



ACTS_{INC}

AUSTRALASIAN CAMPUSES
TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY

2013 Annual Report

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1.0 Message from the President

2013 has been a time of change in Australasia, for those within the tertiary education sector and for sustainability in general. With many institutions facing economic cut backs, restructuring and mergers, sustainability has had to fight hard to stay at the forefront of people's priorities. Hugely compounded in Australia by the change of government and lack of strong leadership, we are facing an uncertain future at a time when action on sustainability is needed and needed now!

But even faced with these hardships, many institutions are still recognising the importance of sustainability and how we must champion the cause now more than ever. ACTS as an organisation continues to support institutions in their sustainability endeavours. Offering recognition for those leading the way, invaluable networking and innovative tools, ACTS has continued to strive for positive change for the tertiary education sector.

With change comes opportunity and one is in the form of the Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) system which we have decided to make freely available, in its basic form, to all members. We look forward to rolling this out to all member institutions, providing a comprehensive performance management and improvement tool to assist in realising holistic campus sustainability.

Networking was at the forefront of our inspiring conference in Sydney in September with a high calibre of keynotes and thought provoking sessions. We were also delighted with the inspirational entries to this year's Green Gown Awards Australasia and overjoyed with two Australasian institutions winning three of the top honours in the second International Awards. We'll be hoping for even greater success in 2014 as Australasia plays host to the International Green Gown Awards for the first time in Hobart!

Now more than ever, collaboration is a must to build relationships to ensure sustainability is given the kudos and priority it needs globally. I am heartened by several MOUs put in place between ACTS and supporting organisations across Australasia and internationally. We look forward to developing these new relationships further and creating new ones as our influence and reputation continues to expand.

I am also delighted to have welcomed several new faces to the ACTS Board and Regional Directors. As our band of passionate volunteers grows, our association can only go from strength to strength. On behalf of the whole team, we hope to share some very exciting collaborative events with you in 2014.

To wrap up I'd like to say a huge thank you to our member organisations for being at the forefront of sustainability, for keeping the flag flying and for continuing to educate our students, green our buildings and show real leadership within the tertiary education system. I look forward to sharing your opportunities and challenges in 2014 and beyond.



Leanne Denby
President of ACTS



2.0 Who we are

Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS) is a member led organisation for the tertiary education sector in Australia and New Zealand. Founded in 1990, we were incorporated in 2006 and have seen continued growth since.

Our aims are simple: to inspire, promote and support change towards best practice sustainability within the operations, curriculum and research of the Australasian tertiary education sector. We do this by providing resources, knowledge, developmental and networking opportunities for members and by critically challenging and supporting collaboration with stakeholders to lead sustainability innovation in the sector.

This aim is supported through a number of projects and initiatives:

- Workshops, training and professional development opportunities
- Advocating for sustainability on behalf of the sector
- Coordinating the annual International ACTS Conference
- The Green Gown Awards Australasia (GGAA) and
- International Green Gown Awards (IGGA)
- Scholarships
- The annual ACTS photography competition
- Exclusive members only access to web based resources
- Provision of the learning and development tool, Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) Index
- Dissemination of case studies and sector communications (fortnightly eBulletin enACT and quarterly newsletter ACTivate!)
- Publicity and support of our member's sustainability achievements



