WE ARE A STUDENT MOVEMENT FIGHTING TO GET OUR UNIVERSITIES TO DIVEST FROM COMPANIES THAT PROFIT FROM THE BORDER REGIME AND FROM THE HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES INFlicted ON MIGRANTS AT BORDERS IN THE UK AND ACROSS THE GLOBE
The far right is expanding across Europe and the Americas. The combination of climate crises and decades of military and economic intervention in the Global South is driving tens of millions from their homes. Meanwhile, the border industry swells with the profits of this devastation.

Now more than ever is time to fight back and build a world without borders where all have the right to move, stay and thrive.
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WHAT IS BORDER VIOLENCE?

People subjected to negligence and abuse in detention centres with horrific conditions. Deportation flights ripping apart families and dropping people into unfamiliar and often life-threatening environments. Children drowning as lifeboats are forced to turn back. It is impossible to ignore the breadth, depth and injustice of the harm caused by the UK’s border regime. We use the overarching term ‘Border Violence’ to encapsulate the full range of physical and emotional violence inflicted upon people as a result of attempts to delineate who does and does not belong in certain spaces. Particularly, we refer to the injustices inherent in nation states’ efforts to control access to their territories and the resources within. This process of bordering is inherently racialised and classed, systematically restricting the opportunities and freedoms of those racialised as non-white and those deemed less economically productive. This regime necessitates violence in a number of arenas, including border security and control, detention, deportation, and border surveillance.
Border Security and Control

Physical abuse, sexual violence and killings are commonplace both at borders and along the routes people are forced to use to reach and cross them. The militarisation of border guards, alongside a lack of oversight or accountability creates conditions in which state agents are encouraged to inflict suffering to prevent crossings. The injustices in this area include the widespread development and use of ‘less-lethal’ weapons such as ‘sound cannons’, which are widely criticised by human rights observers. Furthermore, at camps such as Calais border force guards routinely confiscate and destroy the food, shelter and possessions of migrants with the express intention of breaking their spirit. In addition, countless people are endangered by negligence, with ‘pushback’ operations by patrol boats intent on preventing migrants reaching ashore having led to thousands of deaths in the Mediterranean and the Channel. The removal of safe routes pushes more and more people into the hands of predatory people traffickers where they are at risk of abuse, torture and slavery.

Detention

The detention system in the UK has one of the most striking records in Europe for abuses, with centres facing countless allegations of abuse, sexual violence, negligence, denial of medical treatment, racial abuse and failure to investigate unlawful deaths. While much resistance to these systems focuses on instances in which detention is indefinite, unlawful
and/or squalid, it is very important to recognise that the physical process of detention is inherently violent and that there are no circumstances in which it is just that a person be detained on the basis of an arbitrary characteristic such as place of birth.

Deportation

Although the rate at which the Home Office has been deporting people has been falling since a high in 2012, the numbers are still shockingly high. The UK tries to remove anyone that they can, often targeting people only convicted of petty crimes (if any) and who in many cases have no memory of living anywhere but the UK, where their entire family and life is located. This rips families apart and often leaves children in precarious situations, while in many cases the deportees are jettisoned into environments which present a clear danger to their safety, without any form of support or protection. Countless people are rushed through legal systems and deported in the middle of the night, relying on the idea that appeals are much more difficult and less often successful when made from abroad.
Border Surveillance

The increased determination to control the borders and tabloid scare stories about ‘lost’ migrants has led to a marked rise in the demand for and development of advanced surveillance systems. These include advanced AI, facial recognition, biometrics, drone observations and invasive offender management software. These technologies are not only deployed at the border to prevent crossings, but also within states in order to track the movement, association and activity of migrants. People are forced to yield an increasing amount of personal data, including biometric information, with little-to-no explanation of how it will be used or their legal rights. Migrants’ phones are taken from them on arrival and often kept for months while they are searched. This is under the auspices of preventing people trafficking, but leaves vulnerable people unable to access social and/or safety networks. The storage, use and sharing of this data raises extensive human rights concerns relating to issues of privacy, civil liberties, racial profiling and the misuse of collected information.
HOW IS IT ENACTED?

