



**GLOBAL
UNIVERSITY
SYSTEMS**

GLOBAL UNIVERSITY SYSTEMS

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2024

05
WHO WE ARE

10
GROUP IMPACT

32
IMPACT THEMES

68
GOVERNANCE

71
WHAT'S NEXT

CONTENTS

GUS IMPACT REPORT

GUS IMPACT REPORT

Introduction

At Global University Systems (GUS), we recognise our responsibility in shaping a more sustainable and equitable future as a global leader in education. This year, we've made significant strides in embedding sustainability across our network of 30 institutions, collectively impacting the lives of over 122,000 students worldwide.

This report highlights our progress and key learnings from 2024, while showcasing notable achievements across our four impact themes: Education, Equality, Environment, and Ethics. For each theme, we've chosen to spotlight three initiatives. These spotlights, although representing just a fraction of the impactful work happening across our global network of institutions, demonstrate our collective dedication to leverage education as a force for good.

This year marked an important evolution in our sustainability journey. We refined our approach to our Group goals, emphasising measurable progress and accountability.

Our partnership with Planet Mark has allowed us to take concrete steps toward achieving carbon neutrality, while our collaboration with SustainIQ is enhancing our ability to track and report on material sustainability metrics across our institutions. By becoming a signatory to the CANIE Accord, we've strengthened our commitment to climate action, aligning with their ambition of a carbon-neutral and climate-literate international education sector by 2030.

As we look ahead, we're excited about new initiatives like our Sustainability101 programme, which will ensure every GUS student has access to foundational sustainability education. We will continue to work towards our Group goals, with a focus on forming partnerships with collective ambitions, and continually tracking and evaluating our progress through measurement and reporting.

While challenges remain, we're inspired by the collective efforts of our institutions, employees and students in creating a brighter, more sustainable world through education.

Thank you for joining us on our impact journey.

Education

We are committed to expanding access to quality education and ensuring all our students gain essential knowledge for sustainable development.

Equality

We are dedicated to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment on our campuses and at all levels of our organisation.

Environment

We strive to reduce our environmental impact and enhance operational sustainability across our institutions.

Ethics

We are continually working to uphold and strengthen our ethical standards through transparency, data security, and responsible governance.

Message from the CEO

As we present our 2024 Sustainability Report, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment to transforming lives and society through education.

This year has showcased the innovation and impactful intentions that define our Group and institutions. As we continue to expand our reach we're educating a new generation of leaders. We have made it our mission to provide each student with the power to transform their careers, lives, and society, by equipping them with the tools for success.

As a leading education group, we can drive meaningful change. Therefore, we take the responsibility to integrate Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices across our network very seriously, bringing everyone together to work towards shared goals. We're aligning our Group and institutions, by teaming up with sustainability leaders to create a powerful force for positive change. What really makes this work? It's the passionate people throughout our organisation. Their enthusiasm and commitment are the real engines behind our sustainability efforts, bringing our mission to life in meaningful ways.

Throughout the Group, we're wholeheartedly dedicated to our core values - whether it's championing sustainability, cutting down our carbon footprints, or celebrating diversity.

In this report, you will read about important initiatives such as University Canada West's groundbreaking six-part series titled: *Understanding Indigenous History: A Path Forward*. It recognises a critical gap in education around the history of First Nations peoples during the settlement of Canada, highlighting a lack of understanding of First Nations history and encouraging meaningful conversation, directly improving education access and contributing to society.

The series brings this meaningful story to the foreground, bridging the past with the present and paving the way for a brighter future. The series, hosted by award-winning journalist Lisa LaFlamme, was so successful that it was named a 2024 MUSE Creative Awards Platinum winner in the Video-Documentary category and a Platinum Award winner in the 2024 Viddy Awards.

Also this year, the University of Europe for Applied Sciences (UE) launched the Pink Bear Project in partnership with British artist Paul Robinson, also known as LUAP, to promote diversity and access to education. This initiative blended art, education, and community involvement, alongside UE offering 17 scholarships worth €250,000 to talented students facing financial challenges.

You will hear about our partnership with Planet Mark to boost our sustainability efforts and lower our carbon footprint, reflecting our goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2040. With Planet Mark's certification, we can now track and share our progress in reducing carbon emissions across the Group, creating a greener future for students, staff, and the community, setting a strong example for the education sector.

In this year's report, we've also taken a moment to showcase some of our strong female leaders from across the Group. You will hear about their fascinating career journeys, where they source their inspiration and how they see impact is woven into leadership every day.

As we look toward the future, we remain resolute in our mission to provide transformative education for all our students, while simultaneously working towards a more sustainable and equitable world. It's thanks to our entire team that we're able to make these commitments and work together towards having a positive impact on society. Together, we will continue to shape the future of education and drive positive change for a more sustainable world.



Aaron Etingen

Executive Chairman and
Chief Executive Officer





CHAPTER 01

WHO WE ARE

01



Who We Are

Transforming Careers, Lives and Society

Global University Systems is an international education group that empowers students to transform their lives through education. We believe education drives careers, lives, and society forward, enabling a brighter and more sustainable future for all.

Our institutions offer the broadest range of industry-relevant skills through inclusive, accessible, and digital-first learning. We champion accessibility and inclusivity and lead the way in providing equal access to a transformative education.

We offer a choice of career-enhancing certificate, degree, and postgraduate-level qualifications, equipping our thriving multinational community of students for lifelong success. Our world-leading network and state-of-the-art institutions power the upskilling of our students. At the core of our success is our unwavering dedication to providing accessible, high-quality education to students worldwide.

Our Story

Global University Systems' journey started when Aaron Etingen, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, founded the London School of Business and Finance in 2003 with just four students. Aaron's vision was to create a student-centric, groundbreaking educational ecosystem.

Since the start, the group has worked hard to keep the focus on delivering an excellent learning experience and career success for every student across our institutions. Over the years, we have developed, acquired, and partnered with a diverse portfolio of state-of-the-art institutions worldwide.

We offer students meaningful experiences, empowering them to transform their lives and wider society, while aiming to positively impact the communities that are home to our institutions.



20m+
Unique subscribers



122k
Students



30
Institutions



11k+
Employees



130+
Academic partners



5k+
Recruitment partners

Our Institutions

				
 <p>The Language Gallery</p>		 <p>SABA UNIVERSITY School of Medicine</p>		
	 <p>MEDICAL UNIVERSITY of the AMERICAS</p>			
			<p>*</p> 	
 <p>ST. MATTHEW'S UNIVERSITY</p>	<p>*</p> 			
				

*Academic partners

What We Stand For

Our purpose is to create a brighter, more sustainable world through education.

As educators, we recognise the significant influence we have in shaping the future: the students who pass through our institutions' doors are the leaders, innovators, and change-makers of tomorrow and are shaped by the education they receive today. By incorporating sustainability into our practices, we aim to inspire and empower them to address global environmental and social challenges, as they embark on their careers.

Our mission is to equip tomorrow's students with the tools for success, transforming careers, lives, and society.

Our mission goes well beyond preparing students for their careers; we are preparing them to create a better world. We take pride in equipping them with the skills and knowledge that will not only support their future careers but also enable them to make a positive impact on society. We believe that education is the starting point for change, with its effects resonating far beyond the classroom, shaping a brighter future for all.



Education is the cornerstone of progress and plays a crucial role in shaping future generations. At Global University Systems, our goal has always been to make a meaningful impact on education and to be a positive influence across the sector. Over the years, we've been fortunate to touch the lives of many students and build a reputation for excellence and transformation."

AARON ETINGEN

Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer



Students at The University of Law's Leeds campus



Our Corporate Values

Serving as our compass, our five corporate brand values - Dynamic, Expert, Pioneering, Impactful, and Transformative - guide us to stay at the forefront of educational innovation while making a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and communities.



London School of Business and Finance Graduation at St Andrew's Church, Holborn

London School of Business & Finance



PIONEERING

We lead the way in educational advancements, exploring new methodologies and technologies to enhance learning experiences and set benchmarks for others in the higher education sector.

EXPERT

Our commitment to academic excellence is reflected in our highly qualified faculty and demanding programmes, ensuring that students receive top-tier education and guidance from industry leaders.

TRANSFORMATIVE

Our institutions' programmes are designed to inspire personal and professional growth, equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate and thrive in an ever-changing world.

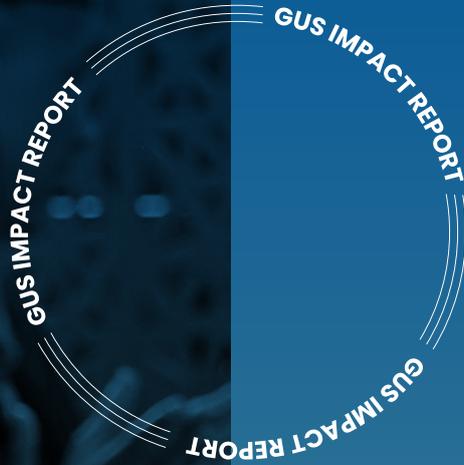
DYNAMIC

We embrace change and adaptability, encouraging innovation so that we can respond to the evolving needs of students and the global education landscape.

IMPACTFUL

We strive to make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and communities, empowering individuals through education and championing positive societal change.





CHAPTER 02

GROUP IMPACT

02

Message from the CIO

As Chief Impact Officer, I am proud to share our 2024 Sustainability Report, which outlines our Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives across the Group. This report underscores our commitment to building a sustainable future for our students, communities, and the planet. Our long-term programme focuses on ensuring that we grow, learn and evolve our approach to sustainability.

Throughout the report, you will see how our commitment to sustainable practices is woven into the fabric of the Group. We've set out to coordinate our sustainability efforts and understand benchmarks across our institutions, regardless of where they are in their sustainability journey. We are continuously developing our targets as we gain new insights. Sustainability is central to our mission, especially in how we educate others. At its core, education is a crucial part of creating a sustainable future.

We are intensifying our efforts to integrate ESG principles throughout our operations. We recognise that education meets sustainability at a critical juncture, placing us in a powerful position to effect change. Our initiatives span environmental, social impact, and ethical governance, reflecting our dedication to building a better future for our students, staff, and communities.

This year there's lots to reflect on.

We became a Signatory to the CANIE Accord – a public pledge to climate action developed in consultation with leaders from international education bodies, associations, and networks. By joining the CANIE Accord, the Group is bolstering and accelerating the sector's collective response to the climate crisis.

Earlier this year, I had the pleasure of speaking on a panel at the World Economic Forum at Davos 2024, on 'The Human Cost of Conflict'. I spoke about the impact of armed conflicts on females and how global conflicts erode the rule of law, democratic values, and gender equality.

We discussed the impact of conflict on women's and girls' education due to challenges including increased risk of gender-based violence, societal expectations limiting mobility, and a lack of facilities that address their unique needs, impeding their educational pursuits.

In this report you will discover how we are taking a stand against gender inequality through various initiatives such as Pearl Academy's Tihar Jail programme where a fashion laboratory was established within the jail, offering women inmates courses in pattern making and garment construction. It was designed to promote economic and social empowerment and give inmates a feeling of self-worth, helping them to rehabilitate back into society and reduce the chance of returning to crime once released. Through this initiative, over 300 women have gained marketable skills.

You will also find out about how The University of Law launched a Scholarship, in partnership with world-renowned human rights lawyer Amal Clooney and the Clooney Foundation for Justice. This initiative offers a fully funded postgraduate opportunity and four runner-up awards for those dedicated to championing human rights and global change.

As we continue on our sustainability journey, from reducing our carbon footprint to enhancing educational access and promoting diversity and inclusion, we are integrating sustainability principles into every aspect of our operations and educational offerings.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our colleagues, partners, and students for their unwavering commitment to positive change. Your passion drives us to set new benchmarks and redefine excellence. This report reflects our journey, acknowledging our progress while identifying the path ahead. Together, we strive for an equitable, sustainable future, sculpting a legacy of impact that will resonate for generations.



Yuliya Zinggen

Chief Impact Officer

Our Progress & Learnings

Our work is guided by 20 sustainability goals across our four impact pillars: Education, Equality, Environment and Ethics.

Our sustainability taskforce, made up of one representative from each institution, remains central to fostering collaboration and shared learning across our institutions while we collectively work towards achieving these.

Measurement & Reporting

The first step in achieving our group goals is understanding our baseline. To this end, we've partnered with SustainIQ and Planet Mark.

sustainIQ

SustainIQ's platform allows us to collect data on all our material sustainability issues across our institutions. We've been working closely with our Sustainability Taskforce to adopt SustainIQ and input key metrics into the platform. As more of our institutions start using the platform, we will be able to centrally track progress towards our group goals, which we can then use to inform our strategy and report progress to our key stakeholders through our annual Sustainability and SASB reports.

Our 30 institutions are spread across three continents, each at different stages of their sustainability journey and with varying in-house capabilities. As such, some institutions already have established processes for data tracking and reporting, while others are starting from scratch. This range of experiences has led us to adopt a thoughtful, tailored approach to onboarding our institutions and gathering consistent data.

This year we've launched new measurement and reporting initiatives, provided roadmaps to help guide our institutions towards achieving our goals, formed strategic partnerships and strengthened our corporate mission.

While we've achieved significant milestones, this path is one of continuous growth and learning. Each step forward brings valuable insights, reminding us that meaningful change often comes with challenges to navigate. We remain committed to our goals, learning and adapting as we continue to move forward our sustainability efforts.

Our method is deliberate and adaptive, allowing us to learn from each institution's unique context.

While this approach may take more time, it ensures we're building a robust, inclusive framework that respects and leverages the diversity within our network. We're steadily advancing, refining our methods, and fostering knowledge sharing across our institutions.

The variety across our network isn't just a feature to navigate - it's a strength we're actively harnessing. This diversity offers rich opportunities for collaborative problem-solving and innovation as we work towards our shared sustainability goals. By embracing these differences, we're creating a more resilient and comprehensive approach to sustainability that benefits from the collective wisdom of our global community.





We are working with Planet Mark to measure our carbon footprint and identify effective reduction strategies. Arden University and The University of Law are both Planet Mark certified, and we are encouraging and supporting our other institutions to follow suit.

Sustainability Reporting

This report presents our annual sustainability update, and we are currently preparing our second SASB report, set for publication in Q1 2025. We are working with our institutions to help measure and report our material SASB metrics through SustainIQ, setting up processes for ongoing reporting and improvement.



GUS Impact Branding

Mission and Values

We've updated our mission and corporate values to better reflect who we are as a Group. This refresh goes beyond words on paper; it's a recommitment to our core purpose and a roadmap for our future. By redefining these fundamental aspects of our identity, we're aligning our organisation around a shared vision of educational excellence and global impact.

Our new purpose and mission statements emphasise our commitment to sustainable, transformative education that extends beyond individual careers to positively influence society at large. The updated values - dynamic, expert, pioneering, impactful, and transformative - serve as guiding principles, shaping our decision-making processes and driving our approach to education.

Events

Hosting and participating in events plays a crucial role in both learning about impact, as well as sharing the work we are doing with a wider audience. We closed last year with our CIO, Yuliya Etingen, speaking at the United Nations General Assembly on 'Education for Sustainable Development - Closing the Digital Divide'.

In January, Yuliya attended the World Economic Forum in Davos, participating in a panel discussion on the 'Human Cost of Conflict'. Yuliya focused mainly on the impact of conflict on women's and girls' education, as well as highlighting the importance of partnerships between businesses, governments, and NGOs for coordinated responses to conflicts.

