Accelerate your sustainability transformation

A diagnostic approach

A people and organisational perspective to integrating sustainability into your business

This paper shares learning from our research and experience in applying psychological science to enable organisations across industries to achieve sustainability outcomes. Our Sustainability Accelerator Framework aims to help you accelerate your organisation's integration of sustainability as a key driver of business success.

This paper is aimed at business leaders who are looking beyond compliance, who are already won over on 'why' their organisation should deliver sustainably and have set ambitious sustainability goals. It aims to provide guidance on unlocking the 'how' of sustainability implementation at the pace and scale they, and the world, need.

Read on for more detailed insights gained from Arup's experience conducting more than 150 interviews and collaborative working groups across multiple industries over the past 18 months. Together, we're changing the system from within. We welcome contact from organisations looking to accelerate their sustainability journey.

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"Sustainability will become a real positive choice in whether people choose to work with us. Looking at trends with the younger workforce, they want to work with companies that are doing good and have good values. Fundamentally, would you want to work with an organisation that didn't have the same values?"

Interviewee, Corporate Affairs and Communications Director
(Fast Moving Consumer Goods)

Key themes

We explore three key themes that are consistently enabling organisations to implement transformational change for sustainability more effectively:

1. Clarity of purpose

Ensure there is clarity of organisational purpose to deliver sustainable outcomes, which aligns to the 'core work' of your business.

2. Build capability

Build capability in the right places across your organisation structure and integrate into roles and responsibilities.

3. Connected systems

Work through connected systems by deeply understanding the context in which you are operating and the levers you should pull.
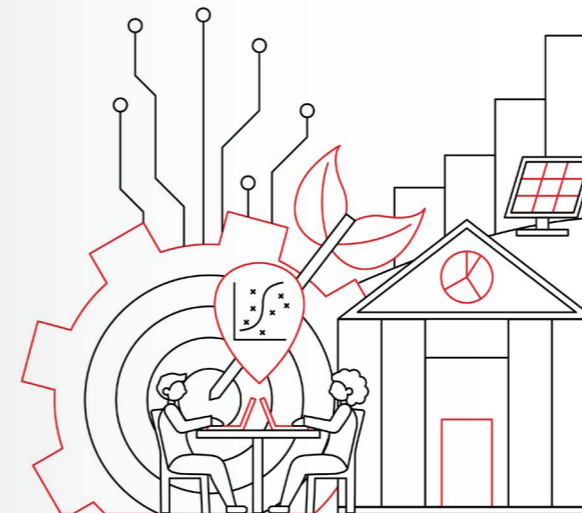
Opening statement

There is an urgent need for organisations to adopt more sustainable ways of working. Our Sustainability Accelerator Framework is here to help lead you on your journey.

Future thinking leaders see the value to be gained by making sustainability a core part of their business.

Based on the current global trajectory, we can expect temperature rises of 3-5°C above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century, possibly much sooner. We are in a crucial decade to turn around the damaging decline in environmental and social degradation – organisations will either lead the pack or risk being left behind.

More than ever before, organisations are looking at making sustainability 'The Way' they do business, rather than a bolt-on. Not simply because it is the right thing to do, organisations are seeing huge financial, reputational and organisational benefits from putting sustainability at the heart of their business model.

Realisation of these benefits demands a significant shift in business approaches: diversifying or refocusing business activities and integrating sustainability within strategy, investment, governance, behaviours and processes to drive sustainability outcomes across the value chain.

Now is the right time to approach sustainability differently. We do not have time for slow, incremental changes - the future of our organisations depends on what happens next.

Setting bold aspirations is important, but we must back this up with equally bold levels of action.

This paper introduces the Sustainability Accelerator Framework, a tool for exploring where you are now in relation to where you need to be, to help you decide where to focus your efforts next. Rooted in research and developed collaboratively with leaders across industry, the Sustainability Accelerator offers actionable outcomes and practical guidance for leaders. We are pleased to share our key insights from application of the Sustainability Accelerator so far.

The case for transformation

Increasing demand from investors, customers and wider stakeholders, along with constantly stretching governmental targets and legislation, mean sustainability is now a mainstream business priority, fundamental to organisational resilience.

What does sustainability mean for my organisation?

We have found that successful organisations explore what sustainability means for them as a business before embarking on the transformation. This can help to shape a clear narrative for stakeholders to understand. The reality is that sustainability means different things to different organisations depending on what is within their scope of influence and impact, and in relation to their broader strategic goals. We often see organisations focusing on mitigating their climate change risks and reducing greenhouse gas emissions to protecting human rights and nature in the local community.

Organisations that embed sustainability are

52%

more likely to outperform their peers on profitability.

69%

of US workers consider a company's environmental record when choosing an employer.

"If you go for a carbon efficient project solution, it doesn't always have to be high cost, it can save you a lot."

