

Sustainable Laboratories Steering Group (SLSG)

Tuesday 19th September 2021, 2pm

via Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

- 1 Minute** **A**
To approve the minute of the previous meeting on 16th September 2020 and raise any matters arising

- 2 Covid-19 Impact and Implications for Labs** **Verbal**
Discussion led by Deputy Director SRS

- 3 Sustainable Labs Programme Plan Update** **B**
To note and discuss a report from the SRS Projects Coordinator (AA)

- 4 Climate Emergency – University actions in response** **Verbal**
To receive and discuss an update from Deputy Director SRS, covering building design, heat, forests and offsetting, Sustainable Campus Fund, climate strategy and update to strategy in 2021.

- 5 Credit/Recognition for students participating in the Lab Sustainability Awards** **C**
To receive and discuss a paper from the SRS Projects Coordinator (AA)

- 6 Freezer Fund Update** **D**
To receive a report from the SRS Projects Coordinator (AA)

7 Lab plastics update **Verbal**

To *receive and discuss* an update from the SRS Projects Coordinator (AA) on actions being undertaken to reduce lab plastic waste impacts.

8 Technician Commitment update **Verbal**

To *receive* an update from Laboratory Technician Val Gordon

9 Any Other Business **Verbal**

To *consider* any other matters from Group members

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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

MINUTE OF A MEETING *of the Sustainable Labs Steering Group held vis MS Teams on Wednesday 16th September 2020.*

A

Present:

Dave Gorman, (Convener), Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

David Gray, Head of the School of Biological Sciences

Andrew Arnott, SRS Projects Coordinator

Candice Schmid, Occupational Hygiene and Projects Manager

Rachael Barton, SRS Projects Coordinator

Michelle Brown, Deputy Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Claudia Schaffner, Technical Services Manager, School of Biological Sciences

Chris Litwiniuk, Sustainability Innovation and Engagement Manager

Lee Murphy, Genetics Core Manager

Matthew Sharp, BVS Deputy Director - Business

Robert MacGregor, Energy Engineer, Utilities Management

David Jack, Energy & Utilities Operations Manager

Stewart McKay, Technical Services Manager, IGMM

David Brown, Estates and Technical Manager, Chemistry

Yuner Huang, Lecturer in Structural Engineering

Apologies: Grant Ferguson; Val Gordon; Kate Fitzpatrick; Glen Cousquer; Brian McTier; Neil Johnston;; Sharon Hannah;

1. Minute

The Convenor welcomed attendees to the eighteenth meeting of the Group.

The convenor also welcomed a high school visitor to this meeting joining us remotely.

The minute of the meeting held on 12 May 2020 was approved as a correct record.

Actions carried forward:

All to share any suggestions for equipment reuse platforms in addition to Warpit.

2. Covid-19 Impact and Implications for Labs

Professor David Gray gave a short overview on the impact of Covid-19 on the University with a personal perspective from the School of Biological Sciences. Building projects have been put on hold. Darwin Building is now delayed which is causing challenges and impacting research and teaching. The impact of Covid-19 and the lockdown impacted vast majority of research in addition to teaching. This has impacted careers (female Principal Investigators impacted more than male counterparts). PhD deadlines were extended. Funding agency priority changes. Buildings are now reopened and in Biological Sciences there is 30 percent capacity. Opportunity to think further about space and lab sharing and what needs to happen in the lab vs what can take place while working from home.

Following the presentation there was discussion about some similarities in other areas. The impacts on technician careers were also highlighted.

3. Sustainable Labs Programme Plan Update

Andrew Arnott provided an overview of progress on the Sustainable Labs Programme Plan.

There was discussion on engagement with labs given current challenges. The Steering Group encouraged working with labs to spread good practice and while recognising some challenges due to Covid-19 not to put aside. There is strong university commitment to sustainability and expectations that schools will integrate sustainability.

Action: AA/RB to pick up engagement with Ashworth Labs.

