

# FRAMING THE FUTURE OF WueLAB

★ "Turning passive passersby  
into active participants"

Team 6B:

Remko de Jonge

Maria Raicu

Yukiyo Sanders

Shakthy Muthukumar

Zoé Phoenix



# INTRODUCTION



WueLAB is a research platform, but also...  
a space where people can practically learn and  
experiment with sustainability, including student  
engagement.

The participatory wall ('Future Frame')

- Find events
- Hang-up ideas
- Bear-foot walk
- See what WueLAB has to offer



PD

WueLAB's sustainability work goes unnoticed by international students.



RQ

*"How can we make WueLAB's sustainability activities visible, accessible, and engaging to international students?"*



WueLAB wants a short publishable documentation/report + a design of the concept based on the survey results



# SWOT ANALYSIS

## Strengths

- Visual representation of WueLAB outside of the building
- Sustainability experimentation
- Knowledge exchange with students on sustainability
- Bridge research, communication & campus life

## Weaknesses

- Limited inclusivity for international students and research
- Limited reach of WueLAB / the Future Frame
- Communication in German only
- Research projects less accessible for short-term students

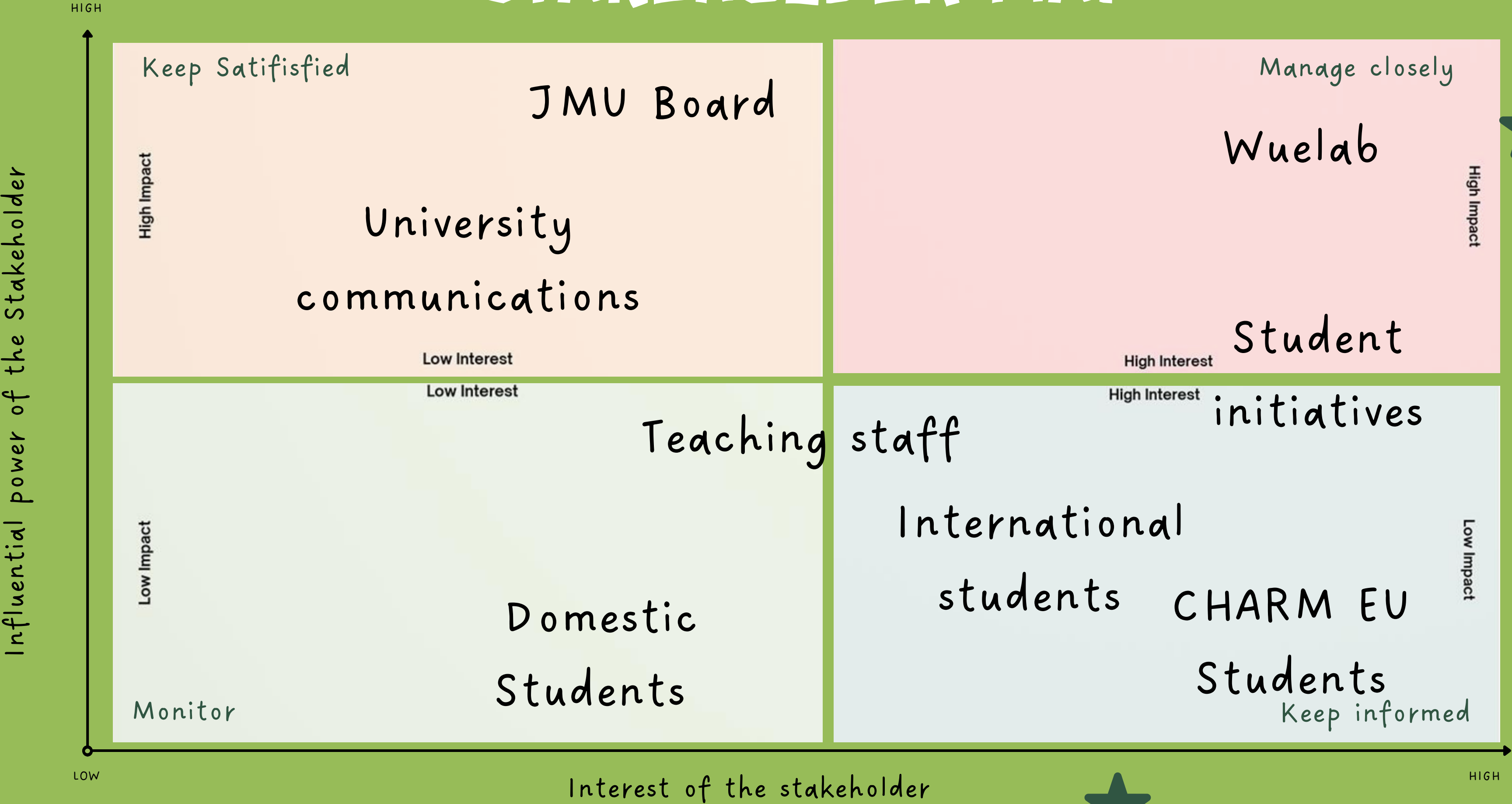
## Opportunities

- Catering to the interest of international students
- Increasing visibility of the Future Frame
- Possibility student engagement
- Use of different media/formats to interact, inform and inspire students
- Collaboration with other university initiatives

## Threats

- Language barrier
- Placement Future Frame creates threat of not being noticed
- Lack of awareness of WueLAB
- Time constraints
- Organizational challenges