Partnerships

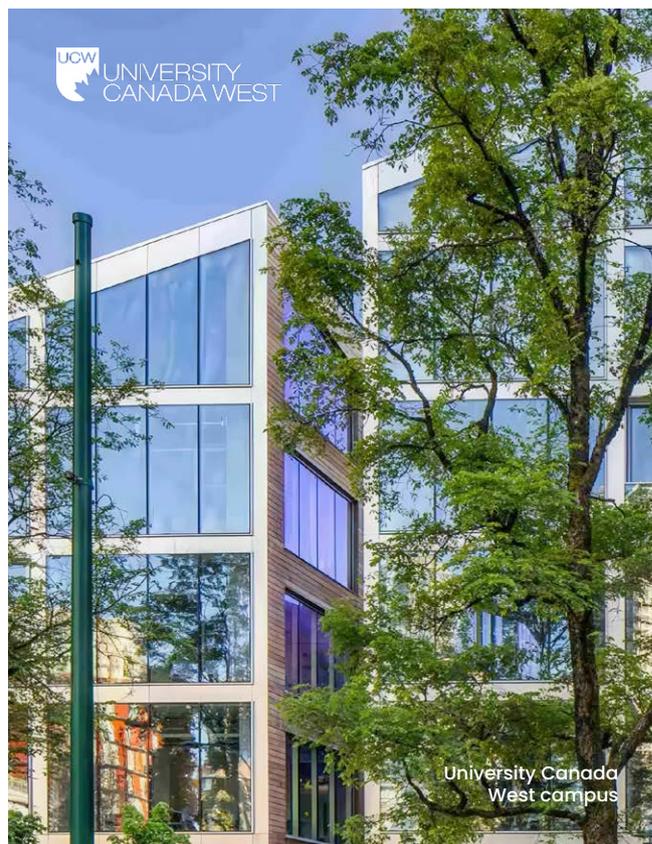
We have become signatories to the Climate Action National & International Education (CANIE) Accord, a sustainability declaration that commits higher education institutions to driving positive climate action. As a CANIE Accord member, we've made public commitments across climate leadership, emissions reduction, and embedding environmental awareness into campus operations and curricula. The London School of Business and Finance (LSBF) has already joined us as a signatory, and we are actively encouraging our other institutions to join too.

The partnership between our online learning platform FutureLearn and UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, announced in late 2023, is currently giving a large number of students in lifelong learning cities around the globe access to free climate change and sustainability courses.

We're actively exploring similar partnerships for 2025 and beyond that will enable us to provide further access to education, as well as support us in achieving our Group goals.

Sustainable Practices

In collaboration with Pollen Advisory, we have developed roadmaps for our institutions to work towards each of our Group goals. These roadmaps include detailed action plans with specific initiatives, responsible parties, and timelines, as well as resources to guide our institutions on their individual sustainability journeys.



Purpose and Profit

At GUS, we believe impact should be integrated into our corporate objectives, while maintaining our core focus on creating positive change through education. The 2024 National Student Survey results demonstrate our commitment to putting students first: our institutions achieved higher student satisfaction scores across all categories, with The University of Law placing first in the National Student Survey twice in the last five years for teaching quality and Arden University ranking in the top 16 overall. Additionally, UPES achieved 8th place among Indian universities in the 2024 Times Higher Education (THE) rankings. We take great pride in our institutions for their unwavering focus on students and are grateful to our students and alumni for this recognition.

We are proud of the progress we have made and are excited about the opportunities that lie ahead, as we remain committed to transparency, continuous improvement, and making a positive impact through education.

Our Group Goals

As we continue to evolve the approach to our group-wide objectives, we've taken steps in achieving the goals we set for 2024, as well as refining our goals for 2025 and beyond.

This year, we've exceeded our targets in policy development. Building on this success, our policy focus is now shifting to continuous management and annual evaluation of group policies to ensure they remain current, applicable, and effectively enforced across our organisation. You can find more information on our policy developments on p61, 'Implementing Group-Wide Sustainability Policies'.

We have also spent time reviewing our group goals for 2025 and beyond. Operating across 30 institutions worldwide gives us unique insights into how sustainability initiatives can be most impactful in different contexts. We've used these insights to strengthen our goals, ensuring they serve both our global ambitions and local needs.

The refinements we've made fall into several categories. Some goals now include more robust measurement ambitions, allowing us to track progress with greater precision. Others have been adapted to better reflect the diverse cultural and operational contexts of our global network. Throughout this process, our focus has remained on maintaining the ambition of our original commitments while providing clear, actionable pathways to achievement.

Our goals continue to span four key themes - Education, Equality, Environment, and Ethics - with timelines ranging from annual commitments to long-term targets extending to 2040. Together, they form a comprehensive roadmap for our sustainability journey, guiding us as we work to create positive change through education.

As this is an ongoing process, our approach will continue to evolve as we gain insights and experience and as we adapt to the evolving global sustainability landscape.

The following list details our redefined group goals. For a more detailed report on the status and rewording of our goals, please refer to 'Our Group Goals: Status & Amendments' in the Appendix.



Toronto School of Management

Digital Business Management class on campus at the Toronto School of Management

Goal	Theme	Year*
Number of students who benefit from scholarships increased from baseline every year.	Education	Annual
A minimum of 10 philanthropic donations from GUS Group every year around the globe.	Ethics	Annual
Implement an institution-wide system to track volunteer service hours dedicated to local communities across all GUS institutions. Once established, increase the total number of tracked community service hours every year across all GUS institutions.	Ethics	Annual
Publish an annual sustainability report.	Ethics	Annual
Continuous management and annual evaluation of Group policies and statements to ensure they remain current, applicable, and effectively enforced across our organisation.	Ethics	Annual
Continue group-wide data breach strategy to safeguard data and minimise potential impacts.	Ethics	Annual
Implement an institution-wide process to measure and report gender and ethnicity metrics for all GUS Group and institution employees by 2026.	Equality	2026
Educate all institutions on existing GUS Group environmental risk identification, mitigation, monitoring & reporting processes by 2025.	Ethics	2025
Eliminate single-use plastics across all campuses by 2025.	Education	2025

Goal	Theme	Year*
Ensure at least 80% of all education facilities at GUS institutions are disability, gender and religion-sensitive and provide safe and inclusive learning environments by 2026.	Equality	2026
Provide access to affordable health and well-being services at 80% of GUS campuses by 2026.	Ethics	2026
All institutions to measure and track Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions by 2026.	Environment	2026
All students enrolled in GUS institutions will have access to education on knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development by 2026.	Education	2026
Implement processes to track eNPS, or other similar measures, across all institutions, achieving greater than 50 for all those that measure by 2027.	Ethics	2027
Retrofit existing buildings to increase energy efficiency and achieve LEED or BREEAM certification for all new constructions and major renovations on GUS institution campuses by 2030.	Environment	2030
Decrease amount of waste going to landfill by 50% across all GUS institutions by 2030.	Environment	2030
Achieve gender and ethnic balance across all boards, senior leadership positions and senior academic roles across GUS Group and institutions that reflect local demographic and cultural context by 2030.	Equality	2030
Implement systems to track and assure we achieve and maintain pay equity across all employee levels, ensuring equal compensation for equal work while accounting for local market conditions and legal requirements by 2030.	Equality	20230
Ensure that all GUS institutions achieve and maintain Fair Trade certification, prioritising Fair Trade products across all applicable categories while implementing comprehensive ethical standards for all procurement by 2040.	Ethics	2040
Achieve carbon neutrality across the GUS Group and all institutions by 2040.	Environment	2040

*The goals listed are aimed to be achieved by the end of the stated year.

Our Impact in Numbers

We are currently in the process of onboarding our institutions onto our sustainability reporting platform, SustainIQ.

With the global nature of our organisation, we are embracing a flexible approach that allows each institution to progress on its sustainability journey in a way that best suits its unique context and capabilities.

This year, we are proud to showcase sustainability data from several of our institutions that are leading the way in measurement and reporting. Their success stories provide valuable insights and inspiration for our wider network.

The following metrics highlight both our group-wide impact and individual institutional achievements. They tell a story of progress across our key focus areas: from environmental stewardship and social responsibility to educational access and operational excellence. These numbers represent not just our current impact but also establish baselines for future growth and improvement.



The Music Box, London College of Contemporary Music's campus

Our Impact in Numbers

GUS Group

Gender diversity among staff

Female

53%



Male

47%



Eliminated single - use plastics from GUS Corporate Offices, London

132,000L
waste per year
diverted from landfill



15,000+
courses offered
across all GUS brands



Total measured carbon emissions for 2023 = 466.3 tCO₂e

 **Scope 1 = 26.6tCO₂e**

 **Scope 2 = 15.1tCO₂e**

 **Scope 3 = 424.6tCO₂e**

Partnerships with external organisations for sustainability research and innovation



United Nations



Our Impact in Numbers

Our Institutions*

153

scholarships in 2024

All institutions



All campuses have eliminated single-use plastics

LSBF Singapore, LSBF UK, UPES



0

claims submitted as a result of legal proceedings associated with advertising, marketing or miscommunication

FutureLearn, LSBF Singapore, LSBF UK, UPES



All retrofitted a proportion of buildings to increase energy efficiency

FutureLearn, LSBF UK, UPES



0

incidents of violence, harassment (physical, verbal, online) were reported

FutureLearn, LSBF Singapore, LSBF UK



No data breaches occurred this reporting year

FutureLearn, LSBF Singapore, LSBF UK, UPES



Inclusivity score 8/10, effective learning environments score 9/10.

LSBF UK



100%

of students have access to education on knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development

FutureLearn, LSBF Singapore, UPES, Pearl Academy



All new buildings built within a year to date are LEED or BREEAM certified

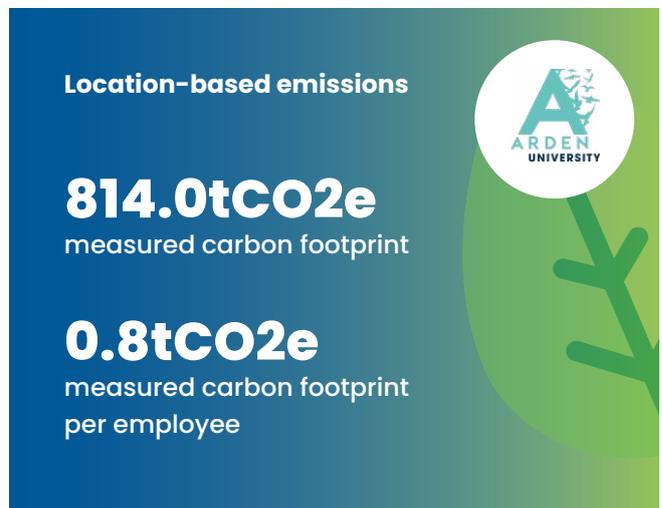
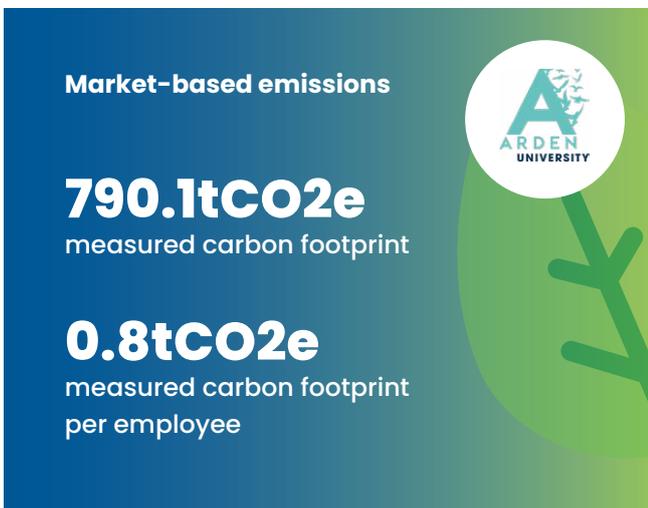
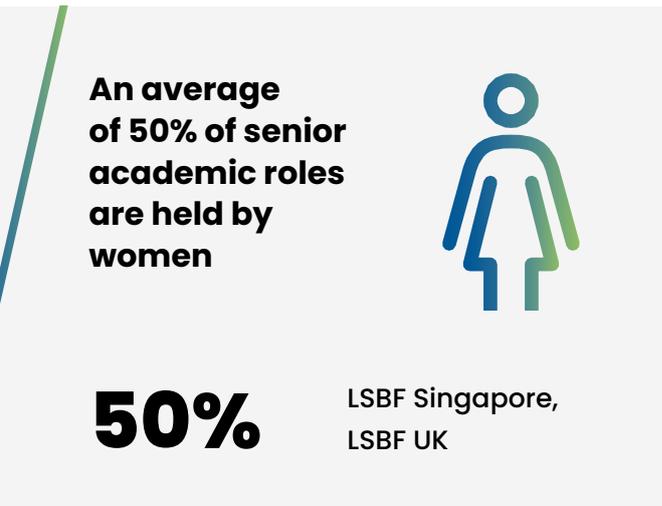
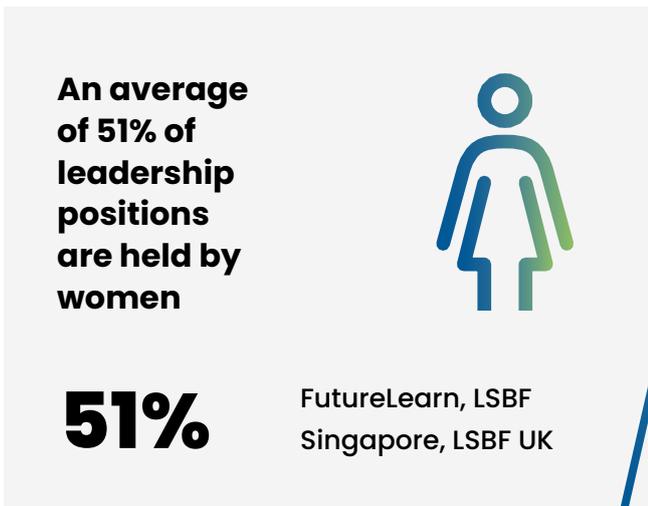
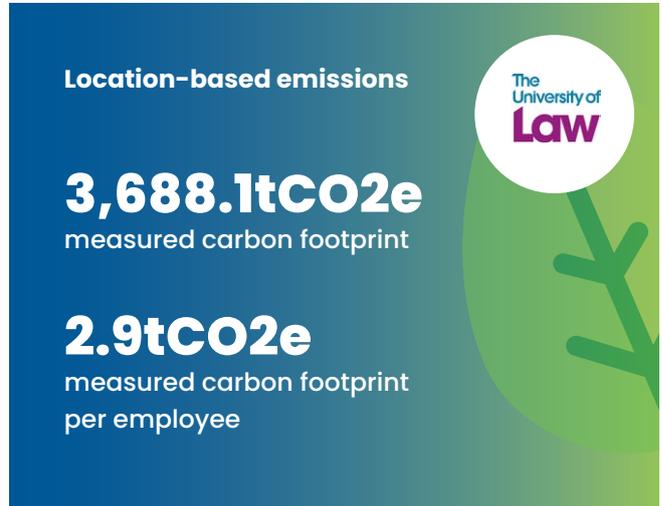
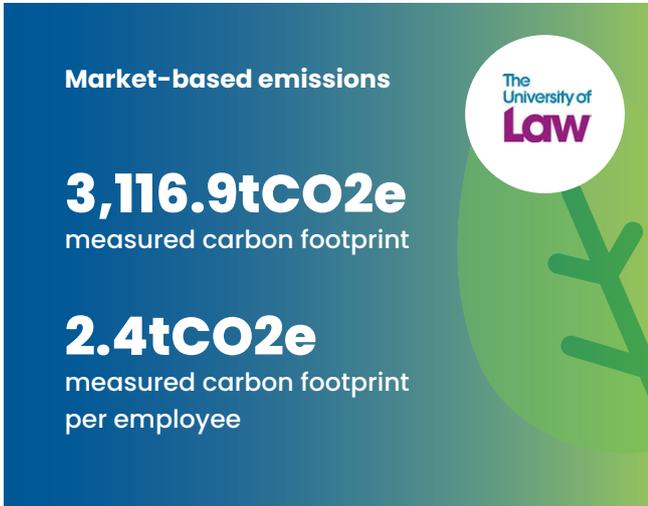
LSBF UK



*Data collected by SustainIQ from LSBF UK, LSBF Singapore, UPES, FutureLearn and Pearl Academy

Our Impact in Numbers

Our Institutions*



*Data collected by SustainIQ from LSBF UK, LSBF Singapore, UPES, FutureLearn and Pearl Academy

Prioritising Five Sustainable Development Goals with Education at the Core



The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) are a universal call to action adopted by United Nations member states at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in 2012.

The SDGs aim to address global challenges such as poverty, inequality, climate change, and education. Comprising 17 interconnected goals, they provide a framework for countries, organisations, and communities to work towards a more sustainable and equitable future for all by 2030.



