

# Curriculum under siege: integrating sustainability in higher education

Elena Cavagnaro, PhD

Professor of sustainability in hospitality and tourism, NHL Stenden UAS  
Associate professor Leadership Development and Sustainable Tourism,  
University of Groningen

Visiting professor at the University of Sunderland, University of Derby,  
University of Bergamo

*THE-ICE 14th IPoE forum 'A sustainable future – embedding sustainability in TH&E curricula'*

# Agenda

- Why sustainability
- Sustainability described
- The role of higher education
- A curriculum under siege
- How to escape the siege
- Concluding...?

# Why sustainability

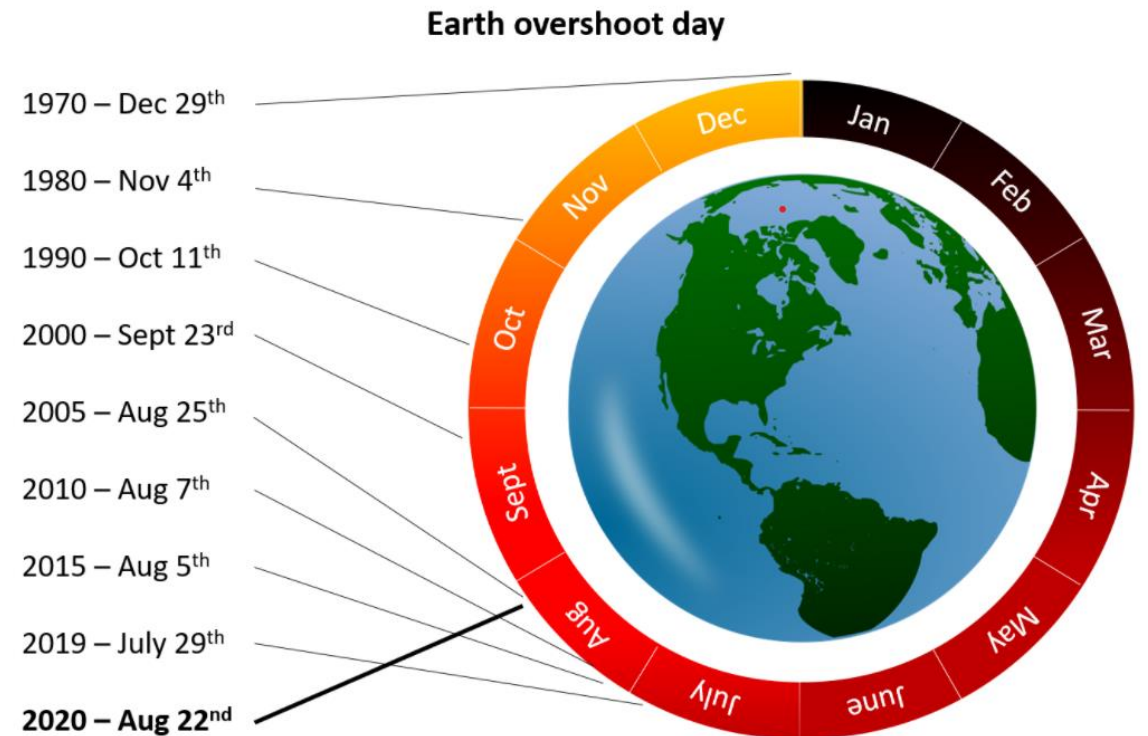


Earthrise Apollo 8, December 24, 1968 (NASA)

# Why sustainability



Earthrise Apollo 8, December 24, 1968 (NASA)

