BANNER DROPS

HOW-TO GUIDE

people & planet

Banner drops are a great low-risk action to draw attention to your campaign and make a statement on campus. Here are some tips for making the most of this simple but effective action!

STEP 1: SCOUT OUT THE LOCATION

Location is key to making sure your banner drop has the most impact. Choose somewhere where your banner will be noticed, this includes places on campus with a high footfall such as outside libraries and lecture theatres, or in an iconic location which is well-known at your university.

Have a look around the location before the day of your banner drop to check out the logistics of the action. Things to look out for include:

- Places to hang your banner i.e. walls, windows, statues
- How big will your banner need to be to fit this space? If your banner is too small it may get lost in

the space!

- How easy is it to get into the space? Are there any gates/doors that may be locked at certain times?
- Is there a backup location you could use if things don't go to plan on the day?

STEP 2: CHOOSE A TIME AND DATE

The date and time you choose to do your banner drop can also impact the effect it will have. Are there certain days and times when your campus is busier and more people will see your banner?

You could also time your banner drop to coincide with an event on campus. Actions during open days or public events will often get more notice from university management as they will be more anxious to give a good impression of the university and gloss over any unethical sides to their business! Remember that event days might also have more security on campus and that your banner may get taken down sooner, so getting a good photo is key.

STEP 3: MAKE A PLAN

- **Roles** - To make sure that the work to plan the action is shared out, we recommend starting by splitting into roles, so that different people take responsibility for different sections. You can have more than one person per role! Some key roles/teams are: Welfare, Logistics, Outreach + Recruitment, Art + Materials, Press, Photographer, Social Media. And of course, people need to volunteer to take part in the action!

- **Photos** - Assign someone to take photos of your banner drop.This is a really essential role, and doesn't need a fancy camera. A phone camera works well!

- **Follow up emails** - Before your action, make sure to draft an email to your University management and careers service, reaching out to discuss your demands. You can then send this as soon as you've done your action and build up the pressure for them to commit to an Ethical Careers Policy.

- **Press** - You should be putting out a press release, or at least a public statement, for every action that you do. It's one of the key ways to make sure your action is impactful. It's always best to have this drafted before the day of your action so that it's ready to be sent out straight away. Newspapers will want to publish a story as close to the event as possible before it becomes old

news. Remember to also make a list of journalists to email your press release to. This could be local newspapers, student press or online blogs.

- **Social media** - You'll also want to draft your social media posts in advance, so that they will be ready to post straight away once you've taken photos of your action on the day. Remember to tag your university and careers service so they know the action has happened. You can also reach out to other groups on campus and ask them to share. It's also important to consider security when posting photos of actions on social media, such as covering or blurring faces so people taking action can't be easily identified.

- **Welfare** - Actions can be draining and intense! Make a plan of how you're going to look out for each other both during and after your action. A great way of doing this is by having a buddy system where everyone is paired with a buddy who they stay with throughout the action. Make sure that you know where your buddy is at all times and if there is any particular support your buddy might need when taking part in the action. It's also important to schedule a debrief for after your action has taken place. This is both a space for people to discuss how the action went as well as a space for people to share how they are feeling and check in with each other.

- **Know your rights** - Before any action it's super important to make sure that you know your rights and are aware of any risks you might be taking. Remember that different people may face different levels of risk and this may impact how they choose to take part in an action. Take some time to check out these resources for more information:

  - [Rights when protesting at universities in the UK](#)
  - [Green and Black Cross legal advice for protests](#)
 - [Legal advice for protesting in Scotland (SCALP)](#)

STEP 4: MAKE YOUR BANNER

Simple banners painted on plain fabric are usually the most effective. Stick to a simple message and make sure that the size and spacing of the text is easy to read.

Banner-making can also be a fun social activity and a great way to get new members involved in your action. Why not make it a social event and bring along some snacks and music?

STEP 5: MAKE THE DROP

- **Getting out the banner** - Agree on a meeting point in advance and make sure you know who is responsible for bringing the banner! If you are doing your banner drop inside a university building, make sure to carry your banner into the building without raising any suspicions. You may simply be able to fold the banner inside your bag, but if your action is taking place during a university event, you may need to get this past security. You can wrap the banner around your body under your coat, and bring a spare banner just in case!