# STAKEHOLDER MAP



# LITERATURE ANALYSIS

★ Main challenges identified for international students: language differences, new environment, lack of awareness, and weak belonging (Rose-Redwood & Rose-Redwood, 2018). ★

- 43% of students cite lack of awareness as the primary barrier to sustainability participation;
- Academic workloads, language demands, and navigating unfamiliar systems consume available time, together with family pressure to prioritise grades over extracurriculars;
- International students often feel like outsiders, not from lack of interest, but from social and cultural barriers;
- Difficulty establishing contact with local students is a primary challenge (Ripmeester, 2023)
- Linguistic insecurity leads to "informal exclusion" from social gatherings that are the entry point for campus initiatives (Pineda et al., 2022)



# METHODOLOGY

## Research Design & Approach

- Survey-based methodology (recommended by WueLAB)
- Focus: barriers to engagement & suggestions for improvement among international students
- $n = 25$  international students, University of Würzburg
- Intercept sampling on and around campus over 3 days
- ~10 rejections



## COM-B Model (Michie et al., 2011)

- Behaviour occurs when Capability, Opportunity, and Motivation are sufficiently met
- Applied to international students & WueLAB:
  - **Capability** - language barriers, unfamiliarity with WueLAB's resources
  - **Opportunity** - social exclusion, lack of outreach, inconvenient access
  - **Motivation** - low perceived relevance, uncertainty about belonging, academics





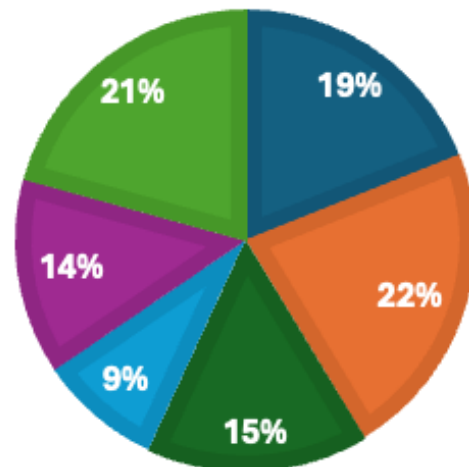
# KEY FINDINGS



# ★ RESULTS OF THE SURVEY ★

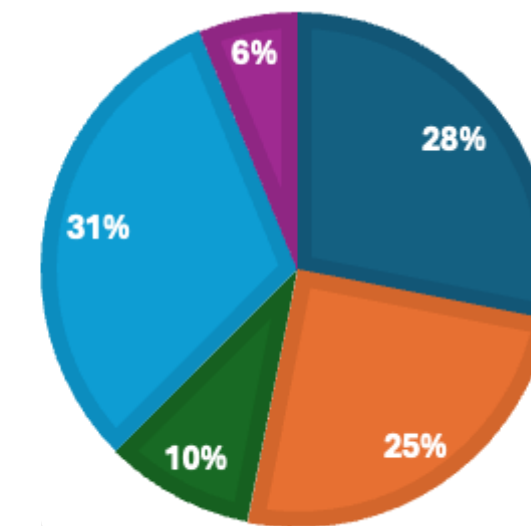
## MOTIVATION TO GET INVOLVED AT THE UNIVERSITY

