

7th WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT UNIVERSITIES (WSSD-U-2026)

From Knowledge to Action: Developing Core
Competencies in Sustainable Development



FINAL PROGRAMME

UNIVERSITY OF INNSBRUCK,
AUSTRIA
September 3–4, 2026

WORLD SYMPOSIUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT UNIVERSITIES (WSSD-U-2026)



The exact address of the event is:

**University Innsbruck
Ágnes-Heller-Haus
Innrain 52a
6020 Innsbruck**



THURSDAY, 3rd September 2026

08:00-09:00- Arrival and registration

Foyer Audimax (basement)

09:00-9:30- Opening – Small auditorium (basement)

Assistant Prof. Ann-Kathrin Dittrich, University of Innsbruck, Austria
Prof. Dr. Janette Walde, Vice-Rector for Teaching and Students, University of Innsbruck, Austria
Prof. Walter Leal, HAW Hamburg, Germany

9:30-10:00 – Plenary Presentation 1- Teenager Voice and Teacher Competences in Focus: The Significance of Pedagogical Relationships for Well-being and Quality Education

Sunet Grobler, Sabine Gerhartz-Reiter & Gabriele Schauer (University of Innsbruck, Austria)

10:00-10:30 – Plenary Presentation 2- Enabling change agents for sustainable development: a whole-institution approach to fostering sustainability competencies in Higher Education

Elizabeth A.C. Price, D. Theresa Nicholson, Rachel Dunk, Cormac Lawler, Matthew Carney, Valeria Ruiz Vargas, Sally Veitch, Sophie Leigh, Christopher Ribchester, Olivia Davidson, Matthew Singleton and Sarah Mottram (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK)

10:30-11:00 – Break



11:00 – 13:00 – Parallel sessions

Session 1A, ROOM 12 (1st floor)

Moderator: Sunet Grobler

11:00-11:20- Developing student sustainability competencies in knowledge integration and knowledge action through a university-wide “art-science-action” module

Gemma O'Sullivan, Kelly Streekstra & Karin Rebel (Utrecht University, The Netherlands)

11:20-11:40- Co-Creating Sustainability Competencies: Holistic and Inclusive Approaches to Embedding, Assessing, and Articulating Student Learning in Higher Education

Vasiliki Kioupi, Clare Jackson, Elizabeth Angus & Zoe Richards (University of Leeds, UK)

11:40-12:00- Listening and Responding – Key Competencies and Education for Sustainable Development

Bettina Hollstein (University of Erfurt, Germany)

12:00-12:20- Key competences for sustainability in two blended-learning universities in Spain and Portugal

María Majadas Matesanz (National University of Distance Education, Spain)

12:20-12:40 - Teaching “Wicked Problems” in Sustainability Education: Insights from Practice at a University of Applied Sciences

Sarah Fraueneder, Michael Jungmeier & Elisabeth Wiegele (Carinthia University of Applied Sciences, Austria)

12:40-13:00- Discussion

13:00-14:00- Lunch

Session 1B, ROOM 13 (1st floor)

Moderator: Liz Price

11:00-11:20- Bridging the Gap: How Experiential Learning in Environmental Education Shapes Change Agents in Academia

Adiv Gal (Kibbutzim College of Education Technology and the Arts, Israel)

11:20-11:40- Towards a Framework for Challenge-Based Learning with Innovative Pedagogies

Joakim Tell, Maya Hoveskog, Jeanette Sjöberg (Halmstad University, Sweden)

11:40-12:00- Cultivating Happiness Literacy for Sufficiency: A Transformative Learning Approach

Lennart Kötschau & Ricarda Kochems (University of Bremen, Germany)

12:00-12:20- From Classroom to Community: Interdisciplinary Challenge Based Learning for Lasting Sustainability Skills

Jolanda Baur, Renate Windbichler, Nils Mevenkamp, Lukas Kerschbaumer & Siegfried Walch (MCI The Entrepreneurial School, Austria)



12:20-12:40- Transforming Competences for Sustainable Development in cross-university initiatives for teaching and learning

Stefanie Preiml, Katharina Salicites, Andrea Bernhard, Dominik Ruffeis, Franz Rauch (University of Klagenfurt & TU Graz, Austria)