We recognise that education is not confined to classrooms; it extends into every aspect of our lives. Our commitment to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles is seamlessly woven into the fabric of our global organisation and our institutions. From scholarship programmes to sustainable campus initiatives, we are focused on making a positive impact on our community and the world around us."

**YULIYA
ETINGEN**

Chief Impact Officer

This year we have sharpened our focus, narrowing down to concentrate on five key SDGs, in the belief that our capacity for impact is much greater when we can concentrate our efforts.

These SDGs have been selected because they most strongly align with our four impact themes: Education, Environment, Equality and Ethics.

As a global group of university institutions, education will always remain our cornerstone, and best opportunity for impacting change for society at large.

SDG 4: Quality Education

Empowering students with the knowledge and skills to shape a better future through quality education.

As educators, our greatest impact is through the learnings our institutions provide. We're proud that our institutions give students the knowledge, skills, and outlook they need to succeed in their daily lives, make a positive impact in their communities, and shape their own futures. Education is the starting point for improvement – we can't tackle tomorrow's problems without the understanding and tools we learn today.



SDG 4 in Action

At the core of our success is our unwavering dedication to providing accessible, high-quality education to students worldwide.

GUS continues to expand its reach, now serving over 122,000 students globally, offering a diverse range of programmes tailored to meet the evolving needs of the global workforce.

[Read more on p6.](#)

SDG 13: Climate Action

Enabling students to drive positive climate action through learning, research, and on-campus initiatives.

By providing climate-related education and research facilities, our institutions enable students to both learn about climate action and contribute to developing solutions. By taking steps to improve our environmental impact, both at the group level and on campus, we are raising awareness and giving our students the opportunity to make conscious choices in their daily lives. We hope that when students leave our institutions, they take this knowledge with them, creating a ripple effect of positive environmental change that goes far beyond our campuses.



SDG 13 in Action

Sustainability and responsible management is at the heart of Gisma University of Applied Sciences' curriculum.

Gisma aims to empower students to drive economic success while also positively impacting society and the environment, alongside a focus on eco-friendly practices across their campuses.

[Read more on p54.](#)

SDG 5 & 10: Gender Equality & Reduced Inequalities

Reducing inequalities by championing equal access to education and empowering underrepresented groups.

We are committed to giving students and faculty equal access to education and opportunities, no matter their background. We aim to reflect the diverse cultures within our institutions in our leadership teams, by collectively working towards our group goals surrounding the representation of ethnic minorities and women in leadership and board positions.



SDG 5 & 10 in Action

We are always looking for new ways to open doors to higher education.

This includes our scholarship programmes, such as our partnership with the Amal Clooney Foundation, as well as dedicated initiatives like FutureLearn's 'Women in Afghanistan'.

**Read more
on p47 & p38.**

SDG 8: Decent Work & Economic Growth

Equipping students to advance sustainable economic progress and championing decent work for all.

We believe that education, innovation, and employability are catalysts for positive change. We equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in the workforce and contribute to inclusive, sustainable economic growth. Our commitment to excellence in education is mirrored by the remarkable achievements of our students across our institutions. We also promote fair employment, professional development, and sustainable job creation, supporting our mission to transform careers, lives and society.



SDG 8 in Action

Pearl Academy's programme at Tihar Jail teaches fashion skills to female inmates, empowering over 300 women since 2017.

The programme was designed to promote economic and social empowerment and give inmates a feeling of self-worth, helping them to rehabilitate back into society and reduce the chance of returning to crime after being released.

**Read more
on p37.**

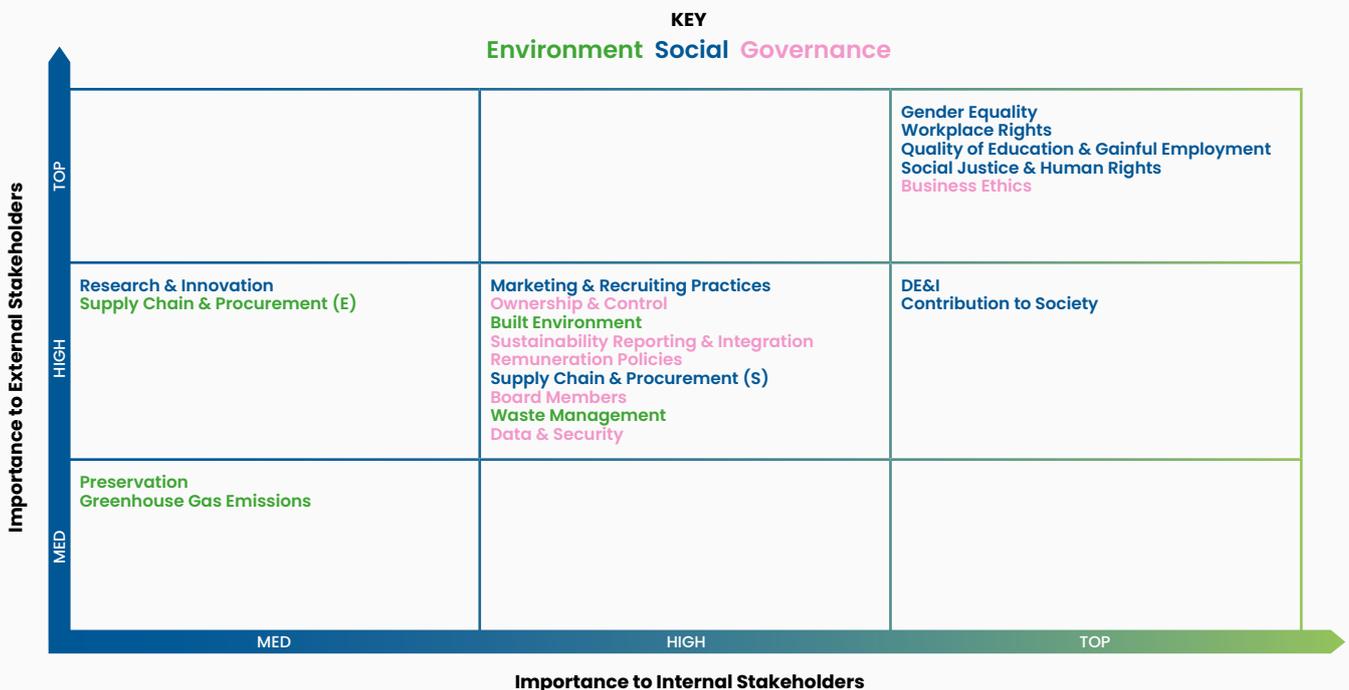
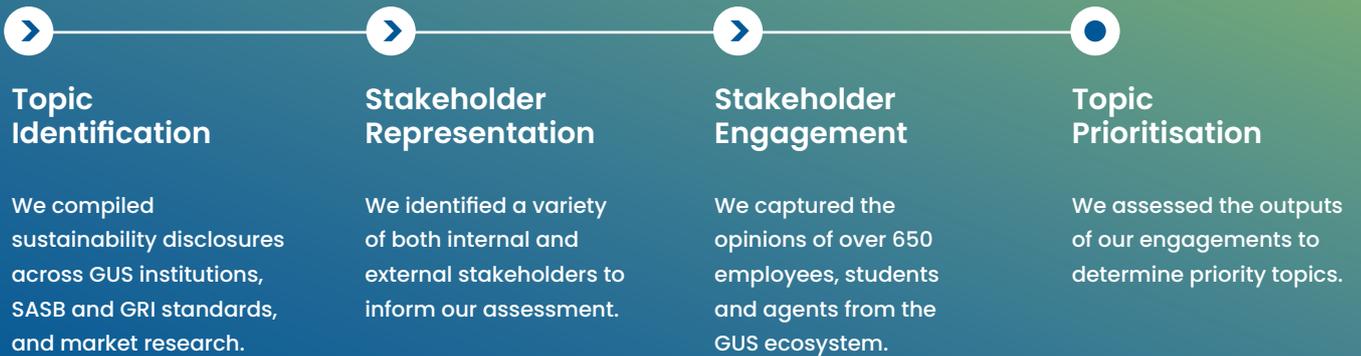


Double Materiality Assessment

The double materiality assessment has been the springboard for our sustainability strategy, as outlined in last year's report.

This assessment continues to guide our ongoing efforts to ensure our strategy remains aligned with the needs and priorities of the people and communities we serve. We plan to update our double materiality assessment every three years to ensure our strategy remains relevant and responsive to changing circumstances.

Double Materiality Assessment Process



SASB Report

We continue to report in alignment with the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) standards, using the education sector standard (SV-ED) as it best represents our business.

We have worked with SustainIQ to design and deploy a survey collecting information on all required SASB metrics from our institutions, which we will use to compile the report. Our institutions are advancing their measurement and reporting capabilities at different rates, reflecting the unique context of each organisation. By providing tailored support and building on existing strengths, we're steadily enhancing the depth and quality of our data collection across our network, allowing us to continuously improve the transparency and comprehensiveness of our group-wide reporting.

Our SASB report is made up of:

Disclosure topics

Industry-specific disclosure topics that constitute material information, specifically data security, quality of education, gainful employment, and marketing and recruiting practices.

Accounting metrics

Quantitative and/or qualitative accounting metrics used to measure corporate performance.

Activity metrics

Metrics quantifying the scale of each institution, used in conjunction with the accounting metrics to normalise data and enable industry comparison.

We plan to publish our report, ensuring SASB Standards compliance, in Q1 of 2025.



**SASB
STANDARDS**

Now part of IFRS Foundation

Our Sustainability Taskforce

The GUS Sustainability Taskforce remains a key force in advancing our sustainability agenda.

Made up of representatives from each of our institutions, this dynamic group puts into practice our belief that sustainability is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, it's a flexible, adaptable journey that respects the unique opportunities and challenges faced by each institution.

Our Taskforce members' responsibilities are twofold: bringing forward the voice of their institutions to help shape GUS' global sustainability strategy and helping to implement sustainability initiatives on the ground.

The global reach of our taskforce enriches our meetings with diverse perspectives and expertise. To maximise this advantage and ensure all members can fully participate, we're introducing an additional meeting each quarter, to ensure we are covering all time zones.

We recognise that institutions of different sizes and at various points in their journeys will have varying capacities towards sustainability initiatives. Our taskforce members show great commitment, with some balancing these responsibilities alongside roles in other complimentary areas, while others have more dedicated time to enhance our collective efforts. We are refining our communication by moving from monthly to quarterly email updates, aligned with our meetings. This streamlined approach provides focused, actionable information, keeping our members informed without overcommunicating.

As we move forward, we're committed to keeping an inclusive and engaged community that caters to both sustainability newcomers and seasoned practitioners.

To get a firsthand perspective on the taskforce's impact and challenges, we spoke with two members about their experiences and insights.



The University of Law's Nottingham campus

Prof Rahu Nainwal

Director, School of Business; Head of RISE Centre,
UPES (Research on Impact, Sustainability and ESG)

Professor Rahul Nainwal is a distinguished entrepreneur and design thinker. He holds a Bachelor of Technology degree from NIT Rourkela and an MBA from IRMA. His commitment to innovation and social impact is evident through his additional qualifications, including a Postgraduate Diploma in Design Thinking from THNK School of Creative Leadership, an Executive Programme on Strategic Management from Harvard Business School, and a programme in International Relations and Public Policy from Oxford University.

In conversation with our Sustainability Taskforce members

Q: What do you find inspiring about being part of the GUS Sustainability Taskforce?

Being part of the GUS Sustainability Taskforce is truly inspiring. It brings together individuals who are genuinely committed to driving positive change in our communities and beyond. This committee provides a collaborative space where we can exchange innovative ideas, challenge the status quo, and work towards making a tangible impact in the real world.

Q: What sustainability initiative at your institution are you most proud of?

At UPES, sustainability is a central focus and we are committed to implementing several initiatives to drive progress. Recently, we launched the RISE Centre, which focuses on research related to impact, sustainability, and ESG criteria. This centre serves as a hub for innovation and collaboration, fostering new ideas and strategies that support our commitment to a sustainable future. We are also integrating sustainability into all aspects of our curriculum to ensure that young people are not only informed but also empowered to take meaningful action.



I appreciate the taskforce's diverse perspectives and strong commitment to our goals. The collaborative environment fosters open communication, which is vital for sharing ideas."

Q: As a representative for sustainability at your institution, what are the biggest challenges you are facing?

One of my main challenges is scaling our initiatives effectively. We need to analyse which initiatives can grow and explore potential partnerships to enhance our efforts. Another key challenge is improving how we measure and report our sustainability work. We should develop a consistent measurement system with clear metrics aligned with our goals, allowing us to collect and analyse data more efficiently. Finally, we must enhance our communication about sustainability efforts to engage a broader audience, including employees, customers, and investors. By being transparent about our successes and challenges, we can build trust and promote shared responsibility for our sustainability goals.

Dr Shahnaz Hamid

Dean, London School of Business and Finance

Dr Shahnaz Hamid holds a doctorate in business administration (DBA, HRM, and Strategic Management) from the SMC University in Switzerland, a master's in business administration (MBA), and a bachelor's degree in commerce. She also holds the status of a Fellow with the Higher Education Academy (FHEA). As the head of academics, she works to ensure the quality of the content and instruction across all programmes.

In conversation with our Sustainability Taskforce members

Q: What motivates and excites you about working at the intersection of education and sustainability?

Working at the intersection of education and sustainability excites me because it empowers future leaders to shape a more responsible and resilient world. Education is key to driving innovation, and when paired with sustainability, it equips students to not only succeed in business but to do so in a way that contributes positively to society and the environment.

Q: What do you find inspiring about being part of the GUS Sustainability Taskforce?

It allows collaboration amongst passionate leaders across various GUS institutions, who are all committed to driving meaningful change. Being a part of the Taskforce provides a unique platform to influence institutional policies and curriculum development at the London School of Business and Finance. It's inspiring to see the tangible steps we are taking to empower students and educators alike to lead with purpose and contribute to a more sustainable future.

Q: What sustainability initiative at your institution are you most proud of?

I'm thrilled to announce the upcoming launch of our MBA in Sustainable Innovation, which will prepare the next generation of business leaders to drive meaningful change. This programme focuses on equipping students with the skills to develop innovative solutions that tackle the world's pressing environmental challenges, blending academic rigour with practical approaches to sustainability.

Q: How do you motivate your colleagues to engage with sustainability-driven initiatives?

Firstly, we lead by example, by actively participating in our sustainability initiatives, but crucially, we make sure we talk about it - so that we can share our experiences and encourage others to get involved. Another key thing we do is foster a sense of community around sustainability through interest groups or committees. We encourage collaboration and networking among colleagues who share an interest in sustainability, a recent example would be at our LSBF Symposium on the 10th of October 2024, where we covered sustainability in depth.



It's incredibly motivating to be a part of a global initiative that has the potential to shape sustainable practices in education and business, creating a lasting impact on future generations and the world at large."



Philanthropic Impact Goal

Alongside our core sustainability strategy, we have committed to make a minimum of 10 philanthropic donations each year, in aid of supporting positive social change beyond education.

In the past year, we've significantly exceeded this target by donating to over 30 causes, ranging from small local charities and community projects to major international organisations. Where possible, we support employee-nominated causes, as well as personal passion projects of our staff members.

This approach creates impact on multiple levels. By supporting a variety of causes, we address a broad spectrum of societal needs while maintaining the flexibility to respond to both immediate community needs and longer-term causes. Our donations span from local community projects to international initiatives, enabling us to help at both a local and global level.

By encouraging employees to nominate causes and supporting their personal passion projects, we hope to create a more meaningful connection between our philanthropic efforts and our people, alongside strengthening relationships with the communities where we operate.

These donations take many forms, from supporting local sporting facilities for young children to helping young mothers in central Africa and providing funding for disadvantaged families in crisis. Each donation, whether large or small, contributes to our aim of supporting a variety of organisations that are dedicated to helping those who need support.



Fleming College Toronto students participating at a food bank

ESG & Sustainability Awards 2024

We are honoured to have been recognised at the 2024 ESG & Sustainability Awards, an initiative that celebrates outstanding Environmental, Social, and Governance performance aligned with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

These awards provide a valuable platform for organisations to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and share best practices with peers across industries.