4. Lab Awards 2020-21

Rachael Barton presented a report on the lab sustainability awards. This promoted discussion on how best to run the awards in October-December 2020. The group supported the proposal to have a rolling submission. Similarly to the discussion under item 3 advice was to offer some flexibility but to continue as this is important. There was some discussion on the naming of the Awards and voluntary vs mandatory actions.

Action: RB to continue working with Labs on the awards scheme.

5. UKRI Environmental Sustainability Strategy Update

Andrew Arnott provided an update on the content of the UKRI Environmental Sustainability Strategy, and the University of Edinburgh response to it

6. Overview of Lab Efficiency Assessment Framework

Rachael Barton provided an update on the Lab Efficiency Assessment Framework piloted at Chemistry – an alternative lab assessment methodology to the Lab Awards.

Action: RB, AA and CL to consider further participation in the LEAF pilot

7. Overview of Lab Sustainability Online Training Sessions

Andrew Arnott provided an update on recent online training sessions.

Action: All to help spread opportunities. SRS to look further at evaluation and standardisation of evaluation across courses

8. Freezer Fund Update

Andrew Arnott provided an update on the Sustainable Campus Fund (SCF) Freezer Fund. Performance was noted. Recommendation that the fund continue to be topped up and supported in line with the criteria was supported by the group.

Action: AA to continue to support Freezer Fund applications and projects

9. Any Other Business

19th September 2021

SLSG Programme Plan August 2020 – July 2025 – Progress Report

Description of paper

This document is intended to give an update on progress against the objectives of the 2020-2025 Sustainable Laboratories Steering Group Programme, which was drawn up to provide a structured approach to improving sustainability within laboratories at the University of Edinburgh over that time period, with a view to achieving wider University goals such as the Zero by 2040 target within the Climate Strategy.

This document will be updated prior to each meeting of the Sustainable Laboratories Steering Group. A Gantt Chart using a traffic-light colouring system (Red/Amber/Green) has been used to communicate quickly and clearly the progress which has been or is being made. In general, this is taken to mean: green = on track, amber = delayed or problematic, red = objective is in danger of not being met, and grey = action scheduled for future work.

The RAG grading is applied to the Objectives and the Targets of the plan, but not the individual actions, which are described in the body of the text where appropriate.

Action requested

SLSG is asked to note the progress described in this paper and provide any advice or guidance for further improvement.

Background and context

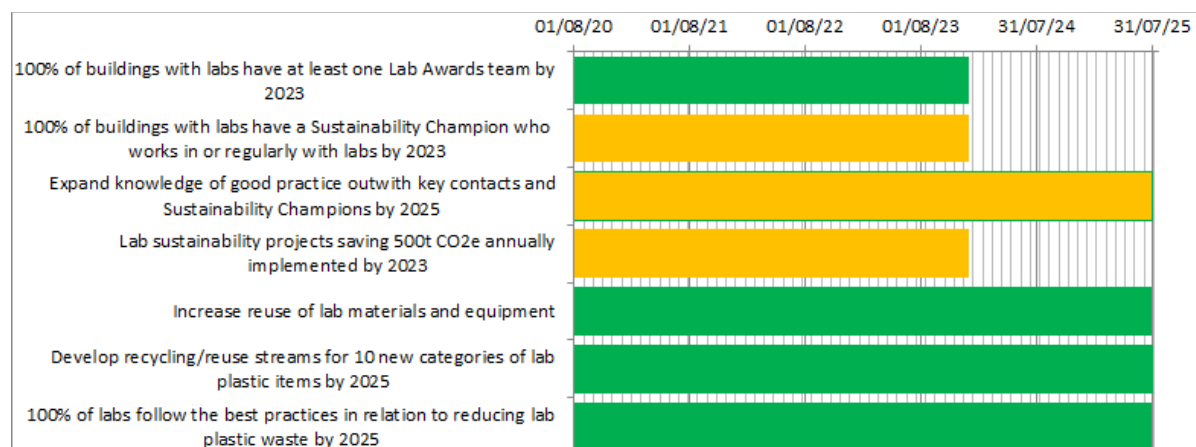
Between October 2019 and May 2020 this 2020-2025 programme plan was developed and approved. This report notes the progress against this 5-year plan.

