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TRANSFORMING STRATEGIC SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE ON CAMPUS

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INTRODUCTION

A huge corpus of scholarly research at Otago Polytechnic (OP) relates to Sustainable Practice and their leadership in the field. This article is a summary of the author's work towards achieving a Master of Professional Practice with distinction from Otago Polytechnic, contextualising Sustainable Practice for Otago Polytechnic Auckland International Campus (OPAIC).

Fundamental to this new undertaking was an examination of what 'Sustainable Practice' actually means, as a definition is not given by OP. Instead, every OP college discovered then articulated what sustainable practice meant to their field of study, compiled in *A Simple Pledge: Towards Sustainable Practice* (Mann & Elwood, 2009, p. 4). The products of this difficult organisational undertaking were inherited by the Auckland campus, with elements of sustainable practice embedded in every paper, qualification, and field of study.

Otago Polytechnic articulated the Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Practice (SOSP) as an actionable mandate for sustainability initiatives on campus. They are expressed in a variety of ways at OP (Mann, 2011). The SOSP needed contextual articulation for the Auckland campus. The aims were:

SOSP 1: to develop sustainable practitioners;

SOSP 2: to model evidence-based sustainable practice in our operations;

SOSP 3: to encourage communities and businesses to embed sustainable practice, and

SOSP 4: to ensure our actions benefit our communities.

Notice that the first two SOSP are internal; they let us play in the safe confines of our walls. SOSP 3 and 4 require an outward vision!

OPAIC sought to activate the SOSP strategically, as a tactical, intentional plan on our campus beset by pandemic lockdowns and the loss of international students. The author stated to our Board that sustainability was our competitive advantage, and that our four SOSPs could be leveraged. However, the existing work undertaken by OP on Sustainable Practice was buried in documentation at OPAIC. Awakening and activating all four SOSP at OPAIC would require a strategic, planned transformation of Sustainable Practice on our campus and beyond.

A sustainability strategy

Over 21 months, seven Campus Sustainability Initiatives (CSI) (Figure 1) were initiated, evolved, and leveraged within and around the curriculum, then refined with pragmatic action research to augment campus capabilities. Data on CSI implementation would be evaluated to refine iterations of the CSI towards success. The work scaffolded the Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Practice and crafted a vision of sustainable development, led experientially by staff and students.

This article summarises key components and phases for delivery of strategic sustainable practice at OPAIC to mid-2022. It tells the story of transformational change, from definitions and hidden curricula to the creation of a sustainable practitioner ethos, ultimately evolving to a culture of sustainability evidenced beyond our campus. The framework can serve as a basis for delivering sustainable practice in virtually any organisation, especially if used with the concluding recommendations.

This Advanced Negotiated Work-Based Learning Project was born out of a presentation to the Board of Otago Polytechnic Auckland International Campus (OPAIC) on 30 September 2020. Six months after New Zealand's border closed initially due to COVID-19, it was apparent that international students would not return in the foreseeable future and our campus was in jeopardy. The context was volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) (Worley & Jules, 2020). Patterns and practices seemed full noise, with huge data limitations; but organisational capability and potential arise from internal data and data-driven decisions (Cherrington et al., 2019c, 2019d). Gathering resources and nous would be our sole option until borders reopened to international students, our only customers.

Beyond sustainability as our competitive advantage, organisational boards were now liable for climate change risk (Institute of Directors, 2021). Leadership and organisational direction from boards are imperative in terms of climate action, regardless of climate change naysayers. That got our board talking. Additionally, I stated that our Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Practice could be leveraged as a point of difference and opportunity in a competitive higher education market, ready once New Zealand borders reopened. As I was the sole Principal Lecturer with responsibility for Sustainability Competency Leadership, our board asked me to begin the task. I immediately piloted seven OPAIC Campus Sustainability Initiatives that could be mapped to SOSPI, as seen in Figure 1.