Our initiatives received recognition across three categories:

GOLD WINNER: BEST ESG CAMPAIGN TO REDUCE INEQUALITY



FutureLearn's 'Higher Education in Afghanistan' initiative earned the highest recognition in this category. This programme, which provides free access to over 1,700 courses from leading British universities for Afghan women affected by the ban on women's higher education, demonstrates our commitment to educational equality. With 33,000 course enrollments and 14,000 new learners, this initiative exemplifies how digital innovation can break down barriers to education in challenging circumstances.

FINALIST: BEST ESG CAMPAIGN TO IMPROVE EDUCATION OR ACCESS TO EDUCATION



We received two finalist nominations in this category. The University of Europe for Applied Sciences' 'Pink Bear' project showcased how art can be leveraged to promote diversity and access to education, offering €250,000 in scholarships to talented students. Additionally, University Canada West's 'Understanding Indigenous History: A Path Forward' six-part series, hosted by Lisa LaFlamme, represents our commitment to addressing critical gaps in educational content and promoting reconciliation through education.

FINALIST: ESG REPORT OF THE YEAR



Our 2023 GUS Impact Report was recognised as a finalist, reflecting our dedication to transparent and comprehensive sustainability reporting. This acknowledgement validates our efforts to clearly communicate our sustainability journey and impact to stakeholders.

These recognitions provide valuable benchmarking opportunities and encourage us to push boundaries in our sustainability initiatives. As we look ahead, we will continue to strengthen our programmes and aim for further recognition, while staying focused on our core mission of creating lasting positive impact through education.



CHAPTER 03

IMPACT THEMES

03





IMPACT THEME 01

EDUCATION

Education is the core of our business and our purpose, and the driving force behind every initiative we undertake

Overview

At Global University Systems, education is the cornerstone of our mission to create positive change in the world. The initiatives across our group reflect our collective commitment to making quality education accessible, inclusive, and transformative.

In 2024, our institutions have focused on expanding educational opportunities across diverse communities and addressing critical societal issues.

From FutureLearn empowering women in Afghanistan, to Pearl Academy supporting the rehabilitation of inmates in India, and University Canada West fostering understanding of Indigenous history in Canada, these programmes demonstrate the power of education to break barriers and build bridges.

These spotlighted initiatives represent just a fraction of the educational impact across our network. We are continuing to increase scholarship opportunities and develop curricula that equip students with the knowledge and skills needed for sustainable development. By doing so, our institutions are not just educating individuals – they're nurturing future leaders who are equipped to drive positive change in their careers and societies.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to supporting our institutions in innovating their educational approaches, ensuring they remain relevant, inclusive, and impactful in an ever-changing global landscape.



Graduation Ceremony at the London School of Business and Finance, UK

London
School of Business
& Finance



Institution Spotlight

Educating on Indigenous History through a Comprehensive Six-Part Video Series



Truth and Reconciliation in Canada addresses the historical abuses against Indigenous peoples, focusing on acknowledging these past injustices (Truth) and building better relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians (Reconciliation). This process involves implementing the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to correct these injustices and promote equity and understanding across the nation.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada was established as a part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, which was the largest class-action settlement in Canadian history. Today, Indigenous peoples form a small but influential community in Canada, reminding the country of its past and the responsibilities owed to its first inhabitants. While Indigenous history is fundamental to Canada's national narrative, it has often been marginalised in favour of dominant cultural narratives.



In a significant step towards furthering Truth and Reconciliation in Canada, University Canada West has launched a new six-part educational series, "Understanding Indigenous History: A Path Forward". This educational initiative, hosted by award-winning Canadian broadcast journalist Lisa LaFlamme, offers a comprehensive exploration of the history of First Nations peoples in Canada and illuminates a path towards reconciliation of these Indigenous communities. The series aims to raise awareness of this often-forgotten part of Canadian history, by illuminating the past, present, and future of Indigenous peoples in Canada, and to bridge the past with the present to pave the way for a more inclusive future.

The series features interviews with prominent figures, including Phil Fontaine, former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations; and Kathleen Mahoney, an internationally recognised human rights expert. These distinguished guests, along with other notable contributors, provide viewers – not just students, but the wider population too – with a nuanced understanding of Indigenous history and the complexities of Truth and Reconciliation in Canada.

The series was recently named a 2024 MUSE Creative Awards Platinum winner in the Video-Documentary category and received a Platinum Award in the 2024 Viddy Awards.



This is a history lesson that won't feel like a lesson at all, it's a conversation that we all need to engage in, and I'm so grateful to Phil and Kathleen for leading the way."

LISA LAFLAMME

**Award-winning Canadian
broadcast journalist**



The six episodes explore a broad range of crucial topics:

1. **"The Beginning"**: The oral origin stories and pre-colonial Indigenous life.
2. **"Treaties"**: The complex treaty relations between Indigenous peoples and colonial powers.
3. **"Impact of Assimilation"**: The profound effects of colonisation and assimilation policies.
4. **"Leadership and Governance"**: Diverse Indigenous governance structures.
5. **"Indigenous Law"**: Traditional legal systems that have guided Indigenous communities for generations.
6. **"Calls to Action"**: Necessary changes and the amplification of voices advocating for justice and reconciliation.

Mahoney and Fontaine emphasised the transformative potential of the series, stating: "All good teaching is about transformation – individual, collective and institutional. Each of these levels is needed to foster reconciliation for all wrongs done to Indigenous peoples in Canada. We hope this series assists in some small way towards that end."



As an institution of higher learning, the best way we can contribute to furthering truth and reconciliation in Canada is through education. I invite all Canadians to watch and share the videos, and to witness and engage in this important conversation."

DR BASHIR MAKHOUL

President and Vice-Chancellor
of University Canada West.

The **"Understanding Indigenous History: A Path Forward"** video series is available to [watch on YouTube](#).



Institution Spotlight

Resurgence of Hope and Wellbeing for Jail Inmates Through Fashion Education



Pearl Academy's Fashion Laboratory at Tihar Jail

Since 2017, Pearl Academy has been transforming the lives of female inmates at Tihar Jail through its innovative education and skill development programme, created with IPS Sudhir Yadav, former Director-General of Tihar. In Jail No. 6, a state-of-the-art Fashion Laboratory offers a three-month course that trains inmates in pattern making, garment construction, embroidery, and printing techniques, providing them with industry-level experience.

Female inmates in Tihar jail have often committed crimes due to a lack of appropriate skills to earn a livelihood, deprived backgrounds, physical and sexual abuse or alcohol and drug dependence. The programme was designed to promote economic and social empowerment and give inmates a feeling of self-worth, helping them to rehabilitate back into society and reduce the chance of returning to crime after being released. Due to the collaborative nature of the programme, the women also began to form stronger relationships with each other.

Over 300 women have gained marketable skills through this initiative, with many earning up to ₹20,000 upon release. The daily training provided by Pearl Academy's faculty, alongside support from ONGC, ensures the programme's ongoing success, while collaborations with NGOs support the rehabilitation process after inmates' release.

This initiative not only aligns with India's 'Skill India' Mission, but also fosters empowerment, inclusion, and hope, making a lasting impact on the lives of incarcerated women and their reintegration into society.

After spending 15 months in prison, one participant found "comfort and direction" through the programme, with future plans to open her own boutique, having upskilled in design and mastered complex embroidery. Another former inmate, who spent countless hours in isolation, turned to the training programme initially as a distraction, but ultimately gained valuable skills and future career opportunities.



Institution Spotlight

Providing Free Education for Women in Afghanistan



33,000

course enrolments

1,700

courses

FutureLearn has taken a bold stand against the Taliban’s ban on women’s higher education in Afghanistan by launching an initiative offering Afghan women free access to its extensive online learning platform. This initiative provides over 1,700 courses from top British universities, including specialist ExpertTracks, creating a vital opportunity for Afghan women to pursue their education in the face of severe restrictions. By empowering these women to continue their studies, FutureLearn is demonstrating a steadfast commitment to educational equality while also highlighting the importance of resilience in the fight against oppression.

In just two days after the ban was announced, FutureLearn’s in-house team successfully planned and executed the campaign, collaborating with local NGOs and women’s rights organisations to spread awareness and establish a mentorship programme that pairs Afghan learners with volunteer educators worldwide. The initiative has already seen remarkable success, with 33,000 course enrolments from Afghanistan, including 14,000 new learners who had previously lacked access to the platform. The offering has not only created a safe and accessible learning environment for Afghan women but has also raised international awareness about the educational crisis in Afghanistan.



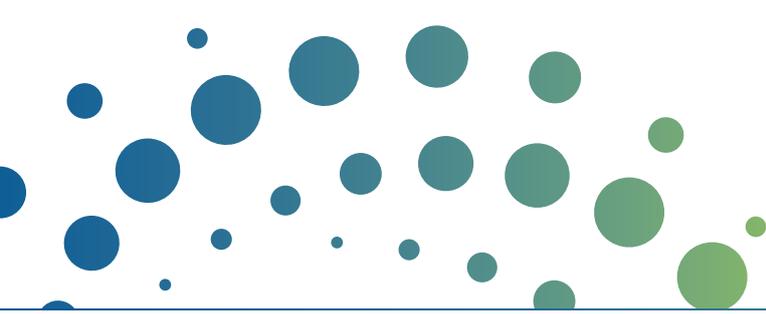
It was important for us at FutureLearn to take a stand on behalf of women. During conflict, women are three times more likely to lose access to education, so our initiative offering Afghan women free access to our extensive online learning platform was incredibly meaningful.”

MARIA KIREEVA

Partnerships Manager at FutureLearn & GUS Sustainability Taskforce member

FutureLearn’s strategic approach has addressed critical challenges, such as internet connectivity and language barriers, while offering relevant content tailored to the needs of Afghan women; through simplifying the registration process, curating practical course selections, and ensuring materials are accessible in low-bandwidth areas.

This initiative not only serves as a lifeline for those affected by the Taliban’s policies but also stands as a powerful statement against gender-based discrimination in education, fostering global support for women’s rights. The programme will remain active until the ban is lifted, ensuring that educational opportunities for Afghan women continue to grow.



Looking to the Future

Goal

Number of students who benefit from scholarships increased from baseline every year.

All students enrolled in GUS institutions will have access to education on knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development by 2026.

Year

Annual

2026

As a global education provider, our primary impact on society will always be through the transformative power of education itself. Every day, across our institutions, we shape the knowledge, skills, and perspectives of our students. Beyond this foundational impact, we have two specific goals that further strengthen our commitment to accessible, sustainable education.

Our annual goal to increase scholarship beneficiaries reflects our ongoing commitment to making quality education accessible to more students. Through SustainIQ, we are starting to centrally track our scholarships, and we will continue to create new partnerships with organisations and foundations to expand funding opportunities.

By 2026, we aim to ensure all enrolled students have access to education on knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. Central to achieving this ambitious goal is our flagship Sustainability101 programme, launching in 2025. This programme will provide foundational sustainability knowledge to every GUS student, covering essential topics including planetary boundaries, negative and positive tipping points, pathways to success, and new ways of living.

Alongside this, our institutions are already starting to embed sustainability principles across existing programmes and develop new sustainability-focused courses and specialisations. We will continue to encourage this and support where we can.

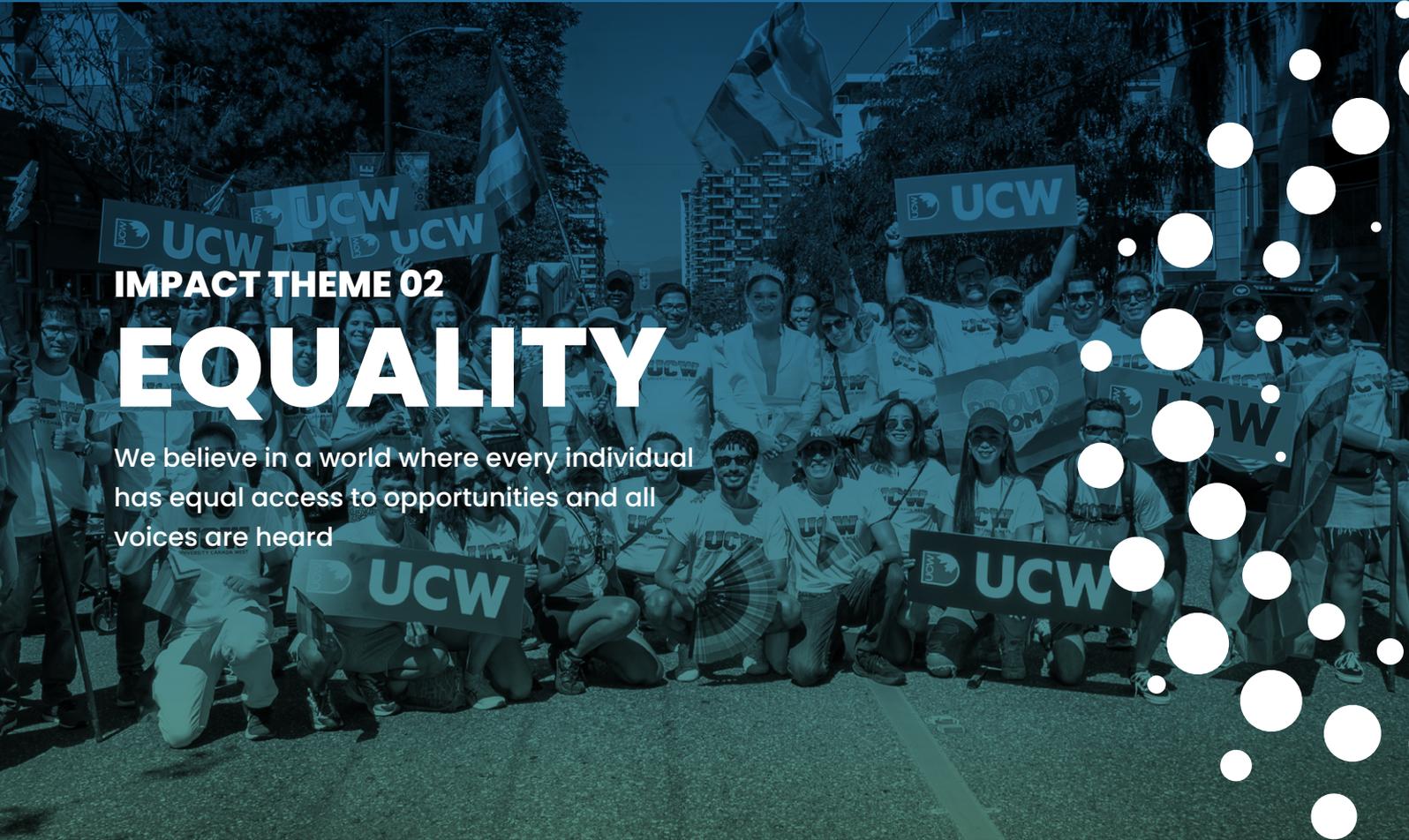
Through these initiatives, we aim to empower our students with the tools and knowledge to drive positive change in and outside of their respective careers.

Graduation at the University of Europe for Applied Sciences

IMPACT THEME 02

EQUALITY

We believe in a world where every individual has equal access to opportunities and all voices are heard



Overview

Equality is fundamental to creating a thriving educational environment and a just society. The initiatives across our Group reflect our collective commitment to breaking down barriers, promoting diversity, and promoting equal opportunities for all.

In 2024, our institutions have undertaken noteworthy initiatives to help advance equality in their communities.

From the University of Europe for Applied Sciences' innovative community art project promoting inclusivity through the Pink Bear Pavilion, to The University of Law's groundbreaking Amal Clooney Scholarship empowering human rights advocates, these programmes demonstrate the power of education to drive social change and create a more equitable world.

We are particularly proud to spotlight some of our female leaders across the GUS Group and our institutions, who are leading by example and serving as an inspiration for those that look up to them.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to measuring our progress, supporting our institutions in improving campus accessibility and inclusivity, and fostering environments where everyone, regardless of their background, has the opportunity to excel.



Students outside the Canadian College of Technology and Business campus



Female Trailblazers

Spotlighting our female leaders at the forefront of change

In a rapidly changing landscape, our female leaders are not just taking part; they are trailblazers forging new paths in higher education.

With an inspiring group of talented women paving the way, these leaders are driving innovation and promoting a culture of inclusivity and excellence. We had the opportunity to speak with several of these inspiring individuals to explore their journeys, insights, and the impact they are making within our organisation and beyond.



