

2020 Edition



Student Sustainability Guide

Green Campus
Institute of Technology Sligo



Introduction

IT Sligo is committed to becoming a leader in sustainability in education. Each student and staff member is encouraged to consider their environmental impacts through their daily habits both on and off campus. Collectively, we can minimise our environmental impacts and help transition to a more sustainable society.

In 2019/20 IT Sligo recycled 23% of its waste (from 14% in 2018) and diverted 35% from landfill (up from 25% in 2018). Year on year we have reduced overall energy consumption while expanding our campus. In 2019, we have reduced our energy use by 21% based on our 2013 baseline.

Our environmental performance is improving but we can do better. In the next 12 months collectively we will set even higher targets to further reduce our environmental impacts. Your participation in sustainable work and life habits can help us all to protect the environment and ensure it is protected for current and future generations.

Change starts with you! Check out the '[Lazy Person's Guide to Saving the World](#)' by the United Nations, a fun, easy guideline to living a more environmentally friendly life.

Get Involved!

You can make a difference. This short guide has lots of ideas but you can go further; Get involved, get active!

Here's how:

IT Sligo Green Campus

The IT Sligo Green Campus Committee comprises students with the support of staff and management across the campus. Students direct and lead our Green Campus journey towards a more sustainable campus. The committee works with all stakeholders to bring about change by consensus and participation. To get involved or to share an idea email green campus@itsligo.ie

IT Sligo Student Union

IT Sligo Students' Union believes that each student of the Institute plays a fundamental role in making the Institute more sustainable and encourages our members to engage with us and the IT Sligo Green Campus Committee to make that vision a reality.

Last year IT Sligo Students' Union distributed 3,000 re-usable keep cups to encourage a reduction in the number of cups which go to landfill each year.

This year the Students' Union will run the Students' Union Green Week working with Clubs and Societies to help educate our members as to how they can become responsible citizens of the Institute.

Clubs and Societies

IT Sligo has over 40 clubs and societies, some like the Environmental Society work directly on environmental matters. Others are more focused on social or sports activities. Getting involved in a club or society, helping out and supporting events brings our students together in a positive manner. It builds our campus community and is a great opportunity for you to contribute more. It is also a great way to embed sustainability in all our sports and social events. Sign up, get involved!

Modules and Projects

IT Sligo delivers a wide range of full-time and on-line programmes. Regardless of the discipline, staff and students can address issues of sustainability from creative design to social justice. For ideas on how to embed sustainability into your modules and projects we recommend you start with the [UN Sustainable Develop Goals](#).

Sustainability Guide

This guide is broken into four sections; energy, water, waste and transport. Each section is colour coded.

Energy: Energy use such as heating systems and electrical products have a high carbon and environmental footprint due to being fuelled largely by fossil fuels.

Water: It takes energy to process, filter and transport fresh drinking water, so be mindful of your use of water. Consume water consciously, and conserve wherever you can.

Waste: Everyone should recycle at IT Sligo. But, reducing your consumption and reusing items is a better way to manage waste.

Transport: Approximately 27% of each person's carbon footprint is due to transport using fossil fuels. You can dramatically lower your footprint by considering your travel methods; walk, cycle and where possible and appropriate use public transport or journey sharing (following appropriate public health guidelines).

The following guides will help you reduce your impact and make your college life more sustainable for everyone!

Here's how you can help to minimise your energy footprint:

Lights off

Whenever possible, turn off lights as you leave your personal rooms, workstation or a shared space (e.g. meeting rooms, bathrooms). Always turn off lights & other equipment at the end of the day.

Power Management

Equipment in standby mode still consumes energy, so whenever possible, turn off computers, monitors, peripherals (e.g. speakers) and other shared electronic equipment (e.g. printers, copiers, coffee makers, etc.) at the end of the day.

Simple actions like using a blank screensaver, tightening up your computer / laptop powersave features, pulling down the sash on fume cupboards, and optimally managing lab equipment all help. Check this [online guide](#) for detailed tips on how to manage lab equipment to reduce energy use.

Unplug

Phone chargers do their job in about 2 hours, but leaving the phone continuously plugged in continues to consume electricity. Unplug once it is charged.

