



NUI Galway  
OÉ Gaillimh

# NUI GALWAY SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

Our journey towards a green, smart and healthy campus

## 2017-2020

learn live lead  
[www.nuigalway.ie/sustainability](http://www.nuigalway.ie/sustainability)



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NUI Galway recognises the importance of achieving environmental, social and economic sustainability. While we all have a role to play in building a sustainable society, universities have a particular responsibility to promote sustainability through education, knowledge exchange, research, corporate social responsibility and shaping future agendas. A sustainable campus is one which maintains a green and healthy environment, promotes resource efficiency and instils in graduates and staff the importance of tackling societal challenges.

The NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2017-2020 sets out a vision of establishing the University as a top-class green, smart and healthy campus. The Strategy outlines objectives and targets for the next three academic years as the first steps in the journey towards a sustainable campus as part of a transition towards a sustainable community. The Strategy was developed by the Community and University Sustainability Project over the past year, following a comprehensive and inclusive engagement process with the campus community, and aligns with the NUI Galway Strategic Plan, Vision 2020.

The Strategy is based on a Learn-Live-Lead model whereby we will build on our core strengths in teaching and research to learn about the environment and new techniques, analyse campus operations building performance and user habits to live more sustainability and connect to the broader community and other institutions to lead by example. Our Learn-Live-Lead model is organised around six themes (Research and Learning, Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Nature and Ecosystems, Health and Wellbeing, Built Environment, and Governance and Leadership), each comprising objectives and targets for our journey towards sustainability.

The Strategy identifies 20 measures for success, which serve as indicators for much more extensive work under each theme (see table overleaf) and an annual Sustainability Report will be produced outlining progress against targets. Good governance and continuous engagement with the campus community will ensure the effectiveness of this approach over three years. A rigorous process will be undertaken to review the Strategy, setting new objectives and targets, with a view to forming a subsequent 10-year strategy to 2030.



# NUI GALWAY'S COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABILITY



LEARN	LIVE	LEAD
<b>RESEARCH AND LEARNING</b> Sustainability in the lecture halls & beyond Research with impact	<b>ENERGY AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS</b> Energy reductions GHG emissions Renewable energy	<b>NATURE AND ECOSYSTEMS</b> Campus landscape design Conservation and education Biodiverse campus
	<b>HEALTH AND WELLBEING</b> Physical, mental and social wellbeing Food	<b>BUILT ENVIRONMENT</b> Water Waste Transport Accessibility
		<b>GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP</b> Vision 2020 Implementation Community engagement
REF	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	2020 TARGET
RL1	Measure and increase sustainability teaching programmes	Achieve by 2019
RL2	Establish staff sustainability development courses	Achieve by 2019
RL3	Develop sustainable event policy	Achieve by 2019
RL4	Sustainability - related research income	Increase by 15%
EN1	Total energy consumption	Reduce by 33%
EN2	Engagement in energy awareness campaigns	Increase by 100%
EN3	On-site renewable energy generation	Increase by 150%
NE1	Students undertaking field-based campus learning	Increase to 500 annually
NE2	Compile and implement a biodiversity management plan	Achieve by 2019
NE3	Based on NE2, actively conserve and enhance biodiversity	Achieve by 2020
HW1	Locations of facilities for cooking/heating food	Extend campus-wide
HW2	Implement and improve on Depression Anxiety Stress Scale	Achieve by 2018
HW3	Level of harmful drinking among students	Annual reduction
BE1	Total water consumption	Reduce by 20%
BE2	Recycling rate	Increase to 60%
BE3	Modal share of sustainable travel	Increase to 72%
GL1	Green Flag award	Achieve by 2018
GL2	Agree ethical investment policy	Achieve by 2018
GL3	Flagship project with Saolta, CHO2 and Galway City Council	Achieve by 2019
GL4	Seek to establish a Sustainability Office	Achieve by 2020