Some of the ACTS team at the 13th International ACTS Conference, Sydney 2013



3.0 Membership



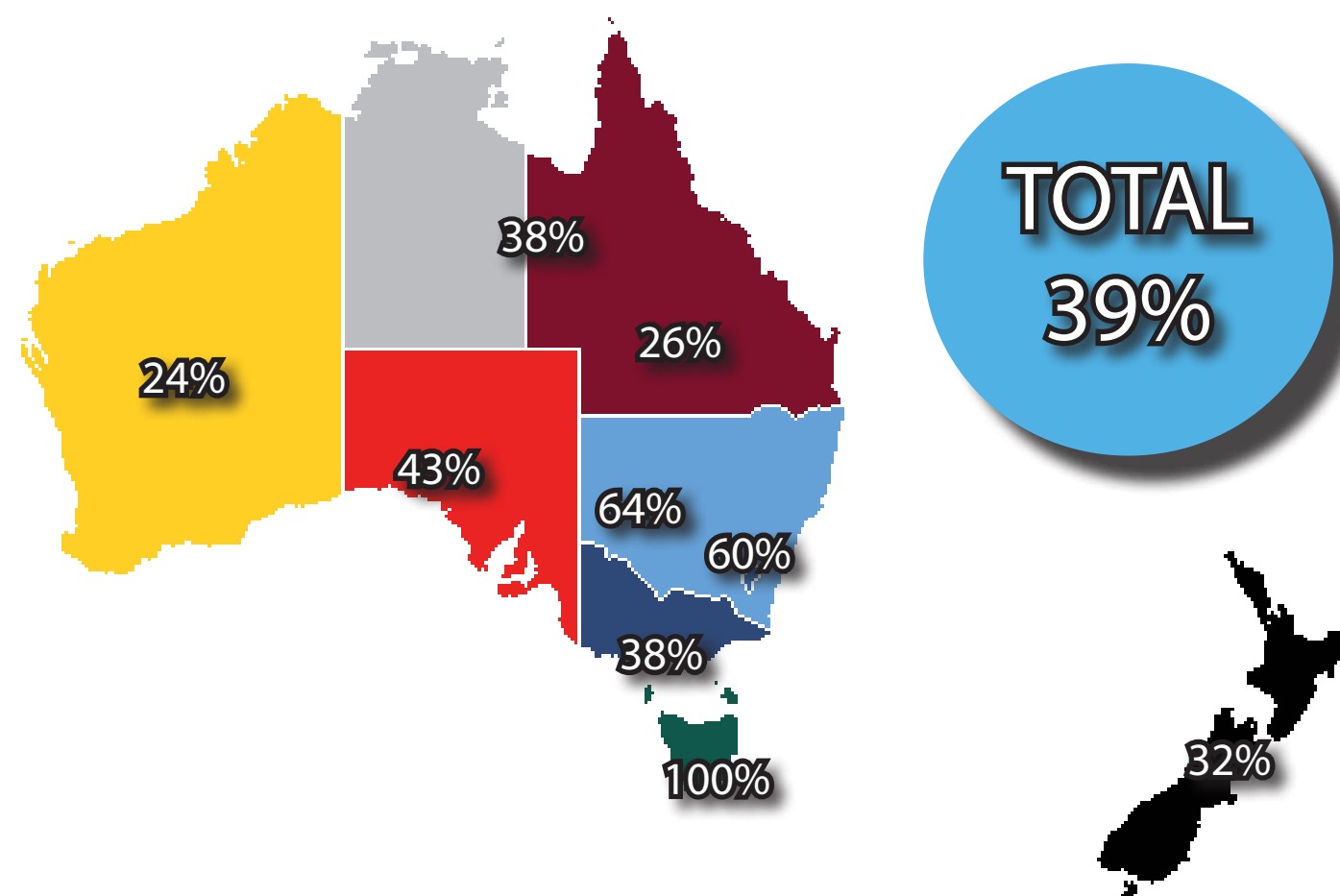
2013: Membership overview

ACTS continues to strengthen its reputation as the sector champion for improving and promoting sustainability in the further and higher education institutions.

We welcomed five new members in 2013 - two universities and three TAFE institutions. Our association now represents 51 universities, TAFEs and polytechnics within Australasia, equating to 39% of the sector. The map below shows our member representation statistics in each of the regions (NZ; NT & North QLD; South QLD; Regional NSW & ACT; Sydney Basin; VIC; SA; WA; TAS). We congratulate Tasmania on becoming the first Australian state to have 100% membership!

Institutional memberships were fairly stable throughout 2013, with only a marginal increase seen. Whilst we have a very high rate of university memberships, our real opportunity for growth lies in the TAFE/Polytechnic and RTO sectors. The unstable political climate within Australia, which led to a change in federal government in September saw a general tightening of institutional budgets, further compounding strains with a number of state-wide government funding cuts to the education sector, particularly in Victoria and Queensland.

2013 also saw a large number of our members undertaking institutional-wide restructuring, resulting in many sustainability departments and/or positions being evaluated, and in some cases, completely removed or absorbed into other departments. Nonetheless, our overall position is stable, with opportunities for growth in other areas being explored in 2014.



Institutional Members

- Australian Catholic University
- Australian National University
- AUT University of Technology
- Challenger Institute of Technology
- Charles Darwin University
- **Charles Sturt University**
- Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology
- Curtin University
- Deakin University
- **Edith Cowan University**
- Federation University Australia
- **Flinders University**
- Gordon Institute of TAFE
- **Griffith University**
- Holmesglen Institute of TAFE
- Hunter Institute – TAFE NSW
- **James Cook University**
- **La Trobe University**
- Lincoln University
- **Macquarie University**
- Massey University
- **Monash University**
- North Coast Institute – TAFE NSW
- **Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE**
- **Northern Sydney Institute – TAFE NSW**
- Otago Polytechnic
- **RMIT University**

Members of the ACTS team who volunteer their time on our Executive Board or as a Regional Director belong to institutions highlighted in blue...

- Southern Cross University
- Sunshine Coast TAFE
- Swinburne University of Technology
- TAFE SA – Regional
- TasTAFE
- **The University of Adelaide**
- **The University of Auckland**
- **The University of Melbourne**
- The University of New South Wales
- The University of Newcastle
- The University of Sydney
- The University of Western Australia
- Tropical North Queensland TAFE
- Unitec Institute of Technology
- University of Canterbury
- University of Queensland
- University of Southern Queensland
- **University of Tasmania**
- University of Technology Sydney
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of Western Sydney
- University of Waikato
- University of Wollongong
- Western Institute – TAFE NSW

Affiliate Members

- Pymble Ladies College
- Tertiary Access Group Co-operative Ltd
- Trinity College

Corporate Members

- Biniris
- Ecosave
- Envisi
- Mojarra



4.0 Organisational Changes



ACTS welcomed several new members to our management team at the 2013 Annual General Meeting. Audette Benson from TAFE NSW Northern Sydney Institute brings her wealth of experience to the Vice-President TAFE position, whilst Rachael Reeve from the North Melbourne Institute of TAFE was announced as Vice-President TAFE elect.

Jan Chaput from La Trobe University, Danielle Rostan-Herbert from the University of Melbourne and Linda Stevenson from RMIT will co-share as Victorian Regional Directors, whilst Barnaby Smith from Flinders University is our newest South Australian Regional Director. The North Queensland region also welcomes Dr Colin Macgregor from James Cook University as the final addition to our Regional Directors.

The AGM also saw the announcement of the new position of ACTS Network Liasion (EfS), to be undertaken by Mark Boulet from Monash University (and former Victorian RD).

