

ANNUAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS REPORT



US

UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX

INTRODUCTION

VICE-CHANCELLOR HIGHLIGHTS

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this annual overview of the University of Sussex's most distinctive contributions to the global project of addressing the challenges identified by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The University of Sussex was established in 1961 with a focus on mobilising the most forward-thinking and innovative researchers and educators to tackle the problems facing the whole world. Pioneering interdisciplinarity from the outset, for over more than six decades Sussex has developed a unique reputation for our capacity to think differently and to advance understanding and practice through disruptive interventions in established bodies of knowledge. With a radically global orientation from the beginning, Sussex has built a global community of over 200,000 staff, students and alumni from over 170 countries who share a profound commitment to mobilising scientific and cultural understanding to make the world a better place for all.

From partnering with the Kelp Recovery Project in Sussex Bay, to providing affordable housing for low-income students, the past year has seen Sussex demonstrating our determination to support the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals in a multitude of ways across every area of our academic endeavour and institutional life. Through a significant programme of transformation on our campus, we are starting to reverse our contribution to climate change and ecological breakdown, and helping with the recovery of local ecosystems and economies. We are also developing innovative open access resources for sustainability education to ensure that our students – and students around the world – are supported to develop the skills, knowledge, and capabilities needed to thrive in an uncertain

future. And through our wide-ranging research and innovation activities, and in partnership with governments, third sector organisations, businesses, and universities locally and globally, we are contributing to the pursuit of a more just and equitable world.

As I write this foreword, war, conflict, and global warming are wreaking havoc in the lives and habitats of people around the world. It is clear that the coming decade will be critical for the fate of humanity and our planet, and it is in this context that we will be launching our new strategy early in 2025. Setting out our ambitions for the next ten years, Sussex 2035 has the title *Creating Progressive Futures – Flourishing, Sustainability and Progress for the Whole World*, and commits the University to a focus on three strategic themes – environmental sustainability, human flourishing, and digital and data futures.

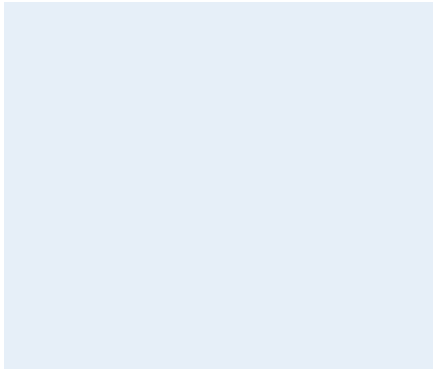
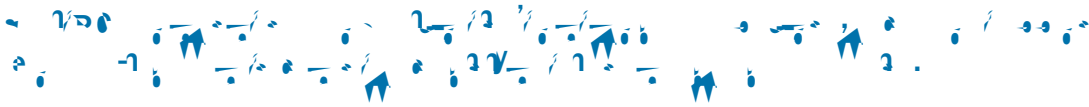
REPORT CONTEXT

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SDG1 NO POVERTY

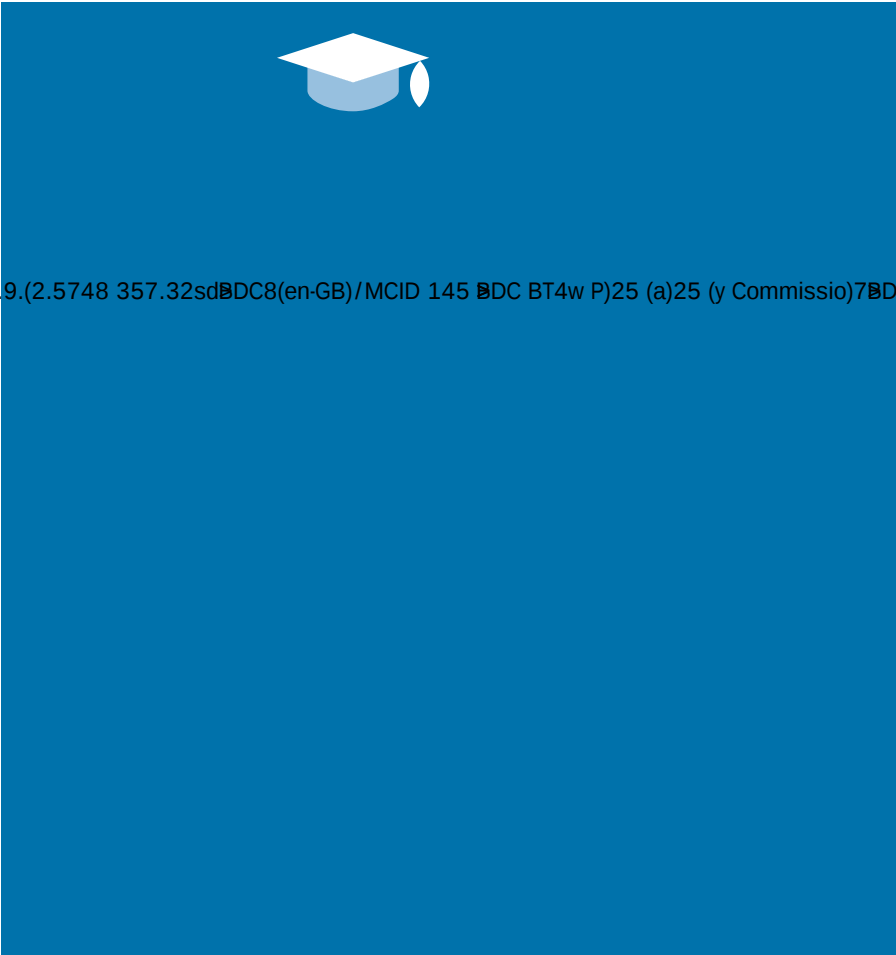


RESEARCH AND IMPACT

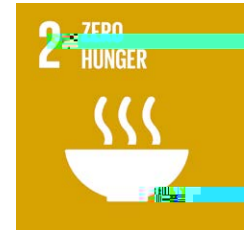
The University of Sussex participates in research and policymaking at national and international levels to implement programmes and policies aimed at ending poverty in all its dimensions.

