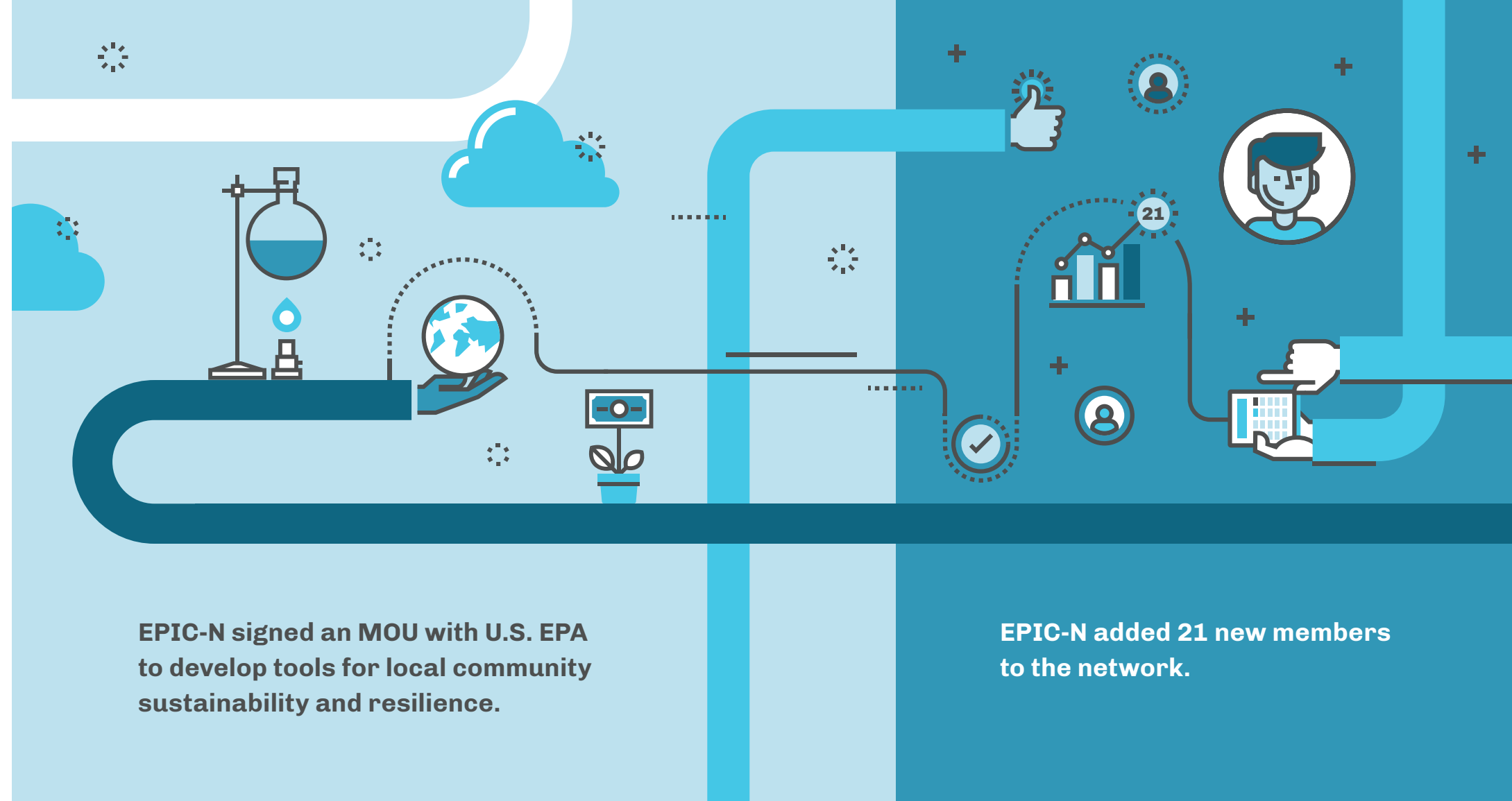
EPIC-N signed an MOU with U.S. EPA to develop tools for local community sustainability and resilience.

EPIC-N added 21 new members to the network.

"The EPIC Model engages students in their communities and helps us better address issues of sustainability."