As we welcome our new members, we also say goodbye to others. A huge and heartfelt thank you goes to Pascaline Owers, Challenger Institute of Technology, outgoing Vice-President (TAFE) as well as Sam Kushuk, Victoria University and Penny Johnston, TAFE SA Regional as outgoing Regional Directors, for their time and dedication to ACTS.

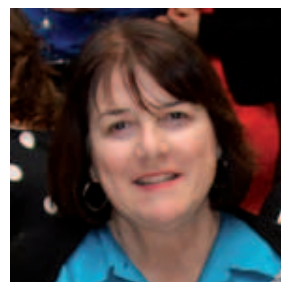
Executive Board

Vice President (TAFE) - Audette Benson

Associate Director, Engineering, Transport and Construction

TAFE NSW Northern Sydney Institute

Audette has led the sustainability portfolio for NSI for 8 years. NSI is recognised through state and national awards as a leader in Education for Sustainability.



Network Liasion (EfS)- Mark Boulet

Monash Sustainability Institute

Mark has over 12 years experience in environmental education and organisational sustainability in higher education, community groups and the public service. Prior to managing the award winning Green Steps program at the Monash Sustainability Institute, Mark managed the Green Office sustainability program at Monash University, engaged multicultural communities in sustainable living at Environment Victoria and evaluated community sustainability programs at the Office of the Victorian Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability. "I would like to ensure that ACTS continues to play a leadership role in advocating the case of Education for Sustainability in the tertiary sector and functions as the representative of the sector in national initiatives (such as the Australian Sustainability Education Alliance) that progress this issue"



Regional Directors

South Australia - Barnaby Smith

Sustainability Officer

Flinders University

Barnaby has over 11 years experience in the sustainability and environmental management field across consulting, local government and tertiary sector roles. He is passionate about a participatory approach to achieving institutional change and hopes to catalyse collaborative action and learning amongst the SA ACTS members.



Regional Directors

Northern Queensland/Northern Territory - Dr Colin MacGregor

Senior Lecturer, Sustainability

James Cook University

Colin has worked as a sustainability practitioner and researcher in State and Commonwealth government agencies, as well as the corporate sector, for almost 20 years. He completed his PhD at James Cook University (JCU) Townsville in Sustainable Development in 2002 before returning to the land of his birth (Scotland) to take up a three-year Post-doctoral research position at the University of St Andrews. He stayed on at St Andrews to establish their undergraduate degree program in Sustainable Development before returning to Australia and the University of Western Australia in 2006. Finally, he came back to JCU Cairns as a Senior Lecturer in 2012 to establish and coordinate JCU's new Bachelor of Sustainability. Colin's other roles at JCU include chairing the University's Sustainability Action Group and he is a member of the Sustainability Advisory Committee which advises JCU's Vice Chancellor on all sustainability-related matters.

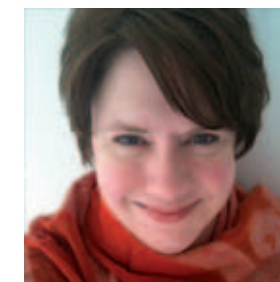


Victoria - Jen Chaput

Environmental Sustainability Manager

La Trobe University

Jennifer has managed the Environmental Sustainability Unit at La Trobe University since 2010. She is a Green Star Accredited Professional with more than seventeen years of experience in land use planning, project management, and sustainability within tertiary education, local and State government. Her education and experiences span Australia, the United States and Canada. "Participating with ACTS is a fantastic opportunity to communicate all the great work we're doing across Victoria and learn how we can do even better through our colleagues' experiences. I look forward to working with the ACTS team and my Victorian colleagues!"



Victoria - Danielle Rostan-Herbert

Sustainability Manager

The University of Melbourne

In the role of Regional Director for Victoria, I bring sixteen years of experience, knowledge and passion of Environment and Sustainability within the tertiary sector. My current role at the University of Melbourne involves engaging with staff, students and the community. I develop and maintain networks of staff and students across the University, and deliver Sustainability training and resources for staff. I have worked on Environmental Policy, Strategic Planning and Environmental legislative compliance, and I maintained ISO14001 for the University for ten years. In the tertiary sector we have a unique opportunity to bring the academic and operational arms together, and this synergy will enable us to achieve a Sustainable Campus for our future.



Victoria - Linda Stevenson

Senior Advisor, Sustainability

RMIT University

I have worked in the tertiary sector in Australia for the last four years, previously working in UK local government roles. I have a broad interest in sustainability from strategy development through to communication and behaviour change. Within my role at RMIT University I have worked collaboratively across research, academic and operational areas to deliver sustainability outcomes and have recently focused on assessing infrastructure updates and delivering sustainability outcomes through the build environment.





5.0 13th International ACTS Conference



Conference delegates

ACTS has now hosted 13 international conferences, with the most recent being in Sydney, Australia. From panels to parties, the ACTS Conference is fast becoming the sustainability event of the year. Read on to find out why the majority of delegates had an “excellent” experience.

The 13th International ACTS conference was held at the Novotel, Sydney Olympic Park. Over 140 delegates from universities, TAFE, government and business attended the event, which also included the Green Gown Awards Australasia Awards ceremony.

Leanne Denby, President of ACTS, opened the conference by acknowledging the traditional owners of our shared land and community support for sustainability - most notably through the flood of donations and support for the Climate Commission despite being shut down by the current Australian government.

