

UVA GREEN OFFICE

SEMI- ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022



CONTENTS

01 INTRODUCTION

02 STRUCTURE

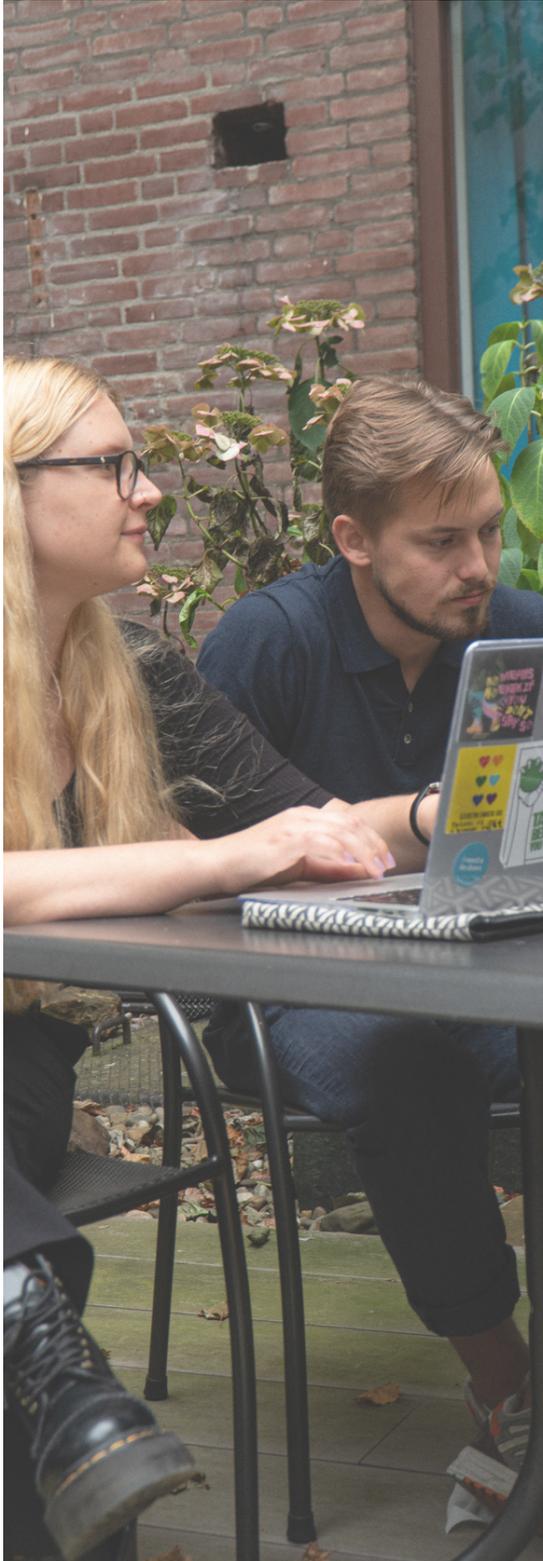
03 OUR PROJECTS

04 COMING UP

05 CONTACT



01 INTRODUCTION



Welcome to the first semi-annual report of the UvA Green Office for the academic year 2021-22!

The UvA Green Office was established in 2016 as a student-run platform integrated into the UvA's institutional structure. Since then, the Green Office has continuously increased its output of policy recommendations and projects to accelerate the sustainable transition and student culture at the UvA, especially concerning environmental sustainability. Together, four team leaders, two general managers, and a number of voluntary student members work under the supervision of one central staff member (bestuurstaf), Ewout Doorman, and in extension, under the board of directors (College van Bestuur) (CvB) of the UvA.

The first semester of this year was yet another COVID-rollercoaster. While things started strong in Spring with our first office-wide borrel in more than 18 months and in-person meetings, snap closures in December meant that sadly a few of our planned events and meetings had to be cancelled. While operating online is not a new challenge for us, the tumultuous ups and downs have yet again been hard on our core team and amazing members who have put in a semester of work on various projects and who were starting to once again get used to enjoying in-person work.

01 INTRODUCTION

Fortunately, last year's addition of a second Manager role proved once again invaluable to our operations as we welcomed a team of 50+ student members, and our four portfolio holders do a great job of maintaining connections within their teams via online meetings even while many of them are spread over countries and continents.