(1) Government

Border violence is the result of the decisions and actions of two main groups of actors. It is the government, specifically the Home Office, who create harmful, racist immigration policies. Ever since the non-white subjects of empire began arriving in large numbers post-war, successive British governments have been steadily adding and ammending
immigration legislation in order to make it more and more difficult for racialised people to live and work in Britain. The current ‘hostile environment’ policies explicitly aim to deter migration by making the lives of those without ‘proper’ documentation as dangerous and precarious as possible. This cold-hearted strategy is combined with a drive to make securing and maintaining this documentation as difficult as possible through the imposition of prohibitive fees and deliberately confusing processes. Additionally, the idea that the Home Office can be run as a business has led to skyrocketing costs for those forced to engage with its services.

Although governments are responsible for creating immigration policy, they outsource the implementation of most of this violence to the private sector.
(2) Border Industry

The border regime relies on a vast network of hundreds of companies, many of which are household names. These firms provide and develop the technologies and labour required to make the hostile environment a reality, as well as playing a significant role in promoting these policies and the alarmist, racist, xenophobic narratives which feed into them. Some of the companies most deeply entangled in the UK Border Regime include Accenture, G4S, British Airways, Serco, Mitie and Thales. While for some of these companies their border industry activities are a core activity, there are many roles which are carried out by large multifunctional firms for whom border violence is just a slice of their operations. For example, Amazon, Microsoft and Fujitsu all lend their expertise in information and imaging technology towards the surveilling of migrants. While these services and technologies may only represent a miniscule fraction of the operations of these companies, the resulting violence is significant and cannot be ignored.

There are many similarities between the border industry and the cases of the arms industry and the prison industry, which are more clearly perceived and understood by the general public due to decades of global resistance to both. There are a number of companies who are major players across all of these industries, such as G4S and Mitie. As well as this, these three industries all share similarities in their nature as networks of disparate companies, think tanks and politicians which all reinforce and support one another in service of mutually profiting from suffering.
Just as with the prison industrial complex, the close relationship engendered between politicians and the offending companies creates a dangerous feedback loop. Government creates the opportunity for profit by creating aggressive migration policies which need to be enforced. Private companies jump at this opportunity to line their pockets and the resulting profits drive further investment and innovation in cruelty. These private companies then use this relationship to influence state policy themselves, lobbying government for more aggressive migration policies and more opportunities to profit. That many of these companies stand to profit from both the sales of arms and the oppression of those fleeing creates an incentive to stoke spiralling violence.
Frontline communities have been resisting border violence in a plethora of ways, and there are a number of strategies we can take.
Resist the Hostile Environment

One method is to resist, challenge and push for alternatives to the hostile environment policies of the Home Office. While this may appear to be an insurmountable task at the onset, due to the vast array of interconnected features of the border regime, some links in the chain are particularly vulnerable to pressure from below. The system cannot function without the collaboration and consent of the public, and by refusing to participate we can weaken its reach. It is hoped that this kind of resistance, alongside other forms of lobbying and protest, can force government to abandon its hostile environment policies.

There are a number of campaigns doing this kind of work, from These Walls Must Fall (who campaign for reform in migration detention policy) to the Patients Not Passports movement which supports doctors in refusing to comply with home office requirements. Unis Resist Border Controls (URBC) and People & Planet’s Undoing Borders campaign fight to kick the hostile environment out of universities, demanding that vice-chancellors commit to opposing these policies and doing everything possible to make sure students are not disadvantaged based on immigration status.
MCR STANDS WITH #STANSTEDIS
END HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT!
Dismantle the Border Industry

Another method is to reduce the willingness and ability of the companies to continue enacting border violence on behalf of the Home Office. The enactment of border violence relies on the technology, labour and cruelty of a network of private companies who make up the border industry. *Without the eager cooperation of these companies, the home office’s policies would not be able to translate into violence so easily.*