Ian Lowe, Emeritus Professor at Griffith University inspiringly presented about custom, practice, and systems of law that allow us to live in balance. “Sustainability is so important, it should be an integral part of everyone’s education”, said Lowe. His satirical look at how we could create an unsustainable future had the audience in stitches as he challenged our societies fundamental assumptions and current flawed strategies. He stressed that the future is not somewhere we are going, but something we are creating - so we need to embrace a new approach by taking responsibility for change and by valuing ecological sensitivity, quality of life and human solidarity.

Sarah Lee, Scotland Manager EAUC, addressed the delegates to give a snapshot of the changing landscape in Scotland. Amid strong government legislation for action on climate change, Lee sees students as key to delivering on national targets: “Students are our future for a resource efficient workforce.”

Cocktail drinks were welcomed after an intense first day of the conference. Hosted at The Brewery, delegates mingled over drinks and canapés whilst musing over sponsor iAutomation’s give away light pens!

Day 2 opened with a keynote presentation from Scientia Professor Veena Sahajwalla, Director of Sustainable Materials Research & Technology (SMaRT) at UNSW. Sahajwalla talked about the passion and dedication that students have for the environment, believing that our future is bright because of them. Veena stressed the need to translate research with on-the-ground action to create a better world, and has been doing this very successfully with industry through green materials and recycling end-of-life polymers in steelmaking.

Charlotte Taylor from the National Union of Students (UK) made a call for action to engage students in sustainability. Her vision is for student unions to act as green hubs educating others (suppliers, institutions and communities), and for all students to model sustainability attitudes, behaviours and social norms on campus and beyond.

The Executive Panel talked about the role of tertiary education in achieving sustainable development. A strong focus from the panel was on leadership, innovation and being a point of connection within the local community. “Sustainability should weave into what Universities are all about,” said Professor S. Bruce Dowton, Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University. Audette Benson, Hornsby Campus Director of TAFE NSW NSI linked the principles of sustainability to those of innovation, stressing the importance of industry partnerships, community involvement and fostering a culture that facilitates sustainability and

Left: Professor Ian Lowe, Griffith University Middle: The executive panel Right: Sarah Lee, EAUC



Key conference feedback statistics

- Overall conference experience: Excellent (52.38%) Good (47.62%)
- Overall quality of the plenary presentations: Excellent (57.14%) Good (42.86%)
- Overall quality of the concurrent sessions: Excellent (33.33%) Good (61.90%) Average (4.76%)
- Overall quality of the Conference dinner and Green Gown Awards Australasia ceremony: Excellent (31.82%) Good (50%) Average (18.18%)

Check out the full conference feedback evaluation here: www.acts.asn.au/2013-conf/

innovation. “Universities have an obligation and luxury to lead long term thinking,” echoed Patrick Woods, DVC Resources of UTS, who also stressed the need for developing relationships with industry.

Also from the panel, Dr Paul Rowland, DVC Engagement Strategy and Quality, UWS, talked about our imperative as education providers to pursue an holistic sustainability agenda within new and existing partnerships, and the need to embed sustainability within current programs, rather than (or in addition to) specific sustainability programs.

Melva Crouch, Chief Administrative Officer from UoW, grapples with the implementation of sustainable development goals, suggesting that it is the role of Universities to “walk the talk” in what they teach, how they engage community, and research. Each executive agreed the challenge is negotiating sustainability within such complex environments.

Closing day two, the winners of the 2013 Green Gown Awards Australasia, presented by Ecosave, were announced at the fabulous conference dinner and Award ceremony at the Scenic WatervieW in Bicentennial Park. The evening was an extremely positive celebration with 14 institutions being recognised for their sustainability achievements. We also celebrated the ACTS Photographic Competition, with Carlene Kirvan from Macquarie University winning the People’s Choice Award for her photo celebrating gardening and upcycling.

Day three kicked off with Professor David Hood, Science and Engineering Faculty at QUT who gave an update on climate change, emphasising why we must act and why it’s good for business to act now. He talked about the coming crisis due to climate change, biodiversity loss, finite resource consumption, the planet’s carrying capacity and general cognitive dissonance – that is, our belief sets that dismiss the science. Professor Hood then guided us through what we need to change - including a new measure for GDP that considers national wellness and a balanced scorecard approach to business. He urged the use of Marginal Abatement Cost (MAC) curve (over Cost Benet Analysis) for engaging the executive and gaining support for effective carbon abatement action.

Formalities ended with a lively professional development session from Greg Jenkins (TinCAN Learning). Delegates swapped tables, discussed concepts, took collective group notes, and walked away with a better understanding of our role as change agents for sustainability.

The ACTS community thanks and supports our wonderful, forward thinking sponsors: Mojarra, Ecosave, Alerton, Aquabubbler, Greensense, Impact Sustainability, Climate Friendly, iAutomation, enVizi, Mojarra, Keep Cup and Learning & Teaching Sustainability. We could not have done this conference without you!

We look forward to seeing you at the 14th International ACTS Conference at the Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart on 5-7 November 2014.



Professor David Hood, QUT



6.0 Green Gown Awards Australasia



The winners of the 2013 Green Gown Awards Australasia, presented by Ecosave, were announced at a fabulous dinner and award ceremony at the Scenic Waterview in Bicentennial Park, Sydney on 26 September 2013. The evening was an extremely positive celebration for institutions showcasing their sustainability achievements.

