



Annual Sustainable Development Goals report

10 November 2025

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).

The past year has been a defining one for the University. Our new strategy - *Sussex 2035: Creating Progressive Futures – flourishing, sustainability and progress for the whole world* sets out a bold vision for the coming decade – one that will be critical for the fate of humanity and our planet. Sussex 2035 starts from the premise that it is our responsibility, as the community with the custodianship of this remarkable university, to strengthen, grow and mobilise our collective capacity to tackle the complex challenges of this period in history, and to develop the knowledge base, skills and tools to drive progressive environmental, social, and technological change.

Sussex 2035 will pursue three transformational themes – environmental sustainability, human flourishing, and digital and data futures – which both capture much of Sussex's existing distinctive excellence and identify the most critical challenges facing the whole world. They are themes that motivate our staff and students, that speak to the concerns of our city and region, and that will inspire future cohorts of students and stakeholders who are not yet engaged with Sussex. And at the heart of Sussex 2035 is the new Sussex School for Progressive Futures, a flagship hub designed to catalyse and coordinate a world-changing interdisciplinary programme of research and education focussed on environmental sustainability, human flourishing, and digital and data futures.

Meanwhile, we have been taking forward our long-standing commitment to contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals in a wide range of ways. For instance, we have developed a new undergraduate degree in Climate Justice, Sustainability and Development, starting in 2026, which will equip students with the knowledge and skills to drive environmental change. On campus, our newly launched Travel Hub, which brings together the Sustainability Team, Students' Union, Bike Shack, and Brighton Bike Hub through the partnership Pedal Point, is helping staff, students, and the wider community embrace low-carbon travel through affordable bikes, repair sessions, and community engagement. We were rated 'excellent' in the Sustainable Restaurant Association's Food Made Good standard, and menus in our main dining facility, Eat Central, are all carbon-labelled, helping students

make informed choices by clearly displaying the environmental impact of dishes. This year, Sussex won the prestigious Bees' Needs Champion Award, one of only 23 winners nationwide, recognising the University's dedication to supporting pollinating insects, and contributing to biodiversity and nature recovery, on our campus and beyond.

We continue to focus on strengthening the student experience and employability, ensuring that our graduates leave Sussex equipped with the skills, knowledge, and real-world experience needed to thrive in an increasingly complex and uncertain world. Through initiatives such as StartUp Sussex and our system-wide focus on sustainability education, we nurture creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship, creating empowered, active global citizens. Across our research and innovation portfolio, and in partnership with governments, businesses, and civil society, we continue to advance the pursuit of a more just, sustainable, and equitable world. The University of Sussex's Bennett Institute for Innovation and Policy Acceleration was officially launched in 2024, with an agenda focused on ensuring that evidence-based policy and practical solutions to the climate crisis are developed and disseminated around the world, working with a wide range of governments and NGOs to this end.

We were very pleased to see our commitment and success recognised in international university rankings this past year, with Sussex rising from 28th to joint 19th in the UK in the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings, and we were ranked in the top 5% globally and in the UK top 20 institutions for sustainability in the 2026 QS World University Rankings. We were also delighted to be ranked 1st in the world for Development Studies with our partner the Institute for Development Studies for the ninth consecutive year in the QS World University Subject Rankings 2025.

This report offers just a glimpse of some of the extraordinary activity taking place across our passionate university community. I invite you to read on and share in Sussex's 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 2023-24 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.

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. It proposes a 10-year policy plan with a package of measures including a £60bn investment in insulation for low-income households, and a rollout of heat pumps and rooftop solar to millions of UK homes over the coming decade to create thousands of new green jobs.

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. Recent work includes **a national report on poverty dynamics and climate resilience in Zambia** which will be discussed at the Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha in November 2025.

The **Sussex Centre for Migration Research** leads a project on **Protracted Displaced Economies**; researchers use methods like community and stakeholder engagement in Myanmar, Pakistan and Ethiopia among other countries to research refugees' experiences and help realise the vast economic potential of displacement-affected communities around the world.

Education

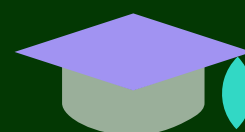
Examples of courses we offer:

- **Development Economics MSc**
- **Economics and International Development BA**
- **History BA**
- **International Relations and Development BA**
- **Poverty, Policy and Development Practice MA**



We are increasing the proportion of Sussex students from the lowest 20% of UK household incomes to 21%

Support for education



We are committed to supporting students from low-income backgrounds to access, progress through, and successfully complete higher education. 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 provide support schemes to support students from low or lower-middle income countries (LMICs). This included scholarships such as three Article 26 Scholarships and two Mandela Scholarships covering 100% of their fees, and multiple scholarships covering up to 50% of students' fees.





Engagement and outreach

By bridging the gap between academia and industry, **Sussex Innovation** plays a key role in driving inclusive economic growth across the region and supporting a thriving local innovation ecosystem. Our initiatives, including the annual **Social Impact Prize**, foster social entrepreneurship and sustainable growth to help local enterprises thrive. All support is entirely free, enabling businesses to access vital resources without financial constraint.

In March 2024 our Business School hosted a **Research and Evidence Review** for Brighton and Hove City Council and Brighton and Hove Food Partnership. More than 30 researchers from the universities of Sussex, Brighton, Birkbeck, Kingston, and the Institute of Development Studies shared research on topics like urban farming and biodiversity, land-use laws and earth justice, and alternative food support. The subsequent report will inform the new Brighton and Hove Food Strategy to help alleviate food insecurity in the city.

University policies and operations

We are committed to making higher education more affordable and accessible through a comprehensive range of internal policies and initiatives. 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.

The Widening Participation team enacts our belief in the power of higher education to drive social mobility and that a diverse, inclusive university community can help make a fairer society for all. Staff deliver outreach activities such as school visits, mentoring, and summer programmes to raise aspirations and improve access.

In 2022, **we launched a cost of living steering group**, bringing together Students' Union officers, student experience and wellbeing experts, and university leadership. This group continues to work on exploring and developing initiatives to further support students.

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:

- Financial support through **the Sussex Fund**, which comprises the Hardship Fund and shorter-term Welfare Loans
- Scholarships, such as **the Andrew Rudd Scholarship** for care leaver students
- Dedicated financial advice, provided by **our Student Money Advisors**, who offer budgeting and money management guidance as part of the Advice and Guidance Team
- 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.

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

- **£1,000 on-campus housing bursary** for eligible low-income students to help with on-campus living costs
- Affordable award-winning £2 hot meals at lunchtime, known as the Sussex Saver
- Part-time job opportunities on campus
- Free career counselling
- Free access to Blackbullion, a financial education specialist online platform to support students with money management
- Discounts for public transport
- Free health and mental wellbeing support
- **Free legal advice to our students and local community** through our Law Clinics Programme.



We offer financial support through the Sussex Fund, which is made up of the Hardship Fund and shorter-term Welfare Loans

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.

Research and impact

The University of Sussex is a proud consortium partner in the UK Food Systems Centre for Doctoral Training, which aims to fundamentally transform the UK food system towards a resilient, healthy, sustainable and inclusive food future. Based on interdisciplinary food systems research, the consortium brings together a number of academic institutions, including two leading agricultural research institutes, with a network of 50 partner organisations including the Brighton and Hove Food Partnership.

One of its projects is the FoodSEqual project, developed by Dr Elaine Swan and the Brighton and Sussex Universities Food Network to address food poverty and injustice by engaging communities in co-developing affordable, sustainable and culturally appropriate solutions to food system issues.

Over 6,000 people in Brighton and Hove rely on weekly food support. To help tackle this and other pressing food-related issues, the FoodSEqual project funded a meeting for people from across the University and the city in June 2025 to identify collective actions. The event was led by Professor Adrian Ely and Dr Katerina Psarikidou and focused on the city's new Food Strategy and Action Plan (2025–2030), which our research helped to inform at another event last year.

A collaborative research project, funded by the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP), was launched in 2023 by an interdisciplinary group of academics in collaboration with the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership and the Wiston Estate. It explores whether we can establish an interconnected system of living labs with the aim to support the transition to sustainable land use across the south coast region.

Elsewhere, Dr William Lock in Global Studies has led a project on land restoration and carbon conflicts in Welsh farming communities project to analyse the boom in carbon plantations and farmland purchases in Carmarthenshire, Wales, and the subsequent conflicts over land prices, land use, and landscape simplification.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- Ecology and Conservation BSc
- Geography BA
- Geography and International Development BA
- Politics and International Relations BA
- Food and Development MA

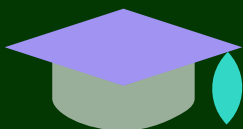


20

students graduated from agriculture and aquaculture courses or degrees in 2023-24, the equivalent of 0.2% of our total graduates



Support for education



Our catering partners **offered half-price food on the Uni Food app** to help support our students preparing for assessments in May 2024. We also gave away free fruit to students with bowls of fruit available in the Library and the Student Centre – plus catering staff handed out fresh produce to students around campus.



