Fossil Free Action Guide

Reinvest in a Just Transition

people & planet

Student action on world poverty and the environment
WHY JUST TRANSITION?

The sun is setting on the fossil fuel industry. Oil and gas firms are collectively in $2.5 trillion worth of debt and it is predicted that $1 trillion of projects will be cancelled over the next couple of years. Accelerated by frontline resistance and an ever-growing fossil fuel divestment campaign, dirty energy is facing an irreversible crisis: it is simply too risky to continue.

However, the struggle is far from over – in fact, there is more at stake now than ever before. Just because the industry is in crisis does not mean the oppressive power structures it is based on will collapse too. As resources deplete, exploitative, colonial practices – which concentrate power and capital in the hands of a few – will intensify, making energy distribution even more undemocratic and inaccessible to the world’s most vulnerable communities.

This is why we must fight for reinvestment in a just transition. This particular transition acknowledges that the fossil fuel industry is built on imperialism, racism and economic injustice – therefore, any transition to a fossil free era must actively undo these legacies. It must be transformative, and based on a politics of liberation, reparative justice and universal energy access. We are at a crossroads. We must prioritise building effective solidarity with frontline communities in their decades-long struggle for energy democracy. An alternative world is on the horizon, and now is the time to fight for it.

“WE DEMAND A JUST TRANSITION AWAY FROM AN ECONOMY DEPENDENT ON FOSSIL FUEL EXTRACTION AND OTHER DIRTY INDUSTRIES TOWARDS CLEAN LOCAL ENERGY, AND TO BE FREE FROM PROFIT-HUNGRY ENERGY CORPORATIONS AND CREATE DEMOCRATIC RENEWABLE ENERGY”

INDIGENOUS RISING

Thanks to Jo Ram (Community Reinvest & Platform) and Laura Clayson (NUS) for their contributions to this resource.
The destructive force of the fossil fuel industry is not limited to physical devastation of land. The industry’s prevailing business model, in which profit is privileged above welfare, has disenfranchised communities (particularly in the Global South) by denying them access to the energy that is essential for a dignified life.

As we move out of the fossil fuel era, it is crucial that we do not reproduce this for-profit model of energy distribution. Specifically, we must not reproduce exploitative and colonial energy practices that the fossil fuel industry has normalized.

Instead, we must call for true energy democracy: the inspiring vision of renewable energy produced under participatory popular control and ownership, distributed in ways that prioritise social justice and universal energy access.

A survivable and just energy future means breaking the grip of elite interests on our energy systems, ending dependency, increasing autonomy, building democratic structures – and of course, leaving fossil fuels in the ground.

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**“AT ITS MOST TRANSFORMATIVE, DIVEST/REINVEST PROPOSES TRANSFERRING MONEY TO COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY, GOOD QUALITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING, FREE EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE, UNIVERSAL HEALTHCARE, A FAIR AND JUST ENERGY SYSTEM, A DECENT WELFARE SYSTEM, AND OTHER SOCIAL ENDS”**

JO RAM, COMMUNITY REINVEST, WRITING FOR RED PEPPER

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**CASE STUDY: PEOPLE POWER - THE NORTHERN CHEYENNE TRIBE**

For decades, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Southeastern Montana have been fighting coal mining on the reservation’s eastern flank. Those in the community were forcefully opposed to the risks associated with coal plants, but knew that to win, they needed an alternative. So rather than just saying no, the community demanded government policies that would not only allow them to generate their own clean power but, earn revenue in the process. With a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Northern Cheyenne Tribe embarked on a project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and produce energy through the installation of solar panels, serving as a model for other tribes on the reservation. Additionally, the tribe uses the project as a training tool to develop energy efficiency by training community members to become solar-heater installers, while raising community awareness about climate change, renewable energy, and energy democracy. The Northern Cheyenne Tribe effectively demonstrates how renewable energy can not only provide an alternative to extraction for indigenous communities around the world, but also provide skills training, jobs and steady revenue streams for the impoverished, beginning a just transition away from coal.

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**COMMUNITY REINVEST**

Community Reinvest believes that with divestment and reinvestment, it is possible to create flourishing low carbon, local economies.

This resource was created in collaboration with them.

communityreinvest.org.uk
ENERGY DEMOCRACY

THE FIGHT FOR ENERGY DEMOCRACY IS A VITAL PART OF ANY JUST TRANSITION

The divest/reinvest movement must recognise and insist that investing in ‘green’ companies is not enough. The for-profit model of renewable energy stands to reproduce the current exploitative and colonial practices of the extractivist fossil fuel industry.

