

# International Higher Education Declaration to Support the Implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

*November, 2018*

It has been three years since UN General Assembly adopted through consensus 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to be achieved by 2030. Progress in achieving these goals so far has been slow and siloed.

These goals, and associated 169 targets, refer to a comprehensive reform and development agenda for all peoples in all countries of the world. 'Leave no one behind' is not merely a slogan, but also commitment made by all national governments to each other, and the citizens of the world. As universal goals, they apply to all countries, communities and households.

While history has positioned HEI as key drivers of change, conversations about SDGs in higher education institutions (HEIs) have not been robust and sustained so far. We believe it is now urgent that HEIs lead on the implementation of the SDGs, through research, teaching and learning, industry and civil and community engagement, thereby taking on a stewardship role towards achievement worldwide.

We call upon Higher Education leaders worldwide, students, policy makers, research funding agencies, academics, industry and civic society partners to commit to collaboration, cooperation and action on the following 10 Point Plan:

1. Address the Sustainable Development Goals through informed research and innovation initiatives that provide new or improved product, process, practice or policy;
2. Work with national Government agencies responsible for the implementation of the SDGs to ensure cooperation, implementation progression and impact;
3. Incentivise and build capacity across the higher education sector and local communities for knowledge exchange to address the SDGs;
4. Undertake a review of policy, infrastructure and protocols on campus to embed a culture and practice of 'Reduce, Reuse, Recycle';
5. Introduce approaches to the study of the SDGs across programs at undergraduate and graduate levels;
6. Engage research funding agencies to address the SDGs through funding for community-university transdisciplinary teams, involving civil society and industry;

7. Promote personal reflection of students and faculty to take responsibility and action towards achievement in their own families and communities;
8. Demonstrate University Social Responsibility by adopting and championing SDGs as basis of a 'good public institution' anchored in society and by giving visibility to examples where this action has been taken;
9. Monitor progress towards achieving the SDGs in community-based and engaged research, teaching and learning across cities, provinces, countries and globally;
10. Develop a strategy to lobby conference organizers nationally and internationally to include SDGs in conference themes and call for presentations in cooperation with UNESCO offices, its specialised institutes and UNESCO Commissions.

We believe that the combined intellectual, financial and physical resources of HEIs with academics, policy makers, funders, administrators and students when linked to community partners can have a significant positive impact on the implementation on the SDGs globally.

**Signed**

- Asia Pacific University Community Engagement Network
- Association of Commonwealth Universities
- Association of Indian Universities
- Campus Engage
- Global University Network for innovation
- International Association of Universities
- Living Knowledge Network
- PASCAL International Observatory
- The Talloires Network
- UNESCO Chair in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education
- Indian Association of Universities
- Pan African Vision for the Environment
- Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement (JVE) International in Togo
- United Nations Environment Programme in Mauritius
- Entrepreneurship Development and Support Initiative (EDASI)