

# University of Amsterdam Green Office

Overview 2017: projects, budget, lessons learned

Prospect 2018: projects, changes and budget

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## FORWARD

This document provides an overview of past and current projects of the UvA Green Office from the year 2017 as well as some projects for 2018. Each project mentioned contains a short description and update of the project.

## Table of contents

<b>1</b>	<b>CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1	Completed Projects	2
1.1.1	Ban the Bottle	2
1.1.2	10 Day Challenge Series:	2
1.1.3	Mobility I	2
1.2	Current projects (at date of publication)	3
1.2.1	Waste Separation:	3
1.2.2	Pen Recycling	3
1.2.3	Fresh Bag	3
1.2.4	Food Footprint Project:	3
1.2.5	Green Guide	4
1.2.6	Composting	4
1.2.7	Resq Club at the UvA:	4
1.2.8	Sustainable alternatives in the canteens:	4
1.2.9	Plastic shoe laces from UvA waste:	5
1.2.10	The Food Lab x TBYW	5
1.2.11	Course attitude change	5
<b>2</b>	<b>RESEARCH AND EDUCATION</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1	Current projects	6
2.1.1	Sustainability Research Inventory	6
2.1.2	Energy Saving	6
2.1.3	Sustainable ICT	7
2.1.4	E-Waste	7
2.1.5	Building Sustainability	7
2.1.6	Honours Course on Sustainability	8
<b>3</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1	Past projects - completed	9
3.1.1	Website Renewal April 2017	9
3.1.2	Graphic Design Consultation for Bike to Work Lottery June 2017	9
3.1.3	Facebook	9
3.1.4	Instagram	9
3.1.5	Blogs November 2017	9
3.1.6	Content Creation + Creative Sessions	9
3.2	Ongoing projects	9
<b>4</b>	<b>COLLABORATIONS</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1	Intreeweek	10
4.2	Day for Sustainability	10
4.3	Green UvA Platform	10
<b>5</b>	<b>2018 CHANGES</b>	<b>12</b>
5.1.1	Description roles for 2018	13
<b>6</b>	<b>2018 PROJECTS</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1	New projects	15
6.1.1	Sustainable Career Day 2017	15
6.1.2	Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in Sustainability	15
6.1.3	Educating the Educators	15
6.1.4	Honours Courses on Sustainability	15
6.2	Continuing projects	16

# 1 CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY

*Goal Campus:* to increase sustainability of operations by reducing the use of resources (energy, water etc.), increase recycling of all types of waste and to reduce emissions.

*Goal Community:* To raise awareness among students and staff on sustainability and to connect students and staff working and/or interested in this topic, mainly by organizing events.

## 1.1 Completed Projects

### 1.1.1 **Ban the Bottle**

Ban the Bottle began in 2016 in collaboration with Join the Pipe to promote drinking tap water as opposed to bottled water. In canteens at the UvA bottled water is the only option as no reusable bottles can be purchased. Furthermore, easily accessible refill stations do not exist on every UvA campus.

Status: Completed (for now)

Update: Join the Pipe bottles are now being sold in the canteens.

### 1.1.2 **10 Day Challenge Series:**

Description:

The Green Office has organised several 10-day sustainability challenges. These revolved around small changes in lifestyle to promote positive behavioural change. Each challenge would be finished by organising a small celebratory event at the Green Office.

Timeline:

1 March 2017 - 10 March 2017: No plastic bags

10 May 2017- 20 May 2017: Vegetarian Challenge

18 September 2017- 27 September 2017: Trash/Treasure Challenge

Status: Completed (for now), perhaps to be restarted using a different format

Update: Even though there was some interest through social media for joining in these challenges, we saw at the 'celebration date' that not many people were interested.

### 1.1.3 **Mobility I**

Description:

The mobility I project consisted mainly of facilitating a study (thesis) concerning mobility and behaviour. This was done through assisting in organising a lottery campaign to stimulate CWI employees to take the bike instead of the car. Every day, lottery tickets were placed on bikes brought to work by the employees. At the end of a week a lottery was held and the winner received a prize. This means that employees who biked to work received more tickets and therefore had a higher chance of winning. The report on the study will be published on the website of the Green Office.

