



Curtin University

Making a Difference

Sustainable
Development Strategy
Towards 2030







Acknowledgment of Country and First Nations Voices

We acknowledge First Nations Australians who looked after this land for more than 60,000 years. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future. We deeply respect their cultural, spiritual and educational practices and aspire to learn from their ways of working. We are honoured and grateful to have the privilege to maintain campuses on Whadjuk and Wungatha Country.

We are committed to amplifying First Nations voices and including traditional custodians in our decision making. This Sustainable Development Strategy outlines a direction which will be achieved through the consultation and involvement of First Nations Australians.

Our future plans, actions and strategies will be developed with the traditional custodians of the lands on which Curtin operates.



Contents

Acknowledgment of Country and First Nations Voices	03
A message from our Vice-Chancellor	05
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals	06
Our journey to embed sustainability and enhance transdisciplinary collaboration	08
Sustainable Development Teaching, Learning and Research looking back	10
What we are doing now: Our Five Areas of Positive Impact	12
Research	13
Teaching and Learning	14
Engagement	15
Governance	16
Operations	17
Consultation with our people to envision our future	18
Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan	20
Making a Difference for People	21
Making a Difference for the Planet	22
Making a Difference Through Partnerships	23
Accountability	24
Innovation that drives positive outcomes is in our DNA	25
Contact us	26



A message from our Vice-Chancellor



Over the past two centuries, the world has made remarkable strides in education and technology. In the early 19th century, for example, only 12% of the people in the world could read and write while today only 14% of the world's population remains illiterate. In the early 19th century.

Despite large improvements in basic education and access to technology, hundreds of millions of people still live in extreme poverty lacking the basic food, sanitation, shelter, health care and education they need to survive and thrive; women and children are disproportionately affected. Our insatiable appetite for technology and other goods currently threatens the sustainability of our planet, through devastating impacts on our land, water, air, and climate.

In light of these existential challenges, in 2015, all United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which provides a shared blueprint for the survival of our people and the planet. At the heart of this agenda are 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) which, if achieved, will lead to greater prosperity for all.

Universities worldwide are in a unique position to support the progress of the SDGs. At their core, universities are committed to the discovery of new knowledge through research, the dissemination of new knowledge through teaching, and the use of new knowledge to solve the big problems facing our communities and our planet. Collectively, we have the time, the talent, and the resources to tackle important issues like poverty, gender equality, climate change, and water quality. At Curtin University, we recognise the power and the responsibility that we have to make a difference to the world.

This Sustainable Development Strategy: Towards 2030 outlines our firm commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Throughout this document we take a critical look at where we are today and present a roadmap for a brighter future.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a vital pillar of Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan.

We envision Curtin University as a place where the betterment of people, planet and prosperity are enshrined in all our actions. The 17 SDGs were supported by all 193 UN member states in 2015, to set global actions to 'end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity'¹

Curtin contributes to the SDGs through our Sustainable Development Strategy: Towards 2030.

Our Sustainable Development Strategy draws on our strengths, focuses our efforts where we can make the greatest difference, and engages the Curtin University community. The Sustainable Development Goals call on all individuals and organisations to use their time, talent, skills and resources to tackle shared issues. Innovation has a direct role in creating and changing industries and technology, designing equitable social systems, and protecting the planet.

¹ UN Development Programme (<https://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals>)





Our journey to embed sustainability and enhance transdisciplinary collaboration

Curtin's Sustainable Development Strategy is framed around growth and maturity, making sustainability more embedded and transdisciplinary.

Like each individual, network, institution and country, Curtin is on a unique journey towards Sustainable Development.

As we pass through the stages Emergent, Evolving and Strategic, and reach for Embedded, we will become more mature and collaborative.

Emergent

Sustainable Development Emerges in individual disciplines

- Sustainable Development arises with limited formal directives and without a strategic approach.
- Engagement is spontaneous and self-directed, and is separate from core operations.
- Awareness and knowledge sharing is low.

OUR
PAST

Evolving

Sustainable Development Evolves across multiple disciplines

- Sustainable Development is supported with strategic direction, formal commitments, and centralised coordination.
- Awareness grows, and Sustainable Development emerges as a core concept in more partnerships.

THE
PRESENT

Strategic

Sustainable Development is Strategic and interdisciplinary

- Sustainable Development is evident across all five areas of Curtin University's impact.
- A unified strategic direction leverages our strengths and challenges our boundaries.
- Transparency and shared resources support connections between academic, research and professional staff.