We cannot demolish the companies, but we can destroy their reputations and their relationships with the state. In order to do this, we should:

- **Stigmatise** involvement in the border industry, increase the social/reputational cost of taking on these contracts
- **Incentivise** investors to move away from the industry by explaining the risks associated with continued investment
- **Fracture** the relationship between the border industry, the government and public institutions such as universities
- **Build** support and coalitions to resist

There are a number of campaigns already doing vital work in this area such as **Reclaim Your Face** and **Stop TUI**. Divest Borders contributes to this aim and acts in solidarity with these campaigns and those affected by border violence.
Our Vision

**NO BORDERS**

Our vision is a **world free from borders**, where arbitrary characteristics have no impact whatsoever on opportunities and outcomes. However, since bordering is so deeply entrenched in the way we navigate, perceive and interact with the world, **it is impossible to fully imagine what this world would look like**. There are way too many dependent factors to be able to advance a clear model of a no borders society in the modern era. However, that we cannot currently formulate a vision does not rule out its possibility. If we are able to take steps in the direction of this ideal, that very process will develop public consciousness to the extent that new scenarios enter the popular imagination. A no borders world is currently distant and fuzzy, but by focusing on the features we know will be inherent to such an ideal and fighting to secure them now, we can approach a point from which the finer details become clearer. It is thus necessary in the medium-term to focus the struggle on achieving a state which we may regard as sub-optimal. This does not make our activism any less radical, as long as we ensure that we do not view such goals as ends in themselves, but rather as **staging posts on the journey to a no borders world where all are free to move, stay and thrive.**
NO VIOLENCE

One feature which we can be sure will be absent from any vision of justice is the violence enacted upon (often racialised) people in order to control, monitor and prevent their movement. We can therefore begin by doing all that we can to bring about an end to the forms of border violence described above. It is also true that in fighting for a world free of border violence, the intrinsic connections between violence and bordering will be made stark. When we come to a popular understanding that the latter cannot exist without the former, we can hope to see a simultaneous development in conversations about a world free from both. Thus if we are able to bring about a world free from border violence, the onward path to a world free from borders will be much shorter and clearer.
This means the withdrawal of all investments from any companies engaged in or supporting violence relating to detention, deportation, surveillance or the use of force in border control. Alongside this (and for any institutions without existing investments in border violence) we demand all universities commit to abstaining from any future investments in the border industry and set up exclusion criteria to compel such behaviour. Therefore, we are calling upon all UK universities:

1. To adopt a publicly available ethical investment policy which excludes border industry companies

2. To exclude border industry companies from their investments

3. To fully divest from current investments in border companies within 3 years
Our Targets

Visit the Divest Borders Webpage to view our Border Industry Divestment List which details the full list of companies from which universities must divest. In short, the list aims to capture all companies engaged in or providing significant support to any of the activities involved in any of the four categories of border violence discussed above. The following are some of our key targets, each with clear records of violence exemplary of their category:

**COMPANY: AIRBUS**
**CATEGORY: BORDER SECURITY AND CONTROL**

Airbus is a European company designing and manufacturing civilian and military aerospace products.

Airbus secured a €50 Million contract to provide The European Border and Coast Guard Agency (aka Frontex) with aerial surveillance drones for the purpose of tracking the movement of migrants in the Mediterranean. This is another dangerous step in the militarisation of borders and opens up many new opportunities for abuses. The use of such drones is increasingly central to bordering strategies.

Airbus have also earned €2 billion providing border surveillance systems to Saudi Arabia, as well as selling border patrol helicopters to Libya and other Mediterranean states. The company supplied equipment for Operations Sophia, Poseidon and Triton, which involved illegal ‘push-back’ manoeuvres and have been criticised for blocking asylum seekers from claiming protection.
Serco Group PLC is a UK-based company providing outsourcing services to governments and corporations around the world, with an annual revenue of approximately £3 billion. Recently this has included the delivery of the UK’s failed track and trace system, but they have secured several lucrative contracts with the Home Office over the last decade. Serco runs three out of the seven immigration removal centres (IRCs) in the UK. In 2007 they took over the management of Yarl’s Wood IRC in Bedfordshire, and in 2014 were awarded a £70 million renewal through to 2023. Since 2020 they have also been responsible for the operation of Brook House and Tinsley House IRCs near Gatwick.

