



Sustainability Bulletin

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While 2025 is skyrocketing by, we've been keeping pace. Our people are driving positive change left, right and centre—and there's plenty of good sustainability news to share for it.

April to July were marked by huge achievements, from our award-winning waste savvy practices and continued recognition as a global leader driven towards Sustainable Development Goals, to the innovation of students and the fantastic frenzy of new affordable Food Hubs we now have across campuses.

Read on to hear about these sustainability highlights, and plenty more, pushed by the passionate people of our community, all opting for a better world.

Continued passion sees UTAS recognised for world-class action

The University of Tasmania ranked first in the world for Climate Action, for our fourth year in a row. Also achieving first place for its vital work for Life on Land and ranking fourth globally for the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

An achievement that doesn't just roll on yearly but happens thanks to the individual and collective contributions across the community.



It's taken a web of passionate individuals working together to advance the university's excellent record amid an 18% increase in universities included in the ranking. Vice-Chancellor, Professor Rufus Black, said "The transformative relationships that we have throughout the Tasmanian community and globally underpin our progress towards holistic sustainability."

The progress we've made and committed to work done, through teaching, research, operations and partnerships also led to ranking first in the world for Life on Land, SDG15, and fourth in the world against all 17 of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Notably, academic publications from more than 650 staff and PhD candidates made up the overall ranking, and over 250 authors helped to claim the number one rankings. The University's community engagement, use of renewable energy and commitment to carbon neutrality were also included in the mix of efforts.

Read more about the University's recent Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings [here](#).

UTAS takes home Waste NoT award for waste savvy practices

Mary Gill, our Waste Officer, accepted this repurposed and recycled trophy at Circular North's Waste NoT Awards.



The award put a spotlight on huge successes we've made of late like exceeding our initial landfill reduction target of 25% by 2025 by reaching 41% reduction in 2024. This included diverting more than 720 tonnes of waste from landfill last year statewide – including to organics and recycling.

The bounty of wins, while guided by the Waste Minimisation Action Plan 2021-2025, innovated their way into circular thinking, student-led initiatives and engagement that were really quite neat. To name a few of these savvy ways, we:

- Processed 8.5 tonnes of food-scraps, garden, workshop and office waste with our acclaimed first-in-state in-vessel COMET composting machine;
- Repurposed materials including over 6km of gas pipeline as pilings in buildings and converted old desk frames into glasshouse shelving in our Inveresk community garden;
- Supported TUSA in kickstarting a household and kitchen goods op shop at Newnham campus, and,
- Partnered with the Big Picture School in Inveresk who repaired 35 abandoned bikes and then donated them to students.

Cutting-edge course launched to empower climate action

We developed and introduced a free short course to provide participants with the knowledge and tools to enact real positive climate impacts in community and beyond.



The University's latest MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), [The Climate Shift: Exploring Science, Empowering action](#) invites people to explore climate change from a multidisciplinary perspective in the 20 hour, self-paced journey. One that delves into the groundwork science of climate change, human influence, impacts and mitigation strategies alongside how we'll adapt in this crisis and the practical tools to get us there. At its heart are more than 45 people, from passionate staff to world-class experts that made it happen. A collective effort to catch lightning in a bottle – creating a timely and hands-on course that makes climate knowledge accessible to all.

One of the makers, Dr Ed Doddridge a physical oceanographer at IMAS, said it's for anyone wherever they're at in their climate journey. "This is for anyone who wants to understand the climate story more deeply and be part of the solution."

It's free of charge, concise but interactive, flexible and ready to start now—a chance to have a hand in re-writing the climate story for the better.

Students pioneer sustainability on campus

Our Sustainability Integration Program for Students (SIPS) enthusiasts have been busy bees buzzing up some sweet projects of late. This includes kickstarting a sustainability book club, collaborating with a local cafe to re-use and test the best coffee ground compost, and painting colourful signs to connect people to green spaces like Source Eco Hub—just to name a few.



We wanted to learn more about the neat ways these interns are planting the seeds of change in community and these are the fruits of wisdom we received: from [Funmi](#), who brought inclusive signs to green spaces; [Erica](#), who used the power of literature; and [Mukta](#), who's giving coffee grounds a second chance.

Describe your project in a sentence.

Mukta: Waste to second life: turning coffee grounds into compost for agriculture.

Funmi: To evaluate the dementia (age) friendliness of green spaces and proffer sustainable solutions to enhance connection to nature.

Erica: My project was creating a sustainability-themed book club, a sustainability book recommendations resource, and various other proposals to integrate sustainability into student life.

What's the biggest thing you've learned about facilitating sustainability action through SIPS?

Mukta: That small, simple ideas like rethinking food waste can spark really meaningful conversations and action when shared with the right people.

Funmi: Two key elements of leading a sustainable project is healthy collaboration and stakeholder engagement.

Erica: The biggest thing I've learned about facilitating sustainability action through SIPS is that it is much more wonderful possible than you might think! People in the university community are very keen to help, and at UTAS we enjoy support for sustainability at all levels. There's lots of possibility to make change – SIPS is one of those special program which connects students who are keen to do so with the resources they need to do so.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of your project?

Mukta: Seeing waste transformed into something useful, and knowing that every bucket of composted coffee grounds is one less step toward landfill and one step closer to healthier soil.

Funmi: Meeting new people that are genuinely interested in your work and growth and vice versa.

