



national union of **students**

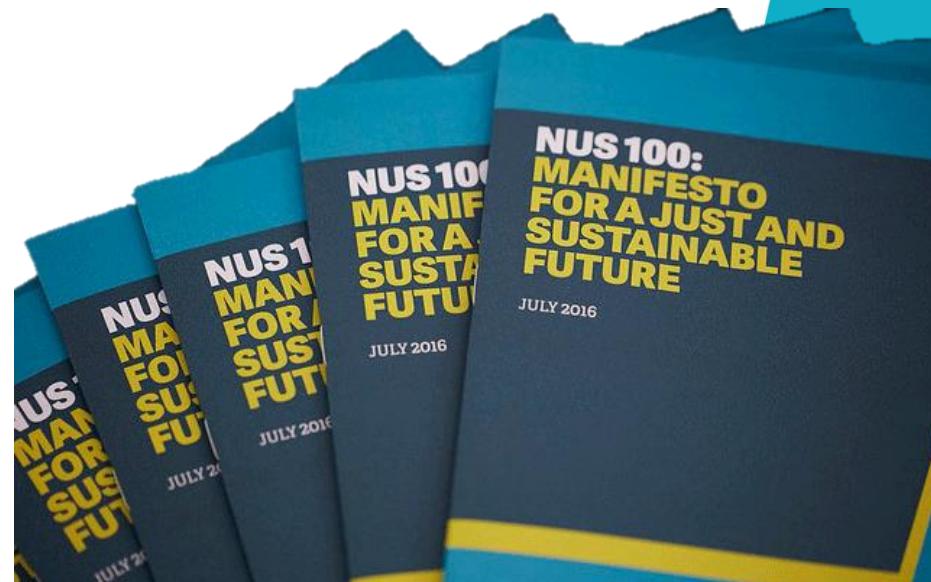


UNESCO Global Action Programme on  
Education for Sustainable Development

# Creating a more just and sustainable society through education

*III.a. Teaching and learning for societal impact*  
*IAU Conference 2018, Kuala Lumpur*

**Quinn Runkle**, Education for Sustainable Development Programme Manager, Department for Sustainability



# Aims for today

- Share with you the **interest and demand from students** to include sustainability in their learning;
- Explain **what this demand actually looks like**;
- Demonstrate **how sustainability can be embedded**;
- And say **why this matters** for students, our universities, and wider society.

# What do students want?

91%

- say their **university should actively incorporate and promote sustainable development**

81%

- say **sustainable development is something they would like to learn more about**

70%

- would like to see **sustainable development incorporated and promoted through all courses**

61%

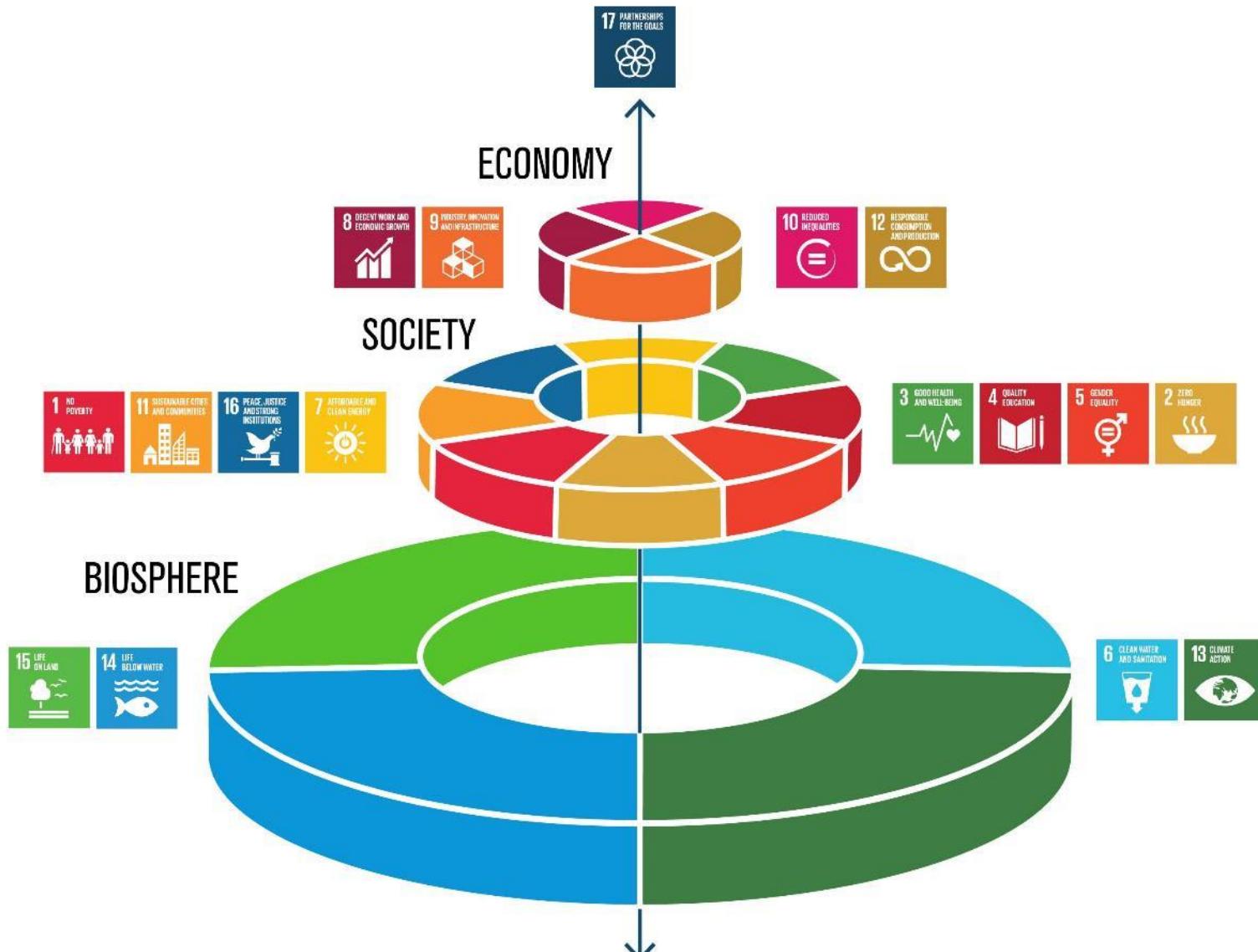
- **would accept a salary 15% lower than average** to work in a company with a good social and environmental record