Timeline: Completed, research has been published and the Green Office has a copy. It will be published on the website in 2018.

## 1.2 **Current projects (at date of publication)**

### 1.2.1 **Waste Separation:**

Description:

The GO is monitoring the progress of waste separation at the different locations. Waste separation is essential in order to increase the amount of recycled materials. The waste company contracted by the UvA tries to separate waste after collecting it, but this technique is not as effective as separating the waste streams at the source. The transition from not separating waste to separating several streams can be rough and difficult, which makes a proper campaign essential. Designing this campaign and raising awareness will be the main role of the GO in this project.

Timeline: Ongoing

The GO has started promotion when the new bins were placed at REC and Science Park after the summer holiday. In addition, the GO assisted in the process of creating a different waste stream for the coffee cups. It is expected that infographics concerning the different waste streams will be put up at central locations to increase awareness of the current state of waste separation and processing at the UvA. Finally, the effectiveness and sustainability of the rented composting machine at Science Park is currently being assessed. If it turns out that the machine is a proper addition to the sustainable waste processing at the university, the GO will be involved in determining the next steps.

### 1.2.2 **Pen Recycling**

Description:

The Pen Recycling project is in collaboration with TerraCycle which is a company that recycles writing utensils. These collection points are emptied when filled, after which the collected utensils are sent to TerraCycle.

Timeline: Ongoing

Update: Currently, two boxes have been constructed for the REC and the box at Science Park has been repaired and is functioning again.

### 1.2.3 **Fresh Bag**

Description:

The Fresh Bag is a concept in which local organic fruits and vegetables are sold to students and staff members. The Green Office was approached by two students who wanted to implement this concept at Science Park. For the Fresh Bag at UvA, the vegetables are bought from local organic farmers and sold for the purchase price to students and staff. It is an inexpensive, sustainable and easy way to get your vegetables. The Fresh Bag has started in September, and is a success so far. On average, they sell 30 bags per week. The main role of the Green Office was to facilitate the students in developing their plan by giving advice and providing contact information.

Timeline: Ongoing

Update: Cormet has agreed to sell the Vegetable Bags in the canteens. Therefore, the project could finally start. The Fresh Bag social media site is also up and running. The Green Office will assist in promotion and purchasing of linen bags.

### 1.2.4 **Food Footprint Project:**

Description:

In collaboration with Eurest the Green Office began an awareness campaign on your food footprint and how the choices you make for food impact the environment in 2016. During this campaign, the carbon footprint of your food was assessed using a three level approach. Posters placed around the canteens provided more general information about

what effect each food choice has specifically on the environment, and the event was promoted on Facebook and the website with more in-depth information about the campaign, information and sources.

Update:

After the new caterer took over, we tried to renew this campaign. So far, this was not achieved yet due to logistical issues on both sides. New appointments will be made with the catering company in 2018.

### **1.2.5 Green Guide**

Description:

The goal of the Green Guide is to create a comprehensive list of sustainable restaurants, bars, art exhibitions, festivals etc. in and around Amsterdam for students interested in living a greener and more sustainable lifestyle.

Update:

The Green Guide has been completed and the first blog is now up on our website. The idea is to publish the rest both in small parts as a blog and as a complete digital booklet. This will be open for download and use to everyone who wants to get to know sustainable recreation places in Amsterdam.

### **1.2.6 Composting**

Description:

A major source of waste at the university is organic waste, mostly from food, which is left over or cannot be used. This waste is currently not used and therefore wasted. Recently, an initiative was started to place a composting machine at Science Park. This will probably be done in 2018. The exact location and size of the operation is still to be determined. The goal of this project is to recycle organic waste produced by the university through composting, to create fertilizer locally, and to create a sustainable food cycle between food suppliers to the university and the students and staff of the UvA. The main role of the GO in this project is to raise awareness and connect parties.

Timeline: The composting machine has been placed and is currently under evaluation. If it turns out that the machine is a valuable asset in the waste separation and processing at the university, the GO will assist in determining the way forward.