—Daniel Fernandez, Faculty and Program Director at CSU Monterey Bay

By the Numbers

167
Technical Assistance Appointments

223
Total Listserv Participants

292
Total Member Commons Participants

20
Hosted Workshops, Webinars, & Network Calls

39,081
Website Views

+237
Total Social Media Follower Growth

+36
Twitter Followers

+9
YouTube Subscribers

+50
Instagram Followers

+107
Facebook Followers

+35
LinkedIn Followers

+45
Resources Created

1,700
Total Projects to Date

21
New Members since July 1, 2020

72
Total Member Count

21
Countries Represented

22
US States Represented

+295
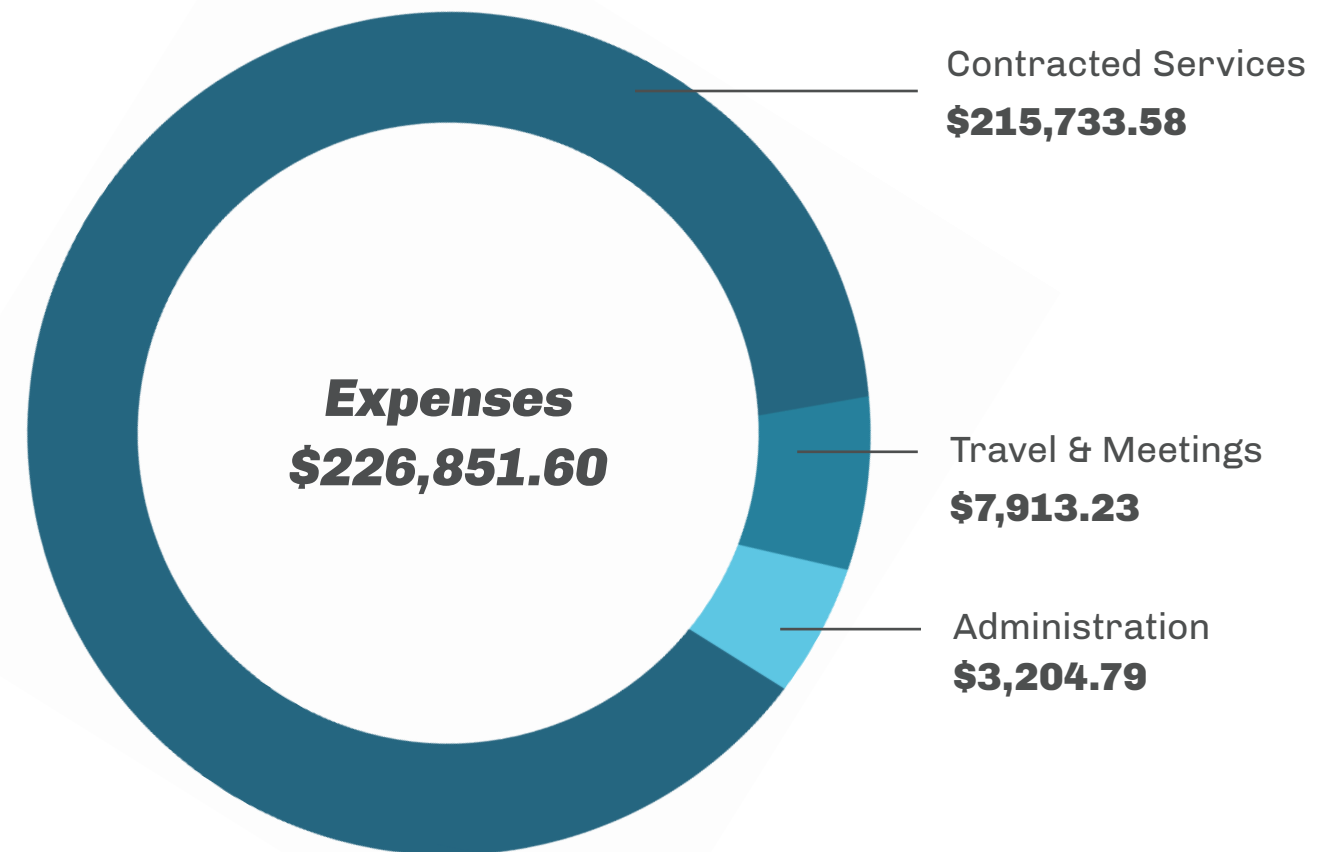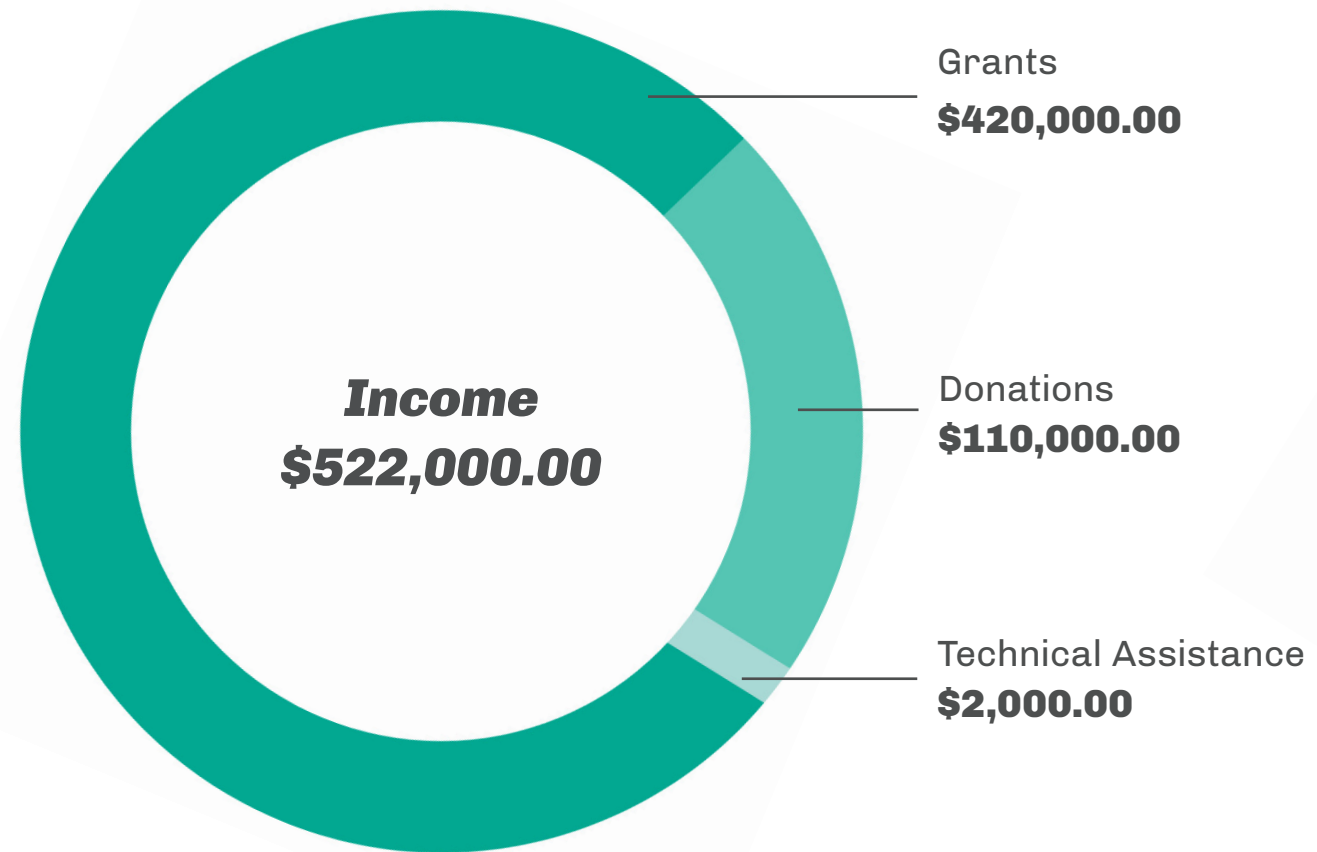**Participating Local Government / Community Partners to Date**