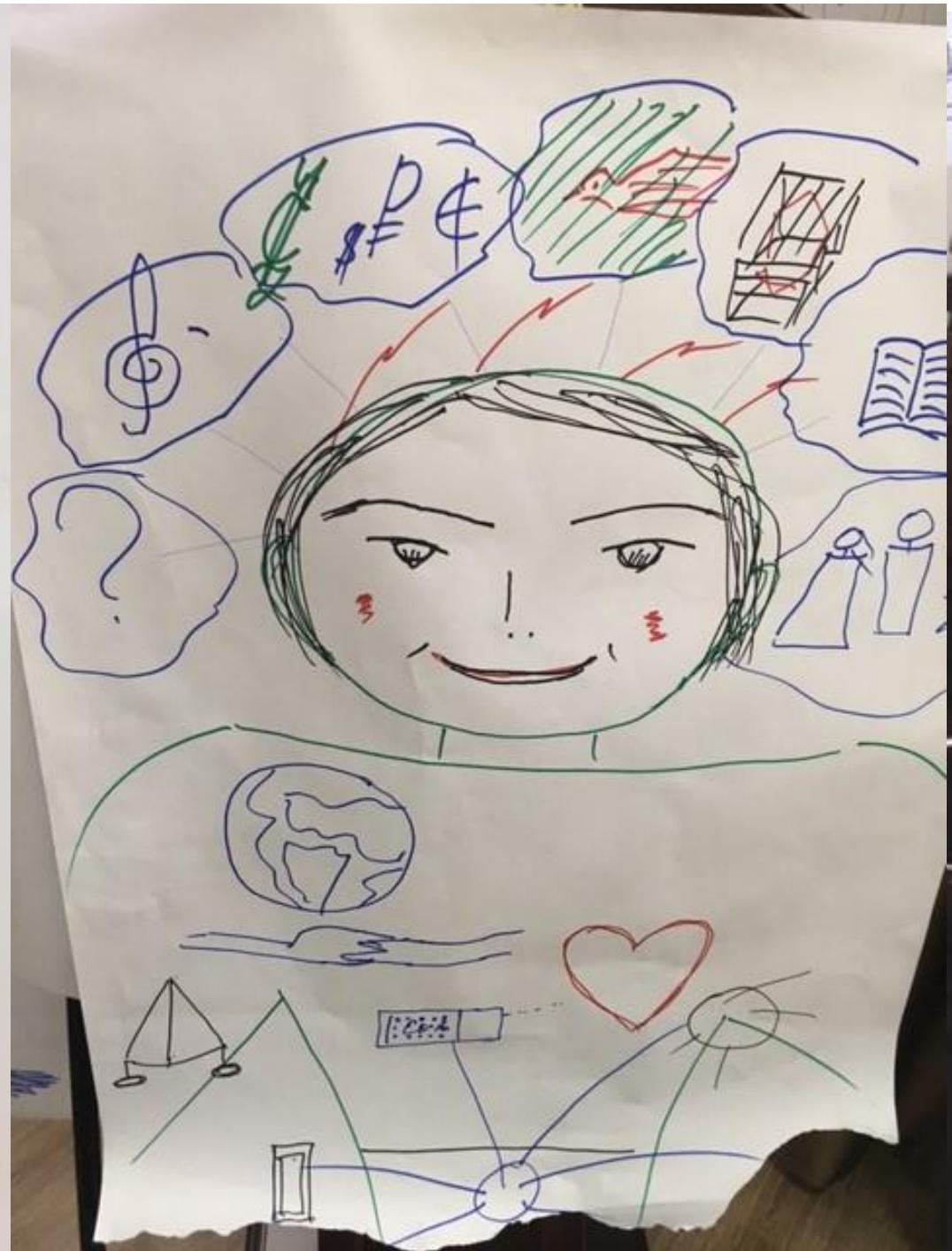
17%

- **rate their university as 'very good'** in relation to the action it takes to limit the negative impact it has on the environment and society

