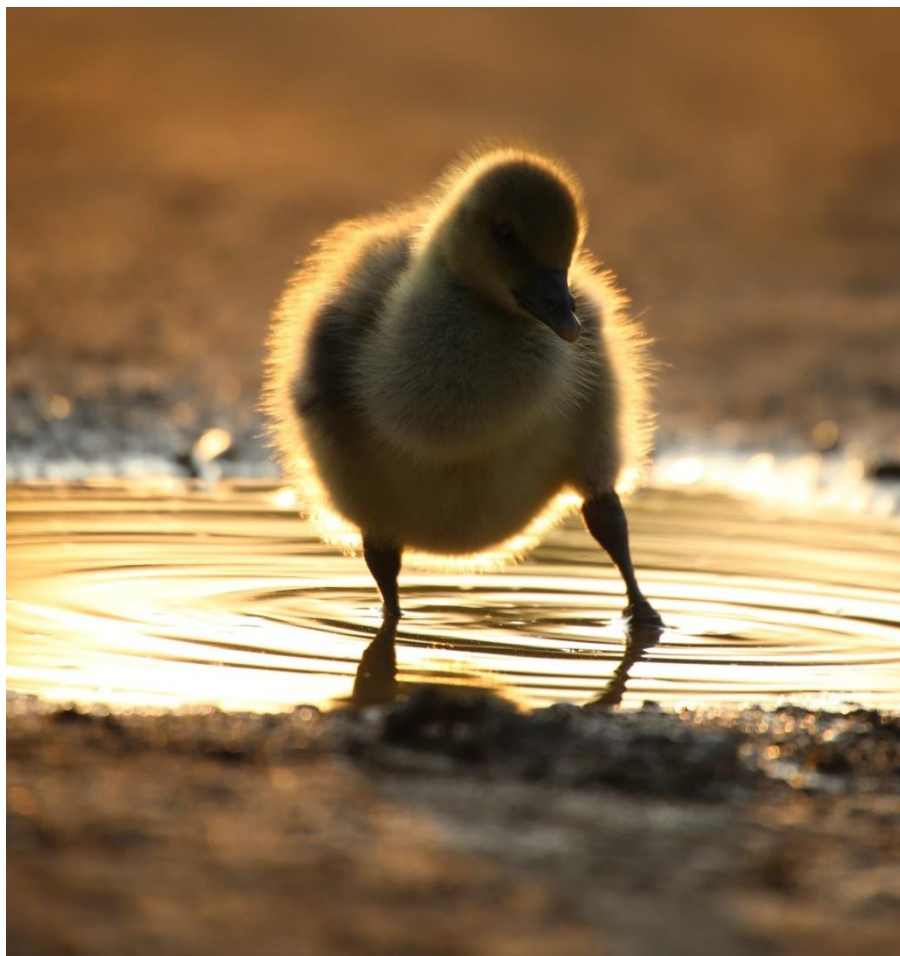


Green Impact at Oxford University

Programme User Guide



Stride into the Future, image by Daniel Bowen, Sustainability Photographer of the Year Awards 2023

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Welcome and overview

The Green Impact programme provides a toolkit of effective actions that staff and student teams can take to improve sustainable practice within their lab, building, department or college. Teams can make a meaningful and visible difference in just one year with the ability to build on their work overtime.

Toolkit actions range from simple to complex and cover a wide variety of environmental topics with opportunities for custom projects. Each action you complete counts towards achieving a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Beyond Gold award!

The average yearly cycle includes:

- Welcome session and registration for new teams
- Optional monthly virtual drop-in meetings
- Completing toolkit actions and progressing custom work
- Submission of finished toolkit
- Audits with Oxford students
- Award ceremony

Who can participate?

We welcome all Oxford staff and students to participate in Green Impact! Whether you are just starting your journey towards sustainable practice or have a wealth of experience in this area there is something for you.

