

SDG Accord

The University and College Sector's Collective Response to the Sustainable Development Goals



“Ours can be the first generation to end poverty – and the last generation to address climate change before it is too late.”

Ban-Ki Moon former UN Secretary-General

"In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, world leaders resolved to free humanity from poverty, secure a healthy planet for future generations, and build peaceful, inclusive societies as a foundation for ensuring lives of dignity for all.

This collective journey has at its heart a promise to leave no one behind.

The 2030 Agenda is deliberately ambitious and transformational, with a set of 17 integrated and indivisible Sustainable Development Goals and targets to guide us, but the clock is ticking.

Our challenge now is to mobilize action that will bring these agendas meaningfully and tangibly to life."

Antonio Guterres, From the UN SDG Report 2017



The Unique Role of Universities and Colleges

Universities and colleges recognise our unique role in fostering and empowering youth as a force for change, and in fulfilling the urgent need for new knowledge, rigorous debate and critical academic engagement to support the SDGs. The SDGs can inspire our teaching and learning with their goal of education, for all, for sustainable development.

The SDGs can be a focus for our research: this vision of a fair future for our shared planet generates an agenda of innovation and discovery, but also scrutiny and challenge. The SDGs offer a catalyst for engagement beyond our institutions, with policymakers and publics alike. But they also provide an opportunity to turn our gaze inwards, striving for inclusion, equity and sustainability in all aspects of our operations. In our collaborative endeavours towards common goals, Universities and colleges embody the spirit of the SDGs.

We recognise our potential as agents of change for sustainable development - at the heart of local communities, and as part of national, regional, and global networks.

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The purpose of the SDG Accord is twofold:

First, the Accord is an opportunity to inspire, celebrate and advance the critical role that education has in delivering the SDGs and the value it brings to governments, business and wider society

Second, the Accord is a commitment learning institutions are making to one another: to do more to deliver the goals, to annually report on each signatory's progress and to do so in way which shares the learning with others both nationally and internationally. These sector SDG reporting metrics will be presented at the annual UN High Level Political Forum.

Who should sign the Accord?

The Accord can be signed on three levels.

1. Leaders of institutions sign to make a corporate commitment
2. Leaders of related university, college and student organisations sign to make a corporate commitment to supporting the sector
3. Individual students, researchers, academics and operational staff can sign to make a personal and professional commitment to playing their part in advancing sector performance

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The Accord

Recognising that we are different stages in our journey towards a sustainable future, with differing strategic priorities reflecting our strategic ambitions, areas of expertise and organisational cultures

This Accord calls upon we, the world's universities and colleges

to embed the Sustainable Development Goals into our education, research, leadership, operations, administration and engagement activities.

We Accord Signatories recognise

- The indivisible and interconnected nature of the universal set of Goals – People, Prosperity, Planet, Partnership, Peace
- That, as educators, we have a responsibility to play a central and transformational role in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

And we thereby assert:

That as leaders or individual practitioners, academics, students or researchers, we will:

- align all major efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators, including through our education, research, leadership, operational and engagement activities;
- aim to involve members from all key stakeholder groups in this endeavour, including students, academics, professional staff, local communities and other external stakeholders;
- collaborate across cities, regions, countries and continents with other signatory institutions as part of a collective international response;
- using our own unique ways, give an account to both local and global communities on our progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals, informing others and sharing our learning
- annually report on how our institution contributes to the Goals and what more can we do.

Endorsed by



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If you lead a network for university/college staff or students and wish to become an Endorsing Partner, please **contact us**.