OUR
FUTURE

Embedded

Sustainable Development is Embedded and transdisciplinary

- Sustainable Development is an embedded ecosystem.
- Staff and students lead sustainable development in their roles, and encourage others.
- People, planet and partners are aligned with shared goals, knowledge and resources.

OUR
ASPIRATION



Our Past

Sustainable Development Teaching, Learning and Research looking back

Many Sustainable Development activities are already underway at Curtin and this formal strategy provides the impetus to scale up. Our maturity journey drives us to increase the number of curricula units and publications addressing the SDGs, develop shared strengths, and improve the accuracy of our measurements.

Curtin assesses teaching, learning and research engagement with the SDGs according to two metrics:

- The number of enrolments in units that explicitly address one or more of the SDGs, and
- The number of publications related to one or more of the SDGs

Without the guidance of a Sustainability Strategy a natural alignment between curricula and research has developed concurrently in SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing), but is less coordinated in other SDGs.

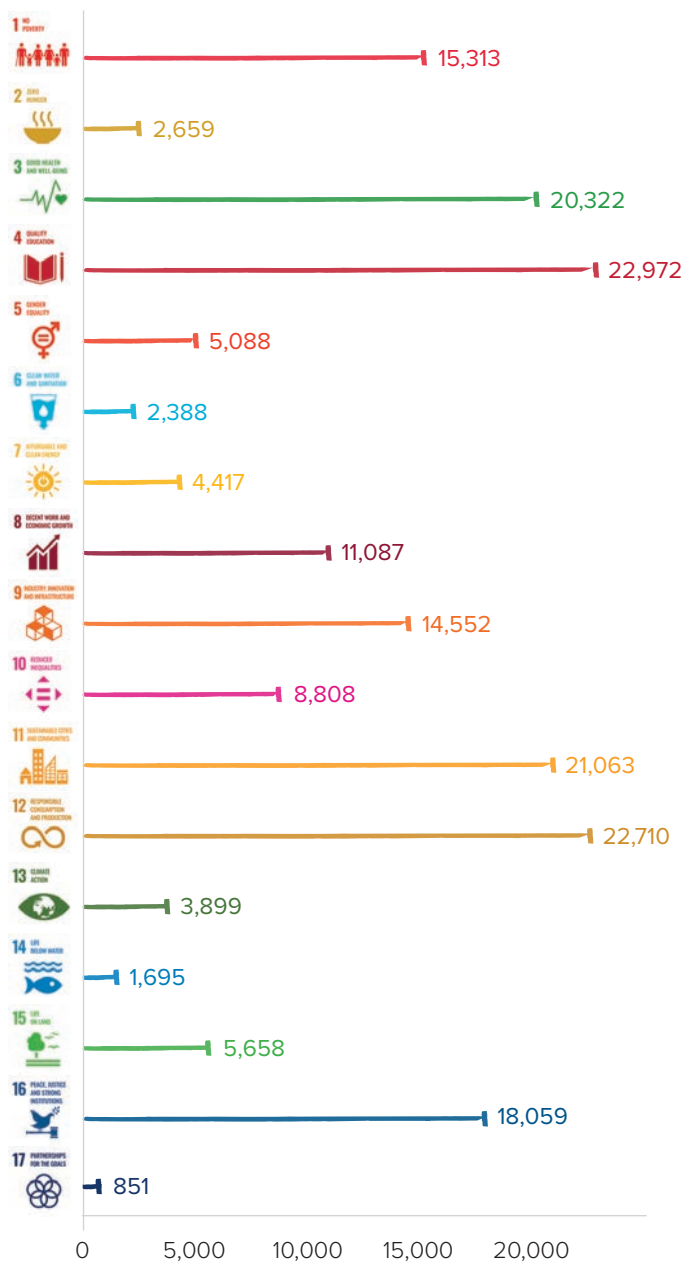
To achieve our aspirations, it is essential for us to increase our understanding of how our curriculum and research contributes to the SDGs. For example, the SDGs are present in 17.8% of publications, however cross checking this data suggests that linking the publication to the SDGs is intentional in only 4.5% of publications. Conversely, closer examination reveals a number of publications related to the SDGs are unintentionally excluded.

As we mature our approach to the SDGs we aim to uncover our strengths and potential and share this with researchers, students, and partners globally.

