



The Association
of Commonwealth
Universities



2021 HLPF UN DESA/UNITAR SDGs Learning, Training and Practice Workshop – Revised concept Note (1 July 2021)

Title: Filling the gaps in further education for the 2030 Agenda and inspiring action towards the SDGs

Session 9: Monday, 12 July, 8:30 to 10:15am EST (14:30-16:15 CEST)

Joint session organized by the [SDG Academy](#) and the [International Association of Universities \(IAU\)](#).

Information and Registration for participants:

<https://sdgs.un.org/events/2021-sdgs-learning-training-and-practice>

Key deliverables of the session:

1. Commitment to the Berlin Declaration and the Roadmap to 2030
2. The importance of strengthened partnerships, including multilateral
3. Identification of next steps and shared pathways for the next ten years of higher education for sustainable development

Introduction:

In May 2021, participants of UNESCO’s World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) adopted the [Berlin Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development](#), declaring that “ESD, anchored in SDG 4.7 and as an enabler for all 17 SDGs, is the foundation for the required transformation, providing everyone with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to become change agents for sustainable development” and committing to advocate for and integrate ESD into all levels of education (primary to higher and further education and lifelong learning).

This renewed emphasis on education as a means of societal transformation comes at a critical point, as educational institutions continue to grapple with the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and take advantage of opportunities to “build back better” for a more peaceful and sustainable world. It is with this context in mind that we present this session on “Filling the gaps in further education for the 2030 Agenda and inspiring action towards the SDGs,” and discuss opportunities to improve education through partnerships (SDG 17) within, between, and beyond higher education institutions.

In particular, the session will look at ESD as a means of supporting internationalization of postsecondary education. Internationalization is present at all educational levels, but it is particularly important in the postsecondary sector, where it benefits both the teaching and knowledge production functions of a university and supports the development of professionally- and personally-valuable global competencies for the entire campus community. The SDGs provide a perfect framework for examining subjects from both a local and global lens. Conversely, a whole-of-institution approach to ESD supports a holistic approach to partnerships and internationalization of a university’s functions.

Part 1: Where to start:

Florencia Librizzi, Head of Programms and Partnerships at the SDG Academy, will welcome speakers and attendees to the session.

Dr. Hilligje van't Land, Secretary General of the IAU, will set the context for this discussion by presenting preliminary results from the second IAU Global Survey Report on the Impact of COVID-19, illustrating the gaps in education highlighted by the pandemic, as well as the opportunities for improvement and innovation in the postsecondary sector, and the role that ESD plays in supporting these improvements.

Part 2: How to move forward: Support structures, mechanisms and tools for HEIs

This panel discussion will bring together different actors within the higher education ecosystem to share best practices and lessons learned for implementing a whole-of-institution approach to ESD, and working with the SDGs on an institutional level, as well as the tools and partnerships that have made it possible.

Overall, the session will illustrate the importance and the benefits that a whole-of-institution approach to (E)SD can bring to a university, and the reciprocal role that a university plays in advancing sustainable development research, supporting communities, and preparing the next generation. The presentations will address the importance of advocating for sustainability within and among university settings, and discuss the role of partnerships in ensuring that all higher education stakeholders are engaged in the discussion about ESD and the SDGs.

Panellists:

- **Maria Cortez-Puch**, SDSN VP of Network Program
- **Dr. Joanna Newman**, Secretary General, ACU
- **Jacob Blasius**, Chairperson Students Organizing for Sustainability International
- **Prof Pornchai Mongkhonvanit**, President, Siam University & Vice President IAU, Head of the IAU HESD Working Group
- **Chandrika Bahadur**, SDSN VP Education & SDG Academy Director
- Moderation/Welcome: **Florencia Librizzi**, Head of Programms and Partnerships, the SDG Academy, and **Dr. Hilligje van't Land**, IAU Secretary General

Followed by Q&A; Conclusions (Moderators Hilligje van't Land and Florencia Librizzi)

Partners:

- SDG Academy
- International Association of Universities (IAU), L'Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) & Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU)

For further questions on the session please contact: contact@iau-hesd.net