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**UNIVERSITÄT  
BERN**

**Vice-Rectorate Quality and Sustainable Development**

**Promoting  
Sustainable  
Development  
through  
education**

**Project application guide**

**December 2023**

*“The University of Bern carries out excellent interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research and teaching on sustainability (ecology, society, economy, culture and climate).”*

*“The University ensures that its students are ideally prepared for the future. The quality of its degree programs continues to improve and interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary teaching is encouraged. The topic of sustainable development is integrated into every degree course at the University of Bern. The University’s diverse and top-quality range of continuing education courses demonstrates its commitment to lifelong learning and knowledge transfer in the working world and society as a whole.”*

Strategy 2030 University of Bern

## Promoting Sustainable Development through education

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<b>WHAT</b>	<p><b>A project that promotes sustainable development through education (in a broad sense) at the University of Bern.</b></p> <p>Projects can be courses or events within regular study programmes, or they can be creative and take other forms (e.g. conferences, workshop series, exhibitions, podcasts, real-world laboratories<sup>1</sup>, etc).</p>
<b>WHO</b>	<p><b>Employees of the University of Bern</b></p> <p>The funding is specifically aimed at lecturers and mid-level staff (i.e. employees of the University of Bern, enrolled and registered doctoral students, post-doctoral and habilitation students, employees of the central administration, etc.). Bachelor's and Master's students are not eligible to apply.<sup>2</sup></p>
<b>WHEN</b>	<p><b>Project submission deadline is 29 February 2024</b></p>

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<sup>1</sup> Philipp T. and Schmohl T. (eds.) 2023. [Handbook Transdisciplinary Learning](#). Bielefeld, Germany: transcript Verlag.

<sup>2</sup> Students have access to support for sustainability-related student activities through the [Students4Sustainability hub](#).

The University of Bern promotes Sustainable Development (SD) in line with its Strategy 2030. It supports projects that involve the design of new sustainability-related courses or events, or that incorporate the topic into existing courses or events.

The “Promoting Sustainable Development through education” funding mechanism provides resources to relieve project managers of some commitments, giving them the opportunity to design or redesign sustainability-related courses and events. The reference to SD can be thematic and/or didactic-methodological.

### **What does sustainable development through education mean?**

For the purposes of this funding mechanism, an “educational event” can take any format that helps the learner acquire competences that are relevant to sustainability. The focus is on the learning and teaching of all participants. The aim – achieving Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) – goes beyond merely imparting knowledge to students. Instead, it invites all participants to take part in the knowledge process and to open up spaces for reflection and action in the field of SD. This means that the format chosen can be creative – and it should empower employees from a broad range of fields to generate a setting appropriate to the chosen format.

#### Possible implementations:

1. “Promoting SD through education” projects can be integrated into a course embedded in the curriculum. You can integrate SD creatively into existing sustainability-related courses, or you may choose to design a new course.

*Example: A lecturer wants to embed the topic of SD into an existing chemistry course.*

2. “Promoting SD through education” projects can be creative educational events, such as discussions among various university members in a reading group. You can also organize an exchange with the public, e.g. by holding an exhibition. New sustainability-related events should result in an output corresponding to approx. 20 hours (attendance time of 2 semester hours per week) for funding with 12PP, or 10 hours with 6PP.

*Example: A staff member of the University’s central administration would like to produce a podcast series on SD topics from their area of activity, in collaboration with other employees and interested students.*

This document is a guide to completing the project application form, “Promoting Sustainable Development through education: project application Autumn semester 2024 or Spring semester 2025”.

## 1. Contact details

Please enter your correspondence address, position, the relevant study programme/field of activity, institute/office (including cost centre number), and faculty/central administration. Note: the official applicant is the respective institute/central administration.

### 1.1 Applicants

“Promoting SD through education” is open to all employees of the University of Bern.<sup>3</sup> Bachelor’s and Master’s students are not eligible to apply. Our aim is for this funding mechanism to be as open and accessible as possible, even for people who have little experience with project submissions, and to provide space for creative and experimental projects. The ESD team at the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) offers consultations that potential applicants can attend before submitting a project. This includes coaching on teaching, clarification of the project idea, and questions of understanding.