180,000 enrolments in 2022 in units which address one or more SDGs

This included 1,000+ of our 2767 units. Most enrolments were in units that address:

- SDG 4 (Quality Education)
- SDG 12 (Responsible Production and Consumption)
- SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).



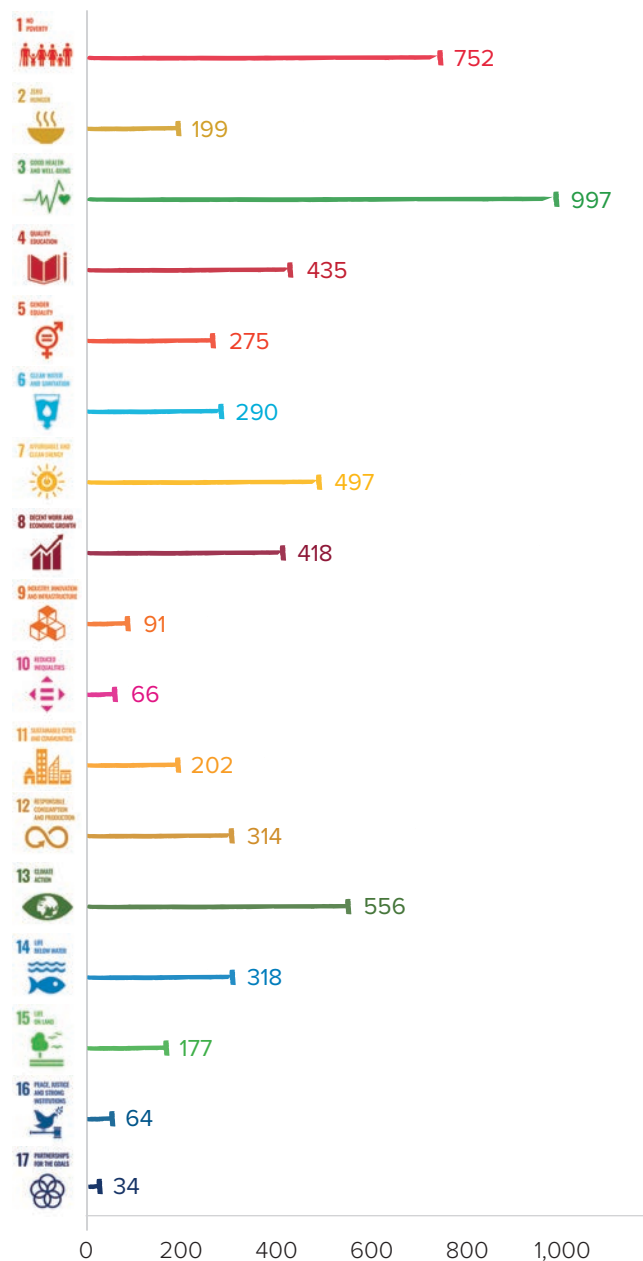
Method: We searched our 2022 curricula for SDG keywords in the syllabus or learning outcomes, using the internationally recognised Sustainable Development Solutions Network compiled list of SDG keywords.

Where a unit addressed more than one SDG it is counted multiple times in the graph, once for each SDG addressed. The over 180,000 enrolments counts each unit containing an SDG only once, regardless of the number of SDGs addressed.

3,500 publications between 2016-2021 (18% of total) related to one or more SDGs

The majority of SDG-related publications focused on:

- SDG 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing)
- SDG 1 (No Poverty)
- SDG 13 (Climate Change)



Method: Using the Curtin Open Knowledge Initiative (COKI) database, ~20,000 Curtin articles published from 2016-2021 were searched for SDG keywords. We used the internationally recognised University of Toronto SDG Research query set.

Where a publication addressed more than one SDG it is counted multiple times in the graph, once for each SDG addressed. The over 3,500 publications counts each research publication containing an SDG only once, regardless of the number of SDGs addressed.

The Present

What we are
doing now

Our Five Areas of Positive Impact

Our five most powerful levers to embed Sustainable Development at Curtin

Research, Teaching and Learning, Engagement, Governance and Operations were identified by assessing Curtin's maturity, mapping the current state and planning for the future. Prioritising these five areas of positive impact draws on Curtin's strengths and focuses our efforts where we can make the greatest difference for people, planet and partnerships, on both the local and global scale.



Research



Teaching
and Learning



Engagement



Governance



Operations





What we are doing now Research



Curtin produces world class research to further Sustainable Development.

