



ED6076 Design Challenge – Local problems, global solutions with SDGs

University College Cork is today ranked as one of the leading universities internationally working towards creating a sustainable world. UCC was ranked 32 in the world by the Times Higher Education [THE] Impact Rankings, the only global performance tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals [SDG].

UCC President Prof John O'Halloran has been quoted as saying that: "SDGs are a critical part of our mission and academic strategy, and enable our graduates to shape a new and changing world".

"We are proud to be in the top 10 universities in the world that are making an impact towards creating a sustainable future for our planet".

"Over a decade ago, and together with our students, we set this university on a path that could inspire and lead change".

"Our teaching, research, and public engagement has been assessed as world class and we are proud to be Ireland's leading university making an impact towards a sustainable world."

However, others feel universities, such as UCC, are not going far enough and that the planet doesn't have time to wait for our universities to 'raise their game'. Most experts interviewed by Times Higher Education feel that universities can and should do more, particularly by becoming more radical role models for wider society in their own environmental policies and targets.

For example, Michael Mann, a distinguished professor of atmospheric science at Penn State University, says that higher education institutions are ideally placed to make a difference. Every important social movement of the past half-century or so has "begun on college campuses", he says, mentioning the civil rights, free speech and anti-apartheid movements.

The purpose of this Design Challenge is to identify, research, and design an achievable initiative within UCC that you feel could 'move the needle' further on achieving meaningful sustainability.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice.

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

For this project you will be working in teams. You will come up with a problem, a complex issue, which your group would like to solve. You will look at the SDGs to inform what this project might look like. You will be applying Design Thinking approaches to this complex issue, the process of which will form the basis of both assessment for ED6076.

Suggested steps for getting started on your project.

1. Look at the list of SDGs via the above link
2. Decide as a group which one/s are the most interesting/compelling/challenging for you as a group
3. Think locally – perhaps someone in your group has connections into the community?
Think also about your UCC community and networks!
4. Once you have a theme for your problem, you will work as a group to apply Design Thinking tools to coming up with solutions.
5. You will record evidence of your Design Thinking processes and group journey for two assessment pieces in ED6076: the eportfolio and the capstone design challenge

Useful resources to get started:

<https://www.ucc.ie/en/news/ucc-ranked-among-the-best-universities-in-the-world-for-sustainable-development-1.html>

<https://www.irishexaminer.com/news/munster/arid-40271474.html>

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/how-green-my-university>