

Education proving its value to the economy and society: From seawater greenhouses to tackling violence against women

The 14th edition of the prestigious Green Gown Awards Ceremony gathered 87 finalist institutions in 12 different categories for an unforgettable evening on Thursday 8th November. Representing over 1 million students, 172,000 staff and a combined annual turnover of £15 billion, these institutions are proving their value to the economy and society. Organised by the EAUC, the Ceremony was held in the home of iconic locomotives and engineering brilliance, The National Railway Museum in York in conjunction with the University of York and York St John University.

Showing institutions are not bound around a specific theme or size when it comes to exceptional initiatives, winners ranged from Stockport Continuing Education Service to Glasgow Kelvin College to the University of Edinburgh with projects as diverse as health and wellbeing opportunities for individuals in recovery from addiction dependency to food waste behaviour change to sea water greenhouses with global impact.

The Awards saw guests from institutions, companies and organisations across the UK and Ireland come to celebrate the educational initiatives, staff, and students helping address some of the most pressing global challenges. For the second year running, finalists mapped their entry against the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the most popular being 'sustainable cities and communities', 'responsible consumption and production' and 'quality education'.

To keep everyone in suspense, for the first time ever attendees voted live for the winner of 'Outstanding Leadership Team of the Year'. Driven by the motto: "Together everybody achieves more!" Keele University triumphed to win this accolade.

Commenting on gaining two Awards on the night for Benefitting Society and Next Generation Learning and Skills, University of the Arts London Vice Chancellor, Professor Nigel Carrington said:

"Winning two Green Gown Awards recognises and celebrates the fantastic sustainability work taking place within the UAL community. Our Sustainability Manifesto guides our focus through a holistic set of themes, increasing engagement with sustainability and catalysing progress within and beyond our institution."

University of Edinburgh received the Sustainability Institution of the Year Award for the continuous work to adopt a whole institution approach and become a more socially responsible and sustainable university. Professor Lesley McAra, Assistant Principal Community Relations said:

"The efforts of our staff, students and partnership working are essential to deliver the programmes that will ensure we achieve our vision of being a socially responsible and

sustainable university. Public recognition provides us with an opportunity to celebrate their enthusiasm and hard work.”

Iain Patton, CEO of the EAUC, co-hosted the ceremony alongside Helen Browning OBE, CEO of the Soil Association.

Opening the awards, Iain said: “*Tonight’s celebration emphasises the role of education in enabling and empowering young people to tackle the pressing global issues we are all facing. In their commitment to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals, universities and colleges across the UK and Ireland are proving that they are leading through their research, enterprise and education for the next generation that we need to provide the solutions.*”

Helen Browning OBE, CEO of the Soil Association said: “*Inspiring the next generation to take on the challenges of sustainability is an issue at the centre of my personal journey in food, farming and the environment so it’s wonderful to see all the winners celebrated tonight. Food and how we produce it is at the heart of tackling many environmental challenges today so it’s also great to see the Soil Association accredit the award dinner menu through our Food for Life Served Here award.*”

This year’s winners were as varied as ever. The Student Engagement Award went to Glasgow Kelvin College for their White Ribbon campaign to tackle gender violence against women on a global scale empowering staff and students to raise awareness of this societal challenge.

Meanwhile, Aston University scooped the Research with Impact Award for their thorough study that has led to the development of cooling and desalination technologies to create seawater greenhouses that are enabling food to be grown sustainably in arid world regions.

The Tomorrow’s Employees Award was claimed by University of Wales Trinity Saint David for their innovative approach to ensuring business graduates are equipped with skills and knowledge to become a part of the shaping of business thinking in the world for our next generations.

The Campus of the Future Award went to Newcastle University for the building-as-a-lab (BaaL) concept dedicated to innovative and interdisciplinary sustainability research which stands as an exemplar for a lower carbon age. The building features a heating system fed by heat pumps, grid-integrated energy storage, photovoltaic (PV) and PV-thermal arrays.

