

UN GLOBAL COMPACT

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT

2025



INSTITUTE
OF SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

Middlesex University Duba



Middlesex
University
Dubai

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FOREWORD

Message from the Head of The Institute of Sustainable Development

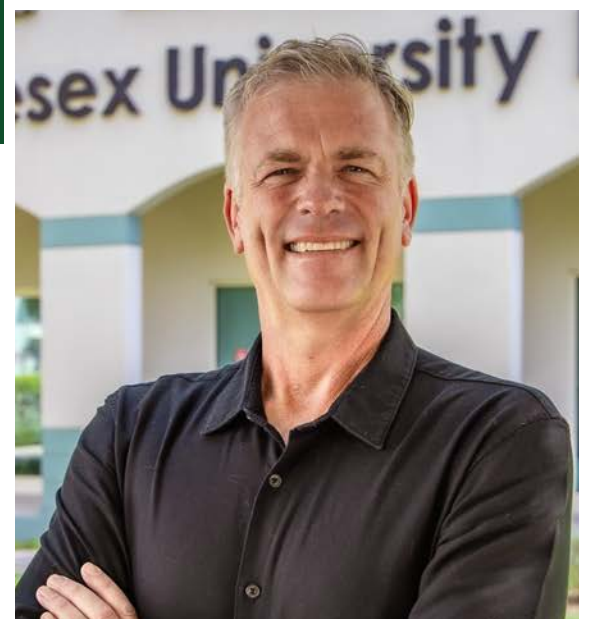
As a proud member of the UN Global Compact, the world's leading corporate sustainability initiative, Middlesex University Dubai reaffirms its commitment to advancing sustainable development through comprehensive sustainability reporting and outreach. We are fully committed to ensuring that our campus-wide efforts in support of the SDGs, their targets and their aligned principles, reflect our ongoing leadership in sustainability education.

On behalf of Middlesex University Dubai, the Institute of Sustainable Development submits this Communication on Engagement (COE) report to the UN Global Compact. The report presents how Middlesex University Dubai integrates SDGs into its strategic priorities and institutional operations, through education, research, knowledge exchange, community outreach, and industry partnerships.

The report highlights some notable achievements undertaken over the past two years. These include the launch of two student-led sustainability societies, the integration of SDGs into all academic programmes, our sustainability-focused research and knowledge exchange, as well as our impactful community outreach through circular economy principles.

"Sustainability is the foundation for a healthier, greener, and more hopeful future for all."

Middlesex University Dubai remains dedicated to integrating sustainability into education and research, as well as to developing environmentally conscious leaders and driving impactful global change.



**"Sustainability is the foundation for a healthier, greener,
and more hopeful future for all."**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Mackenzie'.

Andrew Mackenzie

Head of the Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD)
Middlesex University Dubai



DIRECTOR STATEMENT OF CONTINUED SUPPORT

Professor Cedwyn Fernandes

Pro Vice-Chancellor, Middlesex University
Director, Middlesex University Dubai



To Trusted Stakeholders:

I confirm that Middlesex University Dubai continues its support of the principles of the United Nations Global Compact, to further the University's positive contributions to both sustainable development and its impact on the wider society. This report outlines key achievements from March 2023 to March 2025, reflecting our commitment to integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) across all facets of university life. It highlights the actions we have taken to foster a more sustainable, inclusive, and equitable environment for our students, staff, and the broader community.

This year also marks the 20th anniversary of Middlesex University Dubai - a significant milestone that underscores our long-standing dedication to education, innovation, and social impact in the UAE and beyond.

Across this reporting period, our faculty, administrative teams, students, and partners have collaborated to further embed the SDGs into our operations, academic offerings, and outreach. These joint efforts have strengthened our role as a driver of meaningful change locally and globally. We sincerely thank all members of our university community for their contributions and dedication to advancing our shared sustainability mission.

This biennial report stands as a reflection of our accountability and ambition. It highlights the initiatives that bring the SDGs to life on campus and affirms our alignment with the Middlesex University Strategy 2031, which prioritises the translation of knowledge into impactful, real-world solutions that benefit people, communities, and organisations. Working in close partnership with our campuses in London and Mauritius, we strive to maximise the global impact of our work.

As the first university in the Emirate of Dubai and the second in the UAE to join the UN Global Compact, Middlesex University Dubai is proud to have championed sustainability-focused education across the last decade. We remain committed to embedding sustainable thinking across the curriculum, enhancing student experience through inclusive, innovative, and creative approaches.

Education plays a pivotal role in shaping a just and sustainable future. Our students are empowered not only to learn about sustainability but to live it, through their academic studies, campus interactions, student societies, and extracurricular engagement.

Looking ahead, we reaffirm our commitment to promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and to driving the environmental change that our world urgently needs. We will inspire future generations to lead with purpose and help build a more resilient and sustainable global community.

TESTIMONIAL

Professor Dr Marie Claire Cordonier–Segger

Chair, Sustainable Development Law and Policy,
University of Cambridge, Lauterpacht Centre for
International Law



In our collaboration towards the Climate Law and Governance Day 2023, MDX Dubai demonstrated exemplary leadership and commitment to the principles of the UN Global Compact. As co-host of the premier Climate Law and Governance Initiative event alongside the University of Dubai, MDX Dubai's strategic vision transformed its campus into a global forum: renaming lecture halls after past COP venues, supplying recycled lanyards crafted by sustainability-focused fashion students, and accommodating over 1,730 registrants online and in person.

This meticulous attention to detail set a powerful precedent for responsible campus operations and carbon-conscious event design. Beyond logistics, MDX Dubai convened a consortium of partners including the University of Cambridge, University of Dubai, International Law Association, International Bar Association, CISDL and IUCN to explore four critical themes: operationalising the Paris Agreement in international law; testing high-ambition legal and governance tools; advancing climate resilience and justice; and enabling net-zero finance through robust legal frameworks.

Their coordination enabled seamless plenaries, panels and workshops in which leading experts and policymakers generated actionable outcomes for the first Global Stocktake. In championing interdisciplinary dialogue, operational excellence and sustainability in practice, Middlesex University Dubai has set a benchmark for UN Global Compact participants.