12:40-13:00- Discussion

13:00-14:00- Lunch

Session 1C, ROOM 14 (1st floor)
Moderator: Peter Buck

11:00-11:20 - Unpacking Knowledge, Competence, and Development: Conceptual Clarity for Transformative ESD

Lisa-Marie Seyfried (University of Bremen, Germany)

11:20-11:40 - Developing Equity Literacy: Teacher Education for SDG 4 and SDG 10 Achievement

Sabine Gerhartz-Reiter (University of Innsbruck, Austria)

11:40-12:00 - Sustainability literacy outcomes for the Local Climate Action Program: A self-study for immersive climate planning education

Peter Buck, Brandi Robinson, Elizabeth Smith (Penn State University, USA)

12:00-12:20 - Sustainable Development Education- Creative Strategies for Transformative Learning and Sustainable Development Teaching

Luciana Londero Brandli & Diego José Baccin (University of Passo Fundo, Brazil)

12:20-12:40 - University-Community Collaboration for Rural Climate Planning and Implementation

Shaunna Barnhart & Zane Hensal (Bucknell University, USA)

12:40-13:00- Discussion

13:00-14:00- Lunch

14:00-16:00 - Parallel sessions



Session 2A, ROOM 12 (1st floor)

Moderator: Mirjam Braßler

14:00-14:20: Exploring a futures-orientated framework for sustainability planning in higher education

Seamus Hoyne (Technological University of the Shannon, Ireland)

14:20-14:40: Strategic foresight striving for ESD - futures literacy with anticipative thinking towards education for sustainable development - the case of Wilhelm Büchner Hochschule, Darmstadt (Germany)

Ralf Isenmann (Wilhelm Büchner Hochschule, Darmstadt, Germany)

14:40-15:00 - The collaborative use of design thinking to develop and implement climate change adaptations with farmers

Diane Pruneau, Abdellatif Khattabi, Liette Vasseur, Marina Kovaleva, Anne-Marie Laroche, Walter Leal Filho, Sebastian Weissenberger, Natacha Louis, Jean Marie Agossou, Laurenda Todome, Ornella Kevin Kiampi, Amanda Lange Salvia, Rebeka Chiasson, Felix Dumas, Carole Farida Alimagnidokpo (Université de Moncton, Canada)

15:00-15:20 - Creagile Futures Literacy as a Pathway to Sustainability Competences: Translating Inner Development into Future-Oriented Learning Designs

Birgitta Borghoff, Annett Baumast, Jeannine Hess (ZHAW Zurich, University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland)

15:20-15:40 - From Knowledge to Action: A Mixed-Methods Approach to Developing a Sustainability Leadership Framework in Higher Education

Mirjam Braßler, Emily Chi, Benedikt Jeschek, Lucie Struwe (Kiel University, Germany)

15:40-16:00- Discussion

16:00-16:30- Break

Session 2B, ROOM 13 (1st floor)

Moderator: Stefanie Preiml

14:00-14:20 - Co-Creating a Global Climate School: International and Interdisciplinary Competence Development within the Global Climate Collective (GCC)

Catalina Alvarez Mesa, Tatiana Louise Avila de Campos Rocha, Elisa Kerber Schoenell, Maria Claudia Mejía-Gil and Jonas Weitzel (FH Münster, Germany)

14:20-14:40- Strengthening HEIs' Role in the Green Transition through Participatory Sustainability Assessment Tools – Presenting Two Case Studies from Austria

Verena Régent, Beate Pawle, Verena Liszt-Rohlf & Irem Aksoy (WPZ Research, University of Applied Sciences Vorarlberg and University of Applied Sciences Burgenland, Austria)



14:40-15:00 - From Knowledge to Action: The ImpactThon as a Competence-Oriented Model for University-Business Cooperation

Desiree Wieser, Svein Gunnar Sjøtun, Sabri Ben Rommane (MCI The Entrepreneurial School, Austria)

15:00-15:20 - Methodological analysis for the implementation of an innovative workshop format to raise awareness of circular economy principles

Christine Bertl (University of Applied Sciences Vienna, Austria)

15:20-15:40 - A Multicriteria Methodological Framework for ESG Assessment in Higher Education Institutions

Rodrigo da Silva Alves, José Baltazar Salgueirinho Osório de Andrade Guerra, Ana Regina de Aguiar Dutra, Denis de Souza Luiz (University of Southern Santa Catarina, Brazil)

