

EAUC Travel and Transport Topic Support Network

# **Sustainability and climate action benchmarking for the international education sector**



**A global initiative led by international educators.**

**Tracking and comparing climate action in international education.**

- Who we are
- About the Climate Action Barometer
  - Activating international teams to advance climate action and sustainability
  - Founding partners
  - Advisory board
- Climate Eye - measuring emissions associated with international education
- Headline results
- Timeline – where to next?



**Ailsa Lamont [Climate Action and Sustainability]** was a senior leader in Australian universities before switching focus to help our sector act on climate. She has trained with Al Gore as a Climate Reality Leader and served as a NAFSA Senior Fellow for Sustainability. Lamont was co-founder and inaugural president of CANIE: Climate Action Network for International Educators. She is a recipient of the 2023 IEAA Excellence Award for Distinguished Contribution to International Education.



**Emily O'Callaghan CEO [Governance, Partnerships and Government Relations]** As International Education Association of Australia General Manager, Emily oversaw IEAA's governance, partnerships, strategy, research, policy and major projects. A strong advocate for the student voice, she volunteers for CISA: Council of International Students Australia. She is a standing member of the IEAA Data Group, and an elected member of the IEAA Board.



**Will Archer [Comparative Insights and Development]** is best known as founder of the research, benchmarking and advisory group i-graduate and the International Student Barometer. During this time he worked with more than 1,200 education providers across 57 countries, reporting and comparing feedback from more than 2.3m students. He is a sought-after advisor to government, research and higher education globally.



**Estrid Jonsson [Climate Eye]** Estrid Jonsson is a fourth-year international student studying MEng Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Aberdeen. Having previously worked for the Sustainability Team in Estates and Facilities at the University of Aberdeen, she developed a methodology to calculate student travel emissions now adopted by EAUC. In July 2023 she joined the core team of IESG and the CABie Advisory Board.



**Ivan Hasjim [Data Analysis and Reporting]** Ivan Hasjim is a skilled Business Analyst with a strong background in data analytics in international education. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Melbourne and he has been working at the University of Melbourne ever since his degree completion. As an international student himself he is passionate about the international education field and how to best use data to improve the student experience.



**Nannette Ripmeester [Outreach - Europe]**. Nannette has worked on mobility for study and work purposes for over 30 years. She started at the European Commission, founded Expertise in Labour Mobility and CareerProfessor.works and is involved in running the International Student Barometer in North America and Europe. As a member of CANIE Europe her commitment is to foster the best sustainable mobility options.

# The inevitable tension between international education and climate action

International education is a force for good.

The climate crisis is here.  
We are part of it.

To sustain international education, we need students  
to study across borders.

International student travel might be the largest  
contributor to university Scope 3 emissions.

**Students and stakeholders are concerned, and it is starting to shape their choices.**

**We act when we measure. External comparators drive decision-making.**

**We know, what gets measured gets done.**



# Why take action?

## 1. Demonstrating Leadership

The climate crisis offers an unparalleled opportunity to reimagine our work in a way that reduces or avoids emissions and creates better outcomes for students, faculty and staff.

By joining the Climate Action Barometer for international education, international offices and teams around the world can track and measure their performance to help them make the changes the world needs and students demand.

## 2. Students are worried and it's shaping their choices

Students today are overwhelmingly concerned about the environment and now expect universities to show leadership in this vital area. Many of the globally mobile students in the world come from countries which are the most vulnerable to the impacts of global heating.

These two factors combined mean an institution's climate credentials are an increasingly important factor for prospective students when deciding where to study.

