

# Making the Business Case for Sustainability

A Guide for  
Sustainability Leaders



**Sustainability is key to institutional success over the long-term. It provides critical opportunities for value creation and risk mitigation at a time when universities and colleges are looking for ways to become more resilient in an increasingly volatile environment. Additionally, staff and students are increasingly looking to further and higher education (FHE) institutions to make a socially responsible and sustainable contribution to the world.**

So why is it so difficult to make the business case for sustainability? Business cases often fall down because they don't clearly articulate the benefits for the institution. Sustainability leaders may not link sustainability to the institutions overall strategy nor take opportunities to promote the agenda in ways that are relevant, timely and persuasive. They may also fail to acknowledge trade-offs that exist between sustainability and other institutional priorities, such as those relating to carbon emissions and business travel. A lack of evidence on the business benefits of sustainability in FHE is a related barrier that further weakens calls for support.

It can be particularly difficult to make a successful case for sustainability in a FHE context, because universities and colleges are highly complex institutions. An intricate web of structures, processes and cultures means decisions taken in these settings are often subject to many differing forces that are unique to each institution.

This presents a significant challenge for sustainability professionals who want to achieve greater influence at a senior level, but it is essential for them to understand these complexities before working to drive change in their organisation. This Guide is designed to help sustainability leaders overcome these challenges and develop compelling business cases which, over time, help them to embed sustainability at the top of their organisation and bring about systemic change in the way business decisions are made.

By 'sustainability leaders' we mean those who are aspiring to have greater influence at a senior level. They may have had few opportunities to write business cases before or be looking to engage with senior leaders for the first time as they move along the pathway to management and leadership (though this resource may also be a useful aide-memoire for more experienced leaders).

The Guide was produced by the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability at the University of Edinburgh, on behalf of EAUC. The content was developed with expert input from sector leaders who have real experience of delivering change in their organisations.

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# 1 Quick reference summary

## Introduction

Sustainable institutions are successful institutions in the longer-term. They are best placed to be financially and operationally resilient, achieve better outcomes for students, provide greater societal impact and deliver world-leading research and innovation. To help your institution reap these benefits, you as a sustainability leader should work to:

- align sustainability with strategic priorities and develop business cases that clearly articulate the institutional benefits associated with your ideas;
- influence senior leaders so as, over time, to embed sustainability thinking and practice at the very top of your organisation.

## Core components of a business case

Your business case should explain what your idea is and why it should be supported, based on its expected benefits.

Start by considering whether and how your idea creates value and mitigates risks for the institution (e.g. by reducing costs, improving reputations, meeting regulation, generating income opportunities, etc.) in the context of strategic priorities. Strategic priorities for universities and colleges tend to fall into four overarching categories:



You should then work to fully understand the risks, opportunities, challenges and benefits (financial and non-financial) of your idea and build evidence to support your claims. This process will involve a significant amount of desk-based research and, in all likelihood, wide-ranging discussions with colleagues and stakeholders.

The resulting business case document should contain the following key elements:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Summary</b>	Overview of the idea, costs (including £% requested) and key benefits
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Project details</b>	Full description, cost-benefit analysis, opportunities, challenges and consequences of no action
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Finances</b>	Financial appraisal and sensitivity analysis
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Implementation</b>	Governance arrangements, timetable, risk assessment, monitoring and reporting

**Securing support for your idea**

Your case will be more compelling if you build the following elements into the process:

- Understand decision-making processes in your organisation and work with them

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- Set out your vision for what success would look like and develop your case for support around it

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- Engage key decision-makers early to understand their priorities

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- Think through the risks associated with your idea and explain how they will be managed

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- Develop evidence to support claims about the business benefits associated with your idea

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- Communicate clearly and concisely when presenting your ideas to stakeholders

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**Embedding sustainability and creating transformational change**

Once you have mastered the art of business case development, you should start looking at how you can influence senior leaders to embed sustainability thinking and practice into your organisation’s vision, mission and values.

This is often a long and involved process, which takes time and perseverance (alongside the development of successive business cases needed to secure resources for new and bigger initiatives).