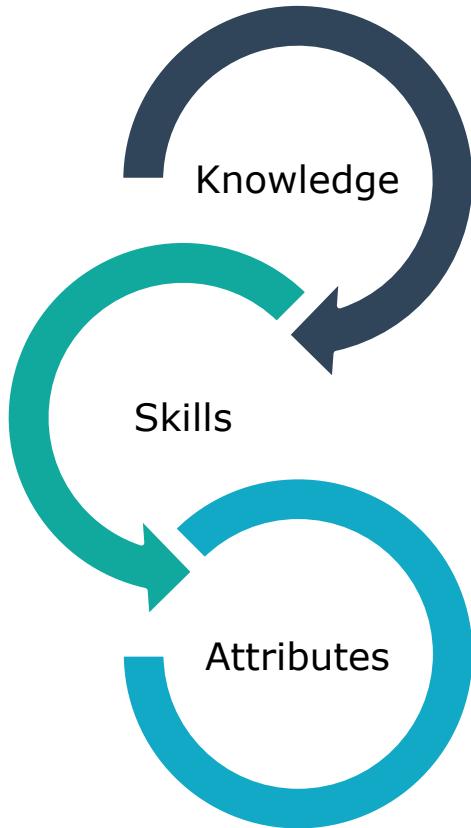
International survey incl. 3,247 respondents, 2017-18, more information [here](#). Results similar to the UK survey incl. c50,000 respondents over last 8 years, more information [here](#).

# When we're talking about sustainability, what do we mean...?





# Education **for** sustainable development vs. education **about** sustainable development



**Education for sustainable development** is the process of equipping students with the **knowledge and understanding, skills** and **attributes** needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and for future generations.

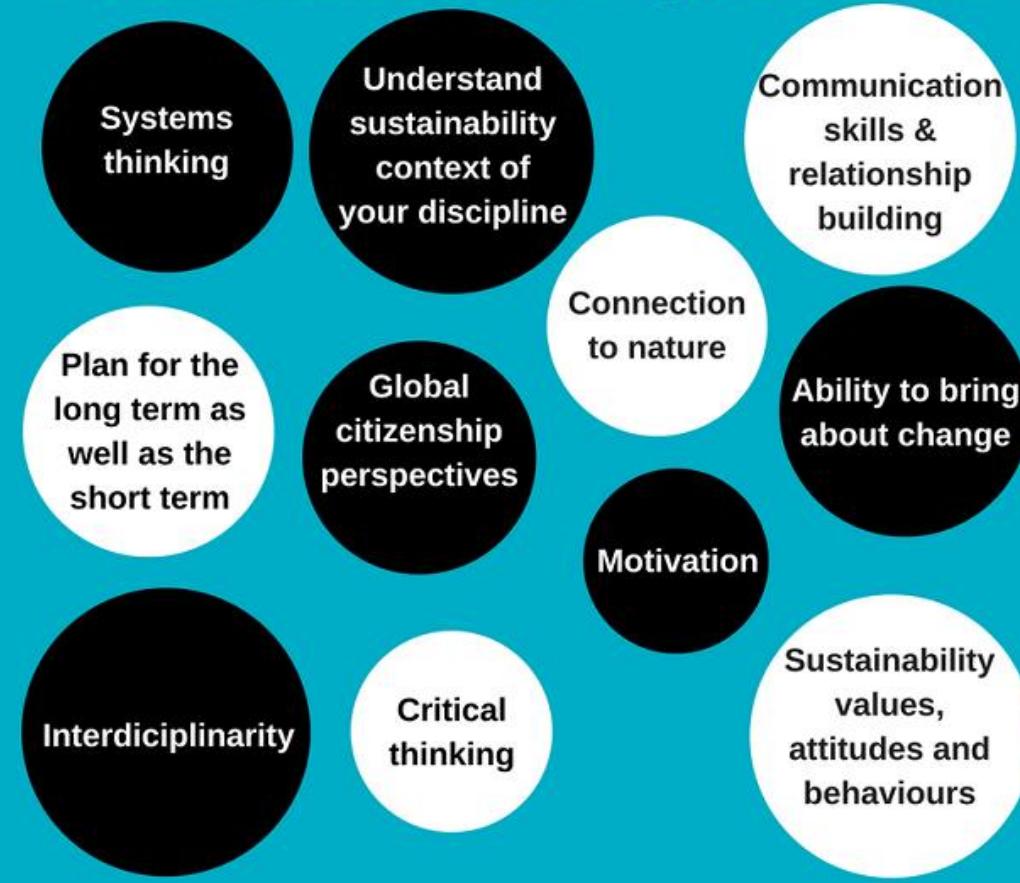
*Higher Education Academy & Quality Assurance Agency guidance on ESD (2014)*

"Education for Sustainable Development **helps the citizens of the world to learn their way to a more sustainable future.**"

