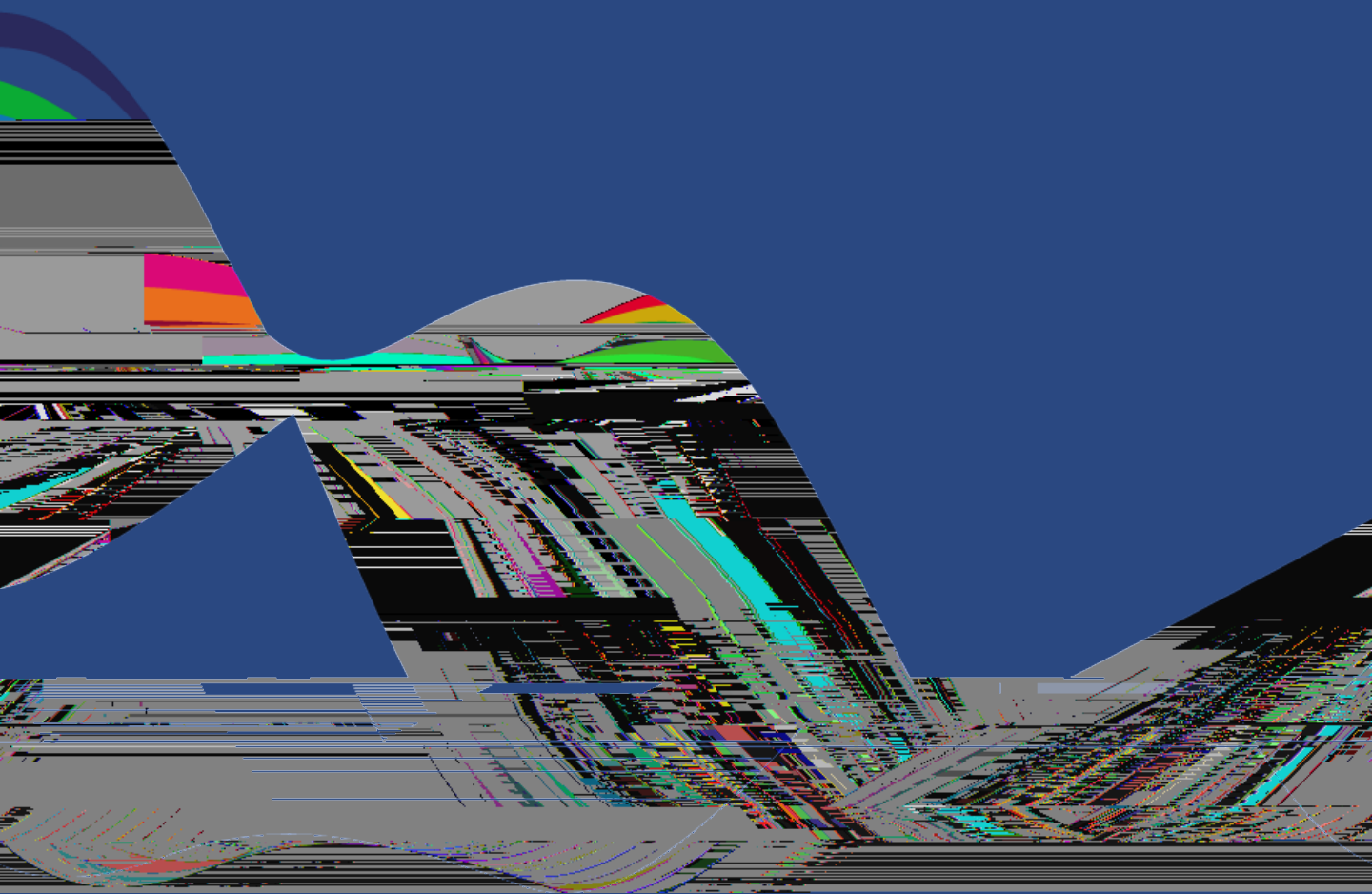


# OSAKI

Osaka University of Science and Technology



# General Guidelines for the Implementation of Sustainability in Higher Education Institutions





The 2030 Agenda is

This unique position provides HEIs with a large potential of not only participating in but leading the way towards sustainable economic, social and environmental development. And this potential should be paired with a large responsibility to do the utmost to advance sustainable development. Most HEIs already contribute to the SDGs in different ways and to different extents, but this is often done through scattered initiatives without an overarching approach to sustainability or a sustainability strategy. This is the main focus of this document.

Recently, HEI leaders have an increased interest in better understanding how they can contribute to the SDGs and in gaining knowledge on how to systematize this approach. However, a very small share of HEIs worldwide can afford external guidance of professionals to support them in this process.

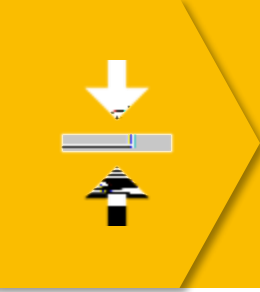
The need of a more rapid progress towards the SDGs, the unique position of HEIs to accelerate this progress and the HEIs leadership interests towards sustainability are the base of this document.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general guidelines for leaders in HEIs to systematize and maximize

# institutional





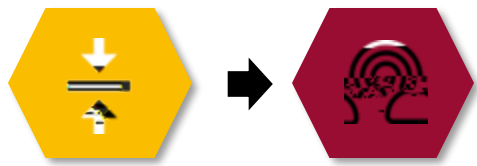


Discuss and clarify among the HEI leadership team, as well as the higher education institutions (HEI) community (students, academics, administrative staff and external partners) the meaning of the concepts 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development' in the particular context of the HEI and the reasons why the HEI should embark in a sustainability transition.



A common understanding of these terms in the HEI community is critical for a clear, efficient and meaningful communication throughout the transition and beyond.

The concept of sustainability is often associated uniquely with environmental sustainability. However, with a UN approach, and in line with the SDGs, it is important to understand sustainability from a broad perspective: economic, social and environmental. These three perspectives also made up the concept of sustainable development.