Cyndi McLeod, CEO of GUS Canada

Cyndi McLeod is an award-winning executive with over 30 years of experience in education. She is recognised as a powerhouse who drives action, achieves results, and delivers with warmth, building trust among her teams and extensive network within the sector. As GUS Canada CEO, she has expanded its network to eight institutions and established over 190 global partnerships. She also co-founded Glow Ed, a platform that engages and empowers women in international education.

Q: Do you have any advice for aspiring female leaders?

Embrace your unique perspective and be confident in your abilities, even in the face of challenges. Like many women, I've experienced obstacles, but working with leaders who listened, respected, and empowered me has made a significant difference in my journey. It's crucial to seek out environments that foster inclusivity and allow you to thrive, but equally important is to cultivate that environment yourself where you can lead. Surround yourself with people who inspire you and push you to grow. As you move forward, remember that leadership is not only about driving results but also about fostering a culture where everyone feels heard, respected, and supported.

Q: In these crazy times, how do you view sustainability and ESG in the education sector?

It needs to go beyond plans or statements - they must be actionable, measurable, and integrated into the core of how institutions operate. In higher education, we have the unique privilege and responsibility of shaping the next generation of leaders. This means we must lead by example, aligning our practices with the values we instil in our students.

Whether it's reducing our environmental footprint, fostering social equity, or practising good governance, we need to show a genuine commitment to ESG principles. By doing so, we ensure that our institutions not only contribute to a more sustainable future but also equip our students with the knowledge and ethical mindset needed to address the global challenges ahead. Sustainability isn't just a goal; it's a responsibility we must uphold every day.

Q: As educators, impact is implicit. What's your vision for impact at GUS Canada?

Our vision goes beyond the traditional metrics of success. We focus on creating lasting change in the lives of our students, the communities we engage with and the global education landscape. Ultimately, my vision for impact at GUS Canada is about creating a ripple effect - empowering our students to become leaders who will make a lasting difference in their communities and beyond. We aim not just to educate but to inspire and equip the next generation to build a better future - and I think that is the most important impact we can aspire to.

Gail Gallie, Founder at Project17,
Co-Founder Project Everyone,
Partner Nature2

Gail Gallie is a prominent business leader and social advocate, known for her role as co-founder of Project Everyone, which promotes the UN's Global Goals, and founded Project 17 to align the private sector with these goals. Gail is also a partner at Creatures United and Nature2 and is a board member within the Global University Systems group.



Q: How do you think GUS and its institutions can make the most impact?

One of the reasons I'm enthusiastic about my role on GUS' Board, is having the opportunity to reach young people who are in that golden age group where they know enough and still care enough to do something. They can take whatever it is that they've been encouraged to think about into their work like a seed, rather than try and get legacy brains to change their ways. There's something extremely exciting about having the opportunity to positively shape the lives and careers of the many thousands of young people across our Group's institutions - the scale, reach and potential impact of us as educators is exhilarating.

Imagine if every person who came through a GUS institution graduated with a basic grounding in what is going on with the climate crisis. They'll be whatever they want to be - a vet or a teacher or a nurse - but they'll know about materiality, that plastic comes from oil, what needs to happen for the energy transition, and that's an incredible impact for the world because they're taking that into their jobs and their own families and networks.

Q: Is there anyone significant in your career who mentored you or inspired you?

Throughout my career, I've been fortunate to have had exceptional mentors who have guided me professionally. One particularly influential woman, who has since become highly respected in her field, left a really lasting impression on me. She was probably the first feminist I'd ever come across, and she struck a

perfect balance between advocating for equality and practical advice. She has remained a trusted advisor and is a go-to person for me. Her approach to mentorship, combining principle with pragmatism, continues to influence my professional journey.

I've also worked with Tony Blair, Alistair Campbell and Richard Curtis who are all amazing leaders. The one thing they have in common is that they're all brilliant listeners, who will listen to any given debate, and can then make a decision and act. I've always thought the most intelligent and most wonderful people to work with are the ones who know how to listen.

Q: Is there one standout lesson from your career you'd like to share with aspiring female leaders?

While it's important to acknowledge that self-doubt affects individuals across genders, I've observed that many women and girls, in particular, struggle with internal voices of self-criticism. Whether it manifests as imposter syndrome, self-sabotage, or excessive self-criticism, these thought patterns can be incredibly limiting. It's crucial for women to counter these negative thoughts by regularly affirming to themselves, "You are absolutely good enough". Unfortunately, there's a significant amount of untapped potential among women who hold themselves back due to self-doubt.

Siobhan Forey, Chief People Officer at Global University Systems

Siobhan Forey is a seasoned HR leader with extensive Board-level experience, specialising in transformational change, talent development, and organisational capability. Previously the Chief People Officer at Boohoo and Arcadia Group, she effectively combines strategic vision with operational execution while advocating for diversity and inclusion in organisational culture.



Q: Throughout your career, has there been anybody who's significantly inspired you?

After 30 years of a corporate career, you pick different things up from different people, including people who unfortunately had all the behaviours that I didn't ever want to emulate. Fortunately, I've worked with absolutely amazing people, and I took so much from them in terms of work ethic and communication style, leadership style, empathy, connection and charisma. It's about incremental growth and as times goes on, you grow as a leader, you become more authentic and better in different situations.

Q: Across your career, what are you most proud of?

I'm proud of my career journey, especially when I became a director before turning 30. It felt like such a big step, and it was exciting to have that trust from senior management. Later, when I became the HR Director at Arcadia, I found myself on the executive board of this enormous global organisation. For me, it was a real "wow, pinch me" moment, especially since I was stepping into a role previously held by someone with so much experience. Those moments really pushed me out of my comfort zone and taught me a lot. I often think back to those board meetings and feel grateful for how far I've come. Overall, that experience has truly shaped my perspective on leadership.

Q: In terms of impact, what's your vision for developing and empowering diverse talent across the workforce?

Our workforce diversity is truly impressive, and I'm excited to build on this strong foundation. My vision is to develop a comprehensive strategy that optimises our existing diversity and empowers and develops talent across all demographics. In every meeting, I'm struck by the rich tapestry of backgrounds represented - different nationalities, religions, ethnicities, and age groups. This diversity is a tremendous asset, and I want to ensure we're leveraging it to its full potential.

One area I'm particularly passionate about is supporting and empowering our female talent. I'd like to champion initiatives that build confidence and provide targeted development opportunities for our senior female workforce. This could include mentorship programmes, leadership workshops, and creating platforms for women to share their experiences and insights. Ultimately, my goal is to create an environment where every individual, regardless of their background, feels valued, supported, and empowered to reach their full potential. By doing so, we'll not only enhance our diversity but also drive innovation, creativity, and overall business success.

Institution Spotlight

Inspiring Change in our Communities Through Art and Scholarships



In May 2024, the University of Europe for Applied Sciences (UE) unveiled a striking public artwork by British artist LUAP, Paul Robinson, during the Altonale cultural festival in Hamburg. The Pink Bear Pavilion – a four-metre-tall sculpture made from 2,500kg of recycled plastic – not only serves as a symbol of environmental consciousness and mental well-being, but also fosters interpersonal connections by encouraging visitors to reflect on themes of diversity, inclusion, and community.

To further celebrate this collaboration, UE has granted 17 'LUAP Pink Bear Scholarships' with an overall fund of €250,000, aimed at supporting young people embarking on their dream careers with an undergraduate programme at UE.

Environmental Consciousness

Using advanced 3D printing technology to craft the sculpture from over two tons of recycled plastic, the installation is a bold testament to the urgent need to reduce plastic waste – championing innovative approaches to tackling global environmental issues.

Mental Wellbeing

Originally conceived by LUAP as a personal escape, the bear has evolved into a representation of healing and peace and a symbol of mental well-being. The pavilion's immersive design, featuring soft pink lighting and enclosed spaces, encourages visitors to slow down and find comfort there – something that is increasingly important in today's fast-paced society.

Improving Access to Education

The LUAP Pink Bear Scholarships aim to make higher education more accessible by covering tuition fees for undergraduate students at UE. This financial support allows talented individuals to pursue their educational goals regardless of financial constraints.

Promoting Inclusion

The Pink Bear Pavilion features work from UE students, including pieces focused on making art accessible to those with disabilities, with one such project incorporating tactile elements for visually impaired visitors. This element to the project shows how art can serve as a medium to bridge gaps and promote understanding across the campus community.

Enhancing Community Development

The Pink Bear Pavilion was displayed at the Altonale Festival in Hamburg, promoting environmental awareness. It nurtured a sense of community and provided exposure for emerging artists. It also engaged the public in themes of mental well-being, inclusion, and diversity.





To have the opportunity to exhibit with a well-known artist like Paul Robinson is simply fantastic. The topics of inclusion and diversity are close to my heart anyway, and being able to present our work within The Pink Bear during Altonale is just incredible."

FENJA REBELL

UE Alumna

In addition to the exhibition, UE organised an auction that raised funds for local daycare centres. Children painted pink bear pictures which were then auctioned to the public, alongside a painting from LUAP. The proceeds from the auction were donated back to the two kindergartens, further strengthening community ties.

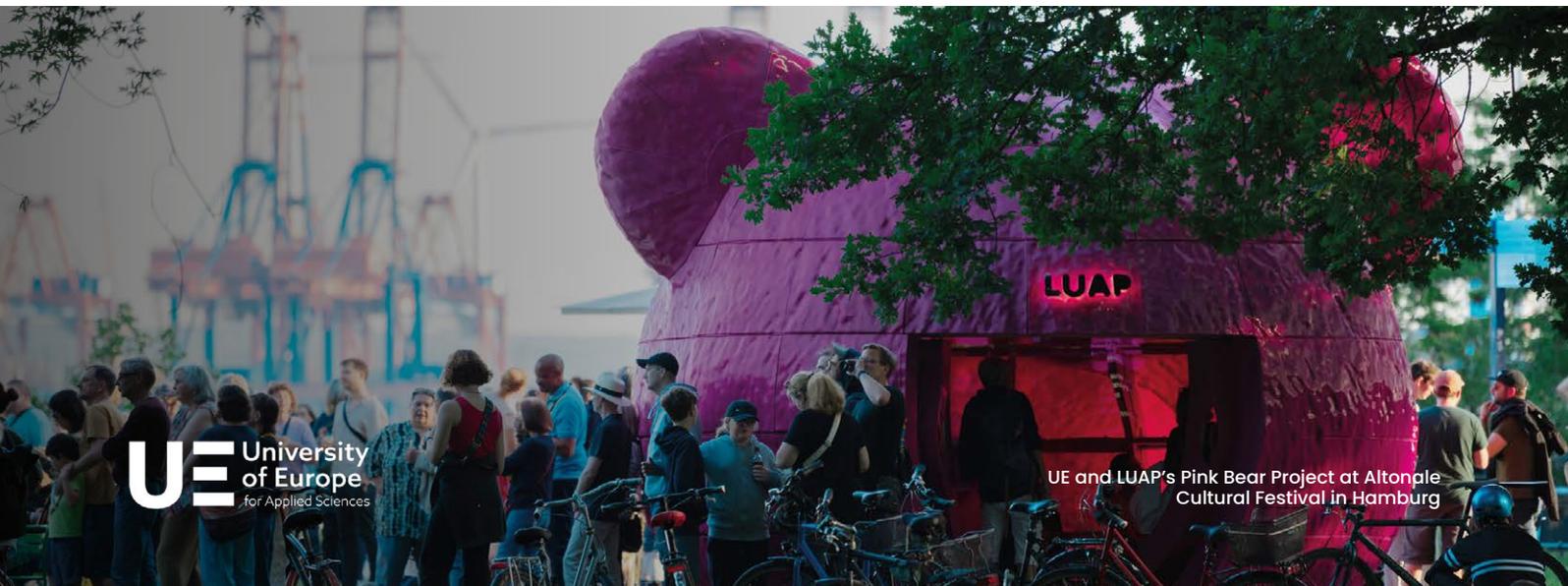
The Pink Bear Pavilion stands as a powerful reminder of the role art can play in addressing these critical issues and how innovation can inspire meaningful change in our communities and across the world.



Art has the unique ability to bring people together and build bridges, and this project is a shining example of that. We brought together young children, students, and established artists to join forces for a good cause. Not only art, but education in general, is the key to a better future, and we are committed to making this key accessible to everyone, regardless of their background."

SAGI HARTOV

CEO and Co-Founder of the Berlin School of Business and Innovation



UE University of Europe for Applied Sciences

UE and LUAP's Pink Bear Project at Altonale Cultural Festival in Hamburg

Institution Spotlight



Enabling Greater Access to Education

We are dedicated to improving access to education and have committed to increasing the number of scholarships offered every year. In 2024, 153 scholarships were offered across our 30 institutions, spanning from undergraduate to masters and MBAs.

Among these, we want to highlight two in particular: the Amal Clooney Scholarship for Human Rights Advocates and the Sherryl Kintu Scholarship, which honours the legacy of our inspiring former colleague.

Amal Clooney Scholarship

In January 2024, The University of Law launched the groundbreaking Amal Clooney Scholarship, in partnership with world-renowned human rights lawyer Amal Clooney and the Clooney Foundation for Justice. This initiative, the first of its kind in the UK, offers a fully funded postgraduate place for individuals who are passionate about defending human rights and driving global change.

Providing free legal support to victims of human rights violations in over 40 countries, The Clooney Foundation for Justice works globally to fight systemic injustice against vulnerable communities, including journalists, women and girls, democracy defenders, LGBTQ+ persons and minorities.

The scholarship allows recipients to study a wide range of postgraduate law programmes at The University of Law's 16 UK campuses, with additional options for online study. A cornerstone of legal education in the UK, the university has trained more lawyers than any other institution and counts distinguished members of the legal community among its alumni.

The team had originally planned to award one full-fee scholarship, but with over 1,000 submissions in total, this was extended to include four other applicants. The recipients began their courses in September 2024.



Over 750 submissions

Awarded one full fee scholarship & four runner-up awards each worth £5,000

Total award value: £35,000



It is an honour to join forces with The University of Law to empower the next generation of lawyers and advocates. I am thrilled that this scholarship will increase access to legal education in human rights and I look forward to seeing the incredible work of future recipients."

AMAL CLOONEY

Lawyer and human rights activist





We are exceptionally proud to launch this new scholarship with Amal Clooney and the CFJ. Amal's global efforts in the fight against injustice through the Clooney Foundation for Justice and providing free legal support to victims are an inspiration to all future lawyers."

PROFESSOR ANDREA NOLLENT

Vice-Chancellor, The University of Law



When I got the email saying I'd won, I was ecstatic! I hope I can use this as a stepping stone to get into human rights law after I qualify. And it goes without saying, but I am so grateful to both the University and the Clooney Foundation for Justice for their generosity in funding this scholarship."

ROBERT STEELE-BROWNE

Partial scholarship winner, BPC student at The University of Law

Sherryl Kintu Scholarship

The Sherryl Kintu Scholarship was established as a tribute to Sherryl Kintu, who was a dedicated and much-loved employee at Global University Systems. During the nine years she worked with us, she rose from Executive Assistant to a Director-level position. Sherryl tragically passed away in April 2021, but she left behind an incredible legacy of passion, commitment, respect and friendship.

The scholarship has been curated with Sherryl's family and friends and aims to support individuals and their education, giving them opportunities in ways that would have aligned most closely with Sherryl's own values and aspirations.

Sherryl had a particular passion for promoting entrepreneurial women and was passionate about the arts, both of which are reflected in the focus of the scholarships. Applicants are assessed by the Sherryl Kintu Fund Board and give us a meaningful way to carry forward Sherryl's memory by empowering talented individuals and giving them a unique springboard for their careers.



Sherryl Kintu Scholarship recipient Valeriya Ibraeva meeting Prof Maurits van Rooijen

Looking to the Future

Goal	Year
Implement an institution-wide process to measure and report gender and ethnicity metrics for all GUS Group and institution employees by 2026.	2026
Ensure at least 80% of all education facilities at GUS institutions are disability, gender and religion-sensitive and provide safe and inclusive learning environments by 2026.	2026
Achieve gender and ethnic balance across all boards, senior leadership positions and senior academic roles across GUS Group and institutions that reflect local demographic and cultural context by 2030.	2030
Implement systems to track and assure we achieve and maintain pay equity across all employee levels, ensuring equal compensation for equal work while accounting for local market conditions and legal requirements by 2030.	2030

Every day, our institutions work to create inclusive environments where all students and staff can thrive, regardless of their background, gender, ethnicity, or beliefs. Building on this foundation, we have four specific goals to further strengthen our commitment to equality.

