SUSTAINABLE.INNOVATIVE.DIGITAL.

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2024

Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld

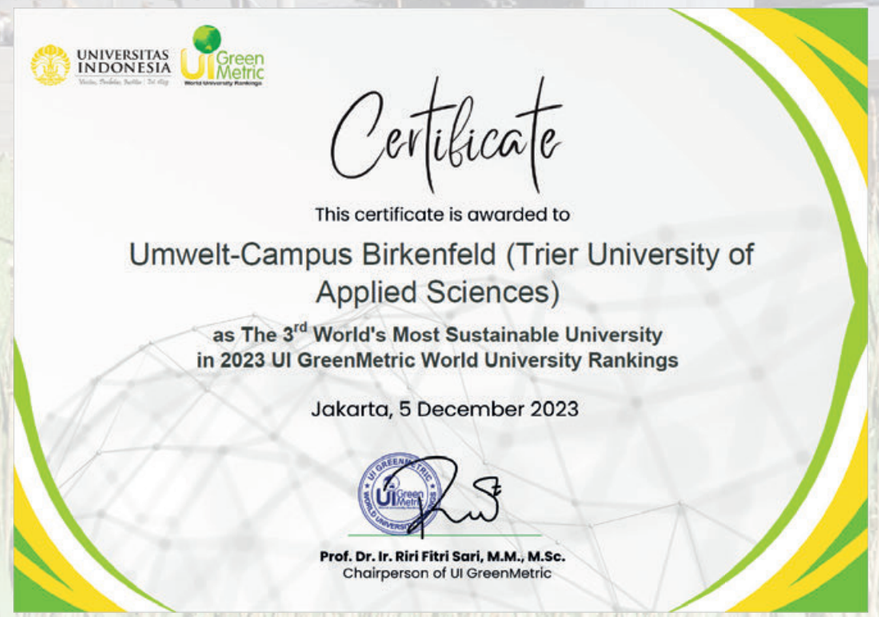
HOCHSCHULE TRIER

Environmental Campus Birkenfeld

No. 3 WORLDWIDE

No. 1 IN GERMANY

More information here



The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld (UCB) is a globally recognised flagship project for sustainable development and environmentally conscious action. Since its foundation, it has pursued the goal of combining ecology, economy and social aspects. The Green Campus concept characterises all areas of campus life.

The UCB achieved an outstanding position in the UI GreenMetric Ranking 2023, taking third place out of 1183 universities worldwide. The GreenMetric ranking evaluates the sustainability performance of universities holistically, is comparable to a „world championship in sustainability" and is known as the world's largest ranking. The Environmental Campus was able to increase its overall result by 325 points compared to the previous year and thus consolidate its position among the leading universities worldwide. We are particularly proud of the fact that we have been the undisputed number 1 in Germany since 2017. The award ceremony took place during the COP28 World Climate Change Conference in Dubai, where Prof. Dr. Peter Heck received the plaque in person.

1. INFRASTRUCTURE

In this category, 1275 out of 1500 possible points were achieved, which represents an improvement of 100 points compared to the previous year.

2. ENERGY AND CLIMATE PROTECTION

In the area of energy and climate protection, the Environmental Campus scored 1925 out of 2100 points. Further measures are in progress so that an even higher score is expected.

3. WASTE MANAGEMENT

The Environmental Campus achieved the highest score in this area, scoring the full 1800 points.

4. WATER

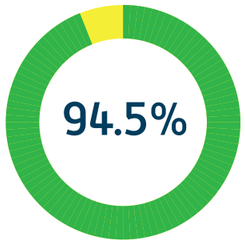
The Environmental Campus achieved the maximum score for water management with 100% of the possible points.

5. MOBILITY

In this category, the Environmental Campus achieved 1700 points, which corresponds to more than 90% of the possible points.

6. TEACHING AND RESEARCH

In the evaluation category of teaching and research, the Environmental Campus received almost 100% of the achievable points.



Total Points 2023:

9450 from maximum of 10000

Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld | HOCHSCHULE TRIER

Dear readers,

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the tenth sustainability report of the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld of Trier University of Applied Sciences. This report reflects both our ongoing commitment to sustainability and our long-term vision of establishing the campus as a leading example of climate-neutral action and practical research.