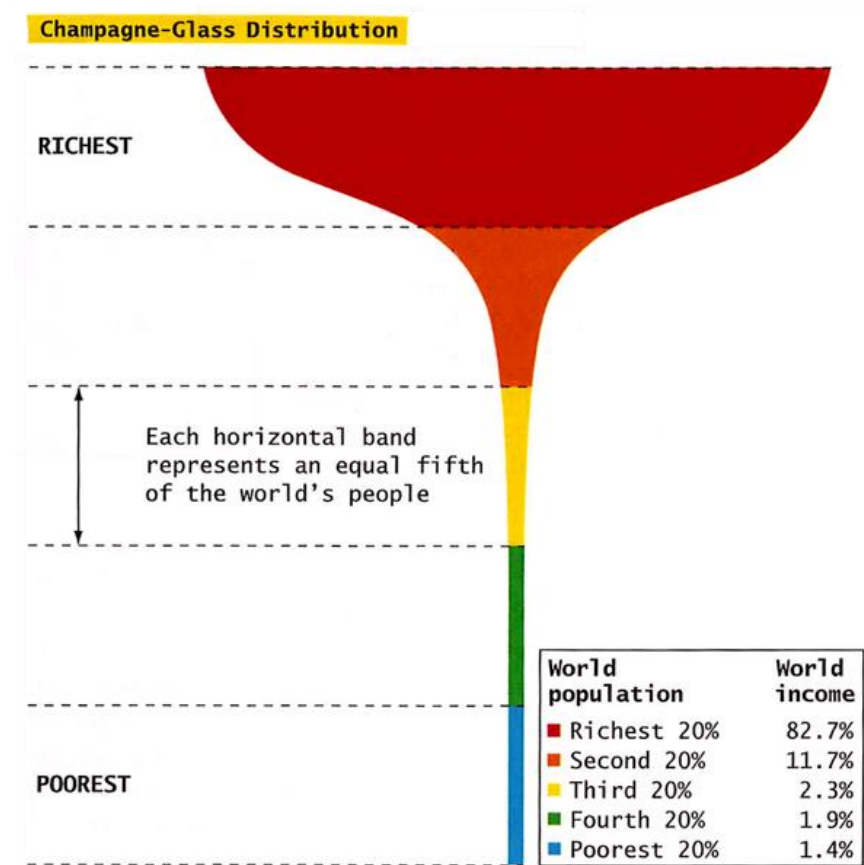


Overshoot Day

# Why sustainability

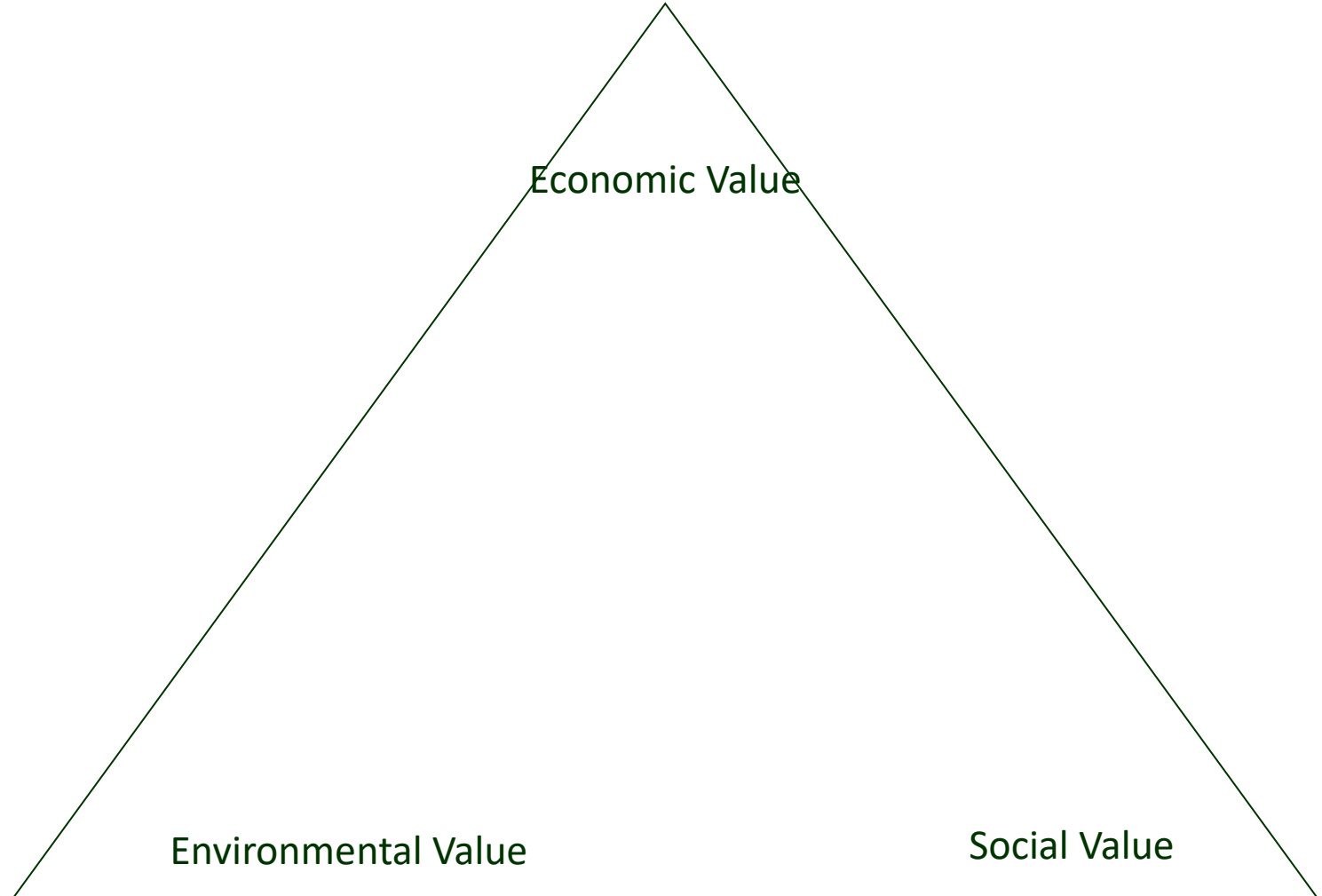


Earthrise Apollo 8, December 24, 1968 (NASA)