Our immediate focus is on developing robust measurement systems to track our progress across GUS Group and our institutions. We plan to measure and report gender and ethnicity metrics by 2026, and by 2030 we plan to have comprehensive systems to track and maintain gender and ethnicity across all employee levels. This data will provide the baselines we need to make informed decisions and drive meaningful change.

Alongside this, we plan to conduct campus audits across all GUS institutions, encompassing accessibility, health and wellbeing services. Once these audits are complete, we can build a roadmap

towards achieving our goal of 80% of our education facilities being disability, gender, and religion-sensitive, providing safe and inclusive learning environments.

Looking further ahead to 2030, we aim to achieve a gender and ethnic balance across all boards, senior leadership positions, and senior academic roles that authentically reflect the local demographic and cultural context of each institution. This nuanced approach recognises that diversity looks different across our global network, while maintaining our commitment to representative leadership.

We recognise that creating lasting change requires both systematic measurement and cultural transformation. We aim to build educational environments where equality is lived and experienced by every member of our community.

IMPACT THEME 03

ENVIRONMENT

Safeguarding our environment is paramount for the present and future wellbeing of our global community



Overview

We recognise the urgent need to address environmental challenges and promote sustainable practices. Our commitment to environmental stewardship is reflected in the diverse initiatives undertaken by our institutions.

In 2024, we took the first steps in our journey towards emissions reduction. Alongside The University of Law and Arden University, GUS Group has partnered with Planet Mark to measure our Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions, beginning to work towards our group goal to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040.

Our institutions are taking innovative approaches to environmental sustainability. Gisma University of Applied Sciences' Meli-Meli programme exemplifies how business education can intersect with environmental stewardship, while The University of Law's comprehensive efforts in emissions reduction, waste management, and biodiversity initiatives demonstrate a holistic approach to campus sustainability.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to supporting our institutions in their environmental efforts, measuring our collective progress, and working towards our goals spanning emissions mitigation, energy efficiency and waste reduction.



Niagara College – Toronto students cleaning the community on Earth Day

nc Niagara College Canada

TORONTO
Economic Development Corporation

Our Journey to Carbon Neutrality: Partnering with Planet Mark



The first step towards reaching our goal of becoming carbon neutral across Global University Systems and all our institutions by 2040 is measuring and understanding our carbon footprint. We've partnered with Planet Mark to do just that and are happy to announce we have achieved Planet Mark Business Certification.

Planet Mark supports businesses in reducing their carbon footprint and driving positive environmental impact. Their robust, evidence-based methodology aligns with our dedication to transparency and measurable impact. This collaboration will empower us to make meaningful reductions in our carbon footprint from year one, whilst also exploring verified carbon credits that align with our mission.

Planet Mark is also supporting The University of Law and Arden University – which have both also achieved Planet Mark Business Certification – and we are encouraging our other institutions to follow suit.

Together, we will achieve:

Comprehensive Carbon Measurement

Ongoing measurement of our Scope 1, Scope 2, and core Scope 3 emissions; including waste, business travel, water, and paper procurement.

Independent validation of all submitted data and evidence, ensuring the highest standards of accuracy and credibility.

Carbon Reduction Planning

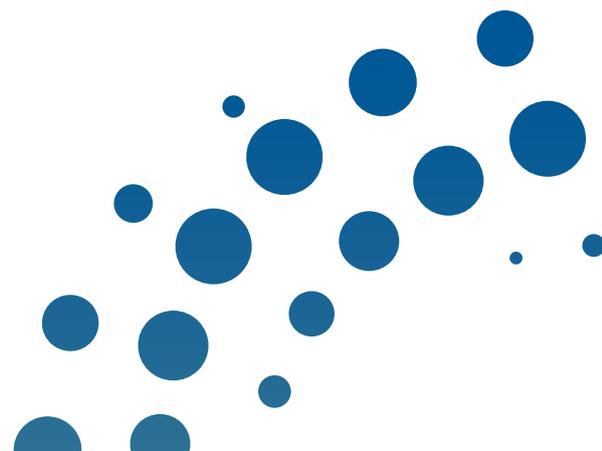
Tailored recommendations for continual improvement, helping us identify and implement effective reduction strategies.

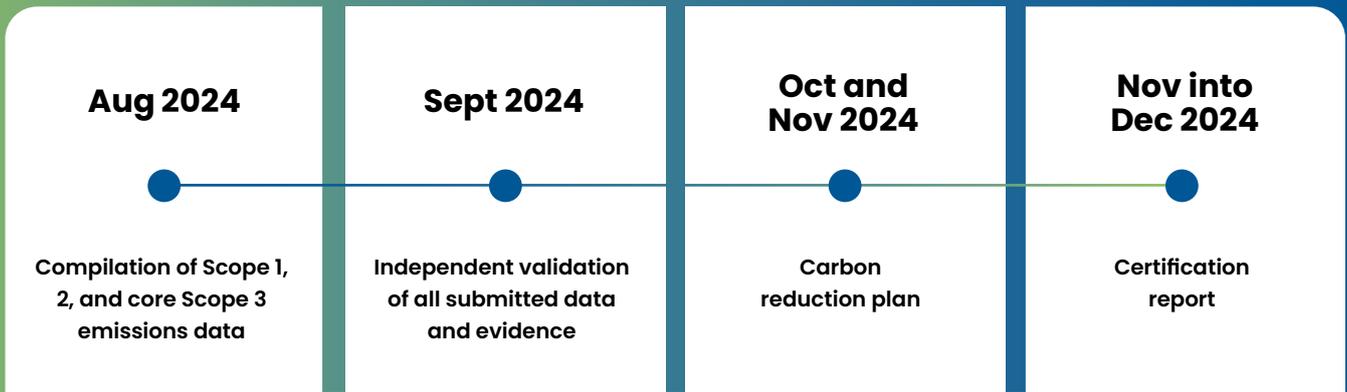
Tools and strategies to encourage and support sustainability improvements throughout our supply chain.

Certification

An annual certification report, requiring carbon reductions each year after our second reporting year to retain certification, with a complete carbon footprint and our measured contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Carbon Neutral PAS 2060:2014 accreditation, encompassing an assessment of our reduction plan, offsets and alignment to the standard.

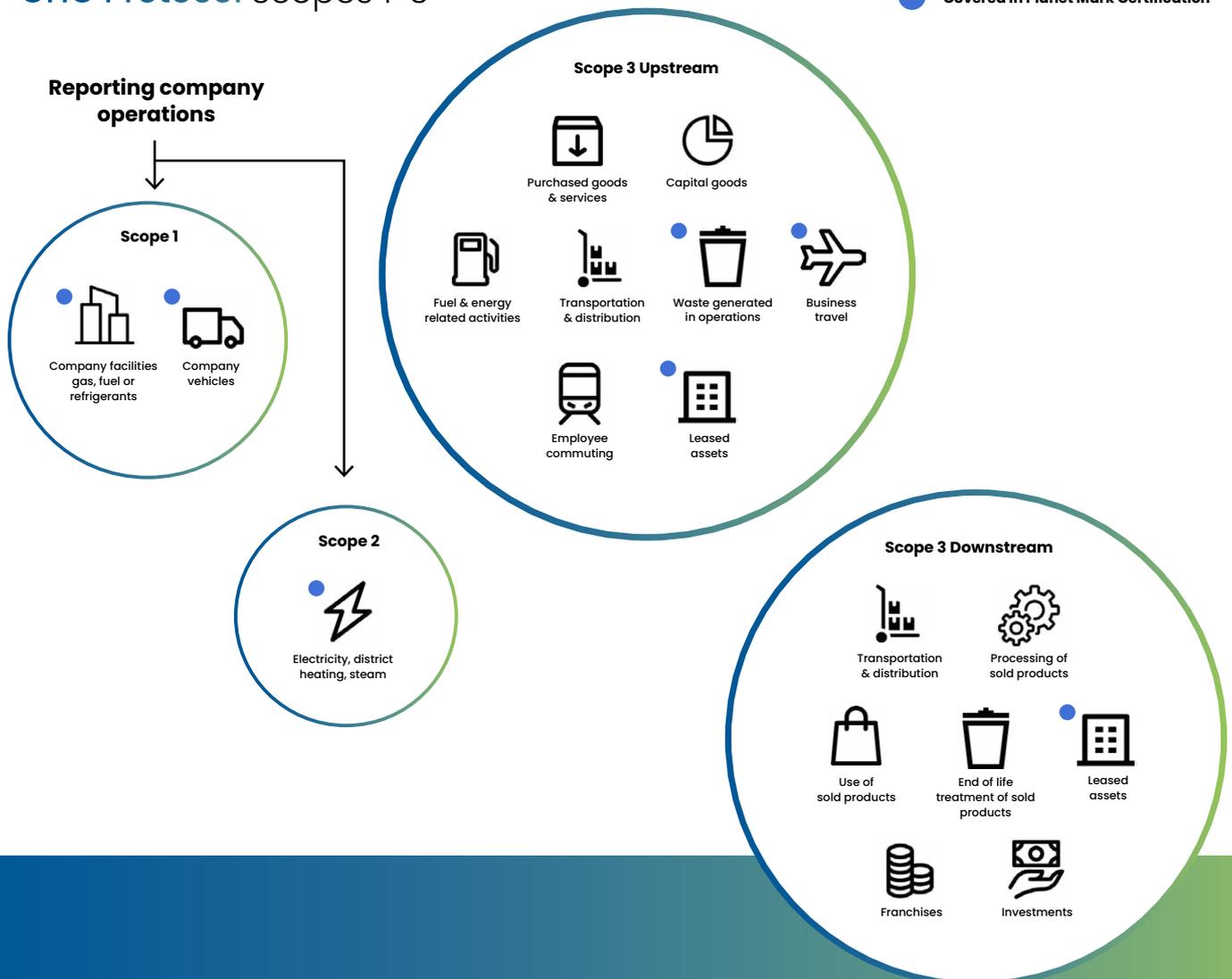




As we progress on this path, we remain committed to transparency and continuous improvement. This collaboration will not only help us reduce our environmental impact but also inspire and empower our institutions and our employees to join us in working towards a carbon-neutral future.

GHG Protocol Scopes 1-3

● Covered in Planet Mark Certification



Institution Spotlight



Nurturing Responsible Business Leaders

Gisma University of Applied Sciences, based in Potsdam, Germany, blends academic theory with real-world business skills to nurture future leaders. Offering MBAs, master's degrees, and executive education, Gisma attracts a diverse international student body, creating a rich multicultural learning experience.

At the heart of Gisma's mission is a commitment to sustainability and responsible management. Woven into the curriculum and initiatives, Gisma aims to empower students to drive economic success while also positively impacting society and the environment. This also extends to their physical campus locations - with eco-friendly practices spanning energy efficiency measures, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing, incorporating sustainability into day-to-day operations.

By encouraging students to participate in environmental collaborations and community outreach programmes promoting sustainability, Gisma fosters a sense of responsibility and active engagement across the institution.

The Meli-Meli stingless bee honey programme is a great example of Gisma's strengths, providing education at the intersection of business studies and environmental progress.

Meli-Meli Stingless Bee Honey

Led by Professor Phungmayo Horam, the programme is focused on promoting biodiversity and fair trade in the production of premium honey in Northeast India, primarily through educating the public about sustainable beekeeping and the importance of preserving natural habitats. Whilst teaching students about designing sustainable business models, it also focuses on the intricacies involved with sustainable beekeeping practices, enriching biodiversity in the region and supporting local communities.

As part of the Meli-Meli project, Gisma has partnered with YouthNet Nagaland, a non-profit organisation dedicated to empowering local youth and promoting sustainable development. This partnership allows Gisma to engage directly with the community, providing training and resources to local beekeepers. Through capacity-building workshops, they help them to improve their practices, increase yields, and access broader markets, ensuring fair prices for their products.

Gisma's students get to work alongside their professors and local beekeepers, participating in training sessions, and helping develop marketing strategies to promote Meli-Meli stingless bee honey. This allows students to gain hands-on experience in sustainable business practices and community engagement, seeing first-hand the direct impact of their efforts on local communities and the environment.

The programme is part of the Diaspora2023 initiative by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and supported by the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ).

The Diaspora2030 initiative in Germany is a platform designed to engage individuals with a migration background in sustainable development efforts. It aims to harness their expertise and experiences to support development projects, particularly in their countries of origin.

The initiative is managed by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), and it offers various opportunities such as short-term development assignments, business support and funding.



Institution Spotlight

Reducing Environmental Impacts on Campus



Students at The University of Law's Moorgate campus

The University of Law is deeply committed to improving its environmental impact. Across its 20 locations globally – comprising 17 campuses in the UK, international sites in Hong Kong and Berlin and a dedicated online campus – The University of Law has made strong progress in reducing carbon emissions, improving the efficiency of its built environment, and reducing waste.

Emissions Reduction

The University of Law is striving to meet the criteria of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Race to Zero by committing to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions for Scope 1, 2 and 3 by 2050 or sooner. It has achieved a validated Net Zero Target and roadmap for Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions. In partnership with Compliance 365, it has identified potential projects to further reduce these emissions and completed the business certification process with Planet Mark for data from June 2023 to May 2024.

All of The University of Law's campuses procure electricity from 100% renewable sources – with its Nottingham campus generating its own solar energy. The team is currently developing a university-wide Green Travel Plan for its campuses, based on data gathered through staff and student travel surveys. The University of Law has successfully engaged half of its suppliers by spend to sign up to its Sustainability Charter that confirms their commitment to adopt

practices that respect the principles of the charter. It is now working with 27 other UK universities to develop a Net Zero Supplier tool that allows suppliers to submit information related to their emissions including carbon reduction plans.

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's Race to Zero

The UN's Race to Zero is a global campaign to get businesses, cities, and countries to commit to reducing its carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050. It focuses on actions to reduce pollution and slow climate change, aiming for a healthier, more sustainable planet. Participants pledge to cut its emissions, track progress, and work towards zero emissions in a fair and responsible way.



Built Environment Optimisation

The University of Law's Space Management Oversight Board was formed to ensure the efficient and effective use of space in order to meet the demands of planned growth, whilst also providing a framework to identify priorities for enhancing the capacity, sustainability, accessibility, inclusivity and quality of the space. Energy audits completed across all its campuses in 2023 provided valuable insights on operations optimisation, demand reduction, heat decarbonisation and onsite renewables. These audits have been used to inform capital expenditure budgets, driving targeted improvements across campuses. A notable example is the Birmingham campus, which has undergone a complete overhaul of its heating and cooling systems. New, efficient systems have replaced those over 20 years old, resulting in minimal gas usage in the main building.

In addition, the university has carried out an ISO14001 environmental management systems (EMS) gap analysis, using its Moorgate campus as the test site, as well as completing a Climate Adaptation Plan with respect to Estates.

Waste Management and Reduction

The University of Law has implemented a recycling strategy, waste guidance, and a core waste strategy. Waste has been significantly reduced over the years, from an annual average of 390 tonnes during 2019 to under 110 tonnes for 2023 - not including construction waste - which is equivalent to 52 African Elephants. The university has a recycling rate target of 70%, matching what is estimated to be the amount of typical waste that can be recycled, which has significantly increased from its 2019 average of 27%.

The university aims to eliminate single-use plastics from its campuses by 2025, with current efforts focused on replacing the small amount still used in cleaning products. As part of this initiative, disposable plastic spray bottles are no longer used, instead opting for environmentally friendly, soluble sachets of cleaning product concentrate that can be diluted in water, saving around 160 kg of plastic every year.

The University of Law's central waste collector has a zero waste-to-landfill approach, with all general waste being sent for Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) or incinerated for the creation of energy. Additionally, all menstrual product waste is diverted from landfill and sent to Energy from Waste facilities.