Over the past 27 years, we have continued to develop the Environmental Campus in order to embed sustainability even more firmly in all areas. In the international GreenMetric ranking, we took 3rd place globally and 1st place again in Germany in 2023, demonstrating that our holistic approach to sustainability is also recognised internationally.

The combination of scientific excellence, practice-orientated research and consistently sustainable operations is the foundation of our success. Sustainability is not a static state, but a dynamic process that requires constant adaptation and innovation. We at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld are facing up to this challenge and are working hard to develop new and effective solutions for a sustainable future. Our goal is to further deepen the Whole Institution Approach and to live sustainability in all areas of our university - in teaching, research, operations, transfer and governance.

The tenth report offers a comprehensive review of what has been achieved and an outlook on future plans. I would like to emphasise that this report was once again produced as part of a student master's project. This shows the active involvement of our students in our sustainability strategy and underlines our commitment to combining theory and practice and promoting service learning.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone involved, especially our Sustainability Officer, Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling, whose expertise and passion have been instrumental in this report. I hope you find this report inspiring and enjoyable to read and invite you to use the projects and initiatives presented here as inspiration for your own work and everyday life.

With best regards,

Prof. Dr. Dorit Schumann

President of Trier University of Applied Sciences

NATIONALITITES ON CAMPUS **84**

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

494

DEPARTMENT

UW/UR 846

UP/UT 915

PROFESSORS

EMPLOYEES

GOALS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORT

GOALS & MEASURES	DATE	STATUS & EXPLANATION
1. Promotion of biodiversity		
Setting up the bee colonies	2023	✓ First Honey Sale in summer 2023
2. Development of partnerships		
Visit to the Celtic Park in the Hunsrück-Hochwald National Park in cooperation with EAO	2023	✓ „Sustainable Tourism 4 the Region" carried out
3. Sustainability in procurement		
Conducting basic training on the topic of „Sustainable public procurement"	2023	✓ Organized as part of DG HochN
Maintaining the award as a Fairtrade University	2023	✓ Regular fairtrade campaigns
4. Establishment of a circular economy strategy		
Installation of a repair station for bicycles in the building 9915	2023	✓ Organisation of Repair Cafés every first Wednesday of the month
Foundation of a circular economy initiative Circular Community	2023	✓ Regular Sessions at the Repair Café
5. Promotion of sustainable mobility		
Implementation Germany Semester Ticket	2023	✓ For employees and students
Launch of GreenTwin project for CO_2-saving cooperative mobility & logistics in rural areas	2023	✓ Start 1.03.2023
6. Resource Conservation		
Continuation of the lighting optimisation in the sanitary rooms and corridors 9913, 9914 and 9915	2023/2024	✓ Done by Facility Management
7. Sustainability communication in the social environment		
Using the MINT mobile for school visits	2022/2023	✓ Successfully in use
Increased media work: creation of podcasts	2023	✓ 53 podcasts on sustainability
8. Equality		
Implementation of the family-friendly university action programme	2023/2024	✓ In implementation by Equality Office
Positive assessment as part of the application for the Female Professors Programme 2030	2023	✓ Positively assessed
9. Participation of students/university members in the sustainability process		
Organisation of the Sustainability Week	2023	✓ Sustainability Week in RLP 11.2023
Continuation of the clothing swap parties	2023	✓ Carried out twice
10. Social affairs		
Creation of additional seating areas between dormitories 9902, 9903, and 9904	2023/2024	✓ Implemented by Campus Company