For example, at a local level, we held an online discussion as part of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) [Digital Divide](#), focusing on the digital divide's impact, especially in low-income households, and highlighting the need for digital inclusion policies in Brighton & Hove.

Our Professor of Economics and former Low Pay Commissioner (LP.tCID 160 973 -11.9.(2.5748 357.32sdBDC8(en-GB)/MCID 145 BDC BT4w P)25 (a)25 (y Commissio)7BDC(Richard1



SDG2 ZERO HUNGER



17.08



RESEARCH AND IMPACT

We are creating a positive, sustainable impact in food and agriculture locally, nationally and globally.

Our [Food & Agriculture Research Project](#) is being refreshed, and an expert panel invited our academic, Adrian Ely, to bring relevant research taking place across the University of Sussex and the Institute of Development Studies to inform discussions on improving urban food production and reducing food poverty in our local community.

Our [Food & Agriculture Research Project](#) (FARP) project is seeking to address inequitable distribution of economic, social and cultural resources currently pushing people into food poverty. Our researchers are embedded in the heart of four UK communities, bringing local residents together with food manufacturers, retailers and policymakers to co-develop local and national policies and systems that can provide healthy, affordable, sustainable and culturally appropriate food for all.

We are promoting sustainable landscape use, focusing on food systems and land use transitions, across Southern England through transdisciplinary collaboration. Our [Sustainable Landscapes Project](#) engages local stakeholders, including NGOs, farmers and policymakers, to address challenges such as rigid national policies and economic uncertainties, highlighting the need for democratic, place-based solutions to sustainability and food system transformation.

The [Agricultural Value Systems \(AVS\)](#) project created a series of podcasts and videos to connect Syrian farmers with agricultural experts to sustain agricultural production in Northern Syria. The project aims to improve food system resilience after the crisis, which began in 2011, devastated the country's agricultural sector, leading to damaged crops, loss of expertise, and the collapse of government support services.

EDUCATION

Examples of courses we offer:

- [Food & Agriculture Research Project](#)
- [Sustainable Landscapes Project](#)
- [Agricultural Value Systems \(AVS\)](#)
- [Food & Agriculture Research Project](#)
- [Sustainable Landscapes Project](#)

We also offer opportunities for further study through our [Food & Agriculture Research Project](#)

- [Food & Agriculture Research Project](#)
- [Sustainable Landscapes Project](#)



We teach a very popular and groundbreaking undergraduate module called the [Food & Agriculture Research Project](#), in which students grow and harvest forest food on our campus whilst learning about sustainable food production. This is in addition to the provision of our student garden, where students are supported to produce fruit and vegetables.





ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Earlier this year, the Sussex Sustainability Research Programme (SSRP) Centre of Excellence held a number of workshops looking into [community gardens](#) in the context of education and research. The first workshop focused on sustainability issues around and inherent in food systems and the complex interactions between health, environment and socio-economic factors. The workshop invited our students, staff and local stakeholders to shape discussions on how to improve our food systems.

As part of a joint effort between Estates team and the Sustainability team, the [Sussex Sustainability Research Programme](#) 22 crates of food, a huge collection of clothes and other items to our local charity partners after the annual student 'move-out', avoiding tonnes of waste and supporting our local community.

We also offer a range of student-led initiatives, such as:

[Sussex Sustainability Research Programme](#)

SDG3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING



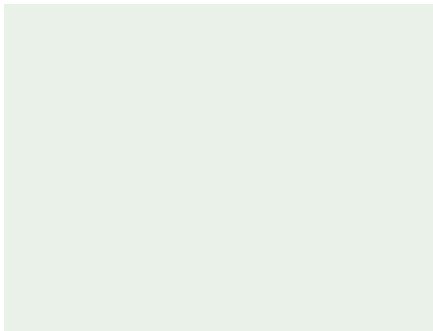
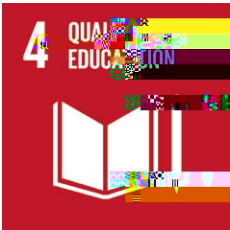
RESEARCH AND IMPACT

We host a range of health and wellbeing research centres, including the




We have a widening participation
scheme called _____

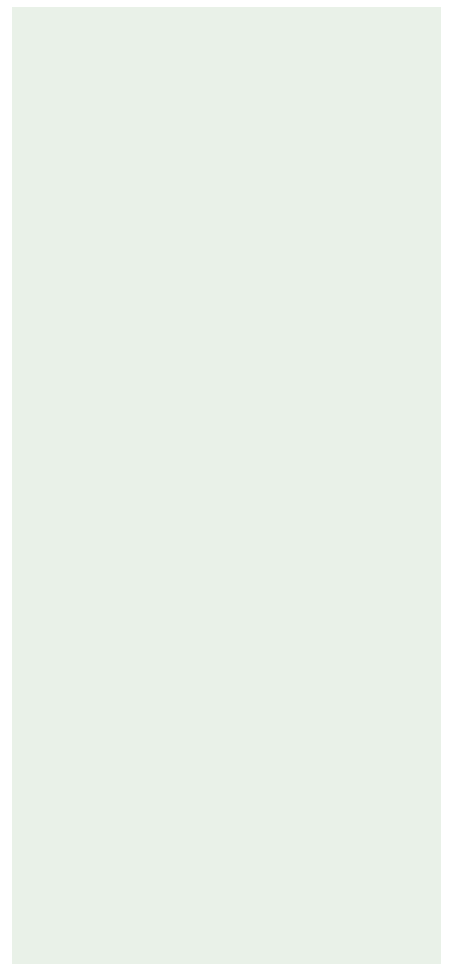
SDG4 QUALITY EDUCATION



RESEARCH AND IMPACT

We are home to four education research centres focused on improving education through research and innovation: the Centre for International Education, Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth, Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research, and Centre for Teaching and Learning Research.

