

UWTSD

Best Newcomer

INSPIRE @UWTSD

(Institute for Sustainable Practice, Innovation and Resource Effectiveness at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David)

About the project

Summary

INSPIRE at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, is a virtual institute overseeing the systematic and systemic introduction and embedding of sustainability principles across all the university's activities. All the learning on the way is being made available through open source mechanisms to other universities via existing sustainability networks. The aim is to ensure future graduates are globally aware and responsible citizens in the 21st century.

Project partners

Staff, students, governors at the university and the colleges plus external expert practitioners through our 'Professor of Practice' model, e.g. the Commissioner for Future Generations in Wales. In return for the University's public recognition of the talents of an Honorary Professor of Practice, the Professor is expected to contribute a minimum of three practice sessions per annum to the University

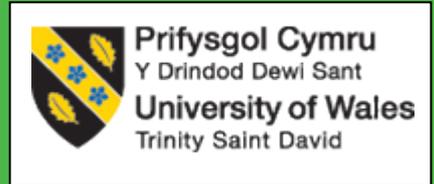
The results

The problem

Prior to the commitment to establish INSPIRE, the university had no previous history of involvement in the sustainability agenda.

The approach

- **2010** – Green Academy programme; committed to establish new Wales Institute for Sustainability
- **2011** – Appointment of institute lead in September. The University Council agreed to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability internally as well as externally. Institute becomes the virtual 'Institute for Sustainable Practice, Innovation and Resource Effectiveness' – INSPIRE – with an emphasis on systemic development across all aspects of university delivery.
- **2012** – January: INSPIRE first prospectus launched including a specific commitment to embed sustainability skills in 15% of all student experience by 2014. Staff Sustainability Skills Survey conducted to identify expertise and champions. Faculty sustainability plans created. Reporting structure through VC to University Council introduced. INSPIRE contributes to all Staff Development as corporate priority.



Profile

- HEI
- 11,400 students (includes full and part time students)
- 2,125 staff
- Urban and Rural

Finalist's case study

- **2013** – First annual report on INSPIRE commitments. Sustainability Committee established. INSPIRE becomes strategic directorate across HE/FE UWTSD group. Strategic Plan (2013-2017) sets specific sustainability KPIs in relation to governance, environment, curriculum and research/innovation. Green Dragon Environmental Management System introduced. Support Unit Direction of Travel papers introduced. ‘An Inspired Education’ features on the University’s home web page. Sustainability link contacts created in every School & department. The Director of Inspire becomes Senate member. INSPIRE becomes mandatory part of validation processes. INSPIRE opportunities and commitments incorporated into the prospectus and marketing arrangements. Sustainability incorporated into the main profile of specific senior officers’ job descriptions and included in the general duties in all university job descriptions; Sustainability commitment in Student Charter introduced and new INSPIRE student internships introduced. Participation of 9 teams in NUS Green Impact programme for first time.
- **2014** - Curriculum Audit carried out to check progress of 15% commitment using Bristol University framework - in core modules, between 29% and 93% (teacher education) compliance. First FE college sustainability plans introduced. University faculty plans revised and embedded in academic and support structures. Systemic environmental management commitments underway including improved performance in People and Planet Green League, introduction of Green Dragon level 5 environment management schemes across all campuses and the adoption of a university wide carbon management plan. New academic lead (0.5) appointed. Tendered for zero waste contracts.
- **2015** – Revision of core KPIs to include ‘Embedding Sustainability’. New policy/admin lead (0.5) introduced. New staffing structure with Head of Sustainability Operations and Energy Manager introduced on environmental/carbon side. New zero waste contracts introduced on 2 campuses. Introduction of Sustainability interdisciplinary research forum. Adoption of QAA/HEA guidance as mandatory for validation.

Our goals

Target	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Improve our classification in the People and Planet Green League.		✓		
Embed Faculty sustainability plans throughout the academic and support structures	✓	✓	✓	✓
Complete curriculum audits and develop the curriculum with due regard to the emerging sustainability agenda	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maximise research, project and consultancy income related to sustainability (to be quantified in line with ongoing curriculum/research review)		✓	✓	✓

Obstacles and Solutions

- Demonstrating strategic commitment
- Identifying staff capacity and buy-in
- Evaluating pedagogical approach
- Getting estates/operations on board
- Getting students on board
- Keeping governors on board
- Introducing systemic approach
- Conducting university-wide staff skills survey
- INSPIRE validating programmes / curriculum review
- part of corporate strategic intentions
- internships and partnerships
- demonstrating fruits of success

Performance and results

INSPIRE won the Guardian Award for Sustainability in HE in 2013, the Soil Association Gold Catering Mark in 2014 and in 2015, UWTSD rose from 113th in the UK and a 3rd class degree, to a 1st class degree and 8th in UK/ 1st in Wales in the People and Planet University League.

The future

Lessons learned

Sustainability is about institutional values. An institution has to be prepared to reform itself before advising others. Winning awards has been important to us as it increases our standing and embeds our niche offer as a university.

Sharing your project

We have been invited to share our journey in many universities and other organisations. Wherever possible, we accept these opportunities to help support others and learn from them too.

What has it meant to your institution to be a Green Gown Award finalist?

'I would be delighted if the University were to win a Green Gown Award. Such a prestigious accolade would acknowledge our commitment to sustainability as one of our core values and most importantly it would celebrate the excellent work and inspiring work of colleagues and students across the University's campuses.'

Professor Medwin Hughes, DL Vice-Chancellor University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Further information

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