Sustainable Procurement

The University of Law procures its washroom paper consumables from Metsä, a company that owns and manages over 100,000 Northern forests across Europe and adheres to the highest sustainability laws. They hold Chain of Custody certificates for PEFC and FSC® wood origin systems and have been awarded the EcoVadis Platinum Sustainability Rating for four years running.

Biodiversity Initiatives

At its Birmingham and Bloomsbury campuses, ULaw has installed pollinator-friendly gardens to help urban pollinators thrive and create corridors for pollinators to travel further afield, enhancing habitat connectivity. These gardens incorporate a variety of plants, including shrubs, edible plants, and scented salvias, as well as discrete mini beast log piles for beetles and insects, nesting boxes for hairy-footed flower bees, and bee nesting posts for solitary bees.

Educating on Sustainability

The University of Law has developed a new Education for Sustainability model that fully integrates the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Alongside this, they are conducting a thorough review of all current courses to ensure they incorporate sustainability principles. Programme Directors are tasked with designing curriculum changes by the end of 2024, with full implementation scheduled for 2025. This comprehensive approach will help ULaw embed sustainability into all their programmes.

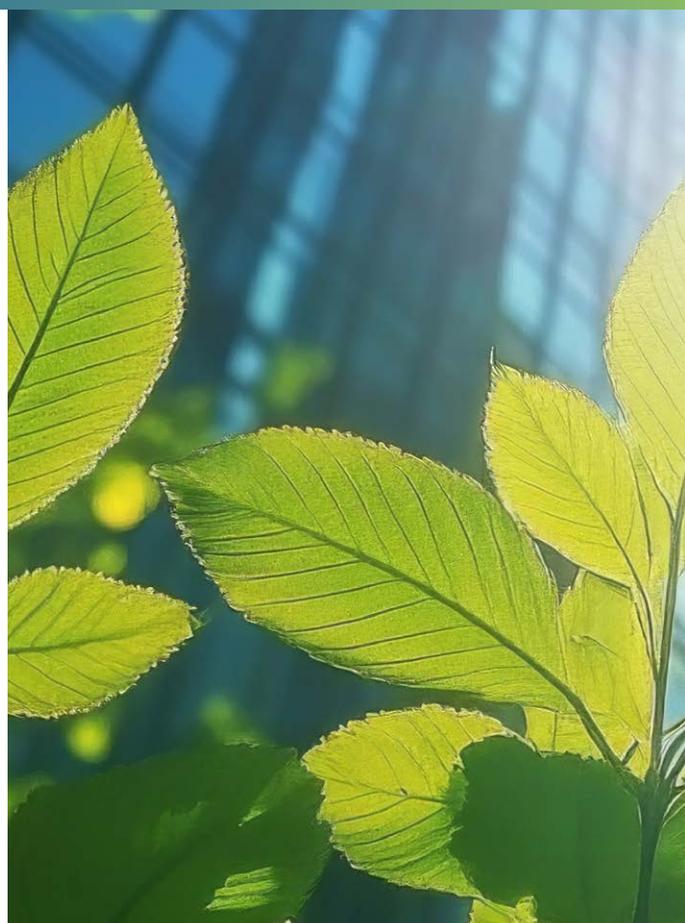


Looking to the Future

Goal	Year
Eliminate single-use plastics across all campuses by 2025.	2025
All institutions to measure and track Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions by 2026.	2026
Retrofit existing buildings to increase energy efficiency and achieve LEED or BREEAM certification for all new constructions and major renovations on GUS institution campuses by 2030.	2030
Decrease amount of waste going to landfill by 50% across all GUS institutions by 2030.	2030
Achieve carbon neutrality across GUS Group and all institutions by 2040.	2040

As educators shaping the next generation of leaders, we recognise our responsibility to demonstrate environmental stewardship across our operations. While our greatest environmental impact comes through educating students about sustainability and climate action, we have also set five specific goals to reduce our direct environmental footprint across our global network of institutions.

Our most immediate priority is the elimination of single-use plastics across all campuses by 2025. This initiative requires a systematic approach to identifying and replacing single-use items with sustainable alternatives, from food service materials to laboratory supplies. We are already seeing promising results from institutions like The University of Law, which has nearly eliminated all single-use plastics from its operations. Following on from our initial plastics focus, we plan to decrease all waste going to landfill by 50% across all GUS institutions by 2030, building on successful waste reduction programmes already implemented at several of our campuses.



By 2026, we aim to have many more, if not all our institutions measuring and tracking their Scope 1, 2, and 3 greenhouse gas emissions. This baseline data will be crucial for developing targeted reduction strategies and monitoring our progress toward carbon neutrality, which we aim to achieve through a combination of emissions reduction strategies, energy efficiency improvements, and carbon offsetting where reductions aren't possible. These offsetting programmes will be carefully selected for their effectiveness and alignment with our purpose to create a brighter, more sustainable world through education.

In our built environments, we plan to both retrofit existing buildings to increase energy efficiency where we can, while ensuring all new constructions and major renovations in our control achieve LEED or BREEAM certification. Our first step towards this dual approach will be to conduct an audit of energy efficiency and certifications of existing buildings across GUS Group and our institutions.

We are aware that each institution will face unique challenges and opportunities in achieving these goals. Through our Sustainability Taskforce, we are sharing best practices and learnings across our network, ensuring that successful initiatives can be adapted and scaled across different campus contexts. While we acknowledge the magnitude of these goals, we are confident that our systematic approach, combined with the dedication of our staff and students, will enable us to create more sustainable campuses for our students.



University Canada West's campus

IMPACT THEME 04

ETHICS

Fundamental commitments that shape our identity
as responsible leaders in the education sector



Overview

Ethical practices are fundamental to our mission and the success of our institutions. Our commitment to ethics is reflected in the comprehensive policies and initiatives implemented across our organisation.

In 2024, we've made significant progress in strengthening our policies. Our new goal of continuous management and annual evaluation of these policies ensures they remain current and effective.

Across our network, institutions are taking proactive steps to embed ethical practices. The University of Niagara Falls Canada has aligned with global ethical standards by signing the UN Sustainable Development Goals Accord. Meanwhile, GUS Group and the London School of Business and Finance have publicly committed to climate action by becoming signatories to the CANIE Accord.

As we look to the future, we will continue to refine and enhance our policies, focusing on areas such as data security, employee satisfaction, and responsible procurement. Our efforts will also extend to promoting transparency, fostering a culture of integrity, and ensuring that ethical considerations are integrated into all aspects of our operations and educational offerings.



Toronto School of Management students on campus

Toronto School of Management

Implementing Group-Wide Sustainability Policies

At the heart of our commitment to ESG lies a recognition that strong, well-crafted policies are the bedrock of ethical, fair, and responsible practices across our network of institutions. In 2023, we took a significant step forward by setting ambitious group sustainability goals, many of which centre on building a comprehensive policy framework.

By establishing this foundational set of policies, we are both supporting ethical practices at GUS Group, as well as empowering our institutions with clear guidelines for sustainable operations.

Our Compliance Statement

At GUS, we are committed to upholding ethical conduct and regulatory compliance across our global operations. We strive to adhere to local and international laws, including those related to education, data protection, employment, and governance.

We recognise the importance of accountability and transparency in our operations. Our goal is to provide a safe and ethical environment for our students, staff, and partners, fostering trust and open communication.

We aim to cultivate a culture of collaboration and continuous learning. By setting clear expectations for us and our stakeholders, we work towards building strong relationships based on mutual respect.

Our compliance programme is designed to adapt to the evolving landscape of the education sector. We are dedicated to ongoing training and support for our team to help them navigate ethical challenges effectively.

At GUS, we view compliance as an essential part of our organisation, requiring continuous improvement as part of our mission to deliver quality education and contribute positively to the communities we serve.

We have achieved the following policy-related targets:

Distribute, educate and implement existing GUS Group bribery and corruption zero-tolerance policies at all institutions by 2024.

Distribute, educate and implement existing GUS Group code of conduct policy at all institutions by 2024.

Distribute, educate and implement GUS Group existing ethical marketing and recruitment policies across all institutions by 2024.

Establish anti-bribery, anti-corruption, anti-violence, crime and acts of terrorism policies at all institutions by 2024.

Implement compliance policies at all institutions by 2024.

Conflict of interest policy implemented at GUS by 2024.

Gender pay equity policy implemented at all GUS institutions by 2025.

This year, we set out to ensure GUS Group has established, updated and implemented the following policies.

Existing Policies and Statements Now Updated

- Anti-harassment and Bullying
- Anti-corruption and Bribery (including Crimes & Acts of Terrorism)
- Recruitment and Selection
- Business Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Modern Slavery Act

Policies and Statements Developed

- Compliance Statement
- Ethical Marketing Statement
- Environment Statement
- Equal Pay for Equal Work Statement
- Supplier Code of Conduct (Q1 2025)

All existing GUS Group policies will be made available to our institutions as reference documents, and where appropriate will be published on our Group website. These policies may serve as foundational frameworks, though may require adaptation to ensure compliance with applicable regional regulations outside of the United Kingdom. We plan to work on the successful rollout and implementation of these policies across GUS Group, alongside helping our institutions to ensure that any adopted or adapted policies are compliant with local regulations.

In 2023 we had seven goals around this topic. Now that we have focused on delivering these, we want to ensure that we maintain the momentum. As such we plan to continue this work under one goal: continuous management and annual evaluation of group policies to ensure they remain current, applicable, and effectively enforced across our organisation.



Arden University Graduation Ceremony, London

Our Commitment to Action: Signing the CANIE Accord

In 2024, we are proud to have become a signatory to the Climate Action Network for International Educators (CANIE) Accord. CANIE is an organisation that is catalysing climate action in the international education sector, with a focus on action-oriented advocacy, education, and connection.

They unite higher education institutions and organisations worldwide to address climate change through practical commitments and collaborative efforts.

CANIE are striving for a **carbon-neutral** and **climate-literate** international education sector **by 2030**.

Not only is this partnership a public confirmation of our commitment to climate action, but it also demonstrates our commitment to leadership, accountability, and improving the efficiency of our operations. This doesn't end with GUS Group as our institutions are also following suit, with the London School of Business and Finance recently also becoming a signatory of the Accord, and we hope there will be more to follow.

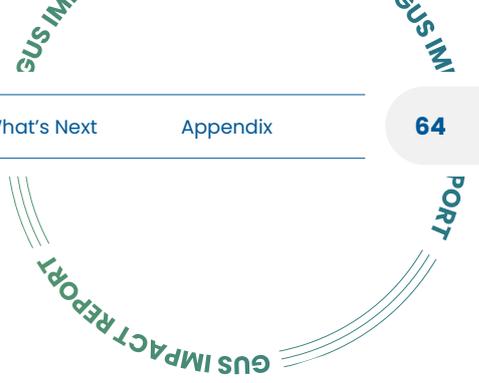
Dr Shahnaz Hamid, the Dean of the London School of Business and Finance, explained that: "By endorsing the CANIE Accord for climate change and sustainability, we commit to fostering a future where our present actions nurture a world of environmental stewardship and sustainable progress for future generations. Embracing the CANIE Accord empowers our institution to foster innovation, equipping our students with the skills and mindset essential for success in a global economy focused on sustainability. Moreover, it strengthens our reputation as a forward-thinking institution dedicated to driving positive change, attracting top talent, and maintaining impactful partnerships with like-minded organisations worldwide."



Becoming a signatory to CANIE is an important step for our organisation as part of our ESG strategy. It enables us to meet challenges head-on and we are harnessing the abundant energy and commitment within our network to foster necessary positive change across our group."

NADIA GABBIE

SVP of Group Communications



Our Five Commitment Categories



LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCING



EMISSIONS ACCOUNTING AND REDUCTION



TRAVEL



FACILITIES, OPERATIONS, AND PROCUREMENT



CLIMATE EDUCATION



Institution Spotlight



Collectively Advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals



University of Niagara Falls Canada (UNF) has proudly joined over 360 post-secondary institutions worldwide by signing the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Accord. This global initiative, spearheaded by the EAUC, was launched in 2017 to underscore the higher education sector's commitment to advancing the 17 SDGs outlined by the United Nations as part of its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These goals address pressing economic, social, and environmental challenges, calling for collective action from countries and institutions to foster a more sustainable and equitable future.

Education has a pivotal role in achieving the SDGs by 2030, and signing the Accord reflects three key commitments to drive this mission forward. Firstly, the university emphasises its dedication to the wellbeing of its students, staff, and the broader community, ensuring the meaningful integration of the SDGs into its teaching, research, leadership, and community outreach initiatives. Secondly, the institution vows to report annually on its individual progress, reinforcing its commitment to accountability and transparency. Finally, UNF will share any learnings and best practices with other institutions across the globe, fostering collaboration and enabling greater progress in the collective journey towards sustainability.



We're aware of the challenges facing the world and UNF is willing to take action to be part of the solution."

DAVID GRAY

Provost and Vice President, Academic



As educators, we recognise our responsibility to play a pivotal role in attaining the SDGs by 2030. UNF is demonstrating its commitment by signing the SDG Accord, joining other institutions to work toward building a more sustainable world and creating a more equitable future for all."

CYNDI MCLEOD

CEO of GUS Canada

Looking to the Future

Goal	Year
A minimum of 10 philanthropic donations from GUS Group every year around the globe.	2025
Implement an institution-wide system to track volunteer service hours dedicated to local communities across all GUS institutions. Once established, increase the total number of tracked community service hours every year across all GUS institutions.	2026
Publish an annual sustainability report.	2030
Continuous management and annual evaluation of group policies and statements to ensure they remain current, applicable, and effectively enforced across our organisation.	2030
Continue group-wide data breach strategy to safeguard data and minimise potential impacts.	2040
Educate all institutions on existing GUS Group environmental risk identification, mitigation, monitoring & reporting processes by 2025.	2040
Provide access to affordable health and well-being services at 80% of GUS campuses by 2026.	2040
Implement processes to track eNPS, or other similar measures, across all institutions, achieving greater than 50 for all those that measure by 2027.	2040
Ensure that all GUS institutions achieve and maintain Fair Trade certification, prioritising Fair Trade products across all applicable categories while implementing comprehensive ethical standards for all procurement by 2040.	2040

Ethical conduct forms the bedrock of our operations at GUS, guiding how we interact with our students, staff, and communities. While ethical behaviour is inherent in everything we do, we have specific goals to ensure we maintain the highest standards of corporate responsibility and community engagement.

We are developing a system that will track volunteer service hours across all our institutions. This will allow us to understand and grow our community engagement year on year, while continuing our commitment to at least ten strategic philanthropic donations annually.

Robust governance and risk management are crucial to our ethical operations. We are enhancing our policy framework through continuous evaluation and updates, ensuring our standards remain current and effectively enforced across all institutions. This work extends to environmental risk management, where we plan to provide guidance on identification, mitigation, and monitoring across our institutions. For data security, we are developing a group-wide strategy to protect against and manage potential data breaches.

The wellbeing of our people - both students and staff - is another key focus area. We are expanding access to affordable health and wellbeing services across our campuses. To ensure we're creating positive work environments, we're implementing employee satisfaction tracking through eNPS (employee Net Promoter Score) measurements. This data will help us identify areas for improvement and share best practices across our network.

Looking further ahead, we plan to transform our approach to procurement through implementing comprehensive ethical standards for all procurement, enabling us to more comprehensively understand and manage the impacts of our supply chain.

Through systematic measurement and continuous improvement, we aim to build an organisation that exemplifies ethical leadership in global education.



Trebass Institute students at a film event



CHAPTER 04

GOVERNANCE

04



Board meeting at Global University Systems' office in London

Governance

At GUS, we recognise that strong corporate governance is not just a business practice, but the cornerstone of our operations. Our governance structure, with Board and Executive oversight at both group and institutional levels, provides the framework that guides our operations, as well as our sustainability and risk management strategies.

Leadership Team and Board Oversight

Our Executive Leadership Team and Board are responsible for ensuring that GUS and our institutions adhere to good governance practices and recognised standards. To further strengthen this commitment, we've established dedicated ESG and Audit & Risk board committees. This year Gail Gallie, co-creator of the SDG campaign, joined as a board advisor. Gail's expertise in sustainability and impact adds a valuable dimension to our sustainability governance and strategy.

