



# Strategy 2030

Our strategy toward a sustainable TU/e

*GO Green Office TU/e*

## Introduction

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In 2018, Eindhoven University of Technology's (TU/e) Strategy 2030, Drivers of Change<sup>1</sup>, was adopted. This strategy document states the ambition to belong to the most prominent universities in the world of science and technology. This, according to the document, is accomplished by educating the engineers of the future, who combine in-depth knowledge about technology with the skills required to take on challenges that present themselves in the real world.

According to this strategy, sustainability is one of the three biggest challenges for the world of tomorrow.<sup>2</sup> Thanks to the innovative sustainability solutions developed at TU/e, the university contributes to meeting these challenges by operating as a linchpin in a world-class high-tech innovation ecosystem. The TU/e commits to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the 17 sustainability objectives adopted by the United Nations in 2015 to construct a better world for all.<sup>3</sup>

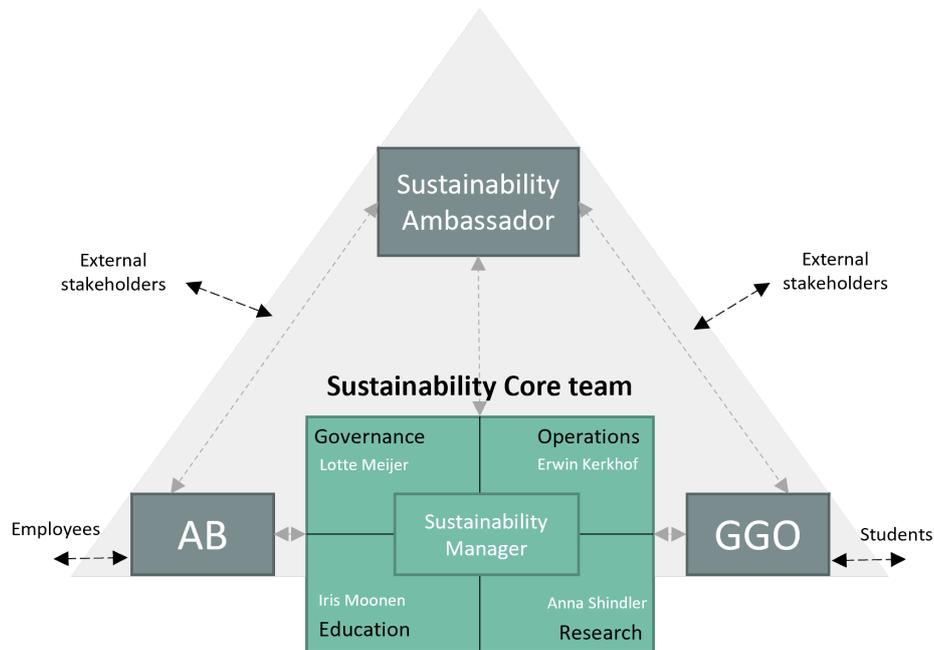
In TU/e's Institutional Plan 2020-2025<sup>4</sup>, TU/e posits that universities should not simply follow but lead the change when it comes to sustainability. This requires TU/e to be responsive to various aspects of the TU/e ecosystem: student learning needs, industry needs, and talent that can enable new technological solutions. Further, the institutional plan places great importance on TU/e becoming a sustainable organization and stresses the importance of sustainable operations and real estate practices.

## Sustainability at TU/e

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Several parties are working on realizing TU/e's aim to function as a fully sustainable organization. The topic is already a point of attention at the different support services of the university. Furthermore, departments, institutes, and research groups are working on the technical, environmental, and societal challenges that the world faces today and in the future. Moreover, sustainability is a recurring topic in both bachelor's and master's education.