Students and staff enjoy our healthy Sussex Saver meals for £2, with more than 120,000 sold to date

Engagement and outreach

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 provide sustainable food choices for all on campus, including vegetarian and vegan food, and **recognise diversity following an extensive consultation.** All of the fruit, vegetables and meat sold by Chartwells (provided by Compass Group UK and Ireland main sellers) come from local suppliers as a standard. We source food and drinks from social enterprises, ensuring it is organic and fairtrade wherever we can.

We have held a 3-star rating (the highest mark possible) from the Sustainable Restaurant Association since 2019. All of our outlets include vegan, vegetarian and gluten free products as part of their core range; our efforts saw us **shortlisted for a Green Gown Award for Campus Health, Food & Drink.** Our outlet **Veg Bowl @ Dhaba is fully vegetarian, and PETA lists us as one of the most vegan-friendly universities in the UK.**

By offering affordable, nutritious meals through programs like the Sussex Saver and supporting local food banks with surplus food donations, we are helping to alleviate financial stress for our students and community members. This support ensures that everyone has access to healthy food regardless of their financial situation. Since November 2022, **students and staff have benefited from healthy Sussex Saver meals at £2,** with more than 120,000 sold to date. We have recently started donating surplus food to our local food banks, directly aiding refugee students and other vulnerable groups.



University policies and operations

We track all the food waste generated in production, post production and plate waste in our campus cafes and, in May 2025, we introduced food waste recycling to 54 office kitchen across campus (in the first five months, we have collected an additional 5.5t).

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 digester to reduce volume. 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.

The university has a programme in place with a number of interventions to help prevent hunger and food insecurity amongst our staff, students and wider community. **In 2022, our Vice Chancellor chaired a cost-of-living steering group** who collaborated with our catering providers Chartwells to launch a £2 vegetarian or vegan daily Sussex Saver.

Our **student-led Food Waste Café Society** allows students to pay what they can for meals made from surplus food, while **the Meeting House runs a food bank** for students who are suffering hardship, and regular free lunch events for students and staff.

In addition, we prioritise purchasing products from local and sustainable sources. We evaluate all suppliers based on their sustainability and company ethics. Where possible we look to provide products with Fair or Direct Trade, Soil Association or organic accreditation. We favour Certified B Corporation companies (businesses that meet standards defined by B Corps to balance profit and purpose). We use local suppliers for most of our food, and have also partnered with local Brighton businesses including Redroaster and Malo Empanadas.

SDG3 Good health and well-being

3 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.

Research and impact

We collaborate with global, national and local health partners to improve health outcomes. For example, **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. This provision of funding on a national scale has allowed the development of a needs-driven research programme on a global scale, helping to strengthen regional institutional collaboration.

The Sussex Centre for Consciousness Science is one of our 12 Centres of Excellence; it is home to **our research on neurobiology, neuropsychopharmacology and clinical applications** which aims to understand how neurobiological changes can lead to psychiatric symptoms such as delusions and hallucinations. Our researchers use psychopharmacological challenges to model perceptual changes seen in patients, and investigate drug treatments and physiological interventions for mental illness.

Research led by Professor Robin Banerjee has shaped national policy and practice in mental health support across the education system through the development, evaluation, and implementation of a **Whole School and College Approach** (WSCA). This work has informed NHS England operating manuals, shaped Department for Education (DfE) guidance, contributed to the NICE guidelines and directly influenced the Children and Young People's Wellbeing Bill. The research has delivered measurable changes in how Mental Health Support Teams work with schools and led to the co-creation of a WSCA Measurement Toolkit, now being used across the country to assess mental health strategy implementation and effectiveness in schools.

A collaboration between Transport for London and Dr Gillian Sandstrom from the Sussex Centre for Research on Kindness in 2023 saw **the installation of simple signs nudging people on buses** to greet their bus driver on the driver cab door and exit doors on over 150 buses across Hammersmith in London. **The resulting report** is part of a growing body of research which shows micro-interactions are more well-received and more meaningful than most of us realise.

Additionally, in 2025, Dr Kate Alford conducted **qualitative research with the HIV community and care providers into a potential twice-yearly injectable HIV treatment** in a study that aimed to understand the preferences, barriers and facilitators for uptake and implementation.

Education

Examples of courses we offer at Sussex:

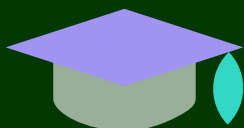
- **Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, BSMS**
- **Medical Neuroscience BSc**
- **Psychology BSc**
- **Social Work BA**
- **Foundations of Clinical Psychology and Mental Health MSc**

Examples of courses offered at BSMS:

- **Global Health MSc**
- **Healthcare Leadership and Commissioning MSc**
- **Paediatrics and Child Health MSc**
- **Public Health MSc**



Support for education



Our School of Psychology has partnered with the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to offer post-graduate training to become an Education Mental Health Practitioner. **The 12-month course** offers students the opportunity to gain real-world training in schools to learn assessment, intervention and support in line with the Government's priority of increasing access to and availability of mental health and wellbeing support for children and young people.



1,340

students graduated from health courses or degrees in 2023-24, the equivalent of 13% of our total graduates

Engagement and outreach

The Sussex Centre for Consciousness Science has embraced a number of high-profile opportunities to share research beyond the world of academia. Professor Anil Seth **joined a discussion on BBC Radio 4's Sideways on the trend of Reality Shifting**, and in 2024, Professor Zoltan Dienes and Dr Jenny Bosten joined other leading experts to **speak at a New Scientist Masterclass on our conscious minds**.

Through our monthly lectures, BSMS offers events on little-discussed areas of health, from conversations on charting a cancer patient's journey through the NHS to explaining why radiology education is essential for tomorrow's doctors. In addition, our **Current Stories in Global Health sessions** bring together a wide range of experts to simplify Global Health research, policy and practice; in January 2024, the School's HIV research team discussed their groundbreaking work addressing the challenges of HIV. And in May 2024, Jo Middleton shared opportunities for Global Health graduates to integrate actions on human health and nature conservation.

June 2024 saw the new Centre of Excellence for Global Health Research **host the Rethinking Global Health symposium**. This hybrid event united participants and speakers from more than 10 countries to share ideas around what could be done to make global health equitable and inclusive, particularly considering the colonial legacy of the discipline.



In addition, 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. We provide free access to our facilities during taster sessions and special events such as **the All-Staff Wellbeing Festival which took place in 2024**.

University policies and operations

We provide our students with **free sexual health services, contraceptives, and advice** through an on-campus NHS health centre and through peer-to-peer student drop-ins. 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.

Students can benefit from **the Therapeutic Services Team** that provides short-term individual therapy and counselling sessions, group therapy and psycho-educative workshops. 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.

We introduced a new **Smoking Policy** in 2022 which prohibits smoking and the use of electronic cigarettes in any campus building or premises, including substantially enclosed outdoor areas.



In 2025, BSMS scored an overall grade A in the Medicine Planetary Health Report Card, ranking 5th in the UK

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.

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.

In July 2023, a team of our researchers published a free toolkit for teachers to educate and help school pupils to manage uncertainty in modern life, with a particular focus on climate change. The toolkit, called 'Creating with Uncertainty: Sustainability education resources for a changing world', includes teaching resources, activities and films for teachers at both primary and secondary schools. A public exhibition based on the Creating with Uncertainty resource was displayed at Jubilee Library in Brighton.

We have just launched the Sussex School for Progressive Futures, an interdisciplinary hub to catalyse and coordinate a programme of interdisciplinary education, research, and global and civic engagement. Our work investigates urgent issues like the connection between labour rights and energy transitions; the influence of technological change on children; and how emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence interact with existing international frameworks in the governance of chemical and biological weapons.

Professor Jo Westbrook is working with the British Council and researchers from the University of Rwanda on a process evaluation that looks beyond gender and disability responsive strategies within large-scale Teacher Professional Development and towards gender and disability-transformative approaches.

