

## Congratulations UCSI University and RCE Kuching! - Winner of the “International Green Gown Awards” 2022

Congratulations!

UCSI University has been selected as the winner of the “International Green Gown Awards”.

The International Green Gown Awards are endorsed by United Nations Environment Programme and are supported by The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU), L’Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), and the International Association of Universities (IAU), which co-hosted the International Green Gown Awards Virtual Ceremony, in association with Allianz GI, as part of the UN High-Level Political Forum on 6 July 2022 at 1300 EST / 1800 BST @ 2.00 am 7 July 2022.

The Green Gown Awards are administered by the EAUC – the Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education and Allianz Global Investors - one of the world’s leading active investment managers.

The Awards also acknowledge RCE Kuching, RCE Kuching Youth Ambassadors, UCSI University, and partnering RCE stakeholders’ good team effort and dedication that led to gaining recognition internationally

The finalist list was announced on 28 April 2022, whereby, there were 56 finalists from 19 countries across the world.

The title of the Green Gown Awards application submission, under the coordination, contributions of inputs, and teamwork support of the RCE Kuching team namely Mdm. Mukvinder Sandhu (RCE Kuching Chairperson), Prof. Dr. Yeong Siew Wei (RCE Kuching Vice-Chairperson), RCE Kuching Fellows - Ms. Dorothy Dzrandimay Desson, Mdm. Agnes Toner, Ms. Genevie Ruran, Mdm. Ting Nyik Eing, and from UCSI Group/RCE Greater KL - Pn. Norani Binti Abu Bakar and Ms. Nurul Fatihah, was Youth Ambassadors – “Our River, Our Life”, under the category of “Student Engagement”, which was submitted on 31/03/2022, reflecting RCE activities ever since it was launched in 2018. The marks were allocated based on the evidence seen on the websites, video, details on the application submitted in relation to the project title, environmental benefits, leadership and engagement, significance for the sector (impact), wider societal benefits, and learner/graduate employer benefits. The video submitted on 22 June 2022, for the award ceremony, with Ms. Dorothy Dzrandimay as the Video Production Advisor, was created & managed by the Video Production Team from RCE Working Committee Group 4 Youth Ambassadors (Mandy Chen Wei Xing (Video Curator & Editor), Reuben Anak Russell Entri, Andrea Le Ta Hoang Nhi) & other youth ambassadors (Lily Pui, Mabel Kua, Tan Ka Yen, Alice Lim, Lois Wong, Jacky Tan, Brian Tiong, Jordan Wee, Wong Lee King, and Wang Han Yu) who supported in the pledges.

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Our application features RCE Kuching Youth Ambassadors as leaders of tomorrow championing SDGs objectives mainly on SDG 4 -Quality Education, SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation, SDG 14 – Life Below Water, and SDG 17 - Partnership for the Goals. RCE Kuching’s main focus of attention is on the river’s conservation along the Sarawak River Kiri, which is the Kuching community’s main water source.

Through our RCE Youth Ambassadors, students in the Kuching urban and rural areas are becoming positive agents of change and creating an impact in leading the social change process towards the incubation of future leaders. They are also instilling a sense of corporate commitment for a better future with the collaborative engagement of grassroots, especially among the students of lower to higher educational institutions, the communities (village & urban), and RCE Kuching partners. To educate a sustainable living, good health, and well-being, especially for those that live around the rivers.

The Youth Ambassadors’ engagement, proactivity, commitment, empowerment, and leadership skills in promoting education and awareness of sustainable development, have led them to achieve first place in their category in the Green Gown Awards and to be a successful RCE Kuching advocator eliminating waste, plastic pollution in our rivers and oceans, through education and social responsibilities engagements.

Highlights of messages and remarks on the Green Gown Award web pages:-

<https://www.greengownawards.org/ucsi-university-malaysia2>

<https://www.greengownawards.org/2022-finalists>

### **Top 3 Learning Points**

1. We empowered youth to be part of a kind of change that is so crucial now.
2. We saw youth realizing that they were contributing as individuals to a wider cause.
3. We see how a multi-stakeholder organization such as RCE Kuching can engage for change within their communities.

### ***Student Engagement***

Sustainability and social responsibility are holistic activities necessitating the involvement of the entire community. For universities and colleges, students are clearly a significant part of the internal community both in terms of numbers and also in the potential that they offer. Every new intake of students offers a surge of fresh energy and ideas that can be harnessed for the benefit of all. As they are by nature a transient population they should also be considered as future change agents, as following their experiences on campus they will return relatively quickly to the wider society where their impacts can continue to be felt. Students who are actively engaged with sustainability agendas as part of their student experience are more likely to emerge as graduates who are equipped with the

skills, knowledge, and experience that make positive contributions to sustainable development throughout their lives.

**Matt Christensen, Global Head of Sustainable and Impact Investing at Allianz Global Investors**, says, *“Creating a more sustainable future goes beyond combating climate change. It is about protecting our environment, fostering biodiversity, and ensuring that we make this important transition without leaving anyone behind. It is therefore critical that all of us – companies, academia, and policymakers – work together to solve the challenges we are facing. Every action counts. Seeing the ideas submitted to this year’s International Green Gown Awards gives me the confidence that we will not run out of sustainable investment opportunities in the future. We are pleased to be a partner to support and recognize such an inspiring group of entrepreneurs.”*

### **What the Judges thought**

The judges felt that this project is a great example of student-staff collaboration, demonstrating clear benefits for their local community. Students were empowered to engage with environmental issues and judges felt this approach to be replicable for other conservation contexts.