Their work on CLGD 2023 exemplifies how academic institutions can leverage the Compact's Ten Principles particularly those on human rights, labour standards, environmental responsibility and anti-corruption to accelerate the transition to a just, low-carbon future.

It has also been inspiring to see the University leadership's commitment to a legacy extending beyond the UNFCCC COP28, introducing credit-bearing courses on Climate Law, and we look forward to continued partnership in the future.

INSTITUTE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ISD)

Environment, Social & Governance

EMBEDDING SDGs IN OUR GOVERNANCE

Middlesex University Dubai has institutionalised robust governance mechanisms to advance sustainability in alignment with the Principles of the UN Global Compact. Sustainability oversight is embedded at the highest levels of leadership, with the Pro-Vice Chancellor, the Head of the Institute, and senior management directly engaged in reviewing and guiding the University's environmental, social, and governance (ESG) strategies. MDX Dubai is one of few universities, both globally and in the UAE, that has established a specific institute focused on sustainability.

The Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD) serves as the coordinating hub for cross-campus initiatives, reporting structures, and partnerships, ensuring that sustainability is not only a guiding principle but a strategic priority across academic, operational, and external engagement domains <https://www.mdx.ac.ae/isd>.

Through education, outreach, advocacy, campaigning, research and training, the ISD promotes awareness about the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and engages students, staff and the wider community in civic initiatives, aimed at protecting the environment.

The objectives of ISD are to strengthen stakeholder collaboration by aligning academic knowledge and professional practice and by promoting partnerships with businesses, civil society and government to reach a sustainable future.

The University has established a formal sustainability governance structure that includes the ISD, sustainability working groups, sustainability-focused, student-led societies, and academic leadership embedded in the strategic planning processes. These bodies are responsible for designing, implementing, and monitoring the University's sustainability roadmap as defined in the MDX 2031 institutional strategy

<https://www.mdx.ac.ae/ourstrategy2031> and <https://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/our-strategy-to-2031/>.



Middlesex University Dubai maintains an ethical Code of Conduct that promotes transparency, inclusion, and integrity in all activities. This is complemented by internal policies on academic ethics, anti-corruption, environmental stewardship, and human rights.

Risk identification and due diligence processes have been institutionalised, particularly in areas of procurement, partnerships, and student engagement. Due diligence measures, while scaled to institutional capacity, reflect best practice standards and ensure ethical decision-making across the value chain. Performance tracking mechanisms are in place to monitor the impact of sustainability programmes and initiatives, including data reporting, internal audits, and progress evaluations aligned with SDGs.

Diversity and inclusion are central to MDX Dubai's governance ethos. The University actively tracks gender representation within its leadership and academic management, and greater than 50% of staff serving in executive roles are women. Managerial appointments reflect the institution's commitment to equitable representation. ESG performance is an integral part of annual institutional reporting and review.

Transparency is reinforced through the publication of sustainability achievements in University reports, conferences and public events. MDX Dubai adheres to global sustainability reporting standards such as the UNGC CoP, SDGs and draws related frameworks for alignment. While external third-party assurance has not yet been conducted on the full sustainability report, the University continues to explore partnerships and capacity to support external review of key data sets and sustainability disclosures in future cycles.

Through the ISD, MDX Dubai has been a member of the UN Global Compact since 2017, the first university in Dubai to sign on, demonstrating our commitment to the core principles of the UN SDGs, ESG strategy and environmental focused initiatives.

WE SUPPORT



IMPLEMENTING AND ADVOCATING FOR THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Incorporating circular economy initiatives into Middlesex University Dubai's operations is crucial for promoting sustainability, enhancing reputation, and boosting profitability. Emphasising resource efficiency and waste reduction aligns with global sustainability goals and reduces environmental impact. This approach not only conserves resources but also cuts costs associated with waste management and procurement. Furthermore, adopting circular practices can improve the University's reputation as a forward-thinking, responsible institution, attracting students, staff, and partners interested in sustainability. Additionally, circular initiatives can lead to innovative research opportunities and collaborations, creating new revenue streams and reinforcing the University's commitment to a sustainable future.

The Re-Programme: "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Repeat"

Middlesex University Dubai was the first university in the UAE to launch a sustainable system for recycling 'waste' back into everyday products, such as clothing and accessories. The University partnered with #SimplyBottles in 2019, a programme that recycles PET plastic and reduces plastic pollution. Since then, the programme has diverted over 400,000 plastic bottles from land fill, to be recycled into clothing, simultaneously reducing the University's single use plastics by 70%.

In November 2024 we took another step towards sustainability with the launch of a new recycling programme in collaboration with EnviroServe, a leading environmental services provider. This initiative aligns with our 2030 UN's ambition goal of attaining 100% resource recovery – with all materials and products recovered, recycled or reused. The goal of the initiative is to make recycling more accessible and efficient for the entire university community, allowing students and staff to easily dispose of e-waste, plastics, paper, glass, and cans.



The University's latest undertaking is our new partnership with No More Bottles, and the upcoming installation of water dispensers that use no physical plastic bottles, further reducing our carbon footprint. Mains-fed filtration requires no external deliveries and requirement for bottles to continually be distributed, reduces need for storage, and reduces waste.

THRIFT FOR GOOD

Through our Fashion Department, during our annual For the Love of the Planet (FLOTP) event, we also upcycled, recycled or reused over 2,000 clothing items, amounting to 500 kg saved from landfills - with the majority going to resale, and/or to recycling. This potentially offsets 52 kg of carbon emissions and will raise around AED 20,000 for Thrift for Good, which will then be used to provide education for up to 10 children for one year.

The Middlesex University Dubai's Fashion Department, led by Vaishali Raj Sharma, has led the way in the upcycling of materials across campus and with external partners. The fashion shows held in 2023, 2024 and 2025 used No-New materials, and students created unique outcomes using the processes of upcycling and thrifting. In partnership with a local 20/20 cricket side The Desert Vipers, Vaishali's team designed and delivered prototypes of tote bags, caps and even bean bags, all made from discerned cricket uniforms. The Desert Vipers' Sustainability Lead, Ben Hardy-Jones, explained the steps taken through our sustainability programme, in collaboration with Middlesex University Dubai, to ensure eco-friendly practices and inspire behavioural change.



