

**United Nations Global Compact**

**COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT**



Griffith University's Strategic Plan:  
*Our goal 'To be a sustainable university'*

## **Sustainability Report**



Conventional petrol cars in the fleet are being replaced with hybrid vehicles.

## Our progress

Griffith University has been a signatory to the UN Global Compact since April 2010 and signed up to the SDSN Australia/Pacific Universities Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals in 2017. Griffith's Business School is one of the founders of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME).

Griffith University is one of Australia's fastest growing Universities and among the top ten research institutions nationally; a multi campus University serving communities from the Brisbane CBD to the Gold Coast. Its campuses are located in one of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

The University's commitment to the principles of sustainability has been maintained and matured over a period of forty years.

Griffith was the first Australian University to offer an Environmental Science degree in 1975 and now offers a wide range of graduate and postgraduate teaching programs integrated across disciplines with a focus on sustainability. Interdisciplinary collaboration brings together themes from business and tourism, law, education, music and performing arts, health, humanities, languages and social science, engineering, urban planning and environmental science among others. Our teaching and research are equipping the next generation of leaders, innovators and decision makers with the knowledge and skills to tackle global goal challenges.

Sustainability is one of five high level goals in the Griffith Strategic Plan 2018-2019 and previous Strategic Plan 2015-2017.

To support this goal, a Sustainability Plan 2017-2020, incorporates economic, environmental and corporate social responsibility in the University's teaching programs, research activities, community engagement and operational practices. A Carbon Management Plan is also in place so that there is a consistent and measurable effort to reduce our carbon footprint over the long term.

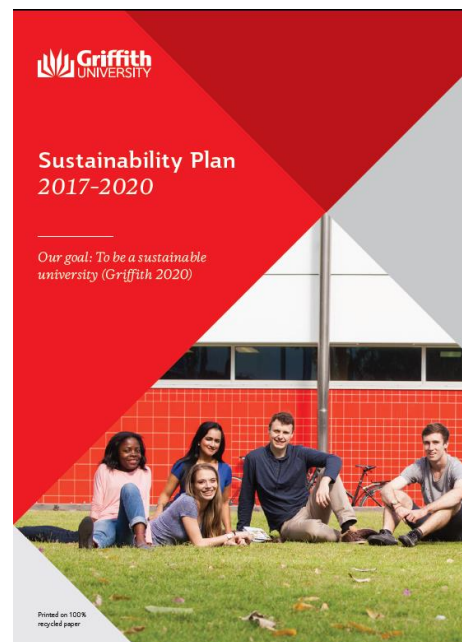
Sustainability goals have been included in University plans: Academic Plan 2017-2020, Research and Innovation Plan 2017-2020, Engagement Plan 2018-2020, Griffith IT Plan 2013-2017.

In 2017 sustainability was also incorporated into a number of key policies:

- Motor Vehicle Policy
- Purchasing Policy
- Travel Policy.

Griffith University supports gender equity and inclusion. Griffith University is proud to have been consistently recognised as an Employer of Choice for Women (2001-2013) and now Gender Equity (2014-present). The University is also taking part in a two-year pilot of the Athena SWAN Charter that works towards enhancing gender equity in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM). The Charter recognises excellence in employment practices that advance the careers of women and gender minorities in STEM subjects.

Griffith also seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education through the provision of 600 scholarships for new and continuing students.



## Committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

In October 2017 Griffith signed up to the Sustainable Development Solutions Network Australia/Pacific - Universities Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals.

This aligns with the University's ongoing commitment to the United Nations Global Compact.



### Sustainable Development website

We recognise the critical role that universities have in achieving the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals, adopted in September 2015.

In 2018 Griffith launched its new [Sustainable Development website](#) that highlights alignment with teaching programs and research activities for each of the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The University undertook a mapping exercise of undergraduate teaching programs and research activities to identify the alignment with each of the Global Goals.







## Learning and Teaching

Our top five sustainability teaching programs that are closely aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and also give our graduates successful employment and significant influence are:

- Bachelor of Business/Bachelor of Government and International Relations
- Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Criminology and Criminal Justice
- Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics
- Bachelor of Environmental Science/Bachelor of Business
- Bachelor of Engineering (Honours)/Bachelor of Environmental Science

Griffith's new **Bachelor of Social Science** (2018), tailored to the world's current and future needs, offers majors on some of the biggest issues facing the world today: Economics, environmental sustainability, global security threats, media community and social change, politics in Asia and social justice.

Our **Master of Integrated Water Management, Graduate Diploma of Integrated Water Management and Graduate Certificate in Integrated Water Management** (2018), targets water professionals and is skill-based, interdisciplinary, experiential and relevant to contemporary sustainable development challenges.