- < Holding meetings and discussion amongst the relevant stakeholders until there is agreement on a common definition of these terms.
- < Communicating the concept of sustainability and sustainable development to the HEI community and externals in a consistent and coherent way across all channels and target audiences.







Inform the HEI community in a clear, sincere and inclusive way about (i) the need to transition towards a more sustainable HEI, (ii) the reasons why this transition is needed - including the potential future challenges and benefits - and (iii) how this will specifically affect each of them.

The HEI community wants to hear about the need and reasons for the transition from the senior management who are responsible of the change. Beyond creating awareness, communication can help dispel rumors, misinformation and distrust among the HEI community, which can have long-lasting negative effects.

There are powerful internal and external reasons for driving an HEI towards sustainability, many of which tap into the HEI social responsibility. The internal reasons are mostly related to the achievement of more relevant curricula, more impactful research and better management and administration. Externally, the HEI could position itself as an engine to tackle the most pressing social, economic and environmental problems that humanity is facing together with industrial, governmental and social stakeholders.

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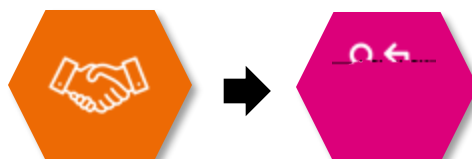


Demonstrate willingness, responsibility, intention and dedication to achieve a more sustainable HEI in the near future.

The commitment of the top HEI management is essential for the success of a sustainability transition as they are in charge of envisioning the change, motivating the HEI community and leading with the example.

This is particularly important because most HEIs work in silos (e.g.; campuses, faculties, departments, offices) and sustainability is a transversal topic that will involve changes from all of them and thus requires a top leadership orchestrating these changes.