There are lots of resources referenced in this Guide that will help you to manage this process of change in your organisation, but the following factors are a great starting point:

- Understand peoples’ drivers and start from where they are at
- Look outside the organisation for wider drivers and barriers to change
- Offer up solutions rather than problems
- Work to build consensus on common issues
- Find a senior champion to support you
- Let leaders see the benefits of sustainability with their own eyes
- Don’t be in a rush; leave time for ideas to soak in
- Celebrate success (linking it to institutional priorities)
- Be pragmatic; learning when to let ideas go
- Develop the right knowledge and skills to navigate complex situations
- Expect resistance and develop strategies to boost your resilience

# 2 Making the case for sustainability

A Guide for Sustainability Leaders

## A case study

Why make the strategic business case for sustainability and how do you go about it?

This Guide begins to answer these questions with a pair of videos that explores how the strategic business case for sustainability was made at the University of Edinburgh.

These feature interviews with the Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability and the former Director of Finance to discover how the journey was experienced from these two perspectives.



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Discussion topics covered in these videos provide a useful context for themes covered in the rest of this Guide – including the steps taken to make the case for sustainability, challenges and enablers encountered along the way, and advice for others who are embarking on a similar journey.

When watching the videos, it may be helpful for you to consider how the issues raised might apply to your own efforts to explain the business benefits of sustainability effectively to senior leaders.



Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

[View video](#)



Phil McNaul, Former Director of Finance (2012-2018)

[View video](#)

# 3 Key to institutional success

Universities and colleges face unprecedented risk and uncertainty in the context of:

global challenges like climate change and human migration

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political uncertainty and short-termism

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long-term sectoral challenges, such as pensions and tuition fees

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changes to key partnerships and funding

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increasing competition and focus on rankings

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rising costs and falling government grants

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tighter regulation and greater focus on students as consumers

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greater calls for transparency and accountability

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Sustainable institutions are well placed to succeed in this environment because sustainability balances financial health alongside environmental and social concerns. It also takes a long-term view and embodies the holistic-thinking required to resolve this complex mix of demands.

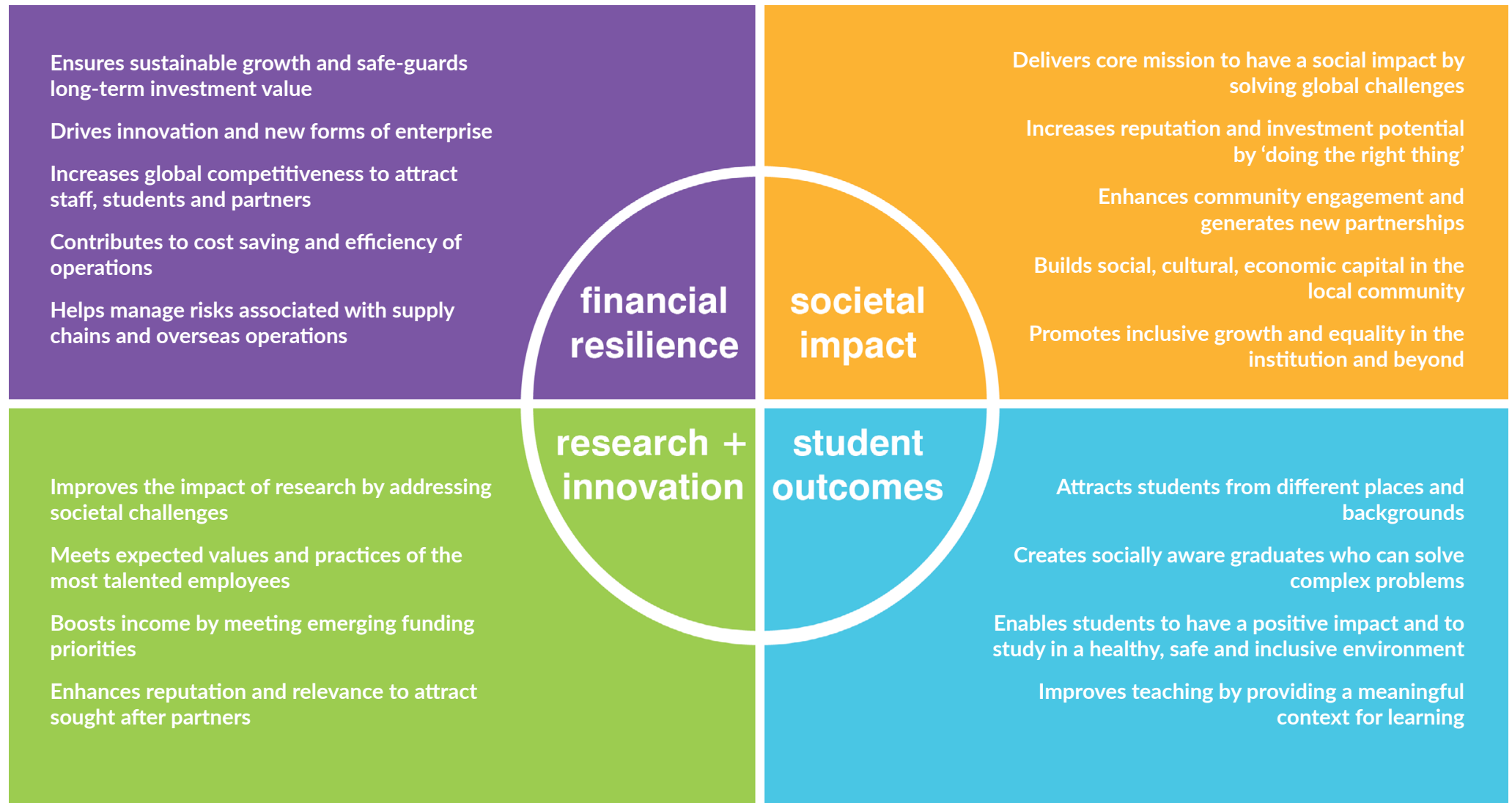
Institutions that embed sustainability in their vision, mission and values can become more financially and operationally resilient, achieve better student outcomes, generate greater societal impact and deliver more world-leading research and innovation.