Until recently, these sustainability efforts were uncoordinated. To change this, from 2022 onwards, a new sustainability structure has been put in place. A sustainability ambassador was appointed to actively foster change while coordinating sustainability initiatives at the university. Multiple staff members were chosen to lead the assessment and actively aid the integration of sustainability in the areas of research, education, operations, and governance. This process is coordinated by the sustainability manager. Within this sustainability structure, the GO Green Office, the university's student-led sustainability office, is the voice of the TU/e student body. An overview of the sustainability structure is given in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 1: Sustainability Structure TU/e**

## GO Green Office

In 2016, the TU/e GO Green Office (GGO) was founded following the Green Office Model, popular at other universities in the Netherlands.<sup>5</sup> Within this model, the primary goal of Green Offices is to ensure that institutions become more sustainable in every aspect possible. A Green Office consists of a team of students and staff, receiving funding from the university, and is integrated within the organizational structure of the institution. As of 2022, a total of 71 offices were set up worldwide with the goal of informing, connecting, and supporting students and staff to act on sustainability.

At TU/e, GGO is formally part of the service department of Real Estate.

As of 2022, the GGO has made great efforts for increasing visibility, awareness, and encouragement of sustainability at TU/e. For instance, as a result of an early GGO initiative, reusable cups are now available for all TU/e events in place of their disposable counterparts. Several sustainability initiatives were started by GGO, such as the Sustainability Managers Project, which helps study, student, and cultural associations on campus become more sustainable. Moreover, a central sustainability hub - the Green Room - was initiated by GGO, where community events and sustainability exhibitions are hosted often. Additionally, GGO has played an integral part in lobbying for a commitment from the university to formally include sustainability in the TU/e's Bachelor College curriculum.

To continue these efforts, and to foster sustainable developments at TU/e, it is vital to have a clear direction for the future of GGO. In this document, the mission and vision of GGO are stated, accompanied by a strategy on how this path might be continued. Join us in taking the next steps!

## Vision

The GO Green Office wants TU/e to become the most sustainable university in the Netherlands. The GO Green Office is *the* “go-to” for students when it comes to sustainability at TU/e. The GO Green Office aims to create and support the Green Student Community, with whom we aim to increase awareness of sustainability on campus and further establish sustainable operations, education, and governance.

## Mission

The mission of the GO Green Office is to create a sustainable impact by supporting and collaborating with the Green Student Community.

## Strategic Goals

For TU/e to become the most sustainable university in the Netherlands, both top-down and bottom-up influences are indispensable. As GO Green Office, we feel the need to take the lead in creating a bottom-up approach, led by students, who are actively demanding a shift toward sustainability at TU/e. GO Green Office will focus on practices regarding three focus areas: campus operations, education, and governance.

The GO Green Office strengthens and bolsters the voice of the Green Student Community - TU/e students who are passionate about sustainability and want to become more engaged with the topic. By stimulating sustainable practices, change processes can be set in motion, ultimately leading to larger top-down sustainability transformations at TU/e. This document describes how GO Green Office will stimulate these changes in all three focus areas and the vital role of the Green Student Community within this process.

## Campus Operations

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For TU/e to become the most sustainable university in the country, the campus, as well as the people utilizing the campus, must exhibit important changes. GGO has a consulting and encouraging role in making the campus, and student-related activities off-campus, more sustainable. Campus Operations are hereby split into four levels: Green Collaborations at TU/e, Green Events, TU/e-affiliated associations, and student teams, as well as the individual student level. These distinctions are made so that each level can be addressed through an approach most fitting.

**The GO Green Office will actively set up collaborations on the TU/e level to achieve more sustainable campus operations and a more sustainable campus overall.**

From the Green Student Community, GGO gathers wishes and complaints about operations at the TU/e campus. To comply with these wishes, GGO helps connect the right parties to solve these challenges together, serving a consulting function in these collaborations. Topics that are to be improved regarding this matter include - but are not limited to - sustainable energy, catering/facilities, waste reduction, water usage, biodiversity, and mobility.