This includes creating intellectual property and patents, and conducting on-the-ground research in the Indian Ocean Rim.

We connect both the academic and non-academic community to sustainability research through journal publications, policy submissions, industry reports, content creation, and media.

Our actions today

- Ongoing projects track and report SDG research
- Research clusters which address sustainable development challenges are emerging e.g., Institute of Energy Transitions
- New international research hubs address Sustainable Development, e.g., South China Sea Global Research Hub
- Curtin Accelerate provides start-up support for SDG-related projects
- Guidelines for researchers to ensure publications are recognised as being aligned with the SDGs



What we are doing now

Teaching and Learning

Curtin University acquires knowledge and skills to transform lives and communities for the better.

Capabilities relating to sustainability are embedded in all award courses, and enacted through our curricula and learning outcomes. We also encourage Sustainable Development through specialist qualifications, credentials, and exchange programs.

Our graduates are:

- Responsive and engaged with global perspectives in ethical and sustainable ways
- Adaptable, understanding how to adapt their knowledge and skills in a changing environment

Our actions today

- Refining curricula to highlight the SDGs
- The 'Balance of the Planet' SDG challenge is available to all unit coordinators as an assessment tool
- Online resources are available for Teaching and Learning staff to explore the SDGs
- The WA School of Mines has shifted its focus from hydrocarbon extraction to skilling engineers for a post-fossil fuel world
- New modes of studying sustainability are available, e.g., Curtin University's Undergraduate specialisation in Sustainability
- Based on the foundation of Boodja Neh, "listening to the land," the Listening to Country, First Nations Perspective On Country unit is available in all degrees.



What we are doing now Engagement

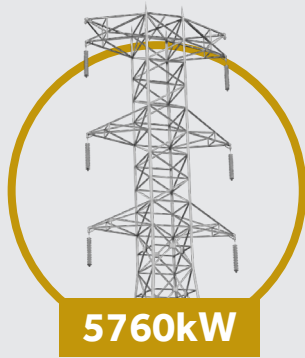
Sharing information and engaging with the wider world expands our sphere of influence.

Curtin's engagement efforts include:

- Partnerships with other universities, industry, and government
- Extra-curricular programs for students and staff
- Building the capacity of staff to embed Sustainable Development in their work
- Spanning the Indian Ocean Rim at our Global Campuses

Our actions today

- Student and staff consultation continues to inform our implementation of Sustainable Development journey
- Academic and research staff across all disciplines are supported to recognise how their existing work relates to Sustainable Development
- We share real time energy consumption and production on the Curtin Living Campus website
- A dedicated sustainability website encompasses Research, Teaching and learning, Engagement, Governance and Operations
- New co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities engage students in Sustainable Development and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reconciliation
- The Aberdeen University, Curtin University and University of Calgary partnership, Global Energy Institute, trials on-the-ground resource industry transformation
- Partnerships address the long-term consequences of legacy hydrocarbon infrastructure, embed Sustainable Development, and align SDG action between organisations
- Carbon Literacy training is available through the Faculty of Business and Law



What we are doing now

Governance

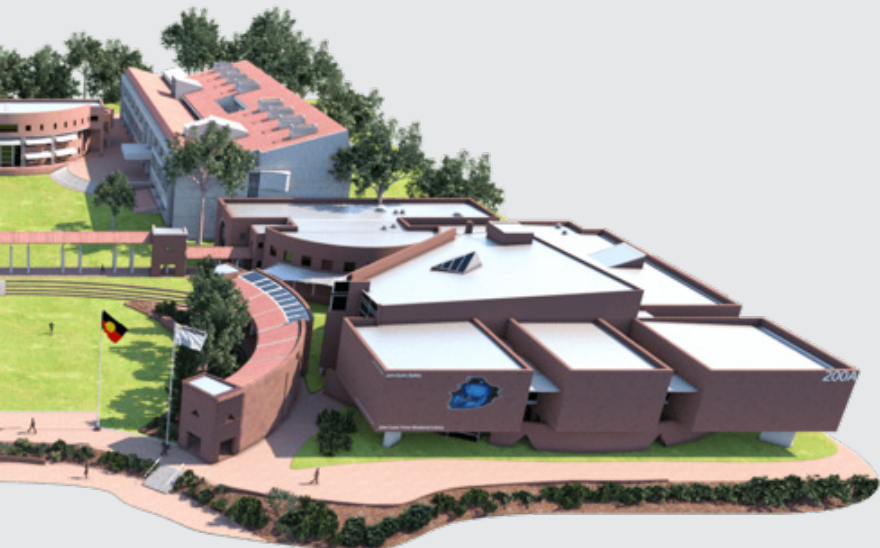
Governing structures create the necessary support framework for Sustainable Development.