Green colonialism is already causing large-scale land dispossession and the transfer of vast tracts of land from food to energy production.

Instead, we must call for true energy democracy: the inspiring vision of renewable energy produced under participatory popular control and ownership, distributed in ways that prioritise social justice and universal energy access.

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LAND GRABS IN SOUTHERN MEXICO

In the Tehuantepec Isthmus, where Indigenous communities have a strong attachment to the land and favour local governance of resources, land grabbing has involved coercion, manipulation of information, and repression. Fourteen wind parks have been constructed and many more are under way precisely because corporations have relied on illegal practices. Embedded in this process of land dispossession is the rejection that the Zapotec, Ixoot or Mixe peoples can possess knowledge of the world. But the Indigenous peoples of this region have a long-standing tradition of fighting against what they perceive as unjust and defending what is rightly theirs.

- Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez (Zapotec)

DISPLACEMENT IN NORTHERN KENYA

Lake Turkana Wind Power (LTWP) is building Africa’s largest wind farm in Northern Kenya, on illegally acquired land. The project is causing violence, displacement of indigenous communities and irreparable damage to a fragile region of high biological and cultural diversity.

This futile and destructive project, and the 428km transmission line being built especially for it, constitute striking examples of climate colonialism: land, wealth and opportunities are stolen, in the name of ‘sustainability’, from poor nations and vulnerable indigenous peoples.

We support the development of renewable energy, but we will not allow a single acre of our land to be leased, sold, appropriated or otherwise controlled by LTWP. We pledge to defend our heritage from neo-colonial intruders and invaders. We owe it to our ancestors and future generations.

We invite international civil society to join our efforts to reverse LTWP’s land grab, and to build just and truly sustainable renewable energy alternatives.

- Sarima Indigenous Peoples’ Land Forum
**WHAT IS DECOLONISATION?**

What is decolonisation, and what has it got to do with climate justice? To understand decolonisation, we must first ask ourselves: what was colonialism? At its heart, European colonialism was the first mass-scale extractivist movement; it extracted human and natural resources in the Global South for the economic benefit of elite classes mainly in the Global North. It was unique both in its breadth (the geographical space it covered) and its depth (the extent to which it controlled every part of political, economic, social and cultural life).

This is the context in which the modern fossil fuel industry was born. The ability of dirty energy companies to destroy land in pursuit of its resources relies on the idea that the lives and livelihoods of those who live on it do not matter; that they have no right to community or self-determination. In other words, it relies on racism. Indeed, rampant fossil fuel extraction is one of the clearest, most direct modern-day legacies of colonialism.

Decolonisation acknowledges this historical connection between racism, capitalism, ecological destruction and other systems of oppression. It recognizes that to undo one of these systems, you must undo them all.

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**DECOLONISING REINVESTMENT**

The COP21 Paris climate agreement’s goal to limit global temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius will require $13.5 trillion investment in new renewable power globally over the next 25 years. This includes an additional $5.2 trillion of investment in wind, solar, geothermal and other zero-emission power sources. This level of investment has the ability to not only limit the devastation inflicted on the world’s most vulnerable by climate change, but also could contribute to reshaping current exploitative economic and social systems.

To achieve this international goal of limiting global temperature rise, 80% of remaining unexploited fossil fuels must be kept in the ground in contention with the vast vested interests of the fossil fuel industry. This can only be achieved by creating a mass movement that brings together frontline and indigenous communities, divestment campaigners, racial justice and other social justice movements.

Some of the most marginalised and economically deprived communities, who have been oppressed by colonial practices for centuries, hold the rights to land that contains vast swathes of these unexploited fossil fuel reserves. While many of these communities continue to lead some of the most successful movements to keep fossil fuels in the ground, promises of jobs and economic development from fossil fuel companies can fracture communities and undermine their movements. In order to support them in their struggles to keep fossil fuels in the

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**JARGON**

**DECOLONIZATION** the undoing of colonialism; the process of recognising and healing the crimes of the empire, as well as resisting the ways in which colonial legacies continue to act in the present. More Jargon Busting at back pages...

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**“DECOLONIZATION IS MORE THAN A STRUGGLE AGAINST POWER AND CONTROL; IT IS ALSO THE IMAGINING AND GENERATING OF ALTERNATIVE INSTITUTIONS AND RELATIONS”**

HARSHA WALIA, UNDOING BORDER IMPERIALISM

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**“ALL OUR STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE AROUND THE WORLD – FOR EQUALITY, FOOD SECURITY, ECONOMIC FAIRNESS, HUMAN RIGHTS, DECENT WORK, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND MORE – ARE INTERCONNECTED AND TIED UP IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST RUNAWAY CLIMATE CHANGE”**

THE WRETCHED OF THE EARTH - GLOBAL FRONTLINES
ground we must centre our demands for reinvestment on solutions led by these communities which break the colonial cycle and provide economic development on their terms.