If you lack experience on the topic of SD and on how to integrate it into teaching in your discipline, you will find help regarding the points listed below at [www.esd.unibe.ch](http://www.esd.unibe.ch), for example in the “ESD Guidelines” and its in-depth modules.

## 2. Project details

The university awards Personnel Points (PPs) to the participating institutes. The PPs give project managers time to design, implement, and evaluate a Sustainability-related course or event.

Possibilities include:

- content-related links between discipline-specific topics and core elements of the Sustainable Development concept;
- the targeted promotion of Sustainability-relevant skills;

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<sup>3</sup> The funding is specifically aimed at lecturers and mid-level staff (i.e. employees of the University of Bern, enrolled and registered doctoral students, post-doctoral and habilitation students, employees of the central administration, etc.).

- a reflection on potential areas of tension between the value orientation of your discipline or field of activity and the normative demands of the Sustainability concept;
- the testing of a teaching–learning method that you regard as particularly suitable in the context of Sustainable Development (didactic and methodological level).

## 2.1 Planned start of project

Choose the semester in which the course or event is planned to take place: Autumn semester 2024 or Spring semester 2025.

## 2.2 Type of support – number of Personnel Points (PPs)

Depending on the time required to plan and implement the project, two types of support of varying intensity are available: 6 or 12 PPs per project. Choose one of the following options:

- 6 PPs for the integration of SD into an existing course/event
- 6 PPs for the design of a new SD-related event resulting in an output (i.e. course, event, or other) of approx. 10 attendance hours
- 12 PPs for the conception of a new SD-related event resulting in an output (i.e. course, event, or other) of approx. 20 attendance hours

## 2.3 Project title

Select a short, concise project title that expresses the relevance of your event to Sustainable Development. One of the following terms must be included: “sustainab\*\*”, “Agenda 2030” or “SDG”. If your project is a course, it must be marked accordingly in the Core Teaching System (CTS, or in German: KSL). We ask you to please also tick the checkbox “Sustainability” in the CTS. This is important, as it will increase visibility of the course by helping students that are interested in sustainability to find it and for purposes of monitoring<sup>4</sup>.

## 2.4 Project description

In the project description, outline the core ideas of your event, including your point of departure. We recommended that you consult the Good Practice Guidelines<sup>5</sup>. Please ensure that you answer the following questions:

- What are your objectives, and why are these particularly relevant to Sustainable

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<sup>4</sup> Please take into account the terminology when repeating the event. Not only will this generate greater visibility for SD, it will also enable successful monitoring of SD-relevant events.

<sup>5</sup> The Good Practice Guidelines are based on past project reports of courses. These can also be applied to a broader understanding of education.

Development (SD)?

- What theoretical basis/bases of SD does your project link to, and why (at the content level)?
- What SD-related competences are you promoting, and why?
- How do you envisage a reflection on the value orientation of your discipline/field in the context of SD as a normative concept? In other words, how will participants reflect on their attitudes and values in relation to SD?
- How will you approach inter- and transdisciplinarity? How will you address the different levels of knowledge?
- Who is your target group?

## **2.5 Description of components related to sustainability**

Describe the sustainability-related components of your event. If you have added components to an already existing event, describe how the revised event is now designed thematically and methodologically. Describe the short- and long-term added value that results for the participants.

## **2.6 Description of the teaching–learning scenario and methods (didactic-methodological)**

Describe the teaching–learning scenario and methods you will use to achieve the intended learning outcomes. Justify your didactic and methodological approach.

## **2.7 Description of the learning outcomes of the course**

Describe the intended learning outcomes, ensuring that these are aligned with the selected teaching–learning scenario. In formulating the learning outcomes, make sure to refer to the event objectives, competences for SD, and reflections on values.

## **2.8 Description of the form of assessment**

Describe how you intend to assess the learning outcomes (type of performance assessment, feedback, survey). Ensure that your assessment is suitable for your teaching–learning scenario.

## **2.9 Description of project evaluation (evaluation tools, implementation)**

How will you check that the goals of your project have been achieved? What tools will you use to evaluate the project, and how will you implement the evaluation?