Sustainable institutions are successful institutions over the longer-term:



**Sustainability delivers business benefits against four pillars of institutional success:**

For more information see EAUC's guide: [Sustainability: Key to Long-term Institutional Success](#)





When developing a business case for a sustainability initiative, you should consider if it delivers benefits across these four pillars of success and, if so, how.

Ask yourself, what does your idea do for the institution? Does it...

- mitigate risk?

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- increase competitiveness?

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- reduce costs?

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- improve reputation?

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- attract and retain talented staff and students?

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- meet or exceed regulatory requirements?

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- stimulate innovation in learning, teaching or research?

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- create additional opportunities for income generation?

Understanding the business benefits of your sustainability initiative is essential for explaining how it will deliver additional value for the organisation. This includes, but is not limited to, financial value.

The following examples illustrate how sustainability can benefit institutions across the four pillars of success. You may notice that these examples tend to provide cross-cutting benefits. In the case of the University of Salford's Energy House, for example, generation of additional research income helps deliver world class research but it also contributes to the financial resilience of the organisation and the societal impact the University has through its research.

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# 1 Financial resilience: Sustainable Campus Fund at the University of Edinburgh

The Sustainable Campus Fund is an internal investment vehicle that finances renewables projects and those that improve energy efficiency and reduce consumption of energy, water and other materials on campus. An initial business case was made to invest £2.75m over three years, to fund innovative projects that provide a sound financial return and carbon savings. It highlighted that there are clear financial opportunities linked to energy efficiency and carbon savings around the University, but often a lack of funding to support local initiatives. The business case was successful and £1.25m of projects were funded in the first two years, which yielded financial savings of £370,000/year and carbon savings of 1300tCO<sub>2</sub>e/year. Approved projects had an average ROI of 288% and a combined payback of 3.9 years. Strong performance led to an increase in overall investment in the Fund to £4.75m over five years. The model has also provided reputational benefits – attracting the interest of other public sector institutions and support from funding bodies.

See [Sustainable Campus Fund Business Case Document](#)



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# 2 Societal impact: Positive Impact Partners (PIP) Programme at the University of Leeds

The Positive Impact Partners (PIP) Programme is a flagship programme by the University of Leeds, which connects local third sector organisations together with University staff to create collaborative partnerships. This Programme is a core element of Leeds' Sustainability Strategy to be a Positive Partner to Society and is therefore supported at the highest level. Leadership actively champion the Programme because of the opportunities it provides to build capacity to deal with societal issues, creates social value in local communities, and increases participation in strategic research projects with third sector partners. The Programme recruited over 100 partners in year 1, which led to the creation of 40 new strategic partnerships. The ongoing data and partnership case studies collated, prove the success of the programme which continues to support new partnerships year on year.