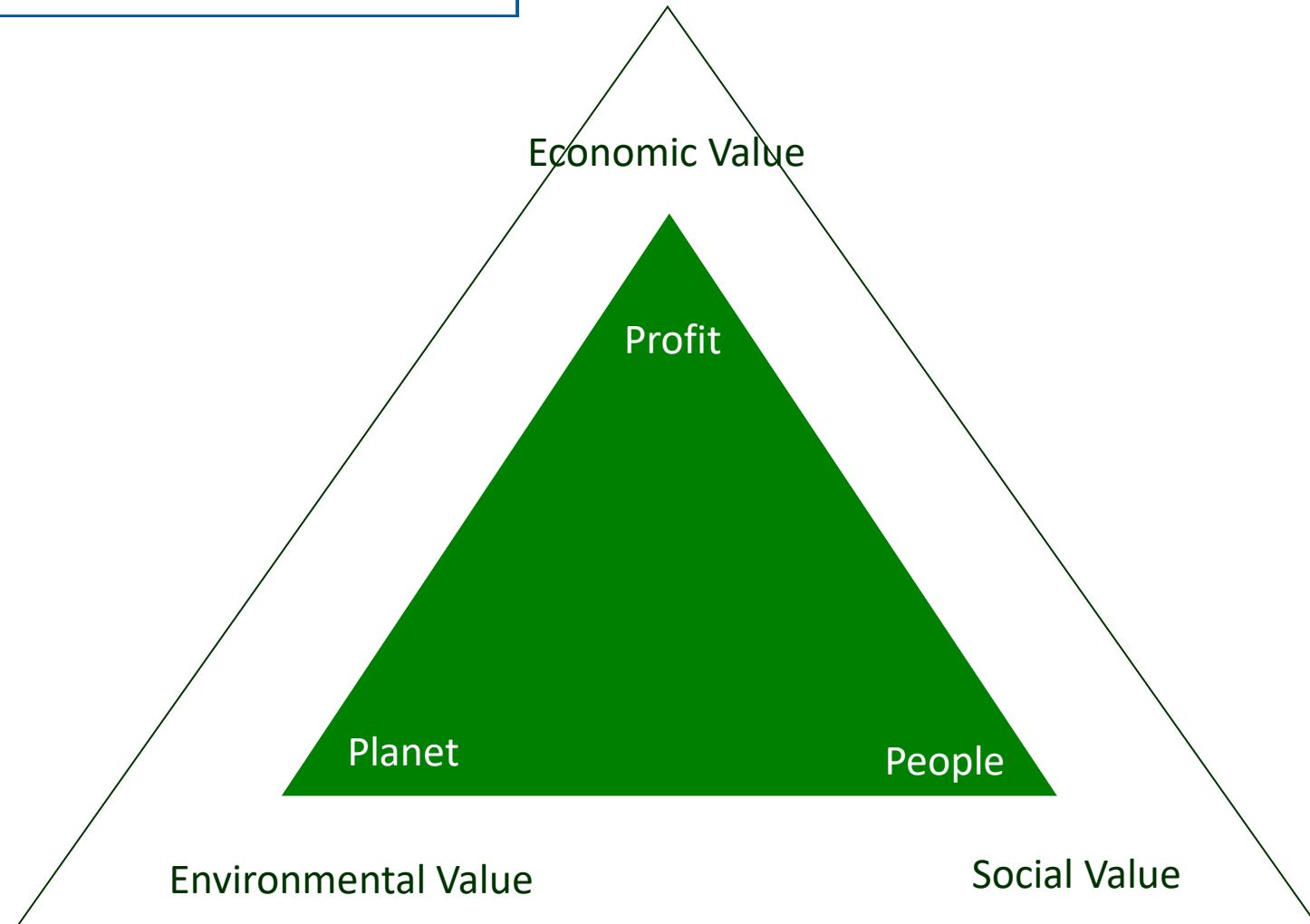


UNDP 1992

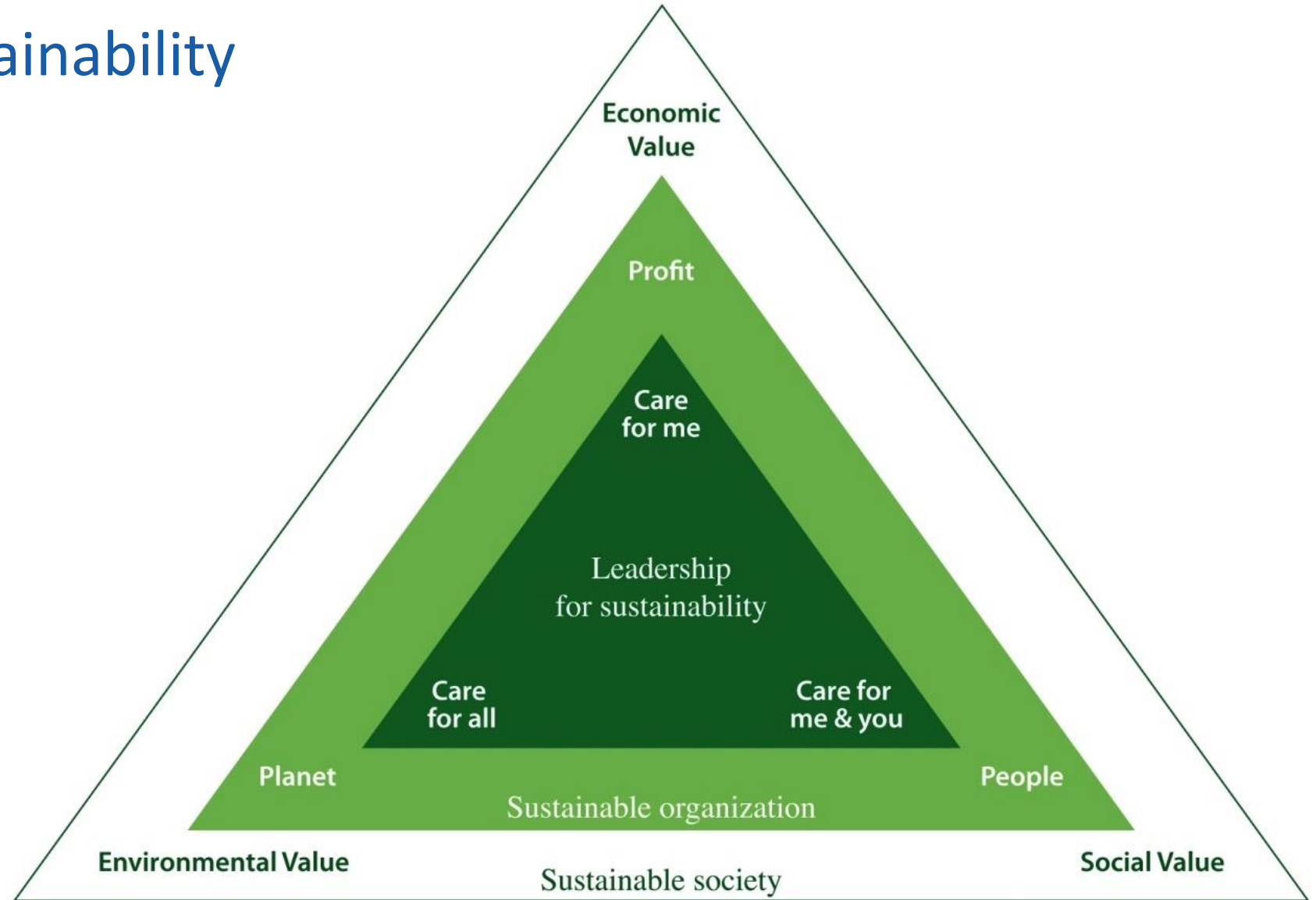
# Sustainability



# Sustainability



# Sustainability



Source: Cavagnaro & Curiel, 2012 & 2018



# The role of higher education



Editorial

## Sustainability Assessment in Higher Education Institutions

Sandra Caeiro <sup>1,2</sup> and Ulisses M. Azeiteiro <sup>3,\*</sup>

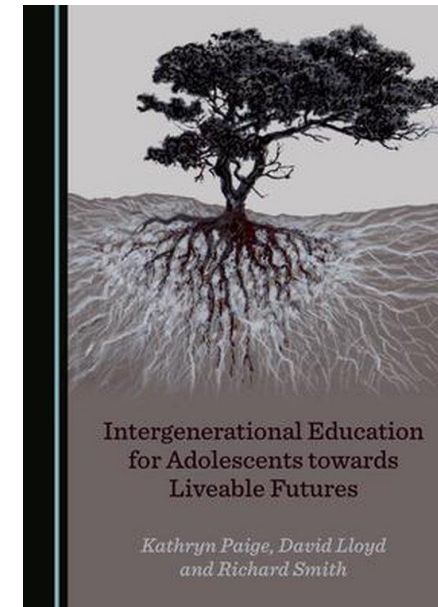
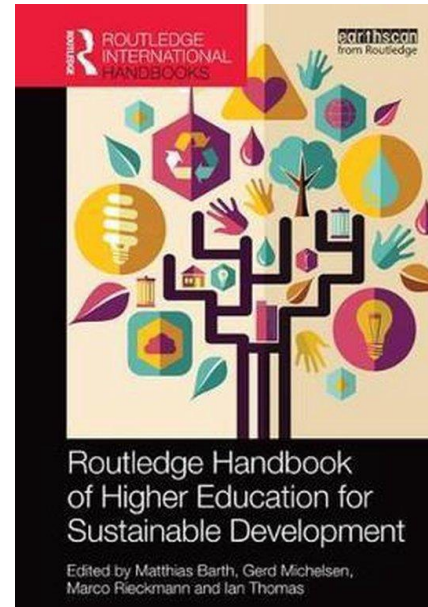
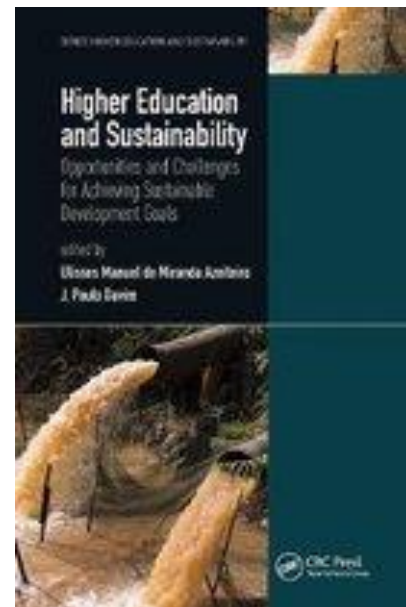
<sup>1</sup> Department of Science and Technology, Universidade Aberta, Rua Escola Politecnica, n. 147, 1269-001 Lisbon, Portugal; scaeiro@uab.pt

