

Empowering HEIs for Sustainability - How can online tools and resources be designed to effectively address the diverse needs of HEIs in their pursuit of sustainability?

# HINCKS CENTRE for Entrepreneurship Excellence

# What's the problem we are addressing? Why is it important?

The European Union's focus for a "Green Transition," involves key stakeholders in education. A key part of this transition is Green Education and Training, aimed at equipping individuals and institutions with the knowledge, skills and tools needed to contribute to this shift.

A lack of accessible and comprehensive online resources for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) across the EU to effectively implement the EU's Green Transition and **Green Education and Training priorities** exists. The GET-AHED Erasmus+ project centralised, user-friendly platform to guide students, staff and management in HEIs on the transition.



# Working across disciplines - Interdisciplinary Considerations

This project sees policy makers, government, IT professionals, researchers, national training agencies and engineers from across Europe come together to support the transition for **students**, **staff and management** in HEIs. The solutions were based on a survey evaluating knowledge, attitudes, challenges and confidence levels relating to the green transition.

In the future, the resources in this project could also support organisations as **CSRD** and **ESRS** are setting new benchmarks (corporates) for **sustainability reporting** across Europe

#### How our research generates IMPACT

The impact is tied to the growing urgency of the **climate crisis** and the EU's commitment to the Green Transition. There is a clear and pressing need for support and resources to enable HEIs to effectively implement **sustainability practices**. GET-AHED has the potential to make a significant contribution to achieving EU sustainability goals and fostering a more sustainable future. The involvement of EU ministries and HEI representative bodies further strengthens the project's potential for widespread adoption and lasting impact.

## **Authors: Hincks Research Team**

### What is our approach to solving the problem?

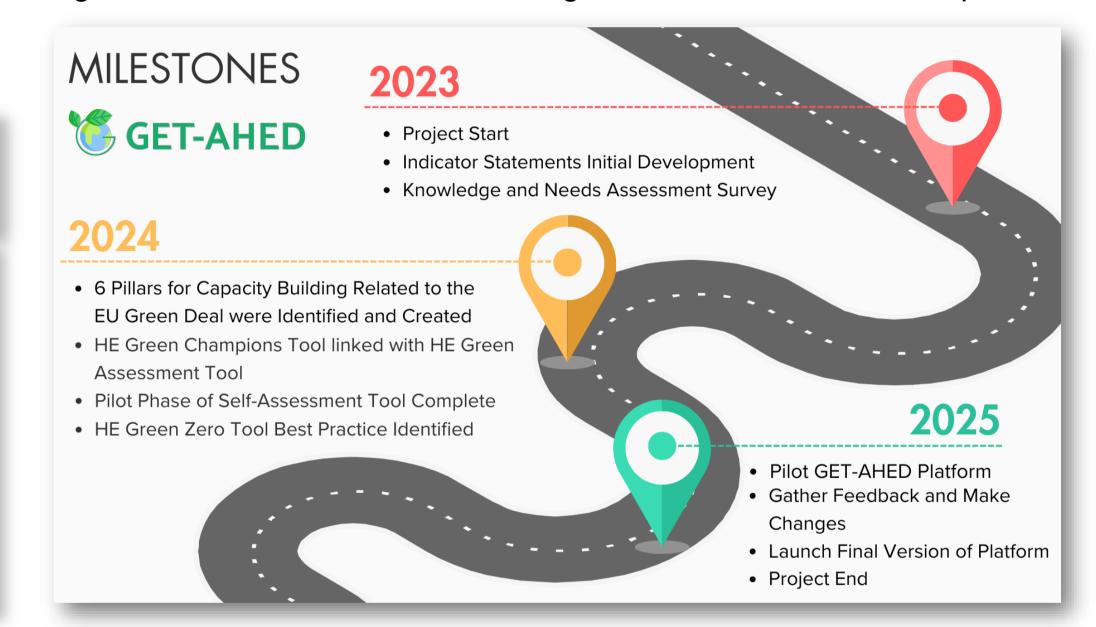
GET-AHED has three main tools on the platform:

- 1. A self-assessment tool: Delivers actionable insights into sustainability performance, highlighting areas for improvement and linking management to helpful resources
- 2. A training system: Provides accessible sustainability education for the entire university community, with specialised content for leaders, staff, and students
- 3. An energy-focused tool: This helps universities reduce their energy use and move towards using clean energy sources, with the ultimate goal of net-zero energy campuses

### **Project Team and Key Collaborators**

The GET-AHED project funded by Erasmus+ provides solutions to issues that span across the 5 primary topics that appear in the "Creating our Future" report which outlines a repository of "high level problems" identified by the Irish public.

The full GET-AHED consortium consists of 5 Universities, 1 Research Organisation, 1 HEI Association, 2 Government Ministries, 2 National Agencies, Students, Staff and Management in HEIs across Europe.



# **GET-AHED Platform**



### Results / Achievements to date

- The **indicator statements** that form the HE Green Assessment tool (WP2) are finalised in the aftermath of the pilot testing. The consortium concentrated its efforts on analysing and consolidating the feedback of 32 pilot institutions and derived a final set of 40 refined indicators (from originally 130)
- The HE Green Champion tool **training materials** (WP3) are ready, covering all six **EU Green Deal pillars** and incorporating insights from the knowledge and needs assessment survey
- Good practices derived for the HE Green Zero tool (WP4) have been evaluated by external stakeholders
- WP2 indicators and WP3 training resource material have been **mapped**, promoting seamless interlinkages across tools
- The design and functions of the platform (WP5) has been agreed upon and is being prepped for piloting
- Presented project and findings at EAIR conference, Cork, 2024 and project published on the OECD P.L.A.C.E.S website