Interviewee, Head of Programme Engineering (Water)

## Leaders are seeing meaningful business benefits

Bold ambitions must be backed up by tangible action and progress to avoid the risk of 'greenwashing'.

Organisations that put sustainability at the heart of their strategy gain benefits from themselves and their wider value chain, such as:

Financial benefits:
benefits from unlocking access to sustainable investment and improving share price. The cost of inaction far outweighs the cost of investing now on sustainability (e.g. preparedness for future carbon taxes and avoidance of fines). Products marked as sustainable grew 5.6x faster than those that did not mark the same[1]. Organisations that embed sustainability are 52% more likely to outperform their peers on profitability, with a 16% higher rate of revenue growth[2].
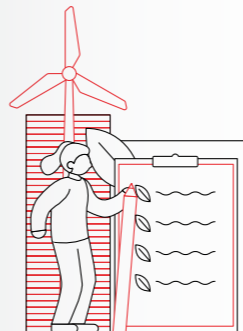
Resilience and systems strength:
from a greater focus on long-term planning, adoption of new technologies, more efficient use of resources and more collaborative ways of working – all of which improve capacity and capability to adapt quickly and manage complexity. For example, the EU will require PET bottles to contain 25% recycled plastics by 2025 and 30% by 2030. Organisations that get ahead of the market can future-proof against such requirements.

Competitive advantage:
from making your organisation more attractive to customers, suppliers and partners. Company reputation is becoming increasingly important; 69% of US workers consider a company's environmental record when choosing an employer, with many looking for organisations that align with their core values[3]. 77% of students said that overall commitment to, and reputation for, sustainability was important to their choice of university[4].

1 Whelan, T. & Kronthal-Sacco, R. (2019). Research: Actually, Consumers Do Buy Sustainable Products. Harvard Business Review,
2 IBM Institute for Business Value (2024). Beyond checking the box. Research Insights,
3 McCarthy, J. (2021). Environmental Record a Factor for Most U.S. Job Seekers. Gallup,
4 THE Consultancy (2022). Students, sustainability, & study choices. THE Consultancy Report

The scale of the challenge

The reality gap between words and action needs to close. While most leaders recognise the need for change and are publishing sustainability plans, far fewer are transforming at the pace and scale needed to meet their objectives.

How much change is required?

For many organisations, transitioning to sustainable practices and realising the benefits requires serious shifts in how they operate. This cannot be achieved through tweaks to 'business as usual' or an incremental approach. It demands a new way of thinking about the role of business in society and action at a collective scale.

Gap between rhetoric and reality

Senior leaders recognise the role of business in tackling the climate emergency and creating positive impacts on society and the environment. 92% of CEOs believe integration of sustainability will be important to the future success of their business[5]. However, only 48% of CEOs are implementing sustainability in their operations, and only 21% say their business is playing a critical role in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

> "Everyone is using buzzwords at the moment but they don't understand what they're asking. Instead we see ill-thought out implementations and knee jerk reactions."
>
> Interviewee, Head of Design (Higher Education)

Many organisations have set commitments relating to their impact on the environment and society. For example, around one third of the world's largest companies now have net-zero targets[6]. Yet, with target timelines as close as 2025 to 2035, it is increasingly unlikely that these organisations will have transformed at the pace and scale needed to achieve their timelines.

We are expecting a pressure point at the end of this decade where the metaphoric stress bucket will overflow in terms of commitments set versus action delivered. Today's businesses will likely be held accountable in the future for failing to deliver on plans to mitigate climate-related risks.

92%
of CEOs believe integration of sustainability will be important to the future success of their business

48%
of CEOs are implementing sustainability in their operations

21%
say their business is playing a critical role in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals

5 Russell Reynolds Associates (2020). Leadership for the decade of action. United Nations Global Compact,
6 Dineen (2022). A third of the world's largest companies now have net-zero targets. NewScientist

What causes the reality gap?

Once we have set sustainability ambitions, we must then put them into practice and integrate them into decision making. Policies alone do not create sustainable transformation.

This framework shows how organisations can move from telling people to think about sustainability to addressing the blockers and unlocking the systemic enablers to sustainability within their influence.

The system around your people (employees, suppliers, customers, clients) must be set up so that the enablers for change outweigh the blockers.

The nature of system change can lead to reticence about where to start, especially when this is not obvious where to focus effort.

The Sustainability Accelerator Framework provides guidance and a handrail, as well as examples of how others have made these changes.