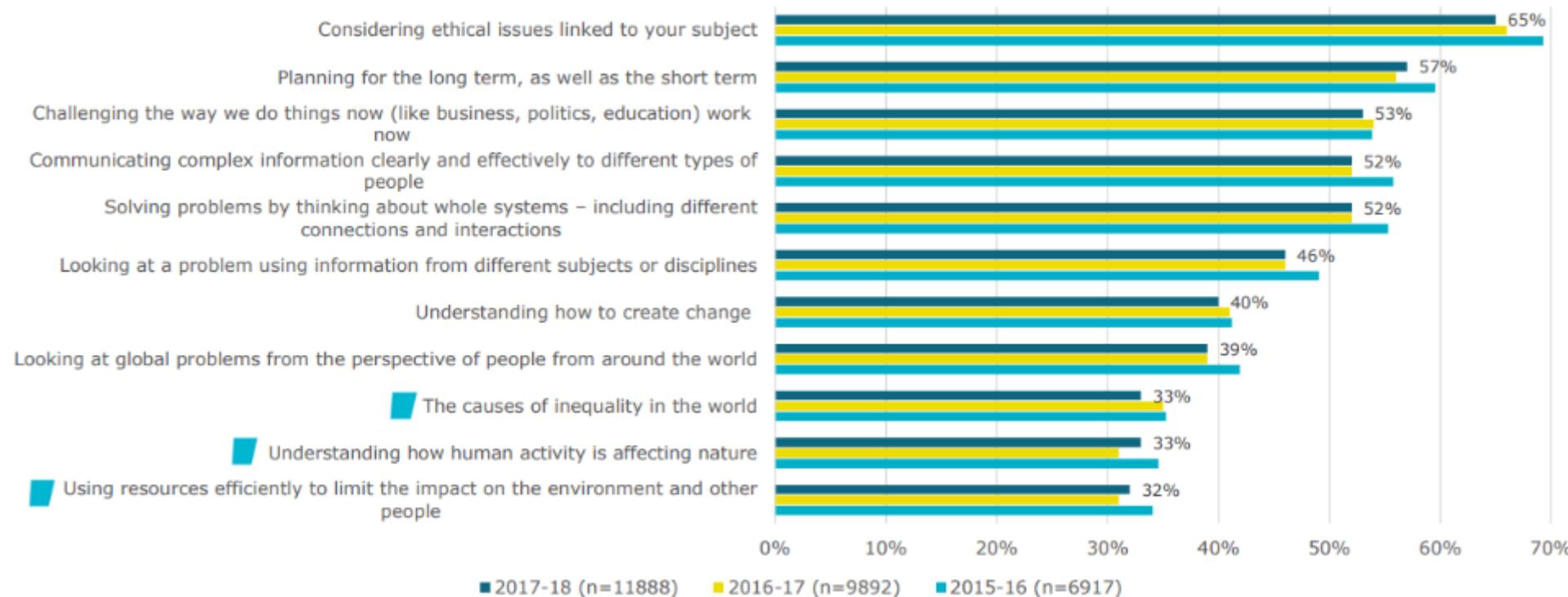
UN Decade of ESD 2005-2014

# Working to embed these 11 outcomes through all parts of student learning

**Knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes to change the world!**



# To what extent are students experiencing teaching and learning on sustainability skills in higher education?



# Making sustainability relevant to the discipline and meaningful for students

**nus #SustainabilityAtoZ Dentistry**



**Demonstrating the clear links between the environmental and health benefits of diet, smoking cessation and eliminating mercury use.**

*Dental Public Health Scholars, Centre for Sustainable Healthcare*

**nus #SustainabilityAtoZ Language (English)**



**Students tour a local ethical business to develop their language skills.**

*Jane Cleary, assistant director of studies of UCLan Language academic*

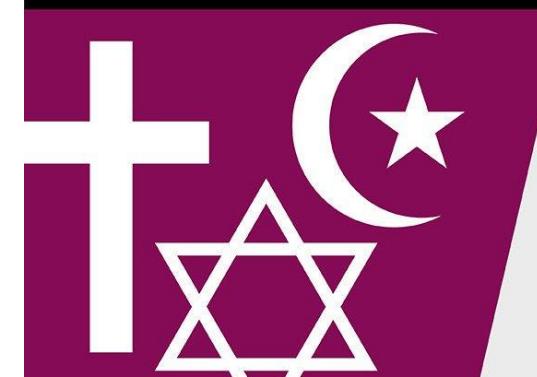
**nus #SustainabilityAtoZ Travel and tourism**



**How does sustainability link to issues of primary importance to travel and tourism?**

*Melissa O'Conor, higher education curriculum coordinator in business and tourism*

