

# Making a strategic case for the Living Lab

Liz Cooper, Research and Policy Manager,  
Department for Social Responsibility and  
Sustainability, University of Edinburgh



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# Key areas for this session – from responsive to strategic

- Keeping track of Living Lab projects – building up a database
- Getting more academics involved
- Getting more operations staff involved
- Senior management buy-in



# University of Edinburgh example



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# SRS areas for the University



Climate change



Sustainable estates



Sustainable procurement,  
fair trade and supply  
chains



Responsible  
investment



SRS in learning  
and teaching



Fair employer and  
equality and diversity  
issues



Widening  
participation



Community  
engagement



Public  
engagement



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# Establishing the case: LL research project 2015

- Commissioned in 2015 to clarify the approach and potential for upscaling it
  - Find out what LL work happening across University
  - Included interviews with academic and professional staff, student focus group
  - Found significant interest, but limited understanding of term LL, and barriers e.g. lack of time; how to build links between research and operations; lack of senior awareness/buy-in

Available at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/about/sustainability/themes/research-teaching/the-university-as-a-living-lab>



# Our LL definition

- *'For us, treating the University as a Living Lab means using our own academic and student research capabilities to solve social responsibility and sustainability issues relating to our infrastructure and practices. Collaborative Living Lab projects can provide answers and guidance for operations and professional services staff, real-life learning opportunities for students, and opportunities for research impact for academics.'*
- How to go beyond a few ad hoc projects?



# Engaging more academics – in a more strategic way

- SRS Academic Network – making known our interest to collaborate
- Themed LL meetings for network
- Approaching individual course leaders re specific projects
- Paper to Learning & Teaching Committee



# Engaging more operations staff

- Formal briefing papers on specific project outcomes and recommendations
- Invite operations to student project presentations
- Engage senior operations through committees
- Continue to solicit their project needs





# Senior leadership

- Why needed?

Enables operations to devote time to LL projects	Potential funding source
Encourages academic involvement in LL	Increases visibility if embedded in strategies

- Senior buy-in at Edinburgh:

- Close links with Assistant Principal – LL champion
- Academic leads – Edinburgh Living Lab
- Buy-in from some corporate services directors
- Term ‘living lab’ now in University Strategic Plan *‘Edinburgh is a living lab for our research and is an open classroom for our students to develop and apply their skills’* (p.5) (has been in SRS Strategies since 2010)



# 2017: guidance and database

- Improving web content to facilitate more involvement:
  - **Guidance on:**
    - Identifying a project
    - Forming a partnership
    - Data
    - Ethics
    - Ensuring longevity
  - **Case studies** – ongoing collation
  - **Database of past projects and research needs**



# Future LL aspirations

- LL in job descriptions and inductions
- Data Governance Policy
- Tapping into more funding opportunities – collaborations with academics

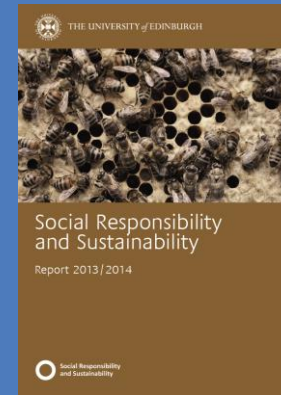


# Questions?

Liz.Cooper@ed.ac.uk

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# Exercise 1

Q. What approaches have you taken/what ideas do you have regarding creating a Living Lab project/project ideas database?

Q. What needs to be considered? What are the challenges?



# Exercise 2

Q. How can you strategically engage more academics in the LL in your institution?

Q. How can you engage more operations staff in the LL in your institution?



# Exercise 3

Q. What reaction do senior managers/university leaders have to the LL concept in your institution?

Q. What approaches have you taken/could be taken to convince senior managers of benefits of LL approach?