- A. **Campus Sustainability Workshops (CSW):** Campus-wide participation and engagement in new sustainability learning and initiatives to foster embedded sustainability in learning and teaching.
- B. **Student Research Forums (SRF):** Highlighting assessment research/expertise and promoting critical thinking, learner capability, scholarly research, and interdepartmental practice.
- C. **Sustainability Industry Open Days (SIOD):** Highlighting sustainability as interdisciplinary, nascent knowledge required for employment and pragmatic industry currency.
- D. **Wānanga Kairangahau (WK):** Student Researchers Workshops to leverage student research for publication, presentation, and as a next step from SRF/SIOD for graduating students.
- E. **Campus Journal Submissions (CJS):** Kick-start OPAIC co-researching/co-publishing outputs on campus as an extension to off-campus submissions and linking to industry research.
- F. **Student Sustainability Projects (SSP):** Interdepartmental research and/or assessment-link projects in order to model agile process, management, and construction project management.
- G. **Projects for Sustainable Operations (PSO):** To model evidence-based sustainable practice in operations on and off campus, encouraging communities and businesses to embed sustainable practice.

Figure 1. Seven OPAIC Campus Sustainability Initiatives (CSI).

LEVERAGING OTAGO POLYTECHNIC'S LEAD IN SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

OPAIC was facing an existential threat, but Otago Polytechnic has long been a leader in sustainability education and research (McGirr, 2018) using the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) (United Nations, 2021) as a framework (Henry & Forbes, 2017). The Otago Polytechnic Sustainable Practice Strategic Framework (SPSF) upholds the training of sustainable practitioners of all cultures (Cherrington et al., 2020a, 2020b; Otago Polytechnic, 2014) to challenge existing practices and developing sustainable ways of operating.

Sustainable practitioners are able to apply frameworks of sustainable practice (ecological, social, political and economic) (Zhukov & Cherrington, 2020) to the “context of their industry or field of study, to challenge existing practices and develop more sustainable ways of operating” (Ker, 2017, p. 112; Wu & Shen, 2016). Otago Polytechnic is committed to provide students with learning opportunities that hold sustainable practice amongst their key values and to become sustainable practitioners in our own right.

Such capabilities are in demand; it is unequivocal that human activities are heating our climate in rapid, intensifying, and unprecedented ways (Arias et al., 2021; Manate & Cherrington, 2021) with enduring, irreversible repercussions (AghaKouchak et al., 2020). Creating a culture of sustainability is vital for Otago Polytechnic Auckland International Campus (OPAIC). “The evidence is irrefutable ... we see the warning signs in every context” (Masson-Delmotte, 2021, p. 1). Our international campus must think globally and act locally. Boards are addressing climate change via risk and liability (Lawrence et al., 2020). Today, climate risk must be assessed in financial reporting, which requires action now (Cherrington, 2019, 2020; Ministry for the Environment, 2019).

INCULCATING SEVEN CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

A OPAIC Sustainability Strategy was sought, but was not getting traction (Cokins, 2009; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000). The pilot initiatives, however, were gaining in momentum and popularity with students (Connor et al., 2021). Experientially, a bottom-up approach could win over key members of staff to infiltrate various campus departments, eventually swaying naysayers (Cherrington, 2020; Ganeshan et al., 2021). A quality improvement approach using Plan > Do > Check > Act (PDCA) (Deming, 2018) began the refinement and evolution of the seven CSI initiatives using research ethics approval (AIC85). Each term, an iteration of the CSI was assessed using a variety of methods for improvement with action research (Zuber-Skenitt, 1993):

- participation and output metrics for CSI from participation tasks or work submitted;
- stakeholder CSI feedback summaries using ethical feedback questionnaires;
- reflective commentary to assess CSI opportunities to improve sustainability practice, and
- reflexivity analysis, especially in examining underlying assumptions for successful outcomes.