See [2018 Progress Report on PIP Programme](#)



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## 3 Student outcomes: Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise at the University of Plymouth

Dentistry is a unique multi-skilled profession, with business acumen and sound social skills required on top of clinical care. Through the work of Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise, the University of Plymouth gives dental students opportunities to have early clinical exposure in areas of significant social and economic deprivation. The internal business case was successfully made due to the impact of the initiative on student experience and employability. Students would be given an opportunity to learn in a real-world setting and to have a positive impact in their local community and, in doing so, they would acquire a better understanding of what they are likely to encounter when qualified. Since its first graduates in 2011, nearly 100% of the University's dental students have gone straight into employment. The curriculum was top in the 2018 UK National Student Survey, with 100% of students satisfied with its teaching.

See [Peninsula Dental Social Enterprise](#)



## 4 Research & Innovation: Salford Energy House and Smart Meters Lab at University of Salford

Domestic energy accounts for more than 25% of UK energy consumption and is becoming increasingly technologically complex. To respond to this, the University of Salford's Energy House, a whole house built in a lab under user-controlled conditions, has expanded its work from energy efficiency into energy systems where these technologies are linked and tested. In addition, its 'Smart Meters>Smart Homes' Lab looks at how smart meters technology can support an increasingly complex energy system. The justification for investment in the Energy House and Smart Meters Lab was the opportunity to increase research income in this field of research and to attract industry partners (while also increasing the societal impact of the University through its research on energy as a major global challenge). The Salford Energy House team have subsequently worked with more than 500 companies and have attracted commercial income and grants of more than £5m since 2010.

See [University of Salford's Energy House](#)



# 5 Cross-cutting benefits: Making the strategic business case for sustainability at South Lanarkshire College

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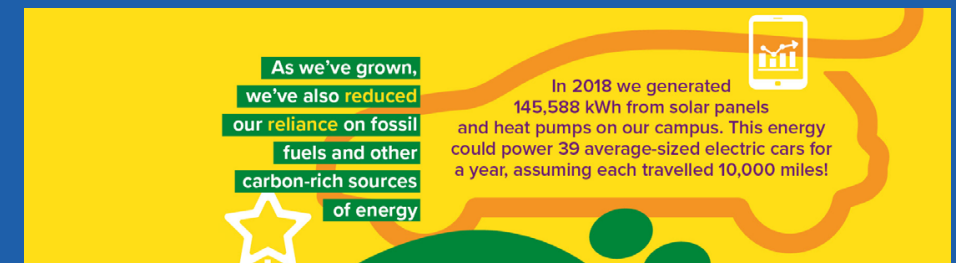
South Lanarkshire College used a 'Great Big Hairy Idea' to initiate conversations about sustainable behaviours.

It began by delivering a project to build a net-zero carbon house on its grounds as a training resource for Construction students and to engage more widely in conversations around sustainability, with Planners, Architects, Builders, Building Standards, Scottish Government Ministers, staff and students. The corporate learning from the project was invaluable. The College realised that promoting sustainable behaviours was an effective way to address other key aims for the organisation (and wider society), such as reducing fuel poverty, delivering organisational financial health and using resources efficiently.

In 2014, the College went on to embed 'Promoting Sustainable Behaviours' as one of three key aims in its Strategic Plan.

As a result, when the College built its new building in 2016, it was a net zero carbon teaching block that received an Outstanding BREEAM rating. The College has also established a Sustainability Group with representation from every Department and Faculty, embraced the NUS Responsible Futures initiative, embedded the promotion of sustainable behaviours into its Corporate Strategy and operational plans, adapted its existing building to have less reliance on fossil fuels, and started embedding sustainable behaviours into the curriculum.

Over the same period, the College has grown in activity by around 40% and has reduced its carbon emissions by 51%. As such, adoption of sustainability as a key strategic agenda has positively contributed to the financial resilience and societal impact of the institution.



# 4 Core elements of a business case

A business case is a justification for investment (not always financial) in an opportunity based on its expected benefits. It isn't just an idea, it's an idea that is costed, considers risks and opportunities, says how the idea can be implemented and provides confidence that what is being asked for can be delivered successfully alongside business benefits and other outputs.