The University of Sussex's Library offers free external membership to members of the public. This membership grants access to the library building and its study spaces, reference use of the physical collections, and limited access to selected online resources such as academic

databases on campus. The TIP Resource Lab, created by the Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC) at the University of Sussex, provides over 330 free online learning resources provides over 330 free online learning resources about sustainable transitions and societal transformations. These include videos, presentations, publications and blogs. The Lab is being used by practitioners, policy makers and civil society in over 50 countries and averages over 650 users a month. TIPC also hosts regular free educational 'Open Learning Series' workshops, open to the general public, policy practitioners, researchers, consultants and community project leads around the world. Between 2024-25, 480 registrations were received for four events from over 60 countries.

Dr Matthew Easterbrook leads research on a psychologically informed approach to reducing inequalities in schools. Since 2023, he has delivered a programme of work to help schools use psychology to reduce inequalities in educational outcomes by designing bespoke interventions to target barriers. In one example, the intervention reduced the attendance gap between pupil premium students and their peers by over 60%, and saw an improvement in attendance rate of 2.1% (equivalent to four days in the school year).

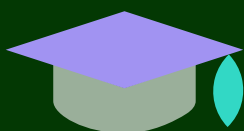
Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- Childhood and Youth: Theory and Practice BA
- Primary and Early Years Education (with Qualified Teacher Status) BA
- International Education and Development MA
- Education PhD
- International Education and Development PhD



Support for education



Students in our Business School can join a **Climate Fresk** workshop. This globally recognised certificate reflects our commitment to a fairer, greener planet, teaching students the science behind climate change and empowering them to take action in just three hours. In October 2024, **the Business School hosted the largest number of workshops ever held in a week in the UK.**

Engagement and outreach

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

The Sussex lectures provide an opportunity for our world-class academics and renowned guest speakers to share their research with the wider community. In 2024, we held a number of free public lectures on topics including 'Climate Consciousness Intelligence' with Professor Thomas Nowotny and Professor Mari Martisakainen on 'Fairer, More Sustainable Energy'. Recordings of all events are **made available online.**

Our Business School **launched a new policy learning platform for sustainability goals** in 2023. This curated collection of multimedia learning materials and interactive tools allows anyone to deepen their knowledge of tools and methods for transformative innovation. **The Multi-Level Theory of Change tool**, for example, uses theory to help identify spaces for intervention within a food, health or energy system and the platform's **user guides** help bridge the gap between theory and practice.

We undertake regular educational outreach activities beyond campus. **The Sussex Inspires programme** has been developed to offer advice and insights to support students in college or sixth form who might not see themselves as obvious candidates for a place at Sussex. It helps them explore career pathways and gain support with university applications. We also engage our local community through a variety of initiatives such as our **annual Soapbox Science Brighton festival, which took place in June 2024;** it celebrates women in STEM and provides an opportunity for the public to learn from, and be inspired by, some of our leading scientists. The events of the day are then **shared on social media** to showcase the impact.



455

graduated from our School of Education and Social Work (ESW) with a teaching degree during the 2023/24 academic year, making up 4.4% of our total graduates.



950

students or 21.3% of our students starting a degree are the first in their family to go to university

University policies and operations

The University of Sussex's Library **offers free external membership to people not studying with us** so they can access the library building and its study spaces and use the physical collections for references. They can also view some resources online, like our academic databases on campus.

Our **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** shows our commitment to tackle structural barriers to enable equal access to opportunities, regardless of race, religion or belief, disability, sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. This strategy, alongside our recently updated **Access and Participation Plan**, encompasses the University's values and extends to all our activities.

10,375

graduates

1,680

graduates in STEM (6%)

8,000

graduates in Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (77%)

690

graduates in Medicine (7%)

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.

Research and impact

In 24/25, women made up 54% of our full-time undergraduate population, and 60% and 50% of our postgraduate (taught) and postgraduate (research) bodies respectively.

Our Centre for International Education addresses contemporary global concerns through the work of education in society, such as gender equality, indigenous knowledge and the environment. Its study on supporting social learning for land reform, sustainable agriculture and biodiversity stewardship in South Africa examined the ways in which indigenous knowledge systems might be used to help resolve conflict, strengthen biodiversity stewardship and support sustainable agricultural practises in communal property associations.

In addition, research on strengthening indigenous knowledge systems to tackle the crises of climate, hunger and conflict in Somalia found that ecological commons, and the knowledge systems required to govern them sustainably, are collapsing in Somalia - provoking widespread hunger and a catalyst for conflict. Current work examines how to bring indigenous knowledge into Somali curricula in ways that allow Somali girls and boys to learn about their indigenous knowledge systems and creatively rework them to fit the needs of their contemporary society.

The WE-SAY project investigates the challenges young women face in education and work in Northern Nigeria and South Africa. It highlights the overlooked reproductive labour of women and its impact on educational opportunities in rural areas where there is high incidence of gender inequality, forced or early marriage, early pregnancies, HIV/AIDS, low and gendered educational outcomes and deep poverty. It explored these complex intersections through partnerships with local universities and NGOs, as well as direct involvement of local young women advocating for change.

Our collaborative FoodSEqual project works with the Women's Environmental Network to highlight the disproportionate challenges women face in food systems, including access to resources and decision-making roles. The project aims to identify and implement strategies that promote equality in food systems, ensuring women have a more equitable share of the benefits and opportunities within the agricultural and food-related sectors.

Education

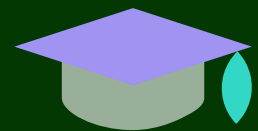
Examples of courses we offer:

- Anthropology BA
- Gender and Development MA
- Gender and Media MA
- Gender Studies MA
- Gender, Violence and Conflict MA



We offer a number of scholarships to help women study STEMM subjects

Support for education



We promote equal opportunities through a number of awards including the Emily O Akinluyi Scholarship for undergraduate study for a woman studying a STEM subject and the Gazelle Twin Scholarship for Women in Music Technology for those studying Music.

In addition, for postgraduate study, one of the John Kinghorn Scholarships in Engineering is for women only.





54%

of our undergraduates are women, rising to 60% of our postgraduate (taught) students. Amongst that, 575 (23.6% of women) are first generation students.

Engagement and outreach

The high-profile Soapbox Science event takes place every summer on Brighton seafront to help demystify science for the public and celebrate Sussex women in STEM.

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 in March this year while their insights were 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 of Engineering and Informatics also hosted a series of events celebrating the achievements, insights, and inspirations of women in engineering for International Women in Engineering Day in June.

University policies and operations

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 Dignity, Respect and Inclusion Policy. We operate a non-discriminatory student admissions policy: our Access and Participation Plan tracks under-representation and includes measures to close gaps.

At Sussex, female students have higher rates of continuation, progression and attainment than their male counterparts. These are published each year in the Student Equality Duty Report and on the OfS website.

We hold an Athena SWAN institutional bronze award in recognition of our achievements and progress in relation to gender equality. 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 late 2023, Brighton and Sussex Medical School achieved a gold Athena SWAN award for measures to address women's representation, including career progression workshops hosted by female academics.

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 women's 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.

110

or 35.5% of our senior academic staff at the University are women

510

or 73.9% of graduates in Medicine are women in 2023-24

585

or 34.8% of graduates in STEM are women in 2023-34

4,660

or 58.3% of graduates in Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences are women in 2023-24

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.

Research and impact

Our Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC), an international strategic partnership dedicated to promoting and supporting innovative policy approaches, focuses on a number of sustainability themes, **including working with governments on water scarcity**. For example, the BiodiverCities by 2030 report, co-authored by the TIPC together with the World Economic Forum, the Humboldt Institute and the Colombian Presidency, highlights the crucial role of ecosystems in rainwater infiltration, local climate regulation and reduction of pollution.

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. 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.

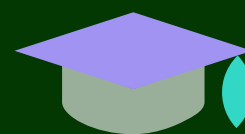
More locally, SSRP fellow Dr Joanna Smallwood has worked with Lewes District Council **to consider how human impact on the River Ouse could be reconciled with its rights** as laid out in a river charter. She took part in the River Ouse Summit in November 2023 and helped deliver four workshops focusing on the mechanisms available to implement a Rights of River Charter for the 42-mile-long river which flows through Lewes. The Ouse is under immense pressure from pollution, development and change in climate and land use and the Charter represents an important step towards embedding the concept into the UK's legal system.

Ripple Effect: advancing waterway resilience is a citizen science project that has developed methods of assessing water pollution and biodiversity in the Upper River Medway. It engages local communities to monitor water health and biodiversity, empowering participants to influence policy changes. In addition, **a study co-authored by our Vice-Chancellor Sasha Roseneil** explored the habits of women who enjoy cold water swimming and highlighted the risks that can be exacerbated by the swimming environment, due to the cleanliness of our waterways.



