



UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Annual Sustainable Development Goals report

9 November 2026

Introduction

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this year's overview of the University of Sussex's most distinctive contributions to the global effort to address the challenges identified by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

At a time of profound global uncertainty, the need for universities to bring knowledge, creativity and collective action to bear on the challenges facing humanity has never been greater. Our strategy, *Sussex 2035: Creating Progressive Futures – flourishing, sustainability and progress for the whole world*, sets out our ambition to strengthen and mobilise our collective capacity to drive progressive environmental, social and technological change. It recognises that the future of our planet and the flourishing of its people are deeply interconnected, and that universities have a vital role to play in shaping a more just, sustainable and equitable world.

At the heart of *Sussex 2035* are three transformational themes: environmental sustainability, human flourishing, and digital and data futures. These themes reflect both the distinctive strengths of our university community and the urgent challenges facing the world. Our new Sussex School for Progressive Futures brings these ambitions to life, creating a flagship hub for interdisciplinary education, research and civic engagement. By bringing together researchers, students, professional practitioners and partners across business, government, the arts and civil society, we aim to develop the ideas, evidence and practical solutions needed to create progressive futures for all.

Across Sussex, we continue to turn this ambition into action. In 2026, the first students joined our new undergraduate degree in Climate Justice, Sustainability and Development – the UK's first undergraduate-level climate justice degree in the social sciences. The programme will equip students with the knowledge and practical skills to understand the politics of climate change, engage with environmental human rights and help drive real-world change. Meanwhile, our commitment to embedding sustainability in the student experience extends beyond the classroom. Our Travel Hub is making low-carbon travel more accessible through affordable bikes, repair sessions and community engagement, while our campus-wide food waste collections sent 32 tonnes of food waste to generate green energy between July 2025 and August 2026. These are practical examples of how we can bring sustainability into everyday university life.

Our research continues to make a difference locally, nationally and internationally. The Bennett Institute for Innovation and Policy Acceleration is advancing research and policy solutions to the climate crisis, while Sussex researchers contribute evidence and expertise to international climate assessments and efforts to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. Our work also demonstrates the importance of collaboration in tackling complex challenges. Through the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project and our partnerships across Sussex Bay, we are supporting the recovery of coastal ecosystems and marine biodiversity. Through research on sustainable land use, clean energy, food systems and circular economies, colleagues across the University are working with communities, policymakers and industry to develop approaches that can deliver environmental and social benefits together.

Our commitment to contributing to a more sustainable and equitable world is also reflected in our work with the communities around us. *Sustainable, Connected, and Equitable Sussex* is the region's first Civic University Agreement, initiated by the University of Sussex, and then developed in collaboration with the Universities of Brighton and Chichester and a wide range of civic partners. This shared commitment provides a platform for working together on the challenges and opportunities facing our region, from nature recovery and renewable energy to inclusive economic growth and community wellbeing. It reflects our belief that universities can achieve more when we work in partnership, combining academic expertise with the knowledge, experience and ambitions of the people and places we serve.

This report also highlights the many ways in which Sussex supports human flourishing: widening access to education, promoting health and wellbeing, advancing equality, and helping students develop the skills and confidence to shape their futures. From our support for students facing financial hardship to research informing public policy and initiatives that help local businesses grow sustainably, our contribution to the SDGs is woven through our education, research, operations and civic partnerships.

The progress described in these pages is a testament to the commitment, creativity and expertise of our staff, students, alumni and partners. It demonstrates the breadth of activity taking place across our university community, as well as the importance of continuing to learn, collaborate and act in the face of shared global challenges.

I invite you to read on and discover more about the University of Sussex's contribution to the SDGs, and our ongoing commitment to creating progressive and sustainable futures for the whole world.



Professor Sasha Roseneil
Vice-Chancellor and President

Report context

This report summarises progress towards each of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and provides a snapshot of the University's collective efforts to address the critical global challenges facing humanity.

Examples of evidence, case studies, and campus activities included in this report are based on a rigorous methodology to assess our contributions to each SDG on local, regional, national, and international scales. We highlight a broad range of impactful activities from 2024-25 and beyond through our research, education, outreach, and campus operations, celebrating the collective ambition and dedication of the University of Sussex as we strive to be one of the most sustainable universities in the world.

This full report is available to the public.



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SDG1
No poverty

This SDG relates to our research nationally and globally to create and help implement strategies to end poverty, and our support for low-income students and citizens in the local community.

Work within the University of Sussex

We are committed to supporting students from low-income backgrounds to access, progress through, and successfully complete higher education. Our **Access and Participation Plan**, refreshed in 2025, enshrines our commitment to working towards equality of opportunity for student. It sets ambitious targets to widen participation among under-represented groups, including students from low-income backgrounds, care-experienced learners, mature students, and those eligible for free school meals.

- We have set a target to increase the percentage of students at Sussex who come from the poorest 20% of households in the UK – known as index of multiple deprivation quintile 1 (IMDQ1) – **from 8.8% to 21% by 2024-25**.
- We want to continue to increase the number of our graduates from IMDQ1 backgrounds. We have a target to reduce the gap in progression outcomes between the poorest and richest students (i.e. IMDQ1 and Q5) **from 16% to 0% by 2024-25**.
- We provided scholarships to students from countries categorised by the World Bank as low or lower middle-income countries (LMICs) for the financial year 2024/25. This included scholarships such as the Sanctuary Scholarship, covering 100% of their fees, and multiple other scholarships covering up to 50% of students' fees.
- In 2025, as part of its commitment as a University of Sanctuary, we introduced **fully funded Masters scholarships for Palestinian students**, particularly those displaced by the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Each award covers tuition fees, living costs, and visa, health surcharge and relocation costs; six scholars were awarded places in the first year.

We provide financial support to students through **the Sussex Fund**, which comprises grants from the Hardship Fund and shorter-term **Welfare Loans**. The Hardship Fund disbursed a total amount of £641,000 to 430 students in 2025. These funds can also benefit students estranged from their families and care leavers, who also are eligible for **the Andrew Rudd Scholarship** and automatically receive vouchers, free bedding, and the opportunity to live in university-managed accommodation all year round during their course.

Students from households with an income of up to £35,000 can receive **the Sussex Bursary**. Students from low-income families who have a specific learning difference (SpLD) can also access tailored academic support following an SpLD assessment, ensuring they receive the resources they need to succeed in their studies.

We offer financial support through the Sussex Fund





Our Student Centre serves as the main hub for student support, where our dedicated Welcome and Triage Team signposts students to the services most relevant to their needs. These include:

- dedicated financial advice, provided by **our Student Money Advisors**, who offer budgeting and money management guidance as part of the Advice and Guidance Team
- free health and mental wellbeing support.

Other services to ensure every student, regardless of background, has equal opportunity to thrive at Sussex, include:

- affordable hot meals at lunchtime, known as the Sussex Saver
- part-time job opportunities on campus
- free career counselling
- discounts for public transport
- **free legal advice to our students and local community** through our Law Clinics Programme.

Our research and impact

The **Sussex Energy Group** is an interdisciplinary group of energy policy researchers, studying transitions to net zero energy systems in the UK that are fair to everyone. Dr Donal Brown leads on the **Green New Deal for Housing** project, a bold plan to address the high energy bills associated with the ongoing cost of living crisis in the UK while reducing domestic CO2 emissions.

On a global level, the **Chronic Poverty Advisory Network**, based at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex, collaborates with policy makers, researchers, and practitioners across 17 low- and middle-income countries to shape effective poverty-eradication policies. Its work includes **a national report on poverty dynamics and climate resilience in Zambia** which was discussed at the Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha in November 2025.

Our Student Money Advisors provide dedicated financial advice

Work within Sussex and beyond

The county of Sussex is characterised by significant social inequalities that limit opportunities and access to all that life should offer. **Sustainable, Connected, and Equitable Sussex is our 2025 Civic University Agreement** that sets out our ambitious vision for positive change to tackle these inequalities. The civic mission will promote community cohesion through inclusive and socially just practices, fully recognising the additions brought by those who join our communities in Sussex.

Sussex Innovation is deeply committed to empowering local companies and start-ups in the community. Through relevant education, mentorship, workshops, and access to university facilities, we assist financially and socially sustainable start-ups in the local community. All support is entirely free, enabling businesses to access vital resources without financial constraint.

Our initiatives, including the annual **Social Impact Prize**, foster social entrepreneurship and sustainable growth to help local enterprises thrive. Our fully funded support programmes offer training, guidance, and access to valuable intellectual property, fostering collaboration with academic experts. New for 2026 is Scale Up East Sussex, a management programme for the county's most ambitious businesses which is entirely funded via East Sussex County Council and the Sussex and Brighton Strategic Authority.

By connecting local businesses to world-class expertise, technology and facilities, Sussex contributes to a local ecosystem where sustainable businesses can launch, grow, and address social needs in the community. **Our Collaborate programme supports businesses to access public funding support**, mentoring, access to academic expertise and resource, enabling early-stage, financially and socially sustainable enterprises.

We have helped collaboration between start-ups like **Tellmi**, supporting them to enhance their digital mental health app via grants through Innovate UK in partnership with our Informatics department.

SDG2
Zero hunger

This SDG relates to our global research on hunger, teaching on food sustainability, and our commitment to tackling food waste in local communities, and offering healthy, sustainable food to staff and students.

In 2025 we gained the Footprint Award for Sustainability in Education

Work within the University of Sussex

The food we provide and encourage others to eat is healthy, sustainable and inclusive. When we sought a new catering partner, finding a firm as committed to sustainability as we are **was an integral part of the procurement process in 2023**. The cafés run by our catering partner Chartwells, in a partnership called Sussex Uni Food, provide sustainable food choices for all on campus, including vegetarian and vegan food. Our offering is award-winning: we have held a 3-star rating, the highest mark possible, from the Sustainable Restaurant Association since 2019 and in 2025 we gained the Footprint Award for Sustainability in Education. In 2026, **Sussex Uni Food won the Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility Award**, recognising its work to embed sustainability across its operation, combining environmental action with initiatives designed to create a lasting social impact.