To maximise profits from these fixed-sum contracts, Serco pushes down running costs at the expense of the safety and welfare of the people they incarcerate. They have been the subject of a number of investigations into human rights abuses, with documented examples of squalid conditions, neglect and alarming rates of self-harm within their facilities. There have also been numerous allegations of sexual assault of inmates by guards at Yarl’s Wood, and in 2015 a UN rapporteur on violence against women was blocked from entering to investigate.

Serco were also responsible for the eviction of over 300 asylum seekers from the accommodation that they were contracted to provide, leaving them in a highly vulnerable position in the middle of winter.
COMPANY: TUI
CATEGORY: DEPORTATION

TUI Group is the largest tourism group in Europe, operating five airlines across the continent with flights to over 150 destinations worldwide. The British arm, TUI Airways (formerly Thomson Airways), has sought to redress pandemic-induced revenue reductions not only by laying off staff, but also by taking on an increasing number of mass deportation charter flights on behalf of the Home Office. This despite the owner’s holding company making over €100million euros in dividends from TUI in 2019, and the CEO pocketing €1.7million as salary in 2020.

To prevent public solidarity with migrants and to keep these activities in the shadows, the Home Office uses non-commercial charter flights to undertake its violent immigration removals. The destinations of these flights are often countries that have been victims of British colonialism and ongoing economic imperialism, including Jamaica, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, as well as Vietnam.

The airline has been responsible for the vast majority of such deportation flights from the UK since August 2020, with at least 21 flights conducted by TUI in 2021. In November 2020 alone, TUI conducted nine mass deportations to 19 destinations as part of ‘Operation Sillath’, the Home Office’s pre-Brexit rush to expel as many refugees as possible under the Dublin Regulation before leaving the EU.

TUI has also been accused of pressuring hotels in the Canary Islands to stop providing shelter and support to African migrants arriving by boat, arguing that their presence will impact the islands’ image in the eyes of TUI customers.
Accenture is one of the world’s largest multinational firms, making $43.2 billion revenue in 2019 from IT and consultancy services. Within these operations, Accenture has been instrumental in the creation and maintenance of the EU’s ‘virtual border walls’ which seek to track and control the movement of migrants across the continent.

The company has played a significant role in lobbying European governments for more hawkish immigration policy and more heavily militarised borders. Accenture propagated the threat that terrorists could be posing as refugees in order to create demands for their biometric security systems, which harvest, store and share the biometric data of migrants. The presence of these systems makes it much more likely that migrants will be detained and deported, and thus lessens the number of safe migration routes leading to increased dependence on human traffickers.

Accenture has also been responsible for the training needs of border agencies across Europe including in Greece, Bulgaria and Turkey, where increasing violence has been observed from militarised border security forces. The company was also involved in the creation of Aadhar in India, the world’s largest biometric registration system. This system has been the subject of significant criticism, with concerns that it will create an underclass of undocumented Indians and migrants now unable to access essential services.
Why Universities? Why Divestment?

UK universities are deeply entangled in the border industry, with their investments, research and partnerships forming a crucial link in the production and legitimation of border violence. While the scales of sums in question are not so significant that taking away university investments will cripple the industry financially, it is a vital step in the right direction. Importantly, universities occupy a respected role in a society which widely regards them as beacons of forward thinking. While university investment in the border industry can be seen as explicit approval of such cruelty, a commitment from such institutions to divest from these practices would be a huge statement delegitimising the industry and stigmatising those who participate in and profit from it. While many of the private companies which enact the cruelty of the UK border regime don’t care what you think, universities are vulnerable to pressure from below. Universities depend on positive publicity and
are very keen to prevent negative headlines which could repel prospective students, staff or investments. We have to make sure universities know that any financial benefits of their investments in the border industry will be heavily outweighed by the reputational damage they will suffer.