The quality of experiential practice on campus continually improved via the OPAIC learning and teaching team (Shephard, 2010). Utilising workshops, peer review, self-reflection, and observation with Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle became a source of learning and development (Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Change can evolve through planned, term-wise initiatives that begin with concrete experience, followed by reflective observation, along with abstract conceptualisation that leads to active experimentation (Cherrington et al., 2022a, 2022b).

Sustainable practice evolved practically via new learning on campus (Greenwood, 2007). The aim was to transform practice within OPAIC in pragmatic, observable ways (Cokins, 2009). There are 'ways of being' that distinctly underpin the learning culture at OPAIC, notably continual improvement through reflection and an experiential learning approach. Cultural shifts are most likely to be successful when they leverage organisational strengths and respect the positive cultural milieu that already exists. The OPAIC Applied Management department is the largest and lends itself to collaboration on sustainability with the IT and construction departments. Management is a broad subject and can often lead to transformational change, using a solid base of scholarly research co-publication.

Continual observation of sustainable initiatives and, notably, water-cooler conversations, were powerful tools to shift situations and actions in the conversational environment. They became occasions on which to listen for the sustainable future of our organisation, as per the Transdisciplinarity tenets (Cowley, 2021; Nicolescu, 2002, 2010) and Leadership Corollaries (Zaffron & Logan, 2009).

Barriers to the SOSP were never the focus. Instead, informal coalitions (Rodgers, 2007) were made that gave credibility to the skill and expertise within our campus, and inspired action that valued diverse fields of experience synergistically. A new future for sustainable practice, highly relevant to our existing and evolving culture, was articulated. Conversations and future-based language transformed how sustainable practice occurred at OPAIC. Campus Sustainability Initiatives would evolve organically to enact sustainable practice in and through the institution. New narratives arose in our organisation in an unthreatening and very beneficial manner. By acknowledging drivers for change, understanding was created and versions of the sustainability story that aligned with the SOSP and initiatives were enabled to inculcate sustainable practice.

FROM INTERNAL TO EXTERNAL SUSTAINABLE PRACTITIONERS

Ultimately, organisational transformation is required for true sustainable development. A strategic approach with interdisciplinary engagement requires a 'learning organisation' culture, adept at innovating via new processes and technologies (Airehrou et al., 2020). The skills and capabilities of sustainable practitioners will be in demand as an asset in every aspect of business, in every industry and sector. We must think critically and creatively, so as to realise the future we want (United Nations, 2015).

The question became: how can OPAIC transform from the internal SOSP 1 and 2 towards external SOSP 3 and 4? The aims were:

1. to implement OPAIC Campus Sustainability Initiatives (CSI) (Figure 1) to activate the SOSP;
2. to use performance metrics, stakeholder feedback and reflection/reflexivity to assess CSI, and
3. to evolve CSI, so as to transform from a marked focus on SOSP 1 and 2 towards SOSP 3 and 4.

Four distinct cycles (plus an initial pilot term) were evaluated in this project, as shown in Figure 2. After a full year (five terms) of CSI (a pilot and four iterative improvement cycles) from term five 2020 through to term four 2021, the cycles were used to gauge transformation from SOSP 1 and 2 to SOSP 3 and 4. After each cycle, metrics, feedback, reflection, and reflexivity were evaluated, and lessons learned to modify and inform a new research cycle. At the start of 2022, synergies exploded and peers were activating sustainability initiatives, building upon, and expanding CSI initiatives.

The Campus Sustainability Initiatives evolved and advanced, transforming sustainable practice via the maturing progression of all the SOSP. By the end of the fourth full iterative cycle in June 2022, Sustainable Practitioners had developed:

- via Wānanga Kairangahau (WK) to a novel Advanced Wānanga Kairangahau (AWK) creating professional student researchers;
- via Campus Journal Submissions (CSJ) for co-publication, with nine accepted submissions by cycle 3 and another nine by cycle 4;
- via Sustainability Industry Open Days (SIOD), where postgraduate students presented research toward five co-publications;
- via online, lockdown Campus Sustainability Workshops (CSW), expanding to a full Campus-wide Sustainability Week (CSWk);
- via Student Research Forums (SRF), where our best students presented top project-/subject-embedded sustainability research;

- via Student Sustainability Projects (SSP) as IT Sustainability apps and project-based emissions modelling research for OPAIC;
- via Projects for Sustainable Operations (PSO) evolved to Green Office Toitū (GOT) focusing sustainability projects (GOM, 2016).



