

Cylchlythyr | Circular

Improving environmental performance through student engagement

Date: 07 February 2013
Reference: W13/06HE
To: Heads of higher education institutions in Wales,
Sustainability managers
Response by: 15 March 2013
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This circular invites expressions of interest from institutions to participate within a planned student engagement programme part funded by the Welsh Government which aims to work with students and host institutions to encourage and develop sustainable behaviour through changing individual responses to energy and water use, and to better support waste minimisation and recycling.

If you require this document in an alternative accessible format, please telephone us on (029) 2068 2225 or email info@hefcw.ac.uk.



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Introduction

1. The Welsh Government is providing HEFCW with limited ring-fenced funding (likely to be no more than £50,000) to support the delivery of a programme of actions that encourages students and host institutions to adopt more sustainable behaviour in their use of energy, water, and management of waste. This programme, which is intended to operate from September 2013 to March 2014, is part of a wider scheme to change behaviour around the use of energy, water, and waste.

Background

2. HEFCW has over the last five years worked with institutions directly and through Carbon Trust Wales to support the adoption of actions, processes, and the development of infrastructure that reduces the negative environmental impacts arising from the operation of universities, and their estate.
3. A number of behavioural change programmes have been developed individually by Welsh Universities and by the National Union of Students (NUS).^{1 2} Typically these programmes incorporate a number of competitions, activities, and events that help students better understand how they can contribute to improving energy, water and waste performance within the university setting and within student halls. These programmes have proved to be cost-effective, as well as contributing to the wider education of students on sustainability and climate change, and in some cases offering work or skills development opportunities to students. To be effective, these programmes require the active support of the host institution and some staff resource to support the programme and provide energy and waste data.

Proposals

4. HEFCW are, within the limited funding allocated to this project, seeking to procure a cost effective largely generic programme that can be applied to all institutions. We are aware that some institutions are already planning to implement their own student behaviour change programmes and therefore may not wish to participate within this project, although we will endeavour to ensure that appropriate and proportionate complimentary activity will be provided in these circumstances, if possible, and subject to budget constraints. We also acknowledge that it may be impractical or unrealistic for an institution to support a project of this type given existing prior commitments. It is therefore proposed that participation within this programme is entirely voluntary.

¹ <http://www.green-impact.org.uk/about/>

² <http://www.nus.org.uk/en/campaigns/greener-projects/greener-students/student-switch-off/>

5. At this stage we are seeking expressions of interest from institutions who may wish to participate within this programme. Those institutions expressing an interest will be provided with full details of the intended programme following the completion of the procurement process and there will be an opportunity to raise questions with the appointed supplier in April/May before confirming participation.
6. To ensure potential suppliers are appropriately informed, we would ask all institutions who wish to express an interest in this project to provide brief details of any current or intended student engagement or other environmental projects which may be relevant to potential suppliers of this service on the proforma at Annex A, together with contact details of a nominated lead on this project. We will also require all participating institutions to contribute £3,000 inclusive of VAT towards the cost of this project.

Timetable

7.

1. Confirmation of expressions of interest from all institutions who may wish to participate within this programme 2. Completion and return of Annex A providing background information to support the procurement process.	15 March 2013
Provision of full details regarding the intended project by the supplier and confirmation of participation	April/May 2013.

Further information

8. For further information, contact Chris Cowburn (tel 029 2068 2247); email chris.cowburn@hefcw.ac.uk

Responses to

9. Institutions should submit their responses to HEFCW by email to Sheridan Nott, email sheridan.nott@hefcw.ac.uk

Equality and diversity and sustainable development implications

10. We will be carrying out an equality impact assessment to help safeguard against discrimination and promote equality, and sustainability. We will also consider the impact of policies on the Welsh language, and Welsh language provision within the HE sector in Wales.