While some believe that the pandemic puts the topic of sustainability on the backburner, we believe that the situation highlights more than ever the urgency of social and environmental sustainability. Not only do lockdowns and restrictions highlight those who do not have a stable or safe home, but extreme weather events of the last year have further threatened the stability of many places. We look at the flooding of the Netherlands and Germany, storms and harsh winters across the United States as evidence that the repercussions of climate change are already hugely disrupting our lives.

Due to the consistent corona restrictions in 2021 continuing into 2022, Green Office operations like pursuing sustainability on campus and physical events have become impossible to realize.

Therefore, in the second half of 2021 the resources for these Green Office operations were re-invested into online activities.

The team has focused on creating more prominent social-networking solutions, deeper integration into different university areas, better coordination between student associations and staff, and last but not least, the internal communication of the Green Office itself. Thanks to all of these activities, the Green Office was able to strengthen its position within the UvA environment and increase engagement for students and student associations united around environmental sustainability.

01 INTRODUCTION

In this semester's hybrid environment, our portfolios have focussed on bringing together and welcoming new members to our ever-growing team, sustaining internal Green Office online communication, developing our Knowledge Hub, and connecting with external green stakeholders in Amsterdam like companies and NGOs to expand our network across the city.

Our mission remains unwavered despite the switches between being an online and in-person office. We strive to make the University of Amsterdam a greener place! This report summarizes the efforts, obstacles, outcomes, and successes of the UvA Green Office between September 2021 and February 2022.

**LUCY UPTON AND
ZITA KOSARAS**

UVA GREEN OFFICE GENERAL
CO-MANAGERS



02 STRUCTURE

ROLES

The UvA Green Office has many students working towards a more sustainable university. Each of us has different roles and responsibilities, which helps us divide tasks and allows many to participate.



i. SUPERVISION

Our supervisor, Ewout Doorman, is the link between the UvA Green Office and the University of Amsterdam. The supervisor supports the Green Office wherever needed and makes sure it performs well within the university's institutional structure.

ii. MANAGEMENT

The current managers, Lucy Upton and Zita Kosaras, are responsible for all the actions of the members of the UvA Green Office and make sure everything goes according to plan. To achieve this, the managers determine the general strategy of the Green Office. In addition to this, the managers monitor the progress of the current projects and the work of the portfolio holders. The managers also decide on the expenses so that the allocated budget is used optimally.



02 STRUCTURE

iii. TEAM LEADERS



Team leaders are an essential part of the Green Office. Together the four team leaders as part of the core team spend a considerable amount of time devising the long-term strategy, and driving policy change at the UvA. In addition, they manage the Green Office members and their respective projects - sometimes overseeing and facilitating up to 10 unique projects at a time. They motivate members by organizing social events and provide opportunities to develop skills and knowledge through things like workshops, meet-ups, or their weekly or bi-weekly team meetings. This year the leaders are Giovanna Hunsrao, Gabrielle Aguilar, Khushi Garga and Ivan Muso.

iv. MEMBERS

The Green Office consists mainly of student members in addition to our managers and team leaders. The members work on creating and implementing projects individually or in small teams. Some projects were initiated and brought to life by members, others are continuous projects. We now operate with about 53 active student members working on projects in addition to our core team.



03 OUR PROJECTS

TEAMS

Our projects are divided across four teams: Campus, Community, Research and Education, and Communications. Read on to see the awesome projects each team is working on.

I. CAMPUS TEAM

After 18 months of remote work, the Campus team was finally able to meet offline! The team consists of eight enthusiastic students. As classes move offline, the Campus team observed the lack of waste solutions on campus. The university is littered with non-reusable coffee cups and food packaging. Moreover, the cafeteria lacks a variety of vegan and vegetarian options. It became clear that throughout the pandemic the university has not implemented sustainable solutions and fulfilled their commitments towards sustainability. Despite the targets discussed in the last year's White Paper, the university seems hesitant to make structural changes with regards to sustainability, and in their operations and maintenance, especially when compared to other Dutch universities. Regardless, the Campus team continues to support the university to find sustainable solutions. So far, the Campus team's ideas have been met with positive feedback.