At the heart of Sussex's success are a range of initiatives that reduce environmental impact and actively engage students and staff:

- **Carbon-labelled menus** help students make informed choices by clearly displaying the environmental impact of dishes
- **The £2.50 Sussex Saver meal offers a different affordable, nutritious, and eco-friendly meal every day**
- **Our on-campus hydroponics farm** grows herbs and vegetables that are harvested and served directly in our cafés and restaurants
- **Student 'Foodie Forums'** create an open space for dialogue where student voice shapes the future of food on campus, through a sustainability lens
- **Social Kitchens** empower students to cook nutritious meals using surplus food that might otherwise go to waste
- **Stop Food Waste Day Pop-ups** offer practical cooking and food-storing tips to help reduce waste at home.

In March 2020, the university was the first higher education institution in the UK to install an aerobic digester. **We process some of our food waste** through our aerobic digestor to reduce volume. **We track all the food waste generated in production, post-production and plate waste** in our campus cafes.

We are also **partnered with Too Good to Go**, who help reduce surplus food waste, as well as Olio who help us distribute any surplus food to local food banks. Since we started the scheme, 8,466 meals have been saved – and in 2025-26, 1,357 meals were saved.

We also work hard to educate our student body about eating well for less. In February 2026, **Sussex Uni Food launched the Cheap Eats Club**, providing weekly videos and recipes showing students how to prepare nutritious meals using inexpensive ingredients. The initiative is explicitly designed to help students eat well for less and manage the cost of food.



Our research and impact

Led by Professor Fiona Marshall with colleagues from Engineering and Informatics, **the interdisciplinary Land-use, Ecosystems, Agriculture, Food security (LEAF) project** works with Indonesian institutions, government agencies, NGOs and farming communities to address the trade-offs between food self-sufficiency, biodiversity, livelihoods and climate resilience. **In October 2025 the research team held workshops in Makassar**, followed by fieldwork in Gorontalo. The research has already helped stimulate a Living Lab for climate-resilient integrated farming, where hundreds of students are gaining practical experience and links are being developed with farmer groups.

Closer to home, a workshop hosted jointly by the SSRP and the **Sustainable Healthcare Group** at the Centre for Equitable Global Health Research in Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) provided food for thought on a range of issues relating to human and environmental health. **The workshop in June 2025** was part of the University of Sussex's Summer of Research 2025 programme. It was designed to bring together food research from various disciplines and perspectives at the University and beyond, and foster knowledge exchange and collaboration between researchers.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Over 6,000 people in Brighton and Hove rely on weekly food support. Dr Katerina Psarikidou, Assistant Professor at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) at the University of Sussex Business School, is leading work to tackle this through **FoodSEqual, a major £6 million UK Research and Innovation-funded project**. Dr Psarikidou has been working with communities, local authorities, community organisations and industry partners to explore how food policy ideas and recommendations can be co-produced with the people they are intended to support.

The project **funded a meeting for people from across the University and the city** in June 2025 to identify collective actions. The event, led by Professor Adrian Ely and Dr Psarikidou, focused on the city's new Food Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2030).

Our menus are carbon labelled and a hot, plant-based meal is available every lunchtime for just £2.50



SDG3 Good health and well-being

This SDG relates to our research on key diseases and conditions, our support for healthcare professions, and the health of our students and staff.

Work within the University of Sussex

The University's new Health and Wellbeing Centre is now open on campus. Office space on the ground floor brings together University and NHS mental health teams, alongside a waiting area. This area will also host a wellbeing stall showcasing support services and student activities. NHS GP services are located on the first floor, which includes a reception, a waiting area, and consultation rooms. The second floor is dedicated to **University therapeutic services**, offering private spaces for counselling and treatment, as well as rooms for group therapy, clinics and workshops.

We provide our students with **free sexual health services, contraceptives, and advice**. Students also have the opportunity to speak in-person with the university student wellbeing officer for sexual health advice via an 'X-scheme' drop-in (weekly during term time) and Wellbeing Stall (weekly during term time).

We offer various services to support the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and students. Staff can access an **Employee Assistance Programme** and the Spectrum.Life app for confidential counselling and advice on personal and work-related issues. We **host Menopause cafes** and other events to help staff thrive at Sussex

We also offer **online resources and information on mental health and wellbeing on our website**. In addition, we have a network of Mental Health First Aiders, and our Residential Life and Chaplaincy teams provide other wellbeing support.

Our new Health and Wellbeing Centre houses all GP, therapeutic and mental health services under one roof for the first time





Our research and impact

We are the first higher education institute in the UK with a dedicated centre on kindness. The **Sussex Centre for Research on Kindness** brings together an interdisciplinary team of community partners to investigate how kindness affects individuals, organisations and communities. Its work combines academic research, public engagement, events and partnerships to build understanding of kindness and its contribution to wellbeing and positive social relationships. The Centre also supports the practical application of research through educational activities and offers **the UK's first ever university course on the Psychology of Kindness and Wellbeing at Work**.

We collaborate with global, national and local health partners to improve health outcomes:

- In December 2025, we won a share of a £10.6 million funding award – as part of the **National Institute for Health and Care Research's (NIHR)'s national investment** – to continue to host an NIHR Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) in Kent, Surrey and Sussex. Over the next five years, **the renewed funding will support the ARC's mission to continue to deliver high-impact, inclusive research** into mental health, early-years support, primary care and health-data analysis, working directly with NHS and care providers and members of the public.
- **The NIHR Global Health Research Unit on Neglected Tropical Diseases** at Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people affected by three highly neglected conditions in Ethiopia, Sudan and Rwanda.
- We partner with Dulas Ltd to improve the efficiency and sustainability of its renewable vaccine refrigeration systems. Drawing on Sussex's engineering expertise, the project will develop digital modelling to support the development of sustainable vaccine storage solutions for global use.
- In September 2025, Sussex researchers worked with Health Innovation Kent Surrey Sussex, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, the University of Surrey and the Charlie Waller Foundation to **develop a national Governors Toolkit based on Sussex research** into whole-school approaches to mental health. The toolkit translates research evidence into practical resources for school and college governors.

Work within Sussex and beyond

The BSMS Outreach monthly lecture series offers free online public talks designed for prospective students, secondary school students, and anyone interested in medicine and healthcare career pathways; **talks are recorded and shared on YouTube** to reach a wider audience.

We share our sports facilities with the local community, we are home to several local groups and clubs, and we host children's activities all year-round. Our facilities are accessible to all members of our community through a membership or 'pay as you go' booking system.



Brighton and Sussex Medical School offers free monthly lectures which are then shared on YouTube

SDG4
Quality education

This SDG relates to our provision of inclusive and equitable quality education for all, how we train the next generation of teachers, and our work to promote lifelong learning opportunities.

Work within the University of Sussex

Our Business School is a member of the United Nations Global Compact. This means we are part of a network of companies across the world who work towards its vision of creating 'a sustainable and inclusive global economy that delivers lasting benefits to people, communities and markets'.

As part of our membership, **we have signed up to the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative**. PRME is the largest organised relationship between the United Nations and management-related higher education institutions, with over 880 signatory members and counting. As a member institution, we incorporate global social responsibility and sustainability values into our teaching and research. We work closely with organisations to understand the challenges faced, encouraging debate and innovation to improve policy and practice relating to these issues.

Every two years we submit **a Sharing Information on Progress (SIP) report to PRME** and a **Communication on Engagement** report to UN Global Compact. The latest report from 2025 highlights our deep commitment to responsible management education and the SDGs. **As the UK's first TASK™ Change Leader**, the School embeds sustainability and social impact across its teaching, operations, partnerships, and scholarly work.

Our new **Inclusive Sussex Culture, Equality and Inclusion Framework 2025-35** sets out our commitment to tackle structural barriers to enable equal access to opportunities, regardless of ethnicity, religion, disability, immigration status or gender. This strategy, alongside our recently updated **Access and Participation Plan**, encompasses the University's values and extends to all our activities.

We have signed up to the Principles for Responsible Management Education initiative

Our 2025 Undergraduate Summer School delivered 15 programmes to more than 200 students



Our research and impact

We are home to four education research centres focused on improving education through research and innovation: **the Centre for International Education** and the **Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth**, both known as Centres of Excellence, along with the Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research, and the **Centre for Teaching and Learning Research**.

Dr Perpetua Kirby and colleagues from the Schools of Media, Arts and Humanities, Engineering and Informatics, and Education and Social Work working to connect young people through improvised storytelling have **received SSRP funding to scale up their sustainability research**. The project aims to educate young people in environmental sustainability facing the prognosis of planetary degradation.

In March 2026 Dr Caroline Lucas, Professor of Practice in Environmental Sustainability at the Sussex School for Progressive Futures, **brought students together for an interactive workshop** examining how political and social change happens in practice. She discussed strategies for influencing change both within institutions and through activism and community-led initiatives. Students worked in groups to explore examples of effective change, ranging from local action to national movements in England, Sri Lanka and Spain.

And the Centre for International Education has launched **Global Research Insights: Voices from across the Globe**. The collection **brings new voices into global conversations about the inadequacies of education policy and practice**, in ways that mainstream development research does not do.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Sussex colleagues contribute to the **Active Learning Network** which offers free, open professional development for educators worldwide. Its annual programme includes an online Global Festival of Active Learning each spring, an International Active Learning Conference each summer, and an autumn CPD series in which participants can earn certificates and badges.

We offer a range of short courses for the general public, as well as those working in business and the public sector, in subjects ranging from social work to trade policy. We also offer **short language courses** where anyone can enrol and study a choice of languages, including British Sign Language to Arabic.

Researchers at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) have led projects on developing local decarbonisation skills for net zero. We support **Future Skills Sussex**, the region's employer-led Local Skills Improvement Plan, and hosted the plan's launch event on campus.

And **the 2025 Undergraduate Summer School delivered 15 programmes to more than 200 students from 24 countries**. The programme included climate justice and sustainability-focused Business School teaching, providing international students with access to research-led education at Sussex.

