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Issue 23 | May - June 2022

This month in sustainability..

STARS GOLDEN Glow for UTAS

The University of Tasmania has become the first Australian Gold-rated institution in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) in June 2022.

A STARS score results from a self-reporting effort that is peer reviewed and put through a data accuracy process by AASHE. UTAS has achieved 73.8 percent of available points, which is well above the 65 percent required to reach Gold. Our full **UTAS submission** is publicly available.

With more than 1000 participants in 40 countries, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) STARS program is the most widely recognised framework in the world for publicly reporting comprehensive information related to a college or university's sustainability performance.

STARS is a comprehensive sustainability rating system for colleges and universities that addresses the environmental, socio-cultural and economic dimensions of sustainability. STARS was developed by and for the higher education community through a transparent and inclusive process. Participants report achievements in five overall areas: 1) academic 2) engagement, 3) operations, 4) planning and administration, and 5) innovation and leadership.

University Chief Sustainability Officer, Corey Peterson, noted that "achieving a Gold rating recognises the significant efforts over the last two years from our staff across all Colleges and Divisions as well as our student partners."

"Together, we have progressed significantly on our sustainability journey, including identifying new opportunities to deliver holistic outcomes."

Congratulations to all staff and students across the University who have been involved with the STARS program over the years.

This rating is in recognition of the hard work, dedication, and passion for sustainability shown by the UTAS community.



UTAS in PRME position to transform business and management education

In December 2021, the University of Tasmania became a signatory to the Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME, pronounced 'pryme'), a United Nations Global Compact initiative that encourages awareness of sustainable development values into the curriculum of business and management schools.

The initiative, which has over 800 signatories across the globe, ensures that institutions are equipping business and management graduates with the skills needed to become the responsible business leaders of tomorrow.

Signatories include the Cornell SC Johnson School of Business, Oxford Business College, and the Howard University School of Business, as well as most major tertiary institutions in Australia.

At UTAS, Dr. Mansi Mansi is leading the transformation of the business and management curriculum.

A senior lecturer at the Tasmanian School of Business and Economics, Dr. Mansi has a background in sustainability accounting, business ethics, and corporate social responsibility.

Dr. Mansi says that sustainability is particularly relevant to business and management graduates.

"When you look at the corporate world, if you look where the money is coming from, the decision-makers – corporations play a very important role in achieving the SDG agenda."

"We're producing business management graduates that will be driving [that] decision-making. They'll be talking about recycling, ecological consciousness, supply chain issues, human rights issues. So, it's a very important link."

Course content at the College of Business and Economics are currently being reviewed to strengthen responsible management education and sustainability values into the curriculum.

Dr. Mansi said that it's critical that the transformation doesn't "artificially inject sustainability" into the curriculum but "bolster authentic discipline knowledge through integrated learning."

Indeed, sustainability will be integrated at different levels depending on the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of particular units.

In some cases, sustainability might just feature as a case study in a lecture. For others, sustainability could become a core component of the unit.

PRME will ensure that UTAS graduates will meet the needs of a changing corporate environment.

PRME is an initiative of the UN Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative.

The Global Compact consists of over 12,000 businesses internationally that are working to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into their organisations, while championing sustainable finance, cleaning up supply chains, and working with local communities.

PRME was developed in 2007 through a partnership with six donors, university presidents, and other representatives from leading business schools to align academic institutions with the principles developed by the UN Global Compact.

Dr. Mansi says that it's a "moral responsibility" for universities to embed sustainability into their curricula and nurture inclusiveness and diversity.

"We have to prepare [students], they are the decision makers, they are going to decide on so many things, and how we prepare them, how we guide them, and what information we provide to them is really important."

"What we teach, what examples we provide, what kind of case studies we include has a direct relevance to the outside world."

Dr. Mansi is currently in the process of reviewing each of the School of Business and Economics' course offerings, mapping the current units to the Sustainable Development Goals and identifying opportunities to further integrate the Goals into the curriculum.

There have been other changes at TSBE in the sustainability space.

Recently, Dr. Leanne Morrison was appointed as a Senior Lecturer in climate accounting.

Dr. Morrison has a background in corporate environmental reporting, sustainability accounting, and corporate sustainability.

The University is also getting ready to launch its Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Business, which will be open for enrolments in 2023.

