MBA Careers in Sustainability
EDGE
CENTER FOR ENERGY, DEVELOPMENT, AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Website:
https://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/edge/
MBA Careers in Sustainability

Part I: Exploring the Options

• Career landscape

• Thinking through the options

Part II: Navigating the Job Search

• Strategies & Tips

Q&A

Appendix: Resources
Part I: Exploring the Options
Career landscape
Example MBA careers

**Corporate Sustainability/CSR**

*Example Roles*

- Senior Product Manager, Worldwide Sustainability, Amazon (MBA ’10)
- Sustainability Manager, Nike (MBA ’20)
- Global Impact Partnerships Manager, Facebook (MBA ’12)

**Consulting**

*Example Roles*

- Senior Strategy Consultant, Accenture (MBA ’18)
- Managing Partner, Purpose Matters (MBA ’90)
- Consultant, The Context Network (MBA ’18)

**Investing**

*Example Roles*

- VP, Global Sustainable Finance, Morgan Stanley (MBA ’13)
- Investment Officer, Grantham Environmental Trust (MBA ’18)
- Investment Director, Mission Related Investing, Cambridge Associates (MBA ’16)

**Clean Energy**

*Example Roles*

- Chief Administrative Officer, Strata Solar (MBA ’06)
- Senior Director, Global Partnerships, ChargePoint, Inc. (MBA ’10)
- Energy Program Manager, Facebook (MBA ’17)
Example MBA careers

Marketing

Example Roles
• Brand Manager - Better For You Portfolio, Danone (MBA ’13)
• VP, Marketing, Ripple Foods (MBA ’02)
• Marketing Director, charity: water (MBA ’07)

Entrepreneurship / VC

Example Roles
• Co-Founder & CEO, Kunoa Cattle Co. (MBA ’14)
• Co-Founder & CEO, BIOMILQ (MBA ’20)
• Managing Partner & Co-Founder, Wireframe Ventures (MBA ’05)

Nonprofit

Example Roles
• Analyst - Food & Beverage Sector, Sustain. Accounting Standards Board (SASB) (MBA ’17)
• Director of Conservation Innovation, The Nature Conservancy (MBA ’12)
• Dir. of Governance & Global Partnerships, C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (MBA ’03)

Supply Chain

Example Roles
• Director, Secondary Packaging, AB InBev (MBA ’19)
• Sr Sustainability Manager, North America Supply Chain Innovation, Nike (MBA ’15)
• Global Procurement & Sustainability Director, AB InBev (MBA ’15)
Trends affecting hiring

• Corporations making bold **corporate climate commitments**.

• **Racial equity, environmental justice, and diversity & inclusion** rising to the fore.

• Growth trajectories are strong for **renewable energy**, **energy storage**, **electric vehicles**, and **charging infrastructure**.

• **VCs, private equity, and philanthropists** are upping investment in **climatetech**, including carbon removal.

• Demand for **ESG investing** products, services, & jobs expanding dramatically.

• **Consumer goods & apparel companies** are getting serious about the **circular economy**.
Thinking through the options
5 key questions

1. Impact
   • What kind of impact do you want to have? What issue do you want to work on?

2. Sector
   • What kind of organization do you want to work for? (nonprofit, government, large company, small company, B corp)

3. Industry
   • What industry do you want to focus on?

4. Role
   • What kind of work do you want to do in the organization?

5. Geography
   • Do you have a geographic focus?
### Organization vs. Role

#### "Traditional" Sustainability-Oriented

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<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VP, Sustainability, <em>Bank of America</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Manager, Sustainable Innovation, <em>Gap Inc.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Packaging Sustainability Manager, <em>Colgate-Palmolive</em></td>
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#### Sustainability-Oriented

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<tr>
<td>Senior Supply Planner, <em>Patagonia</em></td>
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<td>Brand Manager, <em>Stonyfield Organic</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Business Development, <em>Tesla</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director - Neglected Climate Opportunities, <em>Grantham Foundation</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director, Sustainable Business, <em>Burt’s Bees</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Conservation Innovation, <em>The Nature Conservancy</em></td>
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Part II: Navigating the Job Search
Strategies & Tips
Job search strategies

- Embrace the diversity of your background
- Focus on transferrable skills
- Fill experience gaps during your MBA
- Focus on the employer’s need, use their terminology
  - What is the organizational driver for this initiative/project/program?
  - How does the employer define impact?
- Passion is important but not a differentiator
- “Show, don’t tell”
- Be ready to “make the business case” for sustainability
When sustainability is not in your job title

• Think about the points of intersection between your business unit/function and social/environmental impact
  • Where are material impacts?
  • What levers of change do you have?
  • What resources do you have?