The **Bachelor of Marine Science (2018)** trains students to address and manage complex issues to ensure that marine industries prosper sustainably in healthy marine ecosystems.

Griffith's **MBA program** is built on core values that are crucial to doing business in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: sustainable business practices, responsible leadership and an Asia-Pacific perspective. Griffith was a finalist in the Green Gowns Australasia Awards, Learning, Teaching and Skills category in 2017 and 2018 for turning its MBA competitive business strategy into a course focused on responsibility and sustainability.

Griffith's **Graduate attributes** include preparing graduates to be 'socially responsible and engaged in their communities', by being ethically aware, applying interdisciplinary knowledge to solve real problems, and understanding social and civic responsibilities, human rights and sustainability.

Through our work with **Indigenous Elders**, we continue to develop strategies and partnerships for community empowerment, and teaching curriculum informed by respect for the knowledge systems of our First People.



## RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AT GRIFFITH

### Research

Griffith is a research-intensive University with a rapidly growing national and international profile for innovative and interdisciplinary research. Our world-class researchers work in collaboration with industry, government and the community to tackle global challenges.

Since 2000 to mid-2018, Griffith has produced at least 813 indexed (Web of Science) outputs including the word 'sustainable' or 'sustainability' in the title or abstract. Research in the topic of sustainability had a marked increase in 2008-2010 and again in 2015, continuing with similar number of outputs published in 2016-2018. Griffith University is in the top 100 universities in number of research outputs related to sustainability.

The 813 indexed publications by Griffith researchers have been cited 13,494 times (16.6 citations per paper), a higher rate than the Griffith average (12.7). Environmental sustainability is easily the most highly cited, reinforcing Griffith's 40-year tradition of excellence in this field.

- The Griffith Climate Change Response Program leads Griffith University's research in climate change adaptation and mitigation. The program promotes a multidisciplinary approach to climate change research inclusive of the environmental social, economic and governance dimensions.
- Environmental Science at Griffith is largely addressed through the activities of the Environmental Futures Research Institute. Exploring new science frontiers, stimulating innovation and influencing public policy, our researchers develop solutions that facilitate clean, resilient and sustainable futures, and continue to improve the health and wellbeing of people. Our four strategic research platforms: Centre for Clean Environment and Energy, Australian Research Centre for Human Evolution, Planetary Health, and Food Futures.
- Griffith's Cities Research Institute research portfolio comprises four core themes: intelligent infrastructure; quality places and changing communities; smart cities; and coastal resilience and urban water.
- Sustainable tourism is one of the University's areas of strategic investment, bringing together two research programs: Tourism and climate change and Tourism and corporate responsibility.

- The Griffith Asia Institute is an internationally recognised research centre that embraces the complexity and diversity of the Asia-Pacific region. The Institute's research focuses on the politics, security, economies and development of the Asia Pacific and their significance for Australia. It's inter-disciplinary advantage lies in Griffith University's commitment to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) across the region.
- Griffith's Australian Rivers Institute is home to more than 120 scientists and research students, making it the largest concentration of university-based water researchers in the country. The Institute plays a leading role in managing water resources with a focus on freshwater, estuarine and urban water.
- Griffith's Institute for Educational Research has one of the largest concentrations of university-based education researchers in the country. The Institute's members applied research with industry partners, education systems, schools, community and not-for-profit organisations is readily translated into practice.
- The Law Futures Centre aims to conduct research that is responsive to domestic and global change. The Centre has an emphasis on human rights and refugee law. Centre programs: Law and Nature, Law, Governance and Global Change, Law, Risk and Innovation, and Lawyering, Legal Education and Law's Future.
- Griffith's Yunus Social Business Centre was formally opened in April 2017, to contribute to alleviating poverty by focusing on education for enhancing business, social entrepreneurship and responsible leadership values.



The Environmental Futures Centre is trans-disciplinary, diverse in research expertise – combining fundamental, applied and social sciences, is solutions oriented, locally active and globally engaged.





## Community Engagement

Griffith University has a deep commitment to engagement and values its partnerships with its local communities, business, industry and government at regional, national and global levels.

**Griffith's EcoCentre** aims to increase interaction with the local community by promoting and delivering collaborative public awareness education programs on sustainable living. Since 2001, over 280 000 visitors have participated in a wide range of activities, of whom over 120 000 attended school-based learning at the Toohey Forest Environmental Education Centre, a partnership between the University and the Queensland Department of Education and Training. The Centre is based in the EcoCentre with a mission to develop and support environmental education through specialist programs for students, teachers and schools.