We promote our water fountains for refills to reduce plastic bottles

Support for education



Estimates suggest lab-based research accounts for up to 60% of a university's total water consumption, which is why we are among the 85 institutions making sure our labs adhere to the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF). Five of our labs (including the Biosciences and Chemistry Life Sciences teaching labs) **have gained bronze LEAF accreditations for improvements to their sustainability and efficiency** and are working towards silver.





Engagement and outreach

We provide numerous opportunities for local communities to learn about good water management. A 2024 public workshop on sustainability outlined the importance of good water stewardship for local agriculture and natural landscapes, while our Institute of Development Studies' Sanitation Learning Hub offers guidance and tools to enable learning and research for sanitation and hygiene professionals across the sector globally.

In January, 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 in 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.

We actively promote conscious water usage to the campus too; our accommodation handbook has a section dedicated to ways to save water in university-managed properties.

University policies and operations

Between August 2023 and July 2024, we consumed 354,800.81 m³ of water. 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 has been 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, and our new student accommodation development meets these standards. Native planting, green roofs and water recycling have all been included in the design to help make our buildings more efficient.

Elsewhere on campus, our Biodiversity Strategy and Rural Estate Management Plan demonstrates our shift to water-conscious planting methods – this has already been seen in practice outside Sussex House to tackle an area that was prone to flooding by adding plants.



354,801

cubic metres of water consumed in 2023-24

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.

Research and impact

We are working with local stakeholders to help develop a regional strategic approach to energy supply and demand investment for Net Zero. We work closely with Brighton and Hove City Council to show our research could inform their policies and decisions around clean energy and energy efficiency technologies; in June 2024, staff from local authorities in the region came together with University of Sussex energy policy and analysis experts to discuss challenges and opportunities.

In September 2025, Dr Max Lacey-Barnacle at the Science Policy Research Unit at the University of Sussex Business School held a 'Building community wealth into just net zero transitions' workshop. The event aimed to explore the connections between just net zero transitions and community wealth building – an innovative approach to local economic development being implemented across the UK that seeks to strengthen local economies and support local organisations.

As part of the Household and Community Labour in Smart Local Energy Systems project, we collaborate with community energy organisations and households across the UK to understand how this 'hidden' work is distributed and valued. Through workshops, case studies and policy engagement, the initiative will develop practical tools for community groups and evidence-based recommendations for policymakers to ensure smart energy systems work fairly for everyone involved.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- Electrical and Electronic Engineering BEng
- Mechanical Engineering BEng
- Sustainable Automotive Engineering BEng, MEng
- Nanomaterials and Energy MSc
- Energy and Climate Policy MSc



In 2024-25 our solar panels produced over 600,000 kWh, which is enough energy to make more than 12million cups of tea





Engagement and outreach

As well as working to influence policy-makers, the Sussex Energy Group's research activities include **outreach to local communities** about the importance of energy efficiency and clean energy technologies.

We also promote a public pledge towards 100% renewable energy beyond the campus where possible: in 2023 the university's solar panels **featured in a report and a video with the Campaign to Protect Rural England**, a charity seeking to promote the expansion of further rooftop solar capacity alongside the protection of our rural landscapes.

In addition, we provide financial assistance to support start-ups that foster and support a low-carbon economy. Our **flagship initiative Pitch for the Planet event** awarded £5,000 each to innovative start-ups led by students; alongside funding, this student innovation competition offers a coveted spot in our Summer Accelerator programme, designed to help participants develop and implement their initiatives. In addition to Pitch for the Planet, we offer support and funding for students' business or social enterprise idea **in a number of ways**; we also invest in community projects and provides access to resources, including funding and financial support, through **the Sussex Innovation Centre**.

University policies and operations

In 2017, we installed 3,144 solar panels to cut our reliance on non-renewable energy. We will develop Sussex's operations, infrastructure, and people, to meet the challenges of environmental sustainability, to minimise our carbon footprint, and to achieve net zero for scope 1 and 2 emissions by 2035 or as soon as possible thereafter; part of this was set out in our **Carbon Management Plan**.

We have set out our policy for achieving energy efficient buildings (both new and retrofitted) within **the Decarbonising the Economy Section of our Sustainability Strategy**. Our **Sustainability Strategy's section on Energy Efficient Campus** sets out key targets and plans for improving our energy efficiency and reducing our consumption. We have audited the lighting and heating of our worst-performing buildings and are currently developing interventions to tackle this rapidly.

We already ensure all new buildings constructed on campus meet the energy efficiency standards set out in the BREEAM 'Excellent' environmental standard. Through our new Sustainability Programme, we will set environmental standards for new builds and refurbishments and creating accompanying design guides. This would allow us to set the highest achievable environmental and energy standards for a campus of our size, age and complexity.

We have a **Socially Responsible Investment Policy** which has undergone a significant review. Our investments must pass strict criteria and **require our appointed fund managers to consider** the "protection of the global environment, its climate and its biodiversity including the reduction and future elimination of fossil fuel exploration and production" when making investment decisions.

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.

SDG8 Decent work and economic growth

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



This SDG relates to our role as an employer and the number of students undertaking work placements and our research on work opportunities and productive employment.

Research and impact

Dr Josh Siepel, from the Sussex Business School, contributed to [a landmark report](#) highlighting serious barriers to finance in creative industries, despite these industries being named as one of eight priority growth sectors in the UK Government's forthcoming Industrial Strategy.

Dr Max Lacey-Barnacle leads on [a new research project focused on building 'common' wealth through just transitions](#). A collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan, local governments and key stakeholders, it aims to advance new research on Community Wealth Building (CWB) and just transitions via a novel UK-Canada partnership. Over two years, the project will provide the first in-depth international comparative analysis for using CWB to support green economies in the UK and Canada, whilst bringing together disciplines focused on just transitions with CWB and energy transitions.

Generating decent work opportunities within green economy initiatives has been a focus of the work of Professor Ödül Bozkurt's [international research project](#), particularly in the aftermath of multiple global and regional shocks. The project brought together an international network of academics and stakeholders to explore how green economic transitions can support recovery, resilience, and equitable employment in developing economy city regions.

Elsewhere, the ESRC Centre for Digital Futures at Work (Digit) generates robust, evidence-based research on how digital technologies are transforming work and employment. Jointly led by the Universities of Sussex and Leeds, with partners including Cambridge, Manchester, Monash, the Institute of Development Studies, the Institute for the Future of Work, and FutureDotNow, the centre investigates the implications of digitalisation for workers, employers, and policymakers in the UK and globally. Set up in 2020, its initial five-year research programme has provided one of the first comprehensive empirical evidence bases on the digitalisation of work.

Through its research-policy-practice forum, the Digit CoLab, it facilitates ongoing dialogue with policymakers, businesses, trade unions, and third-sector organisations. This engagement ensures that research findings directly inform decision-making, supporting fair and inclusive approaches to digitalisation and promoting productive employment and sustained, inclusive economic growth in the context of rapid technological change.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- [Business and Management Studies BSc](#)
- [Economics BA](#)
- [Economics and Management Studies BSc](#)
- [Globalisation, Business and Development MA](#)
- [International Business and Development MSc](#)



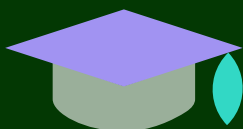
930

students undertook a work placement of a month or more in 2023-24





Support for education



We have a dedicated **Careers Service** for our students. Many of our undergraduates have the option of applying for a paid, year-long placement in their penultimate year of study. A dedicated **Placements team** help to support students to achieve this.

We directly link all of our student careers initiatives to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. For example, our Career Lab scheme includes over 500 funded student internships and consultancy opportunities, over a third of which have a sustainability focus such as work experience in renewable energy co-operatives and (smart) energy companies.

Engagement and outreach

Earlier this year, we held the **third Green Futures event** which provided an opportunity for students to find out about green jobs, hear from employers from a range of industries, and engage with Sussex graduates who are now working in green jobs themselves.

We **provide job opportunities on campus**, including with our catering and facilities management partners; beyond campus, students can gain valuable work experience through our **Student Consultancy Programme**, and our **Graduate** and **Internship** schemes.

University policies and operations

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. In late 2024, we backed the Brighton & Hove Living Wage Campaign to encourage other employers in the city to pay their employees fairly.

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** in 2022/23 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 **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** 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.

We produce **annual gender pay gap reports** to help publicly measure and track gender equality, with a target to halve the gender pay gap by 2024 from a baseline of 20.8%. We have made significant progress: **our median gender pay gap in 2024 was 12.5%**. 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.

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.

