



This month in sustainability...

It's a good news week here at the Sustainability Office!

You have probably seen in your inboxes that UTAS was ranked #1 in the world for climate change leadership by the **Times Higher Education Impact Rankings**.

This is the fourth year of the Impact Rankings, which is the premier global program measuring sustainable development goals.

Universities that participate in the rankings provide data on their work towards achieving the goals to **Times Higher Education**.

Over 1400 universities across the world were assessed in this year's rankings.

UTAS topped the SDG13 - Climate Action leaderboard with a score of 90.4 out of 100.

This incredible achievement is the result of the numerous programs across the university that relate to climate action, including the University's **commitment to carbon neutrality**, our emissions reductions strategies and targets, the **Curious Climate Schools program**, the **Climate Futures Research Group**, the **Redmap citizen science program**, the work of the **Tasmanian Policy Exchange** to provide submissions to the State Government on renewable energy and climate change legislation, and the high number of papers related to climate science published by University researchers, amongst others.

The University of Tasmania was also ranked #25 in the overall rankings.

Congratulations to all the academic and professional staff whose work has contributed to this fantastic result!

The University of Tasmania was also announced as a **finalist for the Sustainability Institution of the Year** in the International Green Gown Awards 2022.

The University won the award category in the **Australasian Green Gown Awards** late last year.

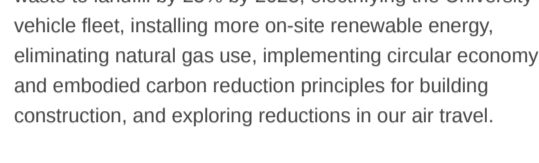
UTAS is nominated alongside four other universities from across the world who are industry leaders in sustainability.

The University is also **nominated in the Student Engagement category** in the international awards for the **SIPS program**, a first-practice example of place-based student engagement and sustainability education in the tertiary education sector.

This program won UTAS the Student Engagement Award at the Australasian event.

The International Green Gown Awards will be held on the 6 July at 6.00pm (UK time) as part of the **United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**.

Congratulations to all involved, and good luck!



UTAS announces industry-leading plan to reduce emissions

Earlier this month, the University Executive Team signed off on an ambitious Emissions Reduction Strategic Plan for the University of Tasmania.

The implementation of the Emissions Reduction Strategic Plan (ERSP) will see the University of Tasmania reduce its gross greenhouse gas emissions by at least 50% by 2030. This is greater than the target set by the Paris Agreement, which requires a global net reduction in emissions of 45% by 2030.

This target includes Scope 3 emissions – emissions that aren't directly generated by the University's activities, such as those generated by external contractors such as security, cleaning, and catering.

Proposed emissions reduction initiatives include reducing waste to landfill by 25% by 2025, electrifying the University vehicle fleet, installing more on-site renewable energy, eliminating natural gas use, implementing circular economy and embodied carbon reduction principles for building construction, and exploring reductions in our air travel.

The ERSP also proposes establishing an internal carbon price (ICP) that would align financial decision-making with climate and sustainability goals by incorporating the true cost of carbon into proposed activities.

An internal carbon price could be applied to activities such as business travel, overseas conference, for example, would be included in annual budgets.

In addition to the ambitious carbon emission reduction target by 2030, the ERSP also supports development of activities that allow UTAS to generate its own Tasmanian-based certified carbon offset.

While the plan notes that carbon offsets should be a last resort in developing carbon mitigation strategies, it also acknowledges that offsetting is an integral part of the emissions reductions process during the life of the ERSP.

Developing local carbon sequestration projects will be allowed while providing value to the Tasmanian community, including UTAS students and researchers.

An example of such a program is the revegetation of areas of research farms that will also be an example for farmers across Tasmania about how this is done and the value generated.

The approval of this plan is a major milestone on a decade-long emissions reduction journey for the University of Tasmania.

The University has been undertaking targeted emissions reduction initiatives since 2005, which resulted in the University becoming certified carbon neutral in 2016.

Since then, the University has stepped up its reduction strategies, creating the Strategic Framework for Sustainability, fully divesting from fossil fuels in 2021, joining **Race to Zero** (developing an **Energy Strategy**, a **Sustainable Transport Strategy**, the **Waste Minimisation Action Plan**, and developing a new sustainability-focused catering model).

