



Green Gown Awards International

PRESS RELEASE

**Embargo – Thursday 6th November 2014
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Global sustainability awarded in tertiary education

The International Green Gown Awards were announced on 6th November at the ACTS Conference in Tasmania, Australia. Tertiary education institutions from Australasia, the United Kingdom, France, Switzerland, Belgium and Luxembourg went head to head to win coveted International Awards.

RMIT University (Australia) was awarded the Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change Award for their vision of shaping sustainable cities. **Hull College (UK)** won the Social Responsibility Award for their inspiring project to transform derelict properties and **Manchester Metropolitan University (UK)** won the Student Engagement Award for their passionate student-led food network.

The winners were announced at a prestigious Awards evening at the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Hobart, featuring the national Green Gown Awards Australasia ceremony. The Awards, presented by Senator Christine Milne, Leader of the Australian Greens, was a night for celebrating the extraordinary sustainability achievements across our campuses.

The International Green Gown Awards recognise exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken by further and higher education institutions. The Awards cover all aspects of institutional activities – from their teaching and research, leadership, buildings and food to how students can benefit from the quality of life in the communities around them. The Awards are judged by an esteemed panel of sector representatives and experts in their own field. The judging criteria is based on the sustainability projects as a whole with the deciding factor being the project with the largest scale of impact.

The Green Gown Awards are delivered regionally with the winners from each of the regions going head-to-head for the coveted International titles. A snapshot of the international Winners follows:

Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change – RMIT University (Australia) – with “Shaping sustainable cities”. RMIT’s vision is to be urban in orientation and creativity, shaping sustainable cities and drawing inspiration from the challenges and opportunities they provide.

Social Responsibility – Hull College (UK) with “East Hull Voids transform lives”. The project supports families in-need by transforming run-down and derelict properties into modern and affordable homes in the community.

Student Engagement – Manchester Metropolitan University (UK) with “MetMUnch”. A student-led food network with a passion for food! Capturing a zeitgeist for ‘popup’ sustainable food events, it brings affordable, nutritional, local and sustainable food to student communities and beyond.

The Australasia Awards are now in their 5th year. Delivered by Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS), President Leanne Denby says, *“The success and reach of the International Green Gown Awards continues to go from strength to strength. As always, ACTS is delighted to be a part of this fabulous mechanism for recognising and rewarding the excellent work of institutions from across Australia, New Zealand, the UK and now French-speaking Europe. Recognising the ongoing and impactful efforts of institutions in the sector is so important, as it shows that tertiary education is committed to sustainability and the place we have in changing unsustainable paradigms and thinking.”*

The UK Awards are delivered by the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC). Now in their 10th year, the national winners were recently announced at The University of Manchester, England on Monday 3 November. Chief Executive, Iain Patton, describes the importance of the International Green Gown Awards, *“The ethos of the Green Gown Awards has always been to ensure that we learn from each other and help our universities and colleges improve but most importantly we seek to engage and enthuse our students in searching for solutions to the problems we as citizens of a small shared planet have created. The International Green Gown Awards share the great practice that is taking place across the globe.”*

2014 has seen the Green Gown Awards go truly global. With the launch of the inaugural French-speaking Green Gown Awards, which are open to all French speaking universities and colleges, schools and specialised institutes in France, Belgium, Switzerland and Luxembourg, Pauline Pingusson from Campus Responsables, delivery partner for the French-speaking Green Gown Awards, says *“We are very happy to offer French-speaking campuses the opportunity to be part of this great event and to promote actions led by French-speaking campuses, on a national, but also European and international scale. We are convinced that sharing experiences and best practices is the key to making tertiary education more sustainable.”*

Building on this momentum, saw the signing of a unique agreement with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The partnership with UNEP will expand the International Green Gown Awards further across the globe with an emphasis on profiling and learning from the Southern Hemisphere. This exciting partnership will put universities and colleges as leaders in sustainability as well as being able to continue their learning from global leaders.

END

Notes to the Editor

International Green Gown Awards & UK Green Gown Awards Media contact : Helen Exton, greengown@eauc.org.uk, +44 (0)7531 244208

Media pack: http://www.eauc.org.uk/gga_media_pack

Regional Media contact – Green Gown Awards Australasia: Sue Hopkins, ggaa@acts.asn.au

Regional Media contact - French speaking Green Gown Awards: Pauline Pingusson, Pauline@grainesdechangement.com

About the International Green Gown Awards:

The Green Gown Awards are delivered on a regional basis in Australasia, UK and French-speaking Europe. The winners of each region go head to head for the coveted International Green Gown Awards. The Green Gown Awards were founded by HEEPI (UK), and are administered by an International Steering Group. The Green Gown Awards open regionally in Spring 2015. Further information is available on each regional website.

Visit the showcase of 160+ case studies and videos from past Green Gown Awards' winners, highly commended and finalists <http://sustainabilityexchange.ac.uk/about/green-gown-awards/about>

About ACTS (Australasia):

The Australasian Awards are managed by Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) and are governed by a cross sector steering group. ACTS is a non-profit member based organisation representing higher and further education institutions within Australia and New Zealand. ACTS aim to inspire, promote and support change towards best practice sustainability within the operations, curriculum and research of the tertiary education sector. Further information at <http://www.acts.asn.au/>

ACTS best practice portal: www.acts.asn.au/initiatives/ggaa/sharing-awards-success/

About Campus Responsables (France):

The French speaking Green Gown Awards are being delivered by, Campus Responsables. The Campus Responsables 'initiative' was created in 2006 to encourage and assist integration of sustainable development into educational institutions programs and the management of their infrastructure. Campus Responsables is the first network of universities and colleges focussing on sustainable development, with 40 member initiative institutions throughout France and Belgium. Campus Responsables are also working with our partners at [UNICA](#) as part of their [UGAF \(UNICA Green Academic Footprint\)](#) initiative. UNICA is a network of 46 universities from 35 capital cities of Europe, with a combined strength of over 150,000 staff and 1,800,000 students. Further information at <http://www.campusresponsables.com/>

About the EAUC (UK):

With a membership of over 230 universities and colleges, the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) is the sustainability champion for universities and colleges in the UK. Run by members, for its members, the EAUC seeks to work with members and partners to drive sustainability to the heart of further and higher education. For more information, visit www.eauc.org.uk.

International Green Gown Awards 2014 – International Winners and Finalists are:

Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change - supported by Fondation Egis

RMIT University (Australasia) – *International Winner*

Finalists

Ecole des Mines de Douai (France)

University of Strathclyde (UK)

Social Responsibility – supported by Veolia

Hull College (UK) – *International Winner*

Finalists

Lille Catholic University (France)

University of Western Sydney (Australasia)

Student Engagement – supported by Green Steps, Ricard and Scottish Funding Council

Manchester Metropolitan University (UK) – *International Winner*

Finalists

Macquarie University (Australasia)

Redbridge Institute of Adult Education (UK)

The University of Lausanne (UNIL) (Switzerland)