# Students are worried and it's shaping their choices

## *According to Times Higher Education:*

**82%** of prospective student international students say sustainability is an important factor in decision-making

**27%** of prospective students already use sustainability indicators to inform their study decisions

**Climate action**  
is second only to quality education among student concerns

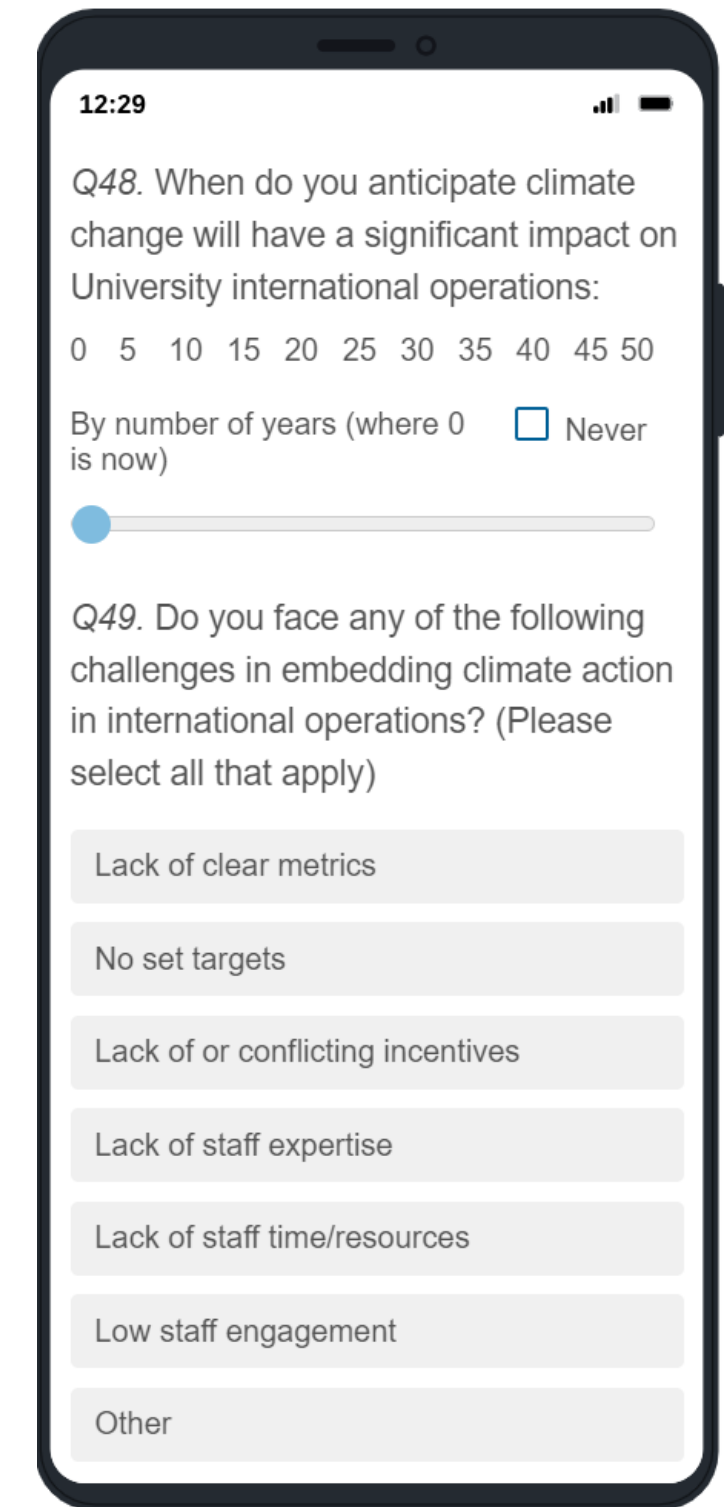
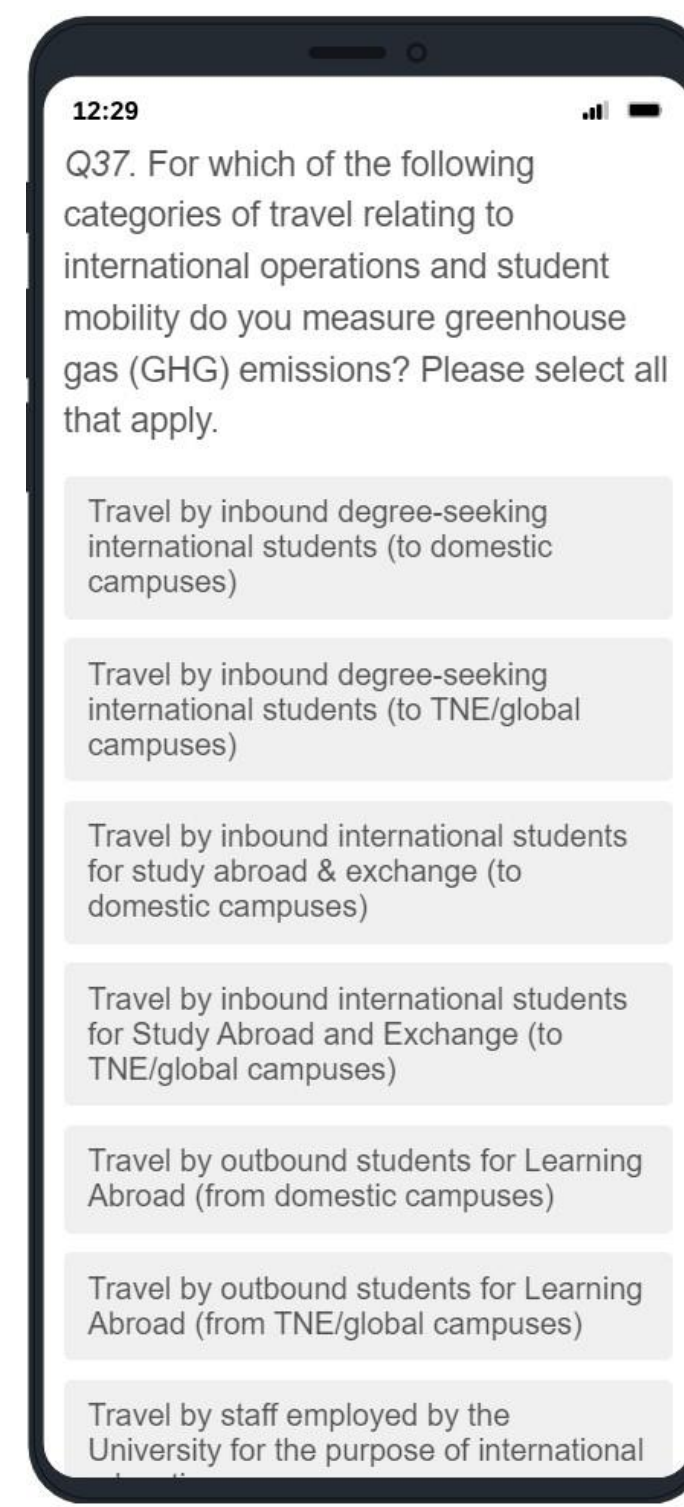
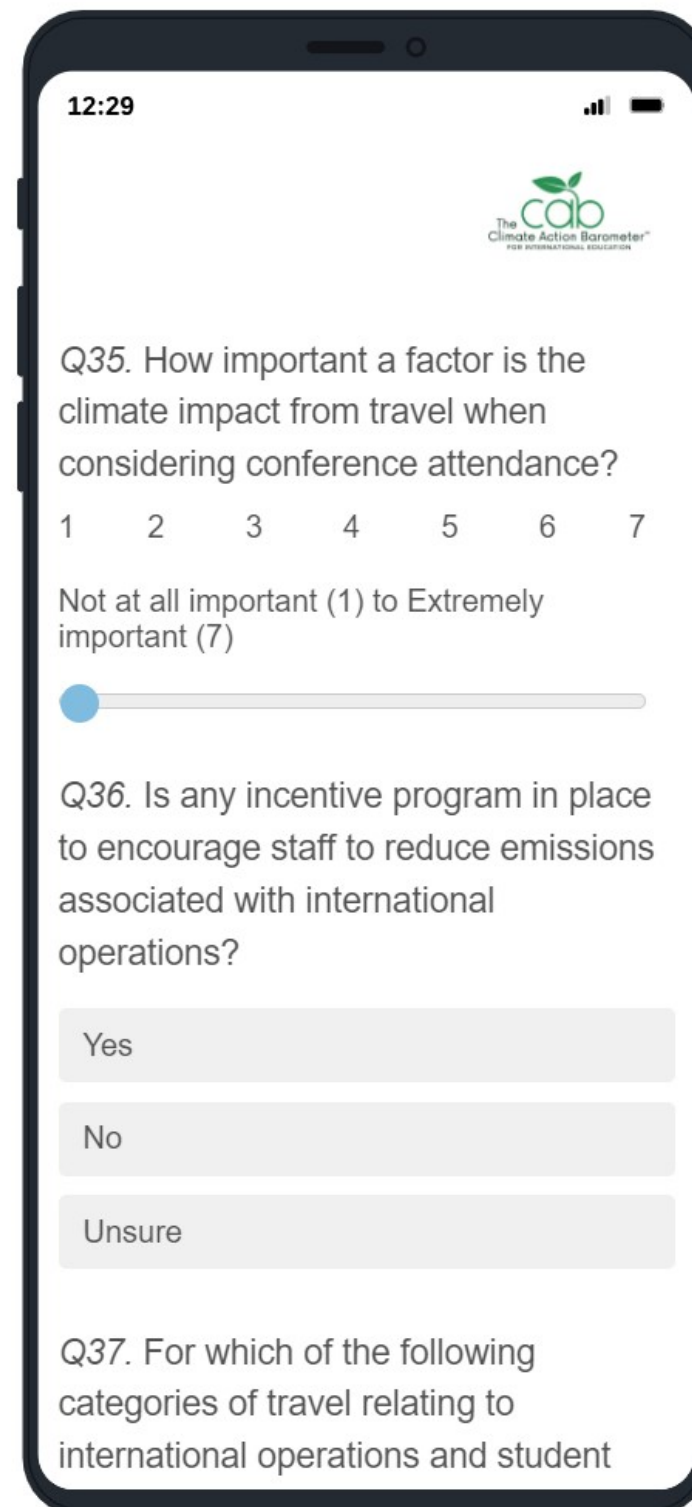
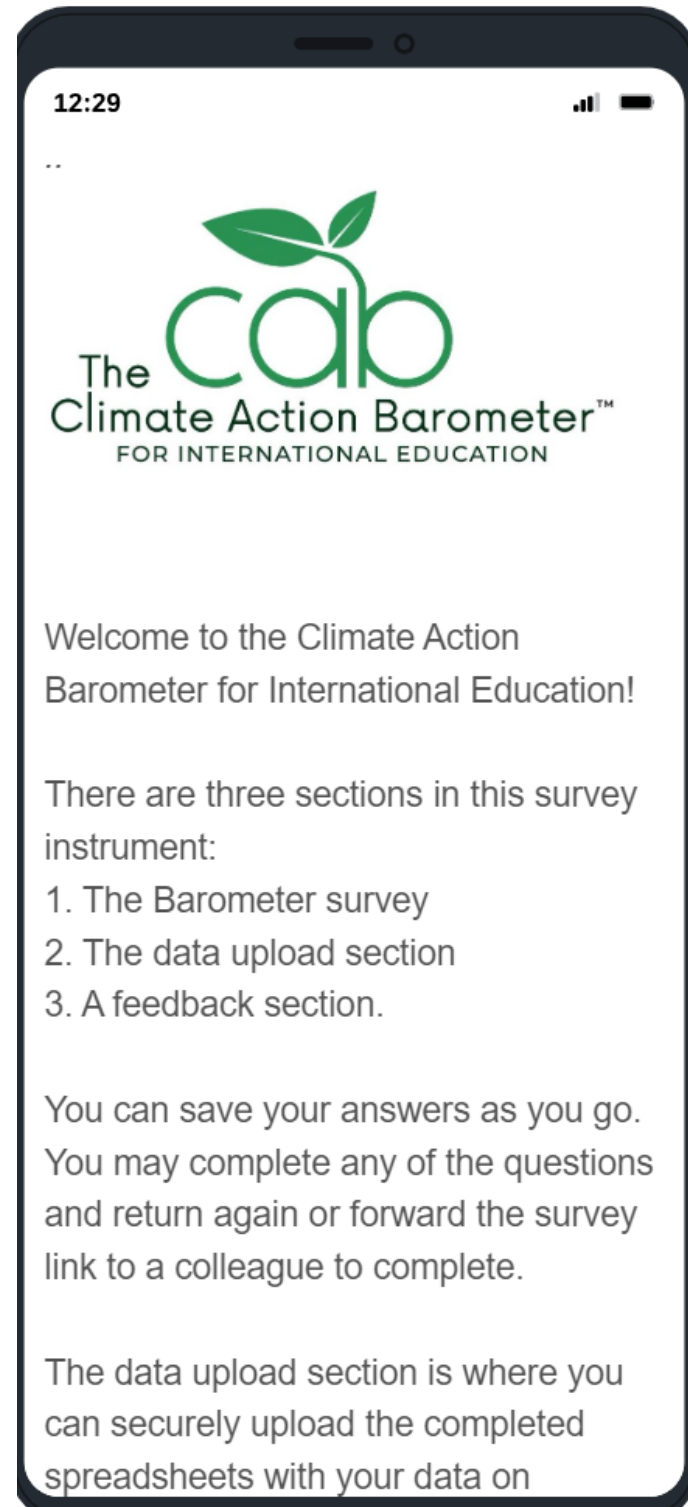
## *A 2019 QS survey of close to 4,000 students found that:*