Sustainability strategies and commitments

Sustainability action and industry change
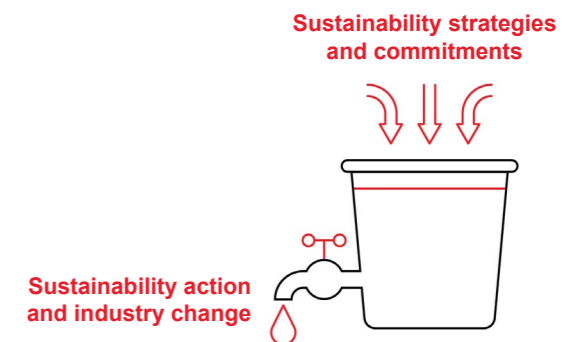
For example, we often hear people say:

"Business cases and investment opportunities that drive sustainable outcomes are not signed off by leadership. I don't have the budget to deliver in a more sustainable way."

"New, time-consuming processes have been created that require ticking the box that sustainability has been considered. I don't have time on top of this and my day job to think holistically about how we can deliver more sustainable outcomes."

"There is no challenge or consequences to not meeting performance expectations around sustainability. What's my incentive to push harder on sustainability?"

"Sustainability is the job of the sustainability team. What has it got to do with me?"

"The strategic priorities are to reduce cost and maximise profit above all else. Why should I prioritise the sustainable option?"

Adopting a transformational change approach

Introducing the Sustainability Accelerator framework

We are working with organisations to help close the action gap, taking a systemic view of the organisation to understand how they can turn their commitments into action.

Our diagnostic approach, underpinned by psychological science, cuts to the root cause of behaviours to better understand and address the challenges being faced.

"It needs to be a value of the business, it's about making sustainability less of a thing that we have to do, to being at the heart of our business. If we embed it within behaviour and values, it stands greater chance of success."

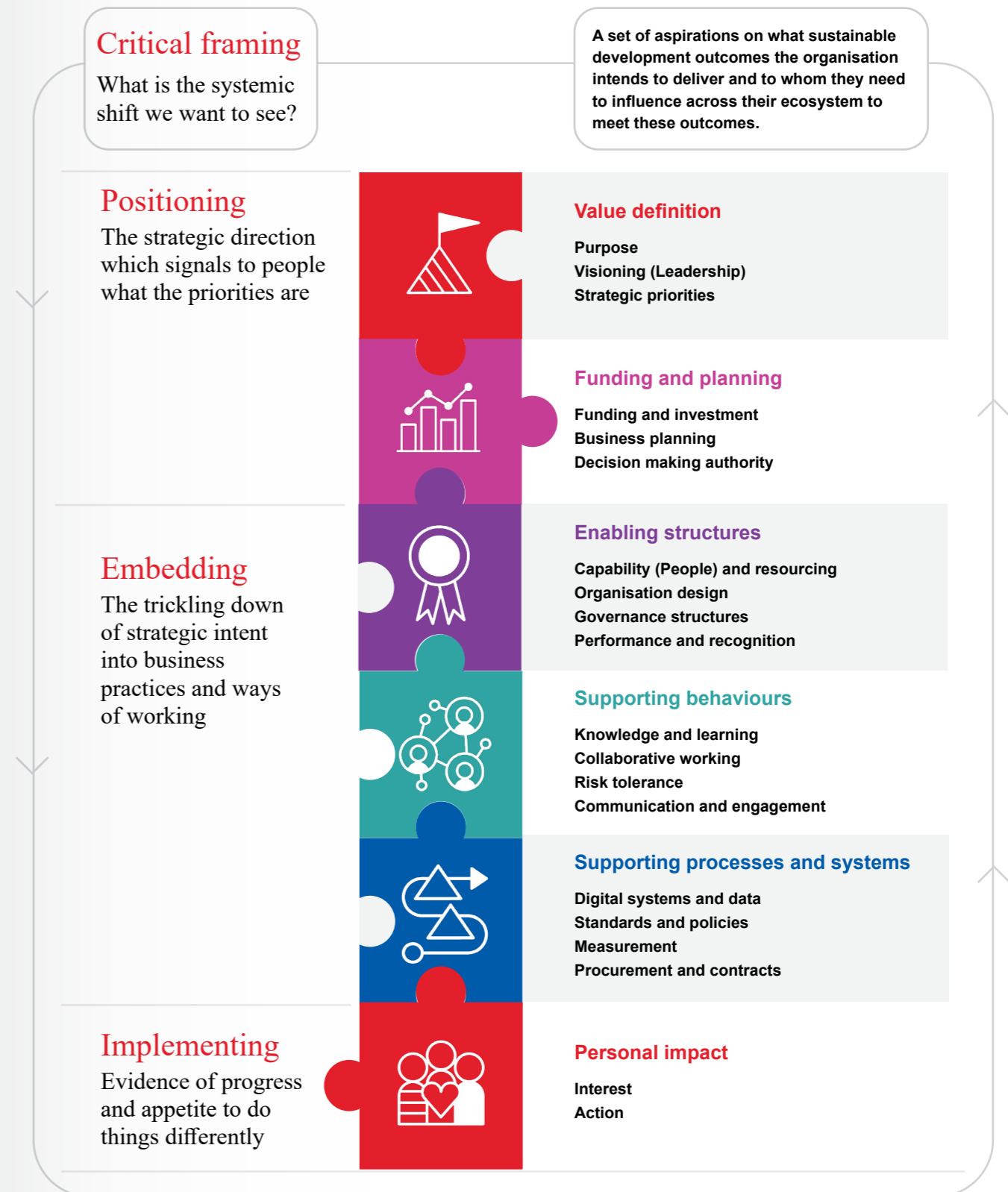Interviewee, Corporate Affairs and Communications Director (Fast Moving Consumer Goods)

We are pleased to share our Sustainability Accelerator framework, developed collaboratively with Arup's clients across a variety of sectors including Transport, Higher Education, Water, Fast Moving Consumer Goods, Real Estate and Government.