In the first half of 2026, **the Sussex School for Progressive Futures welcomed more than 120 sixth-form, GCSE and Sussex students**, plus parents, guardians and teachers, to four events showcasing Sussex research. Topics included women entrepreneurs in Yemen, citizen science and river care, AI and law, and quantum technologies. Travel cost support was also provided to help widen participation. And **in September we hosted the Sussex Climate Conference**, a new opportunity to introduce prospective students to life at the University while showcasing how our research is helping to address some of the most pressing challenges facing society today. Students engaged with cutting-edge research, heard from expert academics, including Dr Lucas, and explored climate justice challenges and solutions through a real academic conference experience.



SDG5
Gender equality

This SDG relates to how we ensure a gender balance in our student population, our research on gender equality and our work to highlight women in STEM subjects.

Work within the University of Sussex

We want all members of our community to feel they belong at Sussex and to have the opportunity to contribute and thrive, as set out in our new ***Culture, Equality and Inclusion Framework 2025-35***. We operate a non-discriminatory student admissions policy: our Access and Participation Plan tracks under-representation and includes measures to close gaps. And our Open Listening Programme develops staff and students' skills in navigating difficult conversations, managing conflict and understanding different perspectives to promote a more inclusive University culture.

At Sussex, female students have higher rates of continuation, progression and attainment than their male counterparts. In 2024-25, **women made up 54% of our full-time undergraduate population**, and 60% and 50% of our postgraduate (taught) and postgraduate (research) bodies respectively. These are published each year in **the Student Equality Duty Report** and **on the OfS website**.

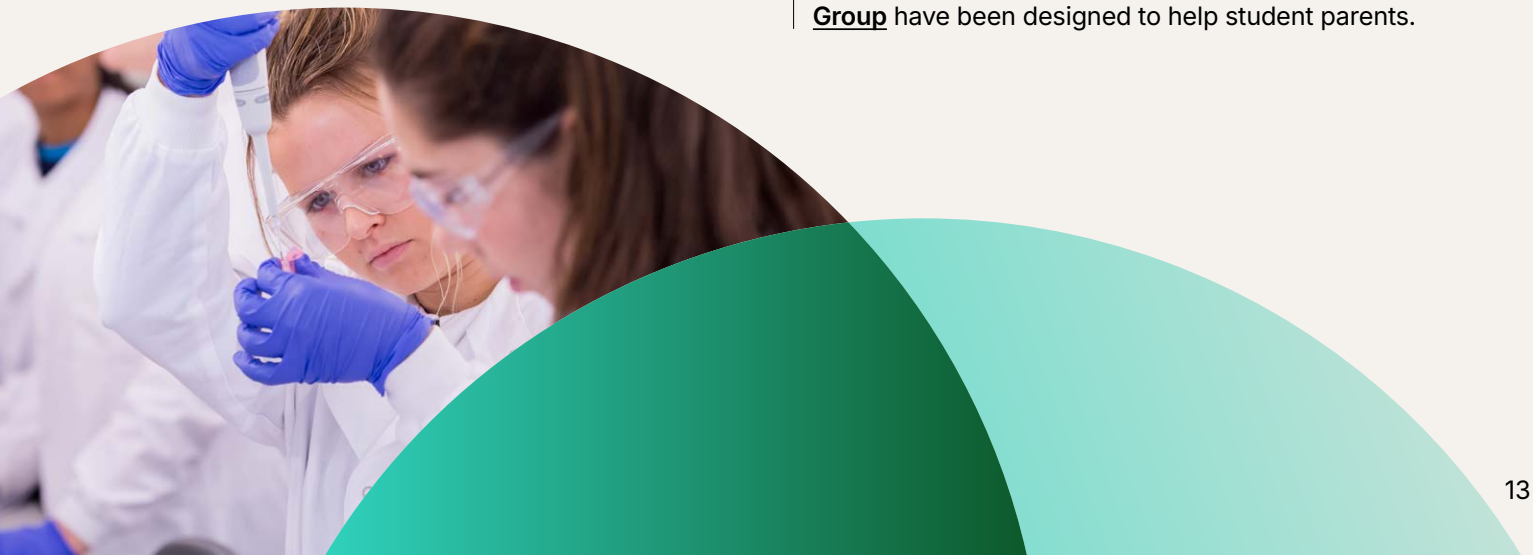
Other steps include:

- In 2025 we awarded **the Emily O Akinluyi Scholarship for undergraduate study** to a woman studying a STEM subject and **the Gazelle Twin Scholarship for Women in Music Technology** for those studying music. For postgraduate study, one of **the John Kinghorn Scholarships in Engineering** is for women only.
- We hold **an Athena SWAN institutional bronze award**, in recognition of our achievements and progress in relation to gender equality.
- In November 2025, **the School of Psychology achieved an Athena SWAN Gold Award**, to add to the Gold Award held by the Medical School: every School in the University now holds an award.
- Our **Gender Equality Steering Group**, which meets quarterly, also encourages school-level applications to address participation in subjects where women are underrepresented. The School of Engineering and Informatics also has its own **Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee made up of staff and students**.

In April 2026 **Sussex published its 2025 gender, ethnicity, disability and intersectional pay-gap data**. The mean gender pay gap fell to 14.1%, the lowest reported by the University, while the median gender pay gap fell to 11%. The University has also introduced further actions around promotion, recruitment, leadership and career development.

We track the gender balance of our staff, including by pay grade, in **the Staff Equality Duty Report**. Among our senior academics, 59% are female at grade 7, 49% at grades 8 and 9, and 37% at grade 10.

Our maternity, paternity and shared parental leave policies help support participation, and we provide **accessible childcare and nursery facilities for students and staff** (students receive a 20% discount). **The free on-campus family room**, activities with **the Belong at Sussex programme**, and **the Student Parent Working Group** have been designed to help student parents.



Our research and impact

In January 2025 we were **awarded a British Council Grant to establish a cross-cultural, reciprocal mentoring scheme with the University of Ghana**. The scheme for women is focused on advancing gender equality, inclusive leadership and international collaboration. In August 2025 colleagues from the University of Ghana visited Sussex to share learning, strengthen relationships and launch mentoring partnerships. The return visit to Accra in February 2026 marked the next phase of the collaboration, demonstrating the sustained impact and growth of the initiative.

A collaboration with Mahidol University, Thailand, ran from January 2025 to January 2026 and included a dedicated research strand on Education, Gender and Livelihoods, alongside work on teacher development, inclusion, digital technologies and climate education. The teams produced comparative policy papers examining progress against SDG targets.

Work within Sussex and beyond

In 2025, we launched **the new Sussex Women's Leadership Academy** to empower early career researchers, particularly all women and minority genders, to maximise their research potential. An exhibition featuring photographic portraits of early career researchers was displayed to the public in the Library Open Learning Space to mark International Women's Day and **their insights shared online**.

Since 2019, the School of Engineering and Informatics has partnered with the Women's Engineering Society to strengthen our commitment to support students' and staff development with access to a professional network of women engineers, scientists and technologists. The School also **hosted a series of events celebrating the achievements, insights, and inspirations of women in engineering** for International Women in Engineering Day in June 2025.

The School of Psychology has received an Athena SWAN Gold Award

In 2025, the mean gender pay gap fell to 14.1%, the lowest reported by the University



SDG6 Clean water and sanitation

This SDG relates to the water we use on campus, how we conserve it and how we encourage others to save water and learn about good water management.

Work within the University of Sussex

We consumed 323,985m^3 of water in 2024/25. **Our overall water consumption dropped by 9.5% between 2023-24 and 2024-25**. We have drinking water fountains across our buildings and free drinking water is available in all catering outlets to encourage the use of reusable water bottles; this is **promoted to all students and staff around key dates like Plastic Free July**.

Our **Sustainable Water Management Policy** commits us to ensuring water discharges do not negatively impact water quality; we also offer **guidance on safely disposing of substances**, including posters for display by the sinks in labs and workshops.

We continuously assess water efficiency across the estate and our water management policy outlines how to apply building standards to minimise water usage: we require a BREEAM rating of 'Excellent' as a minimum for new builds. Native planting, green roofs and water recycling have **all been included in the design** of our West Slope development, which launched in 2026, to make it more water-efficient and flood resilient.

Our research and impact

In June 2025 a team from Southern Water, working to reduce the use of storm overflows and improve the quality of bathing water, **met for a campus learning exchange with staff from the Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC) and SPRU** at our Business School. The meeting provided an opportunity to explore some of the challenges facing the water industry and how our research can be used to address these.

Dr Joanna Smallwood, Associate Professor in Law, **attended a parliamentary session in October 2025 as part of the launch of the new Nature's Rights Bill**. The Bill introduces a transformative legal framework – the Integrated Rights Framework – that recognises nature as a legal subject and embeds human and economic rights within ecological limits. Dr Smallwood has long been involved in **the development of local Rights of Nature initiatives related to the River Ouse in Sussex**.

The value of grass strips as simple nature-based solutions to combat land degradation and conserve water is being explored in research by Dr Cynthia Olumba. **Green Barriers is part of the REAL NbS project to enhance climate resilience in eastern Africa** by co-developing equitable solutions. The practice was co-selected during an inception workshop held in Ethiopia last year. With support from the project team, some farmers are now planting desho grass strips on test plots in their fields and monitoring their effectiveness in reducing land degradation.

And in April 2026, **researchers from Sussex and UCL published new research** estimating that more than 24 million people in Bangladesh remain exposed to unsafe levels of arsenic in drinking water. The research provides updated evidence of the scale and geographical distribution of the problem.



Work within Sussex and beyond

In January 2025, more than 60 researchers came together on our campus **to explore how their work can enable Sussex Bay** to create a healthy blue ecosystem on our doorstep. Academics from different universities came together to look at ways to develop collaborations with external partners and discussion centred on the challenges and opportunities for marine and coastal recovery.

And a parliamentary reception in the House of Commons in June **showcased the strong policy potential of Sussex Sustainability Research Programme research** restoring inland and coastal waters on the South Coast. Researchers shared findings, impact, and policy 'asks' relating to their projects addressing coastal biodiversity and river pollution in Sussex.

Our Forest Food Garden, which operates as a working classroom, **selected water as its annual theme in 2026**. In response to mounting global concern around water scarcity, students are collaborating with colleagues from the Sussex School of Life Sciences and the School of Engineering and Informatics to design and build a pond, alongside other sustainable water initiatives. The new pond provides a practical public-facing demonstration of water-positive design and ecological restoration, with volunteers from across the University community participating in the Forest Food Garden.