• Join employee engagement efforts in your office (recycling, bike to work, volunteering)

• Outside of work, join a board of a nonprofit in your interest area

• Think long-term
Q&A
Appendix: Resources
Learning about career options

Sustainable Career Pathways website
https://sustainablecareerpathways.com/

Sustainability Defined Podcast
https://sustainabilitydefined.com/

Degrees Podcast
https://www.edf.org/77gd

Net Impact Corporate Careers that Make a Difference Report
https://www.netimpact.org/research-and-publications/corporate-careers-that-make-a-difference
Career trends & salary data

Annual GreenBiz State of the Profession Report
https://www.greenbiz.com/webcast/state-profession-2020

Acre CR & Sustainability Salary Survey
https://crsalariesurvey.com
Sustainable business news

- Corporate Eco Forum Weekly Briefing
  [www.corporateecoforum.com/weekly-briefing](www.corporateecoforum.com/weekly-briefing)
  ** Highly recommend! **

- GreenBiz
  [www.greenbiz.com](www.greenbiz.com)

- Axios Generate newsletter
  [www.axios.com › newsletters](www.axios.com › newsletters)

- Sustainable Brands
  [www.sustainablebrands.com](www.sustainablebrands.com)

- Triple Pundit
  [www.triplepundit.com](www.triplepundit.com)

- Material Change
  [www.materialchange.design](www.materialchange.design)

- Reconsidered.co Newsletter
  [www.reconsidered.co/sign-up](www.reconsidered.co/sign-up)

- Financial Times Moral Money
  [www.ft.com/moral-money](www.ft.com/moral-money)

- McKinsey & Co. Sustainability Blog

- Canary Media
  [www.canarymedia.com](www.canarymedia.com)

- Bloomberg Green
  [www.bloomberg.com/green](www.bloomberg.com/green)
Books: Sustainable business

- **RESOURCE REVOLUTION**
  - Rebecca Henderson
  - How to Capture the Biggest Business Opportunities in a Downshift
- **REIMAGINING CAPITALISM IN A WORLD ON FIRE**
  - Stefan Heck, Matt Rogers

- **STRATEGIES FOR THE GREEN ECONOMY**
  - Joel Makower
  - Opportunities and Challenges in the New World of Business

- **DRAWDOWN**
  - The Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming
  - Edited by Paul Hawken

- **THE BIG PIVOT**
  - Andrew S. Winston
  - Reliable Growth Strategies for a Shrunken and More Open World

- **Natural Capitalism**
  - E. Freya Williams

- **GREEN GIANTS**
  - How Smart Companies Turn Sustainability Into Billion-Dollar Businesses
  - John Elkington

- **GREEN SWANS**
  - The Coming Boom in Regenerative Capitalism

For additional book recommendations from Ed Carley, see:
http://edsjobslist.com/eds-recommended-reading/
Books: Working in sustainability

  - Timothy J. Mohin

- The Evolution of a Corporate Idealist
  - Christine Bader

- Getting Green Done
  - Auden Schendler

- How to CHANGE the WORLD
  - Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas
  - David Bornstein

- Strategy for Sustainability
  - A Business Manifesto

- Values-Directed Business
  - Ben Cohen, Mal Warwick

- Sustainable MBA: A Business Guide to Sustainability
  - Second Edition
  - Giselle Weybrecht

- Green to Gold: A Business Playbook
  - How to Transform Your Organization and Achieve Real-World Success in Every Business Function
  - Daniel C. Esty, P. J. Simmons
Conferences

For students specifically:

- **Net Impact Conference** (primary audience is students; great for learning & exploring career options)
- **ClimateCAP: The Global MBA Summit on Climate, Capital & Business** (MBA student audience)

Industry events (ask about volunteer opportunities for reduced rates):

- GreenBiz events (volunteer opportunities exist as well as **Emerging Leaders** scholarships):
  - **GreenBiz Forum** (corporate sustainability)
  - **VERGE** (energy, tech, carbon, circularity)
  - **GreenFin Summit** (ESG & finance)
- **Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) Conference**
- **Sustainable Brands Conference**
- **Ceres Conference**
- **Cleantech Forum**
- **SOCAP (Social Capital Markets Conference)**
- **Engage for Good**
- **Sustainable Investment Forum North America**

(among others)
Finding sustainable companies

- **Rankings**
  - *WSJ Most Sustainably Managed Companies*
  - Just Capital Rankings
  - Global 100
  - *Newsweek’s Most Responsible Companies*
  - 3BL’s 100 Best Corporate Citizens
  - CDP A List Companies
  - Global Cleantech 100
  - *Ethisphere’s Most Ethical Companies*
  - Sustainalytics’ ESG Risk Ratings