### **1.2.7 Resq Club at the UvA:**

Description:

There is a plan to let the catering company cooperate with the ResQ club, who have developed a platform (app and website) to sell leftovers. This could be implemented at the UvA to reduce food waste.

Timeline:

The possibilities and technical details are currently being discussed by the involved parties.

### **1.2.8 Sustainable alternatives in the canteens:**

Description:

The catering company has several sustainable alternatives within its own assortment. These alternatives are often not (sufficiently) promoted though. The goal of this project is to start promoting these alternatives in order to increase the sale of these products instead of the less sustainable ones. This will be done using the sustainability/social responsibility themes of Cormet (see the signs in the canteens). This means that every two months a new theme will be picked and that during that time several products

applicable to that theme will be highlighted and get a discount. Cormet will deliver the list of products and the GO will design the campaign.

Timeline: The campaigns will most likely start somewhere in 2018.

#### **1.2.9 *Plastic shoe laces from UvA waste:***

Description:

As part of a course on developing a business, groups of students have developed a business plan, which they consequently implemented. One of these plans is to produce shoe laces from plastic waste. The idea is to use plastic waste from the university (which is possible due to the new separation of waste streams). As most of the plastic waste is currently not being recycled, this would be a great addition to the waste processing at the university.

Timeline: It still has to be determined where this waste will exactly come from and how much is needed. In addition, if the project continues, the GO will assist in trying to find a market for the shoe laces at and near the university.

#### **1.2.10 *The Food Lab x TBYW***

This project is about establishing a cooperation between The Food Lab and TBYW (Taste Before You Waste). We try to encourage The Food Lab to take products from TBYW (food that normally would have been thrown away), and create products with this that can be served in the cafeteria of the HvA and/or UvA. TBYW can provide food with their existing system of volunteers, and The Food Lab has employees and cooks who can make a product out of the food. We mainly want to establish three things: reduce the amount of waste that is thrown away, encourage people to think about food waste and serve healthy and good-tasting products in the cafeteria.

Timeline: The two organisations have met and will start a pilot of cooperation soon. After that, the GO will assist in determining the way forward.

#### **1.2.11 *Course attitude change***

As part of the course '*Ontwikkelen en evalueren van interventies*' (in english: '*Creation and evaluation of interventions*'), groups of students designed ways to promote behavioral change. The GO discussed the possibilities of introducing case studies surrounding sustainability at the UvA. It was decided that one group of students would look into promoting the separation of waste at the university.

Timeline: the students are currently working on the issue and when the course is finished (end of this semester), they will provide and advice.

## 2 RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

Goal: to provide students and staff with more practical knowledge on sustainability – inside and outside their studies through awareness campaigns and by providing them with an overview of all study and research programs related to sustainability at the UvA.

### 2.1 Current projects

#### 2.1.1 **Sustainability Research Inventory**

Description:

At the FWNI, various disciplines are working on sustainable research. Examples of this research are 'Sustainable Chemistry', 'Solardam', 'Global Ecology' and 'Greening the Cloud'. The Green Office would like to organize a symposium with sustainable researchers at the UvA. This would provide an opportunity for researchers to get in contact with each other and for students to get inspired by what is being researched at the UvA. For research itself it would be useful to collaborate with Amsterdam Green Campus.

More information on this research can be found on:

- Sustainable Chemistry: <http://suschem.uva.nl/>
- Solardam: <http://www.solardam.nl/>
- Global Ecology: <http://ibed.uva.nl/clusters-and-priorities/global-ecology/global-ecology.html>
- Greening the Cloud: <https://ivi.fnwi.uva.nl/sne/projects/greening-the-cloud/>

Each year a sustainability research inventory will be updated. This inventory provides an overview of research groups that address sustainability issues. Plus, an overview of publications of sustainability research of the previous year. This way we can create an easily accessible overview of the research about sustainability at the UvA. This we can use to organize a symposium and write blogs about the research on our website in the future.

Update: This project is still being worked on.

#### 2.1.2 **Energy Saving**

Description:

The Green Office energy saving project focuses on reducing energy consumption. Initial project ideas were to achieve this in computer use by decreasing the amount of inactive time necessary before the computer monitors would go into energy saving mode. The same initiative could also turn down the brightness on the computer monitors on campus to reduce energy consumption.

