



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Focus Sustainability

**focus
sustain
ability**

empowering students
to engage

Co-Presidents Steering Committee: Marina Stone, Benjamin Pierroz
Project Co-Managers: Mégane Schafhirt, Noémie Widmer

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About us

Marina Stone

Marina is a student co-president of the steering committee of Focus Sustainability. She represents the Swiss Association of Student Organisations for Sustainability ([VSN-FDD-FSS](#)).



Benjamin Pierroz

Benjamin is a student co-president of the steering committee of Focus Sustainability. He represents the Swiss Student Union ([VSS-UNES-USU](#)).



Steering committee

Focus Sustainability is guided by: Lara Mogge ([Impact Hub Zurich](#)), Jacopo Grazioli ([Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne](#)), Matthias Herfeldt ([Helvetas](#)), Christian Pohl ([U Change](#)), Andrea Flora Bauer ([University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland FHNW](#)), Markus Wilhelm ([University of Teacher Education Lucerne](#)), Simon Zysset ([WWF Switzerland](#)).

Mégane Schafhirt

Mégane has been a project co-manager at Focus Sustainability since January 2023. She is in charge of the following working areas: Contact person for high education institutions, support platforms and students in the French & Italian speaking parts; Offers for students; Partnerships and network with student organisations; Marketing and communication; Promoting cooperation in Switzerland on the topic of student engagement with sustainability.

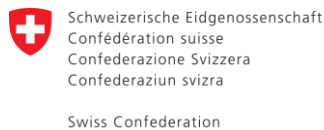
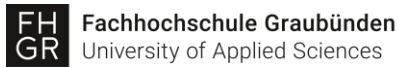


Noémie Widmer

Noémie has been a project co-manager at Focus Sustainability since June 2024. She is in charge of the following working areas: Contact person for higher education institutions, support platforms and students in the German & Italian speaking parts; Offers for students; Partnerships and network with higher education institutions and organisations from society; Fundraising; Promoting cooperation in Switzerland on the topic of student engagement with sustainability.

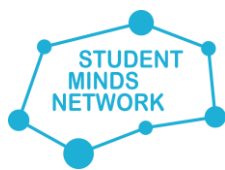


Higher Education Institution and Funding Partners



Federal Office for the Environment FOEN

Cooperation Partners



PERSPEKTIVEN - STUDIUM
Hochschulzugang in der Schweiz.
Informationen für Geflüchtete.



Conducted Activities

Projects and Activities

In 2024, **Focus Sustainability** made significant strides toward its vision of inspiring and enabling students across Switzerland to engage in sustainability initiatives. The project focused on fostering connections between students, universities, and societal actors to drive the transition towards sustainable campuses and communities.

A major highlight of the year was the introduction of innovative programs like the **START Program**, which targeted students who had not previously engaged in sustainability. Furthermore, the general offers reached full capacity, with 159 registrations and 78 active participants, and received overwhelmingly positive feedback. Alumni were also integrated as coaches, contributing to a growing community of sustainability advocates. Similarly, the **BOOST Program** during the spring helped to make an impact by offering tools and workshops that enhanced sustainability competencies, directly engaging 342 students and indirectly influencing an additional 585 participants. This brought the total reach of the program to 927 students.



Closing event of BOOST programme 2024

The **Knowledge Hub**, an online resource launched in Spring 2024, became a cornerstone of Focus Sustainability's offerings. This platform, expanded further in the fall 2024, provides students with educational materials to support sustainable practices. Its launch was accompanied by a national communication campaign to ensure widespread awareness.

Throughout the year, a variety of workshops and events were conducted, such as the "Ideation Workshop" at BFH and other online sessions, which equipped students with tools and methodologies for sustainability. Despite a "no-show" rate of 20–40%, measures like reminder emails helped improve participation. A key milestone was the **Sustainable University Day** in November 2024, which brought together institutions and societal partners, including the Climate Fresk, to foster interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration.

Communication and collaboration

Focus Sustainability also made notable progress in communication efforts. Social media engagement grew significantly, with a 17% increase in Instagram followers and a 37% rise on LinkedIn. New sections on the website, such as "Engage" and the "Knowledge Hub," improved accessibility and outreach. A small but growing community emerged through WhatsApp groups, providing a platform for students and sustainability advocates to connect and exchange ideas.

Institutional partnerships expanded to include 18 universities, with new additions such as HEP Vaud and Università della Svizzera italiana (USI). Collaboration with societal organisations like WWF and collaboratio Helvetica was strengthened through joint projects, further enhancing the network's impact.

Internally, Focus Sustainability advanced its organisational development. In September 2024, the project was formalised as an independent association, enabling improvements in finance, communication, and HR processes through strategic workshops.

Despite these achievements, challenges persisted, particularly in securing additional funding. Efforts to obtain financial support from foundations and sponsors faced hurdles, with critiques highlighting insufficient innovation in proposals. Nevertheless, the project's core mission—empowering students to drive sustainability—remained unwavering, with strong support from VSS and VSN.

In summary, 2024 marked a year of growth and innovation for Focus Sustainability. Through impactful programs, strengthened collaborations, and a commitment to continuous improvement, the project laid a solid foundation for scaling up its efforts and advancing its vision of a sustainable academic and societal landscape.

Budget and outlook for 2025

The year 2024 should end positively in financial terms. However, 2025 is still not financially secure due to a lack of external support. Applications to foundations failed because the organisation is already too far developed, and these institutions refused support for us for not developing enough completely new projects. The sponsorship concept also did not appear to be successful, nor could Focus Sustainability be integrated as an external partner into the last PgB of other HEI projects. In view of the tight budgets of the higher education institutions and the federal government for sustainability, Focus Sustainability cannot count on full funding from these institutions anymore. As a result, even though the valuable support of foundations and higher education institutions helped us to develop our activities in the past years, this financing today is no longer sufficient to maintain our activities in their current configuration, with two project managers at 80%.

Focus Sustainability can therefore unfortunately not extend its current project phase and is currently entering a restructuring phase in order to develop a new project idea as independent association with a different, sustainable funding model. However, Focus Sustainability can continue to count on the full support of the two associations VSS and VSN for its main mission: to inspire students to become more involved in sustainability remains the centrepiece of the commitment of the supporting associations.

We would like to thank all partner universities and funding partners for their valuable support to date and look forward to continuing our collaboration.

Team Focus Sustainability