Figure 2. The seven OPAIC Campus Sustainability Initiatives (CSI) progressed in four cycles (plus pilot).

OPAIC's inaugural Campus Sustainability Week ensured change was consolidated. The concepts were planned and actioned for a future vision:

- sustainable practitioners who developed capabilities to confidently present their applied research;
- communications to ensure our actions benefited our communities (rather than 'green-blushing' or 'greenwashing');
- innovating for impact to encourage communities and businesses to embed sustainable practice, and
- climate action that evidences sustainable practice in our operations to be a role model for others.

SOSP 1 and 2 transformed to SOSP 3 and 4 as a community and business (Flint, 2012). Sustainable practice came from resourced initiatives:

- The inaugural Smart Aotearoa – Sustainable Development (SASD) event that is transforming SOSP 3, as OPAIC takes sustainable practice to businesses, communities, and tertiary providers (SASD, n.d.).
- GOT sustainability projects, particularly the keen focus on activated communications in sustainability via social media posts; 'success story' communications activate SOSP 4 and link to employability via sustainable practice (Bredenkamp et al., 2022).
- The new OPAIC research journal, *Rere Āwhio – Journal of Applied Research and Practice*, which had multiple publications.

The seven Campus Sustainability Initiatives were not created by accident, but by design, and stemmed from our latent capability to amplify research and access our only internal research funding source, which the author was awarded in 2019. Note that the seven CSI generally reinforce each other. Within a year, CSWk, WKA, *Rere Āwhio* and GOT had been created, largely the responsibility of others, culminating to the fully externalised SASD on 30 November 2022 (Figure 3).

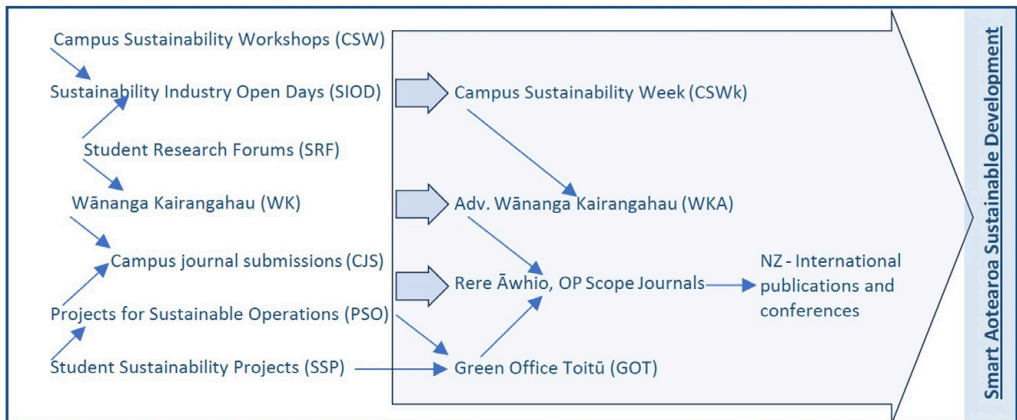


Figure 3. The seven Campus Sustainability Initiatives (CSI) progressed to CSWk, WKA, Rere Āwhio, GOT then SASD.

Notice that each of the SOSP has a different intent. SOSP 1 was to develop sustainable practitioners. OPAIC papers already had sustainability in learning objectives or as indicative content. SRF and SIOD are incentives to elevate student assessment research on campus to build capabilities and create a student research community on campus. WK and WKA led to CJS in Rere Āwhio and Scope, a safe first start for student co-publication.