Curtin has an impact through our corporate practices including:

- Commitments to reduce carbon emissions, food waste, water usage and sustainable procurement
- Engagement in external sustainable development programs
- Transparent reporting
- Supporting Curtin Global campuses to develop local solutions

Our actions today

- Curtin formally embraces a vision for a sustainable future in Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan, protecting people and the planet
- The Sustainable Development Executive Group champions SDG action at Curtin University
- A sustainability team delivers new programs and policies to support Sustainable Development, reduce environmental impact, and improve social outcomes
- New committees are established in Faculties, using the successful model of the Faculty of Business and Law: Sustainability in Business and Law Board
- Curtin formally engages in programs and targets which create a fair and equitable work and study environment, e.g., Athena SWAN
- Procurement of goods and services minimises carbon emissions, waste, fossil fuel dependency and embodied energy, and considers whole-of-life impacts
- Curtin University's Responsible Investment Policy integrates social, environmental and corporate governance factors into investment management and ownership



What we are doing now Operations



Reducing our footprint, improving our building management and developing sustainably has planetary impact.

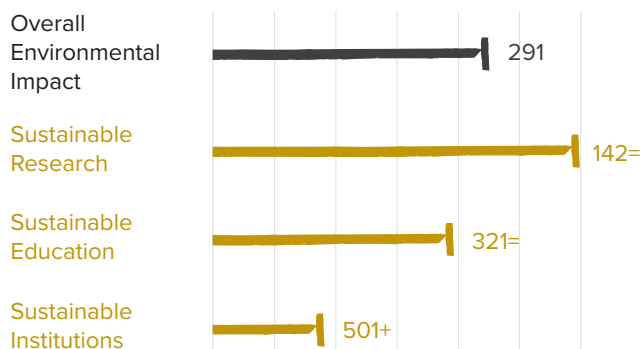
Curtin University owns and leases a portfolio of buildings in Perth and Kalgoorlie. We are increasingly embedding Sustainable Development in our built environment.

Our actions today

- Campuses maintain Green Building Council Australia 6 Star Community rating
- New buildings and major building refurbishments will achieve 6 star Green Star for Buildings certification

Environmental Impact Rank

The ranking aligns with the environmental impact of 700 Higher Education Institutes. The QS Sustainability Ranking aligns with the SDGs and assesses Curtin's curricula in environmental sustainability, institutional environmental impact through operations and governance, and the number of research papers related to the SDGs. An overall Environmental Impact ranking is the combination of these three components.



QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2023 features over 700 institutions

Consultation with our people to envision our future

In 2020-21, several hundred students, staff, and senior executives engaged in workshops and a survey to inform our Sustainable Development Strategy. Extensive consultation emphasised stakeholders' appetite to engage deeply with the SDGs, align strongly, and take more responsibility.

What did we learn?

81% identified sustainability as extremely or very important

83% want to see Curtin take ambitious progress towards sustainable development

89% want Curtin campuses to be change makers and leaders in the built environment



Our people emphasised the importance of several SDGs across three key areas:

1. Corporate Environmental Action



Staff and students identified environmental challenges, including SDG 13 and SDG 12, as challenges Curtin University should focus on.

2. Wellbeing



Stakeholders value Curtin taking action to promote good health and the wellbeing of students and staff, aligned with SDG 3.

3. Excellence in Education



Continuing Curtin's commitment to providing high quality education for students from all countries and backgrounds is a key stakeholder priority and supports SDG 4.



Our Future

Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan

Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan is our whole-of-university approach to make a difference. Adhering to Curtin's five values of Integrity, Respect, Courage, Excellence and Impact, Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan puts Sustainable Development at its core.

CURTIN 2030



The Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan outlines the difference we can make for People, Planet and Partnerships.



People

Our strategic theme People focuses on our students, staff, alumni, and local communities in which we operate. A key element of this theme is the experience people have in their engagement with Curtin, and the positive difference it makes to their lives.



Planet

Our strategic theme Planet focuses on continuing Curtin's journey as a global university, and strengthens our commitment to social good, sustainability, and global impact.