NEW SUSTAINABILITY GOALS 2024

GOALS	MEASURE	DATE	RESPONSIBLE
1. Promotion of biodiversity	Creation of a flowering meadow in front of the new central building as part of the „Nature trail for sustainability" project	2024	Institute for Applied Material Flow Management (IfaS)
2. Development of partnerships	Cooperation agreement for water restoration exhibition on the Ahr in Bad Neuenahr-Ahrweiler	2024	Prof. Schumann, Prof. Stoll
	Membership of the United Nations Sustainable Development Sustainability Network (SDSN)	2024	Prof. Helling
	Cooperation with specialised companies and schools as part of the „From solar model to solar table" project	2024	Prof. Gollmer
	Expansion of research projects and exchange on the subject of hydrogen	2024	Prof. Hoogers
	Expansion of school partnerships	2024/2025	Julia Hartmann
3. Sustainability in procurement	Maintaining the award as a Fairtrade University	2024	Green Office, Prof. Helling
4. Establishment of a circular economy strategy	Organizing Repair Cafés every first Wednesday of the month	2024	Circular Community, UCB-Contact
5. Promotion of sustainable mobility	Creation of better contractual conditions for the students with the Germany Semester Ticket	2024	AStA
	Hydrogen refuelling station and solar carport system	2024/2025	IfaS
6. Resource Conservation	Conversion of ventilation systems in the labs in the buildings 9913, 9914 und 9915	start of 2024	Facility Management
	Replacing the lighting in offices by LED in building 9915	2024	Facility Management
	Conversion of ventilation systems with high efficiency ventilators in the seminar rooms SR1, SR2 and SR3	2023/2024	Facility Management
	Saving water and preventing water damage by installing a water consumption monitoring system in all buildings	2023/2024	Facility Management

NEW SUSTANABILITY GOALS 2024

GOALS	MEASURES	DATE	RESPOSNIBLE
7. Sustainability communication in the social environment	Development and launch of a new degree programme in „Communication Psychology and Sustainability"	2024	Prof. Schönborn
	Organisation of MINT training courses in the National Park and at the UCB	2024	Prof. Naumann
	Organisation of workshops on heavy rain prevention at regional schools	2024	Prof. Fischer-Stabel
	Holiday course in the autumn holidays on topics such as PV and carbon footprint	2024	Markus Klassen
	Involvement in the „Greater Green+" project as a partner to promote green technologies, the circular economy and green energy	Start 2024	Prof. Hartard, Prof. Wahl, Prof. Kennel
	Development of an SDG educational trail	2024/2025	Prof. Helling
8. Equality	Preparation of a short report for the „Audit Family Friendly University"	2024	Equality Office
	Implementation of the family-friendly university action programme	2023/2024	Equality Office
9. Participation of students/ university members in the sustainability process	Renewed realisation of the course „klimafit - climate change on your doorstep! What can I do?"	2024	IfaS
	Organisation of Sustainability Week	2024	Green Office
	Expand the SDSN Youth Network	2024	Green Office, Prof. Helling
	Foundation of Birkenfeld Institute of Technology	2024	Prof. Dartmann, Prof. Vette-Steinkamp
	First conference for SAREP: Reforestation project in Mauritania (Africa)	2023/2024	IfaS
10. Social affairs	Organisation of International Circular Economy Week and Conference 2024	2024	IfaS
	Participation in the „Week of the Environment" in Berlin	2024	Prof. Helling, Prof. te Heesen, Prof. Rick
	Reconstruction of the barbecue hut	2024	AStA

GOVERNANCE & STAKEHOLDERS

The UCB governance structure is based on the mission statement of Trier University of Applied Sciences and promotes sustainable action, innovation and social responsibility in teaching, research and administration. The campus sees itself as a forward-looking institution that integrates ecological, economic and social sustainability in all areas. This is ensured by transparent decision-making processes and the involvement of various interest groups. The aim is to promote open and responsible university management that actively supports sustainable development.

Click here for the university's mission statement

Trier University of Applied Sciences has implemented a university-wide Sustainability Council, which has location-specific councils at each campus, including the Environmental Campus. The Sustainability Council at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld is chaired by Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling, the long-standing Sustainability Officer. These councils play a central role in defining and monitoring sustainability goals and strategies.

The Green Office, which has been established at the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld since 2017, plays a special role. It acts as a central point of contact for sustainability issues and coordinates student initiatives to promote sustainable development. The Green Office was first established at UCB and later also at the other university locations. introduced

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Since 2011, the Environmental Campus has regularly published sustainability reports. From the beginning, these reports have been created in collaboration with students, highlighting the campus's participatory and practice-oriented approach. The reports adhere to international standards, including the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the German Sustainability Code (DNK). In 2018, the Environmental Campus became the first university in Rhineland-Palatinate to publish a DNK declaration of conformity and achieved another milestone in 2019 with Germany's first English-language DNK declaration. The latest reports also incorporate the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and align with the Whole Institution Approach.