SOSP 2 is to model evidence-based sustainable practice in our operations. PSO are interdepartmental, funded research projects on campus. GOT formalised aspects of PSO with students completing, reporting and presenting campus sustainability projects.

SOSP 3 encourages communities and businesses to embed sustainable practice. At first, SOSP 3 was only fulfilled via student co-publication and lecturer research submissions, but Smart Aotearoa – Sustainable Development took elements of SSP outside of OPAIC with interdepartmental specialised on-campus co-research projects. This was transformational, as SASD fulfils SOSP 3 by:

- connecting OPAIC Sustainable Practice with companies, small businesses, and public organisations to share knowledge and scaffold learning, linking industry problems with applied research.
- involving OPAIC with communities of sustainable practitioners such as tertiary institutions and primary and secondary schools, in Auckland, throughout New Zealand, and overseas.
- linking business/applied management with nascent technology via sustainable development, just as Technology forums do, but on a grander scale.
- ensuring a bicultural and Pasifika focus, with a three-fold focus: a SASD submission component, a school and research component, and a UN SDG and Best Idea component.

Smart Aotearoa – Sustainable Development will continue each year and build our networks and connections in business and our various communities. It is not difficult to envision the on-campus buzz it will create, that will radiate outward to international 'countries of origin,' further igniting ideas in sustainable development. This has happened before with masters' projects that have been trialed upon the student's return home, but SASD can escalate such opportunities with opportunities that can only be imagined currently.

SOSP 4 is to ensure our actions benefit our communities. CSW created a project-based learning product based on all SOSP (Sugita et al., 2022) designed to help any student progress SOSP within their course of study. GOT and PSO, when linked to research outputs via WK, WKA, and CJS ensure our action input into peer reviewed journals and conferences for community benefit.

Smart Aotearoa – Sustainable Development will reverse the WK / WKA / CJS processes by taking SASD submissions in six categories and offering them for publication in *Rere Āwhio* and *Scope*. It closes the loop to ensure that our ideas, research and innovations inter-relate with businesses, organisations and other learning institutions in New Zealand and internationally. It formalises SOSP 3 and validates SOSP 4 by creating an event and forum for sustainable development (and thus, sustainable practice) to be showcased and connected to industry, technology and real-world challenges of climate action.

Our 'ways of being' at OPAIC as sustainable practitioners via SOSP will be tested in a crucible of new expertise and enthusiasts in sustainable development. To be worthy, we must ensure our actions benefit our communities. We cannot green-wash our way to SASD, but we can use green communications to elevate our sustainable practice, and to externalise sustainable practice.

Sustainable practice was transformed at OPAIC campus. Sustainability initiatives were activated, refined, and grown to inculcate a culture of sustainability on campus and beyond, embedded in all that we do (Klemenčič, 2017; Voß & Kemp, 2006). It ensued organically, by plan, with existing resources, and was instigated by a principal lecturer responsible for Sustainability Competency Leadership, drilling down on "What do we value?," "What do we want?," and "What do we have?" to create quarterly micro-strategies that were remarkably successful (Logan & Fischer-Wright, 2009). Organisational transformation evolved from those who rallied around the Campus Sustainability Initiatives and those who were similarly inspired by a more sustainable future, even in a context of VUCA disruption (Wals & Benavot, 2017).

By developing sustainable practitioners at all levels and fields of study, work-based learning projects evolved interdepartmentally to broaden sustainability leadership on campus and beyond. In particular, the IT department created unique collaborations with the Applied Management department (Naviza et al., 2021) and the scope for taking data-focused organisations to the next level began to open up; inter-departmental projects from linked and multi-sources exploited data knowledge discovery (Cherrington et al., 2019a, 2019b). Such projects amplified contribution to leadership on campus and in our sector and stimulated transformative practice for productive improvement on campus.

As New Zealand organisations work to build literacy on their climate journey, OPAIC is in the unique position of having embedded sustainability at its core, activating SOSP through Wānanga Kairangahau, Green Office Toitū and Smart Aotearoa – Sustainable Development. These undertakings were taken on by various OPAIC staff, interdepartmentally. We spread our capabilities and began to contribute to social media communications.