This divestment approach has been extremely successful in the climate justice movement, with over 90 universities committing to divest from fossil fuels in the last decade. There is also strong precedence in the arena of migrant justice. In 2015, grassroots campaigners in Australia launched a divestment campaign targeting the state's offshore immigration detention centres. They created such a stigma around involvement with the abuses happening at such sites that no private companies were willing to bid for the government contracts to run them leading to the closure of several sites.
Universities aren’t isolated bubbles, they are connected to and shaped by the same systems that foster global injustice, just as they are shaped by workers’ and students’ struggles to reclaim universities as spaces of learning and curiosity, and of knowledge creation that benefits society. To organise for climate and social justice at our universities, we have to understand the battleground we are fighting on. Right now, our universities have been thrown into financial crisis by this pandemic. Just as in other spheres of society, the pandemic has shown whom those with power are willing to de-prioritise and ignore. We have seen university staff on temporary and outsourced contracts being made redundant and laid off during a pandemic. We have also seen students struggling to pay rent, migrant students with No Recourse to Public Funds struggling to buy food, while being further saddled with lifelong debt to pay off their fees. Under the Hostile Environment migrant students and staff continue being monitored and surveilled by their own universities, who are acting as over-compliant border guards to fulfil the Home Office’s requirements. All this, while we watch our departments continue tying up with fossil fuels, arms, and border industry corporations while our VCs go to dinner with their execs. Now more than ever, the chronic lack of public funding in education and universities’ reliance on international students fees and corporate money becomes apparent.
Our fight for migrant justice at universities has never been only about investments. Across campaigns, students have been making the case for institutions that don’t serve the interests of corporations, but those of our society. This fight is now more important than ever. Universities that invest in border industry companies, that provide ‘education services’ to the staff of such offenders, and who treat their own students with suspicion and contempt, are universities who will always prioritise profit and these corporations over students and staff. Through over 10 years of marketisation, our institutions have become well-oiled machines that graduate bankers, engineers or researchers that move on to work for the cruel, unjust industries. And what’s even more worrying, is that people seem to have accepted it. The neoliberal university has stolen our collective capacity to imagine a better future. That is why, in the context of a pandemic, an impending economic collapse, a looming climate crisis, and increasing push factors for migration, divestment on campus is fundamental. We need to fight for universities that foster our collective creativity to respond to these crises. We need liberated institutions that allow us the space and freedom to imagine, and build, a more just society. Divestment from the border industry is one piece of that puzzle. In solidarity with the struggles of staff, migrants, anti-arm, anti-racist and BDS campaigners at universities, we can together work towards truly liberated, revolutionary futures.
When we call for divestment, we stand in solidarity with those most deeply affected by the UK’s border regime. What do we mean by this?

*WHENEVER WE CAMPAIGN, WE SHOULD REMEMBER THAT THERE ARE AFFECTED COMMUNITIES ALREADY LEADING THE RESISTANCE TO THOSE COMPANIES ON THE FRONTLINES.*
These are the families resisting deportation, detainees fighting to highlight the cruelty they suffer, the vulnerable people fleeing crises created by the West, and all those whose livelihoods and lifestyles are shaped by their immigration status. For these communities this struggle is often a matter of life and death. We take our inspiration from them, and they direct our tone, messaging and actions. True solidarity is about locating your own position(s) within an exploitative global system, and utilising it to challenge that same structure.

