



# Office Awards Gold Project Proposal

**Team name: Easter Bush Campus**

**Project name: Social Responsibility and Sustainability in Veterinary Medical Education**

**1. Please state your project's category.**

Innovation for Sustainability

**2. What are your project's main aims and objectives?**

*In a few sentences, tell us what you hope to achieve with this project.*

Our aim is to promote social responsibility and sustainability (SRS) concepts in professional education through teaching and learning practices at the Easter Bush Campus.

The objectives are to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of veterinary medicine in achieving sustainable development goals
- Introduce staff and student "Sustainability Champions" to lead on curriculum developments
- Facilitate Easter Bush Living Lab projects at the Campus

**3. Project description**

*Please describe your project in a bit more detail, including key dates and any stakeholders involved in delivery.*

This project builds on work undertaken by Sharon Boyd, who was seconded with school support to the Institute for Academic Development from October 2014 to March 2015. The aim of the secondment project was to evidence and promote sustainable education in the veterinary medical curriculum. The core activities being undertaken in this project build on the findings of the secondment.

This project aims to clearly demonstrate how social responsibility and sustainability is at the core of veterinary medical education and 21st century veterinary practitioners. It provides a key opportunity to integrate a number of activities that are currently underway at the Campus. All staff on the Campus are involved in supporting teaching and learning. This includes those whose main focus is on clinical and research activities in addition to those whose main role is in undergraduate and/or postgraduate teaching and support. Furthermore, by integrating with public engagement events, we can develop a connection with the local community in addition to enhancing student and staff skills.

The components of the plan are as follows:

1. Highlighting areas in the curriculum where students and staff are developing skills for a sustainable future
2. Adapting assessment topics to encourage reflection on local and global impacts

3. Fostering cross-disciplinary activities
4. Widening campus and community participation

Details of these components are provided below.

### **3.1. Highlighting areas in the curriculum where students and staff are developing skills for a sustainable future**

The secondment project curriculum mapping project carried out by Sharon Boyd identified specific areas where minor changes could enhance appreciation of SRS issues and increase awareness of this as part of the veterinary medical curriculum.

The initial curriculum areas for focus are:

- Student Research Component Foundation (SRCF) (in progress)
- Clinical Skills teaching (in progress)
- Veterinary Public Health
- Conservation Medicine
- One Health

Staff on these courses and programmes come from a wide range of backgrounds, and include colleagues from the R(D)SVS, Roslin, SRUC and guest lecturers.

In addition, the Five Ways to Wellbeing (<http://www.fivewaystowellbeing.org/>) structure was highlighted to all staff and students in 2015/16 and is currently evidenced as part of the BVM&S Professional Skills programme. Building on this, in future we will link further to events and activities across the Campus.

### **3.2. Adapting assessment topics to encourage reflection on local and global impacts**

As a result of the secondment project, this process is currently underway with the SRCF project, as indicated in the previous section. In this assessment, students were invited to consider their project from the perspective of a range of sustainability themes, including economics, culture and environment.

Further to this, undergraduate students will be encouraged to consider local and global impacts as part of their Student Research Component (SRC) projects [3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> year]. This will follow on from the themes highlighted in the SRCF project [2<sup>nd</sup> year]. These projects are carried out in conjunction with staff across the Campus, including clinicians, research and teaching staff.

Reflection on SRS issues were clearly mapped in the Conservation Medicine and One Health MSc programmes as a result of the secondment. This will be made more explicit via the programme materials and websites. Postgraduate students will also be encouraged to submit dissertation projects for UoE SRS Dissertation prizes (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/about/sustainability/themes/research-teaching/dissertation-prizes>). By advertising these more widely, this may inspire students to develop a SRS-theme as part of their dissertation planning process.

### **3.3. Fostering cross-disciplinary activities**

Three subsections will be investigated – Easter Bush Living Labs, sustainable development activities and courses, and carbon neutral MSc programmes.

3.3.1. Potential for Living Labs projects at Easter Bush for both veterinary and non-veterinary students. The Easter Bush Living Labs will combine the key elements from SRS Living Labs (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/about/sustainability/themes/research-teaching/the-university-as-a-living-lab>) and Edinburgh Living Lab (<http://edinburghlivinglab.org/>), ensuring sustainability is included in the project outlines. The aim of the Edinburgh Living Lab projects is to “deepen University links to the city”, working with the City of Edinburgh Council. At present, Edinburgh Living Lab projects have been focused on the central University campus. The intention is to provide projects for students within and outwith the veterinary area. Through a range of projects, students from different disciplines will be able to work with veterinary students and staff on sustainability-related projects to improve the campus and local community. By extending Living Labs out to Easter Bush, it provides an opportunity to develop a stronger link to the local community in the Easter Bush/Bilston/Roslin area and to Midlothian Council. This will integrate well with future developments planned as part of the Easter Bush innovation centre.

