Lauren Rickards and Wendy Steele

SDGS, UNI’S & STUDENTS

MAY 2019
OUTLINE

- Introduction
- How does it relate to your work?
- The Australian context
- The academic and professional context
- SDGs and students
TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD:

THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
1. **No Poverty**

**Target 1.1:** Eradicate extreme poverty

**Target 1.2:** Reduce poverty by at least 50%

**Target 1.3:** Implement social protection systems

**Target 1.1A:** Mobilize resources to implement policies to end poverty

**Target 1.1B:** Create pro-poor and gender-sensitive policy frameworks
Our goal this morning is to prompt us all to think about:

What is the role of students in helping achieve the SDG agenda?
How does your work relate to the SDGs?
Declaration in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

Never before have world leaders pledged common action and endeavour across such a broad and universal policy agenda. We are setting out together on the path towards sustainable development, devoting ourselves collectively to the pursuit of global development and of “win-win” cooperation which can bring huge gains to all countries and all parts of the world.

UNDERSTANDING THE SDG AGENDA

• Ambition: Transformative change
• Scope: Multiple issues, all sectors
• Site: Everywhere, all nations
• Requirements:
  • New information, knowledge, skills (e.g. systems thinking)
  • New approaches, relationships, partnerships
  • New commitment, resolve, resourcing
EXEMPLARY OF AN SDG NECESSITY:

NOT JUST MORE INNOVATION...

ETHICAL INNOVATION

Four core principles

- **Responsible** - anticipatory, precautionary
- **Inclusive** - collaborative, systemic
- **Disruptive** - bold, impactful
- **Engaged** - purposeful, committed
‘What we’re seeing now is that businesses can spend a lot of money on amazing sustainability initiatives and programs, but it’s how a business makes its money that’s fundamentally in question’

Catherine Hunter (KPMG, ex-Chair of the GCAN)
Figure 5: Australia’s SDG Indicator Scorecard (source: Transforming Australia: SDG Progress Report p. 2) Each score is out of 10.
The Senate

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

February 2019

Snapshot of Australian action on the SDGs
The report ‘indicates [the UN] wants to be a left-wing think tank’
We report on the state of Victoria’s environment to help government, business and the community take practical action.
Examples of organisations’ SDG engagement
UNIVERSITIES:
MULTIPLE FUNCTIONS, MULTIPLE DRIVERS FOR SDG ENGAGEMENT

Figure 8. Multidimensional drivers pushing universities to engage with the SDG agenda.
NEW PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR UNIVERSITIES

Click here to help us rank the world's universities - and we'll make a £250 donation to the Scholar Res fund on behalf of a winning participant.

The *Times Higher Education* University Impact Rankings are the only global performance tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We use carefully calibrated indicators to provide comprehensive and balanced comparisons across three broad areas: research, outreach, and stewardship.
NEW PERFORMANCE CRITERIA FOR UNIVERSITIES

Research: to what extent is the university creating knowledge to address the world’s problems?

Stewardship: to what extent is the university managing resources and teaching well, and enacting the ‘good’ university?

Outreach: to what extent is the university directly acting in society to help meet the SDGs?

[From TIMES Higher Education SDG index]
‘There is no ‘right’ way for a university to engage with the SDGs. How universities choose to act will depend on their size, context, research or educational strengths, funding availability, values, priorities and the needs of the communities they serve’.
What do you think are some of the key things universities need to do to help achieve the SDGs?
What is the role of students in helping achieve the SDG agenda?
How does your work relate to the SDGs?

How has your thinking developed?...
DRIVERS FOR RMIT ENGAGEMENT ON SDGS

Figure 10. Summary of some of the main drivers impelling RMIT to engage more strongly with the SDGs.