Developing a business case involves a significant amount of desk-based research and analysis to understand the risks, opportunities and benefits associated with an idea and to build evidence needed to support it.

It also involves lots of conversations with people - including experts in the field, those responsible for delivering the initiative and other key stakeholders - to find out what their views are and how they fit with the idea. It is worth sharing an early draft with colleagues and a 'critical friend' to get their feedback before sharing more widely.

For many business cases, an analysis of the financial costs and benefits is a key step. There are a range of financial metrics that can be used to achieve this (e.g. Simple Payback, Net Present Value (NPV) or Return on Investment (ROI)). As a sustainability leader, you don't need to become an expert in what these metrics are or how to use them (although a basic understanding helps). Rather you should draw on the expertise of your finance team who will help you calculate the financial costs and benefits of your idea, using the most appropriate measures.

When there aren't any direct measurable financial benefits, it is still possible to make the financial case for an initiative by monetising the broader value associated with it (e.g. by estimating value of strategic partnerships, enhanced reputation, enhanced student experience and retention, etc.). Again, your finance colleagues may be able to help with this.

The final step of business case development involves the production of a written document, which is often accompanied by financial information and other supporting evidence.

The resulting business case document should contain the following key elements:

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Summary</b>	Overview of the idea, costs (including £% requested) and key benefits
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Project details</b>	Full description, cost-benefit analysis, opportunities, challenges, and consequences of no action
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Finances</b>	Financial appraisal (including payback, annual savings, NPV) and sensitivity analysis
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Implementation</b>	Governance arrangements, timetable, risk assessment, monitoring and reporting

There are resources available to help people develop business cases, but there is no 'one size fits all' solution. Business cases should be unique to the context in which support is sought and, as such, **the process of business case development is as important as the end result.**

Finally, you should think of preparing a business case as an opportunity to sharpen your thoughts and maximise your chances of success, not as a burden and obstacle to overcome.

# 5 Making a compelling case for support

Developing a business case takes time, perseverance and skill. There is no magic formula but you should consider the following steps throughout the process to make sure yours is a compelling case for support:

## Understand decision-making processes

Knowing how and when decisions are made, and by whom, is a critical first step when looking to influence senior leaders. It will help you understand who you should talk to, what type of preparatory work you will need to do and when, and how long it is likely to take to get a decision. In doing so, it is important to understand formal and informal governance processes by consulting policy documents and asking for advice from others who have brought about change in the organisation. Understanding budget planning cycles is a key element of this process; no matter how strong your business case is, it will not progress in the absence of available funds.



## Set out your vision for success

Describe what success looks like and how your idea will deliver significant value for the organisation. Focus on **full value creation** – financial value is key but so are ‘softer’ benefits relating to reputation and relationships – now and in the longer term. Softer benefits tend to be trickier to assess but are no less important.

See the [IIRC's International IR Framework](#) that helps to explain how value is created (or diminished) over time in organisations (see ‘Value Creation Process’ diagram on Page 13).

A related activity is to highlight any links between your organisation and key strategic priorities of the moment (e.g. student experience, research impact, commercialisation, local community, etc.). Whatever they may be, you need to be explicit about how your idea helps achieve them.

## Engage key decision-makers

A common pitfall when developing a business case is to assume that their idea is the only one on the agenda of senior leaders. It is important to recognise that senior leaders have to juggle multiple issues, so they are likely to have limited time or ‘bandwidth’ to consider new ideas.

Once you know who the key decision-makers are, work to understand what pressures they face and what type of information appeals to them (e.g. numbers, stories, etc.). These insights will enable you to tailor the type of information in your business case and the way it is presented accordingly. You could then share a draft version of the business case with senior leaders – especially those who represent your area of work and who may be supporting the development of the business case.



**Think through the risks**

There are risks associated with every new idea (though sustainability initiatives are often particularly risky because they tend to be innovative). You must understand what the risks are and explain how they will be mitigated. In doing so, you should also not underestimate the risks of inaction.

**Evidence your claims**

A common pitfall people may fall into is to make claims about the benefits of an idea without providing evidence to back them up. Business cases need to be supported by robust, relevant evidence to be credible to senior decision-makers. Furthermore, should your business case be approved, the reputational consequences could be severe if it transpired that your initiative failed because it was based on poor evidence.