The **Griffith Centre for Sustainable Enterprise** aims to inform and assist the development of sustainable enterprise through innovative research, teaching and engagement activities. A highly collaborative entity with strong national and international connections to industry, academia, government and non-government organisations, it takes a global perspective while focusing on the Asia Pacific region.

**Griffith's Centre for Coastal Management** partners with the City of Gold Coast and runs award winning BeachCare and CoastEd programs. More than 36,000 primary and secondary students have benefitted from the CoastEd program to date. The programs have been developed to maximise community understanding of natural coastal processes and management strategies.

**Logan Eco Action Festival (LEAF)** is an annual community festival organised by the Logan City Council. It generates awareness about environmental issues and practical ways to address them. The theme for LEAF 2018 was 'Rethink the future'. Griffith has hosted the annual event on our Logan campus since 2011 and this event has attracted approximately 40,000 people to the campus over that time.

As part of Griffith's partnership with the **Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games**, the GC2018 internship offered students a unique opportunity to be part of the biggest sporting event in Australia this decade while gaining meaningful study-related work experience and credit towards their degree. This is only one of many internship opportunities offered to our students that gives them a global outlook and valuable life experience. The Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation promoted their commitment to sustainability by delivering the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™ to international standards and used their learning to inspire best practice both at home and around the world. Griffith was proud to be a member of the 2018 Commonwealth Games Sustainability Advisory panel of experts to assist in meeting this commitment.



## Operational strategies

Griffith fosters a culture that is conducive to sustainability. The University's Strategic Plan embraces our commitment that environmental sustainability be reflected in building design, as well as energy, water and waste management strategies.

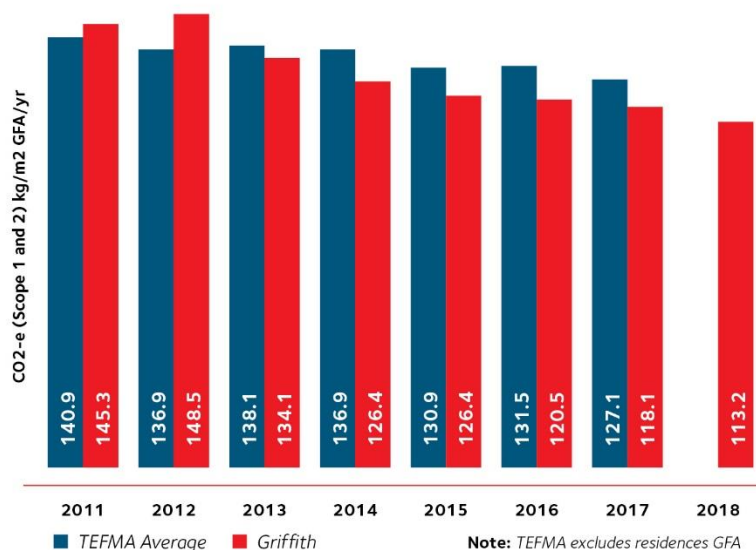
Griffith's campuses at Nathan and Mt Gravatt are situated in Toohey Forest and are home to species of rare flora and fauna. The Gold Coast campus, although not as botanically significant, contains bushland areas with distinctive flora and fauna.

## Carbon Emissions

Griffith University's goal is to reduce our Greenhouse Gas emissions. Our Carbon Management Plan sets the direction and ensures ongoing monitoring and measurement. The University reports its carbon emissions annually to the Australian federal government.

- In 2017/2018, our Scope 1 and 2 emissions have increased by 3.03% on an absolute basis, compared with the 2010/11 baseline.
- On a normalised basis, that is taking into consideration Gross Floor Area (GFA), our Scope 1 and 2 emissions have reduced by 22.09% compared with the 2010/11 baseline.
- Total Greenhouse Gas emissions per square metre went from 177.9kg CO<sub>2</sub>-e/m<sup>2</sup> in 2016/2017 to 162.5kg CO<sub>2</sub>-e/m<sup>2</sup> in 2017/2018, a decrease of 8.7%

CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions per m<sup>2</sup> GFA





## Energy

- In 2017 the University completed rolling out 450 smart meters on every major building across our five campuses. This allows us to more effectively target improvements to lower our energy consumption and thus carbon footprint.
- In October 2016 the University carried out a pilot replacing fluorescent tubes with LED lamps in the Gold Coast and Nathan multi-storey carparks. The data showed approximately 1/3 reduction in energy consumption for the carparks. As a result the University is undertaking a program of retrofitting LED lamps to aid in energy reduction.

## Transport

Our aim is to increase the proportion of travel that is made by sustainable modes of transportation.