Partnership

Our Partnership theme focuses on working in partnership with students, alumni, communities, industry, and other stakeholders to make a difference. Curtin seeks to extend its ways of engagement to nurture relationships that enable value creation for our partners and the University, and will ensure that we develop solutions which make a real-world difference to solving global challenges.

Curtin 2030 Strategic Plan commits to our sustainable future. Curtin will strengthen our teaching, research, and outreach activities that support the SDGs to develop a sustainable future for all.

Across each of these three areas, Curtin acts locally and globally for maximum impact.

Local Change

How we maximise the local impact of the activities we carry out at all of our campuses.

Global Ripple

How we amplify our local impact through synergies of people, partners, research and international alliances.

Global Role

How we influence global-scale actions through ways of thinking and participating in initiatives.

Making a Difference for **People**



Sustainable Development means leaving no-one behind.

Curtin will be inclusive to students, staff and our community and welcome their opinions, needs and expertise in co-designing a sustainable future, together we're making a difference on a global scale.

Local Change

We make the SDGs an underpinning concept in all our units.

Global Ripple

We build Sustainable Development into industry through our post-graduate qualifications and executive training.

Global Role

Our alumni build careers that accelerate Sustainable Development in the Indian Ocean Rim.

SDGs in focus





Making a Difference for the **Planet**

Urgent and ambitious action is needed to safeguard the future of our planet.

Curtin University's expertise can help the world address its biggest issues, from climate change to sustainable production and consumption, together we're making a difference on a global scale.

Local Change

All our activities are viewed through a lens of future climate readiness, social equity, and reducing environmental impact.

Global Ripple

Our University and industry partners will reduce emissions by harnessing the power of partnerships.

Global Role

Our research will drive forward clean industries, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and societal development.

SDGs in focus



Making a Difference Through **Partnership**



Partnerships extend our reach and ambition.

Our students, staff, community, and external organisations are our partners in addressing Sustainable Development. From local collaborations to international partnerships, together we're making a difference on a global scale.

Local Change

Our partnerships form to address sector-specific sustainability issues.

Global Ripple

Our international network of partner universities combine shared expertise to tackle shared Sustainable Development challenges.

Global Role

We contribute to global solutions through involvement in sector, industry and government partnerships for the SDGs.

SDGs in focus



The Herbert Mayer Collection of Carrolup Artwork, John Curtin Gallery, 2020

Accountability

Curtin University's Sustainable Development commitments are overseen by a Sustainable Development Executive group.

Sustainable Development Executive

Meets 2-4 times per year

- Accountable for delivering the Sustainable Development Strategy through the Sustainability Action Plan
- Consulted during development of the Sustainability Action Plan
- Responsible for aligning sustainability with other strategic activities and flagship projects

Leadership teams in each Faculty will guide on the ground activities, supported by Curtin's specialist knowledge.

Implementation Plan

In 2023 steps to embed the Sustainable Development Strategy at Curtin will include:

- Stakeholders are consulted about established capabilities and existing projects (Q2-Q3 2023)
- The Sustainability Action Plan is drafted for strategic evaluation (Q3 2023)
- Sustainability Action Plan is finalised including budgets, resourcing and target timelines (Q4 2023)

Sustainability working groups

Groups of professional and academic staff, with guidance from First Nation and student voices.



People

Guides efforts to include sustainable development in the curricula and create extra-curricular opportunities for student engagement in sustainable development.



Planet

Guides efforts to increase the presence of sustainable development principles and climate change action in research and on-campus.



Partnerships

Guides efforts to include students, staff, alumni and partners in sustainable development knowledge exchange and community engagement.





Innovation that drives positive outcomes is in our DNA

The Curtin innovation (Curtinnovation) approach to solving problems, tackling issues and meeting challenges can drive every area of Sustainable Development forward. Innovation is identified as key a driver in all SDGs with SDG 9, SDG 4 and SDG 8 having the strongest established links.

Curtin will use our recognised innovation strengths to accelerate our Sustainable Development maturity and drive and deliver our Sustainability Action Plan.







Contact us

www.sustainability.curtin.edu.au

sustainability@curtin.edu.au



Disclaimer and copyright

This publication contains general information only. Readers should consider how it applies to their personal circumstances and seek specific advice. Subject to applicable law, Curtin University is not liable for anything done or not done in reliance on this publication.

Curtin University Perth

Kent Street, Bentley,
Western Australia 6102

Tel: +61 8 9266 9266

Postal address

GPO Box U1987 Perth,
Western Australia 6845