Our overall water consumption dropped by 9.5% between 2023-24 and 2024-25

We have researchers focused on restoring inland and coastal waters on the South Coast



SDG7 Affordable and clean energy

This SDG relates to our research on energy, energy use, policies, and our commitment to promoting energy efficiency in the wider community.

Work within the University of Sussex

We **measure and track all low-carbon energy used across the university**, including our green supply contract for electricity, and the energy generation from our photovoltaic panels and combined heat and power plant: almost 11% of the energy we used in 2024-25 came from self-generated low-carbon sources on our campus.

We already ensure all new buildings constructed on campus meet the energy efficiency standards set out in the BREEAM 'Excellent' environmental standard.

We have a socially responsible approach to financial investment. We invest our funds carefully to get the best return – but we also look at the wider impact of those choices. Investment objectives will be met through rigorous screening of potential investments, by actively engaging with the companies and organisations we invest in, and by actively seeking to divest when their activities do not align with ours.

Since October 2017, our endowment funds have also been invested in the Liontrust Sustainable Future Managed Fund. We aim to seek out cash investment products that do not contribute to the financing of fossil fuel expansion, and in February 2024 **we sent a formal request for proposals to financial institutions** asking them to offer more sustainable products and avoid investing in fossil fuels, in collaboration with Cambridge and other leading universities.

Nearly 11% of the energy we used in 2024-25 came from self-generated low-carbon sources on campus





Our research and impact

Nationally, we inform and support government in clean energy and energy-efficient technology policy development. We pride ourselves on offering practical ideas, perspectives and solutions to ensure that our research delivers positive societal outcomes, with many examples shared on our website.

In 2025, International Relations professor **Peter Newell received the Distinguished Contribution Prize from the British International Studies Association**. For over 30 years, his research has focussed on the politics and political economy of climate change and energy transitions: he has played a leading role in developing the idea behind the global campaign for a fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty.

We have showcased new international research on energy transitions. **The Sussex Energy Group's 2024-25 and 2025-26 seminar programme** included new research examining China's influence on renewable-energy investment and critical minerals in the Global South, including case studies from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe and Guinea, as well as a look at carbon capture storage battles. The programme also examined the previously under-recognised household and community labour involved in smart local energy systems.

China was also under scrutiny from the Institute of Development Studies with a new comprehensive and transparent analysis of China's role in the global energy transition. The study shows a significant shift to renewables compared to the past decade, dominated by mega solar projects in Asia and Africa, but varying to include niche areas like biomass in some places.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Our Global Classroom programme connected Sussex and Ghanaian students to explore sustainability through the specific contexts of the UK and Ghana. **The 2025 programme involved 60 students** working collaboratively on sustainability issues including water and energy and considering progress towards SDGs 6 and 7.

The University is a key partner in **Sussex Energy**, the regional mission to achieve energy neutrality across Sussex by 2040. In July 2025 **we hosted the inaugural Sussex Energy Forum**, which brought together over 50 people from 35 organisations across the region, including local authorities, community energy groups, academics and industry partners. The Forum led to new work on communications, mobilising finance and technical expertise for large-scale solar and other low carbon projects, and building a shared picture of energy activity in Sussex.

We have a socially responsible approach to financial investment

SDG8 Decent work and economic growth

This SDG relates to our role as an employer and the number of students undertaking work placements.

Work within the University of Sussex

We are proud to have been an Accredited Living Wage employer since 2022, and this also guarantees the same wage to outsourced workers working on campus as those directly employed by the university.

We recognise three specific trade unions on campus who meet regularly with senior leaders; all staff groups in Grades 1-9 are included in collective bargaining arrangements.

We published **a Modern Slavery Act Statement** for 2025-26 that sets out the steps taken to prevent forced labour and slavery in our supply chain; we are also a member of Electronics Watch to protect the rights of workers in our electronics supply chain.

Our Inclusive Sussex EDI framework sets out our commitment to preventing discrimination on grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment or trans identity, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, trade union membership or non-membership, socio-economic background, or any other inappropriate distinction.

We produce **annual gender pay gap reports** to help publicly measure and track gender equality. In 2025, the mean gender pay gap fell to 14.1%, the lowest reported by the University, while the median gender pay gap fell to 11%. We also publish **annual ethnicity pay gap reports and disability pay gap reports**. All roles undergo a job evaluation exercise to ensure roles with commensurate demands are paid on the same scale, regardless of where or when the role is undertaken.

We have a policy of non-discrimination for transgender people, set out in our **Trans and Non-Binary Equality Policy Statement**, as well as a **Transitioning at Work Policy**, while our **Dignity, Respect and Inclusion Policy** sets out the process for resolution and is designed to support and protect staff reporting discrimination of all forms.

We have been an Accredited Living Wage employer since 2022



Our research and impact

We have been **awarded an Arts and Humanities Research Council Impact Acceleration Account grant** of £750,000 over five years until 2027 to accelerate the impact of arts and humanities research. The programme aims to achieve impactful outcomes, particularly in the creative economy, AI and digital transformation, and place-making and community.

In September 2026, Dr Shyamain Wickramasingha was **awarded a €1.5 million ERC Starting Grant for research** examining how the global transition to a circular economy could affect workers, industries and communities in the Global South. The project will examine circular-economy policy in the UK and EU alongside textile-waste industries in Bangladesh and Ghana, with a particular focus on labour, justice and inclusion.

The ESRC Centre for Digital Futures at Work (Digit), jointly led by the University of Sussex and the University of Leeds, aims to understand how digital technologies are transforming work, employment and workers' experiences. The Centre supports evidence-informed approaches to ensuring that technological change promotes fair, inclusive and productive employment.

In 2025, the Centre published findings from its five-year research programme, highlighting challenges including unequal access to digital skills and digital exclusion. We hosted **the second International Symposium on Digitalisation, Artificial Intelligence, Work and Employment**, fostering international collaboration and debate on the implications of technological change for jobs, skills, workers' rights and wellbeing. Digit has secured a further five years of ESRC funding (2025–2029) to investigate the UK's emerging digital work ecosystem, including the implications of AI, skills and inequalities.

We have developed and helped launch the region's first ever Civic University Agreement to boost economic growth

Work within Sussex and beyond

In January 2026 we came together with fellow Sussex universities and some of the region's most prominent local organisations **to launch a powerful new commitment to boost regional economic growth**. The region's first ever Civic University Agreement is a joint commitment by senior leaders to share resources and work in partnership with the three universities to help drive positive change across the region. Partners include Brighton & Hove City Council, Gatwick Diamond Business, East and West Sussex County Councils, Brighton & Hove Albion FC, the FE Sussex consortium of further education colleges, Sussex Police, and NHS Sussex.

Open to current University of Sussex students and recent graduates, **our Momentum Incubator Programme offers 12 months of tailored masterclasses and expert mentoring**, followed by an additional year of free membership in our vibrant business community. In 2025, 20 ambitious early-stage businesses joined the year-long journey designed to transform bold ideas into impactful ventures.

We work closely with local employers to advertise vacancies for free, hire a placement student or access funded intern and student consultants: we advertise 5,000+ vacancies to our students and graduates each year through the CareerHub.



SDG9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure

This SDG relates to our research on innovation, research income from industry, and our range of patents and spinout companies.

Work within the University of Sussex

Our Research and Innovation Services provide researchers with expertise and support throughout the research life cycle and throughout their whole career. We help researchers to secure funding and have an impact outside of academia through public engagement, partnerships and regional and business engagement activities.

Our Knowledge Exchange and Impact Support Programme is an institution-wide scheme to support the development and acceleration of knowledge exchange and impact. A proportion of the HEIF funding for 2024-2025 was allocated to deliver and support a portfolio of Knowledge Exchange and Impact Fellowships to develop a pipeline of projects being nurtured and developed to support growth and scale of impact activity.

We host the Sussex Awards annually to celebrate staff dedication and innovation: categories include Research and Innovation Excellence.

We also offer support for students to explore their entrepreneurial side and potentially launch and grow their business or social enterprise idea. This includes the Ideas Lab and Bright Ideas development grants.

Our research and impact

Our Business School ranks first in the UK for Business and Management research income, according to the UK's Chartered Association of Business Schools. This research funding is being used to tackle crucial global challenges in sustainability, energy demand, trade policy, equality, innovation and digital technologies within the Business School's 12 research centres and groups.

In October 2025 our Business School hosted two days of intensive discussions with policymakers and funders to identify new pathways towards global system change amid deep economic and political uncertainty. The strategic dialogue was led by the Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium, coordinated by our Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU). Rising government attention on protecting domestic industries, securing supply chains and preparing for potential conflicts risks side-lining long-term goals for sustainability, justice and deep systemic change. Participants reflected on threats to transformation posed by geopolitical tensions, security concerns and economic competition.





In 2025, **the University's Sussex Centre for Quantum Technologies attracted national attention**, with visits from government ministers recognising the potential of its research to drive technological innovation, create high-skilled jobs and stimulate regional economic growth. Research into quantum sensing also reached a significant milestone, **with trials exploring how quantum navigation technology** could reduce reliance on satellite navigation systems.

And in 2026, **two interconnected events hosted by SPRU looked at who innovation serves**, whose knowledge counts, and which futures are made possible. Three themes stood out: how to rethink impact beyond narrow success stories; how to support early-career researchers navigating uncertainty; and why long-term partnerships matter.

In 2025, 20 early-stage businesses joined our Momentum Incubator Programme

We supported and delivered 26 Knowledge Exchange and Impact Fellowships

Work within Sussex and beyond

The Sussex Innovation Centre's Momentum Incubator Programme is all about turning potential into progress. Many of the 20 entrepreneurs received funding for sustainable business ideas in the 2025 round of the programme, including:

- BeComms, a circular economy and communications consultancy founded on the principles of Doughnut Economics to support organisations to become more sustainable and tell their story without greenwashing
- Compost-It, a food waste recycling organisation, redirecting waste away from landfill, towards local composters and anaerobic digestion facilities
- Green2B, a B2B marketplace making it easy for companies to source eco-friendly products in bulk
- ReCycle, which makes bicycles from recycled plastics to be used in a low-cost rental bike scheme
- UnEarth, a tool which enables consumers to see the environmental impacts of products via barcode scan.

