

How to play

Goal: Getting to know each other and their perspectives.

Needs: The WIA-cards (sorted per category/ colour), pen and paper, the role cards

6. You have discussed cards from every aspect of the Whole Institution Approach. Some

conversation might have been more interesting than others. Vote with

each other for which conversation (card-colour) was most interesting.

7. Take the card-set that you, collectively, voted as 'most interesting' and give every player 1 card from the pile.

The Potential to change –

Discussing the Whole Institution Approach with your colleagues

The WIA card game consists of 36 cards with questions in several categories attributed to the Whole Institution Approach (WIA).

Furthermore, the game includes several 'Role' cards as well as a 'Moderator' card and a 'How to play the game' card.

Let's start

1. The moderator starts by choosing a card from his/ her set and reads the question out loud to the group.

2. The group takes 3 minutes to formulate an answer to the posed question. The moderator takes notes of the conversation and keeps an eye out for time.

3. After 3 minutes have passed, the moderator summarizes the answer to the question.

Preparations

1. Appoint a moderator and provide this player with the 'moderator' card.
2. Provide every player (except the Moderator) with a role card. This can be random or players may choose one for themselves or each other.
3. Provide every player, including the moderator, with a set of playing card. (one set of six same-coloured cards)

8. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 with the single-coloured cards.

9. After both rounds of conversation, take a look at your notes. Based on these notes, determine which concrete step can be taken in the next week, month and year. This will later serve as a first guide for the integration process of WIA.

Number of players:

The game is best played with 3 – 6 players. If there are more players, we advise you to create subgroups and divide the card games so that every subgroup has several cards per category.

Duration: 60 minutes. However, it might take longer depending on the results you want to extract of the conversation.

4. Everyone indicates whether (s)he agrees or not. If everyone is in agreement move to step 5. If not, take another 3 minutes to resolve the disagreement.

5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 for every card-colour. When every card-colour has been discussed once, move to step 6.

Vision

Vision

Vision

Vision

Vision

Vision

Vision

Vision

**How sustainable is
our current vision?**

**What contribution do we
want our education to make
to a sustainable society?**

**In what way does the
current vision motivate you
to take action?**

**How is the current vision
reflected in your everyday
work?**

**How do we involve our
students and colleagues in
shaping our vision?**

**How do we ensure a living
vision that everyone
participates in?**

**In what ways is sustainable
leadership present within
the institution?**

**Community and
Connections**

**Community and
Connections**

**Community and
Connections**

**Community and
Connections**

**Community and
Connections**

**Community and
Connections**

**Community and
Connections**

**Community and
Connections**

What does our network look like, and how does it strengthen our education?

What can we and our students offer to our network, and vice versa?

How do teachers and students make use of local knowledge and expertise?

Is there local knowledge and expertise that teachers and students can draw on?

How can we ensure the school is easily approachable for local companies and organisations?

How do we provide young people with regular opportunities to experience and explore the school's surroundings?

How do we ensure that going outside becomes a structural part of our approach?

**Professional
Development**

**Professional
Development**

**Professional
Development**

**Professional
Development**

**Professional
Development**

**Professional
Development**

**Professional
Development**

**Professional
Development**

What knowledge, skills and talents do we already have in-house?

How do we seek out new knowledge, skills and talents?

How can we strengthen one another professionally in the context of sustainable development?

Are we up to date with sustainable developments within our subject areas?

How do we, as a team, discuss societal developments and their impact on education?

How do we structurally create space as a team to talk about what matters to young people and what the world asks of them?

**Building and
Operations**

**Building and
Operations**

**Building and
Operations**

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Operations**

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Operations**

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Operations**

**Building and
Operations**

**Building and
Operations**

In which ways are sustainability already being addressed in our buildings and operations?

How do we communicate our efforts to students, (new) colleagues and visitors?

What opportunities do our buildings and operations offer for links with education?

How do we involve students and staff in making the buildings and operations more sustainable?

How does the campus contribute to education?

What role does the building play in the local community?

Learning and
Development

Learning and
Development

Learning and
Development

Learning and
Development

Learning and
Development

Learning and
Development

Learning and
Development

Learning and
Development

What forms of pedagogy do we use when teaching about sustainability?

How often are there projects with students in the immediate living environment of the institution?

How do we create space for students to discover the contributions they can and want to make to a sustainable world?

Which questions arising from operations can we link to the curriculum?

How is our vision reflected in the curriculum?

How can we enhance collaboration between different subjects?

Doing Research

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Doing Research

Vision:

How is our institutional vision reflected in the research we conduct?