#### MEMBERS OF NUI GALWAY'S COMMUNITY AND UNIVERSITY SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT (CUSP):

Prof. Colin Brown, Ryan Institute; Prof. Pól Ó Dochartaigh, Registrar and Deputy President; Dr. Cairíona Carlin, Applied Ecology Unit; Dr. Frances Fahy, Geography; Prof. Martin Cormican, HSE/NUI Galway; Prof. Grace McCormack, Zoology; Dr. Audrey Morley, Geography; Dr. Dara Stanley, Botany and Plant Science; Dr. Maria Tuohy, Biochemistry; Ruth Hynes, Innovation and Engagement Officer; Bríd Seoige, Senior Marketing & Brand Officer; Dr. Jamie Goggins, Civil Engineering; Dr. Diarmuid O'Donovan, HSE/NUI Galway; John Hannon, Director, Student Services; Michael Curran, Buildings & Estate; Lorraine McIlrath, Community Knowledge Initiative; Lorraine Tansley, Community Knowledge Initiative; Aine Gallagher, Community Knowledge Initiative; Dr. Marcus Keane, Civil Engineering; Lorcán Ó Maoileannaigh, Student's Union President, NUI Galway; Theophile Lienhardt (Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security Society); Brendan Hallahan (Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security Society); Annika Hanke (Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security Society); Andrew Ó Donnghaile (Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security Society); Colm Duffy, Students' Union Postgraduate Officer; Anne Marie Forde, Buildings & Estate; Noel O'Connor, Buildings & Estate; Michelle O'Dowd Lohan, Sustainability Engagement; Adrienne Keane, Information Services and Solutions; Dr. Pat Morgan, Vice President for the Student Experience; An tUasal Gearóid Ó Broin, Financial Accounting/General Accounts; Dr. Gesche Kindermann, Microbiology; Prof. Antony Wheatley, Physiology; Dr. Eoghan Clifford, Civil Engineering; Dr. Richard Manton, Civil Engineering; John Gill, Chief Operating Officer; Dean Pearce, Buildings & Estate; Lorraine Rushe, Buildings & Estate; Deirdre Carroll, Buildings & Estate.

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

NUI Galway recognises the importance of achieving environmental, social and economic sustainability. While we all have a role to play in building a sustainable society, universities have a particular responsibility to promote sustainability through education, knowledge exchange, research, corporate social responsibility, building a circular economy and shaping future agenda. A sustainable campus is one which maintains a green and healthy environment, promotes resource efficiency and instils in students graduates and staff the importance of tackling societal challenges.

The NUI Galway Strategic Plan, Vision 2020, outlines a vision of 'creating a sustainable campus where all resources are used efficiently and where facilities are managed and services consolidated as efficiently as possible'. To develop and realise this vision, the Community & University Sustainability Project (CUSP) was established in 2015 under the direction of the Registrar and Deputy President. CUSP is supported by the University, Students' Union, Saolta University Healthcare Group, HSE Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) 2 and Galway City Council, and is funded through the Students' Projects Fund. The CUSP team is composed of more than 20 students and staff, from across the campus community and Galway University Hospitals.

We recognise the key role that students and staff will play in establishing a sustainable university as key developers and drivers of change. Students and staff best understand the challenges and opportunities for sustainable activities in their everyday lives. The CUSP Team undertook a comprehensive and inclusive engagement process over the past year, starting with generating awareness of sustainability, particularly among incoming first year students. A series of workshops and information sessions were organised across the Colleges and at various themed days on campus. These events were attended by approximately 1,000 students. A **sustainability website** was also launched.

We asked our students to provide initial feedback and ideas on campus sustainability, receiving approximately 1,000 responses. Two major themes of interest emerged: energy efficiency and sustainable drinking water. Based on these themes, demonstrator projects were developed to inspire sustainable behaviour change and pilot elements of the Sustainability Initiative. For example, the Battle of the Buildings Project aimed to make students and staff more aware of the energy use of campus buildings and to encourage energy-efficient behaviour through collegial competition.

A draft Sustainability Strategy was then developed by the CUSP Team, separating into thematic working groups and drawing on the initial engagement. This draft Strategy was circulated for campus-wide consultation, including delivery of the document to all students and staff by email, and targeted engagement with key stakeholders such as student representatives. We received a wealth of insightful opinions and ideas which were incorporated into a final version of the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2017-2020.

This Strategy sets out a vision of establishing NUI Galway as a leading green, smart and healthy campus. It is the first step in an ambitious vision of a sustainable campus as part of a transition towards a more sustainable community. The successful implementation of this Strategy will ensure that NUI Galway's reputation around the world is enhanced, that our graduates are valued for their world-readiness, that our research tackles societal challenges, and that our campus will be a role model for sustainability.