For the Love of the Planet (FTLOTP)

FTLOTP is a day event focusing on sustainability in the UAE, driven by student solutions to the issues of sustainable fashion, food sustainability, and developing a circular economy. This event has run each year from 2023.

Hosted by the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) at Middlesex University Dubai, the event showcases sustainability solutions linked to the UNSDGs 2030 objectives for Net Zero and MDX's target of 100% Resource Recovery - Materials & Products Recovered, Recycled Recovered or Reused. These events highlight and advocate what we, as a leading educational institution, can contribute to the community in 2025 and beyond!



In 2025, Rana Hajirasouli, MDX Dubai alumna and Founder and CEO of The Surpluss, delivered the keynote speech. Rana, a renowned climate-tech innovator and keynote speaker in the GCC, delivered an engaging talk on the importance of rethinking supply chains, how we manage resources and reducing waste in our industries.

Dr Rita Wolff, marine biologist and conservation expert, delivered a talk exploring real-world efforts to protect the Hawksbill and Green Turtles found in the UAE. Dr Rita spoke about threats like habitat loss and pollution, and the use of monitoring techniques such as nest relocation and data collection to help protect the turtles.



BY THE NUMBERS

- A single institutional strategy aligned with MDX Strategy 2031 and UNGC Ten Principles
- 2,000 clothing items saved from landfills
- Recycling of plastic, paper, clothes and e-waste
- Single Use plastic reduction of 80%

BY THE SDGs



INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY INTO OUR CURRICULUM

Middlesex University Dubai has embedded sustainability as a central pillar of its academic mission, aligning educational strategies with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Ten Principles of the UN Global Compact. This integration reflects a deliberate and evolving commitment to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to drive systemic change in their respective disciplines.

To ensure a consistent and transformative educational experience, the University has adopted curriculum-wide sustainability mapping, identifying clear learning outcomes aligned with the SDGs across academic programmes. Faculty development sessions and partnerships with global institutions support the continuous updating of content to reflect current sustainability discourse and industry expectations.

Across disciplines, students are challenged not only to understand sustainability but to practice it. Through capstone projects, industry-informed guest lectures, and community engagement tasks, the curriculum cultivates a generation of graduates who are prepared to be changemakers in a rapidly evolving global landscape.

SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED PROGRAMMES

A flagship initiative was the launch of the BA (Hons) Business Management (Sustainability) pathway, which delves into global governance structures and sustainable development practices and prepares future leaders to address complex global challenges through modules on ESG management, sustainability reporting, and ethical supply chain practices. This undergraduate degree programme exemplifies how sustainability is not treated as an elective concept but as a core competency, embedded into our academic programmes.

eMBA (Sustainability) and Daytime MBA (Sustainability)

Both of our MBA programmes will feature a new pathway for September 2025, diving into the skills, methodologies, and best practices required for driving innovation and sustainability in dynamic business environments.

This empowers students to develop and execute sustainability-focused strategies, equipping them to lead transformative, resilient business practices that align with ESG and Triple Bottom Line frameworks. The programme develops and hones skills for future sustainability officers in the corporate world.

The University also offers an MA in Global Governance and Sustainable Development, which is the first academic postgraduate programme in the UAE with a specific focus on sustainable development.

BA Honours Fashion

Students are taught about the principles of sustainable thinking in design, from the ethical implication of fast fashion to the selection of sustainable fabrics and production methods.

International Foundation Programme

Sustainability is ingrained in the IFP from day one, with students encouraged to participate in the IFP Sustainability Photo Competition and consider a sustainable angle to all their coursework.

For more details about all our programmes [click here](#).

SUSTAINABILITY-FOCUSED MODULES

Among the most impactful curriculum offerings is the module 'Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability', launched in Academic Year 2024/25. Delivered annually to over 500 second-year undergraduate students, this module blends design thinking, life cycle analysis, and ESG metrics to develop creative, practical solutions to real-world problems. Through group projects, simulations, and exposure to international sustainability frameworks, students learn to apply entrepreneurial approaches to sustainable development.

The Climate Law and Governance module, introduced into the LLB curriculum developed in collaboration with the University of Cambridge, educates students on legal and policy issues related to climate change, environmental justice, and environmental global governance

In Accounting and Finance programmes, modules such as 'Ethics and Sustainability' and 'Corporate Responsibility and Ethics' foster critical thinking on ethical dilemmas and responsible corporate conduct using real-life case studies and interactive assessments.

The Department of Computer Engineering and Informatics (CEI) has also pioneered technology-enabled sustainability integration, embedding SDG-based project work in modules focused on urban mobility, healthcare access, and gender equity. Students use technical and design skills to prototype ethically informed solutions, reinforcing the idea that innovation must be socially and environmentally responsive.



BY THE NUMBERS

- A single institutional strategy aligned with MDX Strategy 2031 and UNGC Ten Principles
- 2,000 clothing items saved from landfills
- Recycling of plastic, paper, clothes and e-waste
- Single Use plastic reduction of 80%

BY THE SDGs



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Middlesex University Dubai fosters a culture of community engagement that amplifies its sustainability mission through inclusive outreach, partnerships, and innovation. Through a range of high-impact initiatives, the University connects students, faculty, community members and external stakeholders to co-create solutions aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

STUDENT-LED INITIATIVES

Student societies are key drivers of sustainability action at MDX Dubai

LAUNCH OF THE GREEN WAVE SOCIETY



A key milestone was the launch of the Green Wave Society (GWS) on 28 January 2025, established as the student-led arm of the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD). This initiative underscores the importance of meaningful student engagement and collaborative contributions toward achieving institutional sustainability goals.

Following its launch, GWS facilitated both formal and informal engagements with internal and external partners, supported ISD operations, and developed student-led sustainability projects. One of its signature events was Earth Hour, which featured interactive activities and a student-led dialogue on climate literacy and environmental responsibility. These initiatives translate student passion into tangible climate action while cultivating leadership grounded in sustainability values.