Our researchers evaluated the Quality Standard for Schools (SofS) across schools in Birmingham, Brighton & Hove and

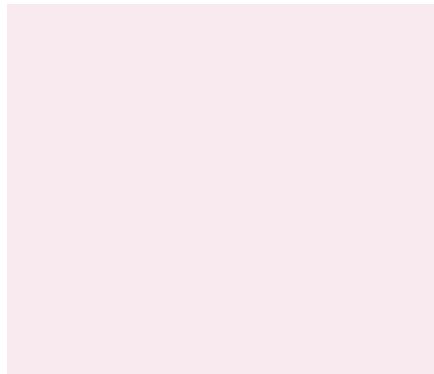




SDG6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



SDG7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



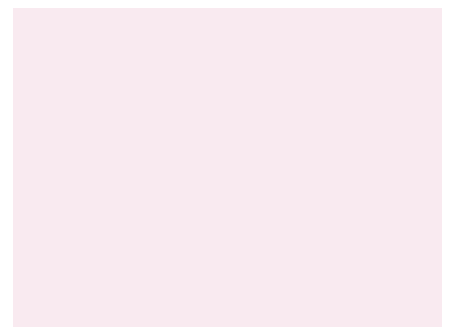
RESEARCH AND IMPACT

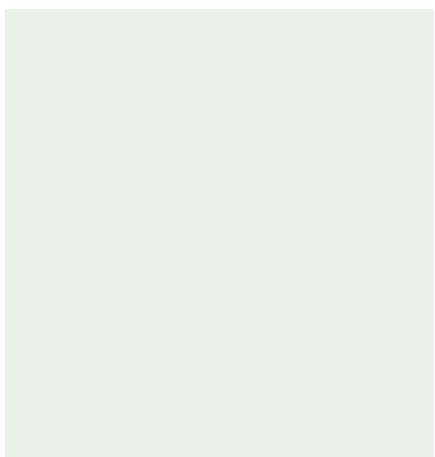
We inform and support government in clean energy and energy-efficient technology policy development. For example, on a local level, the [Brighton & Hove Energy Efficiency Group](#) has established ongoing meetings with members of the Brighton & Hove Council about how our research can inform their policy development and decision making around energy efficiency and clean energy.

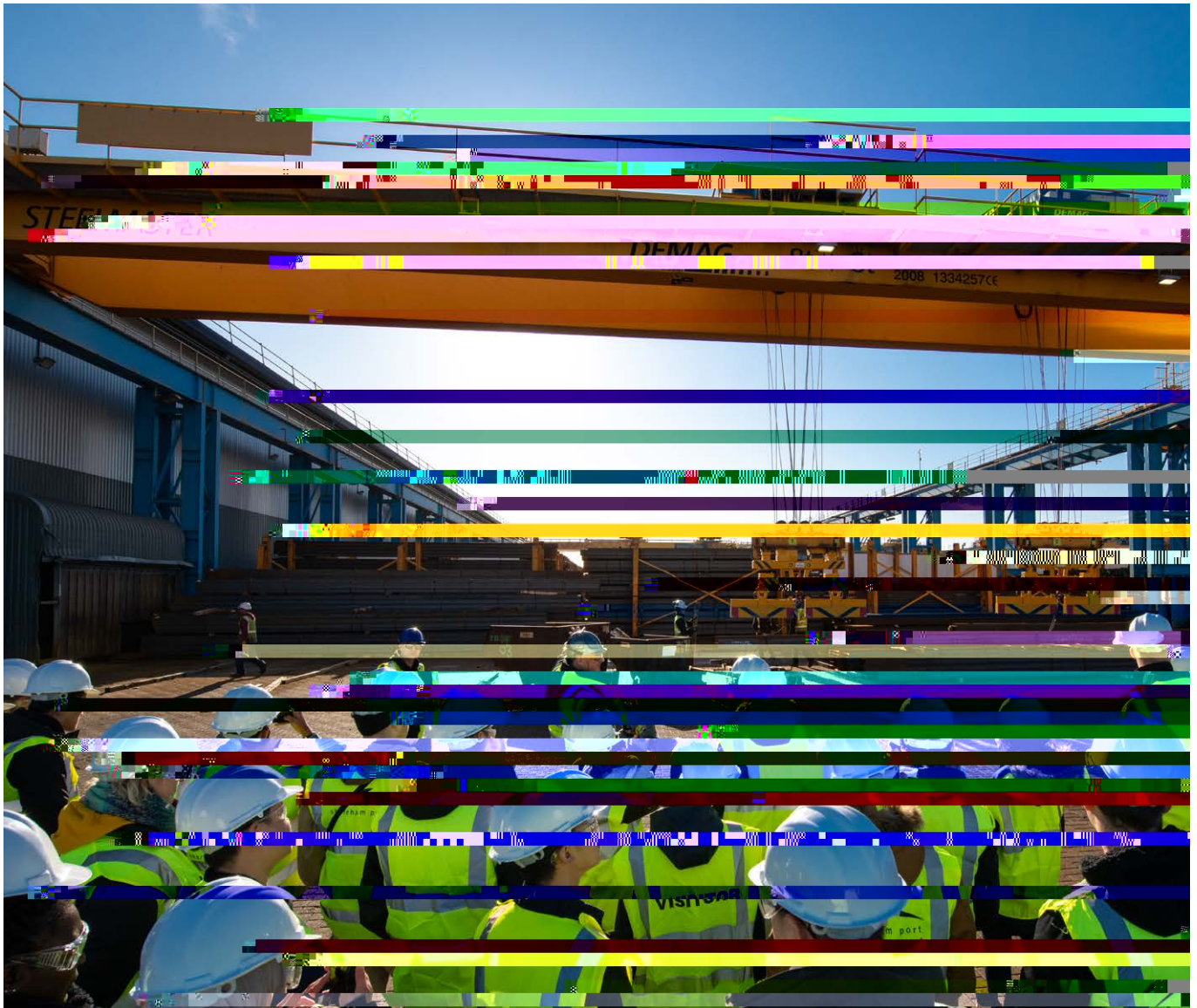
Regionally, the SEG participated in a policy roundtable with then-MP, Chris Skidmore, about the Net Zero Review. Nationally, the SEG has had extensive engagement with the UK's new [Energy Secretary](#), Ed Miliband, about policies that could help to make the UK's houses more energy efficient.