Research and impact

Members of our Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU) work closely with government departments, think tanks, media, companies, and parliamentary committees, to ensure our research benefits and enriches society, and influences policy and practice at international, national and regional levels; SPRU has been ranked first in the UK and third in the world of Top Science and Technology Policy Think Tanks.

The Steering Research and Innovation for Global Goals (STRINGS) project, a major global study into the alignment between science, technology and innovation and the Sustainable Development Goals, has **published a full report on closing the gap between science and the SDGs**. It highlights a glaring mismatch between the two and warns that if this mismatch is not addressed, it will undermine progress on the SDGs, with recommendations on how to tackle this imbalance.

We established **the Bennett Institute for Innovation and Policy Acceleration** in 2024. Professor Benjamin Sovacool, the Director of the Institute, is also a co-director of **the Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre** which is developing innovative, cost-effective and multidisciplinary decarbonisation solutions at pace and scale, by harnessing the power of collaboration.

One paper published in 2024 looks at social innovation in sustainability transitions and offers directions for future research and implications for policy, and a study from the **Transformative Innovation Africa Hub**, led by Sussex academic AbdulRafiu Abbas, focuses on climate-related R&D, highlighting how uneven funding distribution affects the world's ability to implement inclusive and effective climate solutions.

In addition, our **Critical Infrastructure Resilience Network** brings together expertise from all infrastructure sectors to innovate in infrastructure resilience. Work includes the development of **a model for deriving metrics related to network theory and electrical engineering**, and studying the behaviour of cascading failures within an electricity network.

We have produced 11 innovative spinouts – registered companies who exploit intellectual property developed at the university, some of which are:

- **Universal Quantum**: developing quantum computers for complex problem-solving
- **Metasonixx**: shaping sound with targeted delivery technology
- **Hynt**: creating multisensory digital experiences that integrate smell technology
- **Stingray Bio**: fighting breast cancer through LMTK3 protein inhibition
- **Alternox Scientific**: tackling fungal infections for health and food security.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

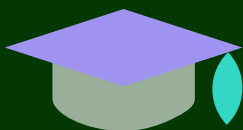
- **Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence BSc**
- **Computing for Business and Management BSc**
- **Finance and Technology (FinTech) BSc**
- **Mechanical Engineering BEng**
- **Media Production BA**



**We have produced
11 innovative spinouts**



Support for education



Our **Education and Innovation Fund** is designed to provide funds for projects that explore new ideas in teaching and learning at Sussex. In 2024, **six more original projects were awarded up to £5,000**, including a project to explore students' perceptions of academic integrity to understand how to tackle plagiarism, and another to establish a student-led space for international students to develop their intercultural expertise and to foster a sense of belonging.

Engagement and outreach

In 2024 we **led a successful bid for funding from the Connecting Capability Fund from Research England**, to bring together universities from across the south east to share skills and expertise to improve the number and success of their spin out companies. The funding will help to create a 'Golden Circle' of university innovation infrastructure adjacent to the current 'Golden Triangle' hotspot around Oxford, Cambridge and London; by pooling innovation capacity, the spin-outs launched inside the Golden Circle will be able to leverage some of the investment, skills and infrastructure that cluster around the Golden Triangle.

We are working with Southern Water to explore some of the challenges facing the water industry and **how University research can be used to address these**. Researchers from SPRU and the Transformative Innovation Policy Consortium (TIPC) collaborated with a team from Southern Water to reduce the use of storm overflows as well as improve the quality of bathing water.

Our company Sussex Innovation offers **seed investment programmes and support with grants**, financial advice, and in-house accountancy and book-keeping services to help local enterprises flourish. Its **new Frontier Tech series of events** funded by the Regional Tech Booster programme are designed to connect the region's most innovative businesses with world-leading expertise in the emerging tech that will transform industry over the coming years. Sussex Innovation also offers **a comprehensive start-up incubation service** and a wide range of training and programmes to create successful teams and roadmaps for success.



University policies and operations

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 research funding and to have impact outside of academia through public engagement, partnerships and regional and business engagement activities.

Staff and students can submit ideas that may be of mutual benefit to a non-academic partner: a cultural or social organisation, business of any size, or the public sector. **Support from Higher Education Innovation Funding** is available for innovative solutions to future problems through the Faculty of Media, Arts and Humanities.

We **host the Sussex Education Awards annually** to celebrate staff dedication and innovation: categories are Teaching to Disrupt, World Readiness, Better World, Learning Together, and Inclusive Sussex.

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 new Ideas Lab and the Big Ideas contest, a highly respected student start-up initiative which supports those who have big ideas for a better world; categories include global health, food and agriculture, arts and social change, education and more. Each year one Sussex student is selected to travel to California and pitch their idea at a Grand Final, with a chance to win £10,000 launch funding.



In 2024, six original projects that explore new ideas in teaching and learning were awarded up to £5,000

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.

Research and impact

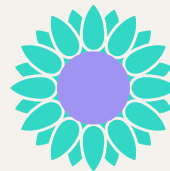
Our university enjoys a worldwide reputation for its work on the analysis of poverty, inequality and economic development. Our **Centre for Study of Welfare and Inclusive Growth** brings together researchers from our Department of Economics, our Business School and the **Institute of Development Studies**. Our Centre for International Education has brought significant changes to learning programmes to improve educational inequalities in some of the world's poorest countries.

Furthermore, our **Centre for Social Work, Innovation and Research** fosters a vibrant community of scholars, practitioners, students, and people with lived experience, all dedicated to pushing the boundaries of social work research and creating tangible social impact. It provides a platform for change by not only strengthening social work but redefining its potential to create a more just and equitable society. For example, the research project looking at **children's information: improving lives through better listening and better data** has set out to ensure children's administrative data are gathered, shared and used in ways that are both ethically sound and most effective. This includes ensuring that the voices of children, young people and those who care for them and work with them appear clearly and authentically within children's data, and are heard when deciding how children's information should be used.

Education

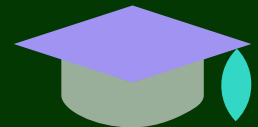
Examples of courses we offer:

- **Anthropology BA**
- **Economics and International Development BA**
- **International Relations and Development BA**
- **Media and Communications BA**
- **Sociology and International Development BA**



In 2024 we attained Disability Confident Leader status

Support for education



One in five students at Sussex has a disability. **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. This includes providing bespoke reasonable adjustments; helping to allocate disabled students to a mentor or a support worker; and liaising with their GP, counsellor, or health care team, if necessary.

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.



Our Black at Sussex project aims to improve the experience of Black students and staff



Engagement and outreach

We provide support to under-represented groups of students and staff. Our Connector Programme is a student-staff community that aims to engage students as co-creators of the student experience and support the delivery of our Access and Participation Plan, targeting specifically underrepresented student groups. Staff can also access support via the staff networks which contribute to shaping policies and procedures relating to EDI.

We were placed 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.

The ambition to develop a programme of allyship work has evolved into an Open Listening programme, with successful initial pilot phases. Further pilot workshops were offered during the 2023/24 academic year, with some being run for specific leadership teams including ULT and the HR leaderships team. The programme was also extended into two Campus Dialogue events focused on the conflict in Israel-Gaza/Palestine.

Our Black at Sussex project launched in 2022. It aims to improve the experience of Black students and staff at Sussex, through ongoing research, events and initiatives. In 2024, we welcomed a new chairperson and a new project manager, and activities included a poet in residence and series of alumni portraits displayed on campus. Award-winning poet Jenny Mitchell, a Sussex alumna, was a Poet-in-Residence as part of the Black at Sussex project. We work in partnership with AccessAble to map and monitor campus accessibility for all users.

University policies and operations

We operate a non-discriminatory student admissions policy. This is supported by our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Our Admissions team tracks undergraduate applications through UCAS, as outlined in our Access and Participation Plan; we also monitor and track applications from under-represented groups and have targets in place to achieve a continued reduction in student attainment gaps for people with protected characteristics, where these attainment gaps exist.

To recruit from under-represented groups, we also work with schools via the Sussex Inspires programme. This programme involves GCSE resit tutoring, a residential summer school and on-campus visits that allow students to experience a broad range of subject tasters, as well the chance to explore academic subjects of their choice in more depth. The programme also provides tailored information, advice, and guidance to help students to make

informed decisions about their futures and support them in applying to university should they choose to do so.

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and our Dignity and Respect Policy are designed to preventing discrimination and all forms of harassment. We also offer various forms of support and protection for staff reporting discrimination and harassment.

We have a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit and a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Culture Equality and Inclusion, Professor David Ruebain: both actively promote, co-ordinate and embed EDI across the entire university community. In addition, our People and Culture Board provided executive oversight over our EDI work.