The presidents said, “As a fellow student, we are confident that we can make sustainability more than just a 2-month TikTok trend, and more like a lifestyle that will benefit us forever! By taking the lead, we turn sustainability from just an idea into real action, inspiring change within our university and beyond!” The team has some exciting events planned for the coming academic year 2025-26.

LAUNCH OF BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION CLUB



To further institutionalise environmental stewardship, the University launched the Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation student-led Club in November 2024. As an initiative under the ISD, the club promotes biodiversity awareness and nature-based solutions through on-campus campaigns, guest lectures, and partnerships with organisations such as Emirates Park Zoo. It has become a vibrant platform for student engagement in conservation and sustainability leadership.

Another leading example of our engagement with the SDGs is the MDX School of Law and Politics StreetLaw programme, running in partnership with international law firm Pinsent Masons. This initiative has empowered law students to deliver 14 interactive legal literacy sessions to secondary school students across the UAE, addressing themes such as environmental rights, digital law, and consumer protection. The programme not only fosters civic education and youth empowerment but also positions legal literacy as a pathway to environmental and social justice.



Middlesex University Dubai students also demonstrated regional leadership at the UAE Sustainability Championship Pitch Competition 2025 held on 9th May at SP Jain School of Global Management, Dubai. Among 56 inter-university teams from across the UAE, three MDX undergraduate business student teams reached the top 20, two advanced to the final four, and won 1st and 4th prizes for their innovative solutions to sustainability challenges. All participating students are active members of the Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation Community (BWCC). Notably, they competed against advanced undergraduate and postgraduate engineering teams, highlighting the strength of interdisciplinary innovation at MDX Dubai. The students were mentored by Sony Sreejith, whose faculty leadership played a pivotal role in guiding the teams' success.

The Sustainovators (Hriday, Amay – 3rd Year; Ayaan – 2nd Year) won 1st Prize (AED 5,000) for Full-Fill, a mobile app that connects food donors to community fridges using AI to ensure food safety and reward donations (SDG 2: Zero Hunger).

EcoLens (Bhavini, Francina, Jason – 1st Year; former IFP students) secured 4th Prize (AED 1,000) for Wash-as-a-Service Pods, a reusable pod system that recycles greywater to provide hygiene access in underserved areas (SDG 6: Clean Water & Sanitation).

JML (Eros, Seth, Clyde – 2nd Year) reached the Top 20 Finalists with Eco Loop Logistics, a project converting used cooking oil into biofuels for carbon reduction in transportation (SDG 13: Climate Action).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES: Partnerships, advocacy and outreach

Community engagement at MDX Dubai reflects a systems-thinking approach, integrating law, mental health, creative arts, business, technology, and student activism into a cohesive framework for sustainable change. These multidimensional efforts cultivate a culture of inclusive engagement, bridging theory and action in the pursuit of shared societal goals.

The Department of Psychology has led transformative community events that contribute to mental health awareness and sustainable development. Initiatives such as the “Meet and Greet with Psychology Professionals” (May 2024) and the 10th Conference on Applied Psychological Research and Practice (Feb 2025) brought together over 25 regional mental health professionals, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, professional development, and inclusive dialogue aligned with SDGs 3 and 4.



Expanding the University’s innovation ecosystem, MDX Dubai has organised hackathons and competitions that bridge technology and sustainability. The Climate Data Hackathon (Nov 2023) provided students with training in climate forecasting aligned with COP28, while the Responsible Sourcing Hackathon, held in collaboration with Accenture and Red Sea Global, strengthened ESG competencies. Two student ventures—GreenMiles and WayWeGo—emerged from these competitions and subsequently received incubation support at In5 and recognition at the Dubai AI Festival, demonstrating the real-world impact of community-driven innovation.



The Sustainability and Waste Recycling Symposium, hosted by Middlesex University Dubai’s Business School and Institute of Sustainable Development in partnership with Enviroserve UAE and DGRADE, was held on 8 November 2023 at the University’s Dubai Knowledge Park campus. The event was designed to play a key role in advancing youth engagement in sustainable practices and empowering good decisions when it comes to reusing and recycling. The event commenced with an enlightening keynote from Stuart Fleming, Co-Founder and Managing Partner of Enviroserve – the only R2 compliant e-waste processing facility in the UAE and Africa. The session moved into a series of impactful presentations, including a significant exploration into consumer perspectives on e-waste by Dr Sreejith Balasubramanian, Head of the Centre for Supply Chain Excellence at Middlesex University Dubai. Insightful discussion points by Stuart Fleming, Emma Barber, Director of DGRADE and Simply Bottles and Andrew Mackenzie, Senior Lecturer and Head of the MDX Institute for Sustainable Development, further emphasised the need for collaborative efforts by different stakeholders for effective waste management and recycling initiatives.

Throughout the symposium, students from across all academic levels were able to actively participate, engaging with the panellists, networking with experts, and forging valuable connections and learning experiences.

Middlesex University Dubai signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Emirates Park Zoo & Resort (EPZR) on 2 July 2024. This MoU, signed by Dr Waleed Shaaban, CEO of EPZR and Professor Cedwyn Fernandes, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Middlesex University and Director at Middlesex University Dubai, marks a significant step towards a shared vision of environmental stewardship and academic excellence.

Emirates Park Zoo and Resort, inaugurated in 2007 as Abu Dhabi's premier private zoo, stands as a beacon of conservation and education in the region. Accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) and a full member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), EPZR plays a pivotal role in safeguarding endangered species and promoting biodiversity.

This partnership aims to explore opportunities in areas of mutual interest, particularly in enhancing environmental, biodiversity, and wildlife education, research, and conservation. The MoU will also pave the way for stronger ties for joint events, guest lectures, and student internships.

Middlesex University Dubai hosted a symposium on Advancing Environmental Conservation for Future Generations. The event provided a platform for discussions focused on sustainability, environmental stewardship, and conservation. Faculty, students, and industry leaders gathered to hear the keynote addresses, panel discussions, and visions for the future of environmental preservation.