**91%** of students felt universities could do more to reduce the environmental impact of their institution's operations

**79%** would be more likely to choose a degree that helped to teach them how to reduce their environmental impact

**98%** agreed that universities should publicise their sustainability efforts on social media channels, on the institutional website, at student fairs and events, and in their brochures

# About the Climate Action Barometer (CAB™)







## About the Climate Action Barometer (CAB™)

CAB™ is a rolling global benchmark, tracking and comparing sustainability policies, practices and emissions for international education across time. CAB is the only climate benchmark tool designed specifically for the international education sector.

A cross-sector comparative study for international educators.

Measuring climate action across international education.

Comparing policies, practices, emissions and remediations.

Driving decision-making. Tracking changes over time.

Self-reported, standardised measures. Validated by sustainability experts.

Minimal time commitment.

Maximum impact from reported indices.

National, international and peer group comparisons.

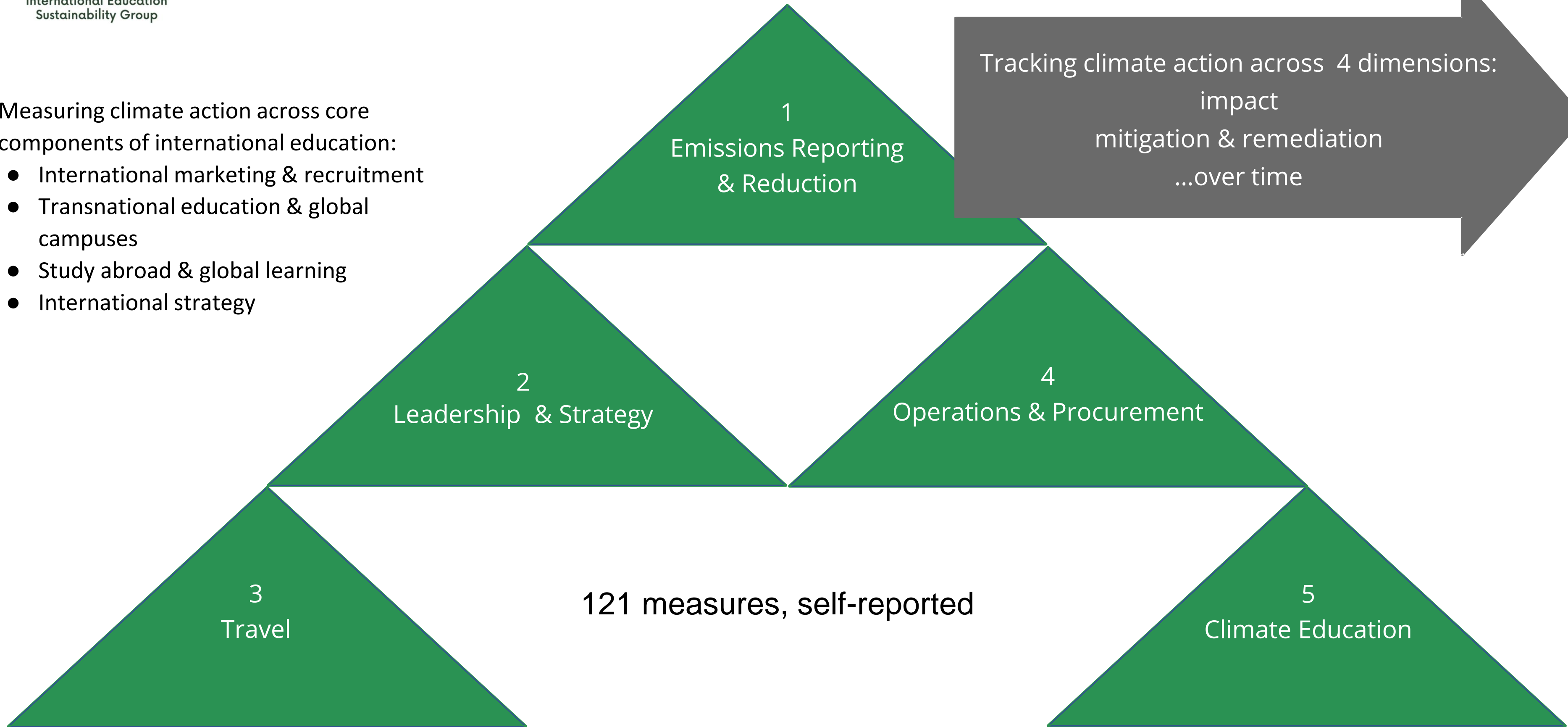
This is an opportunity for international education providers to demonstrate global leadership:

- drive the metrics for measuring climate action in international education
- shape the study and its impact
- be recognised nationally and internationally

**WHERE YOU LEAD, OTHERS WILL FOLLOW**

Measuring climate action across core components of international education:

- International marketing & recruitment
- Transnational education & global campuses
- Study abroad & global learning
- International strategy



# Founding partners for the ANZ pilot



## Motivations for joining

“*I am delighted to support this important new initiative. International teams have a critical role to play in ensuring higher education steps up in sustainability and I have seen how participation in this kind of benchmark really can drive change.*”

*As a global university we have to show students that we are taking this issue seriously and doing everything we can to operate more sustainably.”*

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**Corey Peterson, Chief Sustainability Officer, Student Services and Operations, University of Tasmania and President, Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS)**





## Activating international

“ *The Climate Action Barometer for international education™ presented our international team with the perfect opportunity to show leadership.*

*Climate action and sustainability are, at heart, global issues so we need to be the ones driving change, measuring impact and shaping the future of the discourse on this subject as it pertains to us - for the benefit of our team, the University and the international education sector.*”



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**Tim Field, Director International  
The University of Sydney**



# CAB™ Advisory Board and Peer Review

A diverse group with expertise across climate action, sustainability and international education.