The university is a Disability Confident Employer, and in 2024 we attained Disability Confident Leader status, the highest of the three tiers of the Disability Confident scheme. Our commitments to improving disability equality and inclusion are set in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. The Disability Equality and Inclusion Steering Group brings together key stakeholders to drive this work.

We work with EmployAbility to arrange bespoke training, events and consultancy around disability awareness and inclusion both to Sussex staff and linked employers. The updated Workplace Adjustments Toolkit is the guidance for managers to implement reasonable adjustments for disabled staff and those with long term health conditions, supported by HR and leaders. We also have employee-led networks: Staff Disability Network and Neurodiversity Staff Network. In 2023/24 we introduced a Disability Essentials training eLearning for all staff. We are a member of the Business Disability Forum.

We have mandatory 'Diversity in Workplace' e-training for all staff and for Grade 7 and above 'Unconscious Bias' training is compulsory. All staff are encouraged to complete the Disability Essentials e-learning. The one-hour course aims to support all staff in their knowledge and engagement with disabled staff and students through content informed by legal expertise and those with lived experience of disability. This is underpinned by wider mandatory EDI training for all staff and additional training for leaders.

680 international students from developing countries

4,020 students with declared disability (22.5% of total student population)

390 members of staff with declared disability (13.2% of total staff)

SDG11 Sustainable cities and communities



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

Research and impact

The University is home to several world-leading research centres driving innovation in sustainable cities and communities. We have been ranked first in the world for nine years' running for Development Studies; our excellence is also reflected through the work of the Sustainable Sussex Research Programme and the Science Policy Research Unit, which deliver impactful research shaping sustainability policy and practice locally, nationally, and internationally.

We recently launched the School for Progressive Futures (SPF), 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 is built around three transformational themes: environmental sustainability, human flourishing, and digital & data futures. It 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.

The South Coast Sustainability Project brings together researchers, policymakers, and local stakeholders to co-design practical solutions that balance food production, biodiversity, and climate resilience to build regional capacity for sustainable land use. The project, which also analyses local sustainability in urban areas, empowers communities to take informed action, strengthening the resilience and sustainability of the South Coast region.

Further afield, a project analyses how to implement trade and deforestation regulations, to enable sustainable economic performance by all participants in global food supply chains. And we are a global leader in exploring the implementation of the Rights of Nature, thanks to work by Professor Mika Peck and colleagues from the Schools of Law, Politics and Sociology and Education and Social Work on a transdisciplinary action-research network between actors on the Global North and Global South which is gaining momentum.

Education

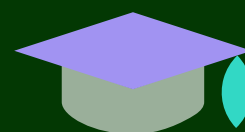
Examples of courses we offer:

- Design and Business (with a foundation year) BSc
- Geography and Anthropology BA
- Liberal Arts BA
- Product Design BA
- Sociology BA



Our new Travel Hub sold 16 bikes within the first two weeks of opening at around £90 per bike

Support for education



Our Development in Cities module looks at how development in cities is critical for the delivery of Sustainable Development Goals. It examines urbanisation, its intrinsic inequalities, security, safety, and challenges to sustainability.





Engagement and outreach

In 2023/24, we hosted a huge number of free public events that reached thousands of people, including lectures, performances, exhibitions and museum activities.

The **Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts** (ACCA) hosts a diverse programme of performances, film, music, and digital art, and is a major sponsor of the 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. Events we delivered during the Festival in 2025 included Nature Unseen, Dawn Chorus Day, Post-Rave Britain Archive Roadshow, Threads of Change: Women Shaping Fashion's New Dawn, and Skank & Sketch Session: A Creative Reggae Experience.

The School of Life Sciences also actively engages with the local community, the public, and charities through a diverse range of outreach and collaboration programmes, **including outreach activities developed by undergraduate students** to communicate science to a young audience, as well as hands-on citizen science. It works through local event partnerships – such as the British Science Festival and the Brighton Science Festival – to bring researchers into the community and enable interactive science experiences.



We have been ranked 1st globally for the last 10 years in a row for Development Studies

University policies and operations

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.

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. Additionally, we house our **Special Collections** at The Keep, a historic archive centre, including a rare book collection to ensure it is openly accessible to the larger public.

We **promote sustainable commuting** through **our Active and Sustainable Commuting Policy** and a dedicated section within our Sustainability Strategy. Building on our 2019 Travel Plan, we monitor staff travel modes through the HESA EMR return.

Our Sustainable Travel Manager has been **setting targets** and developing initiatives and engagement activities, such as bike lessons, to promote sustainable commuting. This year saw the launch of the **Travel Hub** in the Student Centre, which brings together the Sustainability Team, Students' Union, Bike Shack, and Brighton Bike Hub through the partnership Pedal Point. The Hub provides students and staff with information on travel options and discounts, as well as access to affordable second-hand bikes and cycling accessories. 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.

SDG12 Responsible consumption and production



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

Research and impact

The Brighton and Sussex Medical School (BSMS) has received £6m of funding for the Green Healthcare Hub, a group focused on research and education relating to environmental, social and financial elements of sustainability in health and healthcare. Led by Professor Mood Bhutta, their 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.

Work has been underway to reduce plastic pollution, thanks to a pilot project by Dr Andre Maia Chagas and Dr Zahid Pranjol. The Precious Bottles initiative transforms plastic bottles into 3D printing filament, using open-source resources to develop more sustainable products. In collaboration with the University's Sustainability Team, the project has identified key waste streams on campus to support and scale this innovative recycling effort.



One in five people now bring their own cup to our cafes

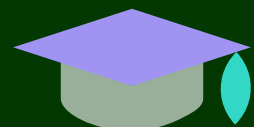
Dr Shova Thapa Karki is collaborating with Circular Brighton and Hove and Brighton & Hove City Council to explore the specific needs of SMEs as they transition to a circular economy model. The research identifies barriers, opportunities, and the types of support businesses require to adopt circular practices. It aims to building dedicated business networks and collaborative platforms to enable knowledge sharing, peer learning, and practical guidance and help local SMEs improve resource efficiency, reduce waste, and foster a resilient, circular local economy.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- Ecology and Conservation BSc
- Geography BA
- Geography BSc
- Social Development MA
- Product Design BSc

Support for education



Our Enterprise in the Circular Economy module helps students learn more about the circular economy and its role in sustainable development. It examines the limitations of the linear "take, make, dispose" model and explores how circular approaches - focusing on material reusability and value optimisation - create opportunities for business innovation.



Pedal Point @ the Travel Hub



1,533t

Total waste generated

Engagement and outreach

We are working towards a target of 50% recycling rate by 2025 through a range of new initiatives, including the launch of a returnable cup scheme to reduce the number of takeaway cups being thrown away. In October 2024, over 37,000 disposable cups were discarded on campus and only 14% of people used a reusable cup. A year-long comms campaign alongside new waste segregation bins in our main food outlet, Eat Central, encouraged students and staff to recycle more effectively: in just three months, **one in five people started to bring their own cups** to our campus cafes.

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. In 2024, this included several beach clean events, one of which was organised to **celebrate National Volunteer Week** and brought together over 40 volunteers to help protect the local coastline. 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.



Research from our medical school was cited in a government paper on cutting medical waste

University policies and operations

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: when we procured a new facilities management partner, **we sought service providers 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** demonstrates a clear commitment to minimising plastic waste, targeting single-use plastics, hard-to-recycle materials, and plastics that may harm wildlife, habitats, or human and aquatic health. Finally, our **Hazardous Waste Policy** establishes procedures for the safe disposal of hazardous materials, ensuring compliance and environmental protection.

SDG13

Climate action

13 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.

Research and impact

We conduct extensive research on climate action, adaptation, and resilience, producing work that not only advances scientific understanding but also delivers tangible, real-world impacts.

We are home to the **Bennett Institute for Innovation and Policy Acceleration**, 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.

Professor Tim Foxon, a leading academic in Sustainability Transitions at the Science Policy Research Unit and a member of the Centre for Research on Energy Demand Solutions, co-authored a 2023 report, **Which Net-Zero Policies Do People Want?** The report examines public support for policies on energy-efficient housing, sustainable transport, and green spaces, using case studies from Greater Brighton and North of Tyne.

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. In addition, 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.

Internationally, through the **CLARE (Climate Adaptation and Resilience) programme**, Sussex researchers secured \$8m (CAD) 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 supports local and regional governments in developing early warning systems and anticipatory action plans for climate-related disasters, particularly drought risk.

We are also 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, demonstrating clear real-world impact.