It has evolved in practice through its application with over 150 in-depth interviews with people from all levels in business, from graduate to CEO, as well as 25+ validation workshops with multi-disciplined stakeholder groups to refine it over time. The framework is underpinned by a contemporary review of relevant literature and industry guidance.

Designed to be practical and applicable across all types of organisations, it articulates the key transformation levers within an organisation. We have explored how sustainability considerations can be successfully woven into decision making across organisational systems.

Transformation can be realised most powerfully when a total systemic view is taken. The framework is already helping business leaders to take a market-leading position by identifying and overcoming blockers to embedding sustainability. It can help you too to identify action areas that will deliver the most impact.

We must first define what sustainable development means to the organisation in relation to their material impacts. This provides the critical framing around what systemic shift they want to see. The Framework below then explores how to integrate these sustainability aspirations within the building blocks of the organisation.

Critical framing

What is the systemic shift we want to see?

A set of aspirations on what sustainable development outcomes the organisation intends to deliver and to whom they need to influence across their ecosystem to meet these outcomes.

Positioning

The strategic direction which signals to people what the priorities are

Value definition

Purpose
Visioning (Leadership)
Strategic priorities

Funding and planning

Funding and investment
Business planning
Decision making authority

Embedding

The trickling down of strategic intent into business practices and ways of working

Enabling structures

Capability (People) and resourcing
Organisation design
Governance structures
Performance and recognition

Supporting behaviours

Knowledge and learning
Collaborative working
Risk tolerance
Communication and engagement

Supporting processes and systems

Digital systems and data
Standards and policies
Measurement
Procurement and contracts

Implementing

Evidence of progress and appetite to do things differently

Personal impact

Interest
Action

Sustainability maturity levels

What is your current sustainability readiness and appetite for change?

Every organisation is at a different point on their sustainability journey.

Even within organisations, we find a variation of maturity across business areas. It is valuable to first understand where you are now and where you need to get to in the future. This is a valuable exercise to complete with the senior leadership team, using real business scenarios to test appetite for change and to identify the next steps that are right for you. This will help you to deploy resources to the greatest effect and deliver the impact you want to see.
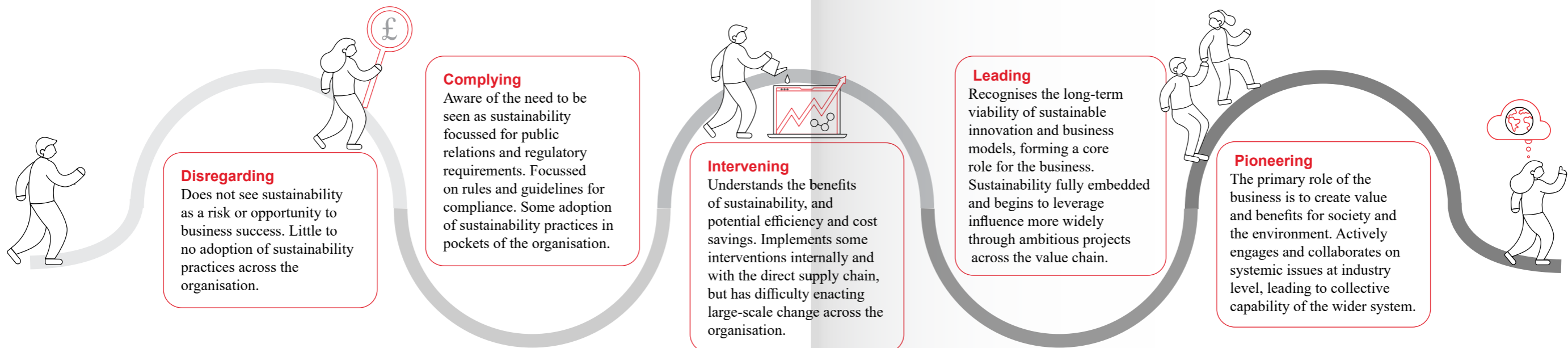
If you are thinking of making a step change in maturity, you can use the following provocative questions to challenge and test your appetite to move forward at scale.

