Green Gown Awards 2016
Finalist's case study
Dissemination supported by:
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University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Sustainability Reporting
INSPIRE @ UWTSD

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Profile
* Higher Education and Further Education
* 9,280 students (includes full and part time students)
* 2500 staff

Category supported by

pwc

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 and to celebrate their achievements in helping the University working towards embedding sustainability throughout its curriculum, Campus, Culture and Communities.

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 undertake the Green Academy program in 2010 and the establishment of INSPIRE in 2011, UWTSD had no previous collective history of involvement in the sustainability agenda. The University did not report on how it measured sustainability or how it celebrated its successes.

The approach
* 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.

- **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' and to voluntarily strategically align with the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015. New policy/admin lead (0.5) introduced. New staffing structure with Head of Sustainability Delivery (Operations) and Energy Officers 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.
- **2016** – Revision of the INSPIRE website and development of a forward work approach for the Sustainability Committee to capture key developments within the University. Development and publication of the first annual INSPIRE newsletter. Website availability of information to support the requirements of the People and Green Planet University League. Expansion of the Internship programme supporting INSPIRE and sustainable development. Regained the Fairtrade Foundation Award status following a number of organisational mergers.

Our goals

The overarching strategic priority, laid out in the 2013 – 2017 strategic Plan, was to embed sustainability throughout the University. The following INSPIRE KPIs, were met by October 2015:

- Improve our classification in the People and Planet University 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).

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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

Our status as a Green Gown finalist has enabled us to gain credibility both within and outside of the University. UWTSD prides itself as a sustainable institution and this status is supported by the Green Gown Award nomination. Sustainable Development is a continual journey and there is still much to do, but we are proud to have been recognized for what we have achieved to date.

The future

Lessons learned

UWTSD has taken a unique path to achieving the level of sustainability that has been recognised today. This has presented many challenges, common to innovation projects. We have leant that it is vital to have a specific goal around which people can come together and work towards together. We have also recognised the need for robust data to support our achievements and the need to celebrate our successes to encourage future progress.

In the future, UWTSD seek to embed the sustainable business practices more firmly within the organisation. We have recently merged with two further education establishments and a period of consolidation will follow. We are also developing a new Waterfront Campus in the heart of Swansea which will feed into the reporting mechanisms already in place to support embedding sustainability within the University. These exciting new projects will provide the opportunity to build on past success and provide an opportunity to review our own ways of working.

Sharing your project

The communication of the achievements UWTSD has managed over the past six years, has been planned for both internal and external audiences. Internally, events including Go Green Week and Student Blackout and campaigns including Green Impact have helped raise awareness. These are supported by the well attended Sustainability Committee meetings, held on a quarterly basis. In this forum, more formal achievements, including progress towards the sustainability action plans are discussed and an opportunity is made available to meet and share ideas with faculty, support staff and student representatives. Whilst these are not currently reported in the public arena, they are available for everyone in the organisation and best practice is encouraged to be shared.

From an external perspective, success has been widely promoted in local press and via social media. We use the INSPIRE webpages to help raise awareness of all initiatives that are undertaken by the University relating to sustainability. Beyond this our Pro Vice Chancellor for Engagement and Sustainability, Jane Davidson has led a positive campaign to demonstrate our leadership in the sector. Jane has championed the University across

Wales and throughout the Higher Education sector. A highlight of this is Jane's participation in a global leaders on sustainability seminar in Harvard in November 2016.

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

'I would be delighted if the University were to win again at the Green Gown Awards. 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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