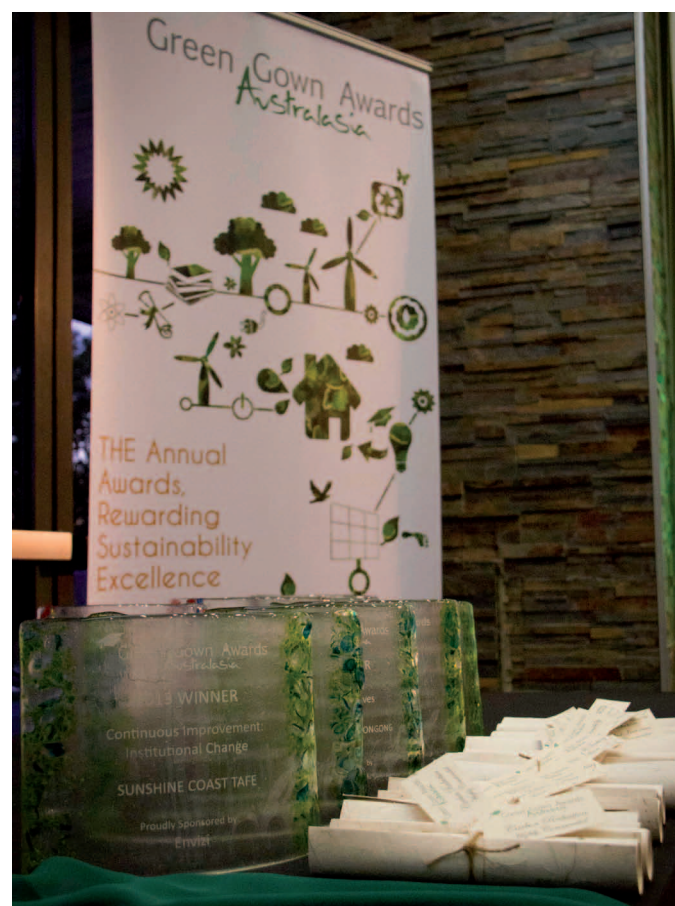
Four years in, the Awards are undoubtedly the best way to recognise sustainability excellence in the sector. Winners were announced in nine categories, with over 40 institutions involved, representing over 20% of the sector. Judged by a panel of independent experts involving 26 sector representatives, the judges were delighted with the high calibre and diverse selection of entries. We'd like to say a huge thank you to the 2013 judges.

2013 Award Categories:

- Carbon Reduction
- Continuous Improvement – Institutional Change
- Learning & Teaching*
- Skills for Sustainability
- Social Responsibility
- Student Initiatives
- TAFE & Smaller Institutions
- ACTS Award of Excellence - Institutional
- ACTS Award of Excellence - Individual

*In collaboration with learning and teaching sustainability

The Green Gown Awards Australasia ceremony was held in conjunction with the 13th International ACTS Conference dinner, attended by national and international sustainability practitioners from the tertiary education sector, business and government. The Awards, presented by Ecosave, were proudly sponsored by Mojarra, Learning and Teaching Sustainability and the Office of Learning and Teaching, Keep Cup and Envizi.



NEW for 2013 was the Individual ACTS Award of Excellence won by Natasha Lay, University of Technology Sydney, alongside the Institutional award won by James Cook University. Nominated and voted on by members, these awards are a recognition of the sustainability achievements of our individual and institutional members and celebrate those who have been working hard to achieve change at any level in their institution.

ACTS President Leanne Denby said "we are overwhelmed by the response to this year's Green Gown Awards Australasia, with winners delighting at the prestige of their accolade. The calibre of initiatives within the sector is extremely high, with all nominees deserving commendation".

CARBON REDUCTION
WINNER: Deakin University

Highly Commended:

AUT University
University of Wollongong

**CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
- INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE**
WINNER: Sunshine Coast TAFE

Highly Commended:

Griffith University

LEARNING & TEACHING
WINNER: Griffith University

Highly Commended:

University of Tasmania
University of Technology, Sydney

**ACTS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
INSTITUTIONAL WINNER:**
James Cook University

SKILLS FOR SUSTAINABILITY
WINNER: TAFE NSW Sydney Institute

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
WINNER: TAFE NSW Western Sydney Institute
Highly Commended:
Curtin University

SMALLER INSTITUTIONS
WINNER: Unitec Institute of Technology
Highly Commended:
Sunshine Coast TAFE

STUDENT INITIATIVES
WINNER: University of Wollongong
Highly Commended:
La Trobe University
The University of Adelaide

**ACTS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
INDIVIDUAL WINNER:**
Natasha Lay, UTS

Winners celebrate with their recycled glass trophies at the 2013 Green Gown Awards Australasia ceremony





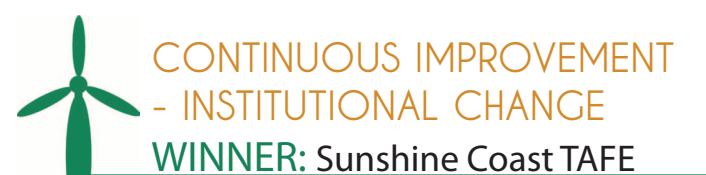
7.0 International Green Gown Awards



Founded in the UK almost 10 years ago, the Green Gown Awards have gone global, with 2013 being the second year for the International Green Gown Awards. Australasian winners competed with UK winners to claim the 'international' title in three categories.

Representing Australasia in the Continuous Improvement – institutional Change category was Sunshine Coast TAFE with "reTHINK for sustainability @ Sunshine Coast TAFE". University of Wollongong for their 'Illawarra Flame – Sustainable Home" in the Student Initiatives category and TAFE NSW –Western Sydney Institute for 'building sustainable communities through the wellbeing of individuals and families" within the social responsibility category.

