



- Integration of SDGs in curriculum development
- Integration of SDGs in student engagement activities

Institution: Leeds Arts University

SDG Accord Case Study: Student Sustainability Award

In 2016 the University introduced an annual Student Sustainability Award in response to growing student interest and engagement with sustainability. The award was established to celebrate the innovative and outstanding student work that addressed environmental, social and ethical issues and that had sustainability clearly running through the thinking and approach. For the award students are required to identify a particular issue, outline its importance and explain how their work will influence new thinking. The 2021 Award requires students to identify the specific SDG(s) that their work addresses.

Since its inception, a wealth of innovative and engaging work has been submitted covering a variety of SDGs across a broad range of creative practices: Graphics, Illustration, Photography, Film, Fashion, Textiles and Fine Art. Entries for the award have increased year on year, and in particular in academic year 19/20 where entries unexpectedly doubled despite periods of lockdown where many students were working remotely.

'The Sustainability Award is a really important opportunity for students to be recognised and congratulated for their sustainable practice, encouraging them to continue working towards bettering our world. The visibility of the Sustainability Award encourages students to make sustainable considerations within their work, even if they don't submit something to the award. Sustainability is something we as the Student Executive Officers are particularly passionate about so it's really great to see our University rewarding students working in this area'.

Poppy Belcham, Leeds Arts university Students Union President.

Winning entries since 2017 can be seen [here](#)

BENEFITS

- The Award recognises and celebrates student achievement and highlights how consideration of sustainability is inherent within creative practice.
- Raises awareness of the SDGs across the student and staff community.
- Demonstrates the University's commitment to sustainability.

BARRIERS

- Ensuring student understanding of how to interpret the SDGs within the context of their specialist practice. Promotion of previous entries on the University website along with increased activities within module/units are beginning to expand student understanding enabling them to navigate the SDG's more widely (beyond SDG12)
- Consideration of the Award categories to ensure fair representation across different levels (FE, UG, PG) and expansion of the number of prizes to reflect the increased range of entries across different categories
- Timing and methods of promotion of the award and deadline date for submission had to be carefully considered to align with course assessment deadline

CONCLUSIONS

The Award has proved very successful in engaging students and raising their awareness of how they can contribute to the achievement of the SDGs through their creative practice.