**The GO Green Office will have a consulting role in the leadup to TU/e events to make them more sustainable.**

Every year, large events take place on campus, like MomenTUM, the TU/e Introduction Week, and BorrelXL. GGO aims to have a consulting role during the preparation efforts of these events and give practical advice on how to organize them in the most sustainable way, with a particular focus on waste reduction and energy use. The target is to reach and consult all events for TU/e students in Eindhoven in some shape or form.

**The GO Green Office will work with and connect all student associations, study associations, and student teams to push together for more sustainable on-campus practices as well as student-related practices off-campus.**

Being parties with similar activities, challenges, and concerns regarding sustainability, GGO encourages and connects the student and study associations, as well as the Student Team Network to work together to push for sustainability efforts within their network. Together, we form a network of inspiring sustainability leaders, who share knowledge that can make an impact on campus.

**The GO Green Office will work to stimulate sustainable behavior amongst students both on campus and indirectly, in their student lives.**

To shape sustainability-minded engineers of the future, students must attain a sustainability-centered attitude. GGO will inspire students on campus, thus indirectly engaging with many students' personal lives, to incorporate more sustainability into their everyday lives on campus and beyond.

## Green Student Community

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TU/e students are the future engineers who will invent and lead the innovations of tomorrow. Thus, it is essential that they are adequately educated and prepared to do this while keeping sustainability in mind. Moreover, the voices of students can encourage the university and its associated organizations to become more sustainable. All these sustainability voices are, of course, part of the Green Student Community. By interacting and collaborating with them, GGO can represent the Green Student Community at the higher, more strategic levels of TU/e. This way, the Green Student Community contributes to a more sustainable TU/e and a more sustainable future.

**The GO Green Office and its activities will be centered around a physical space on campus that connects and inspires people.**

In order to actively engage people with sustainability, it is important to have an inspiring place on campus where people can meet, discuss, and explore sustainability topics and initiatives. The Green Room in the TU/e's Atlas building serves exactly this purpose. This physical space not only improves GGO's visibility amongst students and staff but can also be a way to connect people from different disciplines and backgrounds. It has the potential to become the living lab for sustainability experiments on campus. Moreover, it acts as the channel for receiving input from the Green Student Community. Thus, the Green Room will become *the* place for sustainability-minded people at TU/e; to get inspired, and work toward a more sustainable TU/e, while being informed of what is already going on at TU/e.

**The GO Green Office will facilitate and organize events about sustainability to inspire the Green Student Community.**

GGO can act as a facilitator and organizer of sustainability-centered events, such as documentary nights, discussion hours, and community events to create awareness of and interest in sustainability – always with the goal of connecting and inspiring students of different disciplines. GGO will actively work together with other (student) parties at TU/e in realizing this.

**The GO Green Office will work with the sustainability core team to establish a sustainable brand (#SustainableTU/e) to increase visibility and awareness of sustainability initiatives at TU/e.**

Through promotion, events, and creating a network, GGO is working on helping with the establishment of a sustainable brand (#SustainableTU/e) for TU/e's core team. This increases the visibility of the team and informs students that sustainability is increasingly becoming an important theme at TU/e with an established body working on the topic.

**The GO Green Office will represent the TU/e Green Student Community by collecting input and providing advice.**

Thanks to GGO's initiatives discussed above, the GGO team is able to represent the Green Student Community in an accurate way on a TU/e-wide level. Through various initiatives and groups, GGO receives a lot of input on what can be improved on our campus. This input and associated ideas are always forwarded to the right stakeholders. By frequently meeting and connecting with as many stakeholder groups as possible, GGO ensures that student input always reaches the right ear.

## Education

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The GO Green Office wants to represent student voices who wish to integrate sustainability into education at TU/e. This entails two aspects. Firstly, GGO aims to ensure that the topic of sustainability is integrated throughout the curricula of all education programs in a coherent way. Second, educational operations should be executed in a sustainable way.