Since July 2016, the University has taken delivery of 22 hybrid vehicles as part of a strategy to replace all conventional petrol cars in the fleet with more enviro-friendly alternatives by the end of 2018.

- As a result of purchasing 22 hybrid vehicles for our fleet vehicles in 2016, fuel consumption has reduced by 27%, equating to reduction of 30 tonnes of CO2 emissions per annum.
- As part of Griffith's commitment to sustainable transport, the University installed four electric vehicle (EV) charging stations for electric vehicles and electric bikes at the Nathan and Gold Coast campuses in early 2018.



## Recycling and Waste

Our goal is to reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill. Our recycling options and 'no bin' initiative focus on waste minimisation strategies. We have introduced new strategies to compost food waste for our gardens and to recycle takeaway coffee cups to divert them from going to landfill.

Our 2016/17 Progress: 2,104.4tCO2-e, -55.6% on the 2010/11 baseline.



Our Coffee Cup recycling program is a new initiative implemented in 2018 to increase recycling and divert waste going to landfill. We have partnered with Closed Loop and their Simply Cups initiative – Australia's first dedicated coffee cup recycling program.

We are engaging our university community to help to reduce the millions of takeaway coffee cups being sent to landfill in Australia.

## Sustainable Procurement

Griffith's objective is to encourage procurement that offers reduced environmental impacts over the life cycle of goods or services.

Griffith seeks to support and deal with ethical and socially responsible suppliers that operate in line with sustainable practices. In 2016 Griffith University also became a member of Supply Nation, a direct purchasing link between organisations, government agencies and Indigenous-owned businesses. The University has access to an online database of Supply Nation-certified Indigenous business suppliers.

## Campus development

Griffith University applies environmentally sustainable design to all new buildings and refurbishments.

- The Sir Samuel Griffith Centre, a 6 star green star building on the Nathan campus, represents a capstone project in Griffith's history as a leader in environmental science and design. It provides Griffith with a unique opportunity to integrate business, engineering and environmental science disciplines around a theme of sustainability and provides a building which encourages and promotes active collaboration of key stakeholders. It is powered by solar and hydrogen technologies.
- On the Gold Coast campus:
  - our multistorey carpark features a 100kW solar array and a 10kW wind turbine
  - our new Aquatic Centre features a 90kW solar array and green roof.
- To date, we have installed a total of 758 kW of solar power across our campuses.



Sir Samuel Griffith Building – a six star green star rated building powered by solar and hydrogen technologies  
Nathan campus



Aquatic Centre features 90kW solar array and green roof and Multi-storey carpark features 100kW solar array and 10kW wind turbine  
Gold Coast campus







## SUSTAINABILITY WEEK

### Advancing our sustainability commitment—together

Griffith has had an ongoing commitment to the environment and sustainability. Whether our staff and students pledge to make small changes every day, get involved in the Green Labs Program or participate in activities such as Griffith's Sustainability Week, everyone is encouraged to contribute to advancing our sustainability commitment.

**Sustainability Week** creates opportunities for staff and students and community members to be involved with Griffith's Sustainability agenda. The week features an exciting array of workshops, activities and stalls at the Sustainability Fair on the Gold Coast campus and Enviro events on Nathan, Logan, Mt Gravatt and South Bank campuses.

**Green Labs Program** - Lab work has a significant impact on the environment, ranging from energy and resource consumption to chemical and equipment use and disposal. The Green Labs Programs aims to encourage best practice related to procurement, energy, water and waste in laboratories.

**Battle of the Buildings education campaign** runs annually and aims to raise awareness and provide energy saving tips to reduce energy usage across our five campuses.

**Griffith Mug Club** celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017 – this initiative encourages staff and students to use reusable cups – in 2017, 23631 disposable cups were diverted from landfill as a result of this initiative.

The **Griffith University Residential Colleges**, located in bushland settings at the Mt Gravatt and Nathan campuses, provide on-campus accommodation for 750 students. The colleges provide practical ways for college members to reduce their environmental footprint while living on campus through initiatives such as Earth Hour, Water bottle campaigns and workshops on environmentally sound practices. The **Griffith University Village** at our Gold Coast campus is also dedicated to minimising our environmental footprint. Recycling programs and workshops are run throughout the year.

**Sustainability Awards for Staff** recognises and rewards innovative and effective sustainable practice at Griffith University. The awards, launched in 2014, are made once every two years.

**External recognition for our ongoing commitment** - Griffith University was a finalist in the Green Gown Awards Australasia 2017 in the Continuous Improvement – Institutional Change category. View: [2017 Green Gown Australasia Finalist – Griffith University](#).





<https://www.griffith.edu.au/sustainability>