Measuring and Reporting

Our partnership with SustainIQ allows us to measure and report on material topics across GUS Group and our institutions. We are in the process of developing our GUS ESG Index - an internal tool designed to provide a clear, uniform overview of each institution's sustainability progress. This will allow us to identify which institutions are leading the charge in sustainable practices and which require further support.

Policies

Policy development has been a key focus this year. As highlighted in our policy spotlight, we've made significant strides in drafting and implementing policies aligned with our goals. These policies are available for our institutions to amend and adopt, ensuring a consistent approach to sustainability across our network. Looking ahead to 2025, we're committed to ongoing policy management, with annual evaluations to ensure they remain current, applicable, and effectively enforced.

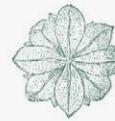
Sustainability Taskforce

Central to our sustainability efforts is the GUS Sustainability Taskforce, a diverse group of representatives from across our global family of institutions. This taskforce serves a dual purpose: it brings institutional voices to the forefront in shaping our global sustainability strategy, while also driving the implementation of sustainability initiatives at the local level. By championing sustainability standards and initiatives, our taskforce members are the catalysts for change within their respective institutions.

As we continue to evolve our governance structures and processes, we are fostering a culture of responsibility that permeates every level of our organisation. From boardroom decisions to on-campus representatives, our commitment to sustainable governance is shaping our future, with education and ethical leadership going hand in hand.

Our Sustainability Partners

At Global University Systems, we understand that the journey towards sustainability is not one we can undertake alone. It requires collaboration, expertise, and shared commitment. That's why we've carefully chosen to partner with leading organisations in the field of sustainability. Our sustainability partners bring a wealth of experience and specialised knowledge to the table, helping us refine our strategy, measure our progress, and communicate our impact effectively.



POLLEN
ADVISORY

Pollen Advisory is a strategy and communications consultancy helping businesses harness sustainability as a driver of long-term value. They create sustainability strategies aligned to business goals, alongside targeted impact communication campaigns.



PlanetMark

Planet Mark is a sustainability certification company specialising in verifying and measuring carbon and social data to help businesses reduce their emissions and achieve sustainability goals aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Planet Mark provides emissions certification that encourages continuous improvement and action, as well as access to a community of like-minded individuals committed to sustainability.

sustainIQ

SustainIQ is a sustainability reporting software, helping businesses to measure, monitor, and report on their environmental, social, and economic performance. Their comprehensive platform provides real-time data collection and reporting across multiple sustainability metrics such as GHG emissions, waste management, social value, and supply chain compliance. SustainIQ's tools are designed to make sustainability reporting more integrated and operationally embedded within business processes, simplifying compliance with standards and improving the efficiency and accuracy of sustainability initiatives.



Gisma University
of Applied Sciences

Graduation Ceremony at Gisma University
of Applied Sciences



CHAPTER 05

WHAT'S NEXT

05

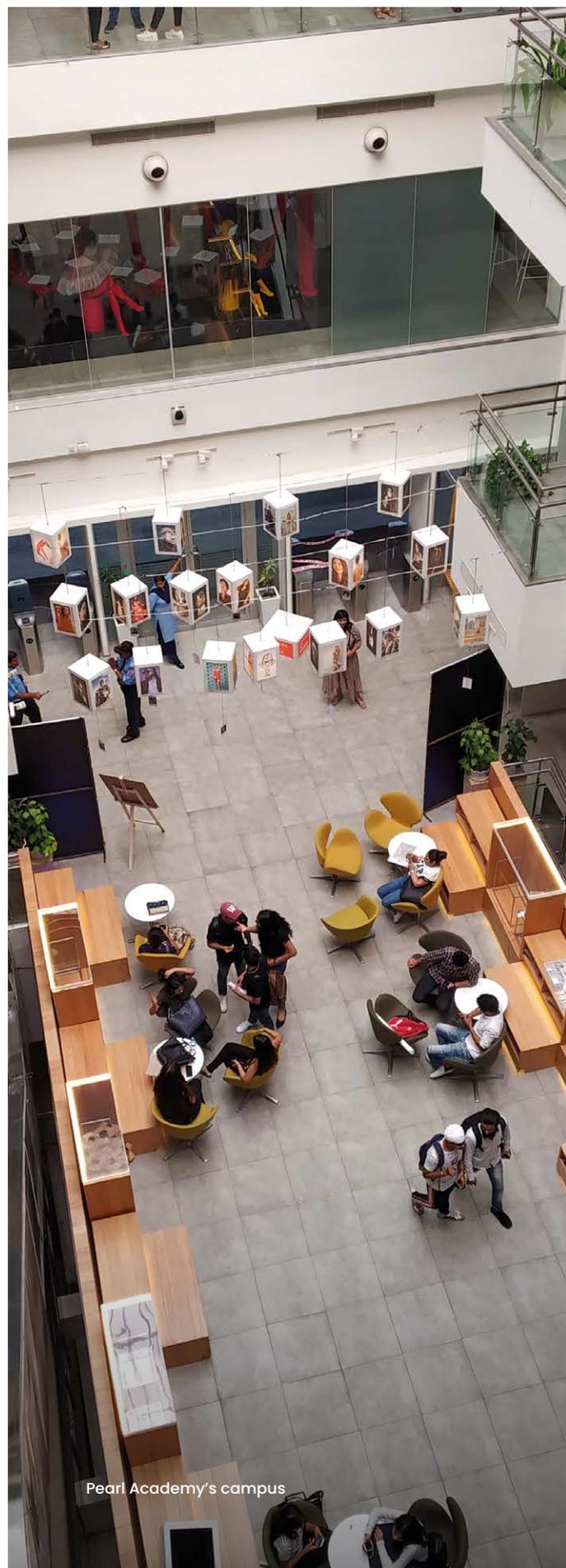
What's Next for GUS Impact

As we look ahead, our focus will be on two important areas: enhancing our measurement and reporting capabilities and making tangible progress towards our group goals. These twin pillars will guide our efforts in the coming year, ensuring we continue to drive meaningful change across our diverse network of institutions.

Measurement and Reporting

Accurate measurement and comprehensive reporting remain central to our sustainability strategy. We are committed to continually enhancing our data collection processes across all material topics. Given the diverse nature of our organisation, we acknowledge that achieving consistent, high-quality data across all institutions is a complex, ongoing process that requires dedication and persistence. Nevertheless, we recognise that robust, consistent data is crucial for tracking our progress and effectively supporting our institutions in advancing their individual sustainability journeys.

Our sustainability taskforce, comprising representatives from all 30 of our institutions, plays a pivotal role in this endeavour. We are continuously refining our engagement strategies with the taskforce, fostering a collaborative learning environment that facilitates collective progress. This approach ensures that we maintain a comprehensive view of our sustainability efforts, enabling us to make informed decisions and drive meaningful improvements across our network.



Pearl Academy's campus

Making Progress Towards our Group Goals

We remain committed to advancing our group goals. Our network encompasses institutions across diverse geographies and cultures, varying in size and specialising in numerous disciplines. While our group goals provide a unifying framework for our efforts, we also recognise the importance of empowering individual institutions to excel in their areas of expertise and passion.

This balanced approach allows us to maintain a cohesive strategy while leveraging the unique strengths of each institution. By doing so, we create a dynamic ecosystem where shared objectives and individual excellence complement each other, driving innovation and progress across our network.

Within the Global University Systems Group, we are consolidating our central functions to streamline efforts, allowing us to focus resources more effectively and ensure maximum impact. Next year, we will focus on two primary areas: sustainability education and developing partnerships in service of our Group sustainability goals.

Education lies at the heart of our impact, and we're proud to see institutions like Gisma University of Applied Sciences, UPES, and the University of Niagara Falls Canada integrating sustainability into their curricula. Building on this momentum, we're excited to announce the development of our Sustainability101 programme for 2025.

Sustainability 101

Recognising that today's students will be tomorrow's world leaders, driving us towards a more sustainable world, we aim to bridge the existing sustainability knowledge gap. This foundational programme is designed specifically to prepare students for the modern workplace. Designed in line with the UN SDGs, the programme covers sustainability and planetary boundaries, environmental impact, resource management, the circular economy, innovative pathways to success, and practical strategies for setting goals and measuring progress.

The course will be delivered through engaging multimedia formats and feature recognised sustainability experts and thought leaders who bring real-world insights to each module. By making this course freely available to every GUS student, we're providing them with the fundamental sustainability knowledge that will become essential across all careers and industries.

Partnerships

Partnerships continue to be a cornerstone of our strategy. We've made significant strides this year, from becoming signatories to the CANIE Accord to collaborating with the Clooney Foundation for Justice to offer fully funded places on postgraduate law programmes.

In the coming year, we'll pursue new alliances that align with our group goals to expand our impact, always keeping education at the core of our mission.

As we look to the future, we extend our heartfelt thanks to you for reading this report and express our deepest gratitude to all contributors across our network. Your dedication is instrumental in our collective effort to make a positive impact on the education sector and the world around us.

The future is bright at Global University Systems. With your continued support, we are working towards a world where every individual has the opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute meaningfully to society. Together, we can create a more sustainable and equitable world for all.

From the Global University Systems Sustainability Team



CHAPTER 06

APPENDIX

06

Our Group Goals: Status & Amendments

Status:

 Achieved

 In progress

 Not met

 Reworded

Goal	Theme	Year*	Status	Comments
Number of students who benefit from scholarships increased from baseline yearly.	Education	Annual		Goal achieved.
A minimum of 10 philanthropic donations from GUS Group every year around the globe.	Ethics	Annual		Goal achieved.
Increase the number of meaningful community donations each year per GUS brand.	Ethics	Annual		To implement this goal we must first start to track CSR activity across our institutions. We have reworded this goal accordingly. 'Implement an institution-wide system to track volunteer service hours dedicated to local communities across all GUS institutions. Once established, increase the total number of tracked community service hours every year across all GUS institutions.'
Publish GUS Impact progress through an annual sustainability report.	Ethics	Annual		Goal achieved.
Conflict of Interest Policy implemented at GUS by 2024.	Equality	2024		Goal achieved.
Distribute, educate and implement GUS Corporate Offices, London existing ethical marketing and recruitment policies across all institutions by 2024.	Ethics	2024		Goal achieved.
Implement compliance policies at all institutions by 2024.	Ethics	2024		We have drafted a compliance statement that applies to all of our GUS Group policies.

Goal	Theme	Year*	Status	Comments
No students or employees affected by data breaches by 2024.	Ethics	2024		Goal achieved. Reworded for ongoing focus. 'Continue group-wide data breach strategy to safeguard data and minimise potential impacts.'
Distribute, educate and implement existing GUS Group bribery and Corruption Zero Tolerance policies at all institutions by 2024.	Ethics	2024		Goal achieved.
Establish Anti-Bribery, Anti-Corruption, Anti-Violence, Crime and Acts of Terrorism policies at all institutions by 2024.	Ethics	2024		Goal achieved.
Distribute, educate and implement existing GUS Group Code of Conduct Policy at all institutions by 2024.	Ethics	2024		Goal achieved.
Measure and report gender metrics for all GUS employees by 2025.	Equality	2025		Reworded to include ethnicity and a more realistic deadline. 'Implement an institution-wide process to measure and report gender and ethnicity metrics for all GUS Group and institution employees by 2026.'
Renovate and upgrade at least 80% of all education facilities to be disability, gender and religion sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive, and effective learning environments for all by 2025.	Equality	2025		Reworded for clarity and a more realistic deadline. 'Ensure at least 80% of all education facilities at GUS institutions are disability, gender and religion-sensitive and provide safe and inclusive learning environments by 2026.'

Goal	Theme	Year*	Status	Comments
Gender pay equity policy implemented at all GUS institutions by 2025.	Equality	2025		Reworded for clarity. 'Distribute, educate and implement existing GUS Group equal pay for equal work policy across all institutions by 2025.'
Measure and track GUS campuses' GHG scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 2025.	Environment	2025		Reworded for clarity and a more realistic deadline. 'All institutions to measure and track Scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions by 2026.'
Implement building practices on all of GUS institution campuses in line with LEED or BREEAM certification standards by 2025.	Environment	2025		Reworded for clarity. 'Retrofit existing buildings to increase energy efficiency and achieve LEED or BREEAM certification for all new constructions and major renovations on GUS institution campuses by 2030.'
Eliminate single-use plastics by 2025 across all campuses.	Environment	2025		In progress.
No monetary losses or claims submitted by anyone as a result of legal proceedings associated with advertising, marketing or miscommunication by 2025.	Ethics	2025		As we cannot control claims, we have instead put in place an ethical marketing policy to ensure best practices and mitigate false advertising claims. This goal is now part of our wider policy strategy.
Distribute, educate and implement existing GUS Group risk identification, mitigation, monitoring & reporting processes across all institutions by 2025.	Ethics	2025		Reworded for clarity. 'Educate all institutions on existing GUS Group environmental risk identification, mitigation, monitoring & reporting processes by 2025.'

Goal	Theme	Year*	Status	Comments
By 2026 all students enrolled in GUS institutions will have access to education on knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development.	Education	2026		In progress.
Provide access to affordable health and wellbeing services at 80% of GUS campuses by 2026.	Ethics	2026		In progress, plans to achieve baseline in 2025.
Implement processes to track eNPS, or other similar measure, across all institutions, achieving greater than 50 for all those that measure by 2027.	Ethics	2027		Reworded for clarity. 'Implement processes to track eNPS, or other similar measure, across all institutions, achieving greater than 50 for all those that measure by 2027.'
50% women in university leadership positions and senior academic roles across all campuses by 2030.	Equality	2030		We have expanded this goal to include ethnicity alongside gender, as well as rephrased it in order to be applicable to all of our GUS institutions, which span multiple geographies and cultures. In order to achieve this goal, we must first work on measurement and tracking, followed by updated recruitment and talent strategies. 'Achieve gender and ethnic balance across all boards, senior leadership positions and senior academic roles across GUS Group and institutions that reflect local demographic and cultural context by 2030.'
Percentage of ethnic minorities in leadership positions and senior academic roles will be in proportion to local population across all campuses by 2030.	Equality	2030		As above, this goal has been reworded. 'Achieve gender and ethnic balance across all boards, senior leadership positions and senior academic roles across GUS Group and institutions that reflects local demographic and cultural context by 2030.'

Goal	Theme	Year*	Status	Comments
50% female board members for GUS & GUS institutions by 2030.	Equality	2030		As above, this goal has been reworded. 'Achieve gender and ethnic balance across all boards, senior leadership positions and senior academic roles across GUS Group and institutions that reflects local demographic and cultural context by 2030.'
Retrofit existing buildings to increase energy efficiency by 2030.	Environment	2030		Reworded for clarity. 'Retrofit existing buildings to increase energy efficiency and achieve LEED or BREEAM certification for all new constructions and major renovations on GUS institution campuses by 2030.'
Decrease amount of waste going to landfill by 50% across all GUS institutions by 2030.	Environment	2030		In progress, plans to complete a waste audit across GUS Group and all GUS institutions by 2026.
Achieve pay equity across GUS institutions by 2035.	Equality	2035		Reworded for clarity and more ambitious deadline. 'Implement systems to track and assure we achieve and maintain pay equity across all employee levels, ensuring equal compensation for equal work while accounting for local market conditions and legal requirements by 2030.'
Ensure Fair Trade and ethical supply chains across all of GUS institutions by 2040.	Ethics	2040		Reworded for clarity. 'Ensure that all GUS institutions achieve and maintain Fair Trade certification, prioritising Fair Trade products across all applicable categories while implementing comprehensive ethical standards for all procurement by 2040.'
Carbon neutral across all institutions by 2040.* *(We acknowledge that these target dates and specific initiatives may vary across different geographical regions and may vary based on circumstances).	Environment	2040		Reworded for clarity. Achieve carbon neutrality across GUS Group and all institutions by 2040.



Disclaimer

While efforts have been made to ensure accuracy, the company cannot guarantee that all information is error-free.

Data Protection Statement

Global University Systems is committed to protecting and respecting privacy. Any personal data contained in this report has been collected, processed, and stored in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

This report may contain aggregated data or anonymised information that does not identify individuals. Where personal data is included, it has been done so with the consent of the individuals concerned or where we have a legitimate interest in doing so, always in compliance with applicable data protection laws.

For more information, go to www.globaluniversitysystems.com

© 2025, Global University Systems. All rights reserved.