Update:

Currently, simple ideas on how to further reduce energy use in ICT are gathered in a small 'bullet-point' report which will be published on the Green Office website. This will be converted to posters and flyers to create awareness amongst students. Next to this a general guide to save energy in your daily life is created. This will also result in a online and offline campaign. A report about the energy use of the UvA still needs to be written. Based on this we will try to make some suggestions to the UvA on how to reduce energy use.

### 2.1.3 **Sustainable ICT**

Description:

The goal of this project is to get the university to focus more on sustainable ICT and make students more aware of sustainable ICT. There are a few possible elements:

- Implementing Ecosia as default search engine
- Providing a collectionpoint for ewaste for students at the university
- Reducing energy use of ICT by turning down screen brightness and decreasing the amount of inactive time necessary before the computer monitors would go into energy saving mode.
- Making students more aware of sustainable ICT
- Getting ICT management to put sustainability in the policy plans.

Update: The Green Office team has attended a few sustainable ICT information days organised by 'Studenten voor Morgen' and at the 'NDDHO may 19th'. A sustainable ICT campaign has been developed and will be started as soon as possible. Also, a plan is made to make Ecosia the standard search engine on computers at UvA as it plants trees for every search on Internet. Furthermore, a flyer is being developed to place at computers with more info on this Ecosia search engine for students and employees. Lastly, a campaign with petition will be started to see whether students are caring about sustainable ICT and give this to ICT management to make them put sustainability on the agenda.

### 2.1.4 **E-Waste**

Description:

Part of the Sustainable ICT project. There is a need for electronic waste collection points to ensure that e-waste, which has the potential to be very toxic, is disposed of or recycled properly. The UvA could be part of the solution to this problem by providing a collection point for the e-waste created by student, faculty, and staff. It is our understanding that UvA already does dispose of its own e-waste properly and so we believe the expansion of this to include students, faculty, and staff waste should not be too difficult. At events, MilieuPC is willing to come and collect electronic waste, and even donate a small compensation for every electronic device to the GO.

Update: During 'Day for Sustainability' on 10-10-2017 a company called 'MilieuPC' brought a van to the entrance of Science Park, where people could hand in old electronic waste. A little compensation is given for each electronic device from MilieuPC to the Green Office. It is an option to ask MilieuPC for future events too.

### 2.1.5 **Building Sustainability**

Description:

The UvA has different buildings and facilities located throughout the city of Amsterdam. Some are older more historic buildings while others are newer and more modern. The University has taken steps on each faculty to improve the sustainability and resource consumption accordingly. During this project an inventory would be made of these actions and innovations in order to advertise them. The project will explain what technologies are used on each campus, how they work, and what their impact is. The goal is to enlighten students on the current technologies in use and to encourage a discussion about possible future technologies that could be adopted by the University. This could be done for example by placing posters at the entrance of buildings.

Update:

The available reports have been read and information has been gathered. This information will be visualized in poster form so an awareness campaign can be started in which information per faculty will be given on posters spread. Also we will make a list with the sustainability measures per faculty on our website which should help the UvA meet the Sustainability criteria and increase our ranking the following years. A summary is in the making.

#### 2.1.6 ***Honours Course on Sustainability***

Description:

Following the VU, an honours course on sustainable projects will be held at the UvA hopefully starting in September 2018. The VU organisers of this course agreed to expand the course to the UvA, and are willing to give this course themselves. They are currently discussing on how they will do this with the honours committee at the UvA.

Update: We are in contact with the VU. They have had contact with our honours coordinator about the implementation. We will meet with them to discuss this, and collect projects needed for the course.

## 3 COMMUNICATIONS

Goal: This pillar aims to communicate in a coherent way with the UvA Community about the UvA Green Office. Firstly, it works develops a general framework for promoting the UvA Green Office as an organization and its actions. Secondly, this pillar manages the social media and it develops promotional material for projects of other pillars. Lastly, this pillar manages the news coverage about the UvA Green Office by other media.