Sustainability is front-and-centre in other schools too, with students undertaking a Bachelor of Science now able to major in sustainability as of 2022.

Over 6000 students have enrolled in the new Diploma of Sustainable Living, which was offered at no cost during the lockdown.

Students can study subjects like Backyard Biodiversity, the Science of Gardening, Global Food Security, Sustainable Design for Houses and Landscape, and more.

PRME is part of a University-wide initiative to identify, co-ify, and enhance sustainability-focused offerings across all existing courses.

This audit is being undertaken by the Academic Transformation Group, which consists of representatives across all disciplines at the University.

All units are in the process of being categorised as "sustainability-focused" or "sustainability-relevant".

At the Sustainability Showcase earlier this year, Provost Jane Long stated that it is important for teaching and learning to prepare students to shape the world they are going to live in.

"Climate change prevention and adaptation will become critical considerations in all professions, if they are not so already."

"Sustainability then must become an integral part of our curriculum but in ways that are meaningful and engaging for students."

"Regenerating a heritage orchard"

Perched at the top of a grassy slope that affords expansive views of the Tamar River, Newnham Hall is an impressive 1822 mansion, the estate of which once included all of what is now the Newnham campus. Currently the headquarters of AMC, the house and its stables complex is registered on the Commonwealth Heritage List.

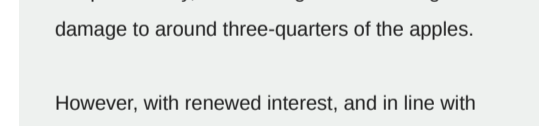
In keeping with the period of its establishment, Newnham Hall originally had a large market garden and orchard. Nothing remains of the former, but amazingly a large portion of the orchard remains, with some trees possibly dating back to the 1800s.

Unfortunately, in recent times the orchard – which consists of about 50 apple, pear and stone fruit trees – has fallen into a state of poor health and low productivity, with coding moths causing damage to around three-quarters of the apples.

However, with renewed interest, and in line with UTAS's overall sustainability strategy, plans are afoot to regenerate the orchard. Community Garden Coordinator Jeff McClintock views the orchard as a key part of the university's **Edible Campus** program. According to Jeff, "Even in its current condition, the orchard is producing the most food – in the form of pears and stone fruit – of any Edible Campus element. With a bit of care, I'm hoping it can produce a whole lot more".

To get the process of regenerating the orchard started, a special project was established through the Sustainability Integration Program for Students (SIPS). Final year Agribusiness undergrad Grace Cooper spent several months observing the orchard as well as researching current best-practice for organic orchard management. This enabled her to then write a management plan which will guide future care of the orchard.

As a first step, Grace recommended that the trees be professionally pruned, something that hadn't happened for many years. A working bee was held in late May and a small but enthusiastic group of volunteers assisted orchardist Kelvin Miller to prune the entire orchard in one day.



Students Emily and Magdal pruning in the heritage orchard.

Next up was filling the gaps in the orchard with different varieties of heritage apples. These were chosen for their eating qualities and marketability as well as their ripening time, with early and late varieties selected to extend the harvesting period from January to June. A bunch of hardy gardeners again braved wintry conditions and planted 20 apple trees in early July, ensuring they will be ready to burst into new growth in spring.

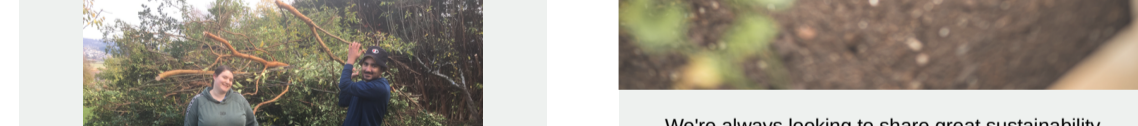
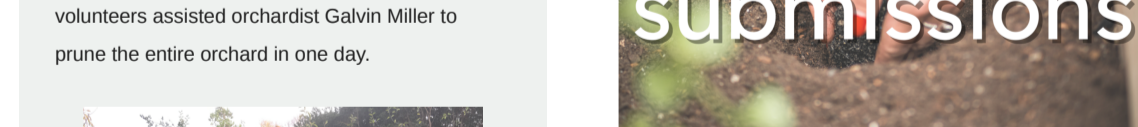
Grace's management plan also calls for compost and mulch to be placed along the lines of fruit trees to suppress weeds, add nutrients to the soil and provide a place to plant beneficial insect attracting flowers. These steps will also allow for the installation of irrigation lines in future and will ensure that any added moisture is retained in the soil.