Staff and students can both participate in Green Impact teams. Students can take part in any of the following ways depending on their academic schedules and interests:

- Join their departmental/college team or work with staff to establish one
 - Note: we recommend a mix of staff and students within teams. The Green Impact programme is designed to implement sustainable practices within an organisation. Staff participation in teams is necessary to complete some of the actions.
- Students:
 - Apply to become a Green Impact Project Assistant (GIPA) working with one of the University's Green Impact teams to implement a custom sustainability project.
 - Receive IEMA- approved training for environmental auditing and conduct year end audits for Green Impact team submissions.

Connection to the University's Environmental Sustainability Strategy

By taking part in Green Impact, you can support the [University's Environmental Sustainability Strategy](#) with headline targets of net zero carbon and biodiversity net gain by 2035. The toolkit actions have been tailored to align with the University's ten strategic priorities.

Time commitment

Green Impact is completely voluntary, community-oriented and fun way to make a difference – there is no fixed time commitment to taking part!

For teams looking to make significant progress or achieve Bronze in the first year we generally recommend:

- One hour of work per week per team member
- Monthly team meetings
 - Note: you can create sub-groups to work on particular actions. This can make the workload lighter and enable more progress between meetings.

Scoring system

Each toolkit action is assigned a certain amount of points which can be earned once complete. To receive an award your team must complete enough actions to meet one of the following:

- **Bronze:** 150 points
- **Silver:** 250 points
- **Gold:** 375 points
- **Beyond Gold:** complete Beyond Gold actions (*for teams that have achieved Gold for 2 years)
 - If working on Beyond Gold – please ensure you upload relevant evidence, comments and any project documents to the ‘Beyond Gold’ actions on the toolkit.

The toolkit has been scored based on a scale that considers:

- The average length of time required to complete actions
- Lasting impact
- Collaboration with stakeholders to complete actions
- Measurable or significant impact

Starting a new team

Green Impact is open to teams of all sizes: any building, department, laboratory or college – whatever suits you! You can search to find existing teams in your area online (page 6) or create a new one.

We will cover the technical aspect of creating a new team later on in the user guide (page 6), The first challenge of establishing a new team is building interest among your colleagues and peers. You can approach a few people personally, send a departmental email through your local newsletter, or host an event. Some event ideas include:

- Coffee morning or lunch meeting
- Hosting an interesting speaker
- Holding a quiz or interactive game (e.g., How bad are bananas?)

It can be difficult to be the first person on a team, but remember ‘if you build it, they will come’ – there are so many passionate people in Oxford interested in sustainability. The Environmental Sustainability team is happy to assist you if you need support or further ideas.

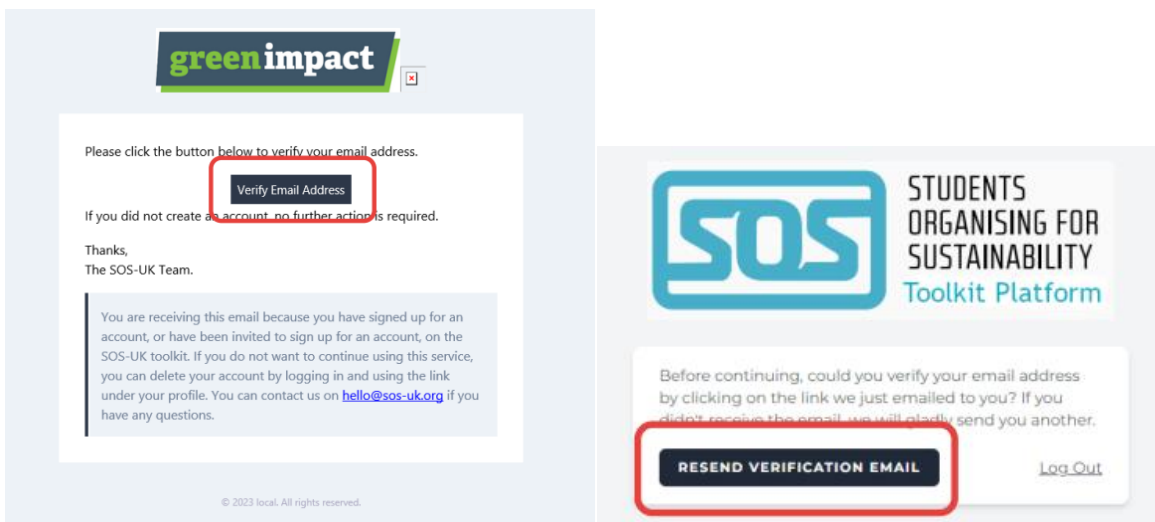
Registration

1. Go to: <https://toolkit.sos-uk.org/greenimpact/oxford/login>
 - We recommend bookmarking this page for easy access
2. Select the ‘register’ button on the log-in box