SDG10
Reduced inequalities

This SDG relates to our research on social inequalities, policies on discrimination, approaches to addressing disadvantage, and commitment to recruiting staff and students from under-represented groups.

Work within the University of Sussex

We offer advice for students, as well as for parents and staff. We have a Disability Advice team of dedicated advisors to help disabled students to access support and funding; they hold term-time drop-in sessions at the Student Centre.

We offer accessible housing to students who have a declared disability or long-term health condition, including rooms that are wheelchair-accessible and/or adaptable for students needing specialist personal care and support. And we work in partnership with **AccessAble to map and monitor campus accessibility** for all users.

We provide support to under-represented groups of students and staff. Our **Connector Programme is a student-staff community that aims to improve the student experience at Sussex** through collaborative working. It supports the delivery of **our Access and Participation Plan**, working to amplify the voices of under-represented student groups.

Staff can also access support via the staff networks which contribute to shaping policies and procedures relating to EDI.

We were ranked 30th in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index in 2024

We were **ranked 30th in 2024 in the Top 100 Employers in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index for our ongoing work for LGBTQ+ inclusion**, while numerous School-level Athena Swan awards, **including a Gold award for the Brighton and Sussex Medical School**, provide similar recognition in relation to gender equality.

We have a dedicated **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit** and a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Culture Equality and Inclusion and Free Speech Officer, **Professor David Ruebain**: both actively promote, co-ordinate and embed EDI across the entire university community. For example, the University has launched a revised **LGBTQ+ Inclusion Action Plan** strengthening its ongoing commitment to LGBTQ+ staff and students, supporting the University strategy **Sussex 2035** and our **Inclusive Sussex Framework**. Every action has been co-developed with staff and students and shaped by a wide range of voices. We have also launched Leadership in Motion, a data-driven positive action programme supporting women, racially minoritised colleagues and disabled staff through coaching, mentoring, sponsorship and experiential learning to complement the existing Women's Leadership Academy.

Our Inclusive Sussex EDI framework outlines our commitment to remaining an equal, diverse and inclusive community and we **publish annual EDI reports**. We hold a **Bronze Race Equality Charter Award, given in 2023 and valid until 2028**. As part of our race and gender equality work, **we launched an EDI Charter survey in early 2026**. Responses will help assess progress against existing Race Equality Charter and Athena Swan action plans and inform ongoing and future action.

We hold a Bronze Race Equality Charter Award valid from 2023 to 2028



Our research and impact

Our Centre for International Education works to address contemporary concerns related to coloniality, race and gender; conflict and migration; global education and development policy; learning quality and pedagogies; sustainability and climate justice. Starting in March 2025, **one of its projects investigates the digital worlds of unaccompanied refugee children and young people** and how their engagement with digital tools relates to their sense of belonging, integration and wellbeing.

Joined up lives is a multi-site research project run by the Innovate Project based in our School of Education and Social Work. It has been funded by the Nuffield Foundation to explore the challenges and inequalities faced by children and young people who experience educational disadvantage, involvement with social care, and contact with youth justice services. Working in partnership with four local authorities and their Virtual Schools, the project seeks to understand what effective multi-agency working looks like in practice, how it is experienced by children, young people and families, and how collaboration across services can lead to better outcomes.

Through international collaborations and research engaging with policy and practice, **the Sussex Centre for Migration Research** contributes to a deeper understanding of migration and inequality, helping to inform approaches to building more inclusive and equitable societies. In 2025 Sussex was ranked number one in the world for Migration Studies in the 2025 ScholarGPS rankings, based on the impact of our members' research publications.

Dr Matt Easterbrook's research focuses on reducing educational inequalities and promoting inclusion. He directs a research group focused on reducing educational inequalities and leads work to develop evidence-informed approaches to addressing disadvantage in schools. Through tailored interventions developed in partnership with schools, **this work is helping to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils**.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Our Law Clinics are a collaboration between final year law students, law academics and external solicitors and barristers. The clinics offer free legal advice to the public, charities, schools and organisations on a variety of legal issues. These seven specialist legal clinics are operated by final-year law students under the guidance of experienced tutors and solicitors. During the 2025-26 academic year, our law clinics received almost 500 web enquiry forms and over 800 telephone enquiries. All those who made contact were offered support/advice or signposted to other services.

We also collaborate with Citizens Advice in West Sussex, with students committing to spending one day per week at Citizens Advice offices in West Sussex in term-time.

Through collaborating on joint initiatives, **the region's first ever Civic University Agreement aims to tackle social inequalities**, pioneer new technologies, and drive economic growth throughout Sussex. Professor Robin Banerjee, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global and Civic Engagement, has spearheaded its development in order to amplify and expand the strong work that our staff and students are already doing across Sussex.

In 2025, the **Negotiating Queer Identities Following Forced Migration project** contributed to international policy development through submissions to several calls for evidence on the rights and protection of LGBTQ+ people. The project's evidence on forced displacement and LGBTQ+ rights was cited in the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity's **2025 report to the Human Rights Council**. It also contributed to the European Commission's consultation on the **EU LGBTIQ Equality Strategy 2026–2030**.



SDG11 Sustainable cities and communities

This SDG relates to our role as custodians of arts and heritage, and our internal approaches to sustainability.

Work within the University of Sussex

2025 saw the launch of the **Travel Hub** in the Student Centre, which brought together the Sustainability Team, Students' Union, Bike Shack, and Brighton Bike Hub through the partnership Pedal Point. **Pedal Point @ the Travel Hub** plays an active role in engagement and outreach throughout the year, connecting students and staff with sustainable and affordable travel options for the city. Through regular campaigns, workshops, and events like Welcome Week and Sustainability Week, the Hub promotes active travel, public transport discounts, and carbon-friendly commuting.

In its first two weeks, 16 bikes were sold at an average cost of £90 per bike, with students receiving a 10% discount. The Hub also hosts free bike repair sessions and **conducts travel surveys to inform ongoing improvements** and foster a low-carbon, accessible, and community-focused travel culture across campus.

We **promote sustainable commuting** through **our Active and Sustainable Commuting Policy** and a dedicated section within our Sustainability Strategy. The University has **an electric and hybrid vehicle leasing scheme for eligible staff**. Building on our 2019 Travel Plan, we monitor staff travel modes through the HESA EMR return.

Our Sustainable Travel Manager is responsible for developing these initiatives. They have also organised regular drop-in bike maintenance sessions for students and staff **as well as cycling lessons** at the Travel Hub, and promoted our Cycle to Work Scheme with stalls at University events.

We are working to reduce travel demand through **our hybrid working framework** that allows staff to work from home up to 50% of the time. This builds on our pre-existing flexible working policies that support home working and other interventions. We prioritise pedestrian access to campus with a network of footpaths and cycle lanes running through the campus, in addition to bus routes, as shown in our travel plan. **The cycling and walking pages on our website** provide detailed information to staff, students and visitors.

Our research and impact

We are now home to **the Sussex School for Progressive Futures (SSPF)**, a flagship interdisciplinary hub to catalyse and coordinate a distinctive, world-changing programme of education, research, and civic engagement. Rooted in the University's strategic vision, **Sussex 2035: Creating Progressive Futures**, the School brings together researchers, educators, students, and professional practitioners from across disciplines, alongside partners from business, industry, government, the arts, and the third sector, to tackle complex global challenges collaboratively.

We also work hard to deliver projects to record and preserve local, regional and national intangible cultural heritage, including heritage of displaced communities. **The Landecker Digital Memory Lab at the University of Sussex**, for example, supports local and regional cultural heritage by providing free online training courses and advisory services for heritage professionals seeking to build digital capacities and literacies (including at regional levels). It contributes to national cultural heritage through its living database-archive of digital Holocaust memory projects from around the world, and by engaging with policymakers at the national and inter-governmental level to influence how digital memory is managed and sustained.

The Civic University Agreement is a historic regional collaboration, spearheaded by Sussex along with the Universities of Brighton and Chichester and partners across Sussex





Work within Sussex and beyond

Our region is facing significant social, economic and environmental challenges, and it is more important than ever for anchor institutions to work together and to pull in the same direction. **Sustainable, Connected, and Equitable Sussex** is our landmark new 2025 Civic University Agreement which brings us together with the Universities of Brighton and Chichester and a number of civic partners to unlock the ambitions and strengths of the people and communities of our region. The agreement was formally signed in January 2026, building on collaborative work undertaken during 2025 to address shared environmental and community challenges. Priorities include nature recovery and biodiversity, a Sustainability Data Observatory to support evidence-based environmental decision-making, and community transitions to renewable energy through the Sussex Energy mission.

Our Library provides a wide range of free open access materials and resources **to the general public**, including journals, statistics and data sets. The library is also the home of **the Open Press at the University of Sussex**, working with academics to create and share educational content that is available to all. **Our special interest collections are available at The Keep** for archives, manuscripts, local history collections and rare books, including the Mass Observation Archive. In partnership with East Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council, it is accessible to the general public permanently free of charge.

We provide free public access to all major campus buildings, including our heritage-listed structures designed by Sir Basil Spence. Situated on the edge of the South Downs National Park and within a UNESCO World Biosphere Region, the university offers open access to its green spaces and natural landscapes. A dedicated **boundary walk map** guides students, staff, and visitors around the campus perimeter and through the surrounding downland, encouraging exploration and connection with nature.

We also delivered free and paid events throughout the year in **our Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts** with over 8,000 tickets sold in 2025. The free events included lectures, performance arts, exhibitions and museum education, amongst others. We are an official Higher Education Partner of Brighton Festival. Our School of Media, Arts and Humanities also ran the fourth Sussex Festival of Ideas during this time, celebrating creativity and contemporary thought.

Our Residential Life Connectors are current students who receive paid employment as members of staff to live in our student accommodation where they can provide advice and support to residents. We are part of the **Student Accommodation Code** that stipulates that we address both qualitative and quantitative elements of the student experience including (as a minimum) rent levels and value for money. Students from households with an income of up to £35,000 can receive **the Sussex Bursary** and can also access other monetary support, for example via **the Hardship Fund** or **Welfare Loan** which can be used towards accommodation costs.