15:40-16:00- Discussion

16:00-16:30- Break

Session 2C, ROOM 14 (1st floor)

Moderator: Luciana Brandli

14:00-14:20 - A Potpourri of Pathways: Integrating Sustainability in Higher Education Teaching at USTP

Viktoria Leitner (USTP - University of Applied Sciences St. Pölten, Austria)

14:20-14:40- Intergenerational Collaborative Learning for the Development of Students' Skills

Yoshinori Naruse (Faculty of Education, University of Toyama, Japan) & *Marfiah Ab. Wahid* (Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainable Development, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia)

14:40-15:00 - Sustainability Education in Teaching Laboratories: Awareness, Attitudes, and the Introduction of "Green Tips"

Claire Butterfield, Fidan Dovlatova, Asaya Starling, Hazel Hamilton, Mary Prathiba Joseph, Emanuele Conte (University of Glasgow, United Kingdom)

15:00-15:20 - Seeing is not Feeling: Immersive Technologies as a Critical Component of Digital Competence in Sustainability

Elias J. Marks (University of Bremen, Germany)

15:20-15:40 – Strategic Database Management for Sustainable University Governance: Developing a Sustainable Database Competency Framework for Higher Education

Gifty Ahwireng Koomson & Frank Frimpong Opuni (Accra Technical University, Ghana)

15:40-16:00- Discussion

16:00-16:30- Break



ROOM 14 (first floor)

16:30-17:15 | *PANEL*

Beyond Intentions: Practical Evaluation Approaches for Embedding Sustainability Competences in Tertiary Education

Anouk Mertens, Tim Stevens, Margien Bootsma, Eric Mijts (KU Leuven; University of Aruba; MertARC, Belgium)

18:00-19:00 | Guided Tour of Innsbruck City Centre

Meeting point: Golden Roof Old Town

Evening: Free

FRIDAY, 4th September 2026

ROOM - Small auditorium (basement)

Moderator: *Ann-Kathrin Dittrich*



9:30-10:00 – Plenary Presentation 3- The Potential of Networks in Fostering International Cooperation in Sustainable Development

Prof. Dr. Walter Leal (Hamburg University of Applied Sciences, Germany)

10:00-10:30 – Plenary presentation 4 - The Gap between Sustainability Competencies offered in Higher Education and those required by Sustainability Professionals

Valérie Vandenbussche, Mathijs Kros, Tim Immerzeel, Paquita Perez Salgado (Open Universiteit, The Netherlands)

10:30-11:00 – Break

11:00-13:00- Parallel Sessions

Session 3A, Room 12 (1st floor)

Moderator: *Sven Linow*

11:00-11:20- Sustainability and Spirituality: Building Ecologies of Hope. A Case Study of a Higher Education Symposium

Adriana Consorte-McCrea, Dennis Nigbur, Ivan Khovacs, Johannes M. Luetz (Academy for Sustainable Futures, Canterbury Christ Church University, UK)

11:20-11:40- University Governance and Education for Sustainable Development: A Self-Assessment Model for Institutional Transformation

Paulo Guilherme Fuchs, Ana Regina de Aguiar Dutra, Ariély Domingos, José Baltazar Salgueirinho Osório de Andrade Guerra (Graduate Program in Business Administration, Brazil; University of Southern Santa Catarina (UNISUL), Brazil; Federal Institute of Santa Catarina (IFSC), Brazil; University of the Extreme South of Santa Catarina, Brazil)

11:40-12:00- Educating for Impact: Integrating Service Learning and Environmental Sustainability in Dental Education

Vitalia Kinakh (University of Manchester, UK)

12:00-12:20 – Education for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Operations at the University of Westminster

Dularee Goonetilleke & Morgan Lirette (University of Westminster, UK)

12:20-12:40 – Evaluation of contributions to the SDGs through research at The Northern Technical University

Patricia Aguirre, Ricardo Muñoz, Guillermo Varela & Katty Cabascango (Universidad Técnica del Norte, Ecuador)

12:40-13:00- Designing Hybrid Learning Experiences: Interactive Sustainability Education for Competency Development in Sustainable Finance

Karin Roither (Institute for Sustainability, UAS Wiener Neustadt, Austria)

13:00-14:00- Lunch



Session 3B, Room 13 (1st floor)