The Strategy outlines objectives and targets for the next three academic years under six themes as part of a Learn-Live-Lead model (see below). Each theme comprises objectives, targets and measures of success for our journey towards sustainability. An annual Sustainability Report will be produced outlining progress against targets. Good governance and continuous engagement with the campus community will ensure the effectiveness of this approach over three years. Approaching 2020, a rigorous process will be undertaken with a view to forming a subsequent 10-year strategy to 2030.



## OUR JOURNEY TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

### VISION

NUI Galway will become a top-class green, smart and healthy campus. Our students, graduates and staff will be increasingly valued for their world-readiness, our research will help to tackle societal challenges, and our campus will be a role model for the transition to a more sustainable future.

### MISSION-LEARN, LIVE, LEAD

We will build on its core strengths in teaching and research to learn about the environment and new techniques, analyse campus operations building performance and user habits to live more sustainability and connect to the broader community and other institutions to lead by example. Our mission is organised around six themes: Research and Learning, Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Nature and Ecosystems, Health and Wellbeing, Built Environment, and Leadership and Governance.

### VALUES

This Strategy is underpinned by the University's five core values:

- **Ambition** – we share a drive for excellence and leadership, working to a common purpose with confidence in our mission
- **Creativity** – inspired by our unique location, a distinctive spirit of creativity imbues everything we do
- **Impact** – our engagement and actions will make a meaningful difference in Galway, across the country, and around the world
- **Collaboration** – strong, mutually-beneficial partnerships are at the heart of our approach, as we engage locally and internationally
- **Integrity** – building on our rich heritage, we value openness, diversity and good citizenship

Moreover, the work of this Strategy will be engaging, holistic and inclusive; students and staff will be at the heart of the sustainability journey





Embedding sustainability in University research and learning is immensely important and goes to the very heart of what we do. We will work towards an internationally-acclaimed sustainability curriculum that is relevant to the needs of society and responsive to the changes taking place. An initial audit identified that NUI Galway currently offers **196 courses** covering environmental and/or sustainability issues, spanning all Colleges within and crossing disciplines as diverse as geography and engineering. We will continue to provide teaching and learning programmes that respond to societal needs and that educate students who will be valued for their world readiness.

We are committed to developing programme delivery methods that incorporate project-based and field-based learning, service learning and problem solving and aims to complement teaching and learning activities through external engagement with employers, alumni, mentors, practitioners and community partners. In addition, the campus acts as a living laboratory for student learning across a range of disciplines for applied research and teaching.

Our current research portfolio includes internationally-funded projects exploring issues ranging from socio-economic sustainable consumption research to engineering new marine renewable technologies that are socially and economically viable. NUI Galway researchers are actively working with local and regional authorities and local community groups on sustainability projects which feed into a range of sustainable development goals at the local, regional and national level, such as the *GreenMap for Galway* and the *Ecoscience Writers in Schools* Projects.

#### STRATEGIC AIM

Embed sustainability literacy into all aspects of learning and research, so that our entire campus community will gain the necessary knowledge and skills to become sustainability role models & leaders in their service to the outside world. Position our researchers to work to address some of the world's greatest sustainability challenges from energy security to food security to protecting endangered species.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Embed sustainability principles and practices into all programme delivery at all levels of research, learning and events
- Train students to tackle problems with interdisciplinary experience, scientific and technical understanding and social, ecological and equitable responsibility
- Further develop our baseline audit of environmental/sustainability courses on offer within the University and benchmark nationally and internationally. Promote and generate awareness of these courses
- Establish a dynamic database of our sustainability research initiatives and increase interdisciplinary collaboration
- Develop indicators for – and increase – the extent of our sustainability-related research, including funding awarded and impact achieved
- Facilitate collaborations to pilot and launch awareness of sustainability challenges and pathways to overcome them
- Future innovation programmes should ring-fence some funding for student sustainability start-up projects
- Offer the widest possible access to our sustainability research findings
- Offer interdisciplinary research opportunities in the field of sustainability, not only in Ireland but through our international networks

- Complement research and learning activities through external engagement with employers, alumni, practitioners, community and environmental partners
- Advance engaged teaching methods, incorporating project/field-based learning, service learning and problem solving
- Incorporate sustainability training into staff learning and development
- Ensure health and safety considerations underpin all university activities, including, for example, laboratory research and field-based learning. Workplace risk assessments will be conducted on a timely basis and in an appropriate fashion

