



Sustainability and study associations

Motivation and obstacles to moving forward
Green Office

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Research question

RUG is working on 3 pillars of sustainability: **People, Planet, Profit**. Study associations are in the capacity to have an impact on students, society and the environment. How do they contribute to sustainability at the RUG?

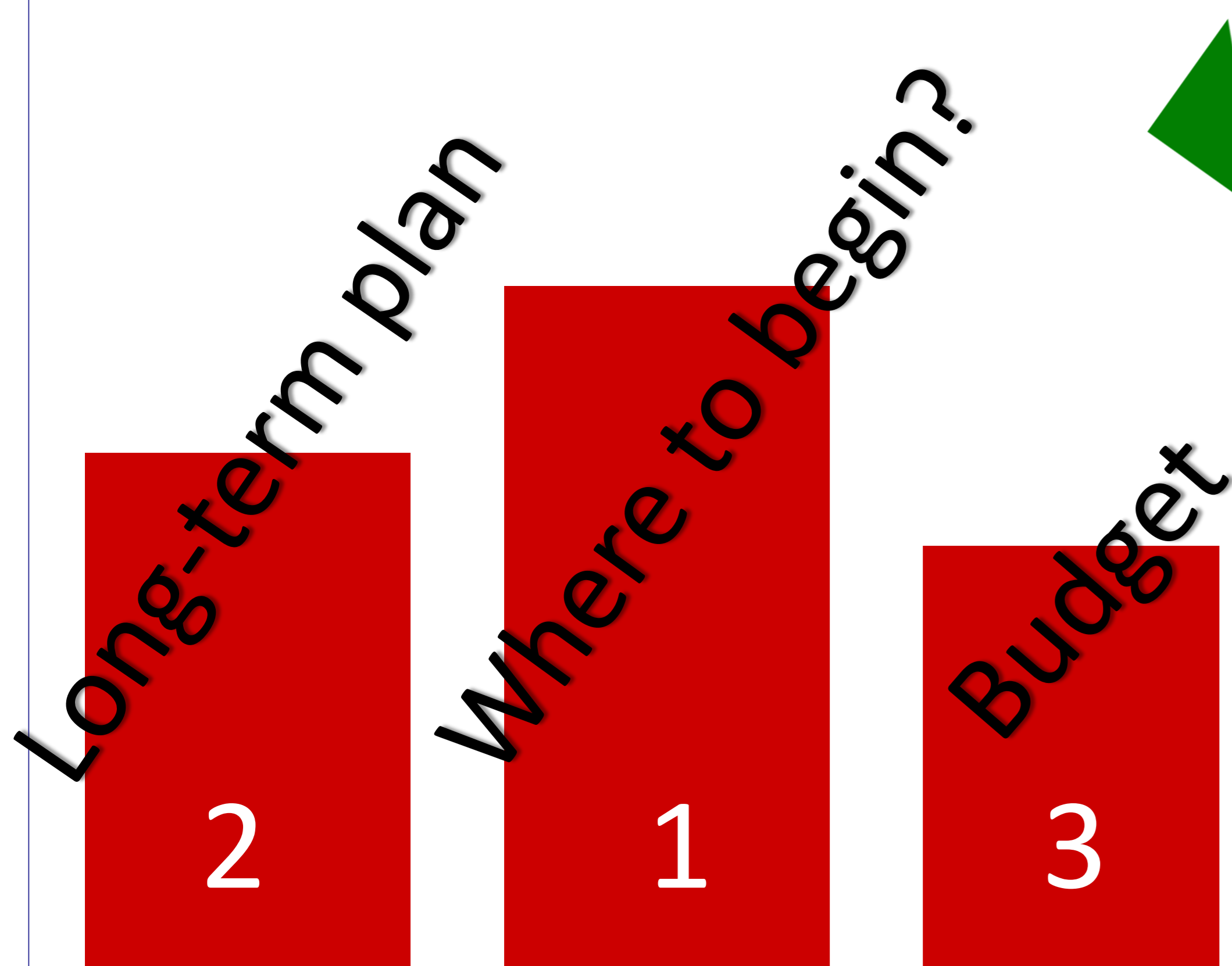
- ❖ How important is sustainability to them at the moment?
- ❖ What helps or keeps them from improving?
- ❖ What do they need in order to improve?

Methods

- Purposive sampling of study associations
- Semi-structured interviews with board members
- Content analysis on their answers



Main obstacles



Results

- ❖ **Achievements** by study associations: (1) Organising events with sustainability themes; (2) Reduced use of single-use plastics and other material in the office; (3) Writing multi-annual strategies on sustainability.
- ❖ The main **obstacles** in improving sustainability: (1) Added costs for implementing sustainable improvements; (2) Difficulty in ensuring long-term incorporation; (3) Not knowing where to start.
- ❖ General **motivation** to work on sustainability: (1) Personal interest/sense of importance for the topic; (2) Professional image towards external parties; (3) Subsidy/extra budget for being sustainable.
- ❖ **Needs** of study associations: (1) 'Minimum effort' protocols/starting point; (2) Help with structural and long-term change; (3) Engaging info on sustainability pillars.

Advice

- Providing a **starting point** for study associations: Which item to tackle first?
- Creating **engaging (video) content** to reach students and board members with the message that sustainability is important
- Use of a **tool to transfer sustainability efforts** to the next board of the association: an attempt designed here

Tool

- Transfer document chapter including:
- ❖ Achievements this year
 - ❖ Knowledge obtained and actions taken
 - ❖ Impact on students and society
 - ❖ Food for thought and lessons learned

Specifically for sustainability in the study association