- Student jobs
- Certificates
- Social events
- CV experience (skills)
- ECTS credits
- Networking opportunities



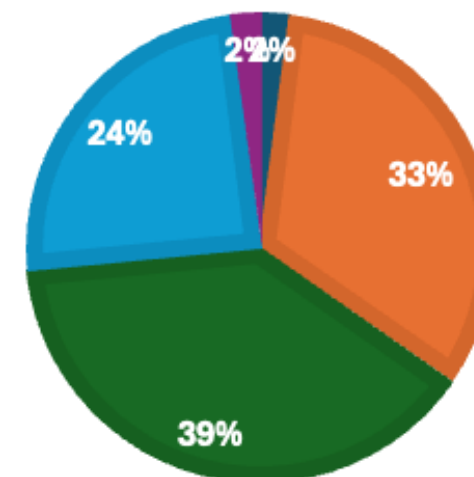
## BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATING IN (MORE) WUELAB EVENTS

- Language barrier
- Lack of awareness
- No interest in sustainability
- No time
- Other



## MOTIVATION TO PARTICIPATE WITH WUELAB

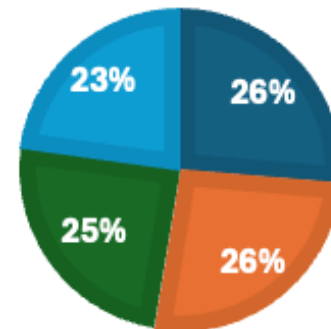
- Online presence
- Opportunities for skills-building
- Other
- Possibility to find community
- Fun activities



# ★ RESULTS OF THE SURVEY ★

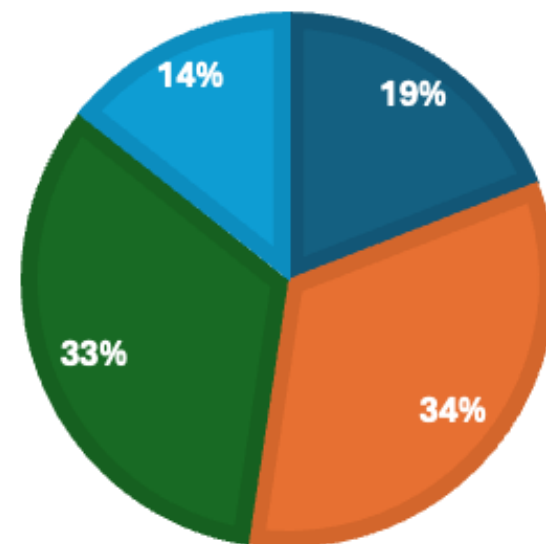
## TYPES OF EVENTS STUDENTS WOULD BE INTERESTED IN

- Educational events (lectures, research opportunities, etc)
- Networking events (meeting experts, sharing research findings, etc)
- Workshops (practical tips, clothing mending, etc)
- Cultural (screenings/exhibitions, poetry slam, etc)



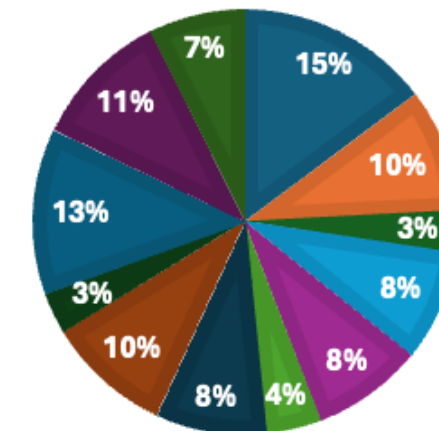
## PREFERRED CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION TO GET INFORMATION FROM WUELAB