### 3.1 Past projects - completed

#### 3.1.1 **Website Renewal April 2017**

The website was redesigned to act as a platform for engagement over multiple types of media. The user interface was redesigned, and switched to Wix.com so to ensure easier transferability and stability.

#### 3.1.2 **Graphic Design Consultation for Bike to Work Lottery June 2017**

A student working on 'Mobility I' project as described in the campus projects chapter, asked for a consultation regarding the graphic design of her bike lottery posters and flyers.

#### 3.1.3 **Facebook**

The Facebook page has been regularly updated, and the GO has grown to 599 followers as of the fifth of December. A beginning is made with engaging with different types of media including videos, gifs, polls, direct messaging, and event managing. In the future we plan to engage more with promoted and targeted ads of GO content.

#### 3.1.4 **Instagram**

We have an Instagram account, it is used in tandem with the other social media accounts to share content in innovative ways. For example, we have been using the "stories" function to capture a different type of audience and to engage them in projects.

#### 3.1.5 **Blogs November 2017**

A team of volunteers and the communications portfolio holder have organized to publish a series of weekly blog posts on our website. These blogs are covering a range of topics including sustainability and local student initiatives.

#### 3.1.6 **Content Creation + Creative Sessions**

At content creation events like creative sessions, volunteers have been invited to come and collaborate to create green office multimedia content. So far, one was organized in November 2017, but these sessions will reoccur during the coming year. These events can include students from diverse backgrounds and engage them in creative activities that directly help to get the message about the GO out.

### 3.2 Ongoing projects

1. Publication of blogs and the Green Guide
2. Further updating website
3. Updating Facebook and Instagram
4. Making promotional material (posts on social media and posters)
5. Organising Creative Sessions

## **4 COLLABORATIONS**

Collaborations for some events for the year 2017-2018 will be done with Students for Sustainability Amsterdam (SFSA). So far there are two events which we will collaborate together for. The first in 'Intreeweek' and the second is 'Day for Sustainability'. The goal of these collaborations is to stimulate discussion and awareness about sustainability, increase visibility of the Green Office and SFSA, and to gain volunteers and members for both the Green Office and SFSA.

### **4.1 Intreeweek**

Goal:

The goal of Intreeweek is to let new UvA students know we exist and increase the number of volunteers applying for the Green Office for the coming academic year.

Actions:

We will do this by having a stand at intreeweek together with SFSA. There we will be distributing flyers together with SFSA that tell the distinguishes between our two groups, highlight our upcoming projects for the year, and our mission. We will attract attention with some sort of game related to sustainability.

### **4.2 Day for Sustainability**

Goal:

The goal of Day for Sustainability is to stimulate discussion and thought concerning sustainability at the UvA. We will do this through a series of actions on different UvA campuses with the help of SFSA.

Actions:

The day will consist of a morning and evening programme. On the Roeterseiland Campus there will be a Room for Discussion. The topic is still to be further discussed but initial ideas are on Water Scarcity and water use given that we have a Join the Pipe fill station at REC and will be expanding this project in the coming year. At Science Park there will be a Beta break. These will all take place around 11:00 and conclude with a plug-in for the evening activities. Evening activities include a borrel at the Green Office from 18:30-19:15. These guests are invited to attend the Green Docs put on by SFSA at CREA at 19:30 followed by a discussion on the topic of the documentary.

### **4.3 Green UvA Platform**

Goal:

The GO, SFSA, Fossil Free UvA/HvA and Milieudefensie UvA are planning to start cooperating more effectively. The main reason for this that all organisations focus on sustainability at the UvA from different perspectives. By collaborating, it is possible to come up with better ideas, and also reach a wider public when one of us is / all of us are organizing an event. There will be an internal Facebook group, which can be used to exchange ideas, expertise and to organise events and projects together. In addition, there will be a public Facebook page which serves as a platform for anyone who is interested in sustainability at the UvA. Our events and projects will be shared there, but it will also be possible for people to get into contact with one of the organisations or the platform as a whole. In order to maintain the platform, it will have its own staff who will work on a voluntary basis to keep the social media channels updated. They will also actively engage the organisations in order to find possibilities for cooperation.