It was with great excitement that the University of Wollongong and Sunshine Coast TAFE were announced as International winners at the UK's Green Gown Awards ceremony in Derby in November, with the Australasian contenders taking two of the three top honours.



ACTS Secretary Treasurer Delwyn Landgon (left) & Regional Director Kay Ollet (right) with Leeza Boyce, Institute Director for Sunshine Coast TAFE/Wide Bay TAFE (middle left) presenting the International Green Gown Award trophy to Annie Nolan, Project Officer Sunshine Coast TAFE (middle right)



8.0 Sharing Awards Success

Case Studies

As well as recognising the excellent initiatives taking place in our sector, the Green Gown Awards also aim to share the best practice case studies. Many of our winners, highly commended and finalists have put together some inspiring videos' and case studies, allowing them to shout about their achievements whilst sharing their knowledge.

Also available is the wonderful collection of winner's videos and case studies from the UK. Be inspired by our international colleagues by checking out the links below.

Awards Feedback

In 2013, Award participants were invited to submit feedback on both the Awards process and the Awards ceremony. We strive to take on board the feedback provided, and very much appreciate all those that took the time to submit comments. ACTS looks forward to implementing changes to ensure the Awards go from strength to strength. Thank you so much for your input!

2014 Awards

The 2014 Awards will launch on **10 June 2014** and the deadline for entries is Tuesday **12 August 2014**. Winners will be announced on 6 November in conjunction with the 2014 ACTS Conference in Hobart, and for the FIRST time Australasia will be hosting the International Green Gown Awards! Make it your year to shine....we look forward to seeing your inspirational applications in 2014!

For more information visit: www.acts.asn.au

Green Gown Award Links

Australasian Case Studies: www.acts.asn.au/initiatives/ggaa/sharing-awards-success/2013-winners

UK Case Studies: sustainabilityexchange.ac.uk/about/green-gown-awards/sharing-2013-excellence

Green Gown Awards Australasia feedback: www.acts.asn.au/initiatives/ggaa/ggaa-2013

14th International Australasian Campuses
Towards Sustainability Conference



BRIDGING DIVIDES
Connections for holistic sustainability

5 - 7 November 2014 | Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart



9.0 Sustainability Photography Competition

ACTS delivered the second annual Sustainability Photography Competition in 2013. The competition was developed with the intention to help raise sustainability awareness through a popular artistic medium. Embraced by the ACTS community in its inaugural year, the 2013 competition saw even greater engagement, with a 50% increase in entries across the staff and students categories.

The top 20 finalists from across Australia and New Zealand were displayed at the 13th International ACTS Conference in Sydney. Conference delegates had the opportunity to take part in the competition, by voting for one of the displayed entries for a 'People's Choice Award'. Feedback from delegates was extremely positive regarding the competition, with the photo display creating a fantastic atmosphere for conversation and discussion.

The competition winners were announced at the annual ACTS Conference dinner, held at WatervieW on Bicentennial Park. Congratulations to this year's winners!

Student Category

- **Winner: Bec Taylor** – The University of Adelaide
'Just a Cupple of Carrots'
- **Second Place: Saba Nabi** – Charles Sturt University
'Lone Survivor - let's change their destiny'
- **Third Place: Matt Goodman** – CPIT
'Deep Sea Surfing'

Staff Category

- **Winner: Simona Galimberti** – University of Technology, Sydney
'Celery Stalk. Sprouting tall, as the buildings in the landscape'
- **Second Place: Suzy Keys** – James Cook University
'The balance of power is in our hands'
- **Third Place: Anselm Bradford** – AUT University
'Urban Forest'

People's Choice Award

Carlene Kirvan – Macquarie University 'Nature's green jeans - gardening in the city'



10.0 Scholarships

Our annual scholarship programme has proven as popular as ever with ACTS awarding 3 recipients in the 2013 scholarship round. The scholarship scheme provides individuals from within an ACTS institutional member, undertaking sustainability related employment, research or learning, the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills via one of three scholarship avenues.

The ACTS Conference Scholarships – student and employee – are designed to provide professional development opportunities for our members as they attend a sustainability focused conference.

The Development Scholarship provides a unique opportunity to undertake a project or study tour to develop knowledge, experience and skills, whilst providing a benefit to the recipient's institution and ACTS more broadly.

We look forward to continuing the ACTS scholarship programme 2014. Visit www.acts.asn.au for more information.

What our 2013 scholarship winners had to say...



Student Scholarship winners Wesley and Sharon at the ACTS Conference



Development Scholarship winner Rachael Goddard

(Left) Leanne Denby, Carlene Kirvan (People's Choice Winner), Belinda Bean and Cindy Cunningham (Right) Conference delegates viewing finalist entries



2013 ACTS Photography Competition winners (left) Bec Taylor and (right) Simona Galimberti with Leanne Denby



Conference Scholarship - Students

Wesley DeMuth, James Cook University

"I've always wanted to go to a nationally-recognised event dealing with the many facets of sustainability, like this one. To hear about people's innovation and experiences, and the many obstacles that they have overcome, will be the greatest reward I could ask for. It is with this exposure, that I hope to have the capacity to help the world in some way."

Conference Scholarship - Students

Sharon Holden, James Cook University

"I think the most important thing [I have learned] is that we are all working for the same goals even though we are taking a different approach. Meeting at conferences like this can be quite empowering as it shows that you are not alone. We should not forget this and seek each other for advice or support when needed and work together to make a difference! I am very grateful for this opportunity that ACTS gave me and I feel like I've learnt so much. I would highly recommend for other students to apply for this scholarship!"