Sussex Professor, Mari Martiskainen, is a Principal Investigator in the [Energy Efficient Buildings](#) project.

This project is working to reduce the primary energy consumption of the building sector across the EU, aiming to develop a configuration that uses a







ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Earlier this year, we held the second [Green Jobs Day](#) event which provided an opportunity for students to find out about green jobs, hear from employers from a range of industries, and engage with Sussex graduates who are now working in green jobs themselves.

We also provide [work experience](#) through various programmes and schemes such as the [Green Jobs Scheme](#), which aims to improve student experience, the [Green Jobs Scheme](#) and Student Mentors. Beyond campus, students can gain valuable work experience through our [Green Jobs Scheme](#), and our [Green Jobs Scheme](#) and [Green Jobs Scheme](#) schemes.

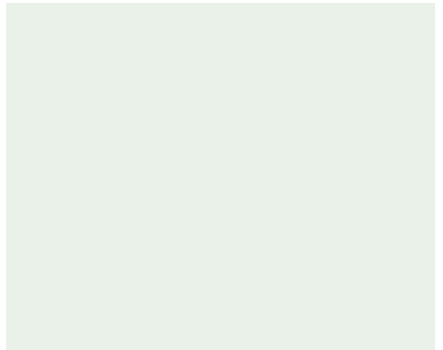
UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND OPERATIONS

We are an important local employer; in 2022/23 we employed 2,710 FTE staff. We are proud to have been accredited as a [Green Employer](#) in September 2022, which guarantees the same minimum wage above the statutory government minimum to outsourced workers working on campus as those directly employed by the University.

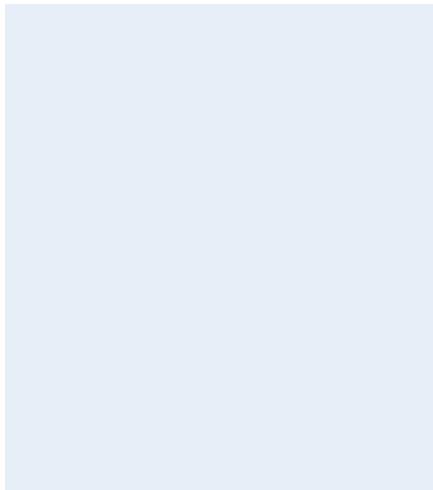
We recognise labour rights and have three specific [unions](#) on campus who we meet with regularly. Between the three unions, all staff groups in Grades 1-9 are catered for under collective bargaining arrangements.

We published a [Modern Slavery Statement](#) that sets out the steps taken by the University to prevent forced labour and slavery in our supply chain.

Our [Gender Pay Gap Report](#) contains a target to halve the [gender pay gap](#) by 2024, from a March baseline of 20.8%. In 2023, our median gender pay gap was 12.4%. We also have clear policies in relation to pay wC BT9 0 gender pay gap was 12.4%. We also