**nus #SustainabilityAtoZ Religious studies**

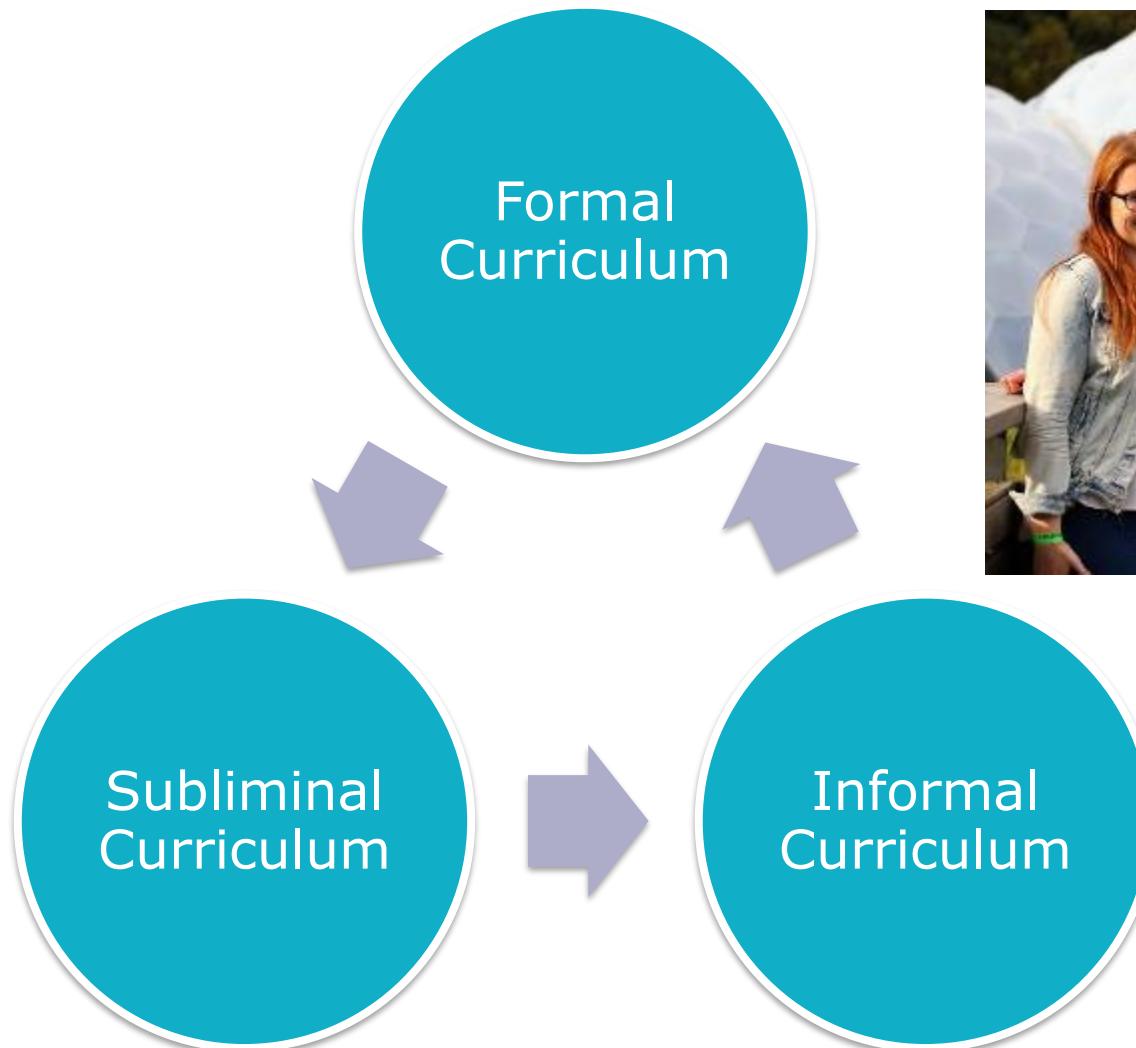


**We need to find ways to communicate sustainability objectives beyond the Western, post-enlightenment paradigm.**

*Dr Brian Black, lecturer in Religious Studies*

#SustainabilityAtoZ

# Embedding sustainability through all parts of the student learning experience



# Our range of programmes, campaigns, training, and support

nus

green impact

nus

student switch off

nus

Alcohol Impact

nus

Responsible Futures

nus

national union of students

Dissertations  
for Good



# Changing our institutions: Responsible Futures



A whole-institution approach to embedding sustainability throughout student learning

A good practice framework and supported change programme

A partnership approach between the students' union and the university

An accreditation mark, audited by students

**nus**

**Responsible  
Futures**

# Working collaboratively with staff: Global Goals Teach-In #*SDGTeachIn*



- An annual international campaign for academics to pledge to include the Global Goals in their teaching, learning, and assessment.
- Save the date: 18-22 Feb 2019



31 institutions



257 teaching staff



16,220 students

# Changing the experience for individual students: Dissertations for Good

The image shows a composite view of the 'nus Dissertations for Good' website. On the left, the homepage features a large background image of a person's face, a navigation bar with 'Home' (highlighted in blue), 'About', 'Students', 'Universities', 'Organisations', and 'Login', and four buttons: 'I'm a student', 'I'm non-academic staff', 'I'm academic staff', and 'I'm an organisation'. A central call-to-action button says 'Start searching'. On the right, a detailed view of a student profile for a completed dissertation is displayed. The profile title is 'Local democracy and community councils'. The student is Susan Munch Lassen, status is 'Completed', and the dissertation category is 'Social'. The theme is 'Local democracy and community councils'. The short summary states: 'A study on how local groups can better inform and influence the design and delivery of public service.' The detailed summary provides more depth: 'Looking at how local communities and groups are involved in shaping and influencing the local policy agenda and policy processes. To what extent, when, and how are communities involved, and how is this reflected in the level of community engagement?' Below the profile, it lists the university as 'University of Edinburgh', the course as 'Master of Public Policy', and the partner as 'Midlothian Council'.

**nus**  
Dissertations  
for Good

We partner students with organisations to collaborate on dissertations into economic, social and environmental sustainability.

I'm a student      I'm non-academic staff

I'm academic staff      I'm an organisation

Start searching

**Local democracy and community councils**

Student: Susan Munch Lassen

Status: Completed

Dissertation: Local democracy and community councils

Dissertation category: Social

Dissertation theme: Local democracy and community councils

Short summary: A study on how local groups can better inform and influence the design and delivery of public service.

Detailed summary: Looking at how local communities and groups are involved in shaping and influencing the local policy agenda and policy processes. To what extent, when, and how are communities involved, and how is this reflected in the level of community engagement?