<sup>2</sup> Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering, CENSE, Center for Environmental and Sustainability Research, NOVA School of Science and Technology, NOVA University Lisbon, 2829-516 Lisbon, Portugal

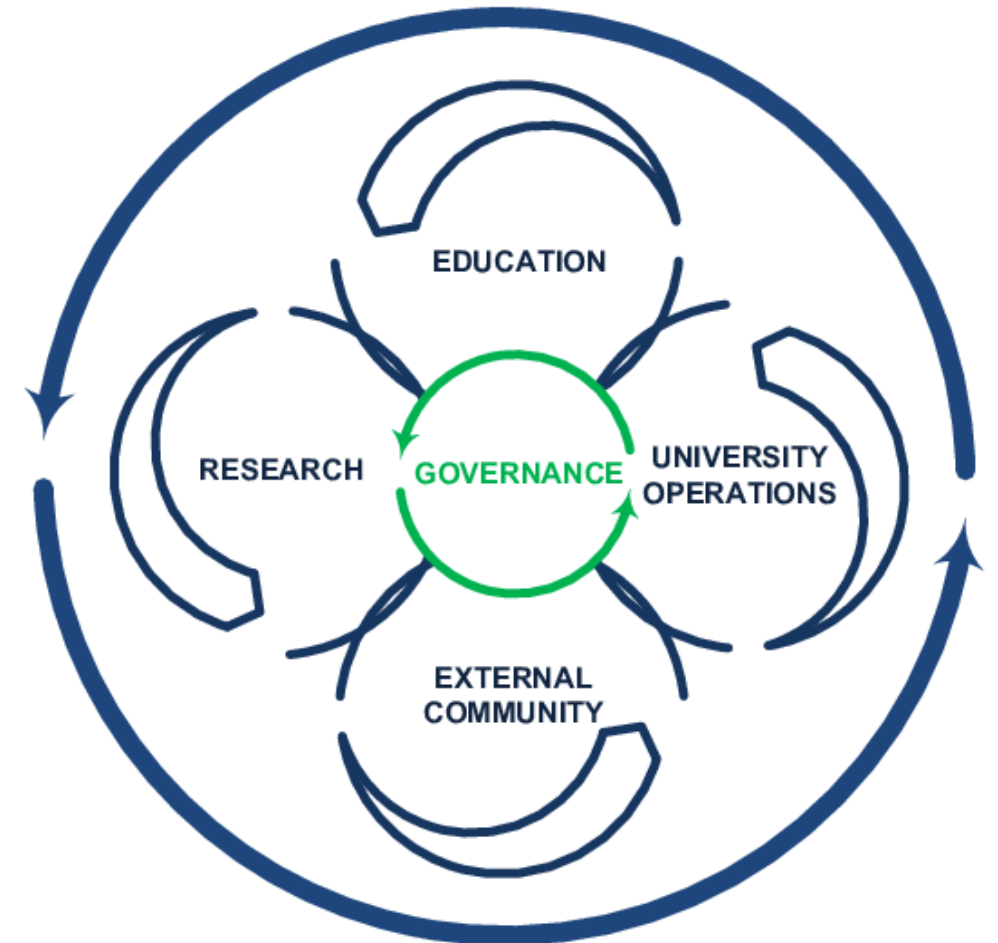
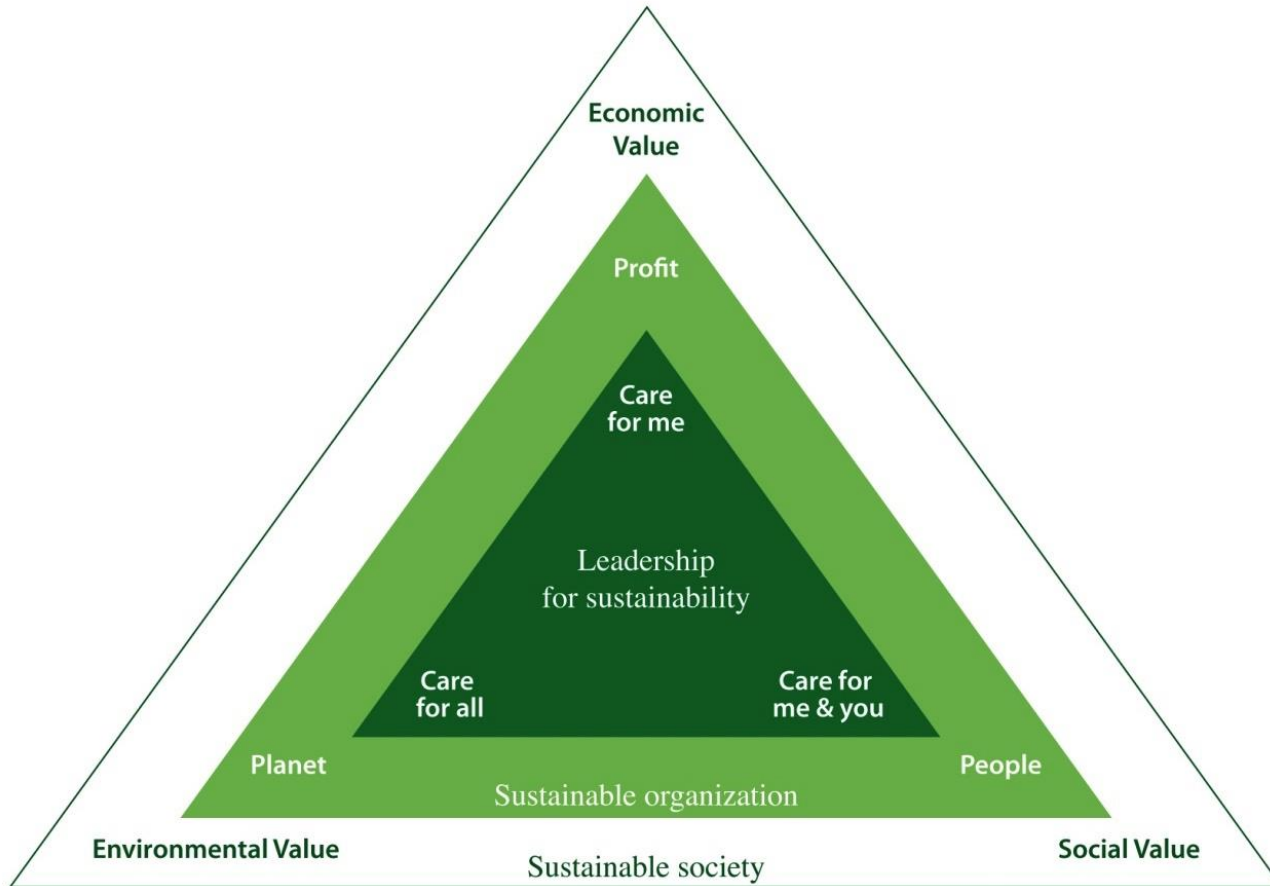
<sup>3</sup> Department of Biology & CESAM Centre for Environmental and Marine Studies, University of Aveiro, 3810-193 Aveiro, Portugal