**Dr Adrienne Fusek,**  
**San Diego State University/In Good Company**  
Lecturer/Executive Director and Founder



**Dr Carmen Primo Perez**  
**University of Tasmania**  
Senior Sustainability Officer



**Professor Robin Shields,**  
**University of Queensland**  
Head of the School of Education



**Professor Chris Ziguras,**  
**University of Melbourne**  
Professor In Higher Education



**Nannette Ripmeester**  
**Expertise in Labour Mobility**  
Director



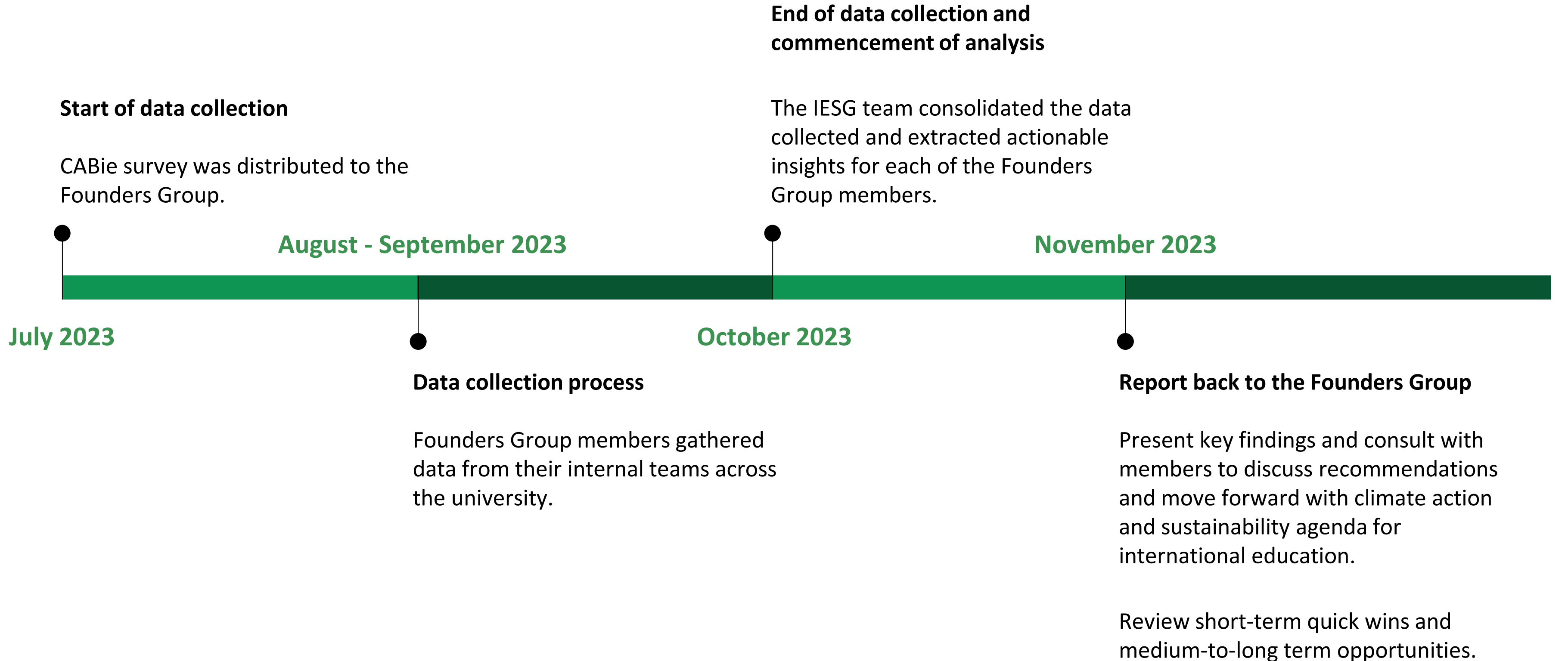
**Estrid Jonnson**  
**University of Aberdeen**  
Student | Emissions Calculator Expert

- CAB institutional analysis and report charting your relative performance and positioning against the Founders' Group Index.
- Personalised presentation and virtual report-back briefing with summary pdf for internal distribution and full ppt report pdf for reference.
- Optional Excel dataset for your institution, with comparative indices.
- Calculation of the carbon footprint of your international student mobility and international education-related staff travel. [ClimateEye]
- Founding Partners' Private Meeting and Best Practice Exchange.
- Subsequently, global comparisons.

# What are the deliverables?

## PLUS

- Data and insights to inform your decision making and identify priority areas for investment and support.
- Enhanced competitive advantage by addressing student and stakeholder expectations around climate action.
- Recognition of sector leadership as a Founding Partner – state, national and international.
- Set of recommendations to embed more environmentally sustainable policies and practices across international operations and to contribute to wider university sustainability ambitions.
- If a group of members join, then a benchmark can be set up for the grouping



# About the ClimateEye™



In addition to the survey questions, we collate the following data, to calculate and compare Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions from participating universities' student and staff travel.

**Inbound degree-seeking students** - international student citizenship and state, source country and state, enrolments, commencements and new students, by level of study.

**Transnational Education (TNE) and global campuses** - study location, enrolments, commencements and new students by citizenship and source country, state and level of study.

**Inbound student mobility (study abroad and exchange)** - numbers by source country and state.

**Outbound learning abroad** - numbers by destination country and state.

**International operations staff travel** - trips by destination country and state, class and (ideally) purpose

This is ClimateEye™ a new, global standardised measure for calculating emissions from student mobility and staff travel relating to international education.