REF	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	TARGET	OWNER
RL1	Measure and increase sustainability teaching programmes	By 2019	CELT
RL2	Establish staff sustainability development courses	By 2019	OSDO
RL3	Develop sustainable event policy	By 2019	Conf. Office
RL4	Sustainability - related research income	increase by 15%	Research





NUI Galway was awarded ISO 50001:2011 (Energy Management Systems) in 2012. This international energy management standard recognised our efforts to use energy more efficiently and to achieve continuous improvement of energy performance. NUI Galway is the first university in Ireland to join the Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland (SEAI) Sustainable Energy Communities (SEC) Network that embraces an inclusive and community approach across all sectors to develop a sustainable energy system.

We are committed to improved Energy Performance standards and goals as detailed in Vision 2020 and Ireland's Third National Energy Efficiency Action Plan. We will strive to lead by example to meet the highest energy management standards and be at the forefront of sustainable development as a standard bearer for good environmental and resource management. We aim to deliver on this commitment by promoting the concept of energy efficiency at all levels in the organisation from students and academics to admin staff and contractors.

We will implement a programme of continuous improvement of energy efficiency addressing the activities with most significant energy usage. We will develop energy conservation action plans and regularly assessing whether the objectives and targets are being met. We will provide our staff with the necessary awareness, education and training to implement this policy. We will ensure that adequate resources are deployed to enable the energy policy to be implemented. We will comply with all relevant energy legislation, legal and other requirements, that relate to the energy use consumption and efficiency. We will incorporate an energy efficiency evaluation dimension to the decision-making process relating to all future capital investments and facilitate upgrades and communicating this Energy Policy at all levels within the organisation.

#### STRATEGIC AIM

To lead the way in reducing energy consumption in new and refurbished buildings, measuring and reporting energy use, implementing energy saving initiatives, investing in renewable energy sources and reinvesting energy cost savings in new sustainability technologies.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Comply with legal requirements set out in Ireland's Third National Energy Efficiency Action Plan by improving energy efficiency by 33% by 2020
- Maintain certification to ISO50001:2011 through monitoring / measuring and reporting energy use, energy audits on buildings, identify and implement net present value positive energy conservation in our buildings
- Integrate energy policy on campus renovation strategy in current building stock based on current best practice and standards
- Implement energy-saving technologies, initiatives and equipment, invest in renewable energy sources and deliverables
- Investigate further reduction on reliability of oil, petroleum gas and diesel to more environmentally-friendly biomass, natural gas and wood chippings
- Develop a participatory approach among the entire campus community which focuses on energy reduction in our buildings. Use the support of Energy Champions and Energy Working Groups to implement behavioural change

- Become a research leader in the development of energy-saving technologies and renewable energy technologies
- Reinvest energy cost savings into new sustainability technologies
- Promote community building through a partnership approach where campus resources and expertise are shared with the local and wide community

REF	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	TARGET	OWNER
EN1	Total energy consumption	Reduce by 33%	Buildings
EN2	Engagement in energy awareness campaign	Increase by 100%	Buildings
EN3	On-site renewable energy generation	Increase by 150%	Buildings





Landscape, ecosystems and biodiversity are of significant environmental, economic, social and health value to students, staff and the wider community. The University boasts Ireland's most biodiverse campus and will continue to promote a healthier, more sustainable and green campus environment through, for example, a bee apiary, organic gardens, wildflower sites and fruit beds. We are committed to enhancing the student and staff awareness of biodiversity issues on campus and will promote the campus as an educational and recreational resource. Interacting with nature can benefit people's health and wellbeing; for example, respondents described time in nature as a time to de-stress, to relax with others, and feel restored. Being in natural environments can provide people with space to problem solve, demonstrate increased levels of cognition, and act with more kindness to others.

#### STRATEGIC AIM

To improve biodiversity and promote the benefits of interaction with nature.