Discussion

Summary of objectives and targets:

1. Good practice behaviours adopted across all labs
 - a. TARGET 1: 100% of buildings with labs have at least one Lab Awards team by 2023
 - b. TARGET 2: 100% of buildings with labs have a Sustainability Champion who works in or regularly with labs by 2023
 - c. TARGET 3: Expand knowledge of good practice outwith key contacts and Sustainability Champions (as measured in biannual SRS staff and student surveys) by 2025
2. Funding is made available and used to support lab sustainability
 - a. TARGET 4: Lab sustainability projects saving 500t CO₂e annually implemented by 2023 (including ventilation/HVAC improvements in lab buildings)
3. Increase reuse of materials and equipment across University labs
4. Eliminate avoidable lab plastic waste through increasing options and increasing awareness
 - a. TARGET 5: Develop recycling/reuse streams for 10 new categories of lab plastic items by 2025
 - b. TARGET 6: 100% of labs follow the best practices in relation to reducing lab plastic waste that are practicable in their lab by 2025

RAG Progress Reporting



OBJECTIVE 1: Good practice behaviours are adopted across all labs

TARGET 1: 100% of buildings with labs have at least one Lab Awards team by 2023

Action	Responsible	Timescale	RAG
Schools mandate that all labs achieve at least Bronze in sustainability awards.	SRS and School management	December 2021	Deputy Director SRS has sent invites to all HoS/Registrars to have a 45min conversation on “embedding” sustainability. This will cover multiple topics, travel, research, climate change – the Awards will be discussed too.
Lab-based PG students get amount of credits for working on a lab sustainability awards team (as part of their skills training outside of the curriculum)	SRS and School management	December 2022	See paper provided for this SLSG meeting describing options. On track.
Develop an e-learning course specifically focussed on sustainable labs (as a spin-off from Be Sustainable)	SRS	July 2021	Completed April 2020 Takes form of an online workshop to be delivered 3 times/year.
Review the Awards processes making the awards more appealing / less burdensome for participants.	SRS	February 2022	No work has yet taken place on this. A comparable Lab Awards framework known as LEAF (Lab Efficiency Assessment Framework) completed a second pilot project in 2020 and a review report is due in 2020/2021. A review of the feedback and outcomes of this pilot, and other similar schemes will be undertaken to compare with the

			<p>SRS Lab Awards and identify possible improvements.</p> <p>Timescale still feels achievable</p>
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TARGET 2: 100% of buildings with labs have a Sustainability Champion who works in or regularly with labs by 2023

Action	Responsible	Timescale	RAG
<p>Increase number of contacts/labs undertaking pilots to demonstrate that good practices are compatible with science</p> <p>Case studies to include details to contact the participants. Including information on costs, staff time, buy-in from management and practicalities</p>	SRS	1 case study published each year (ideally on different topics).	<p>Pilots on lab plastics now taking place at Reagan Wallace lab (SBS) as well as Roslin.</p> <p>Case study on Roslin has been written (by the lab) and published in Access Microbiology.</p> <p>Case study of Reagan Wallace can be written later 2021, or early 2022.</p>
<p>Colleges mandate that each School with labs has an appointed/nominated Sustainability Leader who heads up a committee of Sustainability Champions and coordinates sustainability</p>	SRS and College management	<p>First Schools declare their decision by July 2021</p> <p>50% of Schools declared</p>	<p>The outcomes of this work may not look exactly as described in the action plan – there are other ways for Colleges and Schools to integrate sustainability into their governance structures, e.g. Sustainability Committees.</p> <p>1 School by July 2021 seems challenging but may be achievable</p>

actions across their School.		by July 2022 100% of Schools declared by December 2025	50% and 100% targets seem currently quite a stretch.
Sustainability Champions encouraged to work with neighbouring labs, helping to spread good practice and information	Lab Users, SRS	November 2020	This is delayed but will form part of the various communications messages which are included in the planned SLSG communications via SRS channels (I.e. entering content in existing School/College newsletters rather than having a Sustainable Labs newsletter)