Optimise heat

Some older buildings don't have the thermal properties of a modern building, and may need temperature adjustments, so if your room seems too hot or cold, please ask a member of staff to contact Estates to report the problem and have it addressed.

Heating

Throw on a sweater or top to warm up by three degrees, rather than boosting heat for the whole room! Close all windows, blinds and curtains in the evenings to reduce heat loss from the windows. This is especially important in buildings with older windows.

When renting property ask to see its BER energy label. This label can help you predict the cost and comfort level of the property.



Here's how you can help to conserve water and consume it sustainably:

Drinking Water

Did you know that it takes at least 1.4 litres of water to make 1 litre of drinking water?

Save money and precious water resources by filling your own reusable water bottle at the water fountains across campus. This could save you up to €600 per year!

Leaks

Water leaks waste water AND energy (it takes energy to pump water around those pipes!). Don't assume someone else has reported a leak; report any water leaks (indoors or outdoors) to Estates (via the Estates Helpdesk) or a member of IT Sligo staff.

At Home

Reduce water consumption by not letting the tap run when you wash dishes by hand or brush your teeth. Use a basin to minimise water use. Take shorter showers and only boil the amount of water you need rather than a full kettle (this saves on energy too!).

Laundry

Run the washing machine only when full, and wash with cold or cooler settings as much as possible to save the energy that would be used to heat the water.

Modern detergents are designed to work as well with cold water as with hot water.



Reduce, reuse, recycle, refuse! Here's how you can minimise your waste:

Stop Printing!

Do you really need that 80-page report? Or can you get by with the 2-page summary? Default your print settings to double-sided printing and you immediately reduce the amount of paper you consume by 50%, thus contributing to saving forests. Default your personal printer settings to black and white printing to save on ink. Reuse paper printed on one side for notes/scratch paper/ for printing test pages.

Reusable Containers

Bring lunch in reusable containers rather than plastic/Ziploc bags.

Paper & Cardboard

Recycle clean (i.e. not contaminated with food or drink) paper and cardboard in dedicated bins throughout college.

Reusable Mugs

By using a reusable mug you can help IT Sligo divert tens of thousands of cups from landfill every year, eliminating waste and reducing consumption.

Batteries

Recycle all your one-use and rechargeable batteries and mobile phones through the college battery recycling program. It's free and environmentally responsible. Look for the blue battery recycling box in your department.

For home battery recycling, all large chain supermarkets accept batteries for recycling (usually at the customer service counter or near the tills). They are required to do this by law!

Second Hand

Buy used clothes, books and sporting equipment. Check out DoneDeal, Freecycle, WeShare online for second hand and free items! Social media may also be a good way to offer unwanted items to others.

Compost

IT Sligo has composting bins in the canteen areas. Familiarise yourself with what can and cannot be composted on campus.

Lightbulbs

Always replace old lightbulbs with the most energy efficient option. If you need to dispose of old lightbulb, you can bring them to any hardware store to be recycled for free (e.g. Homebase, Homeland, Woodies, etc.). They are also required to do this by law!

Container Recycling

Recycle all solid plastic containers and bottles, aluminium cans and tins.

Please put your clean & dried, empty containers in the green bins around campus and other locations.



Lower the impact of your transport footprint by following these steps:

Cycling

IT Sligo has a secure bike parking facility around campus. You can plan safe cycle routes countrywide, with the National Cycle Planner.

You'll find more excellent cycling resources on the [Urban Cycle Sligo website](#).

Public Transport

IT Sligo is ideally located for public transport use with a central bus stop at the main entrance.

Plan your trips across Sligo and all of Ireland with the National Journey Planner (which features schedules from private and public transport companies) [here](#).

Walking

Sligo town and the majority of student accommodation is 15 minutes' walk from IT Sligo. For short journeys consider walking.

Use Google Maps or another mapping service to research walking distances.

Choosing to walk improves health and wellbeing, reduces urban traffic congestion and improves air quality.



Want more info?

This guide was developed by the IT Sligo Green Campus Committee in conjunction with IT Sligo Students' Union.

If you want more information on the topics covered in this document or have suggestions on how we can make it better, please email us at greencampus@itsligo.ie