

Green Impact and beyond: A short history of NUS' sustainability work

1969–2018



1969	1971	1995	1996	2003	2005	2006	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
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NUS successfully campaigns for Barclays Bank to divest from apartheid South Africa

The Conservation Project is piloted, to increase students' environmental awareness and action

NUS Services establishes an Ethical and Environmental Committee to investigate allegations of environmental bad practice by one of our suppliers, Bass Breweries

NUS employs its first member of staff for sustainability issues, focusing on reactive constructive engagement with our suppliers

NUS begins constructive engagement with The Coca-Cola Company; the International Union of Foodworkers describe our work as having played an 'important part in positively influencing the company'. By 2014, we've engaged with 25 of the world's biggest companies

NUS plays a pivotal role in the successful campaign to get GlaxoSmithKline to relinquish its patents on antiretroviral drugs in sub-Saharan Africa

NUS receives £30k Carbon Trust funding to carry out environmental audits of students' unions. The 25 audits find a potential £280,000 energy savings

University of Northumbria Student, Anna D'Arcy, approaches NUS with the idea of a competition to reward the greenest students' unions... and Green Impact is formed!

NUS receives a £500k grant from DEFRA to scale up Green Impact Universities to 19 more institutions, engaging a total of 20,000 staff and students

NUS launches the annual NUS/HEA research into student attitudes and expectations regarding sustainable development. Since then, 40,000 students have taken the survey

NUS creates Fresher Freshers with funding from Homebase. The Programme was later rebranded as Student Eats

NUS' first national Student Sustainability Summit

NUS secures £5m from HEFCE to give to students' unions through the Students' Green Fund

NUS launches Alcohol Impact to change alcohol-related behaviours, funded by the Home Office

2014 Student Eats wins a Silver-Gilt Flora medal at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show

Homes Fit for Study published – our report about the experiences of students living in the private rental sector

NUS begins work on fossil fuel divestment, funded by Sainsbury's Family Charitable Trusts, and partnering with People & Planet. By 2017, the 50th university announced divestment, with four having reinvested into renewables

We receive £1m from the Big Lottery's Our Bright Future programme to establish 67 sustainable food social enterprises through Student Eats

■ ■ The student movement has shown trailblazing leadership in the fossil fuel divestment movement, and it will continue to fight for justice.
Rob Young, NUS Vice President, Society and Citizenship

Green Impact wins the UNESCO-Japan Prize for Education for Sustainable Development, making NUS one of just six global laureates in education for sustainable development

NUS launches three pilot projects: the NUS-Fairtrade University and College Standard; UniCycle with Love to Ride; and My World, My Home with Friends of the Earth

We are co-founding – along with other national unions of students – an international charity to progress collaboration through sustainability

European Students, Sustainability Auditing (ESSA) begins, funded by the EU – a partnership between NUS and three European universities and their students' unions, and the European Students' Union

Our motion to the European Students' Union is approved, and the internal working group on Sustainability is formed, with NUS chairing it in its first year

NUS Services Convention passes a motion committing us to 100% Fairtrade clothing by the time NUS turns 100, in 2022

Student Switch Off further expands to Ireland, Romania and Bulgaria via EU funding, and incorporates engagement work to help students avoid fuel poverty. Green Impact Universities is now running in Australia and Belgium

Dissertations for Good launches, to help match students with social causes through student coursework

NUS co-founds Students Organising for Sustainability, an international alliance of over 100 student-led groups from 40 countries working on sustainability

We pilot Responsible Futures at 13 institutions, supporting them to work with their students' unions to embed sustainability across the formal and informal curricula

NUS moves into a new, highly environmentally-conscious office – including the UK's first 'pay per lux' circular economy lighting model, that we developed with Philips

We acquire the Ashden Award-winning Student Switch Off campaign, driving energy efficiency across halls of residence

Student Switch Off saves its one millionth pound for universities via energy savings, and achieves its ten thousandth tonne of carbon saved

Responsible Futures