A key challenge here is that there is often an absence of existing evidence about the business benefits of sustainability initiatives, which means you may need to develop it from scratch. This may be difficult if resources are under pressure, but it should be considered essential to secure support and/or investment.

A related challenge is that it tends to be difficult to ‘prove’ the business benefits of sustainability on issues such as strategic partnerships, employability, student experience or risk management in supply chains because they take a long time to occur or because they are tricky to measure. If time and resources allow, you will be better placed to convey the full value creation opportunity if you can build evidence on these softer benefits.

For example, if you wanted to demonstrate the impact of learning about sustainability on employability you would need to consider surveying relevant alumni to find out what careers they went on to have and whether the learning positively influenced these outcomes. Bear in mind that you would have to wait some years for relevant students to graduate. Ideally you would also survey a ‘control group’ to prove that there was a difference in outcomes for those who learnt about sustainability compared with those who did not. Focus groups could provide further insights into the reasons why sustainability proved so valuable to employability outcomes.

Research of this kind is costly and takes time and skill to undertake, so you may have to conclude that use of secondary evidence - such as sector surveys or academic reviews - will suffice for the case you are trying to make.

Pilot projects are a good way to test an idea and show it works, with a small amount of investment. When you come to make the case for scaling up your idea, it would be informed by the lessons from the pilot study.

Overall, you should consider what evidence you need to make a credible case for investment, what format it should be in (e.g. case studies, quantitative data, student testimonials, qualitative insights, anecdotal evidence, etc.), and how much time you will need to collect and analyse it. Try and work out how you will measure success before you start, not once you get going. Be honest about risks and uncertainties. Quantify and estimate where you can. Most of all, focus on what is measurable and material to your organisation because you won't be able to measure everything.

One way of accessing evidence on the business benefits of sustainability is to share information and insights with your peers in other institutions, who can be reached through networks associated with organisations like EAUC and ISCN.

## Communicate clearly and concisely

Communicating a business case clearly and concisely is key to selling an idea to busy people who face competing priorities. Say what it is you want up front. Focus on the important questions and risks, as well as the things a senior leader would want to know about your area.

Use plain language (avoiding jargon that only you understand) and make any recommendations easy to action. Don't feel the need to demonstrate your professional or academic credentials – the quality and relevance of the proposal is what matters, rather than hundreds of pages of information.

Finally, make sure that you check to see if senior managers use standard business case templates or specific styles or formats for papers and, if so, make sure to use the preferred format. It may also be helpful to see if any colleagues have an example of a successful business case that you can learn from.





# 6 Embedding sustainability at a strategic level

Our ultimate goal as sustainability leaders is to see sustainability embedded in the vision, mission and values of our organisations. Only then can universities and colleges realise the full potential of sustainability as a means of delivering long-term institutional success.

To achieve this, successive business cases need to be made to secure resources for new and institution-wide initiatives, alongside on-going effort to influence the attitudes of senior leaders.

This is not a straightforward task. It is a complex, unpredictable process that takes a long time.

Lots of resources are available to help you understand what change management is and how to apply it in a FHE context (see section 8 – Further resources).

This section introduces some key factors for you to think about when starting out, which should be supplemented by further reading and reflection in the context of your own organisation:

## Understand peoples' drivers and start from there

Sustainability leaders tend to be passionate advocates for sustainability but not everyone is starting from the same point and so this can sometimes be a barrier to changing hearts and minds. When trying to persuade others of the importance of taking action on sustainability, therefore, it is vital that you focus on the things that matter to individuals and the institution.

It is also worth bearing in mind that people experience different pressures depending on where they sit in an organisation.

The descriptors in the table below help illustrate the type of professional drivers that tend to influence middle and senior managers (depending on the nature of your role, you may recognise some of the drivers listed as being relevant to you).

### Typical Senior Manager

More aware than most of the strategic picture

Has access to organisational information and resources

Reacts badly to misaligned requests due to multiple competing agendas

Dependent on briefings/limited capacity for new issues

Significantly time pressured

Thought of as having power, but often struggle to influence or control a blizzard of events

### Typical Middle Manager

Aware of operational realities more than senior managers and of strategic picture more than staff

Often seen as the key person connecting strategy and operations, and the key to change

May think the organisation lacks focus/prioritisation beyond their immediate area

Suffers from multiple agendas imposed from above and under pressure to deliver with fewer resources

Will have own priorities as well as those of the line manager and other senior managers

Often trusted by staff and highly influential when change communication is received and passed on



### **Understand peoples' drivers and start from there (continued)**

People's broader values, attitudes and beliefs are also relevant because they shape what they think and how they behave at work.