Ivan Muso

CAMPUS TEAM LEADER



03 OUR PROJECTS

i. BILLIECUP

Following up the work from the previous year, the Campus team continued working on reducing actual waste at the campus by lobbying for company BillieCup that specializes in managing reusable, deposit-based coffee cup systems in universities, hospitals and independent cafés. Due to push-back from the UvA Facility Services, the campus team worked hard to persuade cafés around the university campuses. There has been positive feedback and interest voiced out by many of them. However, due to the difficult situation regarding Covid-19 restrictions, the cafés are hesitant to make the desirable investment. Due to these circumstances, the Green Office decided to purchase a one year subscription to incentivize cafés to go on board which resulted in the first café on the university property switching to BillieCup, Café Oerknal in the USC Universum in Sciencepark. Not only that it is the first café around the UvA that committed to a real sustainable solution of tackling waste, but Café Oerknal is also the first café that switched to BillieCup in Amsterdam!

Following this, the Campus team had a meeting with Facility Services. They welcomed the negotiations to implement BillieCup at a pilot location, and the campus team is highly motivated to implement the same across the UvA.

ii. ECO-SCORE AT THE CAFETERIA

One of the core pillars of the UvA's White Paper was to "change consumer behavior", in order to meet the goals of decreasing carbon emissions produced in the canteens. One of the ways that the White Paper mentions is to nudge consumers in the right direction. For this reason, the Campus Team works on implementation of eco-score in the canteens so that the consumers get transparent information about the environmental impact of the products. Simultaneously, the Central Student Council has voted in favor of this proposal so there is a general support for this proposal among the students.

The campus team is in contact with an ambitious sustainable company Green Fish that can produce a whole eco-score for the entire canteen, yet waiting for an approval from the Facility Services.

03 OUR PROJECTS

iii. ECOSIA ON CAMPUS

Ecosia is a search engine like Google or Bing, except it uses its profits to plant trees. Building upon the work that the members did last academic year, Ecosia finally made it to all the computers at the university's libraries which count for more than 350 computers. Luisa is currently working on trying to implement Ecosia also on the computers of the employees, yet this task is a bit more difficult due to privacy reasons. Moreover, she is trying to raise awareness among the student body to get students to download Ecosia on their personal laptops. The last step is to make an official announcement in the press release by the UvA stating that the UvA has become part of the Ecosia network!



iv. E-WASTE GUIDE PROMOTION



After completing the E-waste Guide, the Green Office finally had the opportunity to promote the guide on campus! We made physical flyers and posters that were distributed to students before Christmas. The flyers are posted at different student housing notice boards. The E-waste guide will be an integral part of sustainable guides for the first year students.



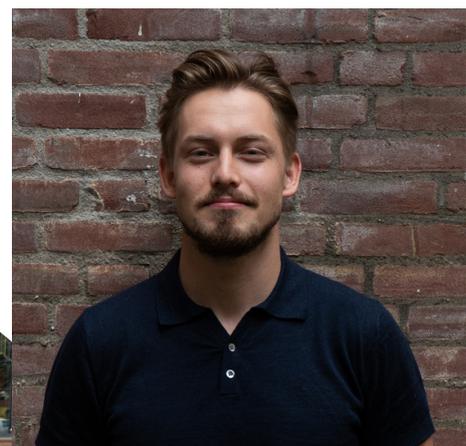
03 OUR PROJECTS

V. PEN RECYCLING ON CAMPUS

After a year and a half of closed or semi-closed campuses, the Campus team had the chance to clear up all of our four pens recycling stations and gave them a fresher look. After collecting three large boxes of pens from P.C. Hoofthuis, Sciencepark and Roeterseiland, the campus team re-established the collaboration with TerraCycle, a company that collects our pens then donates their profits to sustainable projects across the whole world.



THAT'S ALL FROM THE CAMPUS TEAM!