#### OBJECTIVES

- To increase awareness of campus biodiversity from senior management to students to community, through teaching & research, web based information, walks, interpretation boards and signs
- Collaborate with Buildings & Estates/Communications to make information on habitat mapping, tree and river walks, Bioblitz records available online
- Engage with HR and Student Services to provide brief overview of campus biodiversity at staff induction training, student orientation and events, e.g. Biodiversity Action Fair. Record number attending each event
- Track teaching metrics to include no. of modules, credits, students who undertake field-based learning on campus each year (for example, 242 students from 5 courses used Dangan as a learning lab in 2015/16)
- Promote campus biodiversity through use of social media and monitor uses of Twitter hashtag etc
- To empower senior management to support and resource managing and enhancing nature on the campus which helps to deliver on our core objectives in providing first class facilities for our students to learn and work
- CUSP, College of Science (CoS), Buildings and Estates to collate habitat maps, surveys etc to map biodiversity sites on main campus
- Initiate long-term programme of surveys undertaken by students in collaboration with Buildings and Estates and other stakeholders, to identify and enhance biodiversity sites on campus
- Explore the opportunities to be gained by signing up to All-Ireland Pollinator Plan (includes guidance to maintain public manicured spaces and support biodiversity)
- Continue to explore viable effective alternatives including advice from existing initiatives such as the All Ireland Pollinator Plan with a view to achieving significant reduction in use of chemicals, in conjunction with impacts trials
- Continue to survey, identify and reduce invasive species. CoS to collaborate with Buildings & Estates to provide synopses of past treatments as exemplars. Publicise and extend biosecurity training for key staff and contractors for all invasive species
- Continue to mow high nature value areas less frequently and promote and extend this as good practice to allow plants flower and set seed

- To maintain a healthy campus (e.g. riverside walk) for people, nature, ecosystems to use and enjoy (in balance with the Sports Strategy and Masterplan Requirements up to and beyond 2020)
- Utilise campus biodiversity and campus mapping to actively seek to conserve biodiversity in all aspects of campus developments.
- Hold campus competitions to identify and implement actions to enhance amenity areas for biodiversity (e.g. herb walls, insect hotels, bird and batboxes)
- Buildings and Estates to investigate how to add outdoor meeting spaces to booking system. CoS to increase classes mapping/monitoring biodiversity enhanced areas

REF	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	TARGET	OWNER
NE1	Students undertaking field-based campus learning	500 p.a.	Colleges
NE2	Compile and implement a biodiversity management plan	By 2019	Buildings, CoS/Geog
NE3	Based on NE2 survey, actively conserve and enhance campus biodiversity	By 2020	Buildings, CoS, Senior Mg.





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## HEALTH & WELL BEING



The health of the campus community is one of the University's most valuable resources and we are focused on creating a healthier, happier and safer campus for students, staff and the wider community. While health and wellbeing is broad and multi-faceted, three priority areas have been identified for this three-year strategy: (i) safe and sustainable food, (ii) the delivery of visible supports and initiatives to strengthen mental health and resilience, and (iii) reducing alcohol and other substances misuse. This is based on the recognised ability of these areas to motivate action, the availability of data to measure progress, and their relevance as broad public health issues.

We will ensure that campus health and wellbeing aims and objectives are driven by a comprehensive health promoting framework supported by the principles of building policy, creating supportive environments, developing skills, reorienting services and strengthening community action.

We recognise the inter-linkages between health, environment, economy and society in the provision of a healthier campus. We also recognise the synergies between health and wellbeing and other areas of the Sustainability Strategy as well as a range of other related internal and external initiatives. For example, Nature and Ecosystems actively will support and promote the health benefits of interactions with nature; Built Environment will enhance campus health and wellbeing through accessibility, promotion of active transport, initiatives to prevent and reduce waste, implementation of clean energy systems, easy access to safe drinking water etc.

### STRATEGIC AIMS

- To create a healthier, more sustainable campus environment that is committed to the happiness, safety and wellbeing of all students and staff.
- Provide opportunities for healthy, safe and sustainable food and opportunities for physical activity.
- Strengthen mental health and resilience.
- Reduce alcohol and other substance misuse.
- Conduct an annual health and wellbeing survey.

### OBJECTIVES

#### 'Provide Healthy, Safe and Sustainable Food and opportunities for Physical Activity'

*Policy:* Develop and implement an NUI Galway Health Eating and Active Living Policy.

