

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Workshop: University Sustainability Governance in Times of Transformation and Vibe Shifts



Organized by Andreas Wanke and Katrin Schweigel (Freie Universität Berlin)

New Deadline for submission: June 10, 2026

As higher education institutions are increasingly faced with sustainability challenges, the question of how to truly implement sustainability—beyond individual projects or policy commitments—has become central. In this interactive workshop, participants will explore different governance models' universities developed to embed sustainability. We will discuss the outcomes of various governance structures, strategic alignment, and practical implementation—balancing transformative change with the heterogenous realities of institutional culture and stakeholder engagement.

Structured in three sessions, the workshop invites participants to reflect on their own institutional contexts and to exchange practical methods and insights with peers.

Session 1: Governance Frameworks – From Policy to Practice

Focus: Institutional structures, leadership, and decision-making for sustainability

- **Key Questions:**
 - How can universities design governance models that integrate sustainability into core operations?
 - What roles do leadership, sustainability offices, committees, participatory offers, communication and cross-departmental collaboration play?

Session 2: Strategic Alignment – Embedding Sustainability in Mission and Operations

Focus: Curriculum, research, campus operations, audits and community engagement

- **Key Questions:**
 - How can sustainability be embedded in strategy, teaching, research, and campus life?
 - What are the challenges and opportunities in aligning sustainability with heterogenous institutional missions and values as well as professional standards?

Session 3: Implementation & Culture – From Vibe Shifts to Transformation

Focus: Change management, stakeholder engagement, and measuring impact

- **Key Questions:**
 - How can universities foster a culture of sustainability among students, faculty, and staff?
 - What tools and metrics can track progress and ensure accountability?

By combining conceptual grounding with practical exercises, case studies, and cooperative dialog, participants will leave the workshop with a clearer understanding of how to identify leverage points for good sustainability governance within their institutions. The workshop aims to equip university leaders and sustainability professionals with actionable strategies for building inclusive, accountable, and future-oriented universities withstanding dynamic vibe-shifts.

Call for Contributions

We invite presentations of up to 15 minutes that address concepts or provide good practice examples of aspects raised in the key questions in all three sessions. We are much looking forward to bringing together representatives from international universities working in sustainability governance, strategy, and implementation in all areas of Higher Education.

Please, submit your abstracts (250-900 words) until **June 10** via our **registration platform Conftool**.

All selected contributors will be informed by June 22.

The workshop will be part of the Sustainability in Higher Education Conference “Between Transformation and Vibe Shifts”. For more information on the conference please visit: <https://www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/higher-ed-sustainability-conf>.

For further information on the workshop please contact Katrin Schweigel: Katrin.schweigel@fu-berlin.de

For general information on the overall conference and registration process please contact conference manager Moritz Zöllner: events@nachhaltigkeit.fu-berlin.de

Publication Opportunity: Editorial volume

Selected contributions from the conference will be published in an edited volume. The publication is aimed at authors from academia and university administration as well as transfer partners working on sustainability projects in or with higher education. It is intended to serve as a catalyst for the dynamic further development and international networking of sustainability initiatives.

For further information please see the [website](#) or contact editorial volume lead Prof. Dr. Daniela Niesta-Kayser.