For example, from our position as campaigners in the Global North (where most of these violent policies, technologies and companies emanate from) we are able to influence decision-makers more effectively than many of those on the frontlines. Furthermore, the privileges afforded by a British passport allow owners to take actions which may be too risky for those with insecure immigration status. It is our job to listen to those most affected by the border regime, and to use our privileges to support their struggles in any way that they require.
Campaign Tactics

1. Build your Group

1. Build a Team

All good campaigns start with a strong team. Get together with your friends and start recruiting a variety of people to campaign with you. You can put out a call on social media for people to join you, get in touch with like-minded societies, or ask your SU officers to put you in touch with other interested students. Try to get a space at freshers’ fairs (whether online or in person) and see if you can borrow a minute or two at the end of lectures or events to shout out the campaign.

2. Hold a Social

Socials are a great way for people to get to know each other! What you want to do is up to you, but make sure it’s fun! If you need any help organising a digital social event (such as a quiz or escape room) get in touch with us.

3. Hold your first meeting

Arrange an open meeting of your People and Planet group to talk about starting the Divest Borders campaign. You can create a Facebook event to publicise it widely, and ask supportive societies to share it with their members. Make sure that you end the meeting by giving clear next steps on how to get involved: schedule your next meeting, take contact info and distribute any action points. For more resources on building a cohesive campaigning group, check out our Movement Building Action Guide!
2. Research and Plan

PART I: RESEARCHING YOUR UNIVERSITY

The campaign you run will depend on your university - they’re all different. An understanding of the context at your university is invaluable when it comes to planning your campaign. In order to know what success will look like for your group, and how to go about achieving it, there are a number of questions you should try to answer. These can be grouped into three areas:

INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY & PUBLIC IMAGE

1. How has the uni responded to past divestment efforts? (South Africa, Fossil Fuels)? You can check its Fossil Free Scorecard here.
2. How do the institution and decision-makers try to create/maintain a good public image? Can statements they have made or causes they have supported be used to support your arguments?
3. Are any of the student papers more supportive than others?

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE & PROCEDURES

1. What is the decision-making structure of the university?
2. How much power does the Student Union have? Are there any more supportive officers? Are there any other ways students can be heard?
3. Can you identify any groups or individuals who may be influential supporters? Which societies can you form coalitions with?

INSTITUTIONAL INVESTMENTS

1. Who has decision-making power over investments? Which bodies would need to sign-off on a divestment commitment, and how do they make their decisions?
2. What border industry companies are the institutions invested in, both directly through stocks and indirectly via funds? Is there any stand-out posterboy? Do they have any partnerships or other connections?
3. Does the university have an investment policy? Is there any language about social responsibility?
To make your campaign as strong as possible it’s important to know who you will have to influence. Based on the answers to the questions above, map out all the key decision-makers who will be involved along the path to divestment. Try to identify the expected level of support/opposition to your campaign, and any weaknesses you may be able to exploit. For example, if the VC sits on the board of a human rights organisation to boost their public image, use this to highlight their hypocrisy. Check out our sample power map below:

Based on the context at your institution, as revealed in the power map, you should then put together a campaign plan. This is a living document that you can use to order your thoughts and set clear benchmarks that will help keep your campaign on track. Use this in regular meetings to check on your progress towards the milestones you’ve set for yourselves.
3. Build Support

At the moment, the idea of the border industry isn't something which is widely understood, and the abuses and cruelty which accompany it are largely hidden. One of the most important things that we can do is to raise awareness of the scale and nature of these injustices so as to inspire more widespread resistance.

GET SOCIAL

With so much organising happening digitally in recent years, having a social media presence has become fundamental. Create Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts for your campaign so that you can regularly update your supporters with news and calls to action. Engage with your audience, answer questions and spread your vision! Get in touch if you’d like a Social Media Workshop for your group.

PETITION/OPEN LETTER

Petitions are a fantastic way for new supporters to contribute to the campaign! You can use our petition tool to start one. If you do, you will also be able to create a mailing list and email the signatories about campaign updates and further actions they can take. Open letters are another useful tool to publicise the campaign’s reasoning and demands while allowing alumni, academics and societies to show their support. Think about how you will amplify these on social media - it is important to reach outside your followers to gain wider support!