*Environment:* Work with Procurement Office and Catering Contractors to increase availability of healthy, sustainable, locally sourced, affordable and fairly traded food that will cater for our diverse campus community. Develop food growing initiatives on campus. Reduce food wastage and reuse as compost for food production in campus gardens.

*Skills:* Work with catering providers to improve consumer information, e.g. labelling, allergens, calorie posting. Improve student cooking skills. Provide workshops to students and staff on healthy, sustainable and safe eating, cooking and budgeting. Organise and implement cooking and food safety demonstrations.

*Services:* Provide supervised and maintained facilities for students and staff for cooking/heating food produced at home. Provide supervised student kitchen for use by relevant student societies. Provide facilities to accommodate breastfeeding and education and awareness to support breastfeeding. Provide opportunities to enable physical activity.

*Community:* Establish partnerships and linkages with local and national bodies to encourage participation and leadership by students and staff in relevant campaigns and initiatives that promote healthy eating as an integral part of sustainable and healthy living.

## 'Strengthen Mental Health and Resilience'

**Policy:** Update and implement the NUI Galway Mental Health Strategy. Implement the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale, measure progress and achieve improvement year-on-year. Work with the Health and Safety Office to develop risk assessments that include assessments of stressors in the work environment.

**Environment:** Provide information on maintenance and supports for mental health and wellbeing. Provide support to staff when dealing with students or colleagues with mental health issues. Provide support to improve financial wellbeing, promote the Financial Aid Fund and other sources of student funding to ensure student retention and progression. Promote mindfulness and access to facilities for physical activity for all including indoor and outdoor gym facilities, to support overall wellbeing.

**Skills:** Increase the delivery of workshops and education and training programmes on mental health issues. Incorporate mental health and wellbeing information into orientation programming for new students and staff. Empower student groups to improve their capacity to deliver mental health and wellness programmes.

**Services:** Provide comprehensive, integrated and responsive mental health services. Encourage early access to services and promote services. Ensure the necessary staffing resources are allocated and available to meet student and staff mental health needs.

**Community:** Increase student and staff participation in university societies and clubs, in exercise and physical activities and in wider community and outreach activities all as mechanisms to promote and improve mental health.

## 'Reduce Alcohol and other substances misuse'

**Policy:** Review, revise and implement the NUI Galway Alcohol Policy and implement a smoke-free campus by 2021. Address the issue of excessive alcohol consumption among students by achieving REACT (Responding to Excessive Alcohol Consumption in Third Level) Accreditation. Reduce availability of alcohol by reviewing policies related to sale and access. Reduce level of harmful drinking among students as measured by the Alcohol Disorder Identification Test.

**Environment:** Provide a supportive environment to students and staff that seek to reduce alcohol and other substance misuse. Have alcohol counselling available for students and staff and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings available on campus.

**Skills:** Increase student knowledge and awareness of harmful alcohol consumption and other substance misuse.

**Services:** Deliver preventive campaigns and initiatives, target the campus community and student body as a whole and place particular focus on higher risk groups such as incoming first year students. Implement and promote visible and accessible referral pathways to support services. Ensure the necessary staffing resources are allocated and available to support students and staff that seek to reduce alcohol and other substance misuse.

**Community:** Strengthen internal and external partnerships to monitor and respond to instances of alcohol and substance misuse.

REF	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	TARGET	OWNER
HW1	Locations of facilities for cooking/heating food	Extend Campus wide	Student Services
HW2	Implement and improve on Depression Anxiety Stress Scale	Achieve by 2018	Student Services
HW3	Asses levels of alcohol consumption and harmful drinking to enable evaluation of interventions	Annual reduction in harmful drinking	Student Services





NUI Galway is one of Ireland's fastest expanding campuses, investing over €400 million in new buildings and facilities, increasing floor-space by 50% over the last 10 years. As the University continues to develop, so does our potential to impact on land, water and air. We are committed to creating a campus that will have a positive impact on the surrounding environment, promoting resource efficiency, reducing pollution and protecting historic areas of the campus. We will continue to implement universal accessibility measures to enable all of the community to participate independently.

#### WATER

We are committed to the effective and efficient use of water, a key natural resource, throughout the campus and the appropriate treatment, management and disposal of wastewater. The University will reduce water usage and increase the use of reclaimed water through a series of measures including water leakage detection and repair programme, education and outreach, process related efficiency measures, greywater and rainwater harvesting.