Erica: The most rewarding aspect of my project was getting positive feedback about my ideas. I learned that engaging people in sustainability through arts (such as literature) is powerful and impactful.

Learn more about the real-world opportunities and actions the [SIPS](#) program sprouts.

Our sustainability stars progress to the international stage

We picked up [five awards](#) at the [Green Gown Awards Australasia](#) for our outstanding sustainability achievements late last year, with some of them now running for world recognition at the 2025 International Green Gown Awards.



The regional awards for our holistic focus on [climate action](#) and [sustainability major](#) recognised our strong commitment to carbon reductions, activation of sustainable practices in community and equipping the next generation of learners with the tools to tackle sustainability challenges across disciplines. It's groundbreaking work that empowers the people of the future.

The [BioBlitz community science festival](#) will also be showcased for its success. An initiative led by Dr Clare Hawkins, Citizen Science Coordinator and Adjunct Researcher at the University of Tasmania, that saw more than 300 community members and 90 students participate in a phenomenal 30-hour event—a bioblitz. To record and log as many species as possible, finding 400 distinct species in the Kelcey Tiers in the name of citizen science, conservation and collective action. We can't wait to see the applause this kind of activation receives.

Another outstanding community initiative gaining the recognition it deserves is [Sustainable Food Solutions](#), which has been tackling food insecurity and making waves in community. Made of a mix of programs across the university, like food gardens, cooking classes, Food Hubs and the most recent release: community-prepped lunches! With people at the heart and centre of this initiative, it's a real treat to see it progress onwards for the Student Engagement Award in 2025.

The 2025 International Green Gown Awards recognise exceptional sustainability initiatives undertaken across the world's tertiary providers, setting the bar for how learning institutions centre around the SDGs in all they do.

However, this wouldn't be the first time our work's been recognised for dedication to a greener future on the international stage, with the [SIPS program](#) claiming first place for Student Engagement in Sustainability in 2022.

The 2025 Australasia Green Gown Award finalists have also just been announced. Check out the unreal work we've entered the spotlight for [here](#).

Food Hubs are now a staple: giving students what they need across campuses

We've heard [TUSA Food Hubs](#) are going gangbuster cross all major campuses. They're providing excellent opportunities to grab nutritious and affordable food for a feed for all; they just launched at Rozelle, Cradle Coast, Inveresk and Hobart City too. That's four new hubs built in no time, heeding the significant call for accessible food close to home.



These hubs are built to address the very real food insecurity students face—a growing issue that affects the physical and mental health of students and cascades to academic performance and overall uni experience. The latest [Sustainability Survey](#) highlighted it as a widespread one too, with 53% of UTAS students experiencing some level of food insecurity, up from the 2022 result of 42%. What's more, there's a rise in [severe food insecurity](#) from 17% to 29% in 2024, which highlights just how game-changing these new hubs will be for the lives of many, who'd rather focus on study.

TUSA launched the Sandy Bay Food Hub in July 2023 to tackle the issue head-on, with support from UTAS Staff Giving, Alumni & Donors, Healthy Tasmania, Loaves and Fishes Tasmania, OzHarvest, Foodbank Tasmania and Gateway Life. Together they've ensured students can get food with dignity for free or at 40% below retail prices for pantry items. Since launching in 2023, with all the new Food Hubs included, they've redistributed over 12,000kg of food to over 10,000 students. An inspirational triumph that supports the needs and success of our students. "The Food Hub is more than just food relief—it's about building food resilience," said Kim White, TUSA Food Security Program Coordinator. Food resilience built off Food Hub's educational workshops on cooking, nutrition and food sustainability gearing students to get the most out of the food they get at Food Hub. Lending more time and energy to what matters for them, because "no student should have to choose between eating and studying."

The latest drop are the [bubble and squeak community lunches](#), where Food Hub and Source Eco Hub goodies and garden veggies are used for cooking by students to provide lunches for all.

Find more information about [Food Hub](#) and, if you're a student, visit one near you.

Additional successes in the sustainability space

Here's a snapshot into additional successes of the last quarter as we strive for greater sustainability together.



- We're on track with a 17% reduction of GHG at the University to reach our target of reducing gross emissions by at least 50% by 2030.

- We're driving change across the sector by tracking and reducing beyond our direct (scope 1) emissions (e.g. gas use to heat buildings and vehicle fleet use) and indirect (scope 2) emissions (e.g. Energy-use), but also a range of other (scope 3) emissions from staff commuting to air travel and security services among others. Our efforts have added unique perspectives to the [Scope 3 Emissions Guide for the Tertiary Education Sector](#) and advanced us towards our emission targets.

- We've about to launch a revised energy action plan to bolster the current work on our targets and commitments for our local and global community.

- Our novel approach to sustainability reporting, in our annual report, received a third-party audit, which highlighted valuable opportunities to formalise the method for improved accountability across the university, visibility and, ultimately, maximise our positive impacts.

- We were one of twelve Australian universities that came together, as staff, students, community members and local government, to forecast the climate-induced risks and challenges to higher education we're yet to face and how to tackle them. Creating a practical tool for tertiary education institutions: [Navigating Climate Change – Scenarios for Australia's Tertiary Education Sector](#).

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The stories in the Sustainability Bulletin are written on the Country of palawa pakana people in lutruwita/Tasmania. We acknowledge their sovereignty was never ceded and we pay deep respect to palawa pakana people as they continue to care for Country.



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