- Whatsapp
- University email / Newsletter
- Instagram
- Flyers / Posters on campus



## WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WUELAB TOPICS ARE MOST INTERESTING

- Climate change
- Social equality
- Food and nutrition
- Sustainable careers
- Biodiversity
- Mental health and well-being
- Green energy
- Environmental justice
- Economic security
- Community action
- Clean water
- Inclusive urban planning



# ANALYSIS



1

High interest but limited participation

2

Students mostly want networking but unaware that WueLAB offers it

3

Time constraints were prevalent, however, there is willingness to engage in workshops and networking

4

Online presence least motivating factor, yet Instagram and newsletter are preferred channels so using as a means to inform not to motivate

5

Short stay internationals wished for more social events, skill and community building

6

Systematic inclusion of the English language to avoid communication barriers

# RECOMMENDATIONS



Invite local sustainability experts



Encourage campus stewardship



Exhibit sustainability artworks



# RECOMMENDATION 1



## Invite local sustainability experts

- Format: roundtable discussions, lectures + case study
- Objectives: get familiar with Würzburg, network with potential for student jobs, exchange knowledge



# RECOMMENDATION 2



## Encourage campus stewardship

- Format: international-German buddy system for sustainable gardening and biodiversity preservation
- Objectives: social integration, nature-relatedness, practical sustainability skills, direct influence on campus sustainability



Image source: <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/stuv/referat-ak/oekologie/campusgarten-20/>

# RECOMMENDATION 3



## Exhibit sustainability artworks

- Format: workshops for creating artworks from recycled materials communicating sustainability concepts
- Objectives: fun, adopting new perspectives, reflecting on science communication, increasing WueLAB visibility



Left: "SCRIPT" in front of the ZPD. Right: Model of "Maiden Flight". (Image: Würzburg State Building Authority / Pascale Feitner)  
Image source: <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/aktuelles/einblick/single/news/neue-kunst-am-bau-fuer-die-uni/>



Die Mitmachwand mit fertiggestelltem Barfußpfad. (Bild: Viola Leisner)  
Image source: <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/aktuelles/einblick/single/news/wuelab-mitmachwand/>

# ★ CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

## ★ Limitations:

- ★ • Sample size
- ★ • Limited time
- ★ • Context familiarity
- ★ • Language

## What we learned:

- efficient data analysis and surveying method, including in-person surveying
- adapting to BIP under time pressure
- transdisciplinary collaboration
- communication with external stakeholder

**THANK YOU  
FOR LISTENING**



# REFERENCES

CampusGarten 2.0 - Studierendenvertretung. (2026, May 4). <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/stuv/referat-ak/oekologie/campusgarten-20/>

Michie, S., van Stralen, M. M., & West, R. (2011). The behaviour change wheel: a new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. *Implementation science* : 15, 6, 42. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1748-5908-6-42>

Nachhaltigkeit für Kopf und Fuß. (2025, July 29). einBLICK - Online-Magazin Der Universität Würzburg. <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/aktuelles/einblick/single/news/wuelab-mitmachwand/>

Neue „Kunst am Bau“ für die Uni. (2025, July 29). einBLICK - Online-Magazin Der Universität Würzburg. <https://www.uni-wuerzburg.de/aktuelles/einblick/single/news/neue-kunst-am-bau-fuer-die-uni/>

Pineda, J., Kercher, J., Falk, S., Thies, T., Zimmermann, J., & Yildirim, H. H. (2022). Internationale Studierende in Deutschland zum Studienerfolg begleiten: Ergebnisse und Handlungsempfehlungen aus dem SeSaBa-Projekt . Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst. <https://doi.org/10.46685/daadstudien.2022.06>

Ripmeester, N. (2023). The International Study Experience in Germany: Findings from the International Student Barometer 2022 (2023). GATE Schriftenreihe Hochschulmarketing.

Rose-Redwood, C., & Rose-Redwood, R. (2018). Fostering successful integration and engagement between domestic and international students on college and university campuses. *Journal of International Students*, 8(3), 1267–1273. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v8i3.84>