

University of Bradford Union of Students Student Engagement Cycling 4 All

About the project

Summary

The C4A project uses inclusive sports and activity provision for students to promote pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours to the student body, with particular focus on disabled students.

Project partners

NUS Student Green Fund, British Cycling, English Federation of Disability Sports, Sustrans, Bradford Disability Sports and Leisure, Bradford College, CTC, Bradford Bulls Foundation, City of Bradford MDC, British University and Colleges Sport, West Yorkshire Sport, Active Bradford partnership.

The results

The problem

The attitudes and behaviors of disabled students are poorly understood in the HE sector. This project was funded by the NUS Green Fund to identify whether physically active engagement with disabled students could lead to pro-environmental attitudinal shifts.

The approach

To develop a range of inclusive sporting and leisure activities with students of mixed abilities, that would enable the dissemination of pro-environmental messages, resulting in increased participation in sustainability activities.

Our goals

- To promote sustainability to the student body with particular focus on disabled students.
- To promote cycling as a viable transportation solution to students with disabilities.
- To provide disabled students with an equivalent student experience as non-disabled students

Obstacles and solutions

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled student engagement. This is difficult due to the nature of disability. There is no one | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forge links with disability services, sports clubs, societies and with students themselves. A one to one approach is the most effective and by ensuring projects are mixed ability, participation increases. Similarly, including disabled members of the community can ensure |
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Profile

- HEI
- 18,000 students (includes full and part time students)
- 2000 permanent staff
- Urban

Category supported by



Finalist's case study

<p>group of disabled student as disabilities permeate all ages, backgrounds, religions, courses etc. There is the additional issue of stigma which compounds the issue. For example of the 1227 disabled students at Bradford, over 80% of these have dyslexia or dyspraxia and as such, do not generally consider themselves disabled.</p>	<p>that disabled students have an extended peer group with whom to engage with, leading to empowerment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When engaging with disabled students it is valuable to ensure that channels that are used are ones that are already trusted, that the events are local to the individual, we do not lead with an individuals impairment, we speak to their values and fulfil those values in new ways, reassure the student, ensure that they feel like they will fit in, make it easy for a student to tell us their needs, continued encouragement and importantly, to ensure that their first experience is good. • Non-disabled student participation is key to full inclusion. By engaging with activities offered such as wheelchair rugby league, non-disabled students, once engaged, participate in C4A's environmental activities through social interaction and group participation dynamics.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of events. Getting the message to the disabled students can be challenging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events labelled as "disabled" always result in poor attendance. By ensuring that both disabled and non-disabled students can take part, results in increased attendance. Similarly, involving sports clubs and societies results in increased attendance.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation. The additional needs of physically disabled students is an issue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable transportation for disabled students is a continued issue. Students with electric wheelchairs require a minibus with a tail lift. Community groups in the area provided such a vehicle that ensured our members were able to participate fully.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of the pro-environmental message. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This can be a hard sell to students who engaged with an activity such as cycling or wheelchair rugby in the initial phase of engagement. However, once a self-supporting peer group has been established, members are more recipient to try new activities. Because of this, the wheelchair accessible garden was created.

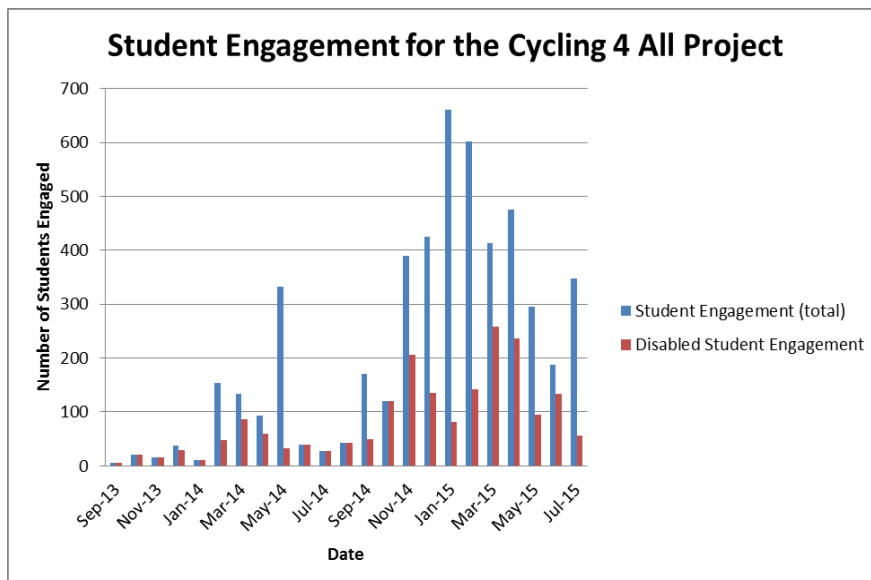
Performance and results

7,282 total student engagements over the course of the project.

Over the course of the project so far, student engagement has increased substantially. This has been through an adaptation of engagement techniques and by altering what services are provided to disabled students.

Starting with cycling, we now provide wheelchair rugby league, sports days and social opportunities for disabled students. This has led to improved engagement over the previous year. The incorporation of disabled students into existing sports and societies has also led to a shift in attitudes over the course of the last year amongst the student body as a whole. The graph below highlights the increase in student engagement at the University of Bradford based upon inclusive event participation.

The graph below shows student engagement for all students with physical and recreational activities within the University of Bradford compared to engagement with disabled students in physical and recreational activities. As is evident, engagement has increased dramatically as the project has evolved and the activities on offer have been diversified.