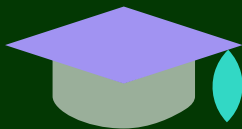
Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- **Ecology and Conservation BSc**
- **Economics and International Development BA**
- **Climate Justice, Sustainability and Development BA**
- **Sustainable Automotive Engineering BEng**
- **Energy and Climate Policy MSc**



Support for education



2026 will see 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.

Engagement and outreach

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.

Since 2017, our academics have organised Soapbox Science Brighton, an annual event celebrating and promoting women in STEMM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Medicine). Held on the Brighton seafront as part of the Brighton Fringe, the event brings science directly to the public without slides or screens, encouraging open dialogue and curiosity. Its accessible, interactive format enhances community understanding of scientific challenges, including those related to climate and sustainability.



University policies and operations

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.

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. 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 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.



We have launched the UK's first BA in Climate Justice, Sustainability and Development

SDG14

Life below water



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

Research and impact

We are actively researching, and engaging the public, to maintain and expand ecosystems and biodiversity. Our researchers investigated the impact of pet flea treatments, finding that toxic pesticides remain on owners' hands for up to 28 days and enter rivers via household wastewater, where concentrations exceed safe limits for wildlife. Building on previous research, it led the British Veterinary Association to recommend vets avoid blanket year-round parasite treatment policies.

The Ripple Effect project aims to improve waterway resilience in the UK through citizen science. Focusing on the Upper River Medway, it monitors water pollution, biodiversity, and engages local communities and policymakers. The project uses techniques like eDNA analysis and invertebrate surveys to assess water health and empower communities. Its goal is to foster sustainable practices, influence policy change, and enhance biodiversity.

A study by a University of Sussex research team, led by Professor Mika Peck and Dr Valentina Scarponi, has identified 81 different marine species along our Sussex coastlines, including tope shark, tub gurnard fish and the critically endangered European eel. The research has provided a monitoring baseline of marine life diversity. Using both baited remote underwater video and eDNA monitoring allowed the team to document changes in our ecosystem, following the banning of destructive fishing practices in the area, with the hope of seeing signs of recovery over time.

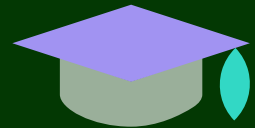
We directly co-fund and execute the Sussex Kelp Recovery Project that is leading the regeneration of the Sussex coastal zone to promote marine diversity and carbon sequestration in the wake of a trawling ban off the Greater Brighton coastline. This project has been backed by Sir David Attenborough and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

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- Biology BSc
- Ecology and Conservation BSc
- Zoology BSc
- Conservation Biology MRes
- Global Biodiversity Conservation MSc

Support for education



Our students gained hands-on experience in collecting primary scientific data in freshwater ecology through our Environmental Research Skills module, contributing to the development of practical research expertise and awareness of real-world environmental challenges. A range of fieldwork, laboratory analytical and ICT methods are placed in a wider research context with lectures and workshops about topics including freshwater ecology.



Our researchers are part of the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project





Engagement and outreach

We are university partners in the Sussex Bay partnership, which encompasses 100 miles of Sussex waters from Chichester to Camber Sands; researchers and professional services staff joined partners around the region to launch Sussex Bay in June 2024. 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.

The Sussex Kelp Recovery Project is a collaboration between the Sussex Wildlife Trust and multiple partners including the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority and Adur and Worthing local authorities. The project has reached millions of people through activities including outreach with fishers along the Sussex coast, talks and beach experiences with local school children, briefings at climate and environmental conferences, media coverage and documentaries.

An SSRP exhibition, 'Visualising South Coast Sustainability', showcased the innovative research that is helping to protect our beautiful environment. The public event brought together researchers, students, staff, and the community to share knowledge, inspire action, and strengthen our collective commitment to safeguarding the region.

Our staff have organised beach cleans on Brighton Beach, including a silent disco beach clean during our Welcome Week celebrations. These events have brought together staff and students along with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global and Civic Engagement to fight plastic pollution and promote conservation of our oceans and beaches. The events were co-hosted with Surfers Against Sewage who work to keep the UK's beaches clean and raise awareness of water pollution and the impacts of plastics.



More than 40 people took part in our Plastic Free July beach clean in Brighton

University policies and operations

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, achieved a 91% score in the Sustainable Restaurant Association Accreditation, including an impressive 97% in the fish and seafood category. 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 (SSC) 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 by which we will 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.

We have a Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Policy where we established our commitment of sending zero waste to landfill and prioritisation of waste reduction in line with the waste hierarchy guidance.

SDG15

Life on land



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

Research and impact

Dr Chris Sandom is the founder of the Rewilding Sussex initiative, which is working with Rewilding Britain to improve the monitoring of rewilding projects nationally. Developed by Dr Alice Eldridge, wilding.radio is the first online platform broadcasting live sounds from rewilded nature. This solar-powered quadrophonic live audio feed from Knepp, a pioneering rewilding project in West Sussex, captures above-ground and underwater soundscapes to help listeners reconnect with nature. It showcases the recovery of biodiversity, including beavers, nightingales, and aquatic life, emphasising the importance of conservation.

Transitioning to sustainable land use is essential to meet the diverse needs of people and nature, and to balance competing interests such as food security and biodiversity. Nature Sense, led by Dr Sandom, seeks to establish a South Coast regional network of long-term monitoring stations covering the major land uses, management strategies and habitat types in the region.

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.

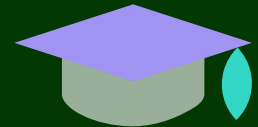
Our world-leading research on ecosystems, rights and justice aims to gain new understanding of natural ecosystems, and explores our role in these ecosystems and the importance of biodiversity for eco-cultural conservation. In 2024, research led by Professor Mika Peck identified a further 16,000km² of biodiverse land which should be legally protected from mining concessions, following the Rights of Nature.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

- Ecology and Conservation BSc
- Biology BSc
- Zoology BSc

Support for education



Rewilding seeks to reverse the decline in biodiversity by restoring natural processes, typically through the reintroduction of missing keystone species. Our Rewilding and Ecosystem Services module explores the theory that underpins rewilding, covering natural process function, trophic cascades, and keystone species then considering the process and application of rewilding to deliver ecological and social benefits.



wilding.radio is the first online platform broadcasting live sounds from rewilded nature





Engagement and outreach

We host and support a range of events that promote the conservation and sustainable use of land and encourage our community to connect with and protect local ecosystems. The **Exploring Wicked Sustainability Problems at Sussex – Nature Conservation** event featured Dr Chris Sandom and Tony Whitbread from Knepp who discussed innovative approaches to rewilding and landscape restoration.

Staff and students were invited to take part in a guided biodiversity walk around campus as part of the **City Nature Challenge**, contributing to global citizen science by recording local species through the iNaturalist app.

We held an extensive series of events **during Sustainable Sussex Fortnight** in April 2024 including a community orchard care tutorial, home composting and growing workshops, and a campus nature walk. **Held every Welcome Week, our Campus Nature Walk** is a great way to introduce students to the diverse habitats that make up over a third of our campus, including woodlands, scrub, and chalk grasslands. These events highlight our commitment to conserving natural habitats and empower the community to engage directly in the stewardship of our land and biodiversity.

University policies and operations

We are actively working to protect and enhance biodiversity across our campus. We plan to **dedicate 42% of our campus to nature by 2027**, surpassing the UK target of 38%. This target, shaped through staff and student consultation, promotes passive rewilding, reduced mowing, and the protection of vulnerable species. Supported by projects such as 'Love Your Scrub' and pollinator habitat research, the campus is becoming a living model for biodiversity and ecological restoration.

Our **Biodiversity Strategy and Policy** (created in 2021 and reviewed in 2023) guides the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of our campus ecosystems. It aligns with our strategic vision to make the university one of the most biodiverse campuses in the UK, embedding nature recovery and habitat protection across all estate management practices. It includes a principle on the protection and monitoring of IUCN Red Listed species present on our campus, and a principle dedicated to planting of native species, and monitoring and management of invasive alien species.

We are committed to achieving a biodiversity net gain on campus, and any new development on campus must meet BREEAM Excellent standards. During the planning of the West Slope development of new residences on campus, One Planet Living was an underpinning principle. 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 **Water Management Policy** highlights methods to maintain high quality water discharge; maintain trade effluent agreements; avoid foul water discharge; and ensure emergency spill procedures are in place. **Our Waste Reduction, Reuse and Recycling Policy** contains a pledge to minimise plastic waste, including minimisation of single-use plastics and plastics that have the potential to harm wildlife, habitats or human life, including aquatic systems.

