The
Good
Guide

To **Creative Practice** for Students

hey everyone

Welcome to our Student Guide for Sustainable, Ethical and Inclusive Creative Practice, also known as **The Good Guide**!

This guide is made by students like us, for students like us. It's all about helping you dive into sustainable and inclusive principles over the course of your studies in creative art, design, media and technologies.

We want to empower you with the basics and point you towards a bank of resources that can help you get a grip on:

— **sustainability**
— **equality, diversity & inclusion (aka EDI)**
— **tech for good**

Our goal as a student community is simple: to do our best not to harm people or the planet in our creative work.

By keeping our eyes on the planet, on people, and using technology for good, we can make a real difference through our projects.
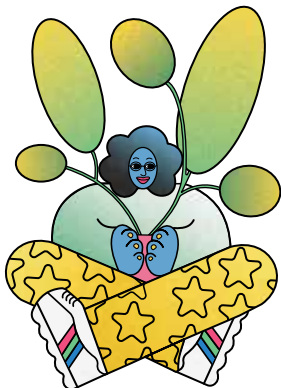
to learn more

Access a digital version of the guide, our research report and links to online resources:

alright

Before we start, keep in mind that you have got some real power in your hands. Every decision you make, every project you take on, it all adds up to something bigger happening out there in the world.

Introduction

Okay, so wrapping our heads around terms and concepts such as sustainability, EDI, and tech for good can be pretty overwhelming, right? There is a ton of information out there, but don't worry, we're here to help break it down for you.

The Good Guide will give you clear recommendations, along with references and resources to get you started.

And if you're up for more, we've got you covered with even more useful links and a full report of the research that brought us here.
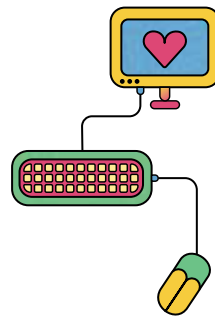
On the back of the guide, we have included a bunch of key terms and a little glossary to help you out as you explore and learn more.
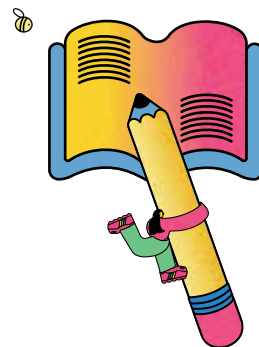
At the start of your projects, it's important to think about your goals. How can your work inspire positive behaviours and help build a sustainable future?

for example

If you're designing packaging, think about ways to promote recycling and reduce environmental impact.

Consider where your materials come from and look out for eco-conscious suppliers that share your values and beliefs.

Check out if companies and organisations are members of B-Corp or FSC (see glossary). This is a good place to start.
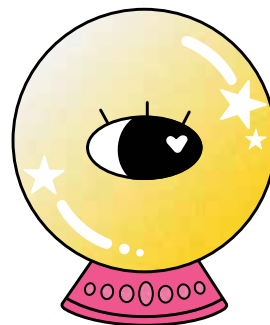
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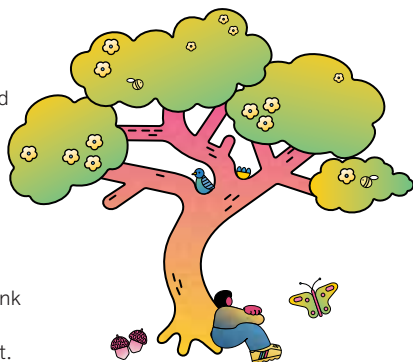
Purpose & Message

Let's think about the impact of our creative work. Does it encourage positive actions, both environmentally and socially? And are you sending the right message in the right way?

Remember, shifting the topic, message or theme of your project towards positivity can make a big impact. Celebrate success and highlight positive changes in your work!

Consider if your work itself can promote or provoke positive climate action and behaviour.
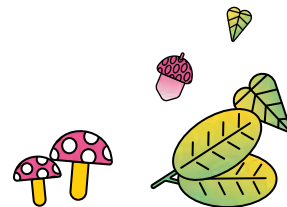
Materials, Processes & Resources

When it comes to materials, every choice matters. From paper to fabric to energy use, be mindful of your resources and their impact on the planet.