FILM SCREENING OR TALK

See if you can find a documentary or film which speaks to issues of migrant justice and host a screening with a discussion afterwards. Invite speakers from other groups running campaigns with similar themes to come and share learnings from their experiences. Get in touch with us if you need any help with this.
Build Coalitions and Practice Solidarity

Solidarity does not exist only in theory - it demands action. Solidarity is the practice of using our time, position, skills and resources to struggle alongside other people for our shared goal - our collective liberation. It is the recognition that no one is free until we are all free - that our struggles are all interconnected.

It’s likely that on your campus and in your area, you won’t be the only group fighting for justice. There could be students demanding the university divest from other areas, such as fossil fuels, arms or Israeli Apartheid. Other groups could be supporting the day-to-day struggles of migrants through mutual aid networks or legal support. There may already be a group targeting a particular border industry company, such as the StopTui Campaign which demands Tui cease to run deportation flights. There are also unions, who exist to represent students and staff in their struggles against institutions. It is crucial that we act in solidarity with these struggles, and form coalitions with like-minded groups wherever possible.
You might have been campaigning for a while, whilst others might just be starting out. Offer to share what you have learned, but don’t be patronising! You could organise skillshares, or help with a task such as drafting a press release. Make sure you don’t assume people don’t know how to do something, always ask what support you can provide. If you have time, join their campaign group and organise with them. Make sure you take care of yourself though – don’t get overworked! It is also important to remember that experiences of protests and confrontation can vary greatly based on a person’s identity. If you are less susceptible to such prejudicial treatment and feel comfortable to do so, consider offering your services to be most visible – you might be needed! It is important that the voices of those affected remain centred.

**OFFER YOUR SKILLS, TIME AND BODY**

Is another campaign holding an event? Show up and show your support! Have they just launched a petition? Sign it, and share it on your social media! Are they holding an action? Participate if you can, and ask if there’s any ways that you can support them behind the scenes! It is important that you don’t expect anything in return, and that you don’t show up at these events just to push your own agenda, however important you feel it might be. In supporting another group’s fight, you will inspire others to show solidarity with yours and other causes.

**SHOW UP, WITHOUT EXPECTING ANYTHING**
4. Negotiate and Escalate

THE INSIDE ROUTE

At some point you will likely need to engage in ‘inside track’ campaigning, making demands of the institution’s administration via the established channels. Once you’ve demonstrated support for the campaign and begun to turn up the heat on management, request a meeting with key staff to make your case for divestment. This must be a serious and reasoned argument, and you should prepare responses for likely counter-arguments. Be sure to do all stages of this as a group to ensure a collective voice is represented and everybody feels supported. Think about the skills in your group and distribute roles based on each of your strengths. Publicise the fact that you’ve got the meeting on social media beforehand, and what you will be trying to get out of it. Update people afterwards too, as this all brings a greater level of accountability. During the meeting, be clear on your aims and agenda and don’t be afraid to repeatedly steer the conversation back to these core issues. These meetings can be very stressful even if they go well, so be sure to grab a coffee together straight afterwards to talk it through and compare notes. If the uni agrees to anything, send a follow up email to confirm this and attach dates to it.

THE ‘OUTSIDE’ ROUTE

If you think that the uni is not listening to you, wasting your time or engaging in bad faith, don’t be afraid to take bold action. Often the things students fear will anger or alienate institution management are exactly what is required to make the university take the campaign seriously. You can disrupt online open days, organise a tweetstorm or coordinate a banner drop in a prominent location. Think about reaching out to alumni - a reduction in donations to the university will always be noticed. If your university has famous graduates, statements of support from them could be very powerful. Get the press involved! Even if it’s just local and student media, good coverage can really put pressure on university management.
5. Win

When your institution is about to make a decision on your Divest Borders campaign, you need to be ready for any outcome. This means preparing your press releases, but also having plans in place for celebration or escalation actions if required. The border industry is vast and the level and form of involvement varies from company to company. As a result, there may be situations in which universities are willing to divest from some of our targets, but not all. While this is still a cause for celebration, you will need to keep pushing. Don’t be shy - you won’t lose the gains you’ve made by keeping the campaign going. Keeping up the pressure means your university is more likely to stick to its word and take your demands seriously.