Vision:

How can the results of our research help shape and strengthen our vision?

Professional Development:
How can research projects help us develop and share sustainability expertise within our university?

Professional Development:
In what ways can students and staff build research skills to address complex sustainability challenges?

Community and Connections:
How do we involve community partners in defining and carrying out our research?

Community and Connections:
How can we make our research results accessible and useful for the communities we serve?

Building and Operations:
How can our campus facilities and operations be used as a living lab for sustainability research?

Building and Operations:
What operational challenges on campus can become research opportunities?

Doing Research

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Doing Research

Learning:

How do we integrate research into teaching so students contribute to sustainability knowledge?

Learning:

In what ways can research promote interdisciplinary learning and collaboration?

Overall - cross cutting:

How do we ensure our research addresses connections between environmental, social, and economic sustainability?

Overall - cross cutting:

How can research help connect our vision, operations, learning, community engagement, and professional growth?

Role card

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Role card

Role card

Role card

Vice-Rector for Education

- enthusiastic about embedding sustainability across curricula
- reads about innovative teaching methods in sustainability journals
- gets impatient with slow progress
- values student engagement but worries about overloading faculty
- has a strong theoretical understanding, less hands-on experience

Facilities Director

- cares about efficient operations and cost-effectiveness
- views sustainability mainly as energy savings and maintenance efficiency
- enjoys data-driven decisions but finds student activism disruptive
- has solid technical knowledge of infrastructure but little patience for “idealistic” goals

First-Year Student

- curious but easily overwhelmed by university bureaucracy
- knows climate change is important but unsure where to start
- more interested in meeting people and exploring new opportunities than deep policy debates
- limited knowledge but open to learning quickly

PCommunications Officer

- skilled at crafting inspiring stories, but must manage sensitive messaging
- sees the gap between internal reality and external perception
- believes storytelling can inspire change, but worries about making promises the university can't keep
- has moderate sustainability knowledge, mostly through projects they've promoted

University Rector

- believes in the importance of sustainability but sees it as one priority among many
- values global reputation and academic excellence
- is more comfortable with strategic visions than operational details
- thinks change should be gradual and consensus-based
- has moderate sustainability knowledge, mostly from policy briefs

Vice-Rector for Research

- measures sustainability impact mainly through research publications and grant income
- proud of the university's top-tier research ranking
- sees “applied sustainability” as less prestigious than fundamental research
- has extensive academic knowledge but less interest in operational sustainability
- pragmatic and focused on funding opportunities

Student Union President

- charismatic and outspoken advocate for climate action
- pushes for visible, immediate change on campus
- sometimes clashes with administration over budget priorities
- has high awareness of social aspects of sustainability and sees it as inseparable from environmental action

Professor in Environmental Sciences

- deeply committed to sustainability in research and teaching
- impatient with institutional inertia and “greenwashing”
- insists on evidence-based action and high academic standards
- has expert knowledge but can be perceived as overly critical

Role card

Role card

Role card

Role card

Role card

Role card

Role card

Role card

Sustainability Coordinator

- energetic and resourceful networker, often juggling multiple projects
- believes in integrating sustainability into every aspect of university life
- frustrated by slow decision-making and competing priorities
- has strong applied and strategic sustainability knowledge

International Exchange Student

- compares sustainability approaches between home and host universities
- open-minded, curious, and asks critical questions about “why we do things this way”
- limited knowledge of local systems but brings fresh perspectives

Corporate Research Partner

- results-driven and focused on applied outcomes
- values innovation but prioritises return on investment
- has selective interest in sustainability — supports it if it aligns with business goals

Alumni Representative

- nostalgic and proud of their alma mater
- advocates for sustainability as part of the university's prestige
- limited technical knowledge but strong influence in fundraising and networking

Dean of Faculty

- pragmatic and focused on staff wellbeing and academic standards
- supports sustainability but resists initiatives that disrupt research or teaching schedules
- understands the concept but prioritises disciplinary autonomy over central directives

PhD Candidate in Renewable Energy

- passionate about research with real-world impact
- eager to collaborate across disciplines, but finds silos frustrating
- knows the science in depth but has limited understanding of institutional politics

Local Government Liaison

- politically savvy and focused on mutually beneficial projects
- sees the university as a key player in achieving city sustainability targets
- has practical sustainability knowledge but expects quick results

Campus Operations Manager

- focused on day-to-day efficiency and safety
- open to sustainability projects if they save money or improve service
- has strong operational knowledge but limited awareness of broader sustainability strategy