Choose recycled stocks where possible, and products without harmful chemicals. Read the labels to check before you purchase.

Don't forget to think about the entire lifecycle of your work and projects, from production to disposal.

Be mindful of waste and that you dispose of unwanted or excess materials responsibly. You can store them for reuse in another project or pass them on to others.

Consider what happens at the end of a project and to the materials used in it. Can you design, create and make work that is long-term, easily fixed and updated?

People

Let's talk about the people you're creating for. You want your work to be **accessible** and **inclusive** to everyone, right?

Create a **checklist** for yourself to make sure your projects consider the needs of all kinds of people. Think about how your work affects users, audiences and the environment. Share your checklist with your classmates and teammates.

also

It's never too early to start setting some ground rules for yourself, especially if you're just starting college. These are called **values**, things that are important to you, that you believe in.

The Good Guide promotes positive and ethical approaches in our creative process. You might decide not to work in industries that you don't agree with, for example, gambling or animal exploitation.

It is worth doing research on companies and organisations that you have the opportunity to work with and for, to see if they share your values.

Ethics in Creative Practice

Here's the deal: our creations don't just impact the audience or end-user, they affect the world around us too. Let's keep our focus on the well-being of both people and nature. You can call this a **life-centric approach**.

Don't forget to embrace **inclusive design** practices, making sure everyone can access and enjoy your work.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

Diversity makes our creative teams stronger. So, let's seek out perspectives from all walks of life - different backgrounds, cultures, generations, etc.

When it comes to showing and representing diverse cultures and people in our work, let's do it right by being mindful of where our imagery comes from and avoiding appropriation.

Tech for Good

Now, let's talk tech. It's a big part of creative practice, so use it responsibly. That means making sure your online and tech applications are **accessible to everyone** and don't exclude anyone.

Try to consider all the types of interaction you are promoting with technology in the context of users' well-being. Balance is key, so keep an eye on the **screen time**.

Data Centre Sustainability

Cloud computing might seem like magic, but it has an environmental footprint too. Be mindful of your energy consumption and practice good file hygiene to reduce the impact on the planet. Back-up your work, but delete any duplicates of files, photos and emails that you don't need.
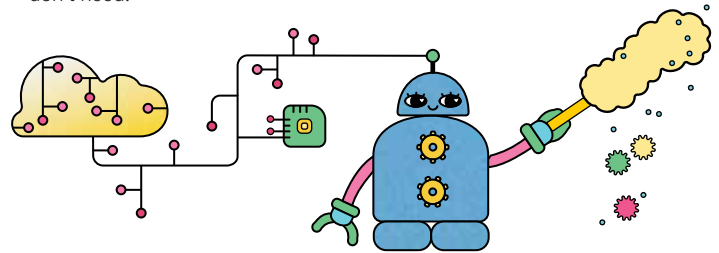
E-Waste Management

When it's time to say goodbye to your old electronic devices, do it responsibly. Recycling and proper disposal are key to keeping our planet healthy. Old electronics contain many precious materials that can be used again, so don't let them sit in a drawer or a landfill.

Data Protection & Ethical Conduct

When it comes to data, less is often more. Only collect what you need for your projects and make sure you are transparent and accountable in how you handle data. Be sure to observe the rules in the data protection and ethics policies which you will find on the college website.

Online & Offline Interactions

We all love being connected but don't forget about the real world too. Designing for balance between online and offline interactions is important for mental health and well-being. Consider the use of real world media for communication and interactions too.

If possible include screen time awareness in interfaces for example.

AI Integration & Learning

AI is pretty cool, but make sure you're using it responsibly. It should enhance your capabilities, not replace them. You are the one with the critical and creative brain!

Always be transparent and truthful if you use AI. Let your classmates, lecturers and users know if they are interacting with AI-generated content or projects. Be sure to read the college AI policy.

Key Terms

Here's a quick rundown of the key terms used in **The Good Guide**.

Planet-centred
Thinking about how our work affects the planet.

Human-centred
Putting people at the heart of our designs.