3. Fill in your details to create an account. Please be sure to use your Oxford email address. Your password must be at least 10 characters and contain at least one special character and one number.

4. Activate your account by verifying your email. Check for a message from Green Impact. Click 'verify email address.' If you do not receive a verification email and cannot find it within your junk folder, please select 'resend verification email' on the login page.



Joining or creating a team online

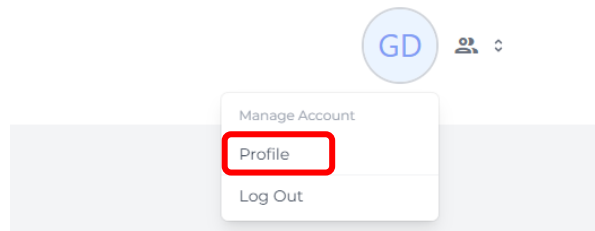
When you log-in for the first time you will be prompted to:

1. Join an existing team or create a new one. **Please make sure to double check that your team does not already exist in order to avoid duplication.** You can click the drop-down menu to search for your building, department, laboratory or college. If you are the first member of a new team you can instead type in a team name and select 'create' in the lower box.

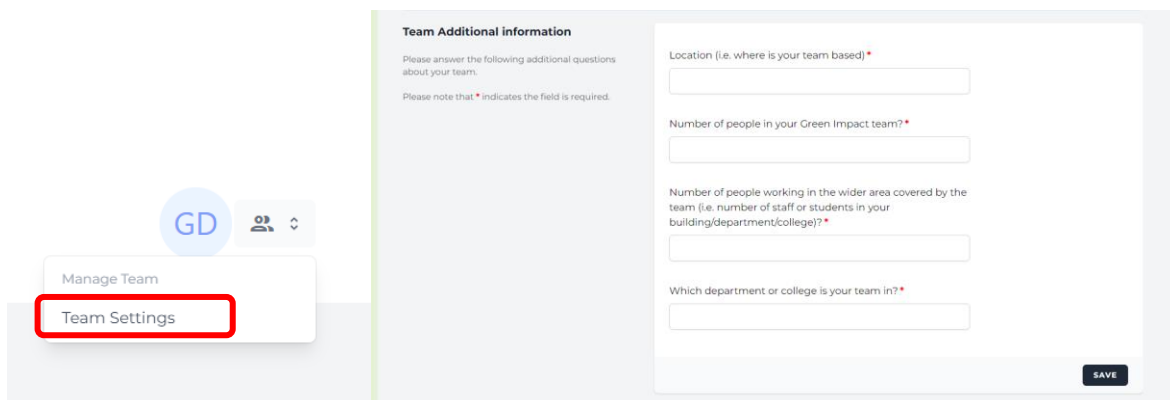
2. Fill in any empty profile details. Give your best estimate for number of team members, but remember you can always go back and update it later on.

User and team profiles

You can make changes to your personal user profile including: amending profile information, password, enabling 2-factor authentication or deleting your account. To access your profile, go to your initials in the top right-hand corner and select 'profile.'