- Largest airport hubs
  - Domicile data
  - Regional Data
    - Australia, Canada, China, India, USA
- Great Circle Formula based on airport codes - recommended 10% distance increase
- No routing
- DEFRA Emission Factors
  - travel mode based on distance
    - Long-haul = 6482 km
    - Short-haul = 1108 km
    - Domestic = 463 km
  - Economy class
- 1 return trip recommended

Airport hubs are determined based on the following methodology for the subsequent student numbers

	<b>Enrolments</b>	<b>Commencements/New Students</b>
<b>Source Airport</b>	Citizenship	Source country/region
<b>Nearest University Airport</b>	User input	User input
<b>Home Airport</b>	Citizenship	Citizenship

## Inbound degree-seeking student enrolments - sample data

Citizenship	Source country*	Source State/Region^	Enrolments	Source Airport	Nearest Airport University	Home Airport	Travel to University				Travel to home country				Number of trips per year	Total Emissions (tCO2e)	Emissions per Student (tCO2e)	Total Distance Traveled (km)
							As the Crow Flies Distance (km)	DEFRA INCREASE Distance (km)	Travel mode	Emission Factor	As the Crow Flies Distance (km)	DEFRA INCREASE Distance (km)	Travel mode	Emission Factor				
Australia	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the)	England	1	SYD	LHR	SYD	17020	18722	Long-haul	0.14787	17020	18722	Long-haul	0.14787	1	5.54	5.54	37444.53
Australia	Australia	Western Australia	2	SYD	LHR	SYD	17020	18722	Long-haul	0.14787	17020	18722	Long-haul	0.14787	1	11.07	5.54	74889.07
Argentina	Argentina	Buenos Aires	2	EZE	LHR	EZE	11137	12251	Long-haul	0.14787	11137	12251	Long-haul	0.14787	1	7.25	3.62	49003.39
China	Australia		1	PEK	LHR	PEK	8154	8969	Long-haul	0.14787	8154	8969	Long-haul	0.14787	1	2.65	2.65	17938.93
United States of America (the)	United States of America (the)	New York	1	DEN	LHR	DEN	7496	8246	Long-haul	0.14787	7496	8246	Long-haul	0.14787	1	2.44	2.44	16491.31

## International education-related business travel - sample data

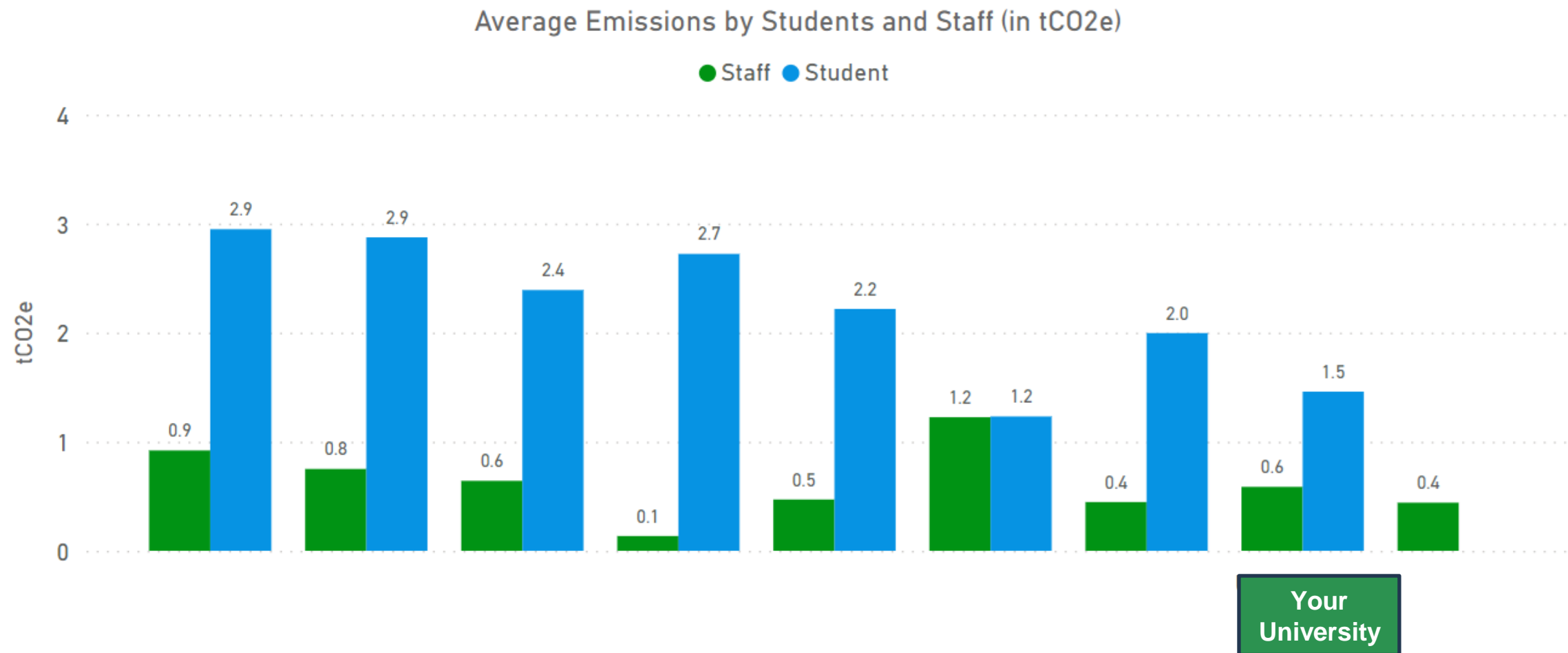
Departure Airport Code*	Departure City	Departure Country	Destination Airport Code*	Destination City	NUMBER OF ROUND TRIPS	Booking Class	Distance (km)	DEFRA INCREASE Distance (km)	Travel mode	Emission Factor	Total Emissions (tCO2e)
SYD	Sydney	Australia	LHR	London	6	Business	17020	18722	Long-haul	0.58029	130.37
LHR	London	United Kingdom	JFK	New York	2	Economy	5539	6093	Long-haul	0.20011	4.88
ICN	Seoul	South Korea	SYD	Sydney	1	Economy	8343	9177	Long-haul	0.20011	3.67
CDG	Paris	France	EDI	Edinburgh	1	Economy	869	956	Short-haul	0.18287	0.35



# Average Emissions by Students and Staff

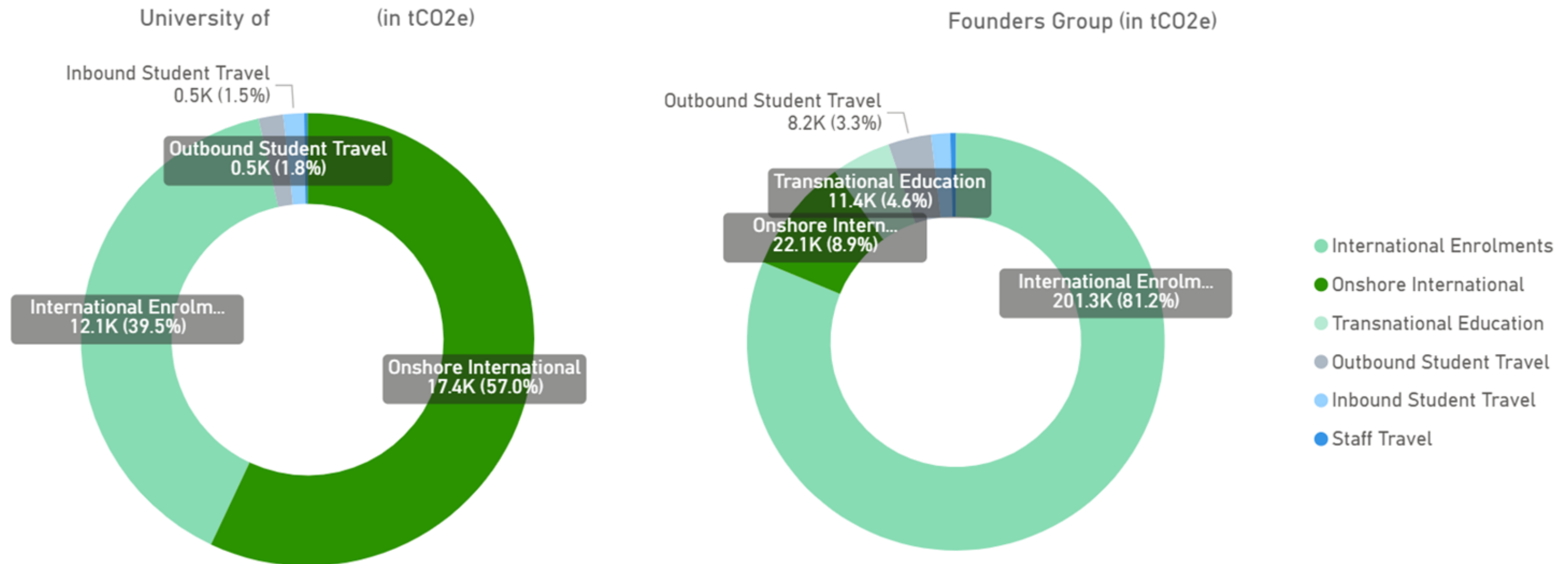
University of ..... is positioned **8th overall** in average emissions by students and staff:

