



# Green Gown Awards International

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**PRESS RELEASE**

## Global Awards for Sustainability Leadership

The winners of the International Green Gown Awards were announced on 26<sup>th</sup> November at the Green Gown Awards Ceremony which took place at Brunel's Old Station, Bristol, United Kingdom. Tertiary education institutions from the United Kingdom, Australasia and French speaking regions in Europe and Canada, went head-to-head to win these coveted International Awards.

Building on this momentum, and the signing of a unique agreement with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), this is expanding the Green Gown Awards further across the globe with an emphasis on profiling and learning from the Southern Hemisphere. This exciting partnership with the Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES) will put universities and colleges as leaders in sustainability as well as being able to continue their learning from global leaders. The GUPES Green Gown Awards will be open to GUPES Members across 6 regions (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and West Asia) and will open for applications in March 2016.

**De Montfort University (UK)** won the Community Innovation Award with "OASYS South Asia" and their inspiring project providing solar energy opportunities to off-grid rural communities; **Université Laval (Canada)** was awarded the Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change Award for their community-wide approach and vision of sustainable development and **Edinburgh College (UK)** won the Student Engagement Award with their thriving community gardens project showing strong commitment, great curriculum links and offering a big impact and outreach.

Hosted by Pauline Pingusson from Campus Responsables, delivery partner for Les Trophées des campus responsables, and Iain Patton from the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC), the International Green Gown Awards were announced via live video streaming to enable the finalists worldwide to see the winners announced.

A snapshot of the International Green Gown Award Winners:

**Community Innovation International Green Gown Award – De Montfort University (UK) with “OASYS South Asia - solar energy providing opportunities to off-grid rural communities”.** The project undertook demonstrations of off-grid options using solar PV-based mini/micro grid systems at four locations in India. It provided access to basic lighting and mobile phone charging facilities as well as supporting use of electricity for productive, educational, and social purposes.

**Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change International Green Gown Award - Université Laval (Canada) with “At Université Laval, I’m for SD!”** Université Laval takes a structured, community-wide approach to sustainable development to get tangible, scalable results that are incorporated into its organisational strategies and processes. The Sustainable Development Policy adopted in 2008 ensures integration of the institution’s values into its sustainable development activities as well as consistent action.

**Student Engagement International Green Gown Award – Edinburgh College (UK) with Edinburgh Community Gardens and Orchards”.** Edinburgh College has built up two thriving community gardens at opposite ends of the city of Edinburgh, and is also in the process of developing four community orchards. Starting in 2012 as part of a student-led project, the community gardens have developed into an important college and community resource.

More details on each of these remarkable projects, together with the judges’ comments are to be found in the International Green Gown Awards Winners’ Brochure at [www.greengownawards.org](http://www.greengownawards.org).

The UK Awards are delivered by the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC). Now in their 11<sup>th</sup> year, the UK winners were announced prior to the International Green Gown Awards. Its Chief Executive, Iain Patton, describes the importance of the International Green Gown Awards, *“The power and value of the International Green Gown Awards is that across the planet we learn so much from each other. We are citizens of a small shared planet and it is the job of universities, colleges and our students to solve the social, economic and environmental problems which affect us all. As the International Green Gown Awards grow, so do our opportunities to learn, share and improve our quality of life.”*

The Australasia Green Gown Awards are now in their 6<sup>th</sup> year. Delivered by Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS), President Leanne Denby says *“ACTS is delighted to be a part of the International Green Gown Awards; a truly fabulous mechanism for recognising and rewarding the excellent work of institutions from across Australia, New Zealand, the UK and French-speaking Europe and Canada. The Awards recognise the ongoing and impactful efforts of institutions within the sector, demonstrating that tertiary education is committed to sustainability and plays an important role in changing unsustainable paradigms and thinking. It’s no surprise to see the success and reach of the Awards continue to go from strength to strength.”*

With last year’s launch of the French-speaking Green Gown Awards and its inclusion of French-speaking Canada in 2015, the Green Gown Awards are going truly global. Open to all French speaking universities and colleges, schools and specialised institutes in France, Belgium,

Switzerland, Luxembourg, and French-speaking Canada, Pauline Pingusson from Campus Responsables, delivery partner for the French-speaking Green Gown Awards, says *“This second edition of the French-speaking Green Gown Awards was extremely rewarding. Campus Responsables is very proud to support the event in the French-speaking campuses from Europe and Canada. This expansion across the Atlantic is a strong sign that sustainable development and sustainable campuses are not just a trend but a structural change for higher education. French-speaking campuses are happy to be part of the Green Gown Awards community and to share their actions within this global movement.”*

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.

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**Notes to the Editor**

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## **International Green Gown Awards 2015 –**

### **An overview of International Winners and Finalists:**

**Community Innovation** – supported by InnuScience (UK) and Veolia (France)

De Montfort University (UK) – *International Winner*

**Finalists**

Institut Polytechnique LaSalle-Beauvais (France)

La Trobe University (Australasia)

**Continuous Improvement: Institutional Change** - supported by Fondation Egis (France)

Université Laval (Canada) – *International Winner*

**Finalists**

Durham University (UK)

University of Melbourne (Australasia)

**Student Engagement** – supported by Ricard (France) and Scottish Funding Council (UK)

Edinburgh College (UK) – *International Winner*

**Finalists**

James Cook University (Australasia)

Ecole Nationale Veterinaire de Toulouse (France)

#### **About the International Green Gown Awards:**

The Green Gown Awards are delivered on a regional basis in Australasia, UK and French-speaking Europe and Canada. 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 the spring of each year. Further information is available on each regional website.

Visit the showcase of 360+ case studies and videos from past Green Gown Awards' winners, highly commended and finalists <http://sustainabilityexchange.ac.uk/about/green-gown-awards/about>

#### **About the EAUC (UK):**

The UK Green Gown Awards and the International Green Gown Awards are delivered by the EAUC. 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](http://www.eauc.org.uk).

#### **About ACTS (Australasia):**

The Australasian Green Gown 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/](http://www.acts.asn.au/initiatives/ggaa/sharing-awards-success/)

#### **About Campus Responsables (France):**

The French speaking Green Gown Awards, Les Trophées des campus responsables, are delivered by Campus Responsables. This network 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 network is 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 UNEP & GUPES (Global):**

The Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability (GUPES), is one of the flagship programmes of UNEP's Environmental Education and Training. GUPES was launched in 2012, on the way leading up to Rio+20, to deliberate UNEP's escalated engagement with universities for mainstreaming education for environment and sustainability around the world. It builds on the successes of the Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in African Universities (MESA), the nascent Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability in the Caribbean Universities (MESCA) and the Asia-Pacific Regional University Consortium (RUC). At present, over 670 universities from five continents are part of the growing GUPES network. Further information at <http://www.unep.org/training/programmes/gupes.asp>

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