The winners of Benefitting Society, Student Engagement and Sustainability Institution of the Year now go head to head with other global regional winners for the coveted International Green Gown Awards.

Green Gown Awards 2018 – WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Benefitting Society#

SMALL INSTITUTION - Stockport Continuing Education Service: Turnaround - 360 degrees different

LARGE INSTITUTION - University of the Arts London, London College of Fashion: Rethinking

rehabilitation - connecting communities through craft

Campus Health, Food and Drink

Category Supporter: TUCO

Sheffield Hallam University: Taste Hallam!

Campus of the Future

Category Supporter: The Energy Consortium

Newcastle University: From coal to cloud - Newcastle University Urban Sciences Building

Enterprise

Category Supporter: CUBO

Keele University: Utter Rubbish - an app to tackle fly tipping and improve recycling across the UK

Next Generation Learning and Skills

University of the Arts London, London College of Fashion: Fashion and sustainability:

Understanding luxury fashion in a changing world

Research with Impact – Institution

Category Supporter: SALIX

Aston University: Seawater greenhouse technology enables drought-proof agriculture

Student Engagement#

SMALL INSTITUTION - Glasgow Kelvin College: Sustainable Inclusive Social Practice

LARGE INSTITUTION - The Students' Union at UWE: Bring Your Own Bowl

Sustainability Institution of the Year Award#

Category Supporter: EAUC

University of Edinburgh: Delivering positive impact for society

Tomorrow's Employees

Category Supporter: WSP

University of Wales, Trinity Saint David: UWTSD Carmarthen Business School: Rethinking Business for a Changing World

Total Reporting

Category Supporter: PwC

Manchester Metropolitan University

INDIVIDUAL/TEAM AWARDS

Outstanding Leadership Team of the Year

Category Supporter: Interface

Live voting

Keele University

Research with Impact – Student

Category Supporter: SALIX

SMALL INSTITUTION - Alex Dixon - Exeter College Technology Centre

LARGE INSTITUTION - Hannah Sellers - University of Leicester

Sustainability Champion Award – Student

Amy Bernice Staff - The Students' Union at UWE

Sustainability Champion Award – Staff

Paul Murray - University of Plymouth

FOOTNOTE: # Included in the International Green Gown Awards

For the full list of all Winners, Highly Commended and Finalists visit www.greengownawards.org/green-gown-awards-uk-ireland

ENDS

Notes to Editors

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About the Green Gown Awards

Established in 2004, the Green Gown Awards UK and Ireland recognise the exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken by universities, colleges and the learning and skills sectors across the UK and Ireland as the education sector leads a path to efficiency, employability and better quality of life for us all.

The Green Gown Awards are administered by the EAUC and are governed by [a cross agency steering group](#).

As the ethos of the Green Gown Awards is to ensure the lessons and examples of best practice are shared within the sector and beyond, we are working hard with the partners of the Awards to ensure this information is disseminated far and wide. All the 2018 Winners, Highly Commended and Finalists have created case studies and videos which are freely available on the sector owned [Sustainability Exchange website](#). The Green Gown Awards UK and Ireland is further enhanced by its international presence. The Awards are also delivered on a regional basis in Australasia, French speaking Europe and Canada as well as the International Green Gown Awards supported by the United Nations Environment. Regional Winners of the three international categories: Benefitting Society, Sustainability Institution of the Year and Student Engagement go head-to-head for the coveted International Green Gown Awards.

For more information visit <http://www.greengownawards.org> and follow us on Twitter [@greengowns](#).

We would like to thank the Green Gowns UK and Ireland sponsors:

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About the EAUC

[The EAUC](#) is a not-for-profit, member-based charity, run by members for members and empowers its' members creativity and dynamism to lead the sustainability agenda within Further and Higher Education in the UK and Ireland. From starting out as a voluntary organisation in 1996, the EAUC has grown to represent over 2 million students and nearly 400,000 faculty and staff with a spending budget of over £25 billion. The EAUC helps leaders, academics and other professionals to drive sustainability to the heart of their post-16 education institutions. www.eauc.org.uk