The approach to engage with the broader student body leading to the current model of inclusion can be seen from September 2014. Disabled students constitute 8% of the student body and engagement amongst this demographic has increased significantly over the course of the project as a result of this broader engagement strategy. The project has seen 1932 engagements with students with disabilities over the last two academic years, a statistic that has not been recorded previously.

In late February the Gardening 4 All site has been finished. This has been developed with consultation with Estates, ensuring disabled student access was a primary consideration from design to implementation. This is the first fully accessible growing site in any TEI and since its inception, there are now 60 students and staff members from around the university, growing food on the site, sharing expertise, best practices and knowledge.

25 students have engaged in engineering project producing disability aids over the last two academic years. Projects include a head controlled bicycle for use by a wheelchair user, a gardening wheelchair was prototyped for use on the gardening site and a human powered testing vehicle has been produced. These projects bring groups of students together who would not otherwise meet to produce practical products for use by disabled

students. The syllabus ensures that sustainability is a key parameter all throughout the design and implementation phase of project delivery.

In brief:

- 1,100 students have cycled
- 200 miles have been cycled on the electric hire bikes – used for commuting
- All sports and society exec members and teams of student reps have been given sustainability training.
- A student and staff sustainability committee has been established that ensures that sustainability is a key agenda item throughout the university and students union
- A green Thursday initiative has been established to ensure that sustainability activities take place each week throughout the entire academic year.
- Improvements in self-esteem, wellbeing have been seen through enabling disabled students to enjoy the outdoors.
“Coming out cycling gets me out of the house which is something I haven't done in years and it's helped my overall fitness as well as my mental state by just getting out and talking to different people who I wouldn't normally meet.”
- Improvements in social mobility have been seen through building social networks
“It's a great way of making new friends, I find it can be hard to interact due to my depression.”
- Deep engagement amongst members occurs
- High level of cross over between activities allows us to promote pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours
- Cooked a sustainable Christmas dinner for 400 disabled students
- Ran a sustainable food festival where over 300 students ate ethically sourced food, learned about organic food and food waste and tried cooking using Fairtrade products
- Planted trees and wild flowers
- 15 disabled and non-disabled cyclists, cycled mountain bikes, trikes, hand cycles and road bikes 180 miles from Morecambe to Flamborough Head over 5 days on the inaugural inclusive coast to coast bike ride.

The future

Lessons learned

- Let students lead. Students know what they want and how they want it and through this they bring an enthusiasm and skill sets to events that they play a key role in organizing.
- Do not underestimate the power of the peer group. By establishing a peer group made up primarily of disabled people, be they students or community members, spillover behaviours become more prevalent as students become more willing to try new ideas.
- Inclusion is the key, do not label things as “disabled”. Make sure everyone can join in as disabled people are not friends only with disabled people.
- Getting out and about and taking part in physical activity that is fun will result in good engagement.
- Disabled students, once engaged, can really commit to a project. This is invaluable when driving projects forwards.

Sharing your project

The project has had a total reach of 1,685,261 through social media, press articles, YouTube views and event participation. Throughout this project, we have been at the forefront of delivering inclusive sports models throughout the higher education sector. As a result of this, C4A has been hailed as a model of good practice by the English Federation of Disability Sports and British University and College Sports and as such are heavily influencing inclusive sports provision in the HE sector with BUCS hosting the 2016 National Inclusion in Sport Conference at the University of Bradford.

www.bucs.org.uk/core/core_picker/download.asp?id=23779

Additionally, we are in the process of developing a document called Pathways to Participation that will be distributed to student unions around the UK. The goal of this document is to inform on how we arrived at the position we are in today, highlighting the mistakes we made and the lessons we have learned to ensure that other institutions can learn from the C4A project when developing their own inclusive, sustainable initiatives.

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

Through the project, all of the senior management team have attended a steering meeting, meeting or event with C4A. The University of Bradford prides itself on its sustainability initiatives and the continued positive press and awards nominations has ensured that senior managers are aware of the sustainability work carried out in direct result of the project.

The following is a recent comment from Professor Shirley Congdon, Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bradford said:

“Here at Bradford we pride ourselves on our sustainable campus and constantly seek out innovative technology to continue leading the way in the sector.

“Our allotment is the first fully wheelchair accessible allotment in any UK university and has been made possible by the close partnership between Cycle 4 All, University staff and our students. We are always striving to make the University accessible to everyone and we will continue to work together on creative projects such as this that everyone can enjoy.”

Similarly, Professor Brian Cantor, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bradford

“The Cycling 4 All project has changed the way the way that we view our sporting activities at the University of Bradford. We previously viewed disability sports provision separate to our sports clubs but the project has led to a much more integrated and inclusive sporting programme.”

“Our developing model of sports is completely new and innovative and aims to build upon the inclusive model being developed by Cycling 4 All, promoting Bradford as the Home of Inclusive Sports.”

Further information

www.cycling4all.org.uk
www.facebook.com/cycling4alluk
@cycling4alluk
<http://goo.gl/QErtBy>

In 2014 Jessica Waite won the UNESCO Salon Student Sustainability video competition and was invited to Japan to the international conference on ESD and featured on the following media outlet
ITV <http://goo.gl/CiFOhV>
Telegraph and Argus <http://goo.gl/fP5oIZ>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcNFcdMFhpc>

In early 2015 we made an impact across the UK with the production of an online video that has reached over 22,000 via social media and Youtube, highlighting the space required when riding an adapted bicycle in traffic. This was in preparation for the disabled coast to coast which took place in June.

A link to the video is here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcNFcdMFhpc>
(<http://www.ctc.org.uk/blog/gavinjwood/inclusive-cyclists-bradford-space-4-cycling>)

Link to a video about our Veg Out Patch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aClrqZjccN0>