The symposium included distinguished speakers Dr Waleed Shaaban, CEO of Emirates Park Zoo & Resort, Dr Mike Cheetham, Sustainability Manager at Hotpack Global, Marsenia Trinanda Haris, Manager of Education, Conservation, and Research at Emirates Park Zoo & Resort, and Andrew Mackenzie, Senior Lecturer and Head of the Institute for Sustainable Development, MDX Dubai.



These leaders shared their expertise on how businesses and institutions can drive sustainability through actionable strategies, including reducing carbon footprints and championing environmental awareness.

This symposium marked the University's ongoing efforts to foster a culture of environmental responsibility. It was an opportunity for students to engage directly with industry leaders and gain a deeper understanding of how they can contribute to global sustainability efforts.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 2 newly established sustainability-focused student-led societies
- 56 teams participated in the UAE SDG Pitch Competition 2025
- 3 MDX Dubai teams ranked in the top 20, 2 placed in the final 4
- AED 6,000 total prize winnings secured by MDX Dubai students
- 14 legal literacy workshops delivered in partnership with Pinsent Masons
- 25+ mental health professionals engaged in psychology outreach events
- 4+ hackathons and innovation challenges hosted during the reporting period
- 2 student ventures (GreenMiles, WayWeGo) recognised at national innovation platforms
- 1 sustainable art installation created and exhibited on campus

BY THE SDGs



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Middlesex University Dubai's collaboration with prominent businesses in the corporate world holds significant potential for driving sustainability outcomes across the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. This partnership can serve as a powerful catalyst for change, merging academic innovation with corporate resources and influence, to address pressing environmental and social challenges. By aligning strategic goals, Middlesex University Dubai and its corporate and institutional partners can implement impactful sustainability initiatives that extend beyond the campus and into the broader community.

These collaborations can facilitate the exchange of knowledge, technology, and practices that promote sustainable development, enabling meaningful contributions to the region's environmental and socio-economic landscapes. Moreover, working alongside established businesses and leading institutions enhances the University's capacity to influence policy, drive sustainable economic growth, and foster a new generation

TRAINING FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

The Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD) has conducted four rounds of training for senior management of DHL every year from 2021 to 2025.

The ISD has delivered multiple intensive 3-day training suites for DHL management across 16 MEA countries. Participants successfully completed training in developing a sustainability mindset and completed knowledge transfer in multiple topics including Creating Shared Value through ESG, Understanding the UN SDGs, Governance and Stakeholder Involvement, Design Thinking, Factor Weighting Modelling, Life Cycle Analysis and Life Cycle Costing, Stakeholders Identification and the Triple Bottom Line. The results have led to tangible community-based solutions linked to the UN SDGs, with 12 such initiatives being launched in the region:

- Egypt – 'Egypt Warehouse Pro': a technical apprentice programme for underprivileged youth in Cairo.
- Ethiopia – 'Self-EmployAble': EOE especially focused on disability equal employment opportunities.
- Nigeria – 'Go Green Nigeria': Plastic pollution reduction on land and under the water.
- Zimbabwe – 'Infra-Edu Zim': An education and development programme focused on building literacy rates in Zimbabwe.

Other countries where outreach programmes have been launched are Cameroon (Blood donation drive), Madagascar (Relieving Food Poverty), Mozambique (Access to Quality Education) and Uganda (Empowerment of female high school graduates for employment), Algeria, Angola, Ghana and Lebanon. These programmes are scalable, as the next 4 outreach programmes launch in May to June 2025. The next four countries currently in progress are India, Iraq, the Philippines, and Saudi Arabia. This expansion brings the total number of focus countries to 12 across the MEA region.



MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY DUBAI HOSTS ANNUAL CLGI CLIMATE LAW AND GOVERNANCE DAY WITH UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, UK

The University hosted the 2023 Climate Law and Governance Day (CLGD 2023) on 5 December 2023 alongside UNFCCC COP28. This day-long conference, held at Middlesex University Dubai's Knowledge Park campus and virtually broadcast worldwide, underscored the vital role of climate law and governance in addressing climate change challenges. In partnership with the Climate Law and Governance Initiative (CLGI), the University of Cambridge, and University of Dubai, alongside esteemed CLGI partners, CLGD 2023 marked a pivotal moment for global collaboration on climate law and governance. Themed 'Engaging in Global Stocktake through Legal Lenses,' the symposium brought together over 1,700 students, attendees, and partners with COP28 delegates and leading international climate law and governance experts.



The event's four key themes included operationalising the Paris Agreement in International Law, testing legal and governance tools for high-ambition implementation, advancing climate resilience and justice, and developing net-zero legal frameworks to enable climate-neutral investment and finance.

Distinguished speakers at CLGD 2023 included UN Special Rapporteurs Professor David Boyd (Special Rapporteur on human rights and the Environment) and Professor Ian Fry (Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change). Recognising the pivotal role of legal education, discussions encompassed the development and training of climate-conscious lawyers. Leaders from multilateral development banks, including the World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Asian Development Bank, provided insights into green economy transition, regulatory reforms, and debt relief provisions for countries impacted by climate change. The symposium also highlighted the importance of nature-based solutions and indigenous knowledge in addressing ecological disasters and climate change. Greenwashing litigation and strategies for scaling up climate technology through law were among the key topics discussed. To close off a successful day, Middlesex University Dubai announced the winners of the 2023 Global Climate Law and Governance Leadership Awards, alongside a student essay competition. MDX Dubai students played an active role as rapporteurs and moderators, with over 60 Middlesex University Dubai students contributing to the final report by the Climate Law and Governance Initiative. Importantly, students from various disciplines showcased their research projects and campaigns to conference delegates.



The CLGD event took a holistic approach in terms of sustainability, with the lanyards worn by all delegates and gift bags being hand crafted by Fashion Department students using recycled tablecloths, reflecting Middlesex University Dubai's commitment to environmental responsibility.

DHL YOUTH TRAINING

Over 100 youth ambassadors for MEA (the future sustainability managers) introduced key concepts and ideas around ESG, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and what DHL are doing and can do to support such initiatives. Participants were actively involved in developing a personal action plan for how they can contribute to more sustainable outcomes.