Development Scholarship

Rachael Goddard, Waikato University

Rachael won the 2013 ACTS Development Scholarship for researching waste at Higher Education Institutions, and identifying barriers to implementing systems for minimisation and diversion of organic waste. "[I am] excited to have the opportunity to delve deeper into a key environmental issue, and hope that my research will assist other HEI's with decisions and options for reducing organic waste."



11.0 Sector Collaboration & Development



2013 has seen ACTS continue to develop its relationships, networks and initiatives both nationally and internationally. Strengthening links with our existing international partners was a high priority for our association, along with making new connections, and developing collaborative initiatives.

International Partnerships

Higher Education Sustainability Initiative

The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI) was founded on the occasion of the global Rio+20 event in June 2012. Since HEIs educate current and future decision makers, they play a key role in building more sustainable societies and creating new paradigms. As educational institutions, they have the mission to promote development through both research and teaching, disseminating new knowledge and insight to their students and building their capabilities. Leaders of the international academic community were therefore asked to commit to the development of sustainable practices by signing a commitment to HESI.

In 2013 ACTS, along with a broad range of international and national organisations and networks, endorsed HESI, and have seen a total of 272 organisations in 47 countries sign the Declaration. This Initiative seeks to improve sustainability programs of cities and towns through their cooperation with local universities and the resulting increased access to technical expertise. Numerous technological innovations are expected to be shared between academic and scientific institutions around the world, and new partnerships formed with the private sector for commercialisation and diffusion of new technologies.

A further objective is for HESI to lead to hundreds of university campuses being equipped with resource efficient buildings, sustainable transport options, and green supply chains, as well as for thousands of university students across multiple disciplines to have acquired knowledge of sustainability concepts that can be applied in the marketplace and to living more sustainable lifestyles.

Platform for Sustainable Performance in Education

Another tangible example of progress in support of HESI commitments was the launch of a Platform for Sustainable Performance in Education on the margins of the UNEP Governing Council in February 2013. The Platform brings together global organisations which have created sustainability assessment tools designed to support universities and colleges improve their social, economic and environmental accountability.

Australasia is represented by Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) which is delivered and developed by ACTS in conjunction with the EAUC in the UK. By coming together it is our goal that more universities and colleges learn about the value of sustainability assessment tools to improve the sustainability performance across the whole of their institution. Education is being reinvented and we desperately need 'turn-around' leadership which is up to the challenge of delivering institutions and graduates that are fit for the economic, environmental and social complexity and challenges we now face.

The Platform brings together the following organisations:

- The Association for the Advancement in Sustainability in Higher Education – AASHE, North America
- Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability – ACTS, Australasia
- Assessment Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education – AISHE, Netherlands
- Conference of Grandes Ecoles – CGE, France
- Conference of University Presidents – CPU, France
- Conference of Rectors of Universities – CRUE, Spain
- Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges – EAUC, United Kingdom
- The Network for the Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research – ProSPER.Net, Asia and Pacific.



Resource Sharing

Following the successful implementation of a global partnership, ACTS continues to collaborate with the EAUC in the UK and AASHE in the USA to share member resources on a global scale. The ongoing initiative is available exclusively to members from each organisation, including ACTS who have access to all resources including publications, e-newsletters and networks, as well as sharing good practice from around the globe on issues such as resource efficiency, education, waste minimisation and sustainability reporting.

Daejayon

In May of 2013, ACTS President Leanne Denby was invited to South Korea to speak at the Green Campus Forum (pictured below), sponsored by the Gyeonggi-do Association for Green Campus Initiative (GAGCI). During her brief tour, Leanne had the opportunity to meet with the student association "Daejayon".

Daejayon, which literally translated means "Great Nature", has an international student base with a remit to change the world! The NGO believes that human beings are in crisis due to the unprecedented environmental destruction in history, and that it is young people who can solve this crisis. For this, Daejayon is producing environmental leaders and establishing 20,000 Green Campuses throughout the world to make a greener planet through their programs, "Green School, Green Campus & Green World."

ACTS signed an MOU with Daejayon to encourage our associations to collaborate and build relationships with tertiary education student networks to support environmental education and actions.



National Partnerships

Tertiary Sustainability Network

In May 2013 ACTS joined the Victorian Tertiary Sustainability Network (TSN), which was established to allow networking with sustainability professionals from the Victorian tertiary education sector. Since the ACTS staff base is now located in Victoria it seemed the perfect opportunity to collaborate and work with ACTS members on future initiatives. The TSN has over 50 members, with regular attendance from about 20 institutions.

International Green Skills Network

September 2013 saw ACTS sign an MOU with the International Green Skills Network (IGSN), run by TAFE Directors Australia. The network was launched in 2012 and aims to encourage graduates and learners to promote innovation in business via 'green skills' to support the transition to a sustainable future. The MOU sees an agreement between ACTS and the IGSN to promote collaboration and resource sharing within our organisations.



12.0 Learning in Future Environments



LEARNING IN FUTURE ENVIRONMENTS

The Learning in Future Environments (LiFE) Index was launched by ACTS throughout Australasia in March 2012. Jointly developed by colleagues from the UK, Australia and New Zealand higher education sectors, the LiFE Index is a comprehensive online performance management and improvement system. After much discussion between EAUC, the LiFE Index partner in the UK, and ACTS Executive, 2013 saw the decision to change the way in which we offer this useful and versatile framework.