The Strategic Plan acknowledges the influence that staff and students have had on encouraging a strong commitment to climate action from the University.

Over 90% of UTAS staff supported the development of the Emissions Reduction Strategic Plan.

Over the years, there has been strong support by both staff and students for the University to maintain its carbon neutral certification and fully divest from fossil fuels, as indicated by past **Sustainability Surveys**.

The ERSP also acknowledges the critical role that staff and student choice will play in successfully reducing emissions.

Enabling students and staff to make sustainable personal choices – such as choosing a sustainable transport method when travelling to and from uni – is essential.

You can access the **All Emissions Reduction Strategic Plan here**.

Breathing new life into abandoned bikes

Jeff McClintock

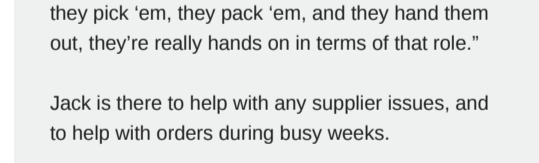
It's an unfortunate reality that bicycles are sometimes abandoned on UTAS campuses. With deflated tyres, rusty chains and wobbling wheels between their spokes, these unloved machines make for a sorry sight. When discovered, the Sustainability Team tags the bikes and gives students several months to make contact. However, sadly most remain unclaimed.

With a mounting stockpile of unloved, but potentially useful bicycles, the Sustainability Team has found two main ways of bringing new life to the bikes and making sure they don't end up in landfill.

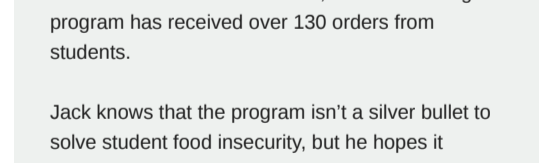
The first approach is simple: bikes are donated to organisations that fix them up and then on-sell them for the benefit of the wider community. In Hobart, eight bikes were recently donated to Bike Kitchen, an organisation that restores bikes and runs sessions to teach people how to fix their own bikes. In Launceston, eleven bikes were donated to 'Bob's Bikes', a Big Picture school program where at-risk students learn to repair and restore bikes, which are then sold to raise funds for the UNICEF.

Another way that abandoned bikes have been reused is a bit more novel. During last month's Bike Week (6-13 March), ISD staff at Newnham decided to launch their very own little 'Campus Bikes' program. These abandoned bikes were chosen and cleaned and serviced, before being officially commissioned for use. Now, whenever staff need to move around campus – and don't happen to be transporting a fridge – they have the option of zipping around on a bike, saving time compared to walking, or carbon emissions compared to driving.

Viva la velopedes!



Community Garden Coordinator Jeff McClintock getting some sweet air on his Campus Bike.



Freshie Bag Supervisor Rishini handing out produce in Sandy Bay.

TUSA is keeping it fresh to tackle food insecurity

A program run by the Tasmanian University Student Association (TUSA) is looking to bring affordable fresh fruit and veggies to students.

In the 2020 UTAS Sustainability Survey, 38% of UTAS students reported facing some form of food insecurity.

Of this number, 15% of UTAS students indicated they ran out of food and were unable to purchase more 'tillie' to eat.

TUSA staff member Jack Booth-Cole says it's TUSA's responsibility to support students facing food insecurity.

Jack is on the Student Advocacy team. Most of his role involves supporting postgraduate students with issues like academic integrity and understanding university policies.

But he's also involved with tackling food insecurity on campus.

"At TUSA, we understand that if students are struggling outside of university, they're gonna struggle inside university," says Jack.

TUSA has a food pantry, and a food voucher program to provide emergency food relief to students.

Following the Survey findings, UTAS staff, students and the TUSA team worked together to bring back the veggie bag program. The program had previously run across all Tasmanian campuses.

Health and nutrition students worked with lecturers Simone Lee and Sandra Murray to work out how to design affordable and nutritious bags, and designing recipes that were for students, by students.

The students calculated the costs savings through buying directly from a wholesaler in Tasmania. TUSA subsidises the scheme, as the Freshie Bags are sold at their cost value.

TUSA's Veggie Bag program now provides fresh fruit and vegetables to students each week in both Sandy Bay and Launceston, at a cost of \$10 per bag (or, if you buddy up with a friend, you can get a double serve for \$18 with the Bestie Bag).