At an international level, Professor Tenia Kyriazi and Tejas Rao were appointed as Co-Rapporteur and member (respectively) to the International Law Association (ILA) Committee on the Contributions of International Law to the Global Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2030 Agenda (Committee on International Law for the SDGs), with a nine-year mandate.

The ILA Committee on International Law for the SDGs will pursue a work programme to analyse how international law can support current efforts in treaty regimes, international tribunals and other fora to address global sustainability challenges through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and related targets, and to develop recommendations which can strengthen the contributions of international law to the emerging post-2030 sustainable development agenda in the United Nations and beyond.

This Committee will address the following elements in particular: (a) the legal status and application of the principles and rules of international law related to the seventeen SDGs, their 169 targets, and the practice of States and international organisations; (b) the recognition and interpretation of the principle of integration of human rights, economic and environmental considerations into development decision-making in international law on sustainable development; and (c) the regional and international legal aspects of measurement and indicators of legal effectiveness for advancing the SDGs. These appointments exemplify the University's global commitment to sustainable development law, governance and justice.

The University's global influence was also demonstrated through its contribution to the UNFCCC COP29 Climate Law Webinar in November 2024. Led by experts including Tejas Rao and Mahine Rizvi Ahmad, Senior Lecturer Law and Politics at MDX Dubai, the webinar provided students and faculty with insights into international climate law, the upcoming ICJ Advisory Opinion on state obligations, and emerging topics such as climate finance and loss and damage. This engagement reflects MDX Dubai's role in connecting legal education with international sustainability diplomacy and climate justice.

RESEARCH & CONFERENCES

Middlesex University Dubai has emerged as a regional hub for sustainability-focused research, knowledge exchange, and global academic collaboration. The University's research agenda is firmly aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a strategic focus on advancing scholarly work in climate action, equity, digital innovation, and sustainable development.

CONFERENCE

During the reporting period, MDX Dubai hosted or co-organised six major international conferences, bringing together over 1,200 participants from more than 30 countries.

Key events included the Emerging Research Paradigms in Business and Social Sciences (ERPBS 2024), the Sustainability, Entrepreneurship, Equity and Digital Strategies Conference (SEEDS 2024), the International Conference on Advances in Management and Technology (ICAMT 2025), and the Advances in Business Research International Conference (ABRIC 2024). Co-organised with Universiti Teknologi MARA in Penang, Malaysia, ABRIC 2024 provided a global platform for scholarly exchange in sustainable business, digital transformation, and higher education innovation. These conferences demonstrated the University's commitment to creating space for interdisciplinary dialogue and real-world impact. Student-led research and innovation have also been actively supported through hands-on initiatives such as the Responsible Sourcing Hackathon, conducted in collaboration with Accenture and Red Sea Global.



These events encouraged students to design solutions aligned with ESG principles, circular economy practices, and climate risk mitigation. Student contributions have been further amplified through symposia, research poster sessions, and competitive innovation showcases, building a vibrant culture of inquiry and applied learning.

Faculty research has made notable contributions to global sustainability discourse. Currently, the University has 34 research-active academic staff members, with women comprising 59% of this cohort, reflecting a strong commitment to gender equity in academic scholarship.

A key milestone was the Centre for Supply Chain Excellence's Net Zero Emissions Roadmap project with Thailand Post, valued at over USD 200,000, which focused on decarbonising logistics and supply chains. Faculty members also led funded research projects, published peer-reviewed journal articles, and participated in policy-shaping seminars on topics ranging from climate justice and consumer behavior to sustainable entrepreneurship and digital governance.



Middlesex University Dubai successfully hosted the 2nd International Conference on Sustainability, Entrepreneurship, Equity, and Digital Strategies (SEEDS) in partnership with Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida, India, at its Knowledge Park campus from 17 to 18 December 2024. The conference brought together over 400 participants, both virtually and in person, from 28 countries, marking a significant milestone in academic and professional collaboration.

RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

Through this dynamic ecosystem of academic inquiry and international exchange, Middlesex University Dubai reinforces its position as a thought leader in sustainability research. The University's integrated research strategy bridges academic theory with practical application, contributing to both scholarly advancement and sustainable policy development across borders.

Seminal Research Papers:

Schulte, M.N. and Paris, C.M. (2024) 'Working the system—An empirical analysis of the relationship between systems thinking, paradoxical cognition, and sustainability practices', *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 31(5), pp. 4154–4171. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2798>

Balasubramanian, S., Shukla, V., Islam, N., & Manghat, S. (2024). Construction industry 4.0 and sustainability: an enabling framework. *IEEE transactions on engineering management*, 71, 1-19. <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9566480>

Other Important Publications on Sustainability:

Balasubramanian, S., Shukla, V., & Kavanancheeri, L. (2023). Improving supply chain sustainability using artificial intelligence: Evidence from the manufacturing sector. In *Industry 4.0 Technologies: Sustainable Manufacturing Supply Chains: Volume II-Methods for transition and trends* (pp. 43-59). Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-99-4894-9_4

Balasubramanian, S., Shukla, V., Islam, N., & Manghat, S. (2024). Construction industry 4.0 and sustainability: an enabling framework. *IEEE transactions on engineering management*, 71, 1-19. <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/9566480>

Belal, M. M., Roy, S., Balasubramanian, S., & Wahab, S. N. (2025). Sustainability Challenges of Lithium-Ion Battery Supply Chain: Evidence from the Indian Electric Vehicle Sector. *Journal of Information Technology Management*, 17(1), 178-197. https://jitm.ut.ac.ir/article_99931_c5b1269ed5b4cd545dd409bac011c1c8.pdf

Belal, M. M., Shukla, V., & Balasubramanian, S. (2025). Greening the pharmaceutical supply chain. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 34(2), 1917-1948. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/bse.4077>

Belal, M. M., Shukla, V., Ahmad, S., & Balasubramanian, S. (2024). Green pharma supply chain: a review of existing practices and future directions. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/meq-08-2023-0249/full/html>

Belal, M. M., Shukla, V., Ahmad, S., & Balasubramanian, S. (2025). Green pharma supply chain: a review of existing practices and future directions. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, 36(1), 72-106. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/meq-08-2023-0249/full/html>