\* Correspondence: ulisses@ua.pt

Received: 3 March 2020; Accepted: 9 April 2020; Published: 23 April 2020



# The role of higher education



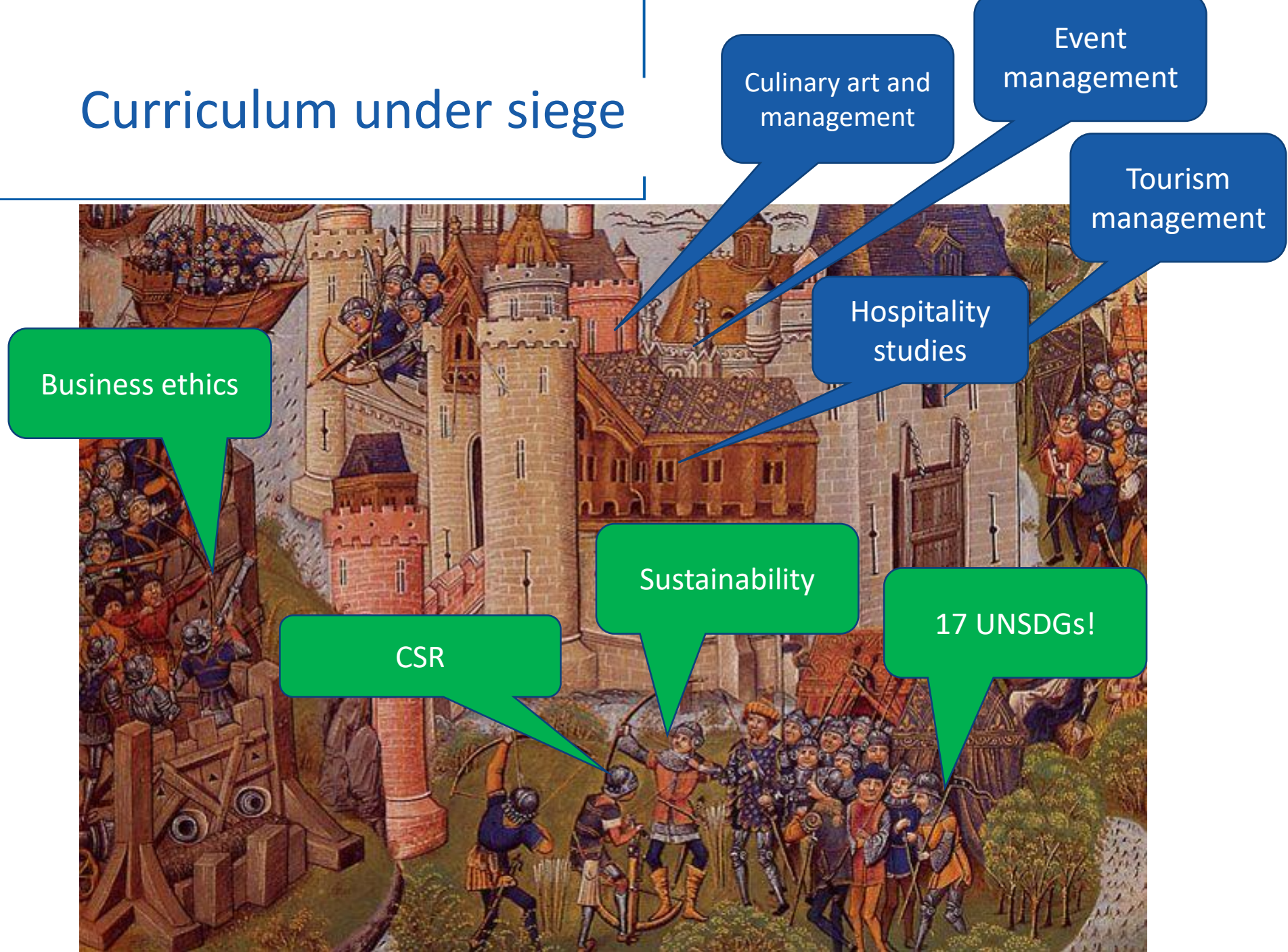


# Curriculum under siege





# Curriculum under siege

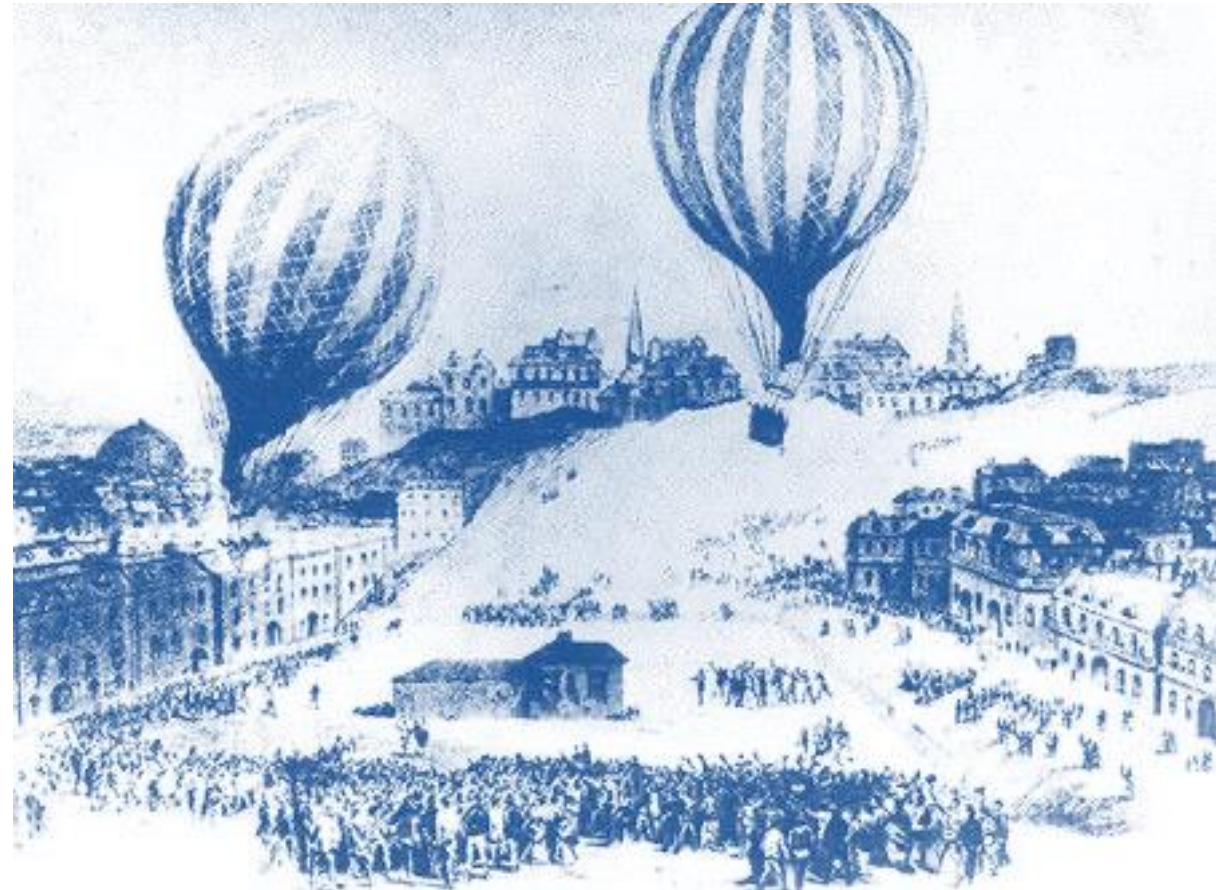


# Escaping from the siege

Case A: redesign an existing curriculum using integrative themes

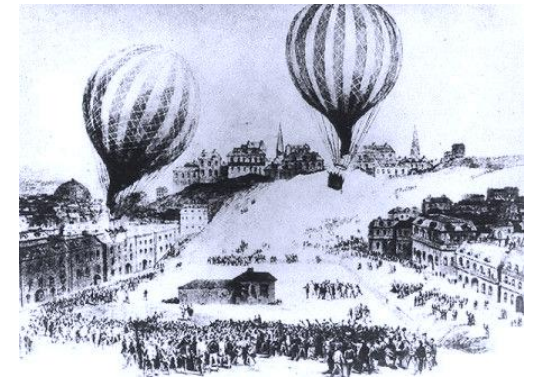
Case B: redesign an existing curriculum through linking to the UNSDG

Case C: design a new curriculum on the basis of the UNSDG





