

# Enriching lives through research and education

We will work to bring our researchers, students and professional staff into an interface of research–education–operations that will be a unique driver and demonstration of our sustainability work and, ultimately, contribute to a positive long-term sustainable future for our nation.

## What we will do and how we aim to achieve it

### Put research excellence into practice through living labs on our campuses

- Develop new opportunities for coordination between students, academics, and Operations staff to facilitate the use of our campuses as living labs, including establishing clear protocols for living lab projects and how they scale across our footprint.

### Prioritise the development of high-quality sustainability research at Sydney

- Directly support sustainability as one of the core foci in the research strategy of faculties and MDIs and as one of the core foci in all Research Portfolio-led funding schemes.
- Incorporate a sustainability focus into internal funding schemes and supplemental support for external grant schemes.
- As part of the development of the next institutional strategy, explore using the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a common language and framework to bring together research from across the University that supports sustainability, and informs the development of new external partnerships.
- Retain our best scholars in sustainability and recruit emerging leaders in a range of fields to build our capacity and support new and novel ways of exploring and addressing the challenges faced by humanity.

### Develop global and local partnerships and practice

- Support researchers to build strong links with communities, industry, NGOs, other universities and governments to develop leading sustainability research into real-world application.
- Provide research support to University contributions to global efforts (e.g. UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and programs monitoring progress on the Sustainable Development Goals).

### Increase our capacity for sustainability education across the University

- Embed sustainability themes and practices into curricula and learning activities across all disciplines, based on a range of cultural and social perspectives and in accordance with broader efforts to ensure a consistent and distinctive Sydney education.
- Integrate cross-disciplinary and multicultural 'Sustainability knowledge' into our graduate attributes.
- Broaden the range of Industry and Community Project Units (ICPUs) linked to sustainability-related problems and industries and Open Learning Environment (OLE) units of study that enable students to engage and explore sustainability themes and ideas.
- In partnership with the Sydney Environment Institute and Associate Deans (Education) establish new opportunities for undergraduate students to embark on a rich sustainability education through a multidisciplinary major and minor in sustainability.
- Determine the viability of micro-credentialing and other specialised postgraduate and executive training in sustainability (e.g. leadership, reporting and communications).

- Support innovation and excellence in sustainability education and increase opportunities to share these ideas and experiences among University staff.
- Draw on global best practice to develop how we reward and recognise sustainability-related teaching (exploring areas such as education fellowships and grants, awards and staff exchanges).
- Enable students' ability to learn across different dimensions of sustainability through greater transparency of sustainability-related units, majors, degrees, and other opportunities.
- Make teaching opportunities available to Higher Degree by Research students and early-career researchers in sustainability research roles.

## Enhance the student experience of sustainability

- Develop mechanisms to support sustainability leadership for students, such as sustainability internships and placements, development of student sustainability leadership programs, and publicising student sustainability research.
- Work with the USU and other partners to enable a holistic campus experience of sustainability.

## Support understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of living in harmony with the environment and each other

- Coordinate sustainability research and education activities with the Unfinished Business Action Plan and the forthcoming 2021–24 Indigenous strategy, *One Sydney, Many People*.

## Making an impact

Our sustainability research and education

## Indigenous Strategy

## Get in touch

Email:

[university.sustainability@sydney.edu.au](mailto:university.sustainability@sydney.edu.au)

## Enabling resilient places and a responsible footprint

We will nurture more sustainable and resilient campuses, and develop a culture of shared responsibility in our approach to sustainability.

### Demonstrate leadership in waste reduction and management

- Send zero waste to landfill by 2030.
- Achieve a 20% reduction in waste generated per person by 2030.
- Recover 80% of organics waste on campus by 2025.
- Achieve 60% recycling by 2025.
- Enable 'single use plastics free' campuses by 2025.
- Compost 80% of food waste by 2025.
- Ensure 100% of food/beverage packaging offered on campus is compostable or recyclable by 2025.

### Reduce our energy emissions

- Achieve Net Zero Emissions from Scope 1 and 2 sources by 2030.
- Source 100% of electricity from renewable sources by 2025.
- Generate 3 megawatts on-site renewable electricity by 2025.