03 OUR PROJECTS

II. COMMUNITY TEAM

The Community team within the Green office is primarily aimed at creating a sense of community interested in sustainability in and outside the UvA. The team consists of a total of 10 members which are separated into four project teams. Aaron, Emily and Rhoda have been bustling away working and perfecting our Green Guides, an ongoing project from previous years, while Chelsea and Rebecca have been sustaining the Alumni Portraits initiative. As for our new initiatives this year, we have Emma, Flore and Kim working on Sustainable Citizens of Amsterdam and Tia and Justyna on the Food for Thought project.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the community team was unable to follow through with in-person proposed events including events with Taste Before You Waste, and other vegan kitchens and our holiday-themed events. Nevertheless, the team has started efforts to adapt to the pandemic by planning and preparing material and standing ready to promote as soon as restrictions are lowered. All in all, the team is aimed at spreading the word on sustainability through events and resources and empathizing the spirit of living consciously and mindfully.



WORKING ON THE GREEN GUIDE



MEMBER BORREL

GIOVANNA HUNSRao

COMMUNITY TEAM LEADER



03 OUR PROJECTS

i. OPENING BORREL

To welcome the team members, an opening borrel was held as a way to break the ice and introduce the core team and other departments to one another. With over 30 team members being present on the day, the opening borrel at Walters was a huge success! To spice things up, a pub quiz was made with questions about sustainability, general knowledge and music and film.



The Communication and Research and Education teams won with a tie and the night continued with drinks and great conversations among the Green Office members. Even if the pandemic has been difficult in terms of doing large-scale activities, this was the first borrel and whole team event after 18 months for the office. The community team is looking forward to organising more team building events for the Green Office after the pandemic.

ii. ALUMNI PORTRAITS

Alumni Portraits is a project started in 2020, where we approach and interview UvA alumni who are currently pursuing a sustainable career. The project aims to shed light on possible sustainability-oriented careers and document the path of our lovely alumni. This cycle, we have successfully interviewed 3 different alumni and posted 2 of our new Alumni Portraits on our blog, one being a previous staff member, Satyam Kathpalia. Satyam is an ex-GO manager, The blog post discusses his experience of finding work within the sustainability field and the transition from a student-led workplace environment to a more structured 9 to 5 job. We hope to interview and extend the project by potentially adding a Q&A session with Alumni in the future.

03 OUR PROJECTS

iii. GREEN GUIDES

The Green Guides are booklets of selected topics of sustainability that we believe need more clarification or serve as a tool to navigate around the world of green and conscious living. To add on to our previous fashion and food guides, the team has worked on our first ever holiday guide this year to demonstrate that the season of giving and eating can be lived with sustainability as a primary lens. The guide covers topics from gifts to reusing leftovers and aims to educate the reader of the easy alternatives in and out of Amsterdam to cater for the holiday season.



iv. SUSTAINABLE CITIZENS OF AMSTERDAM

A new initiative from the Community team, Sustainable Citizens of Amsterdam aims to highlight individuals and entities within the UvA and Amsterdam that promote and live eco-friendly lives. Due to the pandemic, a lot of scheduled interviews were canceled leading to a pushback in the project. Nevertheless, the first video interview and the issue of Sustainable citizens of Amsterdam has successfully been posted on Instagram as a reel and on YouTube. In the video, the team conducted an interview with Little Plant Pantry, a local zero waste-based grocery shop that offers organic bulk buying. The initiative is now working on our second issue which will discuss cultural sustainable practices.



03 OUR PROJECTS

**THAT'S ALL FROM
THE COMMUNITY
TEAM!**



03 OUR PROJECTS

III. RESEARCH & EDUCATION TEAM

The Research & Education team works to promote sustainability within the university by facilitating interdisciplinary collaboration at the UvA. This includes further developing the Knowledge Hub, producing Green Talks and podcast episodes, and overseeing individual research projects. We enjoyed having the opportunity to get together again in-person before the eventual transition back to remote, online work. Our team is composed of a mighty 16 members!

GABRIELLE AGUILAR

RESEARCH AND EDUCATION TEAM LEADER



I. GREEN EXCHANGE GUIDE

The University of Amsterdam offers a wide variety of exchange programmes globally. Our objective is to share sustainability-related information on some of our selected European University-partner mobility programmes including calculating the carbon footprint of your flights, finding other University Green Office communities, understanding local transport options in your selected city and more! We are looking forward to releasing the Green Exchange Guide in March 2022.