SDG9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

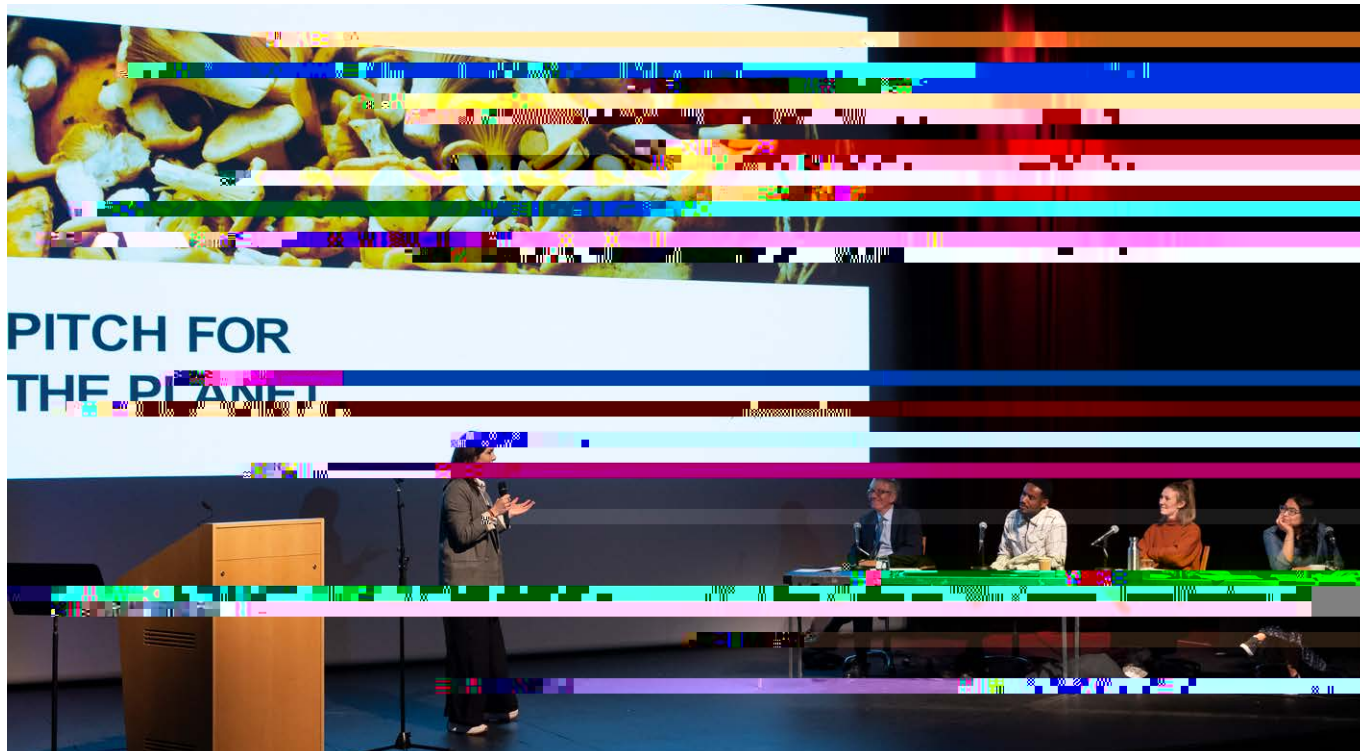


RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Our [Innovation Policy Centre](#) (SPRU) coordinates the [Technology Innovation Policy Centre](#) (TIPC), which provides a global platform for experimentation, research, training and communications on innovation policy, driven by systems thinking.

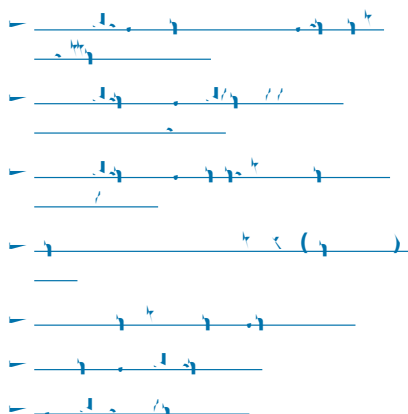
SPRU is also leading the [Science, Technology and Innovation](#) project, working in partnership with several universities and organisations to study and map out the alignment between science, technology and

[Innovation Policy Centre](#)



EDUCATION

Examples of courses we offer:



ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Our flagship initiative, [Sussex Student Innovation Competition](#), awarded a share of £30,000 to three innovative startups led by University of Sussex students. This student innovation competition offers funding and a coveted spot in our Summer Accelerator programme, which is designed to help participants develop and implement their initiatives.

In addition to Pitch for the Planet, the University of Sussex invests in community projects and provides access to resources, including funding and financial support, through [Sussex Community Fund](#).

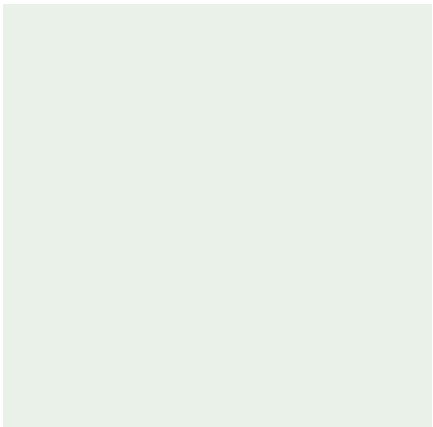
UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND OPERATIONS

We are investing in making our 60-year-old [University of Sussex](#), with significant transformational changes to our spaces, from big builds to small refurbishments. We aim not only to provide modern spaces while protecting our historic buildings, but also to make our infrastructure accessible and resilient.

Our commitment to integrate advanced digital infrastructure to improve accessibility and convenience on campus is demonstrated through the new [Sussex Student Centre](#), the first contactless shop at a UK university. Located in the Student Centre and delivered by our catering partner, this innovative solution addresses students' needs by offering a flexible, technology-driven outlet with extended opening hours to match their busy academic and social schedules.



SDG10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



ENGAGEMENT AND
OUTREACH

We deliver programmes in schools and



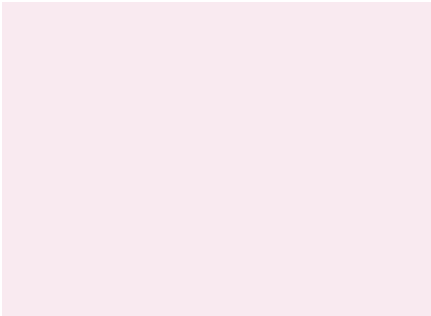
SDG11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



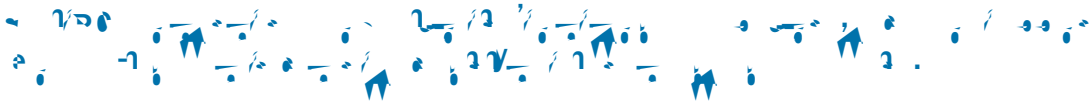
RESEARCH AND IMPACT

The University has multiple globally leading research centres in areas critically linked to the development, delivery and operation of sustainable cities and communities. We have been ranked first globally for the last nine years for Development Studies, whilst our [Urban Studies Centre](#) and Sustainable Policy Research Unit (SPRU) are renowned for delivering impactful research at a local, national and international levels.

Research such as the [Urban Futures](#) run by the Business School explore the role of private and public finance in enabling the fundamental changes needed to fight climate change, species depletion, unsustainable waste production, and rising inequalities. SSRP examines the role of [social science](#) on the boundaries for sustainable transitions, showing the systemic impact of our work on many interconnected issues associated with transforming places to become sustainable.