### Sustainably develop and manage the built and natural environment on our campuses to support people, plants, animals and the planet

- Ensure a minimum 5 Star Green Star rating for all new buildings and 4 Star Green Star for major refurbishment projects in current buildings by 2025.
- Assess 100% of eligible buildings and core infrastructure for climate resilience by 2025, including climate resilience and sustainability standards in the University's asset management planning across all campuses.
- Establish a Biodiversity Management Plan and baselines to set biodiversity targets and approved indicators for all campuses and farms by 2025.
- Enable 30% canopy cover by 2030.

### Require responsible procurement practices to enable ethically and sustainably sourced products at all stages of our supply chains

- Ensure 100% of UniBuy catalogue content sourced or negotiated after 1 January 2021 adheres to ethical buying guidelines by 2025, informed by academic expertise within the University.
- By 2025 include appropriate consideration of sustainability during the sourcing process or in contract delivery for 100% of contracts with a total contract value over \$250,000 (excl GST), where sourcing was commenced after 1 January 2021.

## Reduce our water use

- Reduce our reliance on potable water (per person) by 30% by 2030<sup>^</sup> aligned to FTE/EFTSL).

## Provide affordable, healthy and culturally acceptable food and beverages that are accessible to all and aligned with recognised sustainable procurement practices

- Have 100% of food and beverage items sold in University owned or leased outlets to be ethically and sustainably sourced by 2025, including promoting purchasing relationships with, and support for, local food producers, and expanding the availability of vegan and vegetarian options.
- Reassign 100% of safe, unsold food from non-composting and landfill sources by 2025.

## Reduce impacts associated with unsustainable travel to, from and around our campuses

- Have no more than 10% of staff and 5% of students travel to work by private motor vehicle transport by 2025.
- Reduce the number of kilometres flown on University business by 20% by 2025.

## Improve environmentally, socially and financially responsible investment practices

- Review the University's existing investment portfolio principles and strategy, drawing on expertise from our academic community as well as external investment best practice, and present a recommendation to the University's Senate by 2021 on whether to supplement the existing approach with fossil fuel exclusions and/or increased impact investment.

## Sustainability on campus

How we are reducing our environmental footprint

## Our progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals

(pdf, 4.6MB)

## Get in touch

## Empowering good governance and coordination

Through transparent and open communications, we will be honest about our progress and demonstrate an enduring commitment to sustainability from our leadership, through staff, students, alumni, visitors and the broader community in which we operate.

### Establish effective governance

- Implement a governance and operating framework by end 2020 to support our strategic ambition for the University community to be more sustainable on campus through research, education and collective and individual action.
- Within that framework develop methods to engage the University's academic expertise through a community of practice that advises on how best to pursue the targets and commitments in this strategy, and to provide opportunities for the broader University community to participate in grassroots action that contribute towards the goals of this strategy.
- Rescind the existing Environmental Sustainability Policy 2015 and develop a new policy to include social sustainability and reflect the vision, guiding principles and commitments of this strategy.

### Be transparent about our progress

- Report annually to the University community and broader public during the life of this strategy, transparently reflecting on progress towards our sustainability targets and commitments, showcasing achievements and presenting an action plan for the following year.
- Sign up to the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS), used by more than 1000 tertiary institutions globally, and achieve a 'gold' rating by 2025.

### Sustainability Strategy Development steering committee

- Stephen Phillips, Vice-Principal (Operations) - Chair
- Wayne Andrews, Chief Financial Officer
- Professor Robyn Dowling, Head of School and Dean, Sydney School of Architecture, Design and Planning
- Professor Stephen Garton, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- Dr Jeremy Hammond, Director, Strategic Ventures and Strategic Planning
- Rebecca Murray, Vice-Principal (Strategy)
- Greg Robinson, Chief University Infrastructure Officer
- Professor David Schlosberg, Director, Sydney Environment Institute
- Susan Turner, Executive Director (Acting), Central Operations Services

## Read the sustainability strategy (pdf, 4MB)

Find out how we are committing to be a more sustainable university 

## Sustainability on campus

How we are reducing our environmental footprint

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