03 OUR PROJECTS

ii. GREENTALKS



“Green Talks” are a series of interviews/panels/Q&A-events with sustainability professionals. All of our Green Talks are available in short form on our IGTV and long form on our Youtube. Each Green Talk is intended to give students insight into life after university and provide inspiration for a wide variety of careers in the sustainability industry!

Team member Miléna chatted virtually with De Kaskantine Urban Farm who describes themselves as a community of nomad farmers, chefs, engineers and teachers working on urban gardening, saving and redistributing food surplus, composting systems, as well as upcycling waste and solar installations.

We look forward to chatting about sustainable food solutions with Soupalicious next!

Photo provided by De Kaskantine

iii. COLLABORATION WITH THE INSTITUTE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCES (IIS)

The Research and Education team lead has maintained an advisory role in the pilot-phase of the new IIS Sustainability Minor programme. In addition, we have also joined the interdisciplinary committee responsible for establishing a future Sustainability Master’s programme.

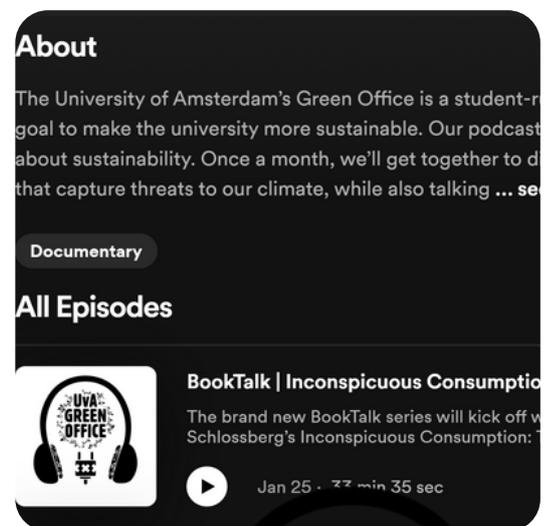
03 OUR PROJECTS

iv. PODCAST (COMMUNICATIONS TEAM COLLABORATION)

The Research and Education team was excited to continue on with the Green Office Podcast in tandem with the Communications Team! We decided to lead a BookTalk series as well as share engaging conversations with UvA lecturers who teach about sustainability in its many interdisciplinary forms. Our intention is to create more awareness about sustainability-related education at UvA and showcase a diversity of voices on our podcast.

- The BookTalk series recently kicked off with a 2 part episode on Tatiana Schlossberg's *Inconspicuous Consumption: The Environmental Impact You Don't Know You Have* which empowers readers to think about the environment in a new way and make more informed choices when it comes to the future of our world. Next on our reading list: Ernest Callenbach's Utopian novel, *Ecotopia*.

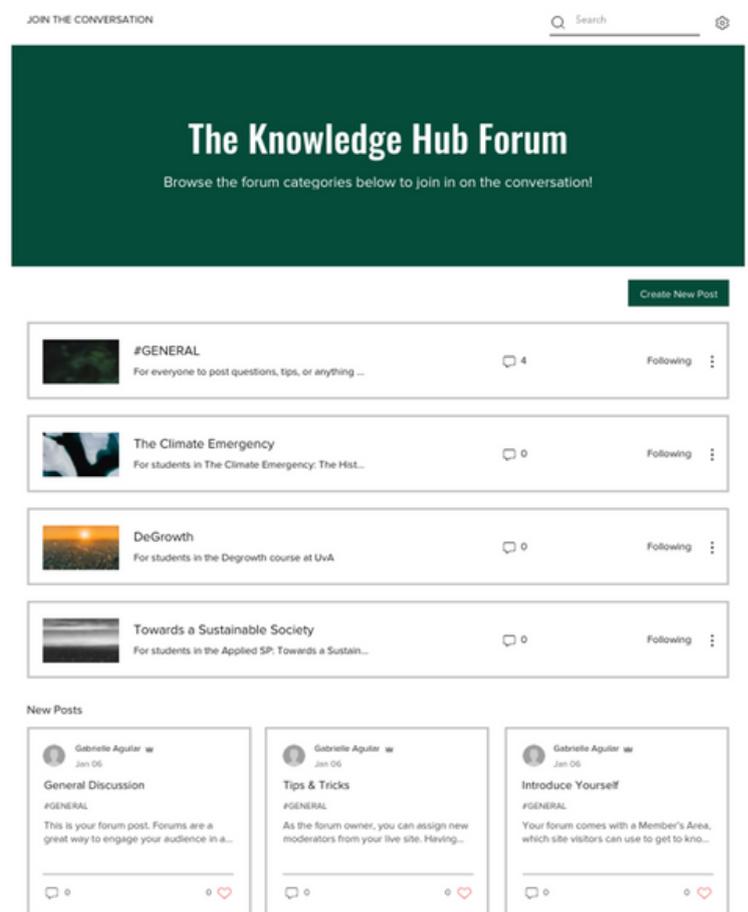
The UvA offers a variety of Sustainability-Related courses across various disciplines. Our SustainableEDU series will be a monthly series diving into everything from the radical Degrowth movement to the social psychology of shifting towards a sustainable society. Tune in on your favorite podcasting platform, so you don't miss out!