Through these governance structures and initiatives, the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld positions itself as a pioneer in sustainable university development and emphasises its role as the „greenest university in Germany".

UCB offers a variety of degree programs focused on sustainability, such as Sustainable Business and Technology, Renewable Energy, and International Material Flow Management. These programs equip students with in-depth knowledge in environmental management, resource conservation, and sustainable economic systems. By fostering an interdisciplinary learning environment, UCB brings together students from diverse fields to address complex environmental, economic, and social challenges. The campus integrates these aspects into its teaching, helping students develop a holistic understanding of sustainability. Project-based learning, which focuses on solving real-world problems, is a key component of these programs, encouraging practical, innovative solutions and preparing students to make responsible decisions in business and the public sector to contribute to a sustainable future.

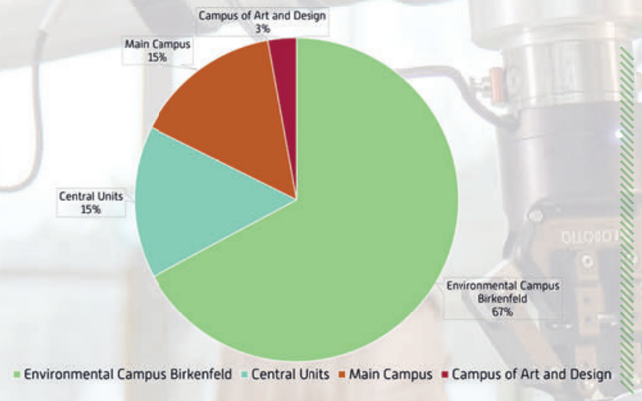
In the CHE University Ranking 2023, both the degree programmes in the Department of Environmental Economics and Environmental Law and the Bachelor's degree programmes in Computer Science in the Department of Environmental Planning and Environmental Engineering achieved impressive results. In addition to the degree programmes in Environmental and Business Administration, Business and Environmental Law, and the international bachelor's programme in Sustainable Business and Technology, which achieved a total of fifteen top rankings, the computer science programmes in Applied Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence, Media Computer Science, and Environmental and Business Computer Science were also rated particularly positively. This recognition by students confirms the excellent quality of teaching and the first-class study conditions at the Environmental Campus. Excellent career prospects are opening up for graduates, particularly in the fields of sustainability, climate protection and innovative computer science.

In 2023, the Department of Environmental Economics/Environmental Law will strengthen its team with the appointment of Prof. Dr. Carola Glinski on 24 August 2023 as Professor of Environmental Law, in particular Pollution Control Law, Nature Conservation Law and Circular Economy Law, and Prof. Dr. Anna Donner de Ceiba on 24 October 2023 as Professor of Labour Law, General Civil Law and Social Sustainability. Both professors contribute valuable expertise and promote the profile of the faculty as well as regional economic relations. The Dean, Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling, emphasises the importance of this reinforcement and is pleased about the increasing presence of women in teaching, which further strengthens gender diversity in the degree programmes.

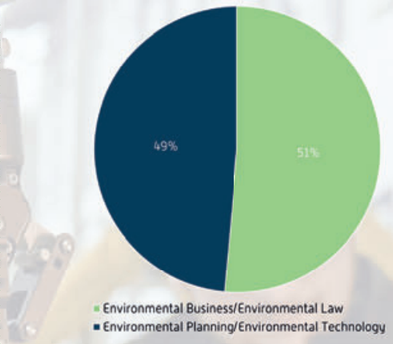
More information here

Project „Trier University International: Global Innovation for Sustainable Futures"
In 2023, the focus will be on two workshops: „Education for Sustainable Development and SDGs in Higher Education Teaching" and „Virtual Exchange: Designing Transnational Virtual Teaching Collaborations". These workshops are intended to give academic teachers new impetus and promote the exchange of best practices. This will make teaching at universities more sustainable and future-orientated and provide teachers with valuable tools to prepare their students for global challenges in the best possible way.