Native planting supports ecological habitat corridors in our new West Slope development which is still under construction; wherever possible, existing trees have been incorporated into the development, whilst new trees will be specially selected to support native biodiversity and enhance the landscape. All suitable demolition waste has been reused on site as per Site Waste Management Plan requirements under Planning conditions.

All new campus buildings are required to meet BREEAM 'Excellent' energy efficiency and environmental standards. **The Business School's Jubilee Buildings** include a number of energy-efficiency features such as a greywater-harvesting system that supplies water for flushing. **Our new West Slope development** of accommodation along with a supermarket, health and wellbeing centre, and study spaces is constructed to BREEAM 'Excellent' standards.

Through **Sussex Co-Lab**, we work with Brighton and Hove Community Land Trust on Who Owns Brighton, a project exploring local property ownership and development. By bringing research and community perspectives together, the project supports greater understanding of how land and property are owned to inform discussions about more inclusive, sustainable and community-centred approaches to urban planning.

Since 2025, we have been home to the Sussex School for Progressive Futures, a flagship interdisciplinary hub to catalyse and coordinate a world-changing programme of education, research, and civic engagement

SDG12 Responsible consumption and production

This SDG relates to our research on resource and energy efficiency, promoting sustainable infrastructure, and using resources efficiently and minimising waste on campus.

Work within the University of Sussex

We have a range of policies and frameworks guiding how products are purchased, used, and disposed of across campus. Our **Ethical and Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework** encourages responsible social, environmental, and economic practices throughout our supply chain. Our values-based, ethical procurement process is seen as sector-leading. And when we procured a new facilities management partner in 2025, **we chose a company whose commitments to equality, diversity, and inclusion and to environmental sustainability were congruent** with our own institutional values.

Complementing this, our **Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy** extends these responsibilities to our direct suppliers during tendering and contract renewal. It promotes principles such as sourcing locally, maintaining high animal welfare standards, and using Fairtrade products where appropriate.

Our **Waste Reduction, Reuse, and Recycling Policy** sets out our commitment to sending zero waste to landfill and prioritisation of waste reduction in line with the waste hierarchy guidance. It contains a specific pledge to minimise plastic waste, including minimisation of single use plastics, hard-to-recycle plastic materials and plastics that have the potential to harm wildlife, habitats or human life, including aquatic systems. We extend our guiding principles to outsourced services and our supply chain under section 6 of the policy. This includes minimisation of single use plastics from catering, stationary, laboratories, halls of residence, offices and events. Our **Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework** also promotes responsible social, environmental and economic consumption throughout our supply chain.

We expanded our recycling scheme **to allow more materials to be recycled, including food waste in offices, student residences and catering outlets**. **100% of the campus has a food waste collection**: from July 2025 to August 2026, we collected 32 tonnes of food waste and sent this to generate green energy.

We worked with our on-site caterer **to launch a returnable cup scheme in October 2024** to reduce the number of takeaway cups being thrown away. **In 2025, our campus community helped save an incredible 40,059 disposable cups** – boosted by a number of catering outlets only providing reusable cups.

Finally, **our policy on safe management of chemicals, other hazardous substances, and their waste** establishes procedures for the safe disposal of hazardous materials, ensuring compliance and environmental protection.

Researchers are working to decarbonise commissioning and delivery of healthcare



Our research and impact

The Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) is one of seven transdisciplinary research hubs based at institutions across the UK to have received funding from the National Institute for Health and Care Research and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to work on decarbonising commissioning and delivery of healthcare. Dr Professor Mood Bhutta leads the **Green Healthcare Hub** whose research was cited in **the Government's new Design for Life strategy on medical equipment reuse**. He has spearheaded work between several NHS Trusts to form **a new circular economy healthcare alliance** to shape policy and practice in the UK and abroad.

The University of Sussex, through its involvement in the Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC), is contributing to international research exploring how cities in the **Global South can develop more sustainable, inclusive circular economies**. In December 2025, Sussex-linked TIPC researchers collaborated with partners in South Africa and Panama to examine innovative approaches to waste management, recycling, biogas production, repair and reuse, and sustainable construction. The initiative promotes international knowledge exchange and collaborative research to identify practical solutions that reduce landfill waste, conserve resources and deliver social and economic benefits for urban communities.

We collected 32 tonnes of food waste between July 2025 and August 2026 and sent this to generate green energy

Work within Sussex and beyond

Beyond campus, we actively encourage staff to give back to the local community through our Volunteering Policy, which supports participation in a wide range of initiatives. Staff are also encouraged to **organise their own activities which benefit the environment and local community** and also help foster team collaboration, wellbeing, and a sense of civic responsibility among staff.

The new Travel Hub collects old or discarded bikes, which are reclaimed, repaired, and resold at affordable prices (with an average cost of around £90 per bike). Open to the wider local community as well as students and staff, the Hub provides accessible cycling options and promotes sustainability and circular resource use, reducing waste and encouraging low-carbon travel across and beyond campus.

The University of Sussex is a board member of the Circular South East Project. Led by Tech-Takeback with Kent County Council and Claire Potter Design, **it is accelerating the transition to a circular economy across Sussex, Kent and the wider region**. The Horizon Europe-funded United Circles programme connects regional stakeholders with an international network of Circularity Hubs to develop practical, scalable solutions that reduce waste and carbon emissions, improve resource efficiency and strengthen regional resilience.

We also work with the local authority to **encourage students living in the city to recycle electrical items**.



SDG13 Climate action

This SDG relates to our world-leading research on climate change, our use of energy, and our preparations for dealing with the consequences of climate change.

Work within the University of Sussex

2026 saw the first students join our Climate Justice, Sustainability and Development BA. **The UK's first ever undergraduate-level climate justice degree in the social sciences**, it will equip students with a unique blend of expertise in climate politics, activism, and environmental human rights. This will be combined with the practical green skills needed to drive real-world change.

We were the first UK institution to join the TASK™ Change Leaders programme, which aims to mainstream sustainability literacy worldwide. All Business School students are eligible to take the assessment and **hundreds have now taken part**. This is just **one of a number of initiatives by the Business School to embed sustainability** into the core of our educational programmes.

We have a target to achieve Net Zero across all scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions by 2035 as set out in **the Decarbonising the Economy section of our Sustainability Strategy**. **Our Sussex 2035 strategy** echoes the pledge to develop our campus to meet the challenges of environmental sustainability, minimising our carbon footprint, and achieving net zero for scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2035, or as soon as possible thereafter.

We are currently reporting our emissions following the Standardised Carbon Emissions Framework for Higher Education set out by EAUC.

Our Climate Action Plan, outlined in **the Decarbonising the Economy section of our Sustainability Strategy**, also emphasises civic leadership and collaborative partnerships. As members of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB), we have committed to 10 shared pledges to drive climate action and promote green growth in the region. Additionally, we participate in **the UN Race to Zero campaign**, reinforcing our commitment to global efforts to combat climate change.

Our research and impact

We are home to the **Bennett Institute**, a world-leading research centre which launched in 2025 to focus on addressing climate change, one of the biggest threats facing the planet. Strategic research themes include artificial intelligence for sustainability and urban sustainability; it also develops climate policies and interventions targeting behaviour, technology and society to achieve climate targets and net-zero energy. Key to its work is collaboration with partner institutions and funding bodies: for example, **the Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre** co-creates whole-system, multidisciplinary solutions that are accelerating the green futures of industries.

The **Sussex Energy Group** conducts research on reducing energy demand and use, addressing both household and societal challenges. The **Household and Community Labour in Smart Local Energy Systems** project, led by Professor Adrian Smith, examines how households contribute vital, but often overlooked, work to make smart local energy systems successful. While the **Advancing Capacity for Climate and Environment Social Science (ACCESS)** project, led by Professor Benjamin Sovacool, provides insights to find fresh thinking and new solutions to support the transition to a sustainable and biodiverse environment and a net zero society.

In 2026, we opened the UK's first ever undergraduate-level climate justice degree in the social sciences





We are home to the Bennett Institute which is focused on addressing climate change

Other research which stands out includes:

- Professor Peter Newell was honoured with the **Activism Award by the Royal Geographical Society** for his contributions to energy justice: he co-created the idea of a **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty** and co-founded the **Rapid Transition Alliance**. He played a leading role in **the world's first conference on transitioning away from fossil fuels** in Colombia in April 2026.

- We are a consortium partner in the **LANDMARC (LAND-use based MitigAtion for Resilient Climate pathways) project**, which examines strategies to support climate resilience and prevent disasters. This research translates scientific modelling and local insights into regionally informed policies, supporting integrated planning that links mitigation, land use, resilience, and climate-driven population movements.

- In addition, we are a partner in **CLARE, a UK-Canada framework research programme on Climate Adaptation and Resilience** designed and run by the United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and Canada's International Development Research Centre. The project aims to enable socially inclusive and sustainable action to build resilience to climate change and natural hazards in Africa and Asia-Pacific.

- Through the CLARE programme, **Sussex researchers secured $8m to scale adaptation work in the Greater Horn of Africa**, collaborating with local communities, institutions, and NGOs across Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Kenya. This work feeds into the **PASSAGE Project (Strengthening Pastoral Livelihoods in the African Greater Horn through Effective Anticipatory Action)**, which aims to build the resilience of pastoral communities through inclusive, cross-scale risk narratives and anticipatory action plans based on predictive multi-hazard impact-based forecasts.

- We are also working on **the FOrecasts to Local Actions (FOLA) approach developed through the PASSAGE project** to include the knowledge and voices of local people and communities.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Professor Benjamin Sovacool from the **Bennett Institute** was appointed **a Coordinating Lead Author for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Seventh Assessment Report** in 2025. His work focuses on the connections between climate change, poverty, livelihoods, migration and vulnerability, helping to ensure that global climate assessments consider the impacts of climate hazards on communities most at risk. This appointment recognises Sussex's contribution to international climate research and supports the development of evidence to inform climate policy, adaptation and more equitable approaches to climate action.