The contents of the bag vary from week to week, and students don't know what's in the bag until they pick it up.

"The idea is to meet nutritional requirements and give some good variety as well, we want it to be different every week, not just potatoes and onions and cauliflower week after week," says Jack.

For item bucks at the grocery shop, Jack reckons you'd be lucky to get a bunch of carrots, a zucchini, and some spring onions.

With the Freshie Bag program, students can get all of that and more, and in quantities that are student-friendly.

In previous iterations of the scheme, feedback from students indicated that the bags were slightly too generous, and they weren't finishing the food within a week.

So, for 2022, the portions are slightly smaller, and the price tag a bit cheaper.

TUSA employs two students, one in Sandy Bay and one in Launceston, to implement the scheme. In Jack's words:

"The students we employ, they pick the veggies, they pick 'em, they pack 'em, and they hand them out, they're really hands on in terms of that role."

Jack is there to help with any supplier issues, and to help with orders during busy weeks.

There are plans to bring the program to the Cradle Coast campus if there is sufficient demand from students.

Since the start of the semester, the Freshie Bag program has received over 130 orders from students.

Jack knows that the program isn't a silver bullet to solve student food insecurity, but he hopes it provides students with an alternative to skipping meals.

It's an issue he sees frequently in his role as a student advocate, particularly for international students.

The Sustainability Survey found that 54% of respondents who were food insecure were international students, in comparison to 34% of domestic students.

"There are expectations of finding a job quite early and there's accommodation quite easily and when that doesn't go to plan, that can be really difficult, I see that on a day-to-day basis," says Jack.

"When you hear about [the rates of] food insecurity I'm not surprised, because if someone is struggling to pay their rent, they're probably going to skip a meal to be able to pay it, which we see quite a bit."

Jack hopes the Freshie Bag program can "take some of the pressure off" students who are struggling with the rising cost of living.

Students can sign up for the Freshie Bag program via **TUSA's website**.

Freshie Bag orders need to be placed by 3pm on Mondays to be collected on Wednesday on the Sandy Bay and Newnham campuses.

You can also follow the **Freshie Bag Facebook page** here for reminders on when to get your orders in, as well as weekly recipes for inspiration.

Jack encourages students who are curious about the program to give it a try.

"It's gonna be better value than going to Woolies or Coles, and you might end up really enjoying trying something new, it might push you into cooking something different that you might not usually cook."

Note: **The Freshie Bag Program is only available to UTAS students.** For staff members interested in trying a produce box, you can check out **Backyard Bounty** in southern Tasmania, **Earthy Earth** in Launceston, and **Live Well Tasmania** in Burnie.

For more information about food insecurity on campus, you can listen to the **Sustainability@UTAS episode on Sustainable Food Systems with Sandy Murray**.

Showcasing sustainability at the University of Tasmania

On March 24, staff and students across our campuses gathered online and in person for a showcase of the University's sustainability achievements.

The event was prompted by UTAS' recognition as the Sustainability Institution of the Year 2021 at the **Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) Green Gown Awards**, an accolade that acknowledges the top tertiary institution across Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific in the area of sustainability.

UTAS is also a finalist for the International Sustainability Institution of the Year Award.

Vice Chancellor Rufus Black noted in his opening address that many people were aware of the University's commitment to sustainability through such achievements, but wanted to know more about the specific projects that led to the recognition.

The Showcase was a 'snapshot' of some of the ongoing sustainability initiatives that underpin the University's core commitment to sustainability.

Highlights from the showcase include: Chief Sustainability Officer Corey Peterson's explanation of STARS, the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System, an international system for assessing tertiary sustainability that is aligned to the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**. STARS is a fully transparent and voluntary system that assesses the sustainability performance of universities across a range of categories including curriculum, research, infrastructure, energy, campus engagement, diversity, and wellbeing.

The University of Tasmania is currently ranked Silver and is on track to receive a Gold rating by mid-2022.

Teaching and learning are very important to STARS, and Provost Jane Long gave an introduction to the ongoing initiative to map sustainability offerings across the UTAS curriculum.

Jane Long stated that it was essential that sustainability becomes an integral part of the curriculum, but "in ways that are meaningful and engaging for students - we can't and won't approach sustainability in the curriculum where generic content is simply tacked on to existing units or courses".