SDG12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



RESEARCH AND IMPACT

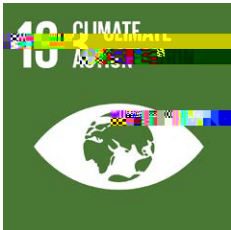
Earlier this year, Dr Andre Maia Chagas and Dr Zahid Pranjol launched a pilot project [to recycle plastic bottles into 3D printing filament](#). The initiative aims to reduce plastic waste and its associated carbon footprint. Students will leverage open-source resources, as Precious Plastics, to create more sustainable products, and in the future, they aim to target other plastics which may be more difficult to recycle through mainstream channels.

The [Circular School Programme Partnership](#) supports policymakers and practitioners in advancing circular economy principles globally. An example of this is in the Circular School Programme Partnership, an initiative that promotes the principles of circularity in schools while addressing pressing environmental challenges and economic development needs in Indonesia.

Our [Design Council Expert](#), has been appointed as a Design Council Expert, and is part of a community of pioneering designers dedicated to advancing a planet-positive and regenerative future through sustainable design practices. Potter has been teaching the module, [Design for the Future](#), for the past 11 years, inspiring our students to seek innovative solutions to responsible production challenges.

Building on the [Data-driven Quality Grading](#) project, Professor Nachiappan Subramanian's research on data-driven quality grading, smart costing for end-of-life (EOL) products, and the integration of distributed ledger technology has significantly contributed to the development of [a new framework for sustainable production](#).

SDG13 CLIMATE ACTION



RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Our [research](#) combines insights from political economy, international relations, sociology and more to understand the factors that encourage policies limiting fossil fuel production. By investigating the barriers and drivers behind supply-side climate actions, the project aims to offer practical guidance for adopting such policies and identifying supportive conditions across different contexts and levels of governance. A key aim of this project was to develop an [online platform](#) that tracks existing supply-side policies around the world in partnership with the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In September 2023, Sussex academics secured a large external grant to ramp up their climate adaptation and resilience research in the Greater Horn of Africa. The [CLARE project](#), led by Dr Pedram Rowhani, is funded by the Climate Adaptation and Resilience (CLARE) programme, run jointly through the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC). It builds on previous research funded by the [UK Research and Innovation](#) (SSRP).

The grant allows the project team to develop early warning systems to protect the livelihoods of pastoral communities and local institutions from climate hazards, and particularly drought, in Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya. The Sussex team is collaborating with national and regional governmental agencies including:

- the National Drought Management Agency
- the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development
- the Climate Prediction and Applications Centre
- the UN agency the World Food Program.

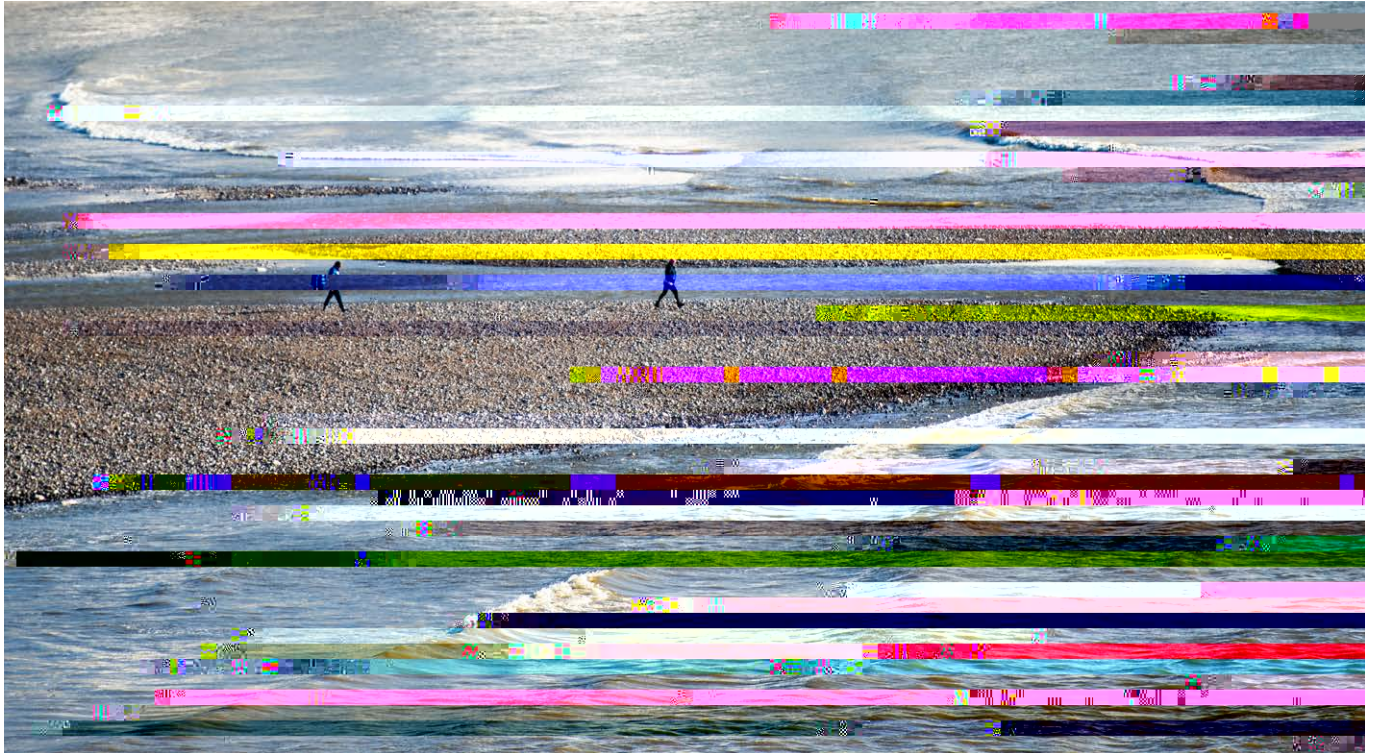
The [CLARE project](#) aimed to deepen our understanding of land-based mitigation technologies by providing better estimates of the realistic potential for agriculture, forestry and other land use sectors to enhance the uptake of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

The [Energy and Climate](#) research focuses on the major challenges facing energy and climate today. For example, the [Energy and Climate](#), led by Professor Karoline Rogge, is investigating how to accelerate the low-carbon transition in energy and mobility systems at regional and national level. The project aims to provide new understandings of the global interplay between multi-level policy mixes and low-carbon innovations in socio-technical transitions, develop new tools and strategies to enable the transition.