03 OUR PROJECTS

iv. KNOWLEDGE HUB

Sustainability is a huge and complex issue that requires people with different knowledge, expertise and life experience to work collaboratively to address the challenges we face. The Knowledge Hub strives to be a place where everyone can share their ideas and collaborate with others on sustainability related initiatives across various academic disciplines and professions. We have just over 100 individuals/organisations that have joined The Knowledge Hub this year and we have even had the opportunity to share our open-source code with the University of Konstanz who is exploring ways to implement their very own Knowledge Hub!



Knowledge Hub Community Discussion Forum

Since the initial launch of The Knowledge Hub in early 2021, we have been discussing ways to improve on its original design. As we explore a future for connecting, creating and collaborating on sustainability at UvA and beyond, we are excited to launch key improvements to The Knowledge Hub that include increased functionality, shareability and a community-based discussion forum.

03 OUR PROJECTS

**THAT'S ALL FROM THE
RESEARCH AND EDUCATION
TEAM!**



03 OUR PROJECTS

IV. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

The Communications team is the mouthpiece for the work of the UvA Green Office! While other teams pursue new individual projects on campus or online, the Communications team focuses their hard work on improving visibility on these projects and spreading the word of the Green Office as far as possible. This means managing a host of social media platforms, keeping the website up-to-date, connecting the UvA central communications team to the Green Office, and expanding our reach as far as possible by pursuing new ways of getting content to new types of followers.

Even though the new academic year isn't fully online, a large part still remains online, our role remains essential as we manage the bulk of the Green Office online presence. This year the Communications team has changed its structure into four small departments; external communications, blog, content creation and the podcast. This leads to meetings becoming shorter but more efficient. The Communications team consists of 17 highly motivated members, ensuring that every student on campus knows about the Green Office.



KHUSHI GARGA

COMMUNICATIONS
TEAM LEADER

i. PODCAST (RESEARCH & EDUCATION TEAM COLLABORATION)

The Communications team is preparing to launch a new podcast called Green Gen. Members Nefeli and Julia Wolska have been an essential part of developing and editing the podcast, and have been involved in the podcast from the academic year 2020-2021. The first episode of Green Gen is going to be published in the end of February.



03 OUR PROJECTS

ii. INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS DEVELOPMENTS

As the Green Office grows, new complications arise and efficiency decreases. This semester the Communications team aimed to create systems to improve efficiency in the Green Office. This includes a content calendar on Canva, a form for website, a new method for recording analytics for the social media and new member guides. The Canva content calendar was implemented using Canva premium. Canva premium includes a brand kit, to consistently adhere to brand colors. and a content calendar with automatic posting to improve efficiency.

The Green Office structure leads to a very high labour turnover every year. This means a lot of time is spent during onboarding and ensuring that volunteers clearly understand their role. To streamline this process the Communications team created member guides. The member guides introduces the structure and roles at GO, logins for each role, explanations of basic tasks for each role and the first task to get them started. The guide also includes basic information like "How to get started on Slack", contact information for all members, Brand Guidelines and link to the Internal GO Calendar (Communications Calendar and overall GO). The member guide ensures a more efficient process onboarding process.

iii. BLOG

The blog team has grown from one member to three. The blog team aims to create informative content for the students of Amsterdam regarding sustainability. This year an article all about Wischcycling and the a new series called Bitesize Sustainability is being developed. The series Bitesize Sustainability will cover complicated sustainability related topics in a bitesized, easy to understand way.