TARGET 3: Expand knowledge of good practice outwith key contacts and Sustainability Champions (as measured in biannual SRS staff and student surveys) by 2025

Action	Responsible	Timescale	RAG
Publicise that the Sustainability Awards criteria is available to all lab users to inform good practice.	SRS	November 2020	This is delayed but will form part of the various communications messages which are included in the planned SLSG communications via SRS channels (I.e. entering content in existing School/College newsletters rather than having a Sustainable Labs newsletter)
Link communications about lab sustainability to academic research e.g. Horsfall Labs'	SRS with input from key academics and lab users	July 2022	This is delayed but will form part of the various communications messages which are included in the planned SLSG communications via SRS channels (I.e. entering content in

<p>work on complete life cycle analysis / Bio Technology and Circular Economy ('theme' within CSE) / Chemistry's work on global mineral scarcity/ capacity</p>			<p>existing School/College newsletters rather than having a Sustainable Labs newsletter)</p> <p>This specific action will also involve our SRS Comms team building relationships with School Comms teams</p>
<p>Restrict procurement options/ heavily promote better options</p>	<p>SRS and Procurement with input from lab users</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>Some work is already taking place on this, although it is a complex area and progress is slow.</p> <p>Within the timescale described it's possible that arrangements could be made for one or two categories of procurement (possibly cold storage, possibly gloves), but probably not more.</p> <p>Some promotion of suppliers who use more sustainable packaging materials/take-back schemes can also take place once that information has been gathered. This may be simpler than developing an appropriate restriction of procurement options for a wide variety of different equipment types.</p> <p>In addition Procurement are actively looking into dry heat sterilisers to replace standard steam autoclaves for certain settings (perhaps BRFs) – many benefits including energy consumption and weight.</p>
<p>Undertake more face to face lab audits/advice visits to give targeted</p>	<p>SRS</p>	<p>3 new labs visited each</p>	<p>Due to Covid19 disruption and restriction of lab time to urgent priorities it is not currently thought justifiable for a generic</p>

and personalised advice		year, with follow up advice and support provided where appropriate.	lab audit/advice visit to take place. As restrictions and advice related to Covid19 develop, this position may change, but 2020-2021 is definitely at risk of missing this target. The planned SRS communications includes promotion of video tours of labs for sustainability audits.
Identify the top 5 initiatives that labs are working on and develop into posters and other communications to prompt spread of good practice.	SRS	December 2020	Data gathering was completed in November 2020. Communications materials still to be developed.

OBJECTIVE 2: Cost effective lab sustainability improvement projects are identified, funded and implemented

TARGET 4: New lab sustainability projects implemented between August 2020 and July 2023 save 500t CO2e annually (including ventilation/HVAC improvements in lab buildings)

Action	Responsible	Timescale	RAG
Assess labs to optimise ventilation rates and controls, including night set-back	SRS, Estates, Lab users, H&S	Ongoing	Estates Building Services and Controls teams remain extremely busy and do not have time to support any non-priority activities. However, Energy currently has KJ Tait engaged to look at Lab ventilation including risk

			<p>assessment procedure development, and identification of opportunities to make improvements to the systems, which they will use to build business cases.</p> <p>Each lab building is different, but generally we have defaulted to uncontrolled ventilation on the back of REVHA risk guidance [note: this is a different approach from other UK Universities, who have used CIBSE guidance to deliver 10l/s per person]. The Energy team are in the process of reviewing opportunities to introduce more controlled ventilation, grounded in site activities and occupancy, and in particular setback times. And, increasingly, the Energy team can draw on their pilot work with Schneider setting up analytics which correlate ventilation requirements to occupancy and air quality.</p>
Lab users are trained in ventilation risk assessment	H&S, Estates, Lab users	Ongoing	See note above about capacity within Estates to support this.
Pilot projects funded for novel approaches such as LILEE	SRS, Lab users, Estates	2 more pilots by 2023	<p>Disruption from Covid19 will impact this, but it's still possible to achieve within the timescale described.</p> <p>Lab plastics re-use/substitutions may be one area which could be suitable for this.</p>
Identify replicable actions which are cost effective, impactful and	SRS, Lab users, Estates	By February 2021	This will be covered in planned SRS communications – possibly not by Feb 2021 though. More