Chanchaichujit, J., Balasubramanian, S., Wong, W. P., & Jomthanachai, S. (2025). The Development of GHG Emissions Calculation Platform for Postal Supply Chain. *Procedia Computer Science*, 253, 2186-2195. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S187705092500287X>

Hassan, A., & Paris, C. M. (2023). Flood risk: a capacity and vulnerability analysis of Newham and Hammersmith, UK. *World Review of Science, Technology and Sustainable Development*, 19(3), 187-204. <https://www.inderscienceonline.com/doi/abs/10.1504/WRSTSD.2023.131924>

Nair, K., Bhardwaj, S., Chopra, R., Balasubramanian, S., & Mishra, M. (2025). Integrating policy, technology, and knowledge: a roadmap to circular manufacturing adoption. *International Journal of Sustainable Engineering*, 18(1), 1-11. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19397038.2024.2446754>

Schulte, M. N., & Paris, C. M. (2024). Working the system—An empirical analysis of the relationship between systems thinking, paradoxical cognition, and sustainability practices. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/csr.2798>

Wojtczuk-Turek, A., Turek, D., Edgar, F., Klein, H. J., Bosak, J., Okay-Somerville, B., ... & Karamustafa-Köse, G. (2024). Sustainable human resource management and job satisfaction—Unlocking the power of organizational identification: A cross-cultural perspective from 54 countries. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 31(5), 4910-4932. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/csr.2815>

Kumar, S., Sasidharan, A., Olasiuk, H., & Vihari, N. S. (2023). Corporate Social Responsibility, Governance and Financial Constraints in Indian Listed Firms. *Global Business Review*, 09721509231152703. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/09721509231152703>

Kyriazi, T. (2023). The private sector against human trafficking in tourism. *Anatolia*, 34(1), 30-44. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13032917.2023.2129675>

Lamba, N., Khokhlova, O., Bhatia, A., & McHugh, C. (2023). Mental health hygiene during a health crisis: Exploring factors associated with media-induced secondary trauma in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Health Psychology Open*, 10(2), 20551029231199578. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10517610/>

RESEARCH SEMINARS ON SUSTAINABILITY

DATE	PRESENTER	SEMINAR TITLE
11 OCTOBER 2023	TENIA KYRIAZI AND DAPHNE DEMETRIOU	TOWARDS A STRONG UAE NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTION: COMPLYING WITH THE PARIS PRINCIPLES AND BEYOND
21 FEBRUARY 2024	ANDREW MACKENZIE	ESG STRATEGY, BARRIERS AND SOLUTIONS: TRENDS IN THE MENA REGION
20 MARCH 2024	FAISAL NAZIR ZARGAR	RISK DYNAMICS IN ENERGY TRANSITION: EVALUATING DOWNSIDE RISKS AND INTERCONNECTEDNESS IN FOSSIL FUEL AND RENEWABLE ENERGY MARKETS
27 MARCH 2024	MONICA DHOCHAK AND PRINCE DOLIYA	GOVERNANCE FOR GREEN: THE IMPACT OF BOARD DYNAMICS ON ESG TRANSPARENCY IN ASIA-PACIFIC CORPORATIONS

BY THE NUMBERS

- 6 major international conferences hosted or co-hosted (ERP BSS 2024, SEEDS 2024, ICAMT 2025, ABRIC 2024, and others)
- 1,200+ conference delegates from 30+ countries
- 130+ student research submissions supported through hackathons and symposia
- USD 200,000+ secured in external research funding
- 5+ international research partnerships and projects delivered
- 34 research active personnel
- 59% women of research active personnel

BY THE SDGs



OUR INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

Middlesex University Dubai's institutional commitment to sustainability is grounded in strategic leadership, long-term planning, and active participation in global and national sustainability frameworks. The University aligns its operations, academic priorities, and community initiatives with the UNGC Ten Principles and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, positioning sustainability as a defining element of its mission and identity.

This commitment is operationalised through the MDX 2030 Goals, which include a university-wide focus on achieving 100% resource recovery, integrating sustainability across curricula, and strengthening institutional governance for ethical and inclusive practices. The Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD) plays a central role in advancing these goals by coordinating interdepartmental programmes, supporting faculty research, and engaging external partners in collaborative sustainability initiatives.

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WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

A notable marker of inclusive sustainability in education is MDX Dubai's steady growth in gender parity within STEM disciplines. Female students now represent over half of the STEM cohort for three consecutive academic years. Between 2022 and 2025, the total number of STEM students increased from 1,192 to 1,663 — representing a cumulative growth of 35.07%— with female representation holding at or above 50% each year. This reflects the university's continued focus on gender equity and empowerment in science and technology fields.

In recognition of its sustained efforts, MDX Dubai was awarded the UAE's "Year of Sustainability Seal", a national honour that affirms the university's leadership in environmental education, climate action, and public awareness. This recognition underscores MDX's alignment with UAE national priorities, particularly during the pivotal year of COP28 and the lead-up to COP29.

TAMKEEN MENTORING PROGRAMME (WITH CISCO & DIFC) SINCE NOVEMBER 2023

We designed and launched the Tamkeen Mentoring Programme in partnership with CISCO and the DIFC, providing one-to-one mentoring from women in tech roles to students across Law, Business, and CEI. This interdisciplinary initiative supports inclusive student development and professional readiness while fostering a culture of mentoring across departments. By collaborating with leading industry partners, we enriched the student experience and modelled effective, inclusive engagement practices, advancing WEPs Principle 1, Principle 4 and Principle 5.

WOMEN IN MENTORING (WIM) SINCE NOVEMBER 2024

As founding mentors and advisors to the Women in Mentoring (WIM) initiative, established by the Head of Compliance at Nissan, we are part of an international network of over 800 professionals supporting aspiring women through mentorship. WIM creates mentoring opportunities that benefit not only law students at Middlesex University Dubai but also learners from diverse disciplines, institutions, and regions. Our participation reflects a strong commitment to widening access and impact across the sectors, aligning with SDGs 1, 4, 5 and 6.