Taking time to understand these drivers will help you frame your idea in the context of their priorities and ideals.

### **Look outside as well as in**

Working to understand the context in which your organisation is operating will help you appreciate how external drivers and barriers are likely to influence your plans for change.

For example, some institutions work closely with city or regional bodies. Linking your aspirations around sustainability to broader city/region ambitions may add weight and help secure buy-in from senior leaders.

### **Create a sense of urgency**

Change doesn't happen without buy-in from affected stakeholders. Creating a sense of urgency will help you secure cooperation by emphasising the importance of acting now rather than delaying action and risk missing out on opportunities or seeing risks escalate. In doing so, it is important that you identify and try to remove any obstacles to change, whilst also being careful to avoid creating a sense of panic or lack of control that can occur when stressing urgency.

### **Be solution-orientated**

Sustainability presents many challenges for universities and colleges – as for wider society – but it also offers many solutions. By presenting solutions and opportunities, senior leaders are more likely to listen to your ideas in the context of the many challenges they are required to manage.

### **Build consensus on common issues**

It is necessary to build a coalition of support for your ideas among senior leaders to drive through the change you want to see happen. Very often, people want the same outcomes (e.g. improved quality of teaching, a nicer working environment, higher student retention, etc.) but they are coming at it from different perspectives. Sustainability is more likely to gain traction if you can align it with the priorities of senior leaders and show how it offers a solution to common issues.



**Find a senior champion**

Peer-to-peer influence can be a powerful way of promoting your idea. When engaging senior colleagues, look for someone influential who ‘gets it’ and is willing to sell the idea on your behalf. This could be an academic champion, a mentor or even a prominent external stakeholder. Once you find a champion they may also be able to help you navigate the system, identify and target key individuals, and access resources to help progress your idea.

**Let leaders see things for themselves**

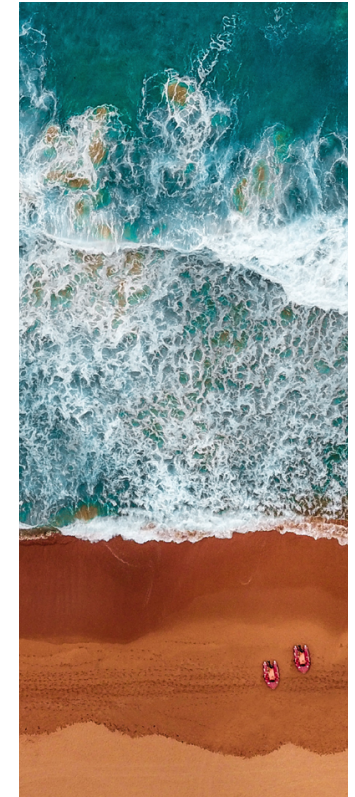
Senior leaders are faced with many competing priorities and are under pressure to make the right decisions with limited resources. It can be hard to stand out from the crowd in this environment. One way of achieving this is to show senior leaders the issue you want to address – whether it be a new piece of technology or a social issue of concern - letting them see the challenges for themselves can be a powerful way of explaining the importance of sustainability.

**Leave time for ideas to soak in**

Time is required to allow new ideas to establish in the minds of senior leaders. Make sure this is factored into your plans for making change happen to prevent delays and disappointment further down the track: Be prepared for this to take many months or even years depending on the nature and significance of your proposals.

**Celebrate success**

Build momentum for sustainability by developing positive news stories about early successes and linking them to big issues affecting the institution. This will help demonstrate the impact of sustainability and reinforce messages about its relevance to current agendas. When opportunities to celebrate success arise, don’t worry about who gets the credit as long as the story helps you get to where you want to be.



**Be pragmatic**

Embedding sustainability at a strategic level in your organisation is a marathon not a sprint. Develop stretching but realisable goals and know when to let go of ideas if they are firmly rejected.