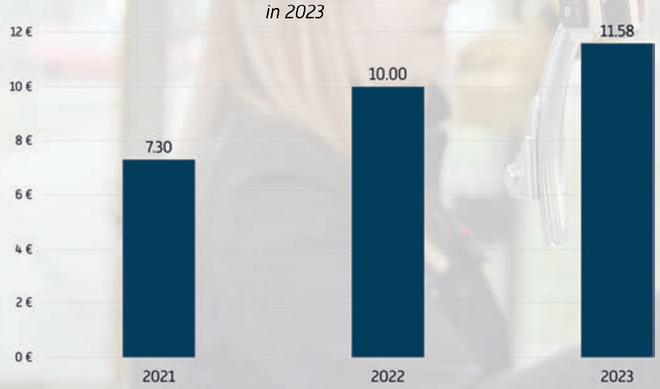
Trier University of Applied Sciences has consistently geared its research profile towards sustainability and focuses on three key research areas: Sustainability, digitalisation and health. In this context, the first cross-campus research days dedicated entirely to these profile topics were held in 2023



Allocation of third-party funds at Trier University of Applied Sciences in 2023



Allocation of third-party funds from the year 2023 to the departments at the Environmental Campus



Development of third-party funds for the Environmental Campus in recent years.

Click here for current research projects

Three main research areas

Our institutes at a glance

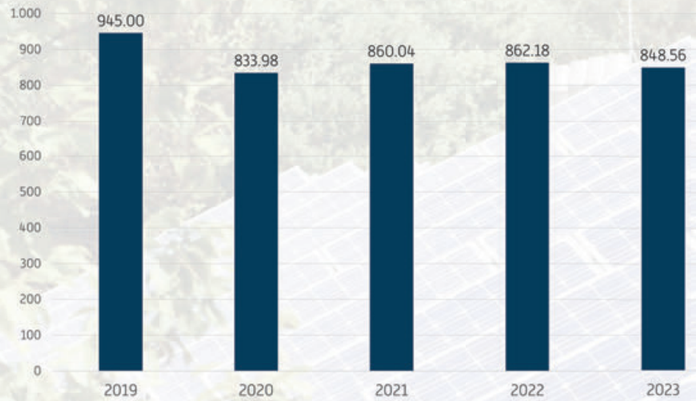
Night of Science
On 15 November 2023, the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld hosted the „Night of Science", during which four professors presented their current research topics in short talks. Prof. Dr. Christian Kammlott presented the „Case Method" as a forward-looking teaching strategy, Prof. Dr. Tim Schönborn spoke about the optimisation of meetings, Prof. Dr. Stefan Diemer about the negotiation of taste in the food industry and Prof. Dr. Fabian Kennel about the future of energy management. The event offered exciting presentations and promoted interdisciplinary dialogue in a relaxed atmosphere.

More information here

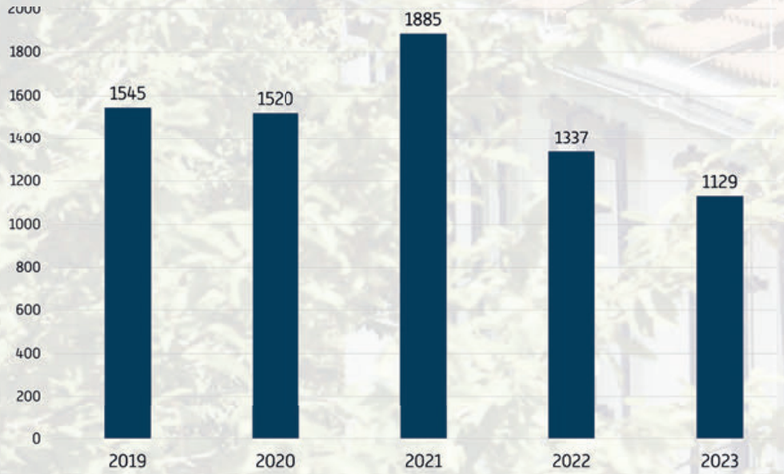
ZERO EMISSION CONCEPT

Energy Supply

A central element of the zero-emission concept is the use of 100% renewable energy from photovoltaics, biomass and solar thermal energy, which is generated locally on campus. The electricity and heat generated are efficiently distributed in an intelligent energy management system. Surpluses from solar energy are stored for night hours and days with little sunshine, while biomass is used for CO_2-neutral heat supply.