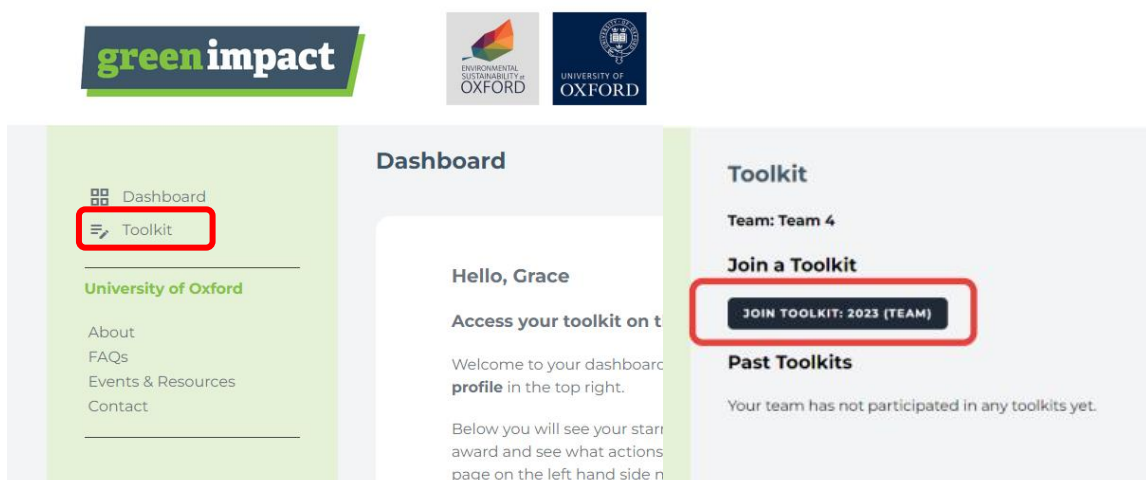


You can also make changes to your team profile including: amending your team name, inviting new team members to join using their email address, or removing team members that are no longer active. If for any reason you need to deactivate an entire team you will need to contact the Environmental Sustainability team (sustainability@admin.ox.ac.uk). To navigate to your team profile simply click on the people icon in the top right-hand corner and select 'team settings.'



Toolkit

Now you are ready to start working through the toolkit of actions! To access the toolkit, navigate to the left-hand side menu and select 'toolkit.' When opening the toolkit for the first time you will be prompted to 'join the current toolkit'.



The toolkit comprises over 100 different possible actions to explore! You are free to complete any action that is relevant to your team. Please note that not all actions will be applicable to you, but

don't worry, you are not expected to complete the full toolkit. You can search by any of the drop-down menus at the top of the page to find actions that align with your team's unique goals and interests. Search by:

- **Themes** (e.g., Energy, Biodiversity, Carbon, etc)
- **Area** (e.g., General, Colleges, Labs)
- **Award level**
 - Use this drop-down menu to find the specific actions necessary to achieve Beyond Gold. All other award levels can be achieved by meeting the points threshold necessary through a combination of any other actions.
- **Status** (e.g., In progress, Done, etc.)
 - Use this drop-down menu to search by your team's progress against certain actions. You can see which actions are currently in progress or complete.
- **SDG** (e.g., Good Health and Wellbeing, Quality Education, etc.)
 - Use the drop-down menu to search by items associated with different United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

We have tagged all of the actions by theme and area for ease of searching. However, please do not feel restricted by these tags. For example, if a departmental team is interested in completing one of the 'College 1-16' actions because it applies to your area, you are very welcome to work on them. The tags are general guidance to help you find what you are looking for.

Starring and assigning actions

You can star actions by selecting the 'star icon' at the left-hand side of each action. Or assign them to a particular team member by using the drop-down list at the bottom of each action.

Once you star or assign an action it will appear on the dashboard of yourself or the relevant team member to which the item was assigned for easy access.

The screenshot shows an action card titled "Start here 5" with a star icon. It has tabs for "General", "Colleges", "Energy", and "First five steps". Below the tabs are four sections: "Criteria", "Further information", "How you will be audited", and "Comments & evidence". The "Criteria" section contains the text: "The team has put up energy-awareness stickers and posters in the majority of offices and communal facilities. Encouraging staff and students to switch off lights/equipment when not needed." To the right of the text are three icons representing Sustainable Development Goals: 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and 13 (Climate Action). At the bottom, there is a red-bordered box labeled "Assigned to: Unassigned" with a dropdown arrow.

The screenshot shows a dashboard with two panels. The "Starred Actions" panel has a star icon and lists two actions: "Start here 3" and "Start here 5", both with "NO STATUS". The "Assigned Actions" panel has a checkmark icon and lists one action: "Start here 3" with "NO STATUS".

