



IAU Global HESD Subcluster: SDG 4: Quality Education (Apr. 16, 2020)

The *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* was initiated under the leadership of Leuphana University (Germany) targeting a two-fold approach with a *Sustainability Barometer* intending to create an assessment tool for higher education and its stakeholders. When transferring the coordination to York University (Canada) in February 2020, IAU encouraged the members of the *Subcluster* to redevelop the strategy. Current *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* members are:

- York University, Canada;
- University of Peace, Costa Rica;
- Charles University, Czech Republic;
- Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany;
- International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia; and
- Rhodes University, South Africa.

The overall *IAU Global HESD Cluster* is mainly open to IAU member institutions but also beyond to institutions that are considering an IAU membership. Youth leadership and ongoing involvement is sought through York University's Student Council.

In the first two months of its engagement, York University arranged for the resources to host the cluster, made several presentations to introduce the cluster in Canada, the *Subcluster* members agreed on an adapted action plan that will focus on whole-institution approaches and the relevance of the concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Planned *SDG 4 Subcluster* outcomes

The following outcomes are aimed at by the *Subcluster* to serve the IAU with a focus on whole-institution approaches including deepening the understanding of the ESD concept and improving overall visibility for the role of higher education for sustainable development:

- **Outcome:** Based on a desk research of existing elements, developing toolkits explaining whole-institution approaches for higher education, especially at leadership level. The concrete approaches and ideas are to be defined.
- **Outcome:** Collecting best-practice examples of sustainability pledges and draft an *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* sustainability graduation pledge for students to obtain upon graduation when committing to work towards sustainable development. This pledge will be an open access product to be shared with IAU members for their specific adaptation. A proposal for the 16th IAU General Conference in Dublin (Ireland) 2020 was submitted to carry out a creative workshop to develop a sustainability pledge.
- **Outcome:** Addressing sustainability in student and faculty mobility in higher education when internationalization is a strategic priority of higher education, with an expert panel of the *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* members in a conference at York University in November 2020. Side meetings of the *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* are also intended.

- **Outcome (tentative):** Specific recommendations for higher education from the 2020 Report on the 1974 UNESCO '*Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Cooperation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms*'. Beginning in 2020, ESD and GCED among other specific aspects of SDG 4.7 will be regularly measured in the course of the 2030 Agenda every four years (UIS, 2019). The four areas to be reported upon at all levels of education are (a) national education policies; (b) curricula; (c) teacher education; and (d) student assessment. This cluster will extract the relevant responses on higher education and analyze them in their relationship to the four IAU strategic priorities. The Subcluster will also consider suggestions for the 2024 survey.
- **Outcome (tentative):** Whenever appropriate and possible, statements published by the *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* with perspectives on the role of higher education towards the SDGs while connecting them to further UNESCO's activities will be potentially offered to more signatories (online and via social media)

Moving forward, including communications/presentations

The following steps have been taken (to be added upon regularly):

- 05 March 2020: YORK signed the IAU commitment to formally take over the role
- 15 March 2020: application sent to respond to call for contributions to 70 Years IAU Publication
- 01 April 2020: defining strategy, draft action plan and arranging communication structures within the *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* (zoom call)
- 06 April 2020: Update on communication channels for all IAU members
- 06 April 2020: Presenting the *IAU SDG 4 Subcluster* at the Canadian UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Network Conference and engage with the network in Ottawa
- 06 April 2020: Presenting at EECOM's Standing Committee on Environmental & Sustainability Education (ESE) in Teacher Education (TE) in Canada (virtual event due to pandemic)
- 15 April 2020: Finalizing the action plan with *Subcluster* members
- 15 April 2020: Respond to call for proposals for 16th IAU General Conference in Dublin (Ireland) in November 2020

The following activities are currently planned:

- 20-22 May 2020: Conducting a campfire session at Together/Ensemble Conference 2020 hosted by Université Laval (virtual event due to pandemic)
- 07-16 July 2020: Participation in IAU event during High Level Political Forum in New York (USA)
- 03-06 November 2020: Participation in the 16th IAU General Conference in Dublin (Ireland)
- November 2020: Cluster members to present Reimagining mobility programs in Higher Education at York University (Canada)
- June 2021: Presenting the *IAU SDG 4 Cluster* at the UNESCO World Conference on Education towards Sustainable Development in Berlin (Germany)