Total electricity demand at the Environmental Campus in MWh in the years 2019-2023.



Total heat demand in MWh in the years 2019-2023.

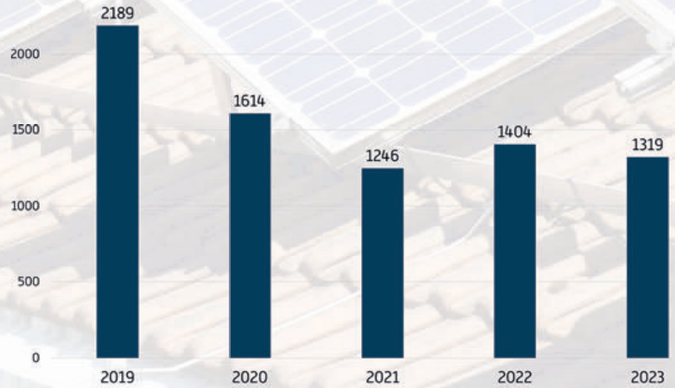
Energy-saving measures

In the winter semester of 2022/2023, the Birkenfeld Environmental Campus implemented strict energy-saving measures in light of the "Ordinance on short-term measures to secure the energy supply". The background to this regulation was the energy crisis triggered by the war in Ukraine, which highlighted the need to reduce energy consumption and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. These challenges led to a key measure being the lowering of room temperatures in the offices to a maximum of 19 °C during the heating period. This adjustment was part of a comprehensive energy-saving plan aimed at reducing the average energy consumption of the last five years by 15%.

To further support these savings, targeted closing times were introduced in the university buildings, during which teaching continued digitally and employees were able to work remotely. These measures helped to significantly reduce energy consumption and maintain operations even under restricted conditions.

Water supply

A system for monitoring water consumption was installed at the Birkenfeld Environmental Campus in 2023, making an important contribution to the sustainable use of water resources. Special software in the building management system (BMS) measures water consumption in all buildings in real time and sends an alarm to the on-call service around the clock if a set limit value is exceeded. This allows potential leaks or technical defects to be quickly recognised and rectified. The system has already contributed to noticeable water savings and the prevention of leaks.



Fresh water consumption in m³ in the years 2019-2023.

Green hydrogen for the Hunsrück Hochwald National Park region

The UCB serves as an incubator for a sustainable hydrogen strategy in the Hunsrück Hochwald National Park region. The project, funded by the National Climate Initiative (NKI), aims to utilise hydrogen as a storage medium for renewable energies and to use it in local public transport. A combination of photovoltaic systems and an electrolysis plant produces green hydrogen, which isused for mobility in the region. The innovative project strengthens sustainable mobility in rural areas and contributes to the UCB's climate-neutral energy supply.

More information here

Comprehensive Report on „Sustainability at Universities in Rhineland-Palatinate" released

The comprehensive report on „Sustainability at Universities in Rhineland-Palatinate", published in September 2023, takes stock of the implementation of sustainability at the state's universities. It highlights best practices and identifies future potential. The study, led by Prof. Dr. Klaus Helling from the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld, was commissioned by the Ministry of Science and Health. Over 100 interviews were conducted with university stakeholders, supported by IfaS staff and Master's students.

The central finding of the study is the need for a holistic sustainability strategy for all universities that includes teaching, research, operations, governance and transfer. Challenges such as the goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2030 require comprehensive support. The report also emphasises the importance of networking and cooperation between universities and the integration of sustainability topics into all degree programmes.

Course „klimafit – climate change on your doorstep! What can I do?"

Translated from German: „Act fast. Stop climate change."

The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld supports social commitment to climate protection in the region through initiatives such as the klimafit courses. In cooperation with WWF Germany and the Helmholtz Association REKLIM, citizens are trained at adult education centres in Rhineland-Palatinate and Saarland on how they can combat climate change locally. Over the course of six evenings, participants learn about the effects of climate change on their cities and communities and receive practical tips for climate-friendly behaviour in everyday life. Successful course graduates are honoured as multipliers for municipal climate protection. This year, the course is being coordinated by Stefanie Erbach from IfaS, with a higher number of participants: 232 in 2023 compared to 126 in 2022.