- **7th** in terms of students' average travel emissions
- **5th** in terms of staff's average travel emissions



# Carbon Footprint Donut – sample data

**University of .....** total carbon footprint consists of International Onshore (57.0%), International Enrolments (39.5% of total emissions), Outbound Student Travel (1.8%), Inbound Student Travel (1.5%) and Staff Travel (0.2%).



# Emissions by Citizenship – Top 10 - sample data

Citizenship	Emissions (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Percentage of Total International Emissions	Enrolments	Percentage of International Student Population	Distance Traveled (km)
China, People's Republic of	8,132.34	67.33%	2398	67.82%	54,996,559.76
India	662.95	5.49%	163	4.61%	4,483,360.43
United States	447.13	3.70%	116	3.28%	3,023,812.98
Malaysia	356.75	2.95%	126	3.56%	2,412,569.40
Korea, Republic of	270.16	2.24%	86	2.43%	1,826,978.84
Hong Kong	202.86	1.68%	68	1.92%	1,371,852.71
Indonesia	176.97	1.47%	71	2.01%	1,196,785.65
Singapore	153.18	1.27%	56	1.58%	1,035,906.31
Sri Lanka	120.80	1.00%	34	0.96%	816,957.28
Thailand	108.80	0.90%	35	0.99%	735,764.16

# CAB™ Insight Examples

## Key insights – CAB™ Founders Group

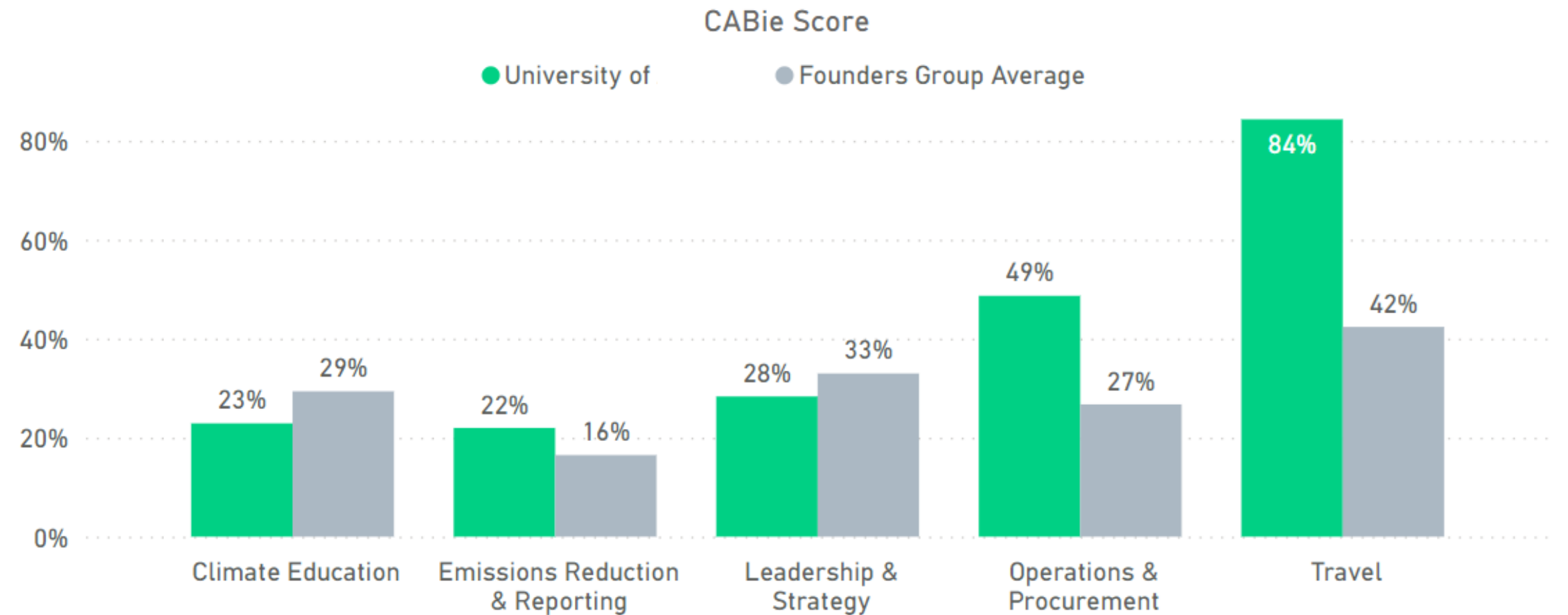
- Sustainability and climate action are core to the strategy and positioning of all 8 Founders Group members
- All anticipate climate change will have a significant impact on their international operations within 3-5 years
- **Yet climate-friendly policies and practices are not yet in place across the board**
- The key challenges international teams face in embedding more environmentally sustainable practices are a lack of staff time or resources, no set targets and a lack of clear metrics, followed by a lack of or conflicting incentives and lack of staff expertise



# CABie Overall Score - International - sample data

University of ..... is positioned higher than other Founders Group members in the following categories:

- Emissions Reduction & Reporting
- Operations & Procurement
- Travel



# CAB – Climate Action Reporting Categories

## Leadership and Strategy

- Centrality to strategy and planning
- Tracking attitudes and awareness
- Enabling staff and student participation

## Climate Education

- Educating staff and students
- Climate literacy as a graduate requirement
- Sustainability-themed programming

## Emissions Reduction and Reporting

- Measuring emissions from international operations, staff travel and student mobility
- Setting targets for emissions reduction
- Targeted steps to reduce emissions

## Operations and Procurement

- Environmental considerations into criteria for selecting partners and suppliers
- Transition from paper to digital
- Global campuses and offshore hubs

## Travel

- Travel policy and incentives
- Pre-departure briefings/orientations on climate issues for students
- Physical climate risk at offshore locations

# Insight Examples

## Leadership and Strategy

A general disconnection is observed between members' university-wide Sustainability Strategy and International Strategy.

Members have not developed sustainability or climate action strategies dedicated to International operations.

## Climate Education

Climate literacy levels are not commonly gauged among students and staff.

Limited incentives are provided for students and staff to undertake sustainability-themed studies and projects.

## Emissions Reduction and Reporting

There is a gap in international operations' emissions reporting to sustainability offices and external bodies.

Further work on emission target-setting may be required for international operations.

## Operations and Procurement

Commitment to climate action and environmental sustainability is not a key selection criteria when appointing suppliers, learning abroad partners and recruitment agents.