As of 2014, each member of ACTS will be able to freely access the LiFE Index guidelines as part of their membership benefits. The guidelines feature comprehensive information to support users in addressing holistic campus sustainability through the four priority areas: Leadership and Governance; Partnerships and Engagement; Learning, Teaching and Research; and Facilities and Operations. Each priority area is accompanied by strategic information to assist in developing a business case for sustainability, and is underpinned by a number of sub-themes to better define the elements of the priority area. What's more, the guidelines include a comprehensive list of supporting resources, as well as examples of what good practice could look like.

In discussing the move to provide the LiFE Index guidelines for free, ACTS President Leanne Denby said "Having the basic elements of the LiFE Index available for our members is a great way to support institutions in developing a holistic approach to campus sustainability. It's no easy task to be able to sell the business case for sustainability into the core business of educational institutions, but the LiFE Index provides supporting text to assist with this, as well as identifying key questions to ask of your approach."

Currently the online system is supported by an organisation based in the UK, who to date have been relatively unresponsive in making suggested changes and updates to the system to improve functionality. This unresponsiveness combined with the significant time difference between Australasia and the UK also impacted on the decision to provide the Guidelines for free. "We need to be able to better respond to the suggestions of the LiFE Index users, and to do that, ACTS needs to have better control of the online system" Leanne said. "As such, we will look to redevelop the online component of the LiFE Index locally, incorporating the feedback we have accumulated to date to make the online tool even better than the current version."

The LiFE Index Guidelines will be available early in 2014 and we strongly encourage you to have a look through them, and if nothing else, see which areas you are addressing and where you may need to pay more attention.



14.0 Communication

ACTS has continued to work hard to increase the frequency and quality of our communications. We have three main tools for communicating with our members and the wider tertiary education sector to ensure people are kept as up to date and as well informed as possible.

enACT

Members and non members alike can subscribe to our fortnightly ebulletin enACT, which delivers the latest tertiary sector sustainability news, resources, appointments, opportunities and events within Australia and New Zealand. It also provides news on other things happening outside the sector, and any advice or tips to help move things forward. All ACTS members can contribute to content for the ebulletin in order to better promote and share good practice. We actively encourage members to send through any news, articles, events, appointments or opportunities so that we can further promote the work of institutions. We believe that enACT provides readers with a valuable and informative bulletin.



ACTivate

This more comprehensive newsletter has been distributed since 2007, but was revamped in 2011, in line with the web development and branding. Currently ACTivate is produced on a quarterly basis and contains sustainability news, resources, appointments, opportunities and events, like enACT, but the articles are more in depth. ACTivate is currently available to anyone that can download it from the ACTS website or subscribe to receive the newsletter via email with each release. In the interest of sustainability no hardcopies are printed.

Social Media

2013 saw significant growth and activity for ACTS on social media. We operate and regularly maintain accounts on popular social networking sites Facebook, twitter, linkedin and youtube. A major communication goal for ACTS in 2014 is to further develop our social media networks to utilise these communication tools further.



13.0 Education for Sustainability Advocacy

The Australian Education for Sustainability Alliance (AESA) is made up of organisations from the education, union, youth and environment sectors and represents a strong and passionate group that want a higher prioritisation of sustainability in the education system. As an alliance, AESA advocates for best practice education for sustainability policy in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

In 2013, ACTS Vice-president Campus Learning (EfS) Dr John Rafferty and Network Liaison (EfS) Mark Boulet worked with the Alliance to develop a succinct and relevant Tertiary Education Policy titled 'Reorienting our education systems to equip future managers, decision makers, teachers and other professionals to work for a sustainable future'. The policy provides a number of recommendations to meet the goal 'to achieve a more sustainable future by integrating Education for Sustainability (EfS) into all tertiary education courses, and to ensure campuses are managed in a sustainable way'.¹

In 2014 the Alliance aims to circulate and gain support and endorsement for the policy within Federal Government. ACTS looks forward to reporting on the progress of this initiative in the coming months. Check out our website for more information or to get involved www.acts.asn.au/initiatives/aesa.

¹ Australian Education for Sustainability Alliance (AESA) (22 March 2013) Tertiary Education Policy. Reorienting our education systems to equip future managers, decision makers, teachers and other professionals to work for a sustainable future.

15.0 Financial Position

ACTS is a not-for-profit member led organisation, with income primarily generated from membership fees and registration to our annual conference. Our fees are tiered depending on the size of the institution or organisation. We have a range of institutional memberships as well as affiliate and corporate membership for sector support organisations and private business. All our membership fees, plus our annual conference registration can be found online at: <http://www.acts.asn.au/index.php/membership/>. The fees will remain unchanged for 2014.

In 2013, ACTS submitted our annual audited Financial Report as per our association's constitutional requirements. We continued to demonstrate growth in our annual income in 2013, however this surplus was significantly lower than seen in previous years, largely due to the employment of two dedicated ACTS staff members. As such, 2014 will see the investigation of a range of opportunities to develop income streams in order to allow the association to operate in surplus for the benefit of our members.



Finally, The ACTS team would like to thank all of its members, advisory board members, event sponsors and sector support contacts for their continued support and expertise to ACTS. We are very much a member led organisation and continue to work hard to provide more member benefits through access to expertise, resources and development tools.

*The ACTS Team
February 2014*

Most of the ACTS team, taken at the 2013 ACTS Conference in Sydney



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