We have a **Hazardous Waste Policy** which sets out the process for disposing of hazardous materials. We also have a lab waste and estates facilities management drain disposal guidance document to support staff to dispose of hazardous waste safely and in compliance with legislation.

Our **Sustainable Food and Agriculture Policy** ensures that all meat, dairy, and eggs served on campus meet high animal welfare standards and comply with FSA and DEFRA regulations. Eat Central has also been **awarded the Sustainable Restaurant Association accreditation**, recognising our commitment to ethical and sustainable food practices. We prioritise local suppliers to support the community and reduce food miles, and our on-campus hydroponic farm grows herbs and leaves for our campus cafes, inspiring students, staff and visitors with innovative, resource-efficient food production.



Last year we were presented with our 8th consecutive Green Flag Award

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.

Research and impact

We undertake policy-focused research in collaboration with government departments. Our Nature-based Solutions for Climate Change project is **part of a broader UK government-funded project headed by Natural England and the Environment Agency** among other organisations. The project explores trade-offs between different land use priorities, such as carbon storage, biodiversity, food production and cultural values. The team – part of the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme – developed a landscape mapping and modelling tool (**LIMMA**), 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.

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, an internationally recognised energy policy expert, has been invited to participate in the **U.S. Government's Net Zero committee**. His extensive research on decarbonisation strategies and energy justice informs U.S. policy discussions, particularly in the context of the Net-Zero Government Initiative, which aims to achieve net-zero emissions from national government operations by 2050.

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.

Dr Mike Rogerson has provided expert advice on **integrating climate change considerations into public procurement processes**. His work, particularly in collaboration with the Modern Slavery & Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre, addresses the intersection of climate change and modern slavery risks in public

sector supply chains. The research emphasises the need for clear mandates and robust auditing to ensure public procurement practices contribute to both climate goals and the eradication of modern slavery.

Sussex researchers are also leading impactful projects within the Industrial Decarbonisation Research and Innovation Centre (IDRIC) that directly inform national and regional decarbonisation policies. **IDRIC Project MIP 4.3**, led by Dr Matthew Lockwood (SPRU), analyses the political dynamics of UK industrial decarbonisation, including technology advocacy, policy cost distribution, and regional impacts, providing insights into effective governance of low-carbon transitions. **IDRIC Project MIP 2.4**, directed by Professor Benjamin Sovacool, focuses on just transitions, developing strategies to ensure that the shift to a low-carbon economy is equitable, addressing vulnerabilities of communities and workers and promoting fair distribution of costs and benefits.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

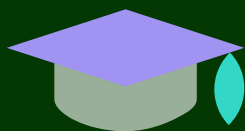
- **Law LLB**
- **Law with International Relations LLB**
- **Law with Politics LLB**
- **International Human Rights Law LLM**
- **Corruption and Governance MA**



More than 80 law students help to offer free advice in our law clinics for the public



Support for education



Our dedicated module on **Conflict, Peace, and the Places in Between** examines the drivers and dynamics of armed conflicts, civil wars and insurgencies beyond the wars between the 'great powers', and international attempts to address them.



Our energy policy experts have been advising the US Government on how to decarbonise

Engagement and outreach

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** on 'Shaping Policy with Evidence' to equip professionals with the skills to shape policy and practice in an international development setting. The course combines practical guidance, evidence-based research, and interactive learning, enabling participants to understand complex development challenges, design effective interventions, and apply policy insights in real-world settings.

The Sussex Law Clinics provide pro bono legal services across a range of areas, including family law, criminal justice, and environmental law. These 10 specialist legal clinics are operated by over 80 law students under the guidance of experienced tutors and solicitors.

In 2023/24, a new StreetLaw Clinic was launched, following a successful pilot, offering legal education and support to charities, schools, and local community groups, further extending our impact in promoting access to justice and legal literacy. In 2024, the StreetLaw team were Highly Commended in the LawWorks and Attorney General Student Pro Bono Awards for 'Best Contribution by a Team of Students'.



920

graduates from law and enforcement-related courses (8.9% of total graduates)

University policies and operations

We are committed to strong, democratic governance, ensuring elected representation of academic staff, professional services, and students on our **Council** and Senate, with **active input from the Students' Union**. 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.

Through its **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. We work with a wide group of stakeholders, including local councils, charities and businesses to reinvigorate retail, local spaces, supply chains and the visitor economy, bringing benefit to specific sector challenges and local residents and firms.

Corporate partnerships are also welcomed where they support student development, research, entrepreneurship, and enterprise.

Furthermore, **the Civic Leaders and Partners section of our Sustainability Strategy** outlines engagement with named local community partners and forums, reinforcing our commitment to co-creating sustainable, socially responsible outcomes in the local and regional context. 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, **took place in Parliament in July 2023 as part of a reception to launch our Research Centres of Excellence**. The reception was addressed by our constituency MP Caroline Lucas, the Science Minister and Shadow Science Minister.

The Open Listening Programme seeks to build the individual and collective capacity of staff and students for engaging with difficult conversations and 'hot topics' and to develop a culture of listening and understanding across different life experiences and identities. Open Listening is an experiential process that includes theory and practice.

SDG17 Partnerships for the goals

17 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.

Research and impact

The University of Sussex leads 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 (STI) 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. By integrating cross-country mapping with in-depth case studies, STRINGS provides an evidence-based resource that informs best practices for governments, funders, and institutions aiming to align STI systems with sustainable development goals.

Furthermore, Dr Michael Rogerson has contributed significantly to the development of SDG-aligned national policies through his **research on the intersection of modern slavery and climate change in public procurement**. Commissioned by the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC) - an initiative funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and supported by UK Research and Innovation - his work examined how public sector organisations can better address modern slavery risks within their operations and supply chains while advancing climate objectives.

Dr Rogerson's team proposed practical policy recommendations, such as requiring explicit supplier disclosures on modern slavery and climate-related risks, evaluating suppliers against best practice benchmarks, and enabling exclusion from public tenders for poor performance. By integrating these findings into national policy discussions, the research provided evidence-based strategies to strengthen sustainable procurement frameworks.

Education

Examples of courses we offer:

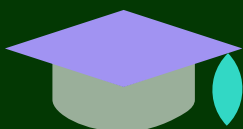
- **International Development BA**
- **International Relations and Development BA**
- **Sociology and International Development BA**
- **Sustainable Finance and Accounting MSc**
- **Economics and Data Science MSc**



We offer exchange programmes with universities around the world for students and staff



Support for education



We have a number of global mobility partnerships with universities around the world through which we exchange both students and staff. Partner universities from Morocco to Malaysia, Australia to Uruguay and Türkiye to Canada provide study exchange opportunities for students, and teaching and training placements for staff members.

Engagement and outreach

We actively foster cross-sectoral dialogue on the SDGs, engaging with businesses, public organisations, and community stakeholders. For example, the Sussex Business School launched a pioneering **Sustainability and AI Business Action Centre** to provide practical sustainability solutions for businesses globally. Established as an online hub, the centre hosted a virtual event in August 2024 bringing together sustainability experts, business leaders, NGOs, and government representatives. Speakers included representatives from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, auctusESG (India), Monash University Business School (Malaysia), and the UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative, who discussed how AI can transform sustainability practices.

In 2024, the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme hosted a **symposium** that brought together around 100 attendees, including local residents, alumni, and external partners, alongside university staff and students. The event showcased sustainability research with international impact, including presentations on community-led environmental projects in Ecuador and Brazil, as well as biodiversity and ecosystem studies in Papua New Guinea. Attendees participated in interactive sessions and discussions, enabling the exchange of knowledge between researchers and the wider community.

And the university has also translated its research on sustainability, childhood education, and resilience into practical resources for the wider community through the launch of the **Creating with Uncertainty** toolkit. Developed by the Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth and the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme, 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.



University policies and operations

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.

Furthermore, one of the strategic aims of our **Knowledge Exchange and Impact Strategy** is to lead and shape local, regional, national, and international discussions on the effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of solutions addressing the SDGs. In line with this, the University actively encourages staff and students to contribute to the wider community. Additionally, **the Ethical Educators section of our Sustainability Strategy** commits us to embed sustainability into all aspects of student learning, experience and research.

This is further supported through our **Volunteering Policy** which specifically acknowledges the realisation of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Employees on contracts of 12 months or longer are entitled to a minimum of two days per year (pro rata) to volunteer with a charity of their choice, particularly those whose work aligns with the SDGs, fostering engagement, social responsibility, and practical support for sustainable development initiatives.



We have a dedicated Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Global and Civic Engagement

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](#).

[Subscribe to the Sustainable Sussex newsletter](#) to stay updated on our work on the SDGs, and our place in the rankings.

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