- **Directories**
  - BSR members
  - Sustainable Brands corporate members
  - Sustainability Consortium members
  - ASBC Business Members
  - WBCSD member companies & regional affiliate organizations
  - B Corp directory
  - Green Business Network members
  - 1% for the Planet business members
  - Ceres Company Network
  - Speakers & sponsors at conferences
  - Local/regional green business organizations

- **Investment Indices**
  - S&P ESG Index Family
  - FTSE4Good Index Series
  - Calvert Responsible Indices
  - Other sustainable investment funds
Groups to join

- The Young Sustainability Network
- Diversity in Sustainability
- Women of Color Collective in Sustainability (WOC/CS)
- Women in Cleantech & Sustainability
- GreenTech Noir
- Young Professionals in Energy (& local chapters)
- Net Impact (& local student or professional chapters)
- LinkedIn groups relevant to your issue/industry interests
- LinkedIn groups for your city/region
- LinkedIn groups affiliated with your university alma mater
Geographic-centered resources

• If you have a specific geographic focus, look for local chapters of:
  • **Net Impact** (professional chapters)
  • **American Sustainable Business Council** (state chapters, US)
  • **Green Drinks International** (city chapters, global)
  • **US Green Building Council** (chapters)
  • **Women in Sustainability** (hubs, mostly Europe)
  • **Impact Hubs** (global)
  • LinkedIn groups
Job postings

Recommended:

- Reconsidered.co Jobs Board
- Ed Carley’s Clean Energy & Sustainability jobs list (sign up for emails)
- Indeed
  - > “Sustainability” search
  - > “ESG” search
  - > “Climate” search
- Twitter @Katie_Kross
- BSR > CSR Jobs Board
- Net Impact > Career Center
- Greenbiz.com > Jobs
- B Corp Job Board

More lists:

- Climate.Careers
- Green Jobs Network
- Sustainable Career Pathways Job Resources List by Trish Kenlon
### Job postings (continued)

#### Industry- or topic-specific:
- [Good Food Jobs](#)
- [Young Professionals in Energy Job Board](#)
- [Energy Folks Job List](#)
- [GIIN (Global Impact Investing Network) Job Board](#)
- [US SIF (Social Investment Forum) Job Board](#)
- [NextBillion Job Board](#)
- [Ocean Job Board](#)
- [Josh’s Water Jobs](#)

#### Recruiters’ job listings:
- [Weinreb Group](#)
- [CA Environmental Associates](#)
- [Good Citizen](#)
- [Acre](#)
- [Koya Partners](#)
- [On-Ramps](#)
Opportunities for diverse professionals

- **Roger Arliner Young (RAY) Diversity Fellowship** - RAY Conservation Fellows and RAY Clean Energy Fellows – *2-year paid fellowship*

- **Empowering Diversity in Clean Tech (EDICT) Internship** – *paid summer internships in clean energy and climate tech*

- **Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) Equity Diversity Inclusion Fellowship** – *paid summer internships working with local governments*

- **GreenBiz Emerging Leaders** – *paid travel to GreenBiz conferences (apply before each conference)*
Outside the US (caveat: I have limited experience with these)

Job Boards:

- Bmeaningful (Canada)
- GoodWork (Canada)
- EnvironmentJob (UK)
- For Purpose Jobs (UK)
- GreenJobs Online (UK)
- Reconsidered.co Jobs Board (UK, Europe, US)
- tbd (Germany)
- Skoll Jobs Board (Global)
- NextBillion Jobs Board (Global)
- Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (Global)

Recruiters:

- Ethical Jobs (Australia)
- GreenCareer (Australia)
- Do Good Jobs (New Zealand)
- Acre (UK, Europe, US)
- Allen & York (UK, Europe, US)
- Ellwood Atfield (UK, Europe)
About EDGE

The Center for Energy, Development, and the Global Environment (EDGE) at Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business is a dynamic hub for education, thought leadership, and industry engagement that enables current and future business leaders to understand and respond effectively to the interrelated global challenges of energy transition, environmental sustainability, and sustainable development.

Learn more about our graduate MBA and MEM/MBA programs at: https://centers.fuqua.duke.edu/edge/
About the speaker

Katie Kross is a sustainability career coach, educator, and speaker. She currently directs programming and thought leadership initiatives as the managing director of the Center for Energy, Development, and the Global Environment (EDGE) at Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business.


She tweets job and internship openings at @Katie_Kross.