

Charles Sturt University Library, NSW



GREENING
LIBRARIES



Charles Sturt University Library. Image credit: Charles Sturt University

Library Service Overview

The Charles Sturt University (CSU) includes six libraries across the various campuses on lands belonging to the Wiradjuri, Ngunnawal, Gundungarra and Biripai peoples of Australia in regional New South Wales (Albury-Wodonga, Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Port Macquarie and Wagga Wagga.) The libraries are part of the University and operate within the auspices of the University including the sustainability initiative 'CSU Green'.

Policy on Environment and Sustainability

The sustainability practices of the CSU Library are guided by the University policies and statements:

- [Charles Sturt University's Sustainability Home page](#)
- [Charles Sturt University Sustainability Statement \(2019\)](#)

Program/initiative/infrastructure Summary

In 2013, the university adopted the [Learning in Future Environments](#) (LiFE) index as the framework for benchmarking, evaluating and identifying areas for improvement to shape Charles Sturt's sustainability action plan. Supported by Australian Campuses Towards Sustainability (ACTS), this initiative is implemented across all areas of the university, managed by a central department called CSU Green and led through the university by 160 trained [LiFE champions](#). As shown in Figure 1, LiFE includes four priority areas with 16 frameworks within those areas and various activities identified across the areas which could support the university's [Sustainability Statement](#) released in 2019.

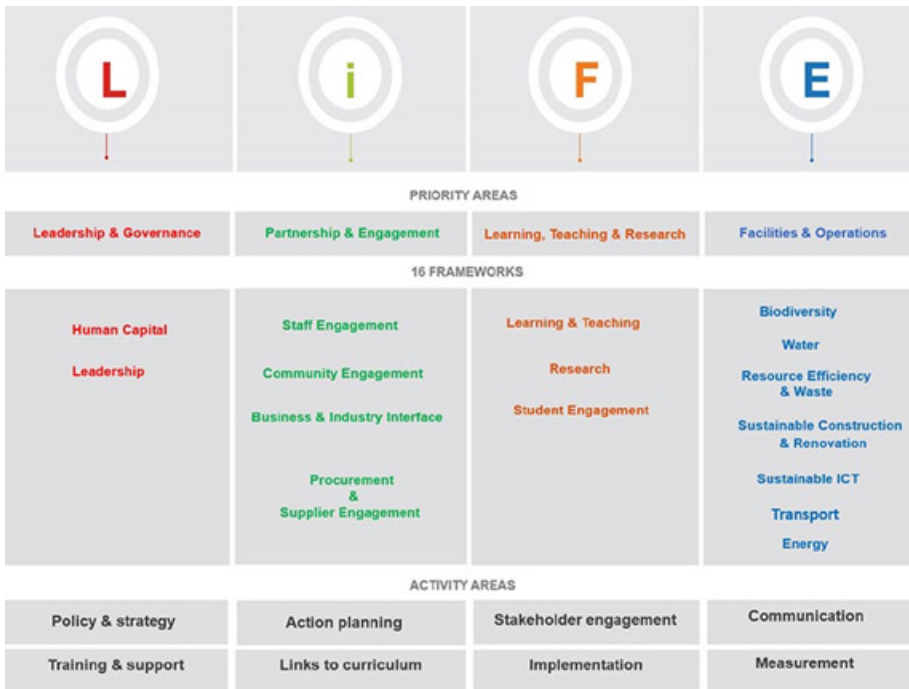


Figure 1. [LiFE Index](#)