? What are the implications for your business, commercially, if you are not taking significant action on sustainability? Would this position be feasible in 10 years' time?

? To what extent do you want to lead in your industry? What would the risks be for your business if you were to lag behind?

? Are you willing to review and make fundamental changes to your core products, services and ways of operating, so that they are more sustainable? What commercial advantages would this accrue?

? Are you willing to make changes in your supply chain, selecting suppliers that will advance your sustainability goals? How much influence can you exert on your existing suppliers so that they accelerate in sustainability maturity with you?

? Are you willing to make a short-term investment to enhance your organisation's effectiveness so that your people feel equipped to take this on? How much work do you think you have to do to get people ready?

None of these questions are intended to have an easy answer. They are intended to provoke debate about what being a leader in sustainability means in practice so that you can be realistic on the journey ahead. It encourages you to set appropriately ambitious sustainability goals, with appropriately considered implementation plans, giving you the confidence that they can be achieved.

Disregarding
Does not see sustainability as a risk or opportunity to business success. Little to no adoption of sustainability practices across the organisation.

Complying
Aware of the need to be seen as sustainability focussed for public relations and regulatory requirements. Focussed on rules and guidelines for compliance. Some adoption of sustainability practices in pockets of the organisation.

Intervening
Understands the benefits of sustainability, and potential efficiency and cost savings. Implements some interventions internally and with the direct supply chain, but has difficulty enacting large-scale change across the organisation.

Leading
Recognises the long-term viability of sustainable innovation and business models, forming a core role for the business. Sustainability fully embedded and begins to leverage influence more widely through ambitious projects across the value chain.

Pioneering
The primary role of the business is to create value and benefits for society and the environment. Actively engages and collaborates on systemic issues at industry level, leading to collective capability of the wider system.

Accelerating your transformation in practice

Maturity assessments we have conducted to date have surfaced three key themes that are consistently enabling organisations to implement transformational change for sustainability more effectively.
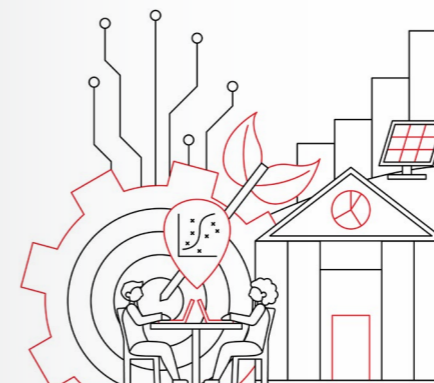
In this section we explore the following:

1. Clarity of purpose

Ensure clarity of purpose through your strategic positioning of sustainability.

2. Build capability

Build capability in the right places through embedding sustainability into your enabling structures.

3. Connected systems

Work through connected systems by considering your key levers for change across all aspects of the Sustainability Accelerator Framework.

1 Ensuring clarity of purpose

"Purpose-driven organisations exist for a meaningful end – to achieve an optimal strategic contribution to the long-term wellbeing of all people and planet."

British Standards Institution PAS 808:2022

As illustrated by the new PAS 808 guidance on purpose-driven organisations[7], leadership teams are increasingly looking at why they do business – their ultimate reasons for existence and contribution to society.

We are hearing business leaders express a profound realisation that, within their legacy of leadership, they can have a significant positive impact on the planet and society we live in.

How can 'purpose' support organisations to deliver outcomes?

Organisations that can articulate their purpose and strategic goals clearly provide a context for daily decision making – unifying and motivating people to act in an aligned way.

Purpose is made visible through looking at the core aims of the organisation, what it is they exist to do and the value they are seeking to create. In practice, this provides the ultimate signal to employees, suppliers, customers and wider stakeholders on the extent to which their organisation considers sustainability within their business and operating model.

In 2022, Arup committed to not pursuing any new energy commissions that support the extraction, refinement or transportation of hydrocarbon-based fuel, except the manufacture of hydrogen, which it considers a part of the transition to a net zero future.

This is a tangible example of a purpose-driven strategic decision; shifting 'the core work' towards challenges that support our mission to shape a better world.

7 PAS 808:2022 Purpose-Driven Organizations | BSI (bsigroup.com)

Do products and services, and how they are delivered, align with sustainable outcomes?

Many of our clients have told us that a source of employee and stakeholder frustration comes from the disconnect between what the organisation says its purpose is, and the reality of the work they deliver and the organisational culture day-to-day.

Cognitive dissonance is the mental discomfort that results from holding conflicting beliefs, values or attitudes. We often see leadership teams produce a compelling 'purpose statement' committing to delivering sustainable outcomes, followed by a vague plan and a well-crafted communications campaign.

What far fewer organisations are doing successfully is ensuring their purpose to deliver sustainably reflects what is really happening on the ground – in operations, procurement, finance, sales and human resources.

