

Sustainability Policy

Category: Governance
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Approved By: Executive Committee
Contact Person: Vice President, Ext 3932

Introduction:

The object of this policy is to provide clear direction for the UCSA's efforts to become environmentally, ethically and socially sustainable.

Policy Statement:

UCSA is committed to being a good neighbour, concerned for the community and the environment. We will continually strive to improve our social and environmental performance, with the objective of ensuring that our activities contribute to the sustainable development of the communities in which we operate.

The UCSA wishes to move towards adopting and embracing environmentally and socially sustainable practices across its operations. The UCSA will be leading by example in promoting a culture of responsible global citizenship to Staff, Students, Suppliers and the Executive.

Definitions

Environmental Sustainability shall involve long-term management of natural and physical resource use in a way, or at a rate, which enables the UCSA to provide for its long-term environmental goal of reducing, and or removing, any adverse effect, on the environment and society, in which it operates.

Specifically, this means that UCSA will aim to operate in a way that:

1. reduces its dependence on scarce metals and fossil fuels;
2. reduces its use of toxic and non-biodegradable substances;
3. helps maintain and restore natural processes and indigenous biodiversity;
4. cares for people, including future generations.

Ethical and Social Sustainability shall require the UCSA to provide for long term social, economic, and cultural goals whilst reducing outcomes that result in people being subject to conditions that systematically undermine their capacity to meet their needs.

Procedures:

Overview

Environmental and social sustainability should be considered (where possible) in all processes and practices within the UCSA's operation.

The UCSA will actively encourage environmental, ethical and social sustainability in the corporate

activities of all the companies that they deal with and minimize engagement with organizations that fail to meet the ethical or social responsibility expectations of the UCSA.

Implementation

The UCSA shall on an ongoing basis assess any harmful or potentially harmful impacts of its operations on the environment and society. The UCSA shall create systems to mitigate and reduce these harmful impacts.

Harmful environmental impacts shall include such things as –

1. High levels of waste output / Low levels of recycling
2. High levels of energy consumption
3. High usage levels of undesirable substances

The UCSA is committed to ethically and socially sustainable practices including:

1. Supporting the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
2. Equal opportunities - opposing any organization that discriminates on the grounds of race, sex, sexuality, disability, age and nationality.
3. Supplying Fairtrade products:
 - i. Fairtrade goods are made available for sale in all campus shops and are used in all cafes/restaurants and bars
 - ii. Fairtrade tea and coffee are served at all meetings hosted by UCSA
 - iii. Fairtrade goods are properly branded and promoted

Partnership with Staff, Students, Suppliers and the Executive

The UCSA will establish a widespread commitment on the part of all UCSA staff, students, suppliers and the Executive to reduce the quantity of waste produced by the organization.

Our commitment to becoming a 'Fairtrade University' is subject to identifying competitively priced Fairtrade suppliers.

The initial cost of being environmentally, ethically and socially sustainable must be recognized as part of a long-term strategy for cost efficiency.

The UCSA Chief Executive will be ultimately responsible for the implementation, delegation, and supervision of tasks required for compliance with this policy.

Partnership with the University

The UCSA will endeavour to work in partnership with the University of Canterbury wherever possible to achieve environmentally and socially sustainable practices campus-wide. This will include providing representation on relevant University of Canterbury committees to promote environmental and social sustainability practices.

Sustainability Education

The UCSA will recognise its unique role as a leadership organisation for students and will promote environmental, ethical and social sustainability messages and student education in its communications and through its events.