The transformative work was given an OPAIC Staff Excellence in Sustainable Practice award. A principal lecturer in Business Management has responsibility for developing sustainable practitioners, but sustainable practice has permeated the campus. This project grew awareness and created directed action within strategic objectives; the sustainability torch was passed on. This experience was used in another industry organisation to provide a successful seven-figure funding application for a pragmatic and researched sustainable initiative. The established Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Practice can work in any organisation that seeks to be profitable and sustainable (United Nations General Assembly, 1987). Indeed, the SOSP can be used in any learning organisation to create an ever-evolving, assured sustainability pathway, including essential CO₂ reduction targets (United Nations, 2012), because the SOSP are backed by years of practice and scholarly research.

ORGANISATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The SOSP can be used to create a stepped, iterative, and evolving platform for organisations to achieve sustainable practice. Delivering Strategic Sustainable Practice within organisations should be reflected upon in three ways (Institute of Directors, 2015):

1. by the Board, Executive Leadership Team, and senior managers (motivations, mandates and resourcing cannot be assumed);
2. alongside Strategic planning – sustainability is complex, dynamic, and needs ongoing review, and
3. via Professional practice, with topic forums on the climate journey (Now to net zero, 2022).

Boards, ELT and senior managers are now choosing sustainable, professional practice for agility and resilience due to stakeholder and global demands (Cherrington, 2020c), to balance risk, and embrace and leverage growing opportunities with external organisations, communities and businesses. However, for boards, the liability and policy imperatives are skewed heavily towards emissions mitigation (Climate Change Commission, 2021). There are many lessons to be learned from others' experience in various industries. Board members need their 'aha moment' to get make the climate challenge real for their organisation (Financial Stability Board, 2019).

The Institute of Directors (IoD) notes that climate change has been a top-five-issue for directors yearly since 2018 (Institute of Directors, December 2021). Climate action is a key leadership theme, and a very real opportunity for powerful, forceful action (Institute of Directors, Summer 2022–2023). The IoD hosts the Climate Governance Initiative national chapter, Chapter Zero New Zealand, whose mission is to mobilise, connect, educate, and equip directors to make climate-smart governance decisions (Preston, 2023). Chapter Zero membership is free for directors. The IoD submission on Climate-related Disclosures for the External Reporting Board (XRB) includes (Institute of Directors, 2022):

- support for the XRB's development of the climate-related disclosure standards, aiding meaningful reporting with Strategy and Metrics and Targets sections to drive strategic thinking and change.
- recognition that some entities disclosure limitations and staged, pragmatic implementation; directors can build capability with Chapter Zero New Zealand and Institute of Directors training.
- comment that costs of the disclosures are consistent with the benefits delivered from them (Financial Sector (Climate-related Disclosures and Other Matters) Amendment Act, 2021).

A longer-term focus on value, rather than just profits, is needed due to rising compliance and costs. Climate emissions reduction and adaptation affect policy, strategy and risk, as well as opportunities. It is not straightforward what to measure, monitor, and publish but transparency is essential. Currently, most boards need advisors. The true intent of the board is inferred by the resourcing given or withheld. Boards can and should make a true difference (Now to net zero, 2022), by shifting their perspective:

- from business as usual to deliberate and targeted actions with integrated thinking and reporting;
- from climate change risk to measured emissions reductions and adaptation risks;
- from short-term funding and quarterly earnings to longer-term value delivery with sustainability, and
- from risk and uncertainty to consideration and actioning of opportunities (Now to net Zero, 2022).

Strategic plans must deal with uncertainties and steer a way forward by positioning for opportunities. A good strategic plan can be back-casted with a knowledgeable advisor. A starting point is an understanding and assessment of organisational risks including transitioning to zero carbon and physical changes relating to sustainability.