# Case A: Fontys University of Applied Sciences



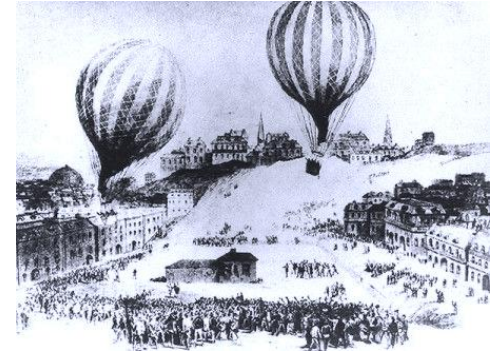
Redesign around integrative themes, i.e. sustainability issues that touch on different disciplines

Bring together a group of experts from the involved disciplines

Develop mono-, multi – and transdisciplinary curricular activities around the theme



# Case B: NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences



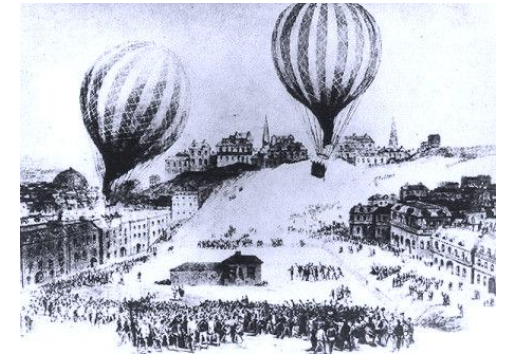
Still under construction!

As an university we will focus on 3 to 4  
overreaching UNSDG

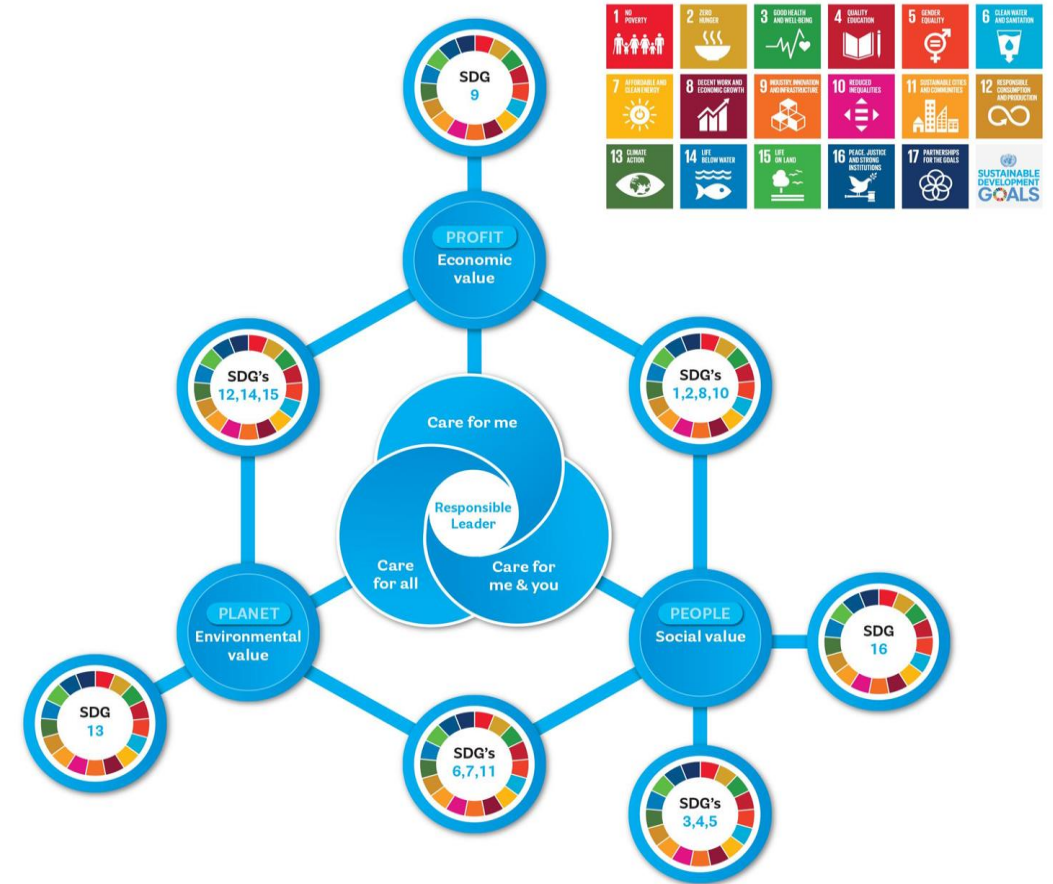
Each school will then choose its own focus