Completing actions

Each action has four sections:

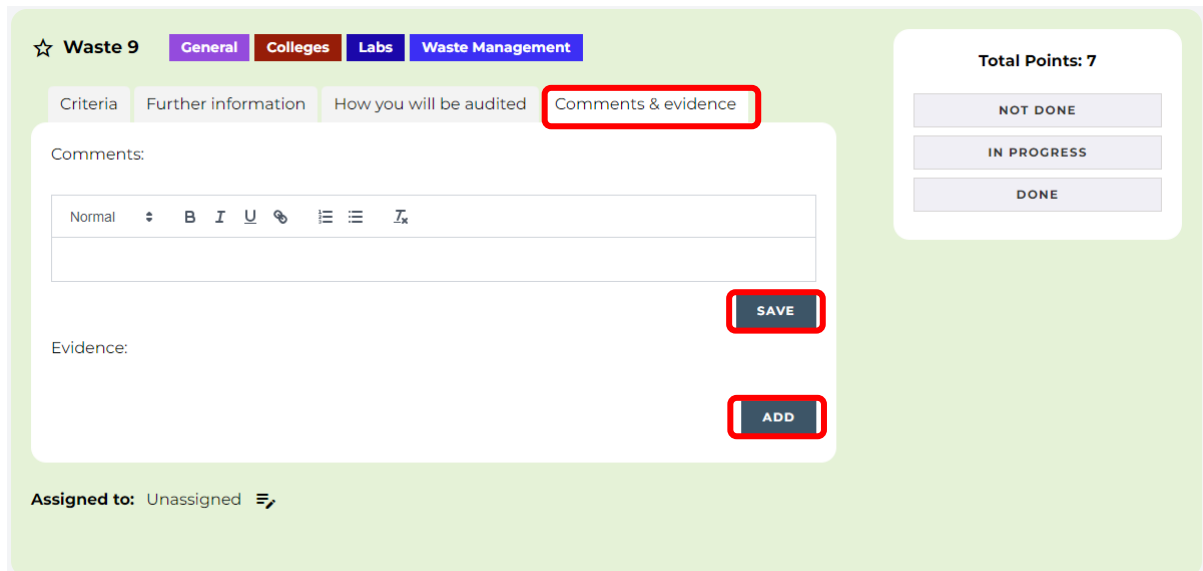
1. **Criteria:** brief explanation of the action.
2. **Further information:** context for the action including its importance, resources, and guidance for how to complete the action.
3. **How you will be audited:** details the kind of evidence you can collect for the audit.
4. **Comments & evidence:** space to record progress to date, collaborate with colleagues and upload final evidence.

The screenshot shows an action card titled "Waste 9" with a star icon. It has tabs for "General", "Colleges", "Labs", and "Waste Management". Below the tabs are four sections: "Criteria", "Further information", "How you will be audited", and "Comments & evidence". The "Criteria" section contains the text: "The team have identified ways to reduce the use of single use items, especially plastics." To the right of the text are three icons representing Sustainable Development Goals: 5 (Gender Equality), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production).