Note that unrestricted thinking can transform operations. A dynamic strategy, business model and operations plan can help organisations adapt quickly to build resilience and reduce the impact of future disruptions (Suarez & Montes, 2020). Boards are embedding sustainability in operating models, systems and processes to future-

proof sustainability reports (Carter et al., 2022) with suppliers, partners and customers (Institute of Directors, December 2022, p. 77).

The work is never-ending. Boards are realising that a focus on carbon mitigation and sustainability then requires work on issues such as diversity, equality, flexibility in the new world of work, and diverse labour markets (Cherrington et al., 2021a, 2022b)

The power of using the UN SDGs as a sustainability framework helps to support this broader inter-related view of how we do business in a global sense, while still acknowledging powerful motivations for integrating regional approaches. In New Zealand, the te Ao Māori perspective cannot be ignored. Even the celebration of Matariki as a national holiday for the first time in 2022 exposes the integrated yet regional approach that organisations in Aotearoa, New Zealand should take. “For most institutions, improving their understanding of mātauranga Māori is an important strategic aim that can help guide their decision-making, management, and monitoring procedures (Whaanga et al., 2020, p. 44).

We must all become more aware and proficient at the what and how of our inevitable climate journey. Boards of directors, executive leadership teams and managers must grow their climate-related literacy; expertise in sustainability is sporadic in organisations and must be embedded (Now to net zero, 2022).

In the labour market, skilled workers capable of sustainable practice are in very hot demand. Champions of sustainable practice can specialise in carbon reduction or specific areas of sustainability. They can make meaningful impacts using skilful communications with informal conversations and coalitions to inspire greater sustainable practice as an essential to the future of organisations.

CONCLUSIONS

This article summaries how pragmatic action research can create transformational change within an organisation (French, 2009; Mitchell, 2018), and a mindset of sustainable practice for climate action, even in an era of disruption. Sustainable Practice at OPAIC had been a learning objective or just a suggested topic in a subject paper. The seven OPAIC Campus Sustainability Initiatives (Figure 1) evolved to Campus Sustainability Week, Advanced Wānanga Kairangahau (scholarly co-publication and conference presentations), a dedicated OPAIC hardcopy journal publication and Green Office Toitū. Smart Aotearoa – Sustainable Development took those in-house initiatives and the conference concept outside of our campus. Strategic sustainable practice was transformed!

By leveraging a foundation of sustainability provided by Otago Polytechnic active scholarship, a clearly articulated competitive advantage for OPAIC was crafted as a strategic investment in innovation and technology (Cherrington et al., 2020d, 2020e, 2020f), based on the imperative to address increasing, irrefutable risk from climate change (Institute of Directors, March 2022).

There is a real opportunity for organisations to be leads in Education for Sustainability to contribute to global sustainability (Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability, 2009). Genuine climate action means educating the next generation of sustainable practitioners in any field, industry, sector, or organisation graduates choose to engage in (Stevenson et al., 2017), but any claims of sustainability must have real substance that communicates authentically (Szabo & Webster, 2021).

Sustainability is the way organisations will ‘do business’ in the future. It is almost inconceivable that educators would not lead and model sustainable practice, and demonstrate sustainable development. It is a context and a core graduate capability (McGirr, 2019) that can activate climate action, which is globally impactful (World Economic Forum, 2020).

This change initiative began with the vision to contribute to the transformation of sustainable practice at OPAIC from a mandate seemingly lost in paperwork (Mann, 2011). My goal was to instigate sustainable practice using internal initiatives, toward a new external focus. The impact was the activation of Strategic Objectives for Sustainable Practice (SOSP) using reflection and transformational change, to inculcate a culture of sustainable practice and sustainable development, and that can work in any organisation. Because what is the point of learning, teaching, and building a business if it is unsustainable?

Marianne Cherrington is a researcher in the stability of high dimensional machine learning algorithms and a business lecturer with a focus on Sustainability. A focus on applied problems has led to research partnerships in many fields, generating exciting collaborations with international and local partners in many disciplines and industry sectors.

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