broadly relevant across labs.			likely to be completed around summer 2021.
Roll out replicable actions identified (e.g. drying ovens)	SRS, Lab users, Estates	By July 2022	Once the above action can be undertaken to develop the list of key technologies/investments required, then this can begin. It would be best done by setting up a fast-track SCF application process (if funds are required).
Work on ensuring the Sustainable Campus Fund is available until 2025	SRS, Estates	Ongoing	Tighter budgets due to the impacts of Covid19 will make this task harder, but hopefully still achievable. At the moment there is no known threat to the continuation of the Sustainable Campus Fund.

OBJECTIVE 3: Increase reuse of lab materials and equipment

Action	Responsible	Timescale	RAG
Identify any gaps in the departments/Schools which use Warpit, and target these to increase participation	SRS	July 2021	AA to undertake desk-based analysis from Warpit data June + July 2021
Raise awareness of Warpit and promote external sale/donation with Lab managers/Stores/those with purchasing responsibilities	Procurement	July 2021	This will be covered in SRS communications channels Procurement's capacity to support the external sale/donation process (as established a couple of years ago) may soon be diminished by job roles being changed in

			<p>their departmental reorganisation. As such, the process may need to be revisited to enable users to follow it with less expertise input from Procurement.</p> <p>Andy Kordiak advised there could be a role for incorporating WarplT in the newly established processes for the upcoming Procurement Hubs. SRS to discuss with Andy Wright. It may be too late to incorporate new items into the processes before the Oracle launch in April.</p>
Provide greater clarity on what is and is not allowed on Warpit (e.g. plasticware and consumables can be included), processes and guidelines	SRS	December 2020	SRS will take this forward in SRS communications channels
Provide more case studies of successful usage of WARPit, including savings.	SRS	March 2021	This will be covered in the SRS communications channels
Adopt a policy requiring people to show evidence of trying to source from Warpit or 2 nd hand before purchasing new equipment/resources.	Procurement	July 2022	<p>Andy Kordiak advised there could be a role for incorporating WarplT in the newly established processes for the upcoming Procurement Hubs. SRS to discuss with Andy Wright. It may be too late to incorporate new items into the processes before the Oracle launch in April.</p> <p>Andy Kordiak is proposing the University re-establishes a</p>

			<p>Research Equipment Committee to review requests for purchases of additional equipment in comparison to our existing inventory. This has now been wrapped up into a bigger project considering options for managed equipment services which is still in the early stages of discussion.</p> <p>If research grant applications can show use of existing equipment instead of requesting funds for new equipment they may be looked at favourably.</p> <p>This ethos is compatible with the Adaptation and Renewal process – looking for cost savings and rationalisation.</p> <p>[note: a related activity is the expansion of communal lab services and the reduction of localised/personalised work (a common example being media prep - are there other areas we can make communal?). Benefits of communal services are reduced procurement costs, reduced waste costs, reduced material consumption, and more replicable science. It requires investment in technical staff to operate the communal services. Where these services are in place it can also facilitate lab plastics waste reduction work (e.g. sterilising and re-use of items)].</p>
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			Finance Transformation programme will also deliver procurement hubs – efficiencies in terms of equipment. AA to meet with hub managers/stores managers for lab areas once they are established.
Increase visibility of information about Warpit e.g. the main page of the Procurement website, clearly on SRS and Waste websites, and as a reminder box on SciQuest.	SRS, Waste and Procurement	July 2021	As Oracle will be the University's main portal to external and internal services, rolled out by April 2021, it is recommended that material is developed for Oracle instead of SciQuest, and that the timescale be moved forward to before April 2021. AA to develop text for Oracle and discuss with Andy Wright, who is managing the roll out of the Procurement Hubs.