**Develop the right knowledge and skills**

Managing change is a complex process. You should spend time better understanding how change occurs in organisations and developing the skills you need to manage it. Consider finding a mentor or job-shadowing opportunity to help you achieve this. Peer-to-peer learning and support is also a valuable resource.



**Be resilient**

Personal resilience is a particularly important attribute for managing change. Things take time and there will be set-backs so developing coping strategies is important for seeing change through.

You should expect resistance to your ideas and be prepared to tackle it (though the majority of your time should be spent engaging people who are neutral or broadly supportive to avoid getting too bogged down with those who are strongly resistant).

Some resistant colleagues will actively reject your ideas and publically voice negative opinions while others may feel negative but not make their views known (the latter being a smaller proportion but more difficult to detect). You should try to identify who is resistant and think carefully about how to respond to them. There is no hard and fast rule because responses should be context specific.

[The SCARF \(Status-Certainty-Autonomy-Relatedness-Fairness\) developed by Rock \(2008\)](#) is a useful model for determining why people resist new ideas and for developing interventions that tackle drivers of resistance.

When you do experience knock-backs, pause, listen to the reasons why, adapt your approach accordingly, and focus on the long-term goal to drive change on sustainability across the organisation.

# 7 Next steps

In a resource constrained, competitive and volatile environment universities and colleges need to take a future-facing, risk-based approach to strategic planning and management in a way that balances financial benefits with social and environmental concerns.

Sustainability offers a key strategic solution and you, as a sustainability leader, are uniquely placed to sell the business benefits of sustainability to senior leaders to help ensure the long-term success of your institution.

This Guide introduces some of the key issues you need to consider when developing business cases on sustainability and, in the longer term, working to achieve greater influence and alignment at a senior level to embed sustainability thinking right across the organisation.

The Guide does not have all the answers. You are encouraged to use it alongside other sources of information and support, some of which are listed in the following section.

EAUC's 2018 Guide 'Sustainability: Key to Long-term Institutional Success' is a particularly useful starting point for understanding the strategic business benefits of sustainability and it can also be shared with your institutions senior leadership team for their information (see next section for details).

You are also urged to help build the evidence base in support of sustainability as a key strategic agenda across FHE as a whole.

With the publication of this Guide, EAUC will establish a peer-to-peer network to facilitate the sharing of evidence and insights on the business benefits of sustainability.

It will also explore other options to increase information and support in the areas of business case development and change management, such as the provision of more case study examples and personal accounts of driving change on sustainability at a senior level.

For further information or enquiries about support EAUC offers in this area, please email [info@eauc.org.uk](mailto:info@eauc.org.uk) or telephone 01242 714321.





# Further resources

## **Business benefits of sustainability in higher education**

[EAUC \(2018\) Key to Institutional Success: A Guide for Members of Governing Bodies](#)

[BUFDG \(British Universities Finance Directors Group\) - The Value of Universities](#)

## **Business case development**

[Business Model Canvas](#)

[HM Treasury \(2018\) Guide to Developing the Project Business Case](#)

## **Change management and strategic planning (general)**

[Kotter \(1996\) Leading Change \(8-step model for transforming your organisation\)](#)

[Jim Collins \(2001\) Good to Great](#)

[PwC - 10 Guiding Principles of Change Management](#)

[HM Government \(2017\) Futures Thinking Toolkit](#)

[HM Government \(2009\) Scenario Planning](#)

[David Rock on SCARF model](#)

[PRIC \(2012\) Common Cause Handbook](#)

[SustainAbility \(2015\) Integrating sustainability into business](#)

## **Managing change on sustainability (FHE sector)**

[Haddock-Fraser, J. \(2018\) Leadership for Sustainability in Higher Education](#)

[Sharp, L. \(2002\) Green campuses: the road from little victories to systemic transformation](#)

[Walker, P. Change Management for Sustainable Development](#)

## **Integrated reporting**

[IIRC - International Integrated Reporting Framework](#)

[PwC - TIMM \(Total Impact Measurement and Management\) Model](#)

[Social and Human Capital Coalition - Social and Human Capital Protocol](#)

[Natural Capital Coalition – Natural Capital Protocol](#)

[Janet Gleeson-White \(2015\) Six Capitals: The Revolution Capitalism Has to Have](#)

# 9 Acknowledgements

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