University: University of Edinburgh

Course: Master of Public Policy

Partnered with: Midlothian Council

*"Dissertations for Good has given real meaning to my University studies."*

# Meet Adela Simonova: “It started with free icecream...”

Student Switch Off Ambassador in halls

Recycling volunteer at Freshers' Fair

Green Curriculum team lead

Founded the first-ever student-led SU sustainability committee and elected 'Sustainability Chair' for Bristol SU

Bristol SU sustainability ambassador

Bristol Big Give student staff member

Co-ran 'A Student's Guide to Sustainability' event, showcasing student-led research



*Adela, from Czech Republic, studied LLB Law at the University of Bristol from 2014-2017, now studying LLM Environment and Climate Change Law at the University of Edinburgh.*



**3% of people attend university  
but they take up 80% of the  
leadership positions.**

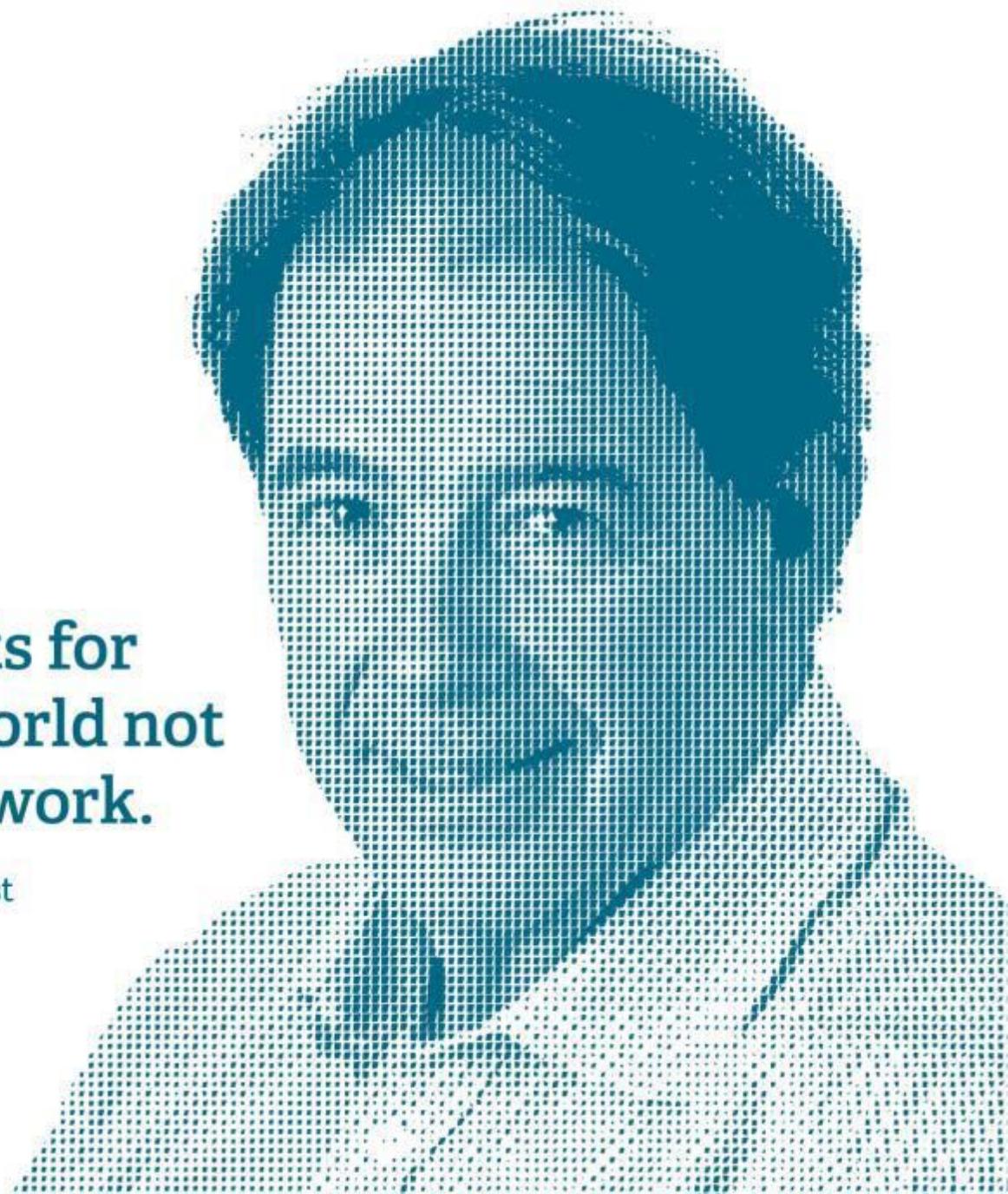
Chuck Hopkins, UNESCO Chair





**Preparing students for  
the work of the world not  
just the world of work.**

Sir Jonathon Porritt, Environmentalist



# Thank you!

To keep in touch:

[www.nus.org.uk/sustainability](http://www.nus.org.uk/sustainability)  
@NUS\_Sustainable

Quinn Runkle  
[quinn.runkle@nus.org.uk](mailto:quinn.runkle@nus.org.uk)  
@quinn\_runkle



national union of **students**

Future opportunities to work with  
NUS, please contact  
[quinn.runkle@nus.org.uk](mailto:quinn.runkle@nus.org.uk)  
if interested in learning more!