## Case C: University of Groningen, Campus Fryslân



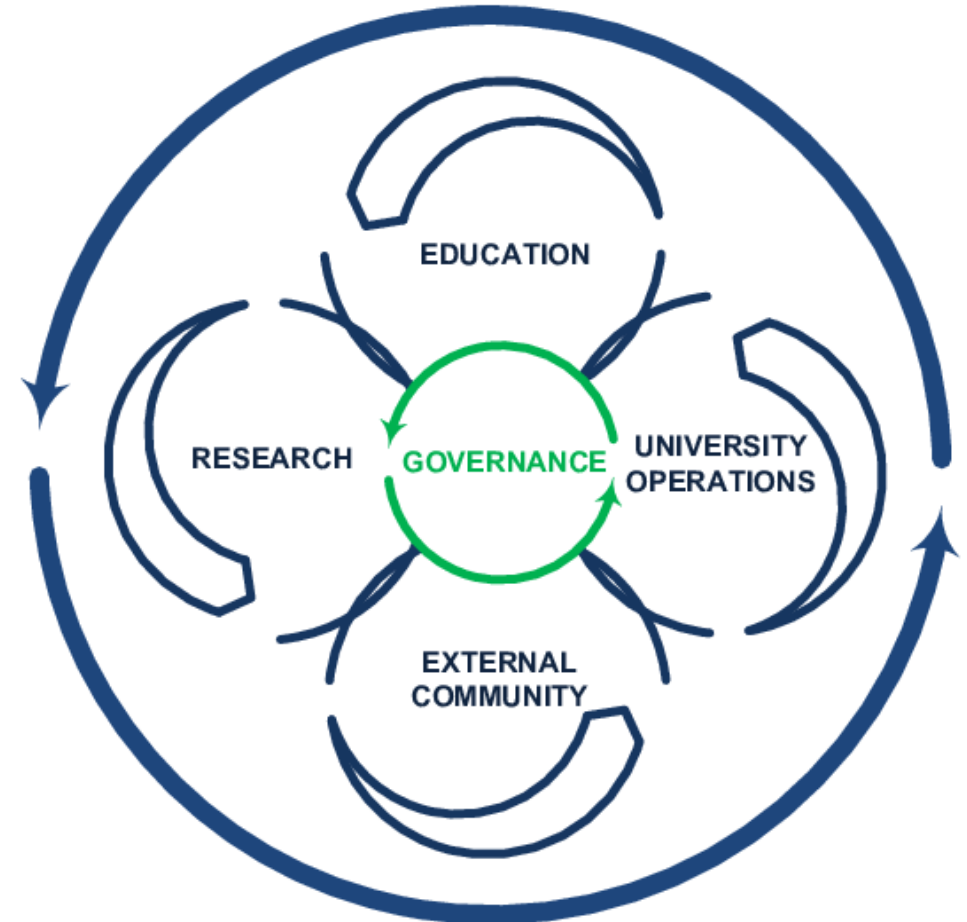
- Design of University College ‘Global responsibility & leadership’
- Curriculum designed around the SDG and the Three Levels of Sustainability framework (Cavagnaro & Curiel, 2012 and 2018)
- **Personal leadership** & three majors:
  - Responsible planet
  - Responsible humanity
  - Responsible governance





# The role of higher education: university operations

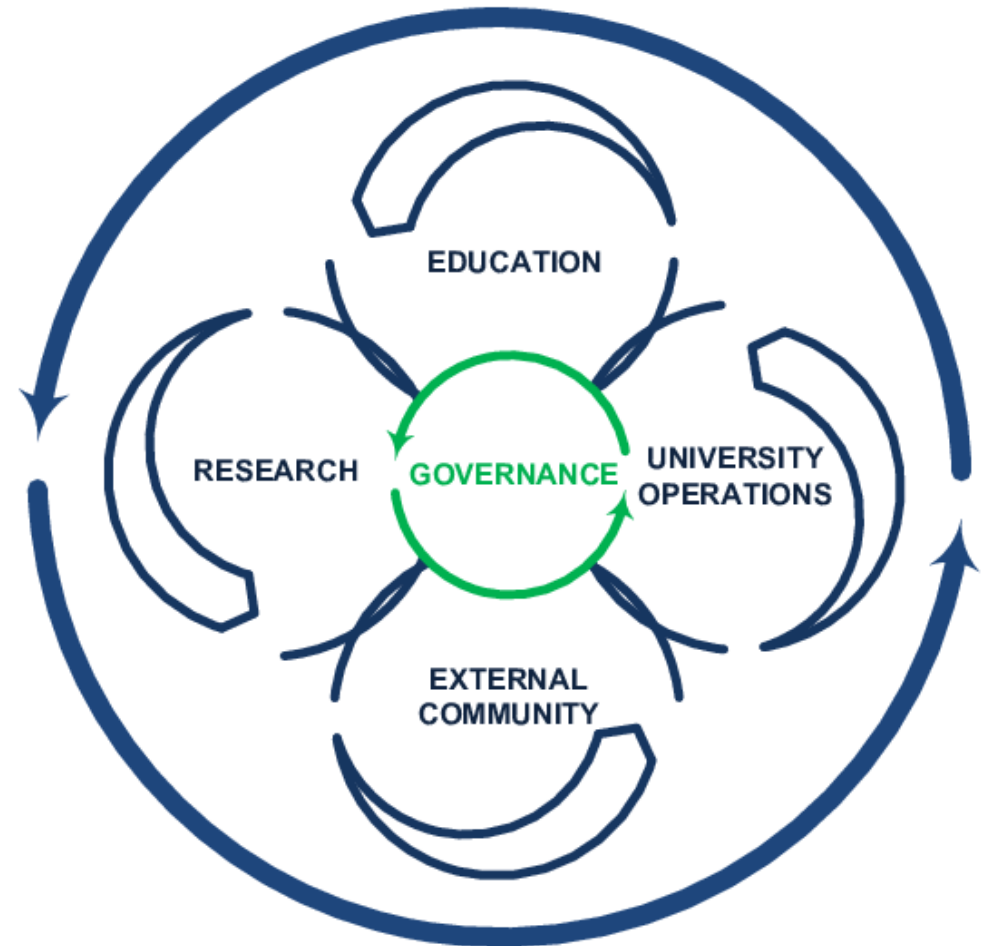
- If a sustainability strategy is not operationalised in an organisation's operations it leads to greenwashing
- Which processes?
  - Maintenance, i.a. buildings
  - F&B
  - HRM