EDUCATION

Examples of courses we offer:

- [Climate Change and the Law](#)
- [Climate Change and the Law](#)
- [Climate Change and the Law](#)
- [Climate Change and the Law](#)
- [Climate Change and the Law](#)
- [Climate Change and the Law](#)
- [Climate Change and the Law](#)



We offer **£3,000** and mentoring support for students to develop a high-level project plan that brings real-world change in relation to the

ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

We support local education programmes and campaigns by providing on climate change risks, impacts, mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning. For instance, Dr. Melissa Lazenby and her PhD students created three videos for Time for Geography covering **and** for GCSE and A-level students. She also provided climate education lectures for local schools and for the Brighton Geographical Association.

The **provides** free seminars on climate to the local community through the **with topics** ranging from low carbon transitions, to societal impacts of energy use. These are recorded and available to watch by all.

We also hold workshops for the local community. For example, two of our lecturers collaborated with a local illustrator and cartoonist engaged the public to create a **that** envisions a journey to a sustainable future for the South Coast of England, bringing together artists, authors and game developers over a series of workshops.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND OPERATIONS

We have our own Climate Action Plan (the **section of our Sustainability Strategy**)

that includes providing civic leadership and partnerships. We are members of the Greater Brighton Economic Board (GBEB) and have jointly agreed 10 pledges to lead the way in helping to

SDG14 LIFE BELOW WATER



RESEARCH AND IMPACT

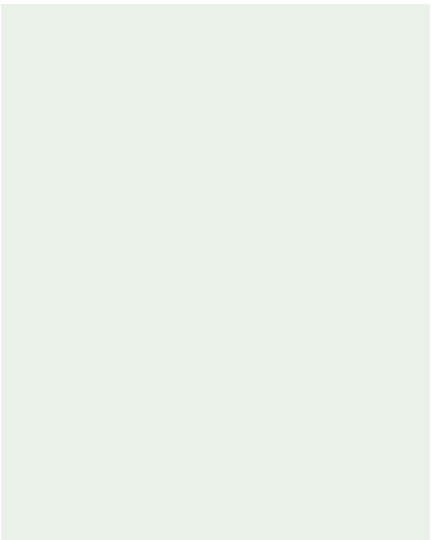
The University of Sussex are established partners of the [Sussex Blue Natural Capital Lab](#). Initiated in 2021, it has now been extended to the [Sussex Blue Natural Capital Lab](#), including NGOs such as Rewilding Britain. Encompassing 100 miles of Sussex waters from Chichester to Camber Sands, [Sussex Blue Natural Capital Lab](#) has designed and implemented the UK's first Blue Natural Capital (BNC) Lab, with the aim of building high-integrity, sustainable investment models to enable seascape restoration at scale, and an aspiration to extend that restoration into coastal communities and intertidal zones of river catchments wetlands and saltmarshes that support nature and people to thrive.



EDUCATION

Examples of courses we offer:

- [Marine Biology](#)
- [Marine Conservation](#)
- [Marine Policy](#)
- [Marine Science](#)
- [Marine Management](#)
- [Marine Law](#)



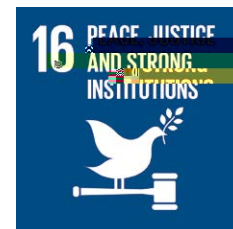


RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Numerous projects led by SSRP researchers have focused on the rights of nature in South America. Professor Mika Peck is developing a knowledge exchange network called [Rights of Nature Network](#), in which ecological data can be used as legal evidence and shared more easily among local stakeholders. Ecuadorian communities can use this data to protect their ecosystems under [Rights of Nature](#) legislation. This builds on a landmark ruling in Ecuador's Constitutional Court in December 2021, which applied 'Rights of Nature' laws



SDG16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



RESEARCH AND IMPACT

We provide expert advice to government and undertake policy-focused research in collaboration with government departments. Our [Land Use and Biodiversity](#) project is part of a broader UK government-funded project headed by Natural England and the Environment Agency among other organisations. The project explores trade-offs between different land use priorities, such as carbon storage, biodiversity, food production and cultural values. The team is developing a landscape mapping and modelling tool, which incorporates socio-economic and ecological data and machine-learning technology. A key aim of the project is to inform policy and enable stakeholders to make informed decisions about sustainable land use.

Our commitment to peace and justice is reflected in the impactful work of our researchers. For instance, Professor Fabio Petito has been working with the Council of Europe on a meeting to relaunch the dimension of [Religion and Public Life](#), focusing on how interreligious engagement can reinvigorate democracies and a democratic culture in Europe. Professor Petito also participated in a Policy Dialogue on Religions and International Relations roundtable entitled [Religion and International Relations](#), providing an opportunity to achieve a more nuanced understanding of what religious actors can bring to the table in peacebuilding.

The University hosted a research forum entitled [AI in Sustainability Research](#) in December 2023, aiming to generate critical conversations and new research collaborations around the positive use of AI in sustainability research. Sussex researchers Dr Adam Barrett, Professor Fiona Marshall and Tessa Lewin presented on various aspects of AI and sustainability. Topics covered in the group discussions included: stemming the exponential growth of data in AI and

the carbon costs of generative AI; AI in international contexts; place-based solutions and social needs; language and how we talk about AI.

