

Information Sheet for Participants

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval No: HE08/067, Valid to: 20/10/2009)

Research Project Title - **Perceptions, aspirations and expectations of environmental sustainability:
What are we doing in higher education for creating a sustainable future?**

Dear UNE Staff member,

We are writing to ask your help with an Institution-wide study of UNE staff member's attitudes and behaviours towards environmental sustainability. This study is being conducted by Dr Susen Smith, Dr Robyn Bartel, Dr Joy Hardy, Dr Mike Littleddyke and Dr Darren Ryder and we would also like to introduce you to our research assistant, Ms Carol Davies. Our contact details appear overleaf. This project has been funded internally by a Faculty (of the Professions) Large Research Grant (2008).

Why is the research being done?

The purpose of this survey is to put together a picture of what UNE staff members are currently doing for environmental sustainability, what you would like to achieve, and what barriers are in place that prevent your expectations being met and what supports are required to meet your aspirations towards environmental sustainability. We are aware that sometimes there is disagreement about what can and should be done and that best intentions are sometimes thwarted by things outside of one's control. We would like to document these issues and record your suggestions for ways forward so that UNE can better meet its goals for environmental sustainability. In 2005 UNE signed the Talloires Declaration, a 10 point action plan for sustainability. Environmental concern is an institutional responsibility outlined in the Strategic plan 2007-2010 and sustainable development is listed as a UNE graduate attribute.

If I would like to participate what would participation involve?

We would like to ask you to help us in our research project by filling out and returning the anonymous survey attached. This will take about thirty minutes of your time. Most of the questions have been designed to be able to be completed as quickly as possible but there are also opportunities for you to provide more detailed responses. We understand that you are busy and have many other things to do. However your views are important and would assist the research greatly. A summary of the findings will be disseminated via the UNE Talloires website at the conclusion of the project in 2009.

What are the benefits and risks of participating?

Participation in this project is entirely voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate. You are free to withdraw consent and to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice. No payment, favour or advantage will accrue from participation in the study other than the opportunity to reflect on sustainability practice and improve environmental sustainability at UNE. Equally, no cost, disfavour or disadvantage will accrue from declining to participate. This research will not raise any personal or upsetting issues, nor will there be any risk of physical or emotional harm or discomfort.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your name is not required on the survey so privacy will be maintained and your responses will be strictly confidential. No individual staff member will be able to be identified from the survey or in any subsequent report. The anonymous survey results will be analysed and reported at group level and recommendations to further environmental sustainability practice developed from the survey responses. Some selected excerpts from responses may be quoted in research publications, but again completely anonymously, the only source information attached will be that, for example, of "a staff member". The researchers listed below will have access to the collected data and all data will be securely stored for a period of five years and destroyed at the conclusion of this period.

I have some further questions...

If you have any further questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact us by phone or email. Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact the Research Ethics Officer at the following address: Research Services, University of New England, Armidale NSW 2351. Telephone: (02) 6773 3449 Facsimile (02) 6773 3543, Email: Ethics@une.edu.au

We appreciate your time

Thank you for taking the time to read this Information Sheet. Whether you decide to participate in this study or not, we would like to thank you for your interest and consideration of this request.

Yours faithfully,

SRSmith

Dr Susen Smith on behalf of the research team.

Dr Susen Smith
Lecturer in Gifted Education
School of Education
Faculty of the Professions
University of New England
susen.smith@une.edu.au
02 6773 4299

Dr Robyn Bartel
Lecturer - Geography & Planning
School of Behavioural, Cognitive
and Social Sciences
Faculty of Arts & Sciences
University of New England
rbartel@une.edu.au
02 6773 2904

Dr Joy Hardy
Lecturer in Education
School of Education
Faculty of the Professions
University of New England
joy.hardy@une.edu.au
02 6773 2520

Dr Mike Littledyke
Senior Lecturer in Science
School of Education
Faculty of the Professions
University of New England
mlittled@une.edu.au
02 6773 2509

Dr Darren Ryder
Senior Lecturer in Science
School of Environmental and
Rural Sciences
Faculty of Arts & Sciences
University of New England
dryder2@une.edu.au
02 6773 5226

Ms Carol Davies
Research Assistant
School of Education
Faculty of the Professions
University of New England
cdavie24@une.edu.au
02 6772 6151