Instead, the Academic Transformation Group is working to identify units in all degree offerings at the University which are sustainability-focused, meaning they explicitly focus on sustainability at their core, or sustainability-inclusive, that incorporates sustainability challenges, issues, and concepts in a prominent way.

Michl Panofel, Deputy Vice Chancellor Education, said that sustainability integration in the curriculum will prepare UTAS students with skills that are needed to meet sustainability challenges in the future, and that sustainability education was "the only way we as an institution can develop meaningful and lasting change, and is the way that education can transform lives".

Other highlights from the Showcase included an introduction to **green bonds** from Chief Operating Officer David Clerk, and an overview of the Emissions Reductions Strategic Plan from Infrastructure Services and Development Executive Director Mike Humbell.

Mike Humbell highlighted the challenge of managing the University's carbon footprint across 161 buildings over four campuses. One of the University's key focus areas is in reducing embodied carbon in capital projects, with the design of the Rivers Edge and Willis Street buildings reducing embodied carbon by more than 30%, setting the standard for new builds moving forward.

While reducing carbon emissions is the ultimate goal, in order to maintain its carbon-neutral certification the University does offset carbon emissions by supporting activities that avoid, reduce or sequester carbon. Developing the University is actively exploring partnering opportunities with local, Tasmanian-based organisations to develop carbon offsets in Tasmania.

Senior Sustainability Officer Catherine Elliott and TUSA Student Sophie Crothers outlined the ways in which students can get involved with sustainability on campus. Catherine is the coordinator of the award-winning **Sustainability Integration Program for Students (SIPS)**, which enables students to work on real-world sustainability projects. Students have an integral role in the delivery of sustainability initiatives at the University, through involvement in projects such as auditing the energy output of buildings and designing sustainable infrastructure such as the **Dobson Road Bike Hub**.

Sophie highlighted the vast array of TUSA Clubs and Societies that relate to sustainability, and highlighted the importance of having societies that focus on social sustainability as well as environmental sustainability. TUSA has numerous ongoing sustainability projects, including the **Freshie Bag** program that provides affordable fresh fruit and vegetables for UTAS students, and the **Student Voices program**, which allows students to develop and implement a research project on an area of their choice, including sustainability.

There will be two further Sustainability Showcases, one in July focusing on the performance and monitoring of sustainability activities, and one in November reflecting on the University's progress thus far and looking ahead to the future of sustainability at UTAS.

If you missed the Showcase, you can **watch the presentation here**. You can also view the **Tasmania's video for the Sustainability Institution of the Year Award here**.

Survey says... Ian Ayre

What do YOU think?

About 1500 students and 500 UTAS staff have taken the opportunity to tell UTAS what they think in the **Sustainability Survey**, held online over two weeks in March.

This survey is held every two years, and 2022 was the fourth time the survey has sought student and staff views on the importance of sustainability in their own lives and as part of the overall operation of the University.

The student data is being analysed by SIPS intern, Ben Willis, who is in his second year of the Bachelor of Natural Environment and Wilderness.

"It has been a great experience seeing the data first-hand," says Ben.

"It's highlighted where we are doing well, where improvements can be made and it's given me hope that the community is moving forward to a more sustainable future."

When Ben has completed his full report in the next few months, we will look forward to telling you know where to find the full document.

An initial look at the data indicates that this will be an interesting report.

It is clear from the early results that sustainability is of considerable importance to the majority of UTAS students.

The results show a trend of increasing levels of concern and involvement with sustainability, as well as increasing confidence in the UTAS leadership, teaching and facilities to promote and improve sustainability outcomes.

They also show that students are eager for more opportunities to engage in sustainable behaviours both on and off campus, and that sustainability should be better embedded across teaching and learning.

The majority of students agree that they have the capacity to make a difference to sustainability at the University.

Students are asked a range of questions in the survey, including basic information about their level of study and College that they are most affiliated with, and questions relating to topics such as modern slavery, food insecurity, and teaching and learning.

They were also asked about their perceptions of the University's sustainability commitment, as well as their own personal beliefs about sustainability.

The Staff Sustainability Survey is based on the **Sustainability Culture Indicator developed by Awake**.

This survey assesses the extent to which sustainability is embedded within the culture of an organisation and is used by organisations internationally, which allows UTAS to benchmark its sustainability engagement.

The results indicate that sustainability is as important to staff members at UTAS as it is to students, with a steady increase in scores across almost all aspects of the survey since the first was conducted in 2016.