OBJECTIVE 4: Eliminate avoidable lab plastic waste

TARGET 5: Develop recycling/reuse streams for 10 new categories of lab plastic items by 2025

Action	Responsible	Timescale	RAG
Hold a workshop to bring suppliers and waste contractors together to share challenges on both sides, and to prompt development of new	Procurement Waste SRS NHS EAUC	April 2021	A workshop with stakeholders is not ruled out, but is not in planning currently as we may be able to make progress without it. Unlikely to happen by April 2021.

lab plastics waste streams.	ZWS		<p>A working group on lab plastics in Scotland has been established by AA, using EAUC to advertise it, with members from Aberdeen, Glasgow, Glasgow Caledonian and Napier.</p> <p>At present this group is sharing best practice and barriers.</p> <p>Once Napier can undertake a site visit of the Enva facility to confirm it genuinely recycles their used lab plastics, we will be in a better position to consider our options.</p>
Identify the most commonly used lab plastic items and confirm which plastic types they are.	SRS	December 2020	<p>A desk based assessment of the lab consumables procurement spreadsheet was undertaken, which identified tips, stripettes, tubes, plates and syringes as the most common. Resin-code information was not often included in the spreadsheet, however, where it was available it showed that PP (5) and PS (6) were the common types.</p> <p>This information can be used in discussions with waste contractors in future.</p>

TARGET 6: 100% of labs follow the best practices in relation to reducing lab plastic waste that are practicable in their lab by 2025.

Action	Responsible	Timescale	RAG
Develop case studies on swapping to use glassware instead of plastic.	SRS	March 2021	<p>The group at Roslin undertaking a pilot published their own write-up in Access Microbiology in October.</p> <p>The online version is available here: https://doi.org/10.1099/acmi.0.000173</p> <p>When further information becomes available from Reagan Wallace lab a case study can be written.</p>
Communicate to provide clarity on what can (and cannot) be recycled in a lab setting	SRS Waste Lab users	December 2020	This will be covered in the communications
If new recycling streams/ recyclable items become available promote these options to lab users.	SRS Procurement Waste Lab users	July 2024	Action will be taken if/when this occurs.
Work with labs to undertake trials/pilots to phase out non-recyclable / reusable plastics, and help designing experiments to reduce waste.	SRS Waste Lab users	2 labs undertake trials by July 2023	<p>The work of the Reagan Wallace group means we now have 2 pilots underway/completed.</p> <p>Further pilots are always welcomed, and SLSG members are encouraged to promote this in their area.</p>
Share the findings of the trials/pilots	SRS	December 2023	The Access Microbiology paper from Roslin was

			shared with the SLSG in October 2020.
Encourage labs to rethink the location of bins and consider allowing recycling bins in labs to facilitate ease of segregation.	SRS Waste Lab users	July 2023	No action taken to-date but the long timescale of this means it's still on track.

Resource implications

No resource implications are related to reporting on progress against this plan. Implementation of the plan will have wider resource implications, which have been detailed elsewhere.

Risk Management

No risks associated with reporting on progress against this plan. No items on the plan are currently at risk of failure (red graded).

Equality & Diversity

No foreseen impacts.

Next steps/implications

A further progress report will be provided at the next SLSG meeting by the SRS Project Coordinator – Labs (or appropriate substitute). During that time further actions will be taken towards the outcome objectives of the plan.

Consultation

This document has been reviewed by:

Michelle Brown, Deputy Director and Head of Programmes – SRS

Chris Litwiniuk, Sustainability Innovation and Engagement Manager – SRS

Further information
Author and Presenter

Andrew Arnott SRS Projects Coordinator - Labs
Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability
January 2021

Freedom of Information

This is an open paper.