# The role of higher education: research

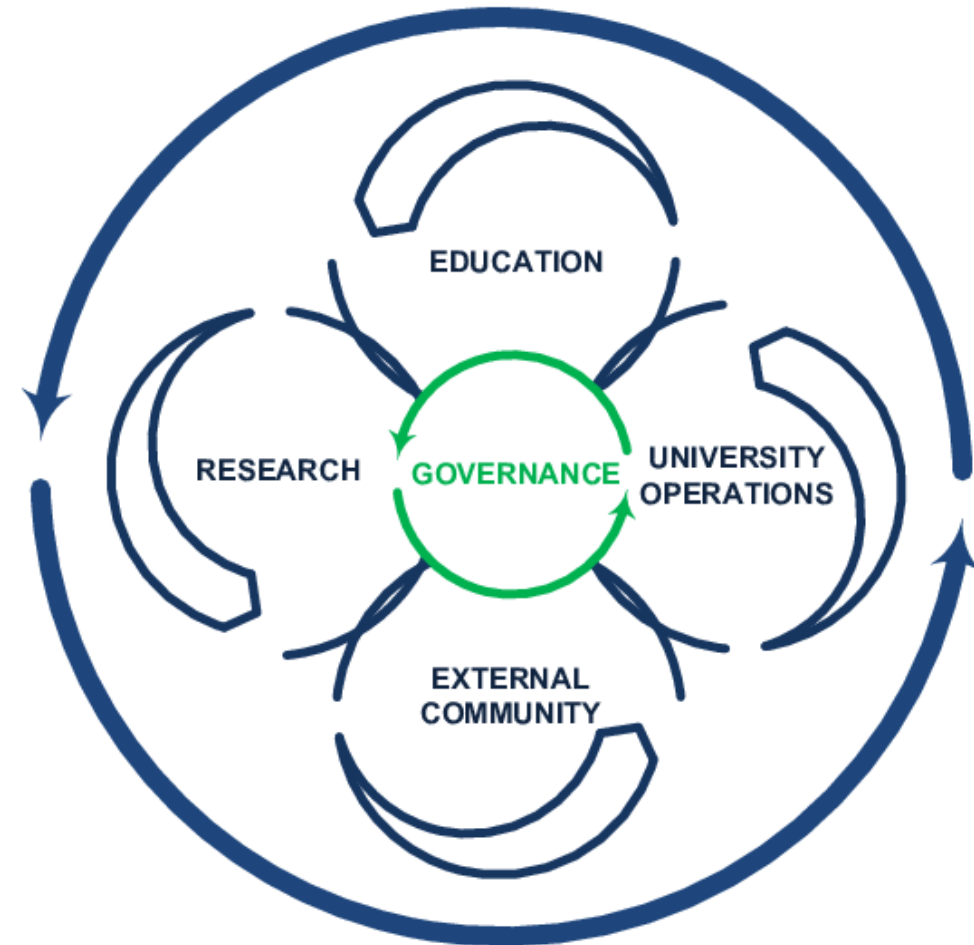
As in the case of the curriculum the choice is between build on or build in

- Build on: appointing alongside other professors a professor of sustainability
- Build in: setting sustainability issues at the core of each professorship and research line



# The role of higher education: external community

Local  
National  
International

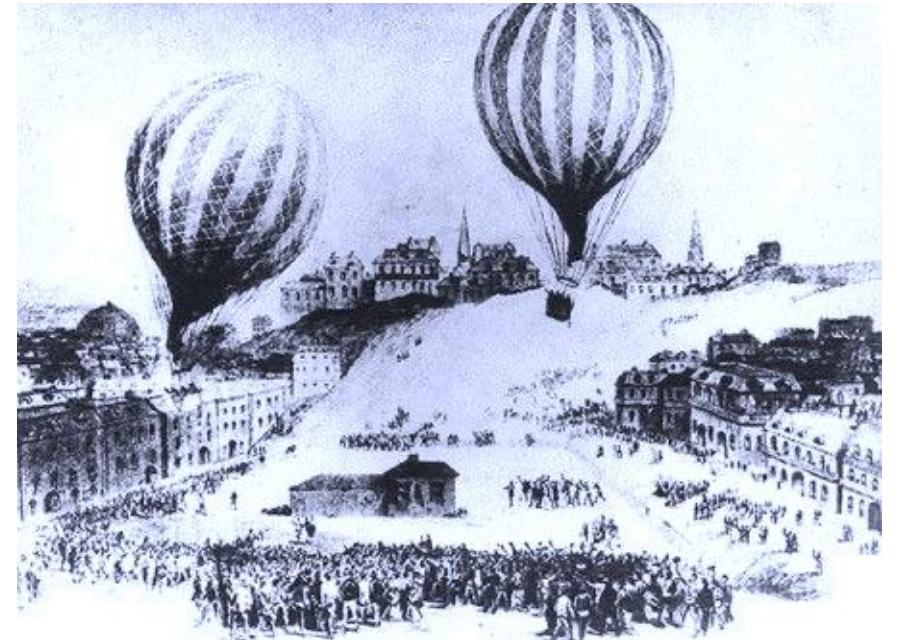


## Concluding

Find your way to escape from the siege  
be creative!

Please consider that sustainability is more  
than greening and includes alongside  
education, research, outreach to the  
community and all university's processes

Include personal leadership development  
along sustainability related values such as  
empathy, compassion, and biophilia





# Thank you!

