

GO Management - University of Jyväskylä



University of Jyväskylä's GO Management - WWF's Green Office case example 2013

The University of Jyväskylä, located in Central Finland, is a relative newcomer to the Green Office network, having obtained the label in the spring of 2013. The University employs 2,700 staff members and approximately 15,000 students, who work in different facilities with an area of 155,000 m².

The University of Jyväskylä had rich soil in which the Green Office could take root. The University offers scientific research and education related to sustainable development, such as corporate environmental management and renewable energy, as well as development and international cooperation. Solar panels installed at the Agora Centre provided demonstration and research opportunities, as did the wind turbine installation across the lake.

In 2010, a target to fulfil the requirements of the Green Office programme was included into the strategy of the University of Jyväskylä. The commitment of top management made it the planning and implementation of the programme easier. The first step for the realisation of the strategy was the nomination of the members of the Green Office team, which was done by the Director of Administration. The team included almost 15 persons with really good and specialised know-how from different organisational units, which helped the planning and implementation process of Green Office.

To begin, an initial environmental review was carried out in order to recognise the most important environmental aspects for the University. Based on the environmental review, the most significant environmental aspects were selected: energy, waste and recycling, procurement, and travel and transport. At the same time, the environmental principles for the university were prepared by the Green Office team, and eventually accepted by the rector. The Environmental Programme includes long-term objectives, short-term targets, and indicators for the most significant environmental aspects as well as 57 tasks in different categories. The Environmental Programme includes long-term objectives, short-term targets, and indicators for the most significant environmental aspects as well as 57 tasks in different categories. For the each task, a person in charge and a timetable for the implementation has been defined.

In addition to implementing the environmental programme, the “Green Office road show” carried out by the Environmental Coordinator travelled around the University to publicise Green Office and environmental issues in general.

“We got really good bunch of people to help with Green Office. It is important to have such contact people across University departments to facilitate integration and communication throughout the University,” says Environmental Coordinator Veli-Heikki Väänttinen about the team. In addition, he appreciates the approach of Green Office: “I think Green Office is a really good system for environmental management. It is important to have a certified system, not only because of our image, but also so that we can honestly say that someone else has audited our operations and activities. Moreover, the relatively light documentation comes within the process that makes the tracking progress easier over time.”

- Veli-Heikki Väänttinen / Environmental Coordinator