

The University of Oxford

UN Global Compact

Communication on Engagement

January 2022



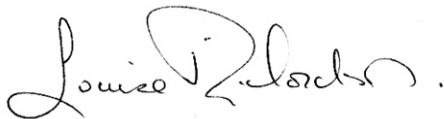
Statement of continued support

I am delighted to confirm that the University of Oxford supports the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact.

I am also happy to commit that Oxford will continue to engage with the Compact by carrying out research and disseminating knowledge to support the advancement of best practices for the preservation of human rights, protection of the environment and elimination of corruption. As required by the Global Compact, we will regularly report on our activities in these areas.

We at the University of Oxford have been at the forefront of research and teaching about human rights, the environment and healthcare for a great many years and during my tenure we have taken further steps to reflect our commitment to these areas in our internal policies and practices.

We remain determined to ensure the success of this important initiative



Professor Louise Richardson
Vice-Chancellor

Period of coverage

This communication covers the academic years 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Description of actions

Research and thought leadership to advance best practices

International rankings and national assessment exercises have consistently rated the University of Oxford as one of the world's leading providers of higher education and producers of research.

Oxford's mission, as stated in its current [Strategic Plan](#), is the advancement of learning by teaching and research and its dissemination by every means.

The University seeks to provide world-class research and education in ways that benefit society on a local, regional, national and global scale. Oxford is committed to equality of opportunity, to engendering inclusivity, and to supporting staff and student wellbeing. The University believes that a diverse staff and student body strengthens its research and enhances its students' learning.

Research and advocacy

Specific aspects of Oxford's research that support the Global Compact principles include, but are not limited to:

Environment

Environmental research at Oxford is spread throughout the University's research and teaching departments, but is coordinated by seven transdisciplinary networks, institutes and schools.

Five of Oxford's environmental networks are connected within the [Oxford Networks for the Environment](#) (ONE), which mobilise the University's expertise in science, technology, business and society to address the complex, converging challenges of preserving biodiversity, protecting the Earth's climate, providing secure and sustainable energy and ensuring future food and water security.

The [Environmental Change Institute](#) promotes interdisciplinary research on the nature, causes and impact of environmental change and contributes to the development of management strategies for coping with future environmental change. The Institute is currently engaged in more than 50 research programmes clustered around five themes: climate, ecosystems, energy, food and water. The Institute also delivers an MSc/MPhil degree in Environmental Change and Management, and hosts doctoral students studying a variety of environmental issues.

The [Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment](#) equips enterprise to achieve net zero emissions and the sustainable development goals, through its research, teaching and partnerships. The School delivers an MSc in Sustainability, Enterprise and the Environment and hosts doctoral students studying these topics. It also hosts an annual Enterprise and the Environment Summer School and provides executive education for businesses hoping to improve their long-term environmental sustainability.

Oxford has worked to engage society with its environmental activities, both in the UK and internationally. The [True Planet](#) communications campaign provided an opportunity for people to learn about Oxford's research, join discussions and make informed, environmentally sound decisions.

Health: Addressing the COVID-19 pandemic

The University of Oxford has played a leading role in addressing the global COVID-19 pandemic. Oxford's most important contributions to addressing the pandemic include:

The development of the [Oxford-AstraZeneca Vaccine](#). As of November 2021, more than two billion doses of the vaccine, developed in Oxford, have been released for supply, with the majority of the vaccine being used in lower income countries. The vaccine is being made in 15 countries and is in use in more than 170 countries.

The [RECOVERY trial](#), the world's largest clinical trial into treatments for COVID-19, with more than 40,000 participants across 185 trial sites in the UK. The trial commenced within six weeks of funding and found one of the world's first COVID-19 treatments, dexamethasone. This cheap, readily available steroid is now estimated to have saved the lives of more than a million people globally.

Oxford's [Medical Sciences Division](#) provides five undergraduate degrees and a number of taught and research graduate degrees. The University has long been recognised as one of the world's leading providers of medical education.

