



## Finalist's case study



# Queen Mary University of London

## Employability

### Green Mary Careers Week



### GREENMARY

#### Profile

Leading urban higher education institute, member of the Russell Group:

- 23,120 students
- 4000 staff
- Diverse student population with 162 nationalities

### About the project

#### Summary

The QMUL Sustainability team dedicate one week each year to educating students about the sustainability related jobs on offer post-graduation. From a careers 'speed meet' with professionals from across the sector to a careers fair and online blog series, students have the opportunity to begin networking and find out more about pursuing a career in the environmental sector.

#### Project partners

We work with a number of external partners for these events. A number of organisations have a stall at our careers and volunteering fair, talking to students and handing out information and freebies. Organisations who attended our 2016/17 careers fair include BAM Construction, Crisis, Fareshare, GLA, ICRS, IEMA, Olio, Siemens Rail Automation, QM Projects, The Conservation Volunteers and Volunteering Matters.

A small number of professionals attend our careers speed meet in the evening representing a range of environmental organisations. This year, professionals attended from the following organisations: Briars Associates, Carbon Credentials, Carnstone, QMSU Volunteering, Siemens Rail Automation and WSP.

The Sustainability team had a presence at both events to talk to students about working in Higher Education and the importance of sustainability within the sector.

### The results

#### The problem

A key problem faced when promoting careers in the sustainability and environmental sector is attracting students from a range of courses. A high proportion of students who attend the event are from a Geography or Environmental Sciences background so a key challenge for us was to attract students from all backgrounds to demonstrate how job opportunities in the environmental sector can actually be of interest to many subjects including engineering for example.



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## The approach

In order to attract a wide range of students to the event we ensured that we promoted in all avenues rather than just targeting a specific course or academic school. Twitter blogs etc.

In addition, where possible when contacting organisations we tried to get as varied a group of organisations as possible so that it would appeal to as many people as possible.

## Our goals

A key goal for us is to increase awareness about careers in the environmental sector at QMUL and beyond. We would love to see more of our alumni working within this field and coming back to network with students and encourage them to do the same to overall have a more positive impact on the environment and wider society.

## Obstacles and solutions

Attracting students from all courses	Promoting across all channels to all students at QMUL and holding the careers fair in a central location
Reaching all students even if they could not attend an event	Utilising social media to reach students who were unable to attend from QMUL and farther afield via an online blog series.
Attracting stall holders from a wide range of organisations to attend for free	Offering the chance to network with professionals in the sector and support aspiring students ensured we were able to attract professionals from a wide range of sectors.

## Performance and results

The careers fair was a success with 17 organisations being represented and 43 students registering their interest in the event in advance. The number of students on the day greatly exceeded this as we were able to guide lots of students into the fair during the 2 hours.

In addition, 8 professionals attended our speed meet representing a variety of organisations and 29 student registered their interest in this event in advance.

The Sustainability team also posted 4 careers series blogs during the week, 1 from each member at a different stage in their career, offering advice and tips to those looking to gain experience and take their first steps onto the career ladder. In total, these blogs have had over 100 views and is an easily accessible way of students getting career advice and help if they are unable to attend the events we also held.

## The future

### Lessons learned

It would be beneficial if we could work more closely with the careers team in the future, and perhaps hold an event in collaboration with this department as they have a greater understanding of how to engage students in careers fairs/events etc. We would also like to hold the fair outdoors (under cover if necessary) to engage even more students and catch more as they go from lecture to lecture, sometimes it is these students who can benefit the most from careers advice and information even if just passing by.



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The online careers series worked really well so we would build on this in the future and would like to have guest blogs on environmental careers in order to bring some more variety and interest into this side of the careers week.

### Top 3 learnings from implementing your project

- 1 Events with a small budget can be extremely successful if organised and promoted effectively
- 2 A good location can make a good event great
- 3 Careers events should cover all levels and fields where possible to attract all students

### Sharing your project

We utilised a number of communications to share the project. In addition to our usual social media posts, we wrote a careers round up blog to go over the week and share with those who could not be there the organisations who attended and the events that were held.

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

It is fantastic to be shortlisted for a Green Gown Award as it highlights that we have been able to organize and run excellent careers events entirely in house. The sustainability team is small but our reach at QMUL is huge so producing engaging, wide reaching events is really important. It is our duty to let students know more about the highly competitive environmental sector and to try, where possible, to encourage them to continue to make positive sustainable impacts upon leaving university. Being shortlisted supports our drive to continue to strive to create bigger and better careers events for students interested in sustainability at QMUL.

### Further information

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Website: <http://www.qmul.ac.uk/about/sustainability/index.html>

Round up blog and links to careers blog series: <https://qmul sustainability.wordpress.com/2016/11/25/careers-week-round-up/>