In terms of organic pest control, Grace is recommending the use of pheromone traps with sticky paper inserts. These attract male coding moths and should go a long way towards disrupting the breeding cycle. Releasing beneficial micro wasps is also being considered, as is the use of a coding moth specific virus, with both measures 100% safe and approved for organic production.

Details aside, the most exciting thing is the opportunity for the orchard to be better cared for and enjoyed by many more people. Now added to UniMaps and given the name 50 Trees Heritage Orchard, this space has the potential to become an oasis for students and staff looking for a place to take a break from their studies or to enjoy their lunch in the shade of an apple tree. With better management, it is hoped that fruit production will increase sufficiently to support a small social enterprise as well as to share with students struggling with food insecurity, something that Grace reckons is "twice cool".

Interact and Engage

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



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Getting smart about waste management on campus

Frequent visitors to Lazerby's on the Sandy Bay campus may have noticed a high-tech addition to the café.

Smart Bins have been installed at the West Park and Sandy Bay with the aim to educate students about waste management on campus.

The systems will be used to communicate information on waste disposal to ensure that the right items are going into the right bins.

"Putting the wrong items into a bin can contaminate the waste stream that forces all of it to go to landfill, thus 'wasting' everyone else's efforts to do the right thing", says Corey Peterson, Chief Sustainability Officer.

Over time, the Smart Bins will also be able to display information about how much waste is being generated at the university – for example, the volume of compost being collected at our campuses in a year.

The pilot bins have a three-screen system, but future Smart Bins on campus will be single-screen to look after the carbon footprint of the system and save energy, says Matt Abbott, Project Manager for the Northern and Southern Transformations and tech expert.

Matt is responsible for overseeing the IT needs of the new southern campus buildings.

We can expect to see Smart Bins in all new buildings across the state in the coming months.

The Smart Bins are just one of a number of tech initiatives on the way to support a data-driven approach to sustainability on campus.

Another project in the works is the Smart Buildings platform, a data collection platform that will be implemented in buildings across the University in order to monitor energy output.

The Field Building in Burnie is currently being used as the pilot for the program.

Building operators contribute to approximately 40% of greenhouse gas emissions across the globe.

The platform will collect data on heating, cooling, water usage, signage, and other infrastructure.

It will also have additional sensors, like people-counters, to fill in data gaps about how our buildings are being used.

"The idea of the building management system, it's all built around IT now, it's got a lot of smart around it, so you can tweak it, you can generate different reports, you can manipulate it. You can look at areas that aren't functioning the way you'd expect and make changes based on that", says Matt.

Data will be collected in real-time, which means that in the future, data from the Smart Buildings platform and the people counter can be used to make decisions about building management on the spot.

For example, if the people counter shows that a room is empty, lights can be switched off and heating or cooling system can be put into standby mode to save energy.

The IT crowd have also made changes to new PC bundles for staff which has resulted in significant energy savings and diverted waste from landfill.

By reducing the standard PC setup from two monitors to one, power consumption has been reduced by 15%.

Cardboard and plastic packaging has been reduced by 60% with the switch, with the new monitors coming in polystyrene-free packaging.

This relatively simple change will prevent an incredible 196 kg of carbon emissions from being released into the atmosphere.

The lifespan of the single-monitor system is also longer than the two-monitor system, lasting six years as opposed to three, which is important for waste management.

"At the end of the day, when they come to end of life, there's way less stuff being thrown out, you've got 50 [monitors] instead of 100 being thrown out".

The IT team are also focused on diverting end-of-life systems from e-waste.

Over 100 PCs were refurbished and donated to the community and those in financial hardship from 2021-2022.

These technological changes will help the University identify data gaps and streamline sustainability management across all areas of operations.

Changes to come include a data management platform for car parks, and an app developed by IT undergraduate students to inform students about waste management.

"A data-driven approach to managing our building sustainability will be key", says Matt.



Brendan Murray recycling some batteries in the new Recycling Wall.