We provide expert policy advice to Government based on our research. Professor Benjamin Sovacool and Professor Matthew Lockwood are leading on key research as part of the [Industrial Decarbonisation](#). This research focuses on governance, just transitions and politics of the industrial decarbonisation policy in the UK, aiming to develop effective policy and regulatory frameworks for industrial decarbonisation.

EDUCATION

Examples of courses we offer:

- [AI in Sustainability Research](#)
- [Land Use and Biodiversity](#)
- [Religion and International Relations](#)



We have a dedicated module on [Armed Conflict and International Law](#), which examines the drivers and dynamics of armed conflicts, civil wars and insurgencies and international attempts to address them. We

also provide specific upskilling and capacity building opportunities to policymakers and lawmakers – for example, the Institute of Development Studies offers a six-week specialist short course on [Power and Politics](#), with an explicit focus on the power analysis and politics required to influence practitioners in highly complex environments.

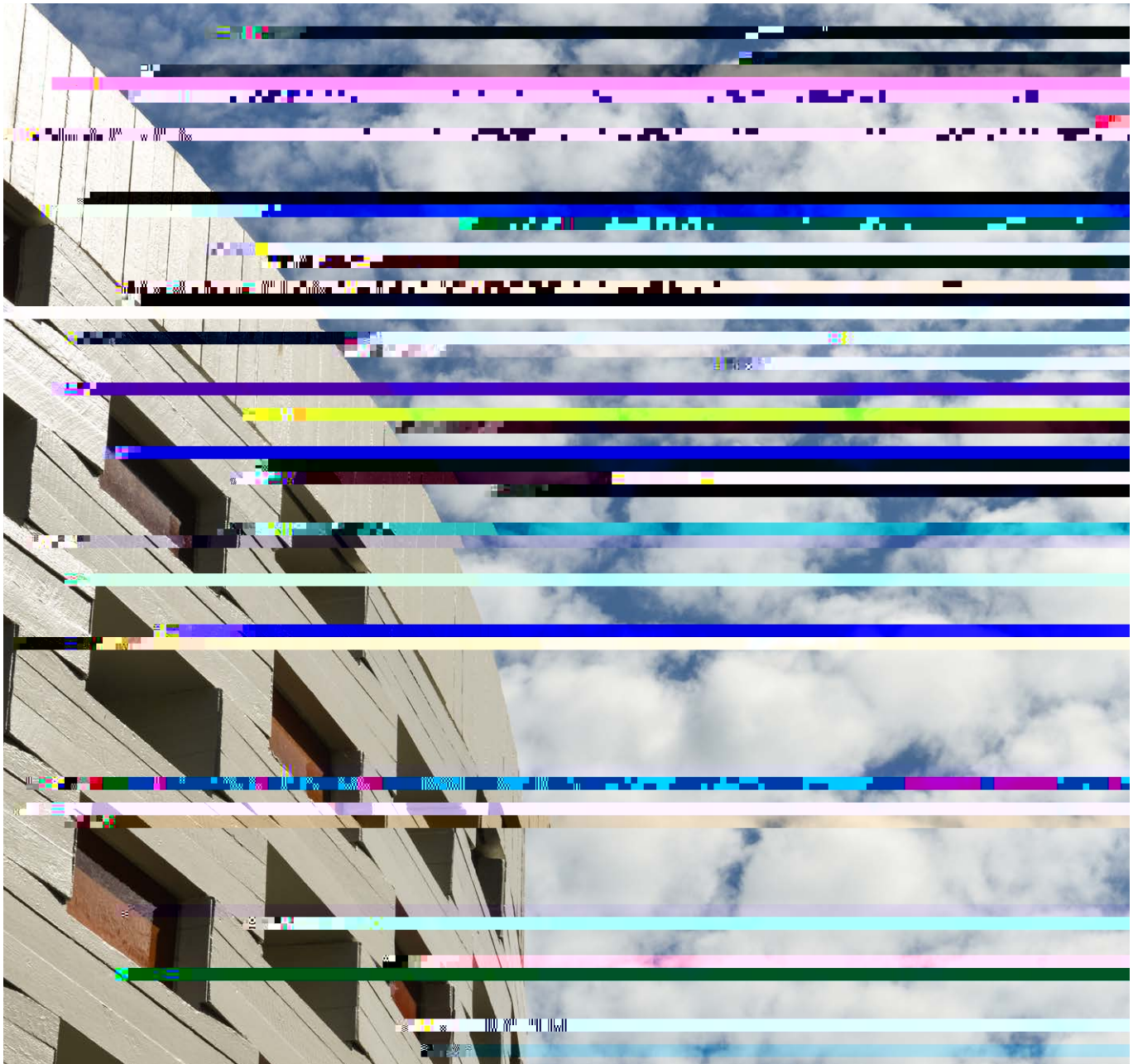
SDG17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



RESEARCH AND IMPACT

Throughout this report, we have shown





ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

SSRP hosted four workshops around the theme of difficult or impossible challenges earlier this year to investigate difficult or impossible challenges where any solution is most likely to resolve in some kind of trade-off. Open to the public, these workshops explored environmental issues directly linked to SDGs.

We have dedicated outreach educational

CONTACT THE SUSTAINABILITY TEAM

To find out more about sustainability at Sussex, visit our [Sustainability page](#) to see the latest news, events and find more information about what we do. You can also stay up-to-date on what the Sustainability Team are doing via our [newsletter](#).

[Sign up to our newsletter](#) to stay updated on our work on the SDGs, and our place in the rankings.

If you have any questions about this report, please contact us at

sustainability@sussex.ac.uk