Human rights

Research into the promotion and preservation of human rights takes place at Oxford at the [Bonavero Institute of Human Rights](#), which draws together legal scholars and fosters collaboration between academics and practitioners, notably human rights lawyers and judges.

Oxford's Faculty of Law also provides a dedicated [MSt in International Human Rights Law](#). This part-time degree is designed in particular for lawyers and other human rights advocates who wish to pursue advanced studies in international human rights law, but may need to do so alongside work responsibilities.

The [Blavatnik School of Government's](#) mission is to inspire and support better government and public policy around the world. The School's initiatives include the [Alfred Landecker Programme](#), which draws lessons from the Holocaust and applies them to contemporary leadership; the [Centre for the Study of African Economies](#), which aims to improve economic and social conditions in the poorest countries; and the [Oxford Institute for Ethics, Law and Armed Conflict](#), an interdisciplinary research programme that aims to strengthen law, norms and institutions to restrain, regulate and prevent armed conflict.

The Blavatnik School of Government provides a Masters in Public Policy degree, as well as hosting doctoral students researching a variety of topics related to governance. Blavatnik School alumni have been elected to several national parliaments and hold senior civil service positions around the world.

Promotion of the Global Compact Principles

As well as contributing world-leading research and thought leadership on a local, regional, national and global scale, Oxford strives to promote and apply the 10 principles of the UN Global Compact within the institution.

Human rights and discrimination (Principles one to six)

The University supports and respects human rights; is not complicit in human rights abuses; upholds freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; does not benefit from any form of forced or compulsory labour or child labour; and has worked to eliminate discrimination.

Specific policies and statements that meet the requirements of the 10 principles include the [Statement on Freedom of Speech](#) and the annual [statement on modern slavery](#).

The University's [Equality and Diversity Unit](#) offers support to all staff and students, ensuring no members of our community face discrimination on the basis of their disability, gender, race, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

Oxford was a founder of the UK's [Athena Swan Charter](#), which recognises good practice in promoting gender equality, and currently holds the Charter's institutional Bronze award. The University also holds the Bronze award of the [Race Equality Charter](#).

The University is proud to be part of the Diversity Champion Programme of [Stonewall](#), Europe's largest lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) charity. Oxford makes annual submissions to the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index and is currently ranked as one of Stonewall's Top 100 Employers.

The University is listed as a [Mindful Employer](#) for its awareness of mental health in the workplace.

Oxford has taken extensive steps to improve access to the University for students from under-represented communities; details of these can be found on the [Oxford Access webpage](#).

Environmental sustainability (Principles seven to nine)

The University supports a precautionary approach to environmental challenges, promotes greater environmental responsibility, and encourages the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

Oxford's institutional [Environmental Sustainability Strategy](#) commits the University to achieving net zero carbon emissions and biodiversity net gain by 2035. The University's Environmental Sustainability Team publishes an [annual review](#) summarising Oxford's progress towards its sustainability goals.

Anti-corruption (Principle 10)

The University works against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

Oxford maintains policies for the [receipt of gifts and hospitality](#), [conflicts of interest](#) and [bribery and fraud](#). Oxford is also registered on the European Union's [Transparency Register](#) and follows its associated code of conduct.

Appendix 1: sources of further data

Further data about the University that illustrates Oxford's commitment to engagement with the Global Compact can be found within:

The University's [Policies and Statements](#).

The University and Colleges [Financial statements](#).

The [Annual Equality Report](#).

The annual [Admissions Statistical Report](#).

Appendix 2: Publications related to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Between 2019 and 2021, University of Oxford researchers published close to 20,000 research papers on the 17 SDGs.* Papers were published on the following topics:

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)	Number of papers published
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	80
SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	258
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	14,990
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	91
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	207
SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	112
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	611
SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	303
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	75
SDG10: Reduce inequality within and among countries	331
SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	284
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	150
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	1,067
SDG14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	264
SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	427
SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	757
SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	<i>statistics not available</i>
Total	20,007

Source: Scopus database.

*Please note that individual papers may be counted more than once if they meet more than one of the SDGs.