03 OUR PROJECTS

iv. NEWSLETTERS

A. EXTERNAL NEWSLETTER

The Green Office newsletter is a key part of external communication. This year the external newsletter has been managed by Liona Auttolia, who joined GO this academic year. Given that our mailing list is made up of self-subscribed followers who have signed up via our website, we see the external newsletter audience as our “inner-circle” of followers compared to our 2000+ audience reach on social media. The Communications team put out the newsletter every month on the 15th via email, with three or four highlights of the month from any team. As of January 2022 we have 558 subscribers to our newsletter.

B. INTERNAL NEWSLETTER

Introduced in January 2021, in the midst of the pandemic, the internal newsletter aims to connect the members of the Green Office. This year, the internal newsletter saw a revamp to become more informal and more personalized. The internal newsletter contains information about work-in-progress projects in each team, a member in the spotlight, and even New Year's Resolutions!

The internal newsletter goes out every month on the 10th and is created and designed by Barbora Machackova.

v. CONTENT CREATION TEAM

The content creation team has grown to four members, including a video editor. This is a way for the GO to communicate its different projects in a more accessible way. In 2021-22, the team has created multiple reels (short form content), promoting and informing students about the Holiday Guide (produced by the community team) to show students how to be more sustainable during the holidays. This content was also shared on TikTok and as YouTube Shorts.



03 OUR PROJECTS

VI. PLATFORMS

2,093 followers

10,000+ reach

287 posts

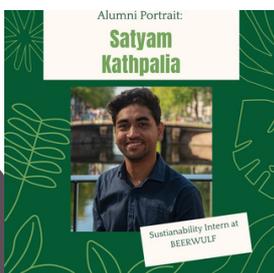
B. FACEBOOK

1969 followers

1851 likes

C. BLOG

~60 reads per post



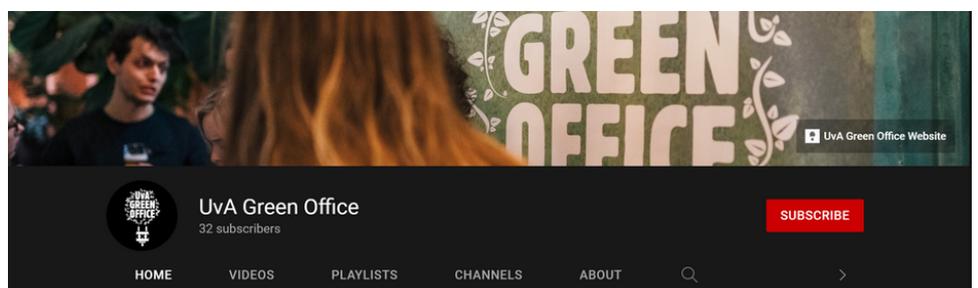
D. WEBSITE

3000+ visits this semester

530 subscriptions

32 subscribers, 1,559 views

E. YOUTUBE



03 OUR PROJECTS

**THAT'S ALL FROM THE
COMMUNICATIONS
TEAM!**



05 CONTACT US

ADDRESS

UvA Green Office,

Roeterseiland Campus
J/K building 1.33
Valckenierstraat 65-67
1018 XE Amsterdam

University Library Singel
Room A0.03a
Singel 425
1012 WP Amsterdam

ONLINE

EMAIL

greenoffice@uva.nl
greenoffice.campus-bb@uva.nl
greenoffice.community-bb@uva.nl
greenoffice.research-bb@uva.nl
greenoffice.communications-bb@uva.nl

SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram: @uvagreenoffice
Facebook: UvA Green Office
Youtube: UvA Green Office

IMPRESSUM

UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM

UVA GREEN OFFICE,

ROETERSEILAND CAMPUS
J/K BUILDING 1.33
VALCKENIERSTRAAT 65-67
1018 XE AMSTERDAM

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SINGEL
ROOM A0.03A
SINGEL 425
1012 WP AMSTERDAM

DESIGN: LUCY UPTON
EDITOR: KHUSHI GARGA

FEBRUARY 2022

