



Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) Special Event

Driving collective action for the SDGs: The role of further education

Building a sustainable and resilient recovery

7 July 2021, 9:00 - 11:00 am (EDT) // [Location: Virtual](#)

Introduction

The Higher Education Sustainability (HESI) Special Event takes place annually during the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in order to highlight the critical role of higher education in achieving sustainable development by forming the current and future generation of leaders, driving the research and policy agenda for both the public and private sectors, as well as facilitating multi-stakeholder collaboration at the local and global level. This forum is also meant to bring together key actors in the space to highlight the challenges, the opportunities and lessons learned to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This year's [HLPF](#) will focus on “Sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building and inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery of sustainable development”. The 2021 HLPF will discuss specifically SDGs 1 (on poverty reduction), 2 (on zero hunger), 3 (on good health and well-being), 8 (on decent work and economic growth), 10 (on reduced inequalities), 12 (on responsible consumption and production), 13 (on climate action), 16 (on peace, justice and strong institutions) and 17 (on partnerships), considering the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the SDGs. In that sense, while SDG 4 is not the distinct focus of this year, this SDG constitutes a critical enabler of a sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 pandemic and the progress on all of the SDGs.

Objectives of the event:

As HLPF participants explore various aspects of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, from international cooperation to controlling the pandemic and its impact to put the world back on track to achieve the SDGs by 2030, this event aims to:

1. Provide a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by the Higher Education sector, as well as the lessons learned, to support a sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

2. Highlight key stakeholder initiatives that drive innovative efforts in support of the recovery and achievement of the SDGs, through education, teaching and learning, decarbonization of campuses, and other crucial endeavors.
3. Convene an evolving and action-oriented conversation on how to bring about the collective systemic change needed to realize the decade of action and achieve the Agenda 2030.

	Agenda
0900	<p>Welcome and open remarks</p> <p>Brief overview of the progress we have made over the past 12 months and the objectives of the event (Florenzia Librizzi, Head of Program and Partnerships, SDG Academy, SDSN and Co-Chair of HESI)</p>
0905	<p>Presenting the SDG Accord Annual Report</p> <p>Presented by Fiona Goodwin, Director of Operations and Planning, The Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education (EAUC)</p>
0910	<p>Session 1: Where are we now: Building a sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 pandemic: Taking stock of the challenges, opportunities and lessons learned for Higher Education to steer the change.</p> <p>Conversation with insights on the challenges, opportunities and lessons learned of Higher Education to contribute to a sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19 pandemic, and promotes economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moderator: Sam Barratt, Chief of Youth, Education and Advocacy UNEP ● Stefania Giannini, Assistant Director-General for Education, UNESCO ● Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot, Director for Youth, Education and Erasmus+, DG Education and Culture, European Commission ● Prof. Phoebe Kounduri, Athens University of Economics and Business, Chair of the Taskforce “Green Recovery” COVID-19 Lancet Commission ● Kelo Uchendu, MOCK COP26 Campaign Coordinator & Engineer

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moderator: Summarising all these insights into 4-5 key lessons ● Q&A: 10-minute discussion and questions from the audience
<p>0950</p>	<p>Session 2: Multi Stakeholder partnerships and action to support systemic change for sustainable development – Big ideas to shift higher education on to the pathway the world needs – 3-minute pitch sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Moderator: Alexander Leicht, Chief of the Section of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship, UNESCO ● How can Universities decarbonise, and fast? Tim Carter, President at Second Nature ● How to integrate Education for Sustainable Development across all levels of education? Chandrika Bahadur, Director of SDG Academy, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) ● How can tech catalyse a break-through on equity? TBD ● What incentives are needed in the rankings of Higher Education? Duncan Ross, Chief Data Officer, Times Higher Education ● How can research and publishing be directed to address real world problems? Debra Rowe, President, US Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development ● How can the UN work with governments to make sure young people today are ready for green job opportunities? Suzana Puerto Gonzalez, Senior Youth Employment Specialist, ILO ● How can sustainable lifestyles be built up on campus? Jean-Christophe Carteron, President of the SuLiTest and CSR Director, Kedge BS ● How can Universities make a difference in addressing the nature crisis? Joseph Bull, Senior Lecturer at the Durrell Institute for Conservation and Ecology; Visiting Researcher at the University of Oxford ● What is the role of HEIs in reaching out to the local community and moving SDGs forward together? Shinobu Yamaguchi, Director of the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS)

<p>1040</p>	<p>Session 3: Final Reflections: Multi Stakeholder insights</p> <p>Keynote listeners:</p> <p>Youth voice: Bea Harrison, Teach the Future volunteer</p> <p>Academic voice: Labode Popoola, Professor of Forest Economics and the Director of the Centre for Sustainable Development, University of Ibadan</p> <p>Facilitator: John North, Executive Director at Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI)</p>
<p>1055-1100</p>	<p>Closing remarks (Co-chairs of HESI Sam Barratt and Florencia Librizzi)</p>
<p>11:10</p>	<p>International Green Gown Awards</p> <p>Announcement of the 2021 International Green Gown Award winners, in partnership with EAUC.</p>