Sustainable Labs Steering Group

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19th January 2021

Student Recognition for Participation in Lab Sustainability Awards

Description of paper

This paper describes options for providing recognition to students who participate in the lab sustainability awards, as a means of incentivising participation.

Action requested

SLSG is asked to note the contents of the paper and provide comment. SLSG members are asked to promote awareness of the option for students to participate in the lab sustainability awards among their colleagues and student bodies.

Recommendation

Students should be made aware of the options available to them, and guided towards participation in the Student Pathways/Edinburgh Award, but also informed of the SLICC option to gain academic credit over a summer break.

Background and context

The SLSG Programme Plan August 2020 – July 2025, Objective 1, Target 1 includes an action:

“Lab-based PG students get [an] amount of credits for working on a lab sustainability awards team (as part of their skills training outside of the curriculum)”

As such, investigations were undertaken into what options exist for this within the structures of the University.

Discussion

There are 2 main means of providing recognition to students for participation in extracurricular activities such as the lab sustainability awards.

- Student Led Individually Created Courses (SLICCs), and
- The Edinburgh Award
 - the SRS department has a scheme called Student Pathways which takes students through the Edinburgh Award via sustainability and social responsibility projects.

Student Led Individually Created Courses (SLICCs)

- Gives 10 academic credits
 - Students can take SLICCs as electives or for additional academic credit (with the permission of their academic school)
- Open to all undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Requires 100 hours of work to be logged by the student
- Requires an academic sponsor
- SLICCs can take place throughout the year, including the summer.
 - Students have more flexibility to take SLICCs over the summer period (as there are no potential clashes with classes)
- SLICCs are supported by the Careers Service and IAD (Simon Riley).
 - Simon can help to find academics to sponsor a SLICC
- Previous examples of SLICCs linked to SRS are the European Students Sustainability Auditing (ESSA) project and the Students as Change Agents (SaChA) project
- Proposed projects must describe the expected skills development and learning outcomes

The Edinburgh Award/Student Pathways

- Provides official recognition (not academic credit) in the Higher Education Achievement Record of the student
- Open to all undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Requires 50 hours to be logged
- SRS already runs a supported programme for the Edinburgh Award called SRS Student Pathways

- Participation in the lab sustainability awards would be an appropriate activity for the EA/Student Pathways programmes, providing the necessary hours and other deliverables were undertaken.
- Activities/deliverables
 - Action plan (what skills do they want to learn)
 - Progress report
 - Recap/peer presentation
- Takes place September/October to May (academic year)
- Supportive cohort peer groups are established each year by SRS to bring participating students together to share experiences, findings and good practice – and to address issues

Conclusions

The existence of well-established support structures operated by SRS for the Student Pathways (Edinburgh Award) scheme makes this seem like a more attractive option. The only downside is that actual academic credit is not earned. It is considered that overall Student Pathways is a better value route for students to take, although those who are particularly focused on gaining additional academic credit should be made aware of the option to undertake a SLICC.

Resource implications

- SLICCs require sponsorship and support time from at least one member of academic staff, as well as support from IAD and HR.
- The Student Pathways scheme within the Edinburgh Award is already resourced from SRS from existing budgets.
- Potential (if promotion is unexpectedly very successful) of an increase in requests to join existing lab sustainability teams – with an impact on the time demand of existing team members initially to incorporate these additional volunteers. Over time, this might be countered by the extra workload the volunteers could assist with.
- Potential extra demands on SRS staff time to help establish new, student-run sustainability teams in labs which currently have no staff-run teams. This should be manageable from within the existing resource allocated to support the lab sustainability awards.

Risk Management

A high number of applicants is not anticipated for this, as currently few lab sustainability awards teams actually have student participation. However, theoretically the promotion

of Student Pathways and SLICCs could lead to an increase in demand for limited staff resource to support both recognition routes.

If the promotion of the Student Pathways and SLICC is unexpectedly massively successful there may be an excessive demand for staff time in existing lab sustainability awards teams to manage the incorporation of a large number of new student team members.