- < Integrate the concept of sustainability in the mission and vision of the HEI.
- < Include sustainability as a core value for the HEI and present the HEI as a sustainable HEI.
- < Appoint someone in charge of sustainability at the highest level (ideally, a vice rector highly coordinated with the rest of the vice rectors) or establish a committee responsible to lead this transition.
- < Integrate sustainability in the current or prospective HEI strategy or institutional strategic plan, as well as in decision-making processes.



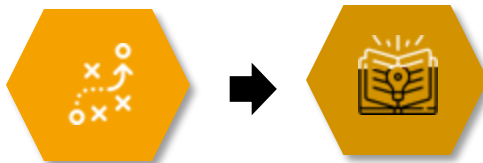




Co-design, co-draft and explicitly establish an institution-wide public document describing what is needed for the HEI to successfully transition towards sustainability and sustainable development. This document is agreed on by HEI leaders and HEI community.

The strategy is an explicit and public mandate from the institution's leadership needed to create a common vision and a direction for the whole HEI towards sustainability. It also helps HEI leaders set values, broad institutional goals and a governance structure for this transition. Overall, it guides the process towards the sustainability outcomes and ideally also inspires the HEI community to be part of this transformation.

- ◁ Either designing a distinctive sustainability strategy connected with the current HEI strategy or integrating the sustainability aspect transversally in the general HEI strategy or plan.
- ◁ Undertaking a consultation process to co-design the strategy with key representatives of the HEI community and ideally also with external stakeholders
- ◁ Undertaking an analysis of the context and setting the main goals to be achieved with that strategy, together with a timeline.
- ◁ Establishing who is responsible and accountable for the different phases of the transition. Some of the options are a steering committee, a board or an advisory group supported by external collaborators and often led by a coordinator who oversees the whole transition process.





Provide knowledge to the HEI community in a clear but holistic way on what to expect and what to do during and after the HEI sustainability transition.

The HEI leadership cannot assume that even if the HEI community is aware of the change, and even engaged on it, it knows what to do. Knowledge is only relevant when the person has the awareness and desire to engage first and only then knowledge will lead to successful change.

- < **Facilitating Q&A ( )** information about (i) the SDGs and its importance for HE, (ii) how HEIs can contribute to SDGs, (iii) how to initiate and implement a sustainability transition within an HEI, (iv) how other HEIs have designed and implemented a sustainability t.08 Tm0 g0 G ( )JTJETQq0.0000085IG(HE)6.57 371.08 Tm0 g07806he





A mapping exercise to identify in which ways the HEI might be already contributing to the SDGs, as well as ongoing or planned changes that might affect this contribution.



To provide a useful and timely 'snapshot' that will allow the HE leadership to gather evidence, analyze where they are and identify strengths and potential areas for improvement.

These teaching, research, engagement and managerial initiatives are likely to be scattered around the organization and take many different shapes, so a systematic and consistent approach to capture and analyze information is needed.

◀ Appointing someone who









Determine the initiatives that will be undertaken in the future, based on the list of current initiatives and the gaps identified previously, as well as the HEI strengths and vision.

The gaps are likely to be large, even for proactive and commitment HEIs, as sustainable development is a very wide concept, so the prioritization of those activities that better align with the HEI's



Accompany the sustainability strategy and the selected initiatives by a dedication of sufficient physical, human and financial resources to implement and sustain them.

Every HEI has limited resources to some extent and many of them suffer from significant budget constraints. However, the commitment and the strategy for a sustainability transition of the HEI needs to be backed up by enough resources (internal or external) to guarantee the appropriate implementation of



Design, define and execute a



In a context of environmental emergencies, unprecedented economic crises and increasing inequalities, HEI leaders should be empowered to lead the transformation of our societies.

Through talent and innovation, HEIs have the potential to lead the change to address the major social transformations that our world needs.

The contribution to sustainable development is not