### **What it Means to Win**

*“At UCSI University, sustainability has always been about the grassroots. More and more of our students are getting involved in outreach initiatives, peer support, refugee aid, environmental conservation, disaster relief, and community organizing. We are heartened to see them stepping up to become the change they seek. And we know that the good work they do today will lay the groundwork for greater undertakings in life, not only for themselves but for the communities they will serve.” -*  
**Professor Datuk Ir Ts Dr. Siti Hamisah Binti Tapsir, UCSI Vice-Chancellor**



Photo caption 1: Certificate awarded to UCSI University for ‘International Green Gown Awards’ under Student Engagement category



Photo caption 2: Video snippet during ‘International Green Gown Awards’ (Source: <https://youtu.be/YNMlzHOecHQ>)



Photo caption 3: International Green Gown Awards Virtual Ceremony, in association with Allianz GI, as part of the UN High-Level Political Forum was held on 6 July 2022 at 1300 EST / 1800 BST @ 2.00 am 7 July 2022.



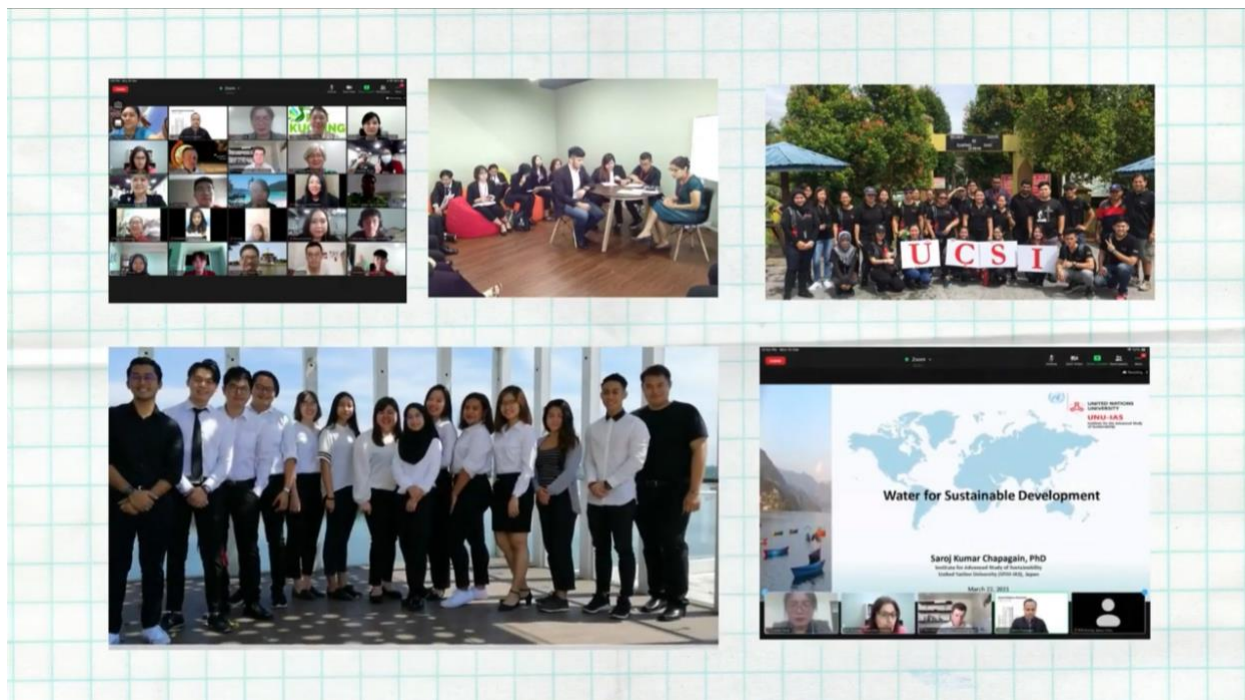


Photo caption 4: UCSI University students together with RCE Youth Ambassadors and RCE Kuching Fellows team (Source: <https://youtu.be/YNMizHOechQ>)



Photo caption 5: Pledging on River Conservation by RCE Kuching Youth Ambassadors (Source: <https://youtu.be/YNMlzHOecHQ>)

*I pledge to bring my eco-bag everywhere*  
*I pledge to not use plastic straws*  
*I pledge to use products from recyclable materials*  
*I pledge to boycott single-use plastic*  
*I pledge to practice recycling*  
*I pledge to bring my own bottle*  
*I pledge to empower others in the "No-Plastic" movement*

**-RCE KUCHING YOUTH AMBASSADORS-**

Photo caption 6: Pledges by RCE Kuching Youth Ambassadors (Source: <https://youtu.be/YNMlzHOecHQ>)





Photo caption 7: Some activities organised by RCE Kuching under “Our River, Our Life” programme (Source: <https://youtu.be/YNMlzHOecHQ>)



Photo caption 8: Concluding video remark by RCE Kuching for the International Green Gown Awards 2022