#### STRATEGIC AIMS

To minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of water usage by reducing university-wide water usage, increasing the use of reclaimed water and reduce bottled water consumption on campus.

#### OBJECTIVES

- To ensure NUI Galway makes the most effective and efficient use of clean water and ensure we do not wastefully use clean potable water in our Estates Operations
- Consider the introduction of rainwater harvesting systems in new buildings and buildings being retrofitted under the Regeneration scheme
- Installation of water-saving devices in laboratories, kitchens, workshops and WC facilities across the campus

#### WASTE

We are committed to preventing and reducing waste and managing waste in a sustainable way that improves resource efficiency, reduces cost and protects health and the environment. NUI Galway adopts the ambitious goal of sending zero waste to landfill to be achieved by maximising recycling and re-use and reducing quantities of incoming waste.

#### STRATEGIC AIMS

Minimise the local, regional and global environmental impacts of our waste by developing policies and procedures that focus on reducing the amount of waste generated on campus and diverting waste from landfill.

Engage with the entire campus community to reduce waste generated and promote recycling.

#### OBJECTIVES

- Increase the recycling rate from 51% to 60% by 2020 and to 70% by 2025 ahead of the EU Commission's objective to reach the same target by 2030
- Ensure that recycling facilities are provided at all waste disposal points
- Ensure the correct segregation, packaging, labelling and storage of hazardous waste on campus. Where possible, reduce quantities of hazardous waste being produced
- Work with catering contractors to reduce quantities of waste arising from disposable food packaging items e.g. coffee cups, plates, cutlery etc. Promote discounts available for using reusable cups etc.
- Expand the binless office campaign 'Bin the Bin' across campus by 2020 to facilitate efficient segregation and recycling of waste and to reduce waste production

- Conduct an extensive awareness program for the campus population to publicise waste data and success stories and to promote the use of targets by individual buildings or campus zones
- Promote the same principles for use in procurement and contract arrangements with commercial units operating on campus

## TRANSPORT

Unsustainable transport and travel patterns have a negative impact on human health and the environment. Increased reliance on single-occupancy vehicle is leading to localised traffic pollution and congestion, inactive forms of transport contribute to obesity and continued dependence on imported fossil fuels in the transport sector. This Strategy is linked to the NUI Galway Travel Plan 2016-2020, through which the University commits to promoting sustainable travel options. Currently, 72% staff and 27% students travel to campus by car and these levels have been increasing since 2014. Meanwhile, 27% staff and 73% students travel by sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport

## STRATEGIC AIM

To cater for the travel needs of University staff and students, and to encourage sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

## OBJECTIVES

- Increase walking and cycling through enhancing on-site cycle facilities, and working in partnership with Galway City Council/National Transport Authority to address deficiencies in Galway City's pedestrian and cycle network
- Increase public transport use through working in partnership with Galway City Council/National Transport Authority to enhance bus service provision, access to bus services and bus service/timetable information
- Facilitate future growth of the University and increased travel demand by reducing single-occupancy car journeys to the University, and in particular to the southern campus, through promotion of more sustainable travel choices
- Ensure that University buildings and facilities are designed to allow for safe and comfortable access to all people, including those with visual, mobility and other impairments. Develop plans to further renovate suitable existing buildings to this standard
- Promote physical activity by running active travel campaigns such as pedometer and cycle challenges, fun runs, bike maintenance classes etc.
- Establish a Travel Plan Working Group and strengthen links with the NTA Smarter Travel Campus unit as a means of implementing these objectives
- Explore upgrading university transport fleet with electric or hybrid vehicles
- Enhance web/video conferencing facilities to discourage air travel. Investigate travel booking procedures that require purchase of certified ethical carbon emission offsets of the greenhouse gas emissions from air travel

REF	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	TARGET	OWNER
BE1	Total water consumption	Reduce by 20%	Buildings
BE2	Recycling rate	Increase to 60%	Buildings
BE3	Modal share of sustainable travel	Increase to 72%	Buildings





Moving towards sustainability will require long-term cultural change driven by system-wide engagement, strong governance and committed leadership. This Strategy builds on the vision and targets outlined in the ambitious NUI Galway Strategic Plan, Vision 2020. The University is committed to embedding the principles of sustainability throughout the institution, from teaching and research to operation and investments.