- **Setting up a great photo** - Getting a good photo is also super important to get the most impact out of your banner drop. Assign someone who will take photos that you can use on social media or send to student press. Make sure that the whole of your banner is visible in the photos! Think about how you will photograph or film the action. Having multiple people taking photos/videos from different angles will give you a better chance of capturing the banner

- **Anticipate security presence** - There is often a security presence on campus, so think about how you will prepare for this. Make sure you are all agreed on what to do if security tries to stop your action or tries to get you to leave. When going into an event in pairs, you can encourage the first pair to report back on what security was like via a Signal chat.
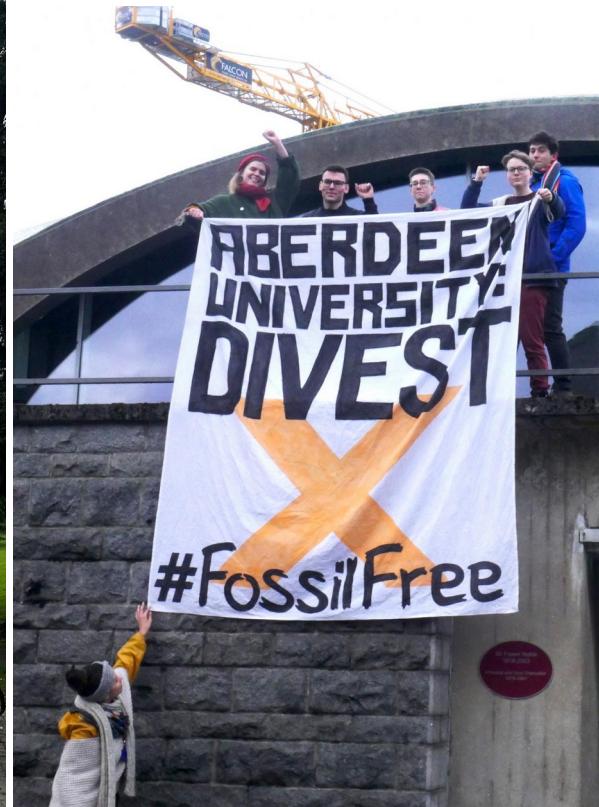
STEP 6: DEBRIEF

Well done! You've pulled off your action, and everyone is now safely at your agreed meeting place. Now it's time to debrief. It's super important to set some time aside after an action for a debrief with your group. This is a chance to check in on how everyone is doing after what can often be an intense and tiring situation. It's also a really great opportunity to reflect on your successes and any learnings for future actions.

Things to discuss in your debrief could include:

- How is everyone feeling now? Is there anything in particular that people need from this space?
- How do people feel that the action went on the day?
- What are some successes to celebrate?
- Was there anything that didn't go to plan? Was there a way that this could have been made better or could have been anticipated in advance?
- What are the key learnings from this action that you will take forward when planning actions in the future?

Remember that taking part in actions can be tiring, so make sure to have some more relaxed social activities in between more intense actions. Once you've had your debrief why not have a group social or film night?

STEP 7: FOLLOW UP

Following up from your action will help make sure that your campaign gets noticed, even by people who weren't there to see the banner drop. This is especially important if your banner gets taken down quickly by the university - a photo lasts much longer!

Your follow up tasks can include:
- A social media statement explaining what your action was and what your campaign demands are. Make sure to include a good photo and a link to any petitions for people to sign. You can also tag your university and careers service to make sure they got the message!
- An article for student press about your campaign and how people can get involved. Photos from banner drops are great for press articles!
- A letter to university management and the careers service, asking to meet with them to discuss your campaign demands.

- Don't forget to send any photos to us at fossilfreecareers@peopleandplanet.org ! We love seeing incredible actions to kick fossil fuels off campus and we can share these for you on our social media.

RESOURCES

Here are some links to more resources to help you when planning an action!

You can also drop us an email at fossilfreecareers@peopleandplanet.org to book a workshop or some training on direct action or action planning.

Guide to Action Planning from Seeds for Change

Direct Action Handbook