Life-centred
Considering the well-being of all living things, that's what we aim for.

Ethical Practice
Doing the right thing in our creative practice so we don't cause harm to either people or the planet.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI)
Making sure everyone feels welcome and represented.

Sustainability
Taking care of the planet for future generations.

Tech for good
Using technology to make positive change.

Creative Practice
Putting our creative skills to work in the things we make.
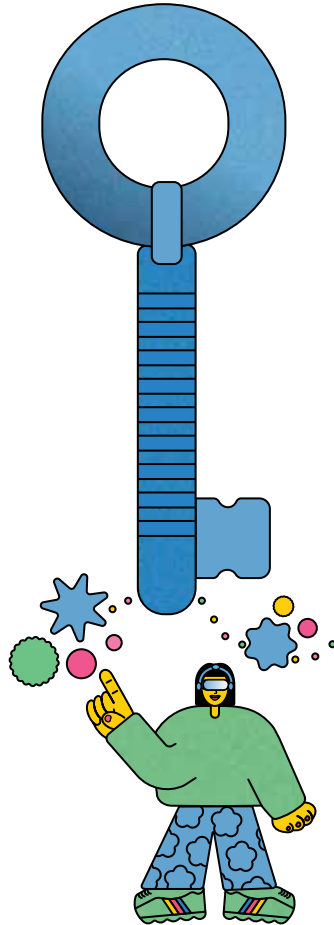
Glossary

Anthropocene is basically the era we're living in right now, where humans have a big impact on the Earth's ecosystems and climate.

B-Corp Certification is a stamp of approval given to companies, that apart from profit, also prioritise environmental and social impact.

Biosphere is all the places on Earth where living things, like plants and animals, can be found - from the air we breathe to the oceans and land.

Carbon is an element found in living things and fossil fuels. When we burn fossil fuels, it releases carbon dioxide, which stays in the atmosphere and is considered one of the biggest causes of global warming.

Carbon Calculator is a tool that tells you how much carbon dioxide you're producing from things like driving or using electricity.

Circular Design concerns designing things in a way that they can be used over and over again without having to throw them away.

Circular Economy keeps products and materials in circulation through repair, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting.

Climate Change is the result of factors like pollution and deforestation to the Earth's climate producing adverse longterm affects and extreme weather.

Climate Justice is about making sure that everyone is treated fairly when it comes to dealing with climate change, especially those who are most affected by it.

COP (Conference of the Parties) is an international meeting organised by the United Nations (UN) where countries get together to talk about how to deal with climate change. They make agreements and commitments to help.

Critical Optimism is a way of looking at the world, that combines realistic awareness of the issues that cause problems, with belief in the capacity to find and build solutions.

Degrowth questions global capitalism and its pursuit of growth at all costs, in favour of shrinking rather than growing economies, in order to use less resources.

Eco-centric Design is about designing things with nature in mind, so we're not just thinking about what's best for humans, but also what's good for the planet.

Ecocene is a cool idea for the future where the Earth's ecosystems are doing really well because we've learned to take care of them better.

Ecological Design is a way of designing that works well with nature and doesn't harm the environment.

Ecology is the study of how living things interact with each other and their environment.

Emissions are gases or particles that get released into the air, usually from things like cars or factories, and can cause pollution.

FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) is an international non-profit organisation that sets standards for the responsible management of forests.

Futures Thinking is recognised by UNESCO as thinking ahead and imagining a positive, ethical future for all so we can make better decisions now.

GDPR is the General Data Protection Regulation passed by the European Union (EU) and put into effect as legislation in 2018. Any organisations that target or collect data related to people in the EU must abide by this privacy and security law.

GenAI refers to artificial intelligence tools that can create content, text images etc., using machine learning patterns across massive datasets.

Holocene is the time period where the Earth's climate has been pretty stable, making it a good time for humans to build civilisations.

Inclusive Design tries to ensure products, services, environments and systesms are usable for as many people as possible, particularly groups who are traditionally excluded.

Paris Agreement is a 2015 agreement between countries to cooperate to reduce greenhouse gases and slow down climate change.