"*The model helps us to mobilize students' inquisitiveness, energy, and desire to effect change toward problem-solving projects that tie directly to community challenges.*"

—Eric Skipper, Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at University of South Carolina Beaufort

Financials

Income
$522,000.00

Grants
$420,000.00

Donations
$110,000.00

Technical Assistance
$2,000.00

Expenses
$226,851.60

Contracted Services
$215,733.58

Travel & Meetings
$7,913.23

Administration
$3,204.79

Board of Directors

Chair and Secretary

Joel Rogers
Director, COWS; Faculty, University of Wisconsin-Madison

President

Marc Schlossberg
Co-Director, Sustainable Cities Institute, University of Oregon

Vice-President

Jessica Barlow
Executive Director, The Sage Project, San Diego State University

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Directors

Kristin Baja
Climate Resilience Officer, Urban Sustainability Directors Network

Laura Bloch
Sustainability Adviser, Region 9, U.S. EPA

Branden Born
Co-Director, Livable City Year, Faculty, University of Washington

Mazi Ferguson
Assistant Program Director, Office of Community

Courtney Griesel
Economic Development Director, City of Springfield, Oregon

Tad McGalliard
Director, Research and Team Leader, ICMA

Anne Reichman
Director, ASU Sustainable Cities Network and Project Cities Program

Jane Rogan
Director, Sustaining Hoosiers Communities

Gilbert Siame
Leader, EPIC Africa; Director, Urban Regional Program, University of Zambia

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