**The GO Green Office will contribute to stimulating discussions on how sustainability should be integrated within education.**

Engineers of the future must be able to adapt to the rapidly changing world that we are currently living in (Strategy 2030<sup>2</sup>). The climate crisis is one of the reasons that this world is changing so rapidly, creating challenges that many engineers must work to solve in the future. GGO believes that the university has to pose the question regarding what a TU/e engineer should be capable of doing in the context of sustainability. When this question is answered, this can then be translated into curricular changes in the different education programs at TU/e.

As GGO, we will take the student lead in stimulating increased levels of sustainability in education. We will focus on both the TU/e Bachelor College and the TU/e Graduate School, as sustainability should be an integral part of all education at TU/e. GGO, therefore, wants to aid in the visioning process of sustainability education at TU/e. Following this, GGO aims to help in the translation of this vision into a concrete set of elements within TU/e education.

As this process requires stimulation from many stakeholders at TU/e, GGO will cooperate with student members of co-determination bodies and educational staff members.

**The GO Green Office will increase cooperation with staff and students to stimulate bottom-up change for sustainability education.**

Changes in education can be set in motion at TU/e by inspiring and stimulating deans, program directors, policymakers, professors, and other staff members. GGO aims to realize this in two ways: using our own efforts and stimulating staff and students to create a bottom-up noise that is impossible to ignore.

Via co-determination bodies like the University Council, the Joint Program Committees, Program Committees, Department Councils, and Coordinators of Educational Affairs at study associations, change processes can be set in motion. Student members of these bodies have regular contact with the deans, program directors, policymakers, and teaching staff. Stimulating and inspiring them to increase the focus on the topic of sustainability in education will, together with our own efforts, increase the chances of realizing change. Moreover, staff members with an already present interest in and dedication to sustainability can be targeted by GGO to stimulate change among their colleagues.

## Governance

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GGO wants to take the student lead in stimulating the entire TU/e to become the most sustainable university in the Netherlands. As students, we want to stimulate the creation of a TU/e strategy and policy that will foster this. A clear roadmap to reach this goal has to be created, where both bottom-up and top-down actions will aid in this.

As GGO we want to facilitate this through the three strategic pillars as defined earlier. Focusing on more sustainable campus operations, creating a Green Student Community, and pushing for sustainability to have a solid place in education will create a bottom-up force that we believe will eventually lead to top-down changes. Students and staff, including the Green Student Community, will be the bottom-up change agents this university needs to become the most sustainable university in the Netherlands.

## Join us for the next steps

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The strategy described needs to be translated into an annual plan for GGO to work effectively. This plan will provide the basis for the annual budget.

This strategy was created in collaboration with all stakeholders of the TU/e GO Green office. Several interactive visioning sessions were conducted with the GGO team. The sustainability ambassador, director of real estate, and other TU/e staff members have contributed to this document. It is important that all stakeholders stay involved in the execution and evaluation of this strategy, as a collectively supported process will foster success.

In order for this strategy to move along with recent developments, a bi-annual evaluation of all of its aspects should be taking place. It is important that the mission is critically evaluated so that the GO Green Office team works accordingly to their perceived reasons for existence. If new

focus areas are defined, or when certain parts are perceived as complete, additions or deductions shall be performed on this document.

At last, an annual report on all activities of GGO will be set up, elaborating on each of the three strategic areas. This will enable GGO to monitor and reflect on executed activities.

## **Bibliography :**

<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.tue.nl/fileadmin/content/pers/2018/09\\_september/TUE\\_Strategie\\_2030-LR.pdf](https://assets.tue.nl/fileadmin/content/pers/2018/09_september/TUE_Strategie_2030-LR.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Strategy 2030, page 14, paragraph 1

<sup>3</sup> Strategy 2030, page 14, 'The sustainability Challenge'

<sup>4</sup> [https://assets.tue.nl/fileadmin/user\\_upload/8420%20TUE\\_Instellingsplan%202030\\_01-03\\_DEF.pdf](https://assets.tue.nl/fileadmin/user_upload/8420%20TUE_Instellingsplan%202030_01-03_DEF.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.greenofficemovement.org/>