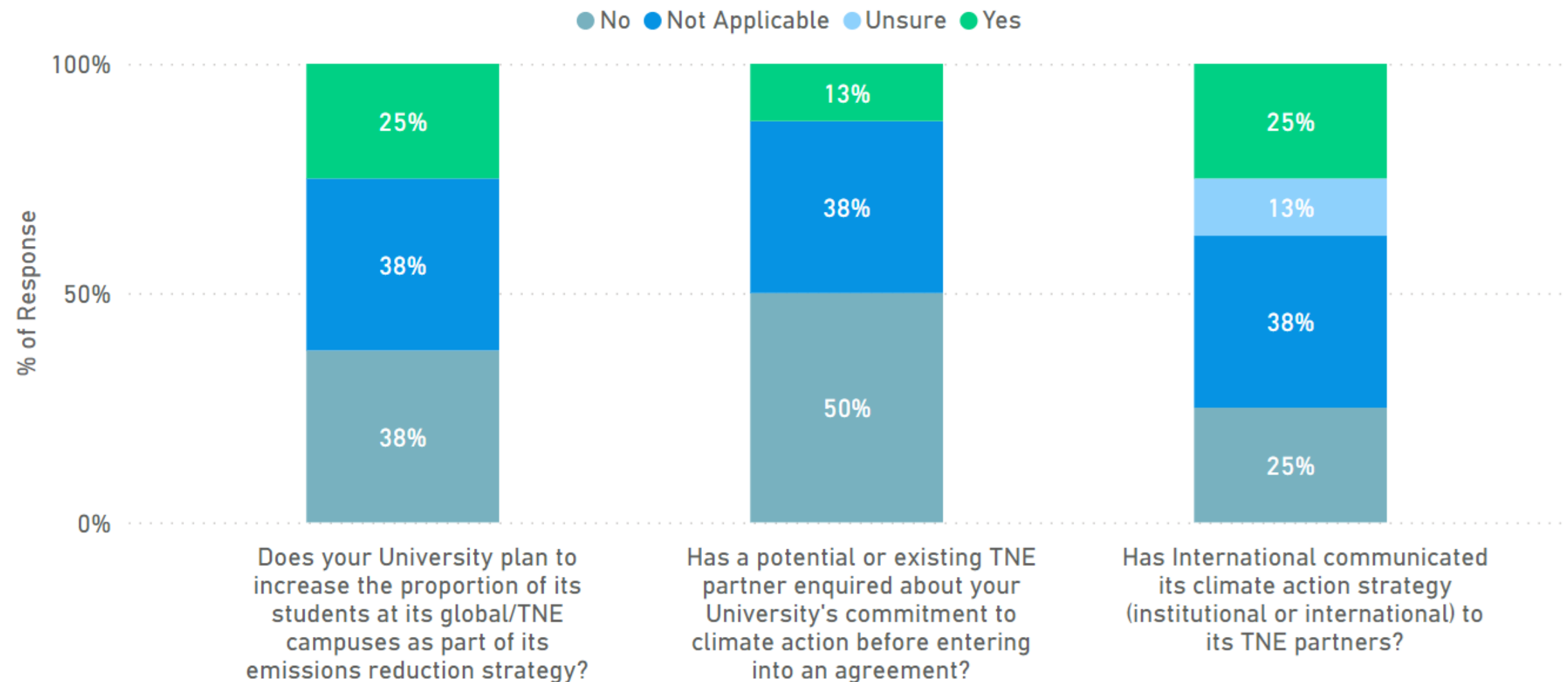
## Travel

Climate impact is not a determining factor when deciding staff travel priorities.

Physical presence in events and conferences is still preferred over virtual communications.

# Transnational Education as an Emissions Reduction Strategy - sample data

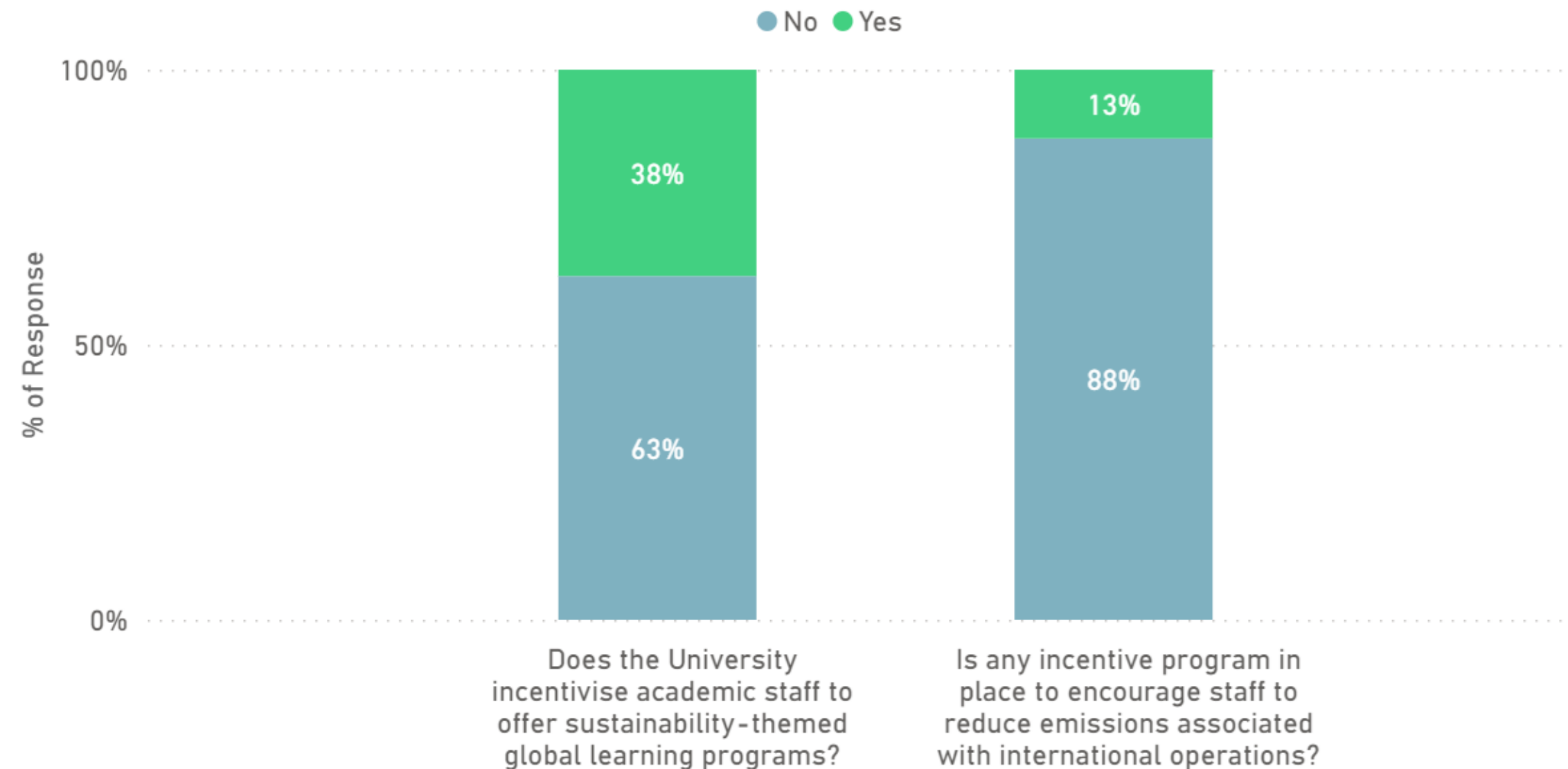
**Out of ... members** that operate global/TNE campuses, **... members** plan to increase the proportion of students at their global/TNE campuses to reduce carbon emissions.