YOU’VE WON! WHAT NOW?

SHARE

Make sure you share your story on social media and beyond. Write blogs, give interviews, share resources, and run workshops to let others learn from your success and what you’ve done well. Big successes are inspirational and your story will encourage others to start campaigns or take theirs up a notch, so it’s really important that you spread the word!

PUBLICISE

If it’s a victory, there is a lot of work to be done to publicise your win and get the story out to the press. You’ll need to appoint media spokespeople, write press releases and be ready with photos. Contact People & Planet if you need help with any of this!

CELEBRATE

Have a party to celebrate all the amazing things that you’ve achieved! It’s vital to mark successes and share them with the wider movement, whether digitally or in person.
6. Follow Through

Make sure that the university delivers on its commitments. There have been numerous occasions in the past when universities have tried to take advantage of the high turnover of student organisers to squirm out of their promises.

**Take Action:** When the university committed to divestment, there should have been dates attached to the promises with clear means of tracking the progress towards them. If you see that the university is falling short of these targets, it may be time to take action to remind them of their duties. Publicise management’s own words and draw wide attention to their hypocrisy.

**Campaign Handovers:** While campaigners graduate and leave, it doesn’t mean the campaign has to stop, or that the university will no longer face scrutiny for its actions. Before you leave, pass on all the important information about the campaign to those who are staying on. This includes both tactical advice and what the university has committed to, as well as relevant contacts and passwords to access all campaign files. Cambridge Zero Carbon society has written an amazing blog post about this, check it out.
As a campaigner, your job is to make journalists’ jobs as easy as possible so they’re most likely to run your story. **Research journalists at different publications** who have run similar stories recently, and get in touch with them before an action to feed them advance details. It’s important to send **press releases** whenever you do an action and at other strategic moments. They should contain everything needed to write an article: the who, what, where, when and why of the story. Try to include photos and further reading if possible.

You may want to use local and student media to run comment articles breaking down the aims of the Divest Borders campaign and why people should get involved.
We can provide you with logos, fonts and colour codes to use in your designs!

Check out our other guides:

- Collective Liberation Guide
- Digital Organising Guide
- Movement Building Action Guide

Further reading:

- Vice - How the $68 Billion Border Surveillance Industrial Complex Affects Us All
- The Ferret - Critics condemn the UK’s increasingly privatised immigration industry
- TNI Report - Financing Border Wars
- Corporate Watch - The UK Border Regime

We offer interactive training to groups on any of these topics:

- Divest Borders Introduction
- Introduction to Activism
- Running Digital Actions
- Introduction to Facilitation
- Building a Movement
- Campaign Strategy
- University Governance
- Action Planning
- Working with Student Unions
- Research for Campaigns
- Press and Local Media
- Social Media and Petitions
Decolonisation
The undoing of colonialism; the process of recognising and healing the violence of the empire, and resisting the new ways in which colonial legacies continue to act in the present.

Imperialism
The policies, processes and practices by which the political and economic interest of a nation or industry exert power over another community.

Capitalism
A system in which the means of production are mostly owned privately and operated for profit, concentrating resources and power and relying on the oppression and exploitation of the majority.

White supremacy and racism
A system of white superiority and dominance based on the oppression and exploitation of people of colour.

Intersectionality
A theory of power and struggle that understands social identities - and their related systems of oppression - to be interconnected and mutually reinforcing. For example, someone’s experience of sexism will not only be affected by their gender identity, but by other components of their social reality, such as their class, race, ability, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.
Thank you for taking the time to read the Divest Borders Action Guide! We hope it will be useful in planning and running your campaign. Please do get in contact with People & Planet for support - we can answer any questions you have, put you in contact with other groups and publicise your progress to the wider movement!

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