Our annual **Summer of Research Sussex** provides local education programmes and campaigns on climate change risks, impacts, mitigation, adaptation and impact reduction. For example, our annual **Soapbox Science Brighton** included members of the public hearing from scientists working to understand plastic ingestion by UK hedgehogs.

In 2025, the School of Global Studies ran a **Climate Justice Summer School** to focus on ways to tackle the climate crisis whilst building transferable green skills in the classroom and outdoors. In 2026, more than 200 sixth form students joined the University of Sussex's **inaugural climate conference** to discuss threats to the planet and green career opportunities.

Dr Perpetua Kirby and colleagues have received funding from the Sustainable Sussex Research Programme to develop a **multi-community, collaborative storytelling game for secondary school students**, scaling up their earlier work to provide **a toolkit of resources for schools**. The project uses creative writing, speculative fiction, and serious games to engage young people with sustainability challenges, encouraging imaginative problem-solving and cooperative learning. The initiative fosters reciprocal knowledge exchange with global youth communities, helping to build awareness, creativity, and engagement in sustainability issues.

SDG14
Life below water

This SDG relates to research on life below water, and both our education on and support for aquatic ecosystems.

Work within the University of Sussex

We have a **Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy** to ensure food on campus that comes from aquatic ecosystems is sustainably harvested: guiding principles include a section on responsible fishing.

Our catering partners, part of Compass Group UK and Ireland, **have held the top three-star rating from the Sustainable Restaurant Association since 2019**. They champion Marine Conservation Society (MCS) Best Choice species like chalkstream trout, hake, haddock and mackerel. By exclusively using Best Choice-rated fish, we reduce pressure on overfished species while enhancing our menus with diverse, high-quality options. Executive chef Michael King **shared his passion for ocean sustainability in a blog for our social media**.

Compass Group UK and Ireland is also partnering with the Sustainable Seafood Coalition and committed to its codes of conduct which requires annual risk assessments on all fisheries it works with.

Our Health and Safety webpage details **water discharge guidelines** around campus, especially within labs. And our **Water Management Policy** highlights methods to ensure we maintain high-quality water discharge, maintain trade effluent agreements, avoid foul water discharge and ensure emergency spill procedures are in place. A section dedicated to preventing water system pollution commits to ensuring water discharges do not negatively impact water quality in order to protect ecosystems, wildlife or human health.

In 2026, we achieved our Silver Phase award from EcoCampus for the new Environmental Management System under development. The System will set out our delivery mechanisms to reduce pollution to the environment and meet our goals in the **Sussex 2035** strategy.

We directly co-fund and execute the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project



Our research and impact

We are actively researching, and engaging the public, to maintain and expand ecosystems and biodiversity. A 2025 study explored **how well environmental DNA (eDNA) works in monitoring marine life in dynamic coastal environments**. The research in the Sussex Bay area investigated whether eDNA metabarcoding – a method that collects genetic material shed by organisms into water – can be used to estimate marine species abundance and richness in tidal waters. This non-invasive way to track marine life detects three times more species than traditional underwater video surveys.

Project Ripple Effect sees our academics team up with local NGO Friends of the River Medway to inspect levels of pollution in the River Medway through citizen science. The project aims to understand the health of the river and work with different stakeholders to improve it. Its first phase established a citizen science project where specialists train local people to use science techniques to monitor water health and biodiversity. The volunteers' findings will be made public and shared with organisations responsible for river health.

We directly co-fund and execute **the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project** that is leading the regeneration of the Sussex coastal zone to promote marine diversity and carbon sequestration in the wake of a trawling ban off the Greater Brighton coastline. This project has been backed by Sir David Attenborough and our academics' work has been featured on the BBC.

In 2025, we hosted The Kelp Summit and the project has helped many students gain marine survey experience at undergraduate, Masters and PhD level plus community volunteers. And in January 2026, **kelp campaigner Eric Smith was awarded an honorary doctorate** after being nominated by a staff member.

Project Ripple Effect sees our academics team up with local NGO Friends of the River Medway to inspect levels of pollution

Work within Sussex and beyond

We are university partners in the Sussex Bay partnership, which encompasses 100 miles of Sussex waters from Chichester to Camber Sands. The partnership **engages with fishing communities and partners around overfishing-related issues**, working with communities, scientists, regulators and other partners to co-produce its seascape recovery strategy.

In June 2025, staff from the University of **Sussex's Student Advice and Guidance team took part in a beach clean** on Brighton beach as part of Surfers Against Sewage's Million Mile Clean. Over two hours, staff collected a range of coastal litter, including plastic fragments, cigarette butts, disposable vapes and fishing equipment, helping prevent waste from entering the marine environment. The activity also generated wider community engagement, with members of the public stopping to ask about the clean and its environmental purpose.

Sussex's TIPC and SPRU **hosted a learning exchange with Southern Water in 2025**, exploring how research, systems thinking and innovative solutions could help address storm overflows and improve bathing water quality through more sustainable water management.

Our researchers also work with conservation charities **The Blue Marine Foundation** and **Sussex Wildlife Trust** to monitor biodiversity off the Sussex coast since a trawling byelaw in 2021.



SDG15
Life on land

This SDG relates to our research on life on land, and our education on and support for land ecosystems.

Work within the University of Sussex

The Sussex Forest Food Garden is a practical sustainability learning space that engages students, staff and the wider University community in biodiversity, ecological systems and sustainable land use. Established as an elective module in 2020, the Garden operates as a 'working classroom', where students explore ecological interdependence, biodiversity, regenerative food systems and the impacts of climate change and ecological degradation through hands-on activities. Students plan, plant and harvest collaboratively using a seven-layer forest model, with each cohort building on the work of the previous one. Volunteers from across the University also participate, extending engagement beyond enrolled students.

The Garden is now developing a new international collaboration with the University of San Diego through the US-UK Fulbright Commission's Global Challenges Teaching Awards 2025–26. This partnership provides opportunities for interdisciplinary virtual exchange and Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), connecting Sussex students and teaching with international perspectives on global environmental challenges.

We are actively working to protect and enhance biodiversity across our campus. Supported by projects such as Love Your Scrub and pollinator habitat research, the campus is becoming a living model for biodiversity and ecological restoration.

We are committed to achieving a biodiversity net gain on campus, and any new development on campus must meet BREEAM Excellent standards. Our West Slope development of new residences on campus was designed according to One Planet Living principles. Due to the size and sensitivity of the site, the university's Council instigated a Design Review Panel of experts, including a landscape architect, who closely reviewed the scheme; green roofs have been incorporated into the design.

Our Forest Food Garden is developing a new international collaboration with the University of San Diego





Our research and impact

Sussex Nature Sense provides nature monitoring services through state-of-the-art sensor technology, aiming to support land managers to take an evidence-based approach to caring for the environment. **In 2025, researchers began a research project to measure the amount of carbon captured by different natural landscapes**. They measure the number of species of earthworms within a particular area as they help capture carbon in the soil.

Building on this in 2026, **we introduced two new Nature Sense stations on campus**. Camera traps have captured species such as badgers and foxes, while acoustic monitors are recording bird vocalisations. Alongside this, students and staff have been getting involved in seasonal surveys, including earthworm studies to assess soil health.

Nationally significant work on **land restoration and carbon conflicts in Welsh farming communities** has been led by Professor William Lock, who examines the connection between carbon and reforestation policies and farmland purchases in the UK. The project investigates the scale and nature of the trend for carbon forestry and placed the often-overlooked concerns of local communities at the central of the debate on future landscapes of trees and carbon in the UK.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Our world-leading **research on ecosystems, rights and justice** aims to gain new understanding of natural ecosystems and explores our role in these ecosystems and the importance of biodiversity for eco-cultural conservation. In 2026 Lewes Town Council approved a motion granting several rights to trees, including the right to life, to flourish, to be restored and to complete natural life cycles. The motion was guided by a **toolkit developed by Dr Joanna Miller Smallwood**, who leads the Environmental Justice Law Clinic at the University of Sussex. The toolkit includes information around the current legal protections available for trees.

In April 2026 Sussex participated in the global Campus Nature Challenge, with students and staff recording plants, insects, birds and fungi through iNaturalist. Guided butterfly, pollinator and earthworm surveys were organised, contributing observations to an open-access biodiversity dataset.

In addition, we work with conservation partners to protect biodiversity, restore habitats and strengthen understanding of the ecosystems that sustain life on land. **Through collaboration with Kew at Wakehurst**, Sussex researchers contribute to landscape-scale research investigating biodiversity, carbon storage and the role of nature-based solutions in tackling environmental challenges. The University also works with the South Downs National Park Authority and other regional partners to advance nature recovery and biodiversity conservation across Sussex.

A Sussex research project is measuring the amount of carbon captured by different natural landscapes

SDG16 Peace, justice and strong institutions

This SDG relates to our research on law and international relations, our participation as advisers for government, and our policies on academic freedom.

Work within the University of Sussex

We are proud of our strong and democratic governance arrangements. We have elected representation on our highest governing body, our **Council**, from academic staff, professional services staff and students (graduate and undergraduate). In addition, we have a senior academic body, our **Senate**, with elected academic members.

This framework promotes transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making. To uphold these principles, the University maintains robust anti-bribery, fraud, and corruption policies, revises its **Freedom of Speech Code of Practice** annually, and publishes annual financial statements to ensure public accountability.

The University upholds all laws relevant to countering bribery, fraud and corruption and has zero tolerance towards fraud, bribery and any form of dishonesty in its transactions. Wherever University staff or agents operate they must abide by the laws of the UK.

Council has approved our Anti-Bribery Policy, and the Chief Operating Officer, as chief compliance officer, has operational responsibility for implementing the policy and monitoring its effectiveness. Any incidents are reported to the Audit and Risk Committee, and an annual compliance report is provided to that committee and Council. **Additional guidance is published on the University's website**.

Our Schedule of Statutes commits us to protecting the freedom of all academic staff, within the law, to teach, research and publish in ways that question established ideas and present controversial or unpopular views, without risk to their jobs or privileges.

To support this, our Council has approved and published **a Freedom of Speech Code of Practice and External Speaker Procedure**, along with a report setting out the legislation, regulatory guidance and governance values that shape our obligations. We have also created a dedicated **Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech section on our website** to explain our commitments and responsibilities.