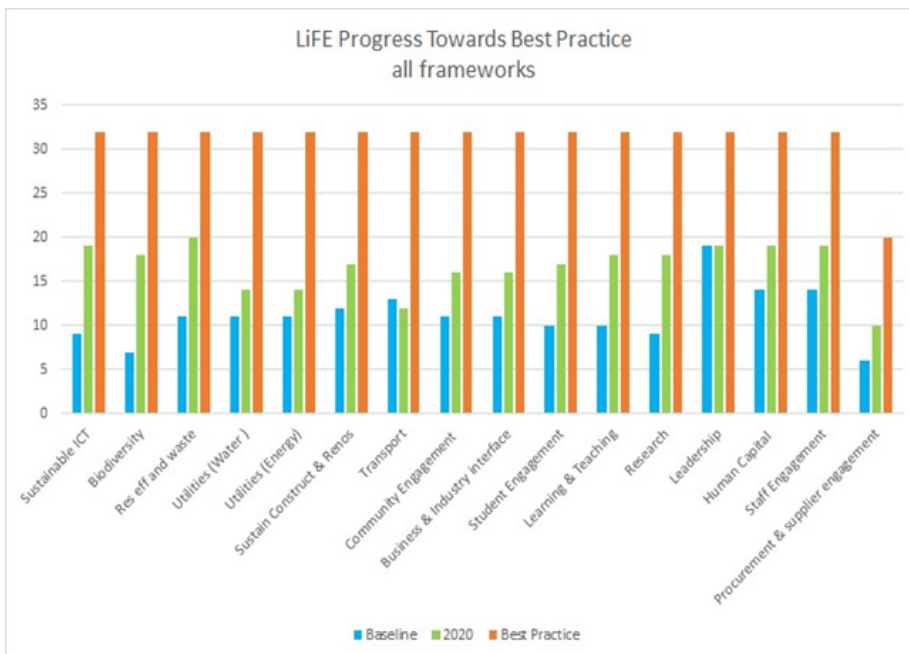


Figure 2. [LiFE Progress Towards Best Practice](#)

The goal of the LiFE Framework is to embed sustainability practices in all facets of university life, identifying practices that support or impede these practices and making changes as needed to reach targets and benchmarks as shown in the graph below. As shown in Figure 2, the university has reached baseline rankings for all areas with the goal of a 5% increase per year as they progress towards best practices.

While this is a university-wide initiative not just in the library, it underlines processes and procedures throughout the library and presents a useful framework for other libraries to consider their sustainability practices. All students and staff at the university [have the opportunity complete online training modules on sustainability practices.](#)

Charles Sturt is a signatory to the [University Commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals.](#) Further, the SDGs are embedded within the Framework and linked to areas within improvement action plans which detail best practices criteria and the university's progress towards that.

The LiFE Index is used throughout the entire university and by 70 other institutions worldwide. The University is an active member of ACTS and ACTS Member Institutions can use LiFE for free as the organisation administers the index. Other costs are dependent on the size of the institution.

The program is assessed in various ways including annual evaluation of the framework to measure progress through improvement action plans designed to support staff in making the necessary changes. Further, senior staff have LiFE framework goals within their annual performance plan. This also puts sustainability at the forefront as a discussion point within division planning cycles. An example outcome from the inclusion of sustainability as a discussion point within division planning cycles is the reduction in processes requiring printing.

CSU has received numerous accolades for greening activities, including recognition as Australia's first certified carbon neutral university (2016); Green Globe

Awards (2016) for Regional Sustainability and Climate Change Leadership; Green Globe Australasia Award (2016) Carbon Reduction, Green Globe Award (NSW) 2018 Ed Maher (Sustainability at CSU Manager); Green Gown Awards Australasia (2019) Continuous Improvement Winner; and Green Gown Finalist International (2020) [Highly Commended status for Sustainability Institution of the Year](#). Also, in 2020 Charles Sturt achieved a global rank of 61st (out of 766 universities) overall in *Times Higher Education* Impact Rankings related to the SDGs, specifically achieving outstanding individual results in categories such as: reduced inequalities, gender equality, clean water and sanitation, life on the land, quality education, and climate action.

The library supports sustainability in other ways including:

- The [collection development policy](#) is to collect e-resources whenever possible unless print is specifically needed.
- The roofs of the Learning Commons buildings host significant [solar arrays](#).
- The Learning Commons is a recycling hub for the university, hosting printer ink, oral hygiene and battery recycling stations for the Division of Facilities Management, as well as the usual waste separation and recycling bins.
- The library displays recycling and other sustainability messages on digital screens throughout the Learning Commons spaces.
- Library managers participate in biodiversity events on various campuses and promote these to staff.