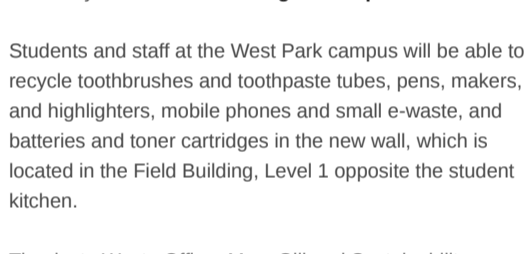
A new Recycling Wall has been installed at the West Park campus!

Recycling Walls allow students and staff to recycle hard-to-recycle items like batteries, small e-waste, and toner cartridges.

Recycling Walls can be found at all our campuses - you can find your closest wall [using this map](#).

Students and staff at the West Park campus will be able to recycle toothbrushes and toothpaste tubes, pens, markers, and highlighters, mobile phones and small e-waste, and batteries and toner cartridges in the new wall, which is located in the Field Building, Level 1 opposite the student kitchen.

Thanks to Waste Officer May Gil and Sustainability Projects Officer Caitly Walker for their work installing the wall!



Join the Climate Café nipaluna sessions to talk about our emotional responses to the climate crisis

What is Climate Café nipaluna? Climate Café nipaluna is a free collaborative space for UTAS students, alumni, and staff to talk about our emotional responses to the climate crisis. The program is a partnership between the Sustainability Integration Program for Students (SIPS) and the social work program. Climate Café nipaluna sessions are held on the Sandy Bay campus every Monday and Wednesday until 27 July. The sessions are co-designed and co-facilitated by a trained social work student on placement as part of their Masters of Social Work (Qualifying) degree.

Climate Cafés are:

- a place to give voice to what you see and feel is happening in the world right now
- a collaborative place to talk about our responses to the climate crisis;
- a place to listen to others who are experiencing climate related emotions;
- a place to connect with others sharing similar journeys.

Climate Cafés are not:

- a place to give voice to what you see and feel is happening in the world right now
- a place for learning about climate science;
- a place for counselling or advice giving;
- a place where you can buy food and drink.

Additional information:

- This is an over 18 event.
- Climate Cafés are held in a venue with disability access and an ambulant toilet.

Please register before you attend to ensure we are practicing COVID safety.

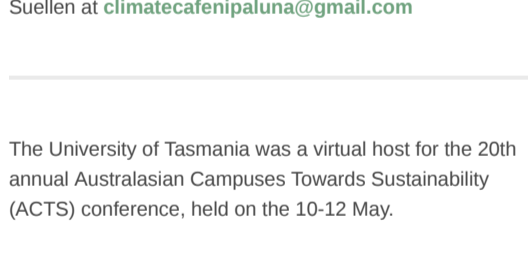
Contact
If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email Suelien at climatac@nipaluna@gmail.com

The University of Tasmania was a virtual host for the 20th Annual Australian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) conference, held on the 10-12 May.

The theme for this year's conference was the Future of Sustainability, and that theme ran strongly throughout the diverse range of presentations from universities across the Asia-Pacific region.

Sustainability at UTAS was all over the conference, with staff and students presenting on topics such as our Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) performance, how to develop a campus sustainability survey, decarbonising campuses, food gardens, applying circular economy principles on campus, and heaps more.

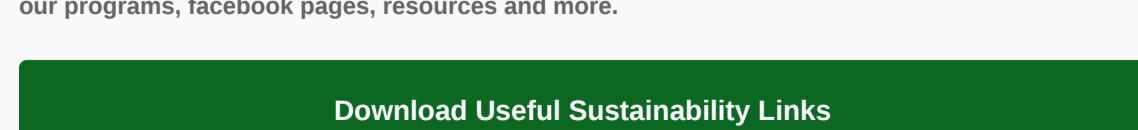
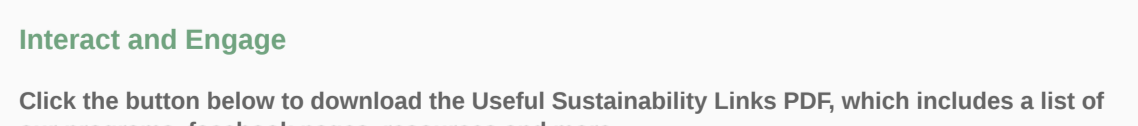
As UTAS is an ACTS member institution, all UTAS staff are able to access the recordings on the **ACTS Member's Portal** - simply register using your utas.edu.au email address.



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: August 23

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