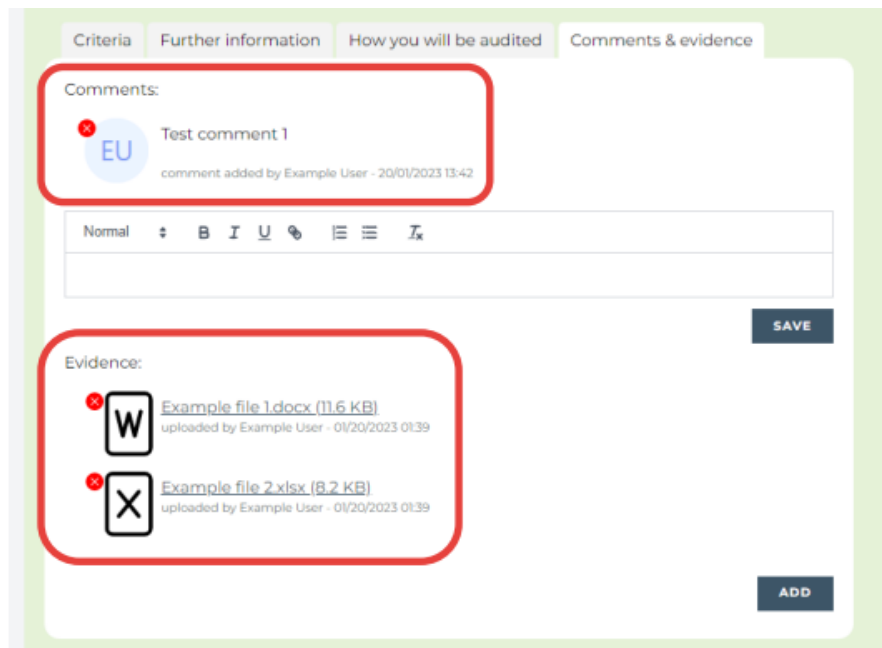
To demonstrate how you have completed an action you can upload evidence or leave a comment explaining your work. You do not need to include a lot of evidence for each action, in many cases a simple screen shot or photo is sufficient. Reference the 'how you will be audited' tab for guidance.

To upload a file, select 'add' and choose your desired file. You can upload files up to a maximum size of 4MB. Most file types are accepted (e.g., Word, Excel, PowerPoint, JPEG, PDF). If you are including a photo please upload it directly instead of including it within the comments section.

We recommend leaving a brief comment within each completed action to help the auditor verify your work. Once you have done so, remember to click 'save.'



Actions with uploaded evidence and comments will appear as below. You can download, delete, change and re-upload any item in this section if needed.



When you have included the necessary comments/evidence you can select 'Done' to the left-hand side of the action. This change will automatically save and add the total points indicated above to your team's total.

Dashboard

The dashboard will automatically open every-time you log onto the platform. It contains:

- An introductory message
- Leader-board featuring the top ten Oxford Green Impact teams by points
- Starred actions
- Actions that are assigned to you
- Your team's award progress

Projects and custom work

Projects and custom actions are a great opportunity to do something unique as a team that is tailored to your context with the capacity for significant impact! You know your area best and can flexibly adapt to meet the specific challenges and opportunities available.

The 'Project' and 'Custom' actions have suggestions and templates to provide guidance for this work if you need. You can also use these items to recognise work that your building, department or college is already taking part in that might not be covered by any of the other actions.

Toolkit submission and audits

Every year the Green Impact programme will have a submission deadline for teams who would like to have their work recognised at the annual Sustainability Showcase and take part in the audit process to receive a Green Impact award. This deadline can be found on the 'FAQ' page on the left-hand side menu.

Once you've completed as many actions as you can and included all of the necessary evidence/comments, you are ready to submit the toolkit. To do so, simply select the 'Submit Toolkit' button at the top right of the 'Toolkit' page. This will automatically send your work to the Environmental Sustainability team who will reach out to coordinate your audit.

Audits are a friendly process led by Oxford students who have received IEMA-approved training for environmental auditing. Providing students with a valuable experience and opportunity to learn more about the successes and challenges of implementing sustainable practice within a large organisation. The audit process also allows teams to share their work and have their award level verified each year (e.g., Bronze, Silver, Gold or Beyond Gold).

Each audit is conducted by a pair of students who have reviewed your toolkit evidence and comments. They will ask you questions to better understand your work throughout the year. On average each audit slot is 45min-1hr long. The Environmental Sustainability team will reach out after you have submitted the toolkit to organize your audit time slot and ask for 1-3 representatives from your team to attend.

At the end of each audit teams can share their feedback and experience working with the Green Impact programme. Your feedback enables the programme to evolve overtime and also helps us engage with potential new teams.

Awards and ceremonies

Every year we have an annual ceremony where the Green Impact teams who have completed the audit process receive their awards. This Sustainability Showcase is a chance to celebrate the exceptional contributions of staff and students advancing environmental sustainability across the collegiate University. Taking place in Trinity term, the Environmental Sustainability team will share the registration for this event within the newsletter, Green Impact Teams channel and through social media.