Equality & Diversity

Although both Student Pathways and SLICCs are open to all UG and PG students, both require the participant to volunteer their time. Those with additional time demands (such as part-time employment)/caring responsibilities outside of their studies will find it more difficult to find the time required to participate. This impact will be unequally distributed through the student body, with those from lower socio-economic status backgrounds, more likely to be adversely affected. Connected to this there is an unequal racial distribution, as BAME students may be more likely to come from lower socio-economic status backgrounds. Of those with caring responsibilities, women are statistically likely to form the majority of this group. People with disabilities may also require additional support to be able to volunteer their time.

To address the above issues, we should be strategic with communications - working with the Student Disability Service, Liberation Groups, and discipline specific student societies. We should also collect the relevant information from student participants - firstly understanding what groups of students are engaging with this programme.

Next steps/implications

1. SLSG to approve the approach recommended in this paper
2. SRS to distribute promotional information on both Student Pathways and SLICCs to STEM schools at appropriate times of year
 - a. April to promote SLICCs
 - b. September to promote Student Pathways and highlight that lab sustainability awards participation is an appropriate activity for the scheme.

Consultation

SRS:

Matthew Lawson, Student Engagement, Events & Reporting Programme Manager, SRS

Chris Litwiniuk, Sustainability Innovation and Engagement Manager, SRS

Michelle Brown, Deputy Director and Head of Programmes, SRS

Further information

Author and Presenter

Andrew Arnott, Project Coordinator (Labs)

Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability

August 2020

Freedom of Information

This is an open paper.

19th January 2021

Performance of the Freezer Fund

Description of paper

This paper describes the financial and carbon performance of the Freezer Fund, a ring-fenced section of the University of Edinburgh's Sustainable Campus Fund.

Note – no change since September's paper, no new applications have been received.

Action requested

SLSG is asked to note the performance.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the fund continue, as it performs well and provides a useful and impactful incentive to lab users to remove old inefficient freezers and replace them with energy saving equivalents. As well as an energy benefit, there is often a science benefit too, with more consistent and reliable temperatures and better racking/organisation making samples quicker and easier to find.

Background and context

The freezer fund was set up as a ring-fenced section of the Sustainable Campus Fund shortly after the fund was established in 2016.

Discussion (this section can be adapted as appropriate)

Using the Project Tracker spreadsheet the following analysis was produced using figures up to end of April 2020:

1. Total spend £41,928 (from SCF grants, not including the amounts spent by the recipients - we haven't been tracking this. For example we give a maximum grant of £1,500 per ULT freezer but we don't track if that freezer cost £6k or £9k)
2. Total annual electricity cost savings £12,935
3. Simple payback 3.2 years
4. Average NPV is £2,998
5. Average IRR is 30%
6. Average ROI is 361%
7. Total annual CO2e savings 38.6tonnes
8. Average £/tonne CO2e saving is £86
9. 29 applications have been received (mostly for a single ULT, two for a pair of ULTs, two for a single -20 freezer). Two applications (one for a pair of freezers) were an 'eco top up' for someone purchasing additional freezers, which obviously we try to discourage unless absolutely necessary.
10. More than half of all applications (18) have come from only 4 applicants (with 9, 4, 3 and 2 applications each)

Resource implications

The grants given (maximum £1,500) are relatively small, compared to the cost of the ULT (c.£6-9k). There has been a steady but not excessive increase in use of the fund over the past year or so. The usage of the fund is deemed to be within the capacity of the SCF to support.

Risk Management

Discontinuation of the freezer fund could risk reducing the number of new contacts SRS makes through this fund, as well as disincentivising engagement in wider SRS activities from existing contacts.

Equality & Diversity

No Equality and Diversity implications have been identified relating to this fund.

Next steps/implications

It is recommended the fund continue to be reviewed and 'topped up' as and when the ring-fenced funds are exhausted.

Consultation

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Further information

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Freedom of Information

This is an open paper.