3.3.2. Feasibility of collaborating with the CHSS Cases in Sustainable Development (<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/15-16/dpt/cxssps10014.htm>) and CSE Case Studies in Sustainable Development (<http://www.drps.ed.ac.uk/15-16/dpt/cxpgge11192.htm>) course teams will also be investigated.

3.3.3. Working with colleagues in the School of Geosciences, the team will investigate ways in which our MSc programmes could move to being carbon neutral.

### **3.4. Widening campus and community participation**

There are many opportunities to engage those on the campus and in the wider community, and centre on sharing knowledge and understanding. This can be facilitated both through public engagement events and community involvement.

Public engagement events include the Easter Bush Campus Open Day, student and staff visits to local schools, and the shared Roslin Institute and R(D)SVS share a tent at the Royal Highland Show in June. All of these activities provide clear opportunities to share information and research on social responsibility and sustainability issues.

The new School website will also feature a SRS section. This will include information to allow the public to join in by undertaking similar activities in their own homes.

Student SRCF posters and blogs can be shared publicly with the students' permission. Staff and students will be invited to view the posters as part of a presentation session at the end of the course. In this way, students can choose to share their research on sustainability-themed projects with a wider network. A similar approach can be taken to disseminate findings from Living Lab projects.

The Easter Bush Campus has been awarded the “Investors in Young People – Silver Award” as of March 2015. This demonstrates our commitment to providing opportunities and experience to local youth within our community. The Campus has undertaken a number of new initiatives over the past year including participation in the Career Ready Scheme, Science Insights, development of a Youth Forum, and active involvement in the development of new apprenticeships. We will investigate ways in which our SRS activities can inform our developing “Youth Employment Action Plan”.

### **3.5 Stakeholders**

- Easter Bush students and staff, incl.
  - Easter Bush SRS committee – students and staff
  - Veterinary Students Council
  - Course leaders
  - Easter Bush Youth Forum

- UoE Living Lab and SRS teams

#### **4. How will your project improve sustainability within your department, the wider University or in the community? How will its impact be measured?**

*Your Gold Project should have a demonstrable sustainability impact; for example, it should reduce your department's carbon footprint or lead to other positive environmental or social outcomes. This impact could be measured qualitatively (for example by conducting surveys or interviews) or quantitatively (for example by calculating carbon savings). You will be asked to report on your project's sustainability impact at the end of the year.*

The sustainability impact of this project will focus on raising awareness of the knowledge being developed in students and staff as a result of engagement with learning and teaching on campus. This includes research and teaching on the following SRS themes in the context of veterinary medical research and teaching:

- Environment (includes ecosystem health, food and farming)
- Economy (including employment rights)
- Society (includes medicine, health and wellbeing)
- Environmental ethics (relationship between humans, animals and the environment)
- Research using animals and the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement; <https://www.nc3rs.org.uk/the-3rs>)
- Futures scenarios
- Uncertainty and risk

Key to this knowledge is enhancing leadership and interdisciplinary group communication skills, ensuring that students and staff have the opportunity to share their research with a wider network, and learn from others.

The impact will be measured qualitatively, following ethical approval of the survey and interview approach by the Human Ethical Review Committee.

#### **5. What will be your project's legacy?**

*Your project should have a legacy beyond the 2016 Sustainability Awards; for example it should result in new practices being embedded in your department or a longer term positive change.*

This project aims to clearly demonstrate how social responsibility and sustainability is at the core of veterinary medical education and a requirement for 21<sup>st</sup> century veterinary practitioners. This will also integrate our sustainable campus with learning and teaching activities.

We will highlight how veterinary medical education and research is central to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (Figure 1). Staff and students will be involved in activities designed to enhance current teaching practice with clear understanding of sustainability concepts. The outcomes of the project will be shared with other vet schools in the UK and beyond through a range of methods. A chapter proposal on the SRCF course development has already been accepted for a book on the Connected Curriculum due for release in 2017. In addition, Sharon Boyd, Andrew Gardiner, Professor Pete Higgins and students from the SRCF course have been invited to write a blog post for Teaching Matters on sustainability in education.

Long-term, this project will embed SRS themes explicitly within the curriculum through clearly evidencing the work we carry out.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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Figure 1: UN Sustainable Development Goals (<http://is.gd/susdevgoals>)

**6. How will staff and students within the wider department be involved in your project?**

*Depending on the nature of the project, staff and students will be involved to varying degrees. At the very least the project should be promoted so people know what's happening!*

The project aims to facilitate discussion between staff and students concerning actions that promote SRS graduate attributes. As such, all members of the wider Campus should be aware of this to some extent.

The students and staff directly involved in the courses and programmes outlined above will have a greater awareness and involvement. The intention is that this leads to a long-term roll out of these themes and issues as students progress through their studies.