Planetary Boundaries describe limits where the negative impact of human activities on the Earth system may go beyond repair and the earth is no longer able to self-regulate or regenerate.

Pluriverse advocates for the co-existence of many forms of life and knowing. It challenges the notion of a universe dominated by Western capitalism, modernity and colonialism.

Regenerative is about doing things that help the environment to heal and to thrive again, like planting trees or cleaning up pollution.

Right to Repair is the idea that people should be able to fix their own stuff instead of having to throw it away and buy new things all the time.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are goals that countries around the world are working towards to make life better for everyone without hurting the planet.

Speculative Design is a design practice that imagines what the future could be like and uses design to explore different possibilities.

Transition Design is a way of using design to help society change for the better, especially when it comes to things like the environment and social issues.

Universal Design is another design theory, this one stands for designing things so that everyone, no matter their abilities or disabilities, can use them easily.
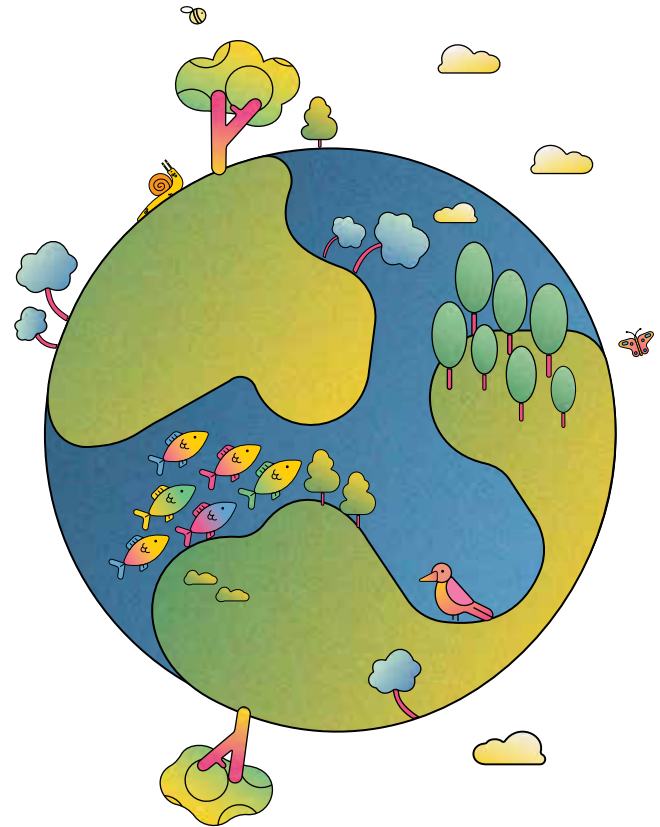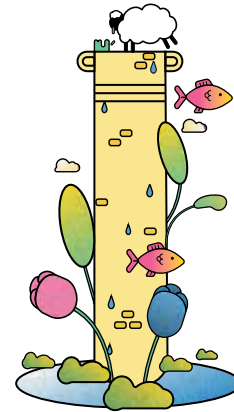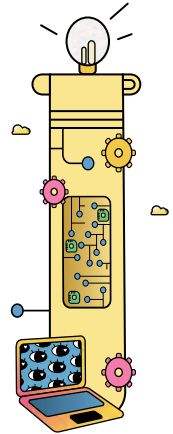
Notes

Reflect on what values matters most to you. Write a personavl checklist for your projects.

People

Planet

Tech

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Art, Design +
Technology
Dún Laoghaire**
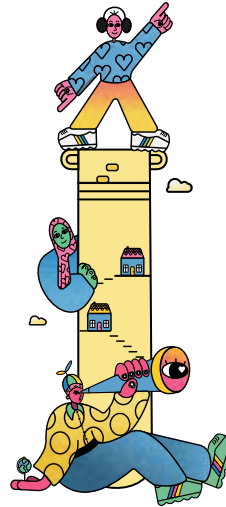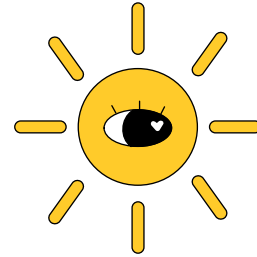
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