



## S4F Statement in Response to Universities' Comments

We commend NUS, SMU, NTU and SUTD for their efforts in developing stronger sustainability action plans and commitments<sup>1</sup>. **However, we would like to highlight that our universities have yet to substantively engage with most of our recommendations, especially those concerning the fossil fuel industry's presence in academia, professional development and the use of our campus spaces.** We believe that addressing our universities' impacts on the climate crisis through these domains is critical to their key functions of research, learning and engagement, as higher educational institutions prepare students for the workforce and conduct leading research on pressing societal issues.

We urge our universities to carefully assess the suitability of their current environmental, social and governance (ESG) benchmarks if they allow investments in companies which threaten a liveable future. At minimum, we believe that good governance should entail our universities disclosing their investments across all asset classes, their investment exclusion and inclusion criteria as well as investment policies.

It is essential that universities not only involve substantial consultation, feedback and input from their various stakeholders, but that such community engagement processes should be transparent and align with a just transition. This creates opportunities for our communities to come together and consider the cost, benefits, and trade offs, as well as identify the resources required to support and implement institutional change. Such action plans must also have clear and measurable goals as well as easily accessible and transparent reporting on progress to be effective. To our knowledge, our universities have yet to extensively engage with students and the broader communities in the development of their existing sustainability commitments.

Beyond these improvements to internal efforts, S4F believes that our universities can create a much larger impact by adopting [the short, medium and long-term recommendations proposed in our report](#). As renowned public institutions, our universities are uniquely positioned to catalyse greater action and momentum by setting necessary and positive precedents in climate action. This is also an opportunity to equip

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<sup>1</sup> [CNA Digital: NUS, NTU and SMU reaffirm commitment to climate action, following report highlighting links between fossil fuel industry and universities](#)  
[Eco-Business: Singapore universities, energy firms respond to student fossil fuel divestment campaign](#)  
[The Straits Times: Undergraduates call on 7 S'pore universities to wean themselves off fossil fuel links](#)  
[TODAY Online: Student coalition urges S'pore universities to cut ties with fossil fuel firms by 2030](#)



**Students for a  
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our youth with knowledge, confidence, and agency to engage actively in systems and processes that directly impact our futures.

**Thus, we reiterate our desire to engage closely with our university leaders, starting with those we propose in the short-term (within 1-2 years).** These include:

- Developing and publishing a timeline for complete divestment from fossil fuels;
- Developing and publishing a plan to secure alternative modes of funding from companies committed to a post-carbon transition towards academic opportunities; and
- Seeking to increase the advertisement of career opportunities centred on sustainable, low-carbon industries.

As we wrap up our campaign, we are heartened to have engaged with a diverse group of people through a series of online and on-campus events. Over the past two weeks, we reached over 25 thousand individuals on our social media pages, hundreds of students through our community booths on three campuses—NUS, NTU, and Yale-NUS—and more than 110 individuals through our two online report presentations, many demonstrating strong interest in and support for the report and recommendations. Our campaign has also reached countless others through our coverage in mainstream media. Through these platforms, as well as face-to-face and online interactions, we received valuable feedback about our report and recommendations.

We strongly believe that it is important to develop longer-term plans now to ensure that the transition from fossil fuels is just, equitable, and inclusive, and that our students and broader communities will not be harmed in the process. We invite interested students, stakeholders, and members of the public who would like to contribute or get involved to reach out to us, as we pivot to supporting student groups working across all five universities to push these recommendations and possibilities forward. We hope that students will also continue to engage in these conversations within and beyond the classroom.

More importantly, we are reaching out to university leaders directly in hopes of further engagement and dialogue. In August 2022, we plan to release a memo to share updates on these engagements and their progress in line with a just transition, as part of our commitment to transparency and accountability to the wider community on these issues that affect us all. We are optimistic that we can work with and alongside our universities to achieve meaningful change, and the time to act is now.