GIRLS IN ICT (WITH CISCO) MAY 2024

We facilitated student participation in the Girls in ICT event hosted by CISCO, showcasing our commitment to inclusive, interdisciplinary opportunities. By enabling CEI students to connect with global tech leaders, we advanced experiential learning and demonstrated the value of professional networks in action. This initiative aligns with WEPs Principle 1 and Principle 4, supporting young women to explore pathways in traditionally underrepresented sectors.

Sustainable Artwork Installation

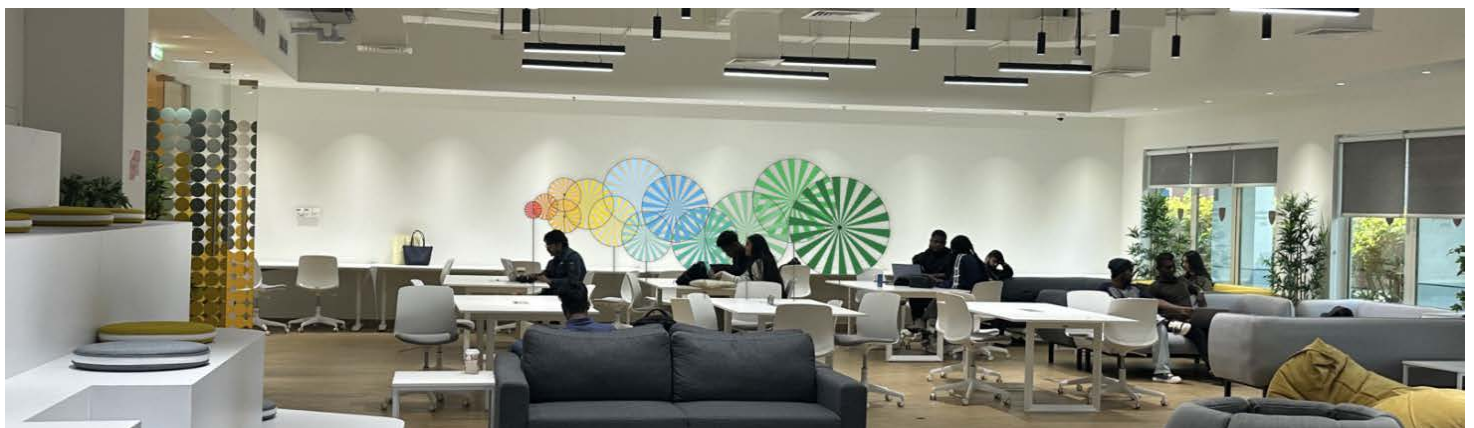
A campus art installation to celebrate and promote our university's commitment towards sustainability from Kanaka Raghavan & Tenia Kyriazi, Andrew McKenzie (ISD)

The University also leverages creative engagement to inspire sustainable thinking. Recently, the University accepted the proposal of the Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD) and assigned Kanaka Raghavan, Senior Lecturer in Graphic Design at MDX Dubai, to produce an art installation created from upcycled PVC banners, to promote our commitment to Sustainable Development.

This large-scale kinetic sculpture will be displayed on campus, to symbolise the concept that "small actions can drive big changes" and aims to become a powerful visual prompt for sustainable design and reuse practices.

The installation is inspired by material reuse, particularly the repurposing of discarded PVC banners, one of the most-produced plastics globally, with 40 million tonnes made annually. Drawing from the colourful pinwheels seen at Indian fairs, the design transforms the banners into spokes of a vibrant gradient of pinwheels, shifting from red to green to symbolise a move towards a greener future. Arranged as interconnected wheels, the smallest pinwheel sets off a kinetic chain reaction that drives the largest. The installation serves as a compelling visual metaphor for the idea: "Small actions can drive big changes."

The installation aims to engage students, faculty, and external stakeholders (schools, outreach and media outlets) encouraging them to recognise their role in promoting sustainable practices and links to MDX 2030 UN Ambition Goal of 100% Resource Recovery - Materials & Products Recovered, Recycled Recovered or Reused - in line with the target identified in UN SDGs 12 and 13.



To strengthen its strategic sustainability alignment, three representatives from Middlesex University Dubai — Andrew Mackenzie, Rhoderick Romano, and Rebecca Rich — successfully participated in the SDG Ambition Accelerator organised by the United Nations Global Compact. Through this six-month programme, they applied a systems-thinking approach and the UNGC's 8-step methodology to draft an SDG Ambition strategy tailored to MDX Dubai. Their involvement signifies the University's institutional commitment to embedding the SDGs into operational and academic planning, and to aligning with the UNGC's Forward Faster targets for transformative sustainability impact.

Institutionally, MDX Dubai continues to expand strategic partnerships that advance sustainability objectives. Ongoing collaborations with Enviroserve UAE, DGRADE, and Emirates Park Zoo facilitate initiatives in recycling, waste management, youth engagement, and biodiversity conservation. These alliances amplify the university's role in contributing to the UAE's environmental goals while providing students with experiential learning opportunities rooted in real-world challenges.

Through proactive governance, strategic alignment, and inclusive stakeholder engagement, Middlesex University Dubai exemplifies institutional commitment to sustainability. The University does not simply teach sustainability — it actively demonstrates it through practice, policy, and partnerships that reflect a values-driven approach to education and social responsibility.

BY THE SDGs



OUR GLOBAL PARTNERS



ACTIVITIES OF THE ISD INCLUDE:

- Collaborative research with businesses, government and un agencies
- Best practice consulting and corporate training workshops
- Sustainability mindset training and community outreach programmes
- Promoting sustainable best practices
- Customised certificate programmes for specific industries
- Industry round tables with a focus on esg

We have a particular focus on developing the 'Sustainable Mindset' through ESG strategy development, providing corporate training and delivering programmes that culminate in community outreach programmes in the MENA region.

As a university, we have identified three shared priorities as pillars for strategic implementation to achieve our strategic goals by 2031.

Transforming Learning - Through practice-oriented and collaborative research, knowledge exchange and education.

Creating Impact on Global Challenges -Through a culture that is creative, inclusive, nurturing, agile and outcome focused.

Constructing a Learning Organisation and Enquiring Community - Through a culture that is creative, inclusive, nurturing, agile and outcome focused.



Middlesex
University
Dubai

www.mdx.ac.ae