# Staff Incentives on Climate Action - sample data

**University of .....** does not offer incentives for academic staff to offer sustainability-themed global learning programs - only ... **out of** ... Founders Group members do.

**University of .....** does not provide incentives to motivate staff to reduce emissions related to international operations.

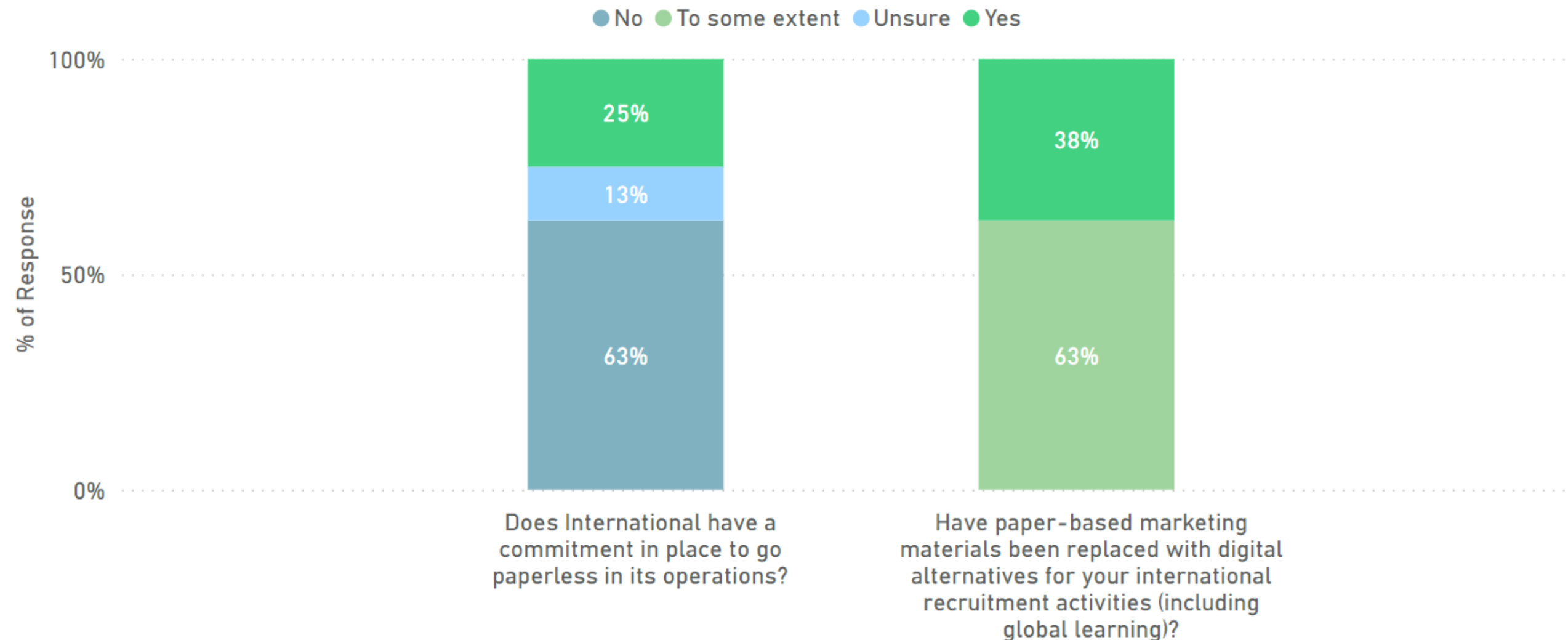




# Marketing and Sustainable Practices

Founders Group members have substituted paper-based marketing collateral with digital materials.

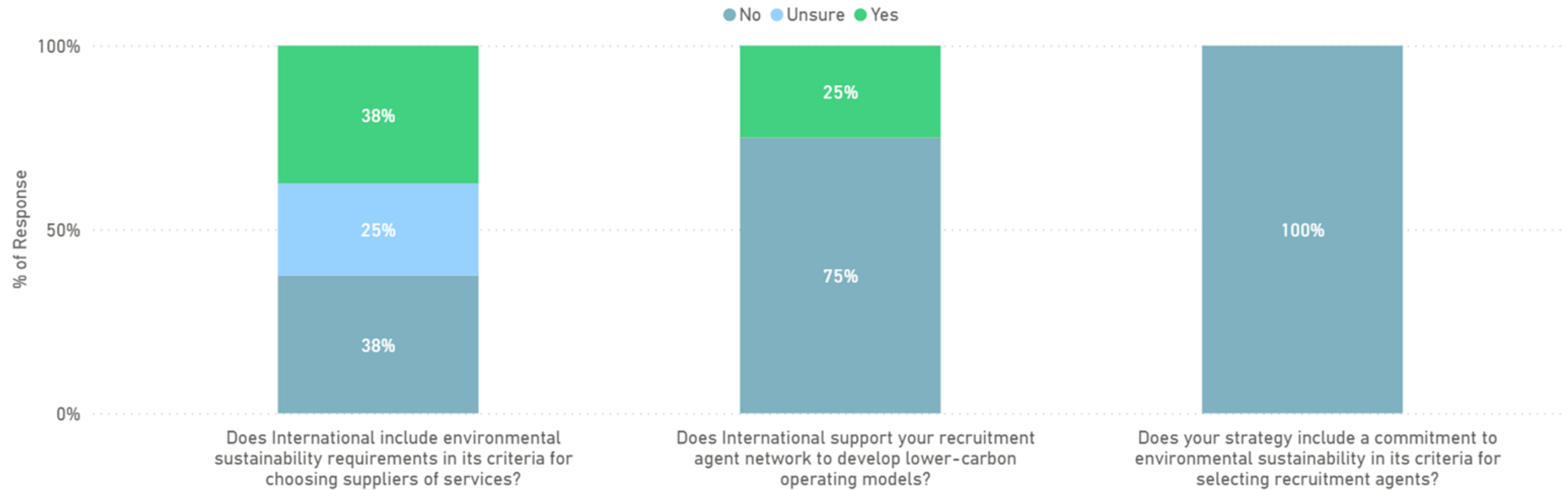
Only **University of .....** and one other member have made a commitment to go paperless in their international operations.



# Recruitment Agents and Supplier of Services

**University of .....** includes environmental sustainability requirement when selecting suppliers of services, but not for recruitment agent partners - none of the Founders Group members do.

**University of .....** is not one of the members that provide support to their recruitment agent network to adopt low-emission operating models.



# Timelines – UK/Scotland and Europe roll-out

## Start of global roll-out

UK/Scotland and Europe Founders' Group assemblies

## Data collection and commencement of analysis

Founders' Group members gather data from their internal teams across the university.

December 2023

February/March 2024

November 2023

January 2024

## Data requests and refinement

UK/Scotland and Europe Founders' Group members assess and amend the pilot survey from ANZ.

## Report back to the Founders Group

Present key findings and consult with members to discuss recommendations and move forward with climate action and sustainability agenda for international education.

Review short-term quick wins and medium-to-long term opportunities.

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1.5°c.

The KPI that really counts...

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We are the International Education Sustainability Group.

We are a social enterprise and we support organisations who are committed to climate action.

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