The next three years present major opportunities for the University, Galway City and the wider region through the Green Leaf 2017, Region of Gastronomy 2018 and European Capital of Culture 2020 designations. We will scale our sustainability successes beyond the campus boundaries, acting as a role model for neighbouring communities, other national bodies and our international partners.

### STRATEGIC AIMS

To embed the vision and objectives of this Strategy throughout the University, ensuring its effective and inclusive implementation. To show leadership in the transition to a more sustainable future by promoting sustainability scholarship, social justice, human rights and global citizenship as graduate and staff attributes, building practical partnerships with communities and other organisations and achieving public sector targets.

### OBJECTIVES

- Build on the work of the Community & University Sustainability Project Team to coordinate the implementation of this Strategy. Ensure that the Team continues to represent the diverse campus population by including representatives from student organisations, academic staff, support and service staff, and University management. Link with other university policies such as Human Rights Principles and Code of Practice
- Establish representative sub-groups to coordinate the work of each of the thematic areas outlined in this Strategy. Their work will include: engagement, creating action plans, measuring progress against targets, reporting and dissemination
- Implement an ethical investment policy, including divestment from fossil fuels, building on the work of the Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security Society and the commitment by University management to examine divestment
- Include Corporate Social Responsibility Statement as part of NUI Galway's Annual Financial Statements
- Achieve international recognition for progress on sustainability, including participation in international green ranking systems, such as UI Green Metric, and national recognition through the An Taisce Green Campus Green Flag
- Demonstrate leadership at the regional and national levels by promoting partnerships with key stakeholders. This will include rolling out a flagship project with Saolta University Healthcare Group, HSE Community Healthcare Organisation 2, and Galway City Council
- Work with our partners to raise major national issues affecting student and staff health and wellbeing

- The University Procurement & Contracts Office (PCO) note the content of Green Tenders, the Government's Action Plan on Green Public Procurement. The PCO will include environment, social and economic criteria in the selection of providers for goods and services where appropriate
- Develop a system of measurement for sustainability in procurement. For example, all future catering tenders could include provision for self-catering for students and staff
- Seek to establish a Sustainability Office, following the normal process for the establishment, staffing and funding of any new initiative

REF	MEASURE OF SUCCESS	TARGET	OWNER
GL1	Fossil fuel free investment policy	By 2018	CUSP
GL2	Green Flag award	By 2018	UMT
GL3	Flagship project with Saolta, CHO2 and City Council	By 2019	CUS
GL4	Seek to establish a Sustainability Office	By 2020	UMT



## COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

The engagement of the campus community and other stakeholders in the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2017-2020 is vital to its success. Our students and staff are our greatest resource, brimming with ideas, enthusiasm and expertise. We will ensure that there are continuous opportunities for active involvement in the implementation and governance of this Strategy, including through thematic working groups and campaigns. We will effectively communicate each action and success, aiming to raise awareness, influence attitudes and transform behaviour.

Community engagement is at the heart of NUI Galway's sustainability journey. We will foster sustainability-related community-university partnerships and promote greater civic engagement through service learning, volunteering and outreach, student work experience, student-staff collaborations, and satellite campus projects.

### OBJECTIVES

- Identify key stakeholders and audiences, creating a community of engaged individuals and groups
- Include all of our campus communities, from Shannon to Sligo, from An Cheathrú Rua to Gaith Dobhair
- Provide continuous opportunities for involvement through working groups, speak outs, workshops, satellite campus visits and networking
- Develop and hone key messages and marketing materials
- Work with Internal Communications to develop a bi-annual sustainability e-newsletter
- Proffer training and development as necessary to various audiences
- Utilise social media to disseminate key messages and activity updates; develop a co-ordinated social media and traditional media awareness campaign
- Develop the NUI Galway Sustainability website and other online platforms to showcase activities and act as a central knowledge base and hub
- Align the identity / brand of the University with the concept of sustainability

A rigorous communications and engagement process will be undertaken to review the NUI Galway Sustainability Strategy 2017-2020, setting new objectives and targets, with a view to forming a subsequent 10-year strategy to 2030.

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For background notes on this Strategy, including a glossary and references, please see: [www.nuigalway.ie/sustainability](http://www.nuigalway.ie/sustainability)