We are transparent about our finances and **publish an annual financial statement online** for public scrutiny.

We publicly recognise **the University of Sussex Students' Union** which is affiliated with the National Union of Students. The Union provides governance input and oversight via Council and various committees.

The University regularly meets with local leaders and civic stakeholders to gain their input and support for the University's work. **The Annual Forum**, also known as the University of Sussex Court, takes place each year to promote the research, teaching and interests of the university to the local area. We also have a dedicated **Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global and Civic Engagement**.

And through our **Knowledge Exchange and Impact strategy**, Sussex fosters collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, including local councils, agencies, educational partners, charities, and businesses, to inform policy, promote sustainable solutions, and translate research into real-world impact. Through this, we inform, challenge and influence public policy, lead on and influence local, regional, national and international discourse concerning the efficacy, sustainability and impact of proposed solutions for the UN SDGs.

We take steps to ensure that lawful freedom of speech and expression is secured for all staff and students and for visiting speakers



Our research and impact

We actively contribute to governmental policy through our academics' expert involvement in key areas such as climate action, public procurement, and energy policy.

- Professor Benjamin Sovacool is a Research Co-Director of the **Industrial Carbonisation Research and Innovation Centre (IDRIC)**, which produces **policy reports and hosts regular policy events** with the goal of decarbonising UK industry. He was appointed to the UK Government's Science and Technology Advisory Council in July 2025. **The Council provides independent, evidence-based scientific and technical advice to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero and ministers**, supporting decisions on achieving clean power by 2030 and accelerating the UK's transition to net zero.

- Professor Sovacool was also **appointed a Coordinating Lead Author for the IPCC's Seventh Assessment Report in August 2025**. He is contributing to Working Group II, leading the assessment of evidence on poverty, livelihoods, mobility and fragility, including the links between climate change, inequality, displacement and conflict. This appointment demonstrates Sussex's contribution to international scientific assessments that inform climate policy and decision-making globally.

- Moira Dustin, co-founder of Women in Refugee Law (WiRL), submitted **evidence on the new Independent Appeals Body** and to the Joint Committee on Human Rights' scrutiny of the Immigration and Asylum Bill. In January 2026, WiRL also contributed to the submission to inform the **UN Independent Expert's call for input on violence and discrimination experienced by lesbian, bisexual and queer women**. The Independent Expert's subsequent report to the 62nd session of the UN Human Rights Council highlighted WiRL's concern that LBQ refugee women are "falling between different rights frameworks".

- Dr Lucila Newell and Dr Valentina Scarponi presented their research on the restoration of South Coast waterways at a **parliamentary reception** in the House of Commons hosted by MP for Lewes James MacCleary in June 2025.

- In November 2025 we **hosted two days of intensive discussions with policymakers and funders** to identify new pathways towards global system change amid deep economic and political uncertainty.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Through our role in the **UK Trade Policy Observatory (UKTPO)**, we provide a neutral, evidence-based platform for government, academic, business, and civil society stakeholders to discuss and shape UK trade policy. By hosting debates and offering impartial analysis, the UKTPO fosters constructive dialogue, helping to develop fair and balanced trade policies post-Brexit.

The Centre for the Study of Corruption runs the **Kickback podcast**, which features in-depth interviews with a wide range of experts on corruption and integrity research and practice.

We provide outreach and general education, upskilling and capacity-building to policy and lawmakers. For example, **our Institute of Development Studies offers a six-week online policy course** to equip professionals with the skills to shape policy and practice in an international development setting.

Professor Fabio Petito was appointed by Pope Leo XIV as a **Consultor to the Holy See's Dicastery for Interreligious Dialogue**, providing specialist advice on promoting respect, mutual understanding and collaboration between Catholics and followers of other religious traditions. This appointment highlights our contribution to global efforts to foster peaceful coexistence, strengthen cross-cultural understanding and address religious divisions.

Professor Fiona Marshall and Sussex colleagues – part of the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme – have developed a digital platform called **Landscape Integrative Mapping and Modelling for Multifunctional Analysis (LIMMMA)** which incorporates socio-economic and ecological data and machine-learning technology. The project informs government policy and enables stakeholders to make informed decisions about sustainable land use.

And in 2025, **Business School students presented their sustainability-focused consultancy projects to MPs and business leaders at the Houses of Parliament and the House of Lords**, showcasing practical solutions to real-world sustainability challenges. Alongside this student engagement, our **Policy@Sussex network** supports researchers in sharing evidence, informing parliamentary debates and contributing to policy development across a range of societal issues.



We actively contribute to governmental policy through our academics' expert involvement

SDG17 Partnerships for the goals

This SDG relates to the broader ways in which we support the SDGs through collaboration with other countries, the promotion of best practices, and the publication of data.

Work within the University of Sussex

The Sussex School for Progressive Futures (SSPF) is our flagship hub to catalyse and coordinate a distinctive, world-changing programme of interdisciplinary education, research, and global and civic engagement. We focus on the three linked transformational themes that underpin the Sussex 2035 strategy and are central to making a better world in the 21st century: environmental sustainability, human flourishing, and digital and data futures. Through the SSPF, we work with a diverse range of civic partners across the arts and culture sector, public services, businesses and place-based initiatives. These partnerships connect academic expertise with community knowledge to support collaborative responses to social, economic and environmental challenges, strengthening local engagement.

The Ethical Educators section of our Sustainability Strategy commits us to embed sustainability into all aspects of student learning, experience and research. We offer a range of sustainable development-focused degrees, Masters, PhDs and modules at Sussex. We also showcase which of our undergraduate degrees currently have some of the most relevant content for people interested in learning about a specific SDG.

Our new strategy focuses on environmental sustainability, human flourishing, and digital and data futures

And, to mark the launch of the SSPF, we launched a new programme of scholarships for selected taught Masters courses. These apply to Masters in topics related to environmental sustainability like Climate Change, Development and Policy. In addition, the SSPF hosts events that bring together researchers, educators, students, local residents and external partners to explore the greatest challenges facing our planet and its people.

Sustainable, Connected, and Equitable Sussex is our 2025 Civic University Agreement that sets out our ambitious vision. The Universities of Sussex, Brighton, and Chichester share a deep commitment to their civic responsibilities. In particular, the agreement highlights the strategic alliance of higher education and further education in Sussex – with the many tens of thousands of young people who power it – and its central role in the development of our communities.

The university actively engages with local leaders and civic stakeholders through forums such as the University of Sussex Annual Forum, also known as the Court, a platform to shape collaboration with local partners. This work is supported by a dedicated Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global and Civic Engagement, ensuring strong and ongoing community partnerships.

We publish an annual sustainability report which sets out the University of Sussex's most distinctive contributions to the global effort to address the challenges identified by the SDGs. This is published on our website and shared on our social channels with the public.

We were the first UK institution to join the TASK™ Change Leaders programme, which aims to mainstream sustainability literacy worldwide. All Business School students are eligible to take the assessment and hundreds have now taken part. This is just one of a number of initiatives by the Business School to embed sustainability into the core of our educational programmes.





Our research and impact

Sussex contributes to the design of modelling tools, data integration, and supporting evidence generation for government efforts to incorporate nature-based solutions into land management and climate policy. Our Sustainable Multifunctional Landscapes is a **transdisciplinary programme** of research that explores pathways to sustainable land use, working to support policy and planning processes. The **LIMMMA Platform**, (Landscape Integrative Mapping and Modelling for Multifunctional Analysis), initiated in 2017 at the University of Sussex, is central to this work. It demonstrates a strong track record of expert policy-oriented research, national government collaboration, and expert advice across national and regional levels.

In July 2025, the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP) launched its timely **Synergy Drivers report** at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum. The report, funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office, shows how countries can cope with declining resources for the SDGs by adopting efficient "synergy driver" policies that accomplish multiple targets at the same time.

And the impact is still being assessed of the **STRINGS (Steering Research and Innovation for Global Goals) project**, an international collaboration with seven universities, research centres, and the UNDP. STRINGS examines how science, technology, and innovation contribute to the SDGs, combining systemic data analysis with regionally grounded case studies in India, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. The project maps and visualises research and innovation activity across countries, over time enabling international comparisons and highlighting differences and similarities in national pathways toward the SDGs.

Work within Sussex and beyond

Through the Civic University Agreement, we work with regional partners, including local government, public services, chambers of commerce and business networks, to address shared challenges and support sustainable development. By bringing together expertise, resources and local knowledge across sectors, these partnerships strengthen collaborative action on environmental sustainability, inclusive economic growth and community wellbeing.

We have translated our research on sustainability, childhood education, and resilience into practical resources for the wider community through the launch of the **Creating with Uncertainty toolkit**. Academics working on the project have **received SSRP funding to scale up their sustainability research** by developing bids for bigger platform grants.

Developed by the Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) and the SSRP, the toolkit provides teaching materials, activities, and films to help primary and secondary school pupils engage with uncertainty, particularly around climate change. By making these materials openly accessible, Sussex demonstrates how its research can be actively shared with the community, supporting education, capacity-building, and engagement beyond the university.

The Innovate Project's latest work is **Joined up lives**, a multi-site research project exploring how organisations, systems and professionals can work together more effectively to support children and young people at the intersection of education, social care and criminal justice systems. By understanding how support is currently organised, where challenges arise, and what helps professionals collaborate effectively, Joined up lives aims to identify practical ways to improve opportunities, reduce harm, and strengthen outcomes for children and young people.

In 2025, **the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme hosted its seventh symposium** which was open to the public. The event showcased sustainability research with international impact, including presentations on a new Sustainability Observatory on the South Coast for acquiring biodiversity and other nature-related data in the context of policy action, as well as biodiversity and climate action studies in Papua New Guinea. Attendees participated in lively Q&A sessions, enabling the exchange of knowledge between researchers and the wider community.

We map our undergraduate degrees against the SDGs

Contact the Sustainability Team

To find out more about sustainability at Sussex, visit our **sustainability webpages** to see the latest news, events and find more information about what we do. You can also stay up-to-date on what the Sustainability Team are doing on **Instagram**.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact us at **sustainable@sussex.ac.uk**