Moderator: Mihaela Sima

11:00-11:20– Green Office UPF: A Five-Year Journey in Promoting Institutional Sustainability

Luciana Londero Brandli, Gabriela Rodrigues, Gabriela Nicoloso Brandli, Rafael Vuelma, Ana Júlia Loss Marcon (University of Passo Fundo, Brazil)

11:20-11:40- Measuring Students' Awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals within the Technological University of the Shannon (Ireland)

Bradley Joubert, Beth Storey, Noëlle O'Connor, Nicola Ryan, Catherine-Ann O'Connell (Technological University of the Shannon, Ireland)

11:40-12:00 – Green Campus Initiatives as Antecedents of Environmental Mindsets and Behaviours among University Students: A Cross-National Study of Malaysia and Thailand

Mohamad Saifudin Mohamad Saleh, Tanapat Temrattanakul, Miao Huang & He Lewei (School of Communication, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia)

12:00-12:20 – From Climate Anxiety to Climate Agency - A Youth Engagement Framework for Developing Core Competencies in Sustainable Development in Higher Education

Teresa L. Rule (Prescott College, USA)

12:20-12:40 – Assessing Sustainability Learning Outcomes in Software Engineering Education

Ashok Tripathi, Mikhail Ola Adisa, Shola Oyedele, Jari Porras, Sim Tze Ying & Sian Lun Lau (LUT University, Finland)

12:40-13:00 – Discussion

13:00-14:00- Lunch



Session 3C – Room 14 (1st floor)

Moderator: José Baltazar Salgueirinho Osório de Andrade Guerra

11:00-11:20– Between Mourning, Hope, and Resilience: Artistic-Pedagogical Explorations of Transformative Higher Education in Times of Crisis

Oktay Bilgi, Philipp Gelitz & Ina Scheffler (Alanus University of Arts and Social Sciences, Germany)

11:20-11:40- From Knowledge to Action: Design Principles for Culturally Responsive Climate Education in Higher Education Outreach with Bedouin Youth in the Negev

Shaima Alokbe & Orit Ben-Zvi Assaraf (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel)

11:40-12:00 – Successful Integration of Transfer-oriented Higher Education for Sustainable Development into Academic Teaching - Case study of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary Education for Sustainability: River-Elbe-Project

Heike Molitor, Jennifer Krah, Eva Greischel & Lea Fischer (Eberswalde University of Sustainable Development, Germany)

12:00-12:20 - Integrating Teaching, Research, Service, and Campus Operations: A Case Study of Sustainability Responses in a Colombian University

Hesam Sadeghian-Rios & Filiz Keser-Aschenberger (University for Continuing Education Krems, Austria)

12:20-12:40 – Co-Creating Sustainability Literacy: A Photovoice Approach to Experiential Geography Fieldwork in Geopark Lembah Kinta, Malaysia

Abdul Rahim Asyirah, Nur Rafidah Asyikin, Mohd Fadly Md Noor & Siti Najwa Mokhta (Universiti Sains Malaysia and Ventrex Outdoor Recreation, Malaysia)

12:40-13:00 - Discussion

13:00-14:00- Lunch

14:00-15:40- Parallel Sessions



Session 4A, Room 12 (1st floor)

Moderator: Lisa-Marie Seyfried

14:00-14:20 - Integration of Sustainability into Higher Education Teaching through a Didactic Concept

Petra Endl-Pichler, Daniela Nömeier, Cornelius Benekam (CAMPUS 02 Fachhochschule der Wirtschaft GmbH, Austria)

14:20-14:40 – Navigating the exponential frontier: human-centric core competencies for sustainable transformation

Paweł Poszytek (Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Poland)

14:40-15:00 - Rethinking pre-service teacher education for sustainability: Lessons from in-service teachers designing interdisciplinary mathematics learning modules

Leslie Mahe Collazo Expósito, Marta Gual Oliva & Paula López Serentill (Universitat de Girona, Spain)

15:00-15:20 - Exploring Educators' Self-Reflection as a Missing Link in Advancing Education for Sustainable Development

Nadine Husenbeth, Juliane Scheering & Lisa-Marie Seyfried (University of Bremen, Germany)

15:20-15:40 - A Theoretical Framework for the Analysis of Green Knowledge Management in the Context of Sustainable Development in Higher Education Institutions