## **2.10 Use of the PPs**

Describe in detail how you will use the requested PPs to free up your time (e.g. reducing your

working hours, delegating work to assistants, etc.). You may combine different options.

### 2.11 Project planning

Create a table with the most important project phases, activities, and milestones.

### 2.12 Note

Here you can provide further information relevant to your project. For example, what institutional aspects would help you to integrate SD into your choice of course/event?

## 3. Conditions

**The next deadline for project submissions is 29 February 2024** (start of project: Autumn semester 2024 or Spring semester 2025)

Please send your project application by email (PDF) to: [sustainability.cde@unibe.ch](mailto:sustainability.cde@unibe.ch). We will confirm receipt by return email.

**The Vice-Rectorate Quality and Sustainable Development will select the projects by 31 March 2024.**

For the submitted projects, two criteria-based reports will be prepared, one by the ESD Team of the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE), and one by the Educational Development Unit (*Hochschuldidaktik & Lehrentwicklung*).

**Project applications will be assessed based on the following criteria**

(see also [www.esd.unibe.ch](http://www.esd.unibe.ch)):

- **Content-related connection to SD:** the proposal specifies
  - where there are links between your discipline/field and the dimensions of Sustainable Development, and
  - the conceptual framework or conceptual approaches of SD to which the project refers.
- **Development of SD-related competences:** Competences relevant to promoting SD will be developed, enabling participants to work together on complex SD challenges (possibly with actors from other disciplines or from outside the university):
  - Thinking in terms of systems and links (integration of environmental, sociocultural, and economic dimensions, holistic problem analysis, etc.)
  - Forward-looking, networked thinking (anticipating, formulating impact hypotheses, holistic assessment of possible solutions)
  - Starting to develop scientific contributions to solving societal problems (relating



- science to practice)
  - Addressing ethical issues in research in the SD context
  - Fostering inter- and transdisciplinarity
- **Reflection on value orientation in your discipline/field:** The project involves a scientific-theoretical reflection that contributes to solving normative social problems from a scientific standpoint.
  - Reflecting on the role of your discipline/field in society
  - Reflecting on how science is perceived in your discipline/field
  - Self-reflection of own attitudes and values in relation to main discipline/field and SD as a normative concept
  - Carrying out a discussion of values in your discipline/field
- **Didactic-methodological approach:**
  - The teaching–learning scenario and methods used are suited to achieving the desired learning outcomes
  - The didactic design of the teaching–learning scenario and the methods used should also be of interest for other disciplines and fields (generalisability)
- **Learning Outcomes:** The application specifies the desired learning outcomes, which are appropriate to the selected teaching–learning scenario.
- **Form of assessment:** The application describes how the desired learning outcomes will be assessed or tested.
- **Evaluation:** The application contains a concise evaluation plan that will be implemented as part of the project.
- **(Curricular) embedment:** It should be possible to continue the developed format (within the curriculum), making it a permanent feature, if reasonable.

### 3.1 Project submission deadline

**29 February 2024** (start of project: Autumn semester 2024 or Spring semester 2025). Please submit your project application by email (PDF) to: [sustainability.cde@unibe.ch](mailto:sustainability.cde@unibe.ch). We will confirm receipt by return email.

### 3.2 Project Report

The project manager commits to producing a written documentation of the project and to submitting a report (max. 5 pages) by e-mail to the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) ([sustainability.cde@unibe.ch](mailto:sustainability.cde@unibe.ch)), at the latest three months after project completion. The report must be submitted using the designated form, “*Project report: Promoting SD through*

*education*". While the report as a whole will not be published, its conclusion may be. Please ensure therefore that the conclusion contains no confidential information.

#### **4. Obtaining advice**

After approval of your application and during project implementation, you are welcome to seek advice:

- a) from the ESD team, if your query is content-related
- b) from the Educational Development Unit (*Hochschuldidaktik & Lehrentwicklung*), if your query is didactic and methodological
- c) If your application is successful, you will be invited to a meeting to discuss the conditions to which your project must adhere

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