Inauguration of the concert hall at the UCB

The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld (UCB) is committed not only to ecological sustainability but also to cultural and social initiatives. A shining example of this dedication was the inauguration of a new concert hall, funded entirely through donations. The musical tribute evening featured performances by over 20 artists and students, ranging in age from 7 to 82, and captivated more than 150 guests with a diverse musical program. The repertoire included everything from Chopin waltzes to Brazilian shepherd flutes and original compositions. A standout moment of the evening was the performance by young pianist Johann Berend, whose virtuosity left the audience in awe. This cultural event deepened the bond between the university, its students, and the local community, underscoring UCB's commitment to social responsibility.

Kids' Uni – for the 13th time with the Rhineland-Palatinate Chemical Association!

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Green Office

Since 2017, the Green Office has been a central element of the sustainability strategy at the Umwelt-Campus Birkenfeld. Founded and run by students, it regularly organises events such as vegan breakfasts, clothing swap parties and the annual Sustainability Week. With campaigns such as food sharing and the „Cleanup Day", the Green Office aims to spread consciousness about sustainable consumption and environmental protection on campus. Through its work, it encourages the active participation of students in the sustainability goals of the campus.

Translated from German: „Green Office Events".

International Students' Office (ISO)

The ISO provides comprehensive support to help international students settle into life and studies in Germany. Through a variety of intercultural and social activities, including „Café International", tandem language partnerships, and roundtable discussions, the International Students' Office fosters meaningful connections and promotes exchange between international and local students.

AStA

The General Students' Committee (AStA) represents the interests of students and promotes campus life through university political, social and cultural events. Activities include managing sports activities, organising events and supporting projects such as the Repair Café and the campus garden.

Student Councils

The Student Councils of both departments regularly organise events such as semester parties and sports tournaments. They lend out old exams, lab coats, calculators and community games etc. and work closely with the AStA and Green Office.

Translated from German: „ 21.04. Semester Opening Party, 01.05 May Hike, 04.05 Barbecue Party, 06.05 Flea Market, 11.05 Soccer Tournament, 24.05 Beer Pong Tournament, 07.06 Wine Festival, 09.06 After-Exam Party, 17.06 Student Committees' Competition, 20&21.06 University Elections, 22.06 Night of the Basses, 15.07 Semester Closing Party".

EQUALITY AND HEALTH PROMOTION

The UCB is actively committed to equal opportunities and health promotion. The Equal Opportunities Office supports the compatibility of family, studies and work. In 2023, a new action plan for the family-friendly university was introduced, which contains targeted measures to promote an inclusive and family-friendly university culture. In addition, regular sports programmes are offered by employees for employees as well as health promotion workshops to improve well-being on campus.

PARTNERSHIPS

The Environmental Campus Birkenfeld fosters diverse partnerships to advance knowledge exchange and sustainable development. Working with regional, national, and international collaborators, the campus develops practical solutions for ecological and social challenges. Key partners include universities, research institutions, and companies that contribute to innovative projects in areas such as the circular economy, education for sustainable development, and renewable energies. The campus collaborates with over 80 partner universities worldwide, spanning Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas. These partnerships facilitate knowledge and cultural exchange, offering students and staff valuable opportunities for international experience and global networking. Additionally, UCB actively works with local authorities and civil society to jointly pursue sustainability goals and support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

In 2023, the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld at Trier University of Applied Sciences has applied for membership of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN). The SDSN supports practical solutions from science, civil society and business to promote sustainable development at local, regional, national and global level.

The network focuses on core issues of sustainable development through thematic groups, addressing topics such as responsible resource use, agriculture, climate and energy, sustainable urban development, and health. With over 1,800 institutions from academia and practice across more than 145 countries, the SDSN pools its expertise to support the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Thanks to its many years of expertise in the field of sustainable development, the Environmental Campus Birkenfeld has fulfilled the requirements for a successful application and is endeavouring to make a further contribution to the implementation of the global sustainability goals through memberships with several partners.

PUBLISHER

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