**Actions:**

On November 7, SFSA, UvA Green Office, Fossil Free UvA and Milieudefense launched the sustainability platform 'the Green UvA'. The next meeting will be on the 6th of December. Then we will determine the way forward and appoint the necessary staff.

## 5 2018 CHANGES

The organisation structure for 2017 included 2 managers, 4 portfolio holders and 1 communications person, as well as 15 volunteers.



Figure 1: Schematic overview organizational structure Green Office 2017

For 2018, there will be 1 manager, 4 portfolio holders (of which one is communications), and hopefully more volunteers. These 4 portfolio holders will be managing the following project subjects: Campus, Community, Research & Education and Communications. We hope to attract a minimum of 4 volunteers per portfolio holder, which would give 16 volunteers in total.

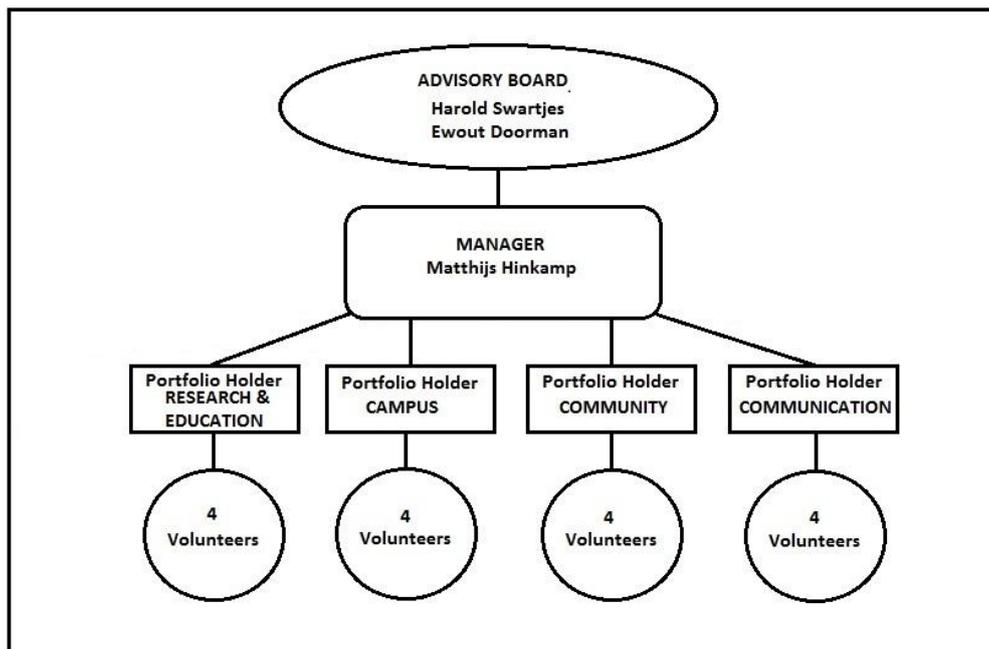


Figure 1: Schematic overview organizational structure Green Office 2018

### 5.1.1 **Description roles for 2018**

#### **1. Manager**

- Manage the budget
- Teambuilding
- Communication with supervisors
- Providing a sustainable structure for the UvA GO
- Manage UvA GOs email
- Recruitment of new GO members

#### **2. Portfolio 1: Campus**

Description:

This role aims at making the campuses and functioning of the campuses more sustainable. This includes buildings (Gas, water, electricity, heating, isolation, building materials, equipment etc.), the practical facilities and waste treatment. Since this pillar has the right information and contacts about all the campuses, it has the ability to promote sustainable actions and to work on the Sustainabul.

Projects (examples past year):

- Recycled Furniture List
- Canon and Student Printing – PaperWise
- Expanding Join the Pipe
- Waste Separation
- Pen Recycling
- Plastic shoe laces from UvA waste
- Energy Saving
- Sustainabul (Because they probably have the most relevant information and contacts to fill this in)
- Building Sustainability
- Sustainable ICT & E-Waste (These two are linked due to close cooperation with the same partners if the workload for this pillar is too high, they could be transferred to pillar II)

#### **3. Portfolio 2: Community**

Description:

This pillar aims at promoting more sustainable behaviour by the UvA community (Students, teachers, researchers and employees) including parties that are linked to the UvA. Because food and behavior projects are closely linked due to the community (building) aspect, they are housed under one theme.