Jefferson Jacques Andrade, Clarissa Carneiro Mussi, Gabriel Cremona Parma, Ana Regina de Aguiar Dutra, José Baltazar Salgueirinho Osório de Andrade Guerra (University of Southern Santa Catarina, PPGA, Brazil)

15:40-16:00 - Final Session & best papers awards - Small auditorium (basement)

Session 4B, ROOM 13 (1st floor)

Moderator: Jolanda Baur

14:00-14:20 - The Role of Universities and Green Offices in Implementing the 2030 Agenda and Advancing Climate Action: An Integrated Approach to Global Research and Case Studies

Walter Leal Filho, Janaina Mazutti, Luciana Londero Brandli, Amanda Lange Salvia, Patrizia Lombardi, Marlies Nijemeisland, Anselm T. Grahl, José Baltazar Salgueirinho Osório de Andrade Guerra

14:20-14:40 - Linking OER to the UN 2030 Agenda: Evidence of Social, Economic, and Environmental Gains

Sandra Schön & Martin Ebner (Graz University of Technology, Austria)

14:40-15:00 - From Knowledge to Action: Sustainability Education and Competency Development for Environmental Stewardship in Higher Education

Richmond Yeboah & Filiz Keser Aschenberger (University for Continuing Education Krems, Krems, Austria)



15:00-15:20 – Bridging the Gap: A Theoretical Policy Framework for Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education

Reena Agrawal, Anjali Dimri & Deepshi Garg (India)

15:20-15:40 – Developing Sustainability Competencies through Green and Smart Campus Innovations in an Emerging Economy: A Hybrid Approach with CB-SEM and ANN

Frank Frimpong Opuni, Simon Mawulorm Agyeman, Isaac Torny, Florence Dedzoe-Dzokotoe Plockey, Gifty Ahwireng Koomson, George Kwabena Asamoah, Richard Amponsah (Accra Technical University, Ghana)

15:40-16:00 - Final Session & best papers awards - Small auditorium (basement)

Session 4C, ROOM 14 (1st floor)

Moderator: Jana Engl

14:00-14:20 – Design Lifewide Competency Framework: HE Design as a catalyst for sustainable transformations in graduates

Emma Dewberry & Vera Hale (The Open University, UK)

14:20-14:40 - Removing sources of misunderstanding through revealing implicit assumptions in education for sustainable development

Sven Linow (Hochschule Darmstadt, Germany)

14:40-15:00 - The roles of academic leaders in sustainability transformations at higher education institutions and underlying tensions: A systematic literature review

Anete Veidemane, Daniela Craciun, Barend van der Meulen (University of Twente, Netherlands)

15:00-15:20 - Designing equity through engineering: Education for sustainable development through inclusive toy design

Luana de Aguiar Vieira, Ana Regina de Aguiar Dutra, Anelise Ieal Vieira Cubas Henrique Souto, Henrique de Souza Medeiros, José Baltazar Salgueirinho Osório de Andrade Guerra (Catholic University Center of Jaraguá do Sul, Sustainable Development Research Center, Graduate Program in Business Administration, University of Southern Santa Catarina, State University of Santa Catarina, Brazil)

15:20-15:40- Transforming universities of applied sciences specialized for distance learning and online education towards sustainability – illustrated by the Wilhelm Büchner Hochschule, Darmstadt (Germany)

Ralf Isenmann & Jutta Sistemich (Wilhelm Büchner Hochschule, Darmstadt, Germany)

15:40-16:00 - Final Session & best papers awards – Small auditorium (basement)



Posters

1. **From legitimacy to institutionalization? How sustainability reporting shapes organizational change in universities**
Franz Aschauer & Romana Rauter (University of Graz, Austria)
2. **Fostering sustainability competences among geography students through story mapping and role-playing scenarios**
Mihaela Sima, Gabriela Morosanu-Mitoseriu & Ines Grigorescu (Romanian Academy, Institute of Geography, Romania)
3. **How to Integrate Life Cycle Thinking and Interdisciplinary Skills in Engineering Courses. A case study from an Austrian Institution of Higher Education**
Jasmin Helnwein & Ursula Knaack (UAS Technikum Wien, Austria)
4. **Universidad Técnica del Norte on the way to becoming a sustainable University**
Katty Cabascango & Patricia Aguirre (Universidad Técnica del Norte, Ecuador)