> ## "The first change in behaviour should be at the top management. It is really distressing to see so much effort put into communications while so little is being achieved."
>
> Interviewee, Scientist (Research)

Leaders play a crucial role in facilitating change

Leaders influence the organisational culture while empowering employees to make sustainable decisions, e.g. through allocating resources and rewarding desired behaviours. A collective force from leadership will enable and drive positive sustainable outcomes.

Network Rail invested in a Sustainability Leadership Development Programme across all their routes and regions in the UK. Arup built sustainability leadership capability at the senior and executive management level, facilitating a behavioural shift to embed sustainability into leadership decision making and planning.

We positioned sustainability as a foundation to existing priorities (e.g. safety, performance, efficiency), not as a competing demand.

Feedback told us this helped to start trigger a mindset shift from 'what I can't do' to 'what I can do'.

Success comes when there is board and executive level ownership of sustainability, and where sustainability consideration is integrated within the fundamental governance mechanisms (e.g. decision-making boards and committees) of the organisation.[8]

Increasingly, we are seeing senior executive roles for sustainability being introduced. In the same way as we have a Chief Financial Officer accountable for the financial status of the business, we are starting to see Chief Sustainability Officers accountable for the sustainability status. We are also seeing sustainability being incorporated into existing executive level responsibilities and linked to bonus packages. This is an example of designing at the system level to build traction from the top down.

8 See the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) for industry guidance on leadership and governance.

Have you considered...

Questions to understand a 'Leading' level of maturity

? What would people in your business describe as the 'core work' and 'resources/products/services' you are producing? To what extent is this aligned with long-term wellbeing of people and planet?

? To what extent does this align with what you are saying you are doing to deliver sustainability outcomes and your business objectives?

? To what extent does sustainability get traded off or deprioritised against other priorities during key strategic decisions? Are there any hidden competing commitments?

? To what extent do your leaders across the business include sustainability considerations as a key element of their decision making?

2 Building capability in the right places

Historically, sustainability has been a deeply technical skillset that exists within one role. Today, it is widely recognised that a broader range of enabling skills is required to embed sustainability within whole organisations to have real societal impact.

What skills do we need?

Sustainability is an evolving discipline which means that, in practice, we want teams of subject matter experts, working together.

What has been missing from the sustainability skills debate is the wider non-technical skills that are needed to deliver a sustainability transformation.

Organisations that succeed tend to draw on a wide set of skills from the disciplines of commercial, financial, project/programme management and organisational development, to name a few.

A critical skill from our experience is that of meaningful stakeholder engagement coupled with behavioural change expertise to secure buy-in and start shifting deeply held beliefs and ways of working.

Arup supported High Speed Two Ltd (HS2) to implement their Net Zero Carbon Roadmap, using the Sustainability Accelerator framework to empower and embed locally-owned action plans collaboratively across the business.

HS2 recognised the need to think about implementing a positive shift in culture towards carbon thinking, as a holistic complex business change programme, and the need to combine change and programme management skills alongside their technical carbon expertise.

The approach to engaging teams and co-creating their own plans resulted in ownership for carbon being built across directorates.

We are seeing faster impact where organisations develop their 'soft' skills – a set of behavioural competencies – which have a broader impact beyond their sustainability transformation. In practice, we see a focus on leadership, systems thinking, collaborative working, influencing and relationship building.

> "The organisation doesn't understand sustainability at a broad level - our decision-makers across the business don't have the technical expertise, it exists only in small pockets."

Interviewee, Head of Engineering (Higher Education)

Where do we need these skills?

Many organisations are now looking at how they develop skills across key areas of their entire workforce and create a collective responsibility for sustainability in response to ability to influence.

"I'm aware of sustainability, but I'm not doing much about it in this role if I'm honest."

Interviewee, Senior Human Resources Manager (Rail)

The University of Liverpool (UoL) identified this as a key enabler to their sustainable campus implementation, developing capability and ownership across all areas of their estate teams, from their front-line maintenance and capital delivery teams to supporting functions of programme management, communications, procurement and people management.

Arup supported UoL to integrate sustainability into existing roles and work initiatives, building technical sustainability knowledge across business areas in the process.

This is not only about harnessing the value from 'champions' who make an extra effort outside of their 'day job'.

We need to build skills within roles that have direct or indirect sustainability impact, as well as considering where to hire new roles to fill any significant skills gaps.

Where should we start?

We often see organisations begin their sustainability transformation with training to upskill people on technical sustainability concepts.

Building basic awareness in sustainability early on is important in creating a common language around what sustainability means in the context of the organisation and clarifying why the organisation is focused on driving more sustainable outcomes.

The sustainability strategy development process can be a great opportunity to build skills during stakeholder engagement.

We have seen this work well when we enable clients to translate technical sustainability concepts into their business context, whilst showing the link to wider strategic goals and business priorities.