Projects (examples past year):

- Soft drink dispenser pilot
- Vegetarian and Vegan Friday
- Fresh Bag
- Food Footprint Project
- Mobility I & II
- Sustainable alternatives in the canteens:
- The Food Lab x TBYW
- Ban the Bottle
- 10 Day Challenge Series
- Composing (Because it is linked to food)

#### **4. Portfolio 3: Research and Education**

Description:

This pillar aims at making sustainability a more prominent part of the main purposes of a university, namely education and doing research. Firstly, this entails making sustainability a more prominent part of the UvA curriculum and stimulating research about sustainability. Secondly, this pillar aims to create more opportunities for the UvA community to acquire knowledge on sustainability outside the traditional channels by, for example, informal lectures and research symposia.

Project (examples past year):

- Course attitude change
- Sustainability Curriculum Inventory
- Research Symposium
- Green Talk: Lectures on Sustainability
- Sustainability Research Inventory
- Honours Courses on Sustainability
- Intreeweek
- Day for Sustainability

#### **5. Portfolio 4: Communications**

Description:

This pillar aims to communicate in a coherent way with the UvA Community about the UvA Green Office. Firstly, it develops a general framework for promoting the UvA Green Office as an organisation and its actions. Secondly, this pillar manages the social media and it develops promotional material for projects of other pillars. Finally, this pillar manages the news coverage about the UvA Green Office by other media.

Projects (examples past year):

- Green Guide
- Website
- Blog
- Facebook
- Promotion material

## **6 2018 PROJECTS**

### **6.1 New projects**

#### **6.1.1 Sustainable Career Day 2017**

Description:

A SFSA member reached out regarding a sustainable career day as part of Career week at the University of Amsterdam. In collaboration with SFSA the Green Office would like to organise a career day to highlight the sustainable businesses around Amsterdam. Furthermore, it would connect students with possible employers and job opportunities in a sustainably oriented market.

Update: When a next meeting is held (with the new SFSA board) this is a topic to discuss for 2018

#### **6.1.2 Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in Sustainability**

Description:

MOOCs are a way to make education available to all. They provide free information which can be viewed at one's convenience therefore MOOC's potentially have a greater audience and larger impact than regular classes held on the University. We would therefore like to begin offering MOOCs on sustainability related topics with the help of professors at the UvA. This is also a project that will improve the ranking at the SustainaBul.

Timeline: 2018

#### **6.1.3 Educating the Educators**

Description:

This project aims to guide professors in their teaching and help them include sustainability in their curriculum. It would be done in a lecture or seminar form in which Professors could attend, ask questions, and brainstorm together on the different ways to include sustainability in their subjects. This is also a project that will improve the ranking at the SustainaBul.

Timeline: 2018

#### **6.1.4 Honours Courses on Sustainability**

Description:

Following the VU, an honours course on sustainable projects will be held at the UvA hopefully starting in September 2017. The VU organizers of this course agreed to expand the course to the UvA and are willing to give this course themselves. They are currently discussing on how they will do this with the honours committee at the UvA.

Update: We are in contact with the VU. They have had contact with our honours coordinator about the implementation. We will meet with them to discuss this and collect projects needed for the course.

## 6.2 Continuing projects

Below is the list of projects that are described in the earlier paragraphs, that will continue or will be proceeded in 2018.

1. Green Talk: Lectures on Sustainability
2. Sustainability Curriculum Inventory
3. Sustainabul
4. E-waste
5. Research Symposium
6. Soft Drink Dispenser Pilot
7. Molibity I
8. Waste Separation
9. Food Footprint Project
10. Little Green Book: publication
11. Mobility II: publication
12. ResQ Club with Cornet
13. Blog: publication website
14. Further Update Website [uvagreenoffice.nl](http://uvagreenoffice.nl)