The majority of staff see the University's commitment to sustainability as a positive.

The results from the UTAS Staff Survey exceed the average from other tertiary institutions' responses to the survey, indicating that UTAS has a more embedded culture of sustainability in comparison to other institutions.

Staff at UTAS are also more likely to participate in sustainable practices while on campus, such as recycling and reducing energy consumption, than other tertiary institutions.

It is a widely accepted adage that the only thing worse than not asking your community what they think, is to ask them their feedback with no intention of using it.

The University has used the results of the Sustainability Survey to identify key areas for improvement and drive sustainability initiatives since 2016.

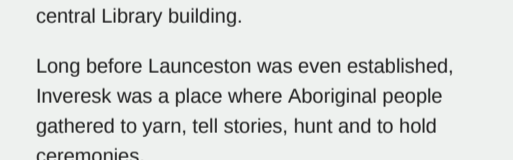
Examples of the Sustainability Survey being much more than just data collection in the past include the University's commitment to carbon neutrality and divestment, the development of the Emissions Reduction Strategic Plan, and the continuously increasing status of sustainability in curriculum, in the form of new degrees and a more prominent position in many existing courses.

The results of this year's survey will be used to continue to drive change into the future.

A randomly-drawn voucher for each of the regions was an added incentive for participation. Each winner has now been given a \$50 voucher for a sustainability-orientated shop or service of their choice. The lucky winners for each region are:

Sandy Bay: P. Mitchell
Southern Tasmania: B. Khatiwada
Northern Tasmania: M. Yu
North-West Tasmania: K. Feeney
Distance: L. Sawwale
Sylbury (Roselle): A. Ross-Hodges

Thank you to all students and staff who participated in this year's Sustainability Surveys.



SIPS Intern Ben Willis crunching the numbers from the 2022 Sustainability Survey.

Country and community connect at Inveresk

Shantelle Rodman

A special outdoor area has opened at Inveresk which acknowledges the site's past, present and future.

The *pulungna milyaythina* Indigenous Welcoming space is the first of a series of spaces known collectively as the 'Urban Realm' to be brought to life.

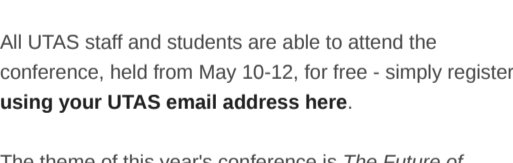
Made possible through the **Northern Transformation Program** which is enabling the creation of a new University of Tasmania campus at Inveresk, the space has been symbolically positioned in the heart of the precinct outside the central Library building.

Long before Launceston was even established, Inveresk was a place where Aboriginal people gathered to yarn, tell stories, hunt and to hold ceremonies.

In paying tribute to that history, the resulting Aboriginal space is a representation of what has come to pass while looking ahead to the site's exciting future.

Key features of the design include guardian stones representing Tasmania's nine Aboriginal Nations and deep-time connections to Country, as well as a fire pit, sand circle, seating and native plant species...

Read the rest here: <https://www.utas.edu.au/communications/general-news/all-news/country-and-community-connect-at-inveresk>



pulungna milyaythina Indigenous Welcoming space at the Inveresk campus.

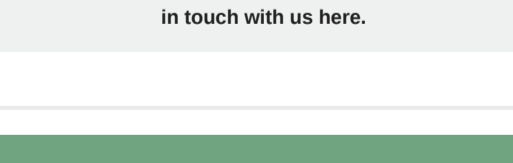
The Future of Sustainability

THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA IS A VISUAL HEAVEN INSTITUTION FOR THE AUSTRALASIAN CAMPUSES TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY (ACTS) CONFERENCE.

All UTAS staff and students are able to attend the conference, held from May 10-12, for free - simply register using your UTAS email address here.

The theme of this year's conference is: The Future of Sustainability. The conference brings together sustainability champions from campuses across Australasia and the Pacific to share and inspire transformative actions toward a future that is fair, just and equitable for all.

You can view the conference program here.



We're always looking to share great sustainability stories from across our campuses. If you would like to submit a piece to the Sustainability Bulletin, get in touch with us here.

Next Bulletin Date: June 21

Interact and engage

Click the button below to download the Useful Sustainability Links PDF, which includes a list of our programs, facebook pages, resources and more.