Organisational learning and development functions are often under-utilised for design support and can be a great asset in systematically identifying required sustainability skills. They understand to what extent skills need to be built internally and, if skills gaps exist, how they can best be addressed (e.g. through recruitment, onboarding and ongoing personal development).

Our clients asked: "Should I have a dedicated sustainability leader or make it part of all my leaders' responsibilities?"

We have found that, for those at the earlier stages, a dedicated role focused on driving change can be critical to building momentum and seeking buy-in from leadership as they start to make sustainability a key part of their roles.

Have you considered...

Prompts to get to a 'Leading' level of maturity
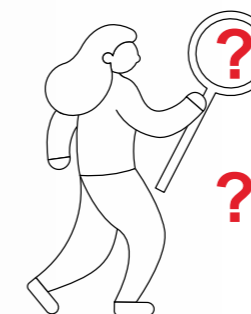
? Do you understand what skills you need, including the non-technical, across all your business areas?
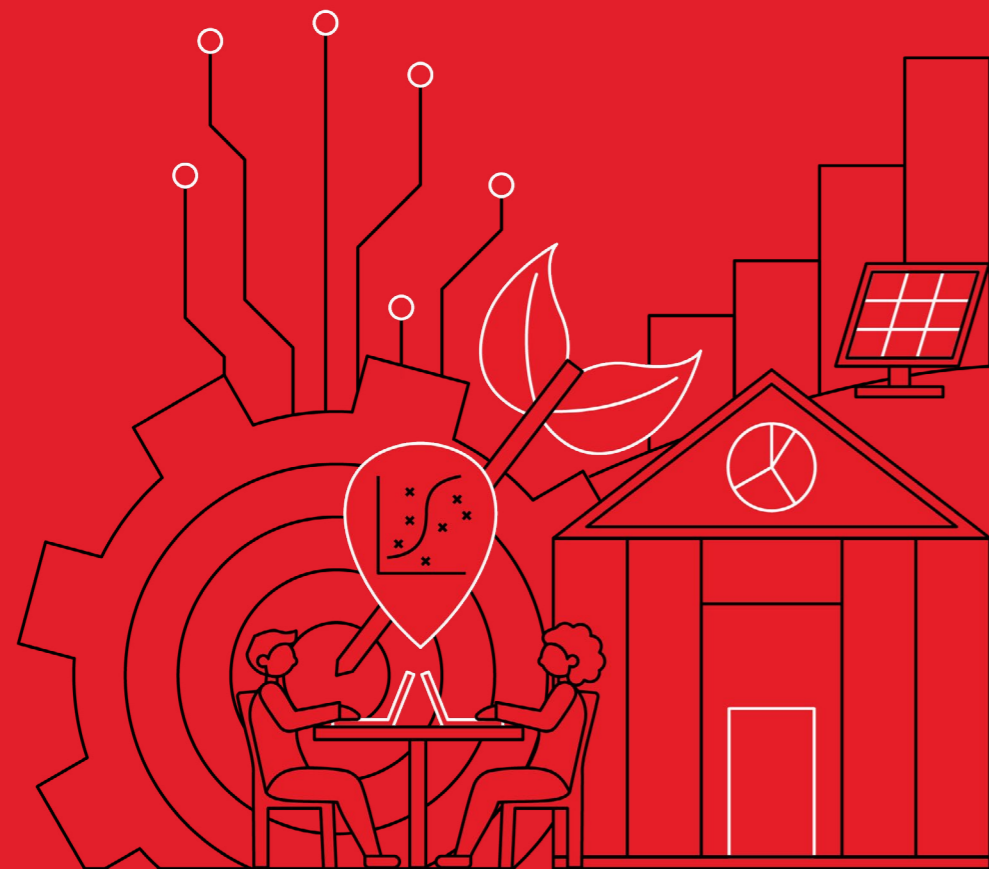
? Would your people say they feel capable to make sustainable decisions within their roles? How about your leadership team or board?

? What opportunities are there to integrate sustainability skills into existing organisational development and engagement initiatives?

3 Working through connected systems

What do we mean by systems?

The term 'systems thinking' is often used to describe the difficult nature of sustainability-related challenges – complex, uncertain, interdependent and with multiple perspectives to consider. This is especially true when we approach sustainability through people and organisational lens.

We must think holistically about the organisation as a whole and its interactions between different systems, both internally and externally.

We use the Sustainability Accelerator Framework to conceptualise the different organisational systems we must consider and address to help organisations transition faster and more effectively. Only through understanding how these different systems are together influencing human behaviour, can we begin to identify where to target action and how to deliver real, sustained change.

Which systems should you lever?

Our experience across sectors and client types shows that what works well for one organisation might not work well in another. Transformation requires a deep examination of organisational context, culture and ways of working to identify which systems you should lever.

Northern Ireland Water asked its key stakeholders, including the CEO, how ready the organisation was to implement the recently developed Climate Change Strategy.