**Quinn Runkle**, Education for  
Sustainable Development  
Programme Manager,  
Department for Sustainability

Learn more about our  
research at:

<https://sustainability.unioncloud.org/our-research/our-research>

# Research on student understanding of and interest in the SDGs



- In the UK: **67% hadn't heard of the SDGs** prior to answering a survey about them, but **61% say they would like to learn more about the SDGs.**
- 81% agree that the government should actively lead and support achievement of the SDGs.
- **Goal 13, climate action, is seen as the most important goal**, and climate change is reported as being the most important issue facing the world today.

*Tracking questions included in NUS TOTUM omnibus survey, more SDGs added monthly*

<https://sustainability.nus.org.uk/our-research/our-research-reports/student-opinion-sustainable-development-goals>

# International student research

Build on the international data for 2018-19 and learn about students in your country by collaborating on international student sustainability research!

Currently in:

- English
- German
- French
- Japanese
- Greek

- Danish
- Hungarian  
(coming)
- Spanish  
(coming)

We need help with:



- Translation into other languages
- Promotion of the survey

# A few of our campaigns...

# SDG Teach-In

18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019

An annual international campaign for academics to pledge to include the SDGs in their teaching, learning, and assessment.

#SDGTeachIn

Leaderboard (% of total students reached)	
1st Place	Royal Agricultural University
2nd Place	University of the West of England
3rd Place	Canterbury Christ Church

Leaderboard (number of teaching staff pledged)	
1st Place	University of the West of England
2nd Place	Nottingham Trent
3rd Place	Canterbury Christ Church



31 institutions



257 teaching staff



16,220 students



# Divestment campaign

Emissions Impossible has three key asks to drive the just transition from fossil fuels to renewables.

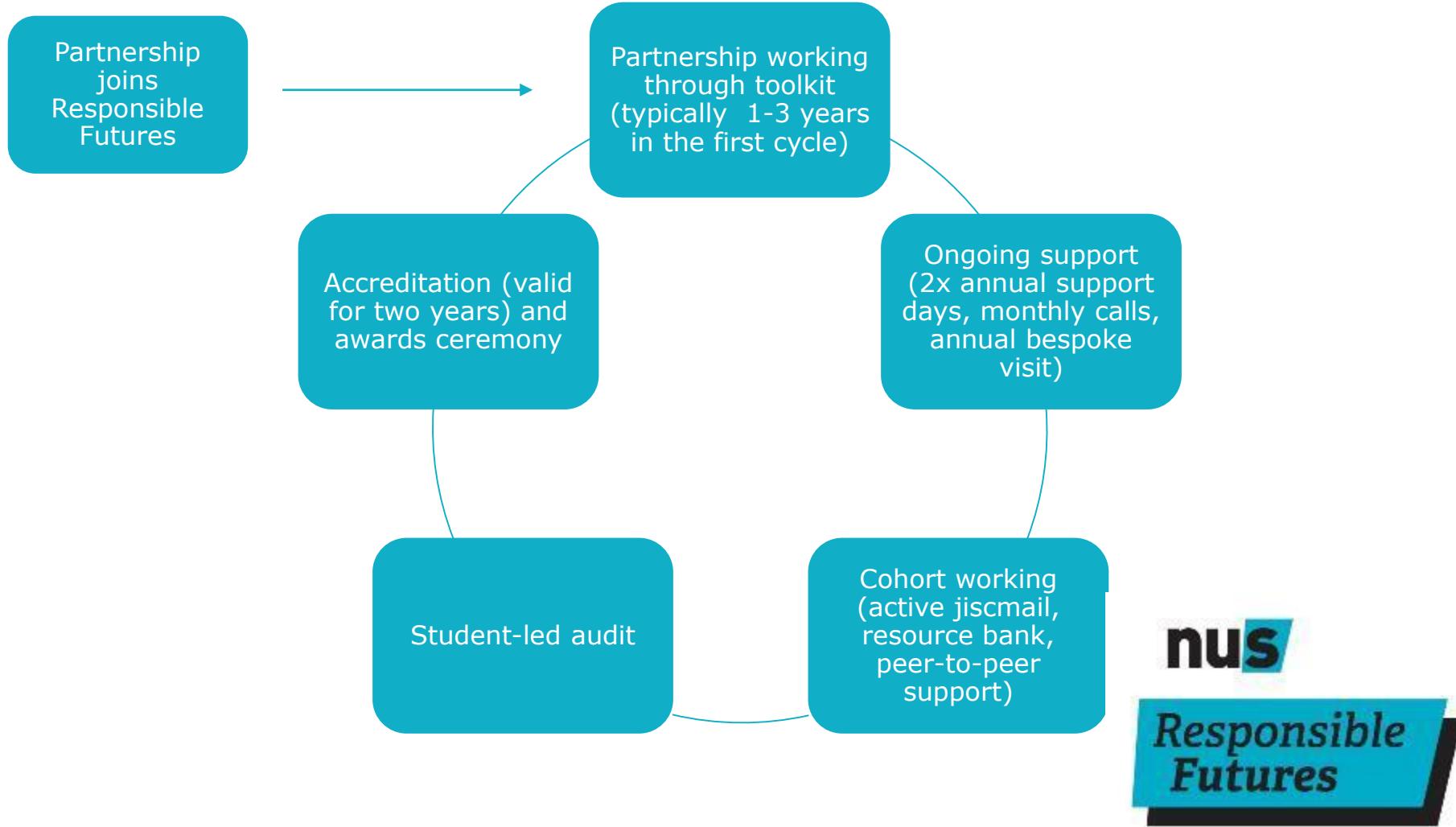
- 1. Divest-Invest:** we want every penny of fossil fuel investments moved into socially-responsible renewables
- 2. No New Dirty Investments:** we want commitments from our institutions to never invest in fossil fuels
- 3. Go 100% Renewable:** we want all universities and colleges to source 100% of electricity from socially responsible renewable sources