This is an excellent opportunity to network with other teams from across the University, learn about various sustainability projects and celebrate all your hard work with some canapes! Although we do welcome all teams to take part in the fun, if your team is not able to attend you will still receive your award plaque through the internal post within the following weeks. You can [learn more about some of our previous award ceremonies here](#).

Support and resources

Green Impact is a community and you are not alone in this work! You can find support and resources including:

- **Monthly Green Impact drop-in meetings**
 - These informal meetings are an opportunity to gather and discuss learnings, challenges, and questions regarding the sustainability projects in your area with the wider Green Impact community.
- **Green Impact Microsoft [Teams Channel](#)**
 - Ask questions and learn from other teams. You can also find a variety of sustainable events advertised throughout the year.
- **Sustainable Oxford Newsletter**
 - [Join the mailing list](#) and learn about all of the events, resources, campaigns and opportunities available through the University's Environmental Sustainability team and wider environmental community.
- **Green Impact resource bank (accessible through the website)**
 - Gain access to a wide variety of communications resources and materials to help you engage with your colleagues to effect change.
- **Monthly Green Impact webinars**
 - SOS-UK offers a [monthly webinar series](#) available to all Green Impact teams covering a wide variety of topics.
- **Green Impact Toolkit**
 - The toolkit itself contains guidance in the 'further information' tab for each action.

The Green Impact Programme at Oxford is managed by the University's Environmental Sustainability team and Students Organising for Sustainability UK (SOS-UK). If you have any questions or require further support please contact:

- Vered Balan -Environmental Sustainability Engagement Programme Manager
 - vered.balan@admin.ox.ac.uk
- Celine Clark -Oxford's SOS-UK Project Manager
 - Celine.Clark@sos-uk.org

Top tips for beginners

If you are just beginning your Green Impact journey we want to welcome you aboard and thank you for your commitment to a sustainable future. Below are the top tips to help new teams as they are getting started:

1. **Change takes time:** Our enthusiasm and passion for environmental work can sometimes make the challenges or barriers we face all the more frustrating. It's important to remember that we may not see immediate change from our actions, we need to be patient with ourselves and those around us. Be considerate and try to take the perspective of your colleagues and peers when introducing potential changes to practice. When people feel seen and understood they are more likely to be willing to explore new habits.
2. **Small is important:** When we are faced with global challenges we can feel paralysed or that only large-scale action is reasonable. It's important to remember that we need both top-down and bottom-up solutions to this crisis. Small actions create a ripple effect and build on each other. You are now a part of a larger network of Green Impact teams that have completed thousands of environmental actions over the years and it is creating change!
3. **Joyful work is sustainable:** To interest other people in taking part and sustain our own work overtime we need to build fun and joy into our environmental action. This doesn't mean we ignore heavier subject matter but that we balance it with the authentically joyful parts of sustainable living – inviting people to take part in plant-based food contests, introducing interesting podcasts, attending community events, etc.
4. **Be visible:** When you are just starting out it can feel uncomfortable to put yourself out there but often the best way to influence people is to lead by example. When colleagues and peers see you taking part it makes change less intimidating. Create opportunities for your Green Impact to be visible and for others to join you naturally. This may include adding switch-off stickers to your lights, labelling your bins, having energy thermometers at your desk. Don't be modest, people are more likely to make change once they see it is common practice.
5. **Build relationships and communicate:** Having a network of people in your area and communicating effectively with them is key. Working collaboratively with your Building Manager, local Communications team, Finance department, or any other stakeholder can make implementing substantial changes much easier. Share what you are doing with your team, colleagues and wider department. You can utilise a local newsletter, notice board, Teams channel, social media and more.
6. **Manage your workload:** Remember to manage your workload and be realistic setting expectations so that team members do not burn out. Voluntary work is sustainable in moderation.
7. **Use support and resources:** Don't work in isolation, you can utilise any of the resources covered above. The Environmental Sustainability team is happy to provide additional support or meet up for a friendly informal chat if you are experiencing challenges.
8. **Stay curious:** Deepen your knowledge and take the available resources and trainings to learn more and stay interested in the work!