Applying Arup's Sustainability Accelerator Framework, together we considered how carbon reduction and resilience thinking is being embedded throughout the organisation and how organisational processes are designed to support the goals of the strategy.

They have now started implementing change across their systems, appointing a head of climate change and setting up a governance structure for delivery in the first instance.

Sustainability needs to permeate every facet of the organisation, flowing through different organisational systems in a complementary way so that unintended consequences are minimised.

"If we embody the true sense of sustainability in our day-to-day work we will get there, but if we consider this is someone else's job we won't. Having carbon in every process is key."

Interviewee, Head of Digital Engineering (Rail)

Influencing beyond the organisational boundaries

An effective organisation that has sustainability integrated throughout its internal systems is set up to maximise its impact and influence externally.

Since the benefits to society and planet are shared across multiple organisations' balance sheets, a single organisation must consider how their business model interacts with others and the strategic partnerships they need to influence at a wider industry level.

C&C Group, a beverage producer and distributor, recognised the business benefits to be gained from embedding sustainability into their procurement and sourcing decision making.

Arup is continuing to support C&C to enhance their approach across organisational systems, focusing not only on procurement processes and policies, and on their wider levers for change, including supply chain logistics and customer strategies.

From focusing internally on governance, resourcing and skills building, they can now articulate the benefits for customers, suppliers and shareholders.

> "If we are not getting sustainability right we can't get any development or permissions approved. It is embedded in all our scopes and interdisciplinary design reviews"

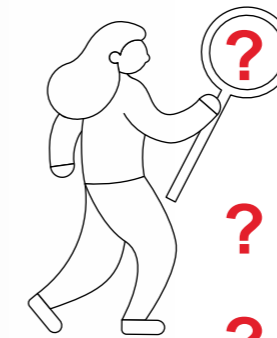Interviewee, Graduate in Urban Design (Rail)

An example of systems connectedness

The diagram illustrates a recent worked client example of systems connectedness for the process of target setting to mitigate the risks of any one element being blocked.

Leaders reprioritise work that supports the sustainability targets.

Data is collected and used for reporting and monitoring sustainability performance.

Sustainability targets are discussed in monthly business planning meetings.

Actions are being delivered at scale to achieve sustainability targets.

Everybody knows what their roles and responsibilities are for achieving sustainability targets.

Progress against target is communicated, sharing wins and project case studies.

Have you considered...

Prompts to get to a 'Leading' level of maturity

? What are the critical systems driving behaviour and decision making? How can these be used to influence across your broader value chain?

? Which systems are not adding value, but are causing people hassle or providing conflicting messages?

? Before investing in training or data platforms, have you explored how your people and organisation will embrace them?

From words
to action

Now is the right time to approach sustainability differently.
If we are to secure the long-term future of our organisations,
we need to move from words to action.

This paper highlights forward-thinking organisations that are taking a systemic approach to their transformation, putting sustainability at the heart of everything they do. Arup is on this journey to lead alongside them and to enact our purpose of 'Sustainable Development is Everything'.

The Sustainability Accelerator Framework has been applied within Arup's business to model our intent to understand our own maturity and to identify opportunities to have even greater impact with our clients. We would like to help you to do the same.

The first step to making a radical step change in outcomes is through opening yourselves up for examination – facing into the areas of your organisation that are not ready to implement sustainability and understanding root causes to the challenges being faced. Yes, this requires leaders to ask difficult questions, for which they might yet not have answers.

We recognise that this transformation can feel daunting, with challenges to overcome. There are benefits to be gained, not just for your business, but for all those you interact with. Being a sustainable organisation means being an effective organisation.

You are not alone; we have lessons to be shared from others on the journey.

We invite organisations to reflect on the questions and learning points discussed in this paper and consider their maturity in transforming to achieve more sustainable outcomes.

What key transformation levers can you pull to move from words to action?

1. Ensure there is clarity of organisational purpose to deliver sustainable outcomes, which aligns to the 'core work' of your business.

2. Build capability in the right places across your organisation structure and integrate into roles and responsibilities.

3. Work through connected systems by deeply understanding the context in which you are operating and the levers you should pull.

The first step to making a radical step change in outcomes is through opening yourselves up for examination.

Further reading

Total Value Decision Making

We developed this paper to help organisations understand the imperatives of sustainable outcomes and how total value decision making can not only offer an approach for their delivery but also create purposeful and successful organisations. This paper draws from the valuable experience we have gained through working with clients to develop their thinking in this area, in the UK and globally.

A new future for water

From our experiences working with public and private organisations and institutions across the globe that are on the frontline of the water crisis, we have identified nine features that we deem essential for organisations to successfully help address the challenges we face. We term these the necessary characteristics of future-facing organisations.

Social Value: A UK White Paper

At Arup, our Social Value and Equality team have developed this UK-focused White Paper, which sets out how we think about social value and our approach to embedding it into our projects.

ARUP