More information on our  
Responsible Futures  
programme on the following  
slides and available on:

[www.nus.org.uk/rf](http://www.nus.org.uk/rf)

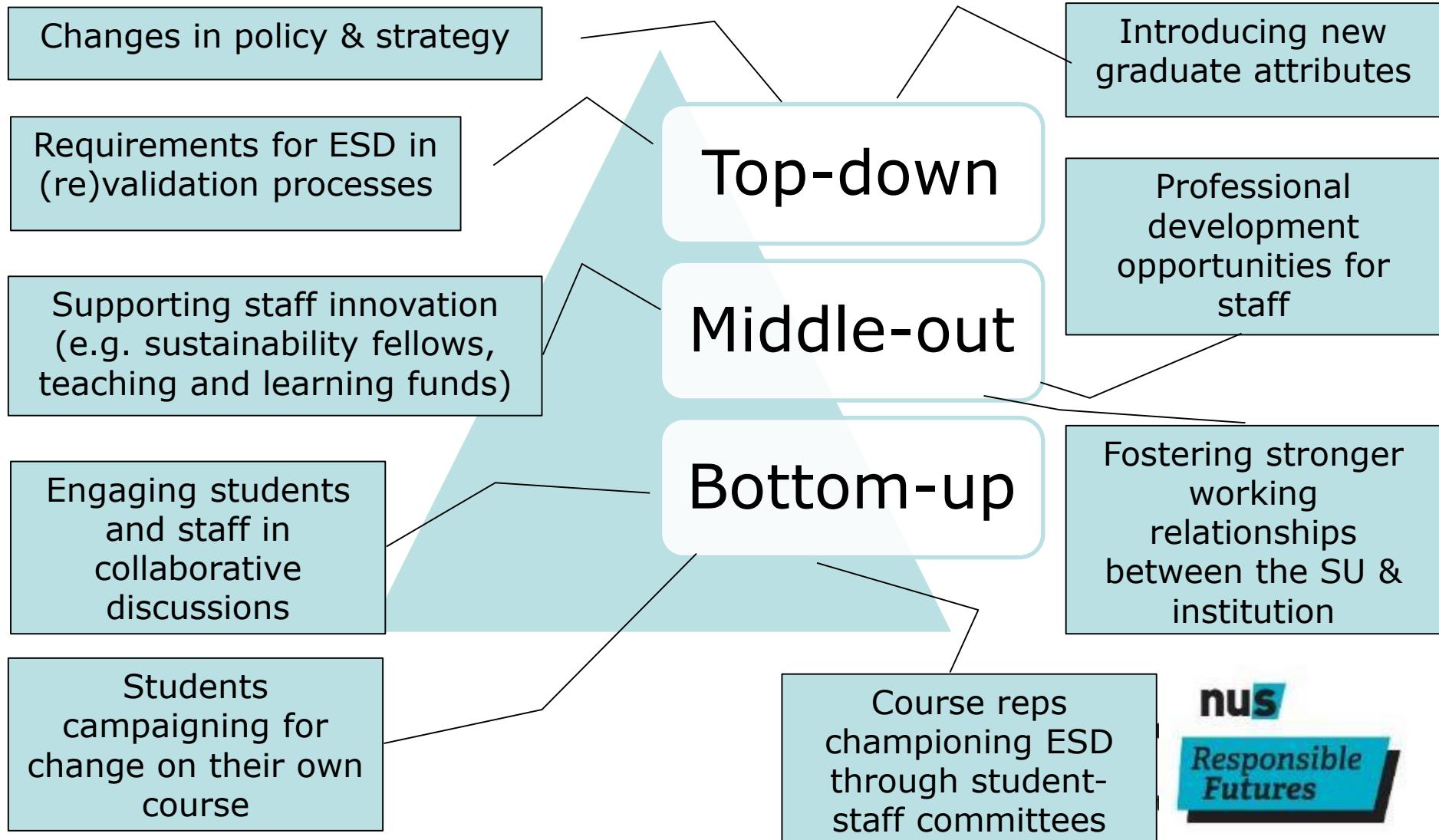
# The Responsible Futures programme cycle



**nus**

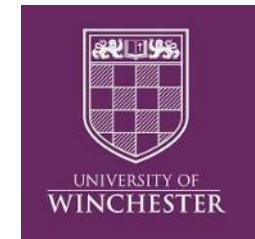
**Responsible  
Futures**

# The framework supports a range of levels of interventions



# Accredited & 'working towards' partnerships

Representing 500,000+ students in FE and HE



Aston University



Manchester  
Metropolitan  
University

Canterbury  
Christ Church  
University