In order to succeed in tackling climate change decolonisation must be at the heart of any Just Transition. We must learn from history and reject ‘solutions’ that further oppress frontline communities and place profit above indigenous and human rights.

Some ‘green’ companies are already involved in large-scale land dispossession. This is merely a reproduction of the extractivist fossil fuel industry’s colonial practices, which have historically been responsible for displacement, poverty and cultural genocide. This is because they are still allowed to operate a business model that precludes any democratic control over energy. It does not ask the question: who controls energy, and for whose benefit? Democratisation of energy is needed to prioritise social justice and universal energy access.

This undemocratic business model also does not centre reparative justice. The fossil fuel industry has historically damaged indigenous frontline communities. A decolonial, just transition recognises this historical damage, and works to compensate for it – financially or otherwise. Creating a framework for communities to begin a process of healing must remain central.

**TOWARDS DECOLONIAL ENERGY DEMOCRACY**

**RECOGNISE** the historical, colonial damage of the fossil fuel industry and the violent, disenfranchising effects it has in the modern day.

**RESIST** the dominant, profit-driven agenda of large energy corporations and their allies.

**RECLAIM** the public sphere parts of the energy economy that have been privatised or marketised.

**RESTRUCTURE** the global energy system to massively scale up renewable and low carbon energy, with community and democratic control over the energy sector.

**REPAIR** and compensate frontline communities for this historical damage.

“**THERE IS NO MORE POTENT WEAPON IN THE BATTLE AGAINST FOSSIL FUELS THAN THE CREATION OF REAL ALTERNATIVES**”

*NAOMI KLEIN*

*THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING*
PRINCIPLES OF REINVESTMENT

1. **Builds Community Wealth**
   Resources, particularly financial, should shift from a few large institutions (banks and markets) to many smaller, diverse institutions in which the benefits of investment are distributed among more people and communities.

2. **Shifts Economic Control**
   Invest in companies whose finances prioritise the interests of workers, communities, and the success of the enterprise rather than focusing solely on the profit of investors. These models offer a greater social, ecological, and economic return.

3. **Democratises the Workplace**
   Investments in the new economy should support and increase worker ownership, democracy, and rights in places of work and in the economy as a whole.

4. **Drives Social Equity**
   Investment should actively work against current and historic social inequities based on race, class, gender, immigrant status and other forms of oppression.

5. **Advances Regenerative Ecological Economics**
   Investment should be in economic activity that advances ecological resilience, reduces resource consumption, restores traditional ways of life, and undermines the extractive economy (dependence on fossil fuels) that is eroding the ecological basis of our collective well-being.

Starting your reinvestment campaign with such high ideals and principles may seem daunting. You will be told that these goals aren’t achievable and that Finance Managers won’t take you seriously.

These people will be right in some respects. There aren’t enough investment ready financial projects in place that will fulfi l all these principles and decision makers will need to be brought on board through effective arguments.

This isn’t something new. When students started campaigning for their universities to shift their investments out of South Africa or making the case for the carbon bubble and fossil fuel divestment this was also the case.

While there are groups working on investable projects that will feed into a just transition, we need more innovation. UK universities are leading the way on divesting from fossil fuels, with more institutions making fossil free investment decisions than any other country. They have the chance to be at the forefront of this innovation by investing in projects that are able to reshape society, but the only way this will happen is if we take this opportunity to reshape the debate.

6. **Shifts Primary Production and Consumption**
   Investment should support growth in the sustainability of renewable energy and manufacturing sector.

7. **Strengthens the Public Sector**
   Investment should shift resources from the corporate sector to the public sector, where most appropriate, in addition to building the people’s economy. For example, investments that support public sector infrastructure in zero-waste, clean energy, transportation, etc. are key to a just transition and a regenerative economy.

**PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS: SWITCHED ON LONDON**

*Switched On London* is campaigning for a publicly owned energy company. It’s setting out to create an affordable, democratic and environmentally sustainable alternative to the Big Six. A company with social justice, clean energy and democracy at its core. This is the kind of energy democracy universities should be investing in. For that to happen we both need to win.

**Just a start...** These principles are a starting point for reinvestment and your group may want to adapt or add new ones.
WHY INTERSECTIONAL?

The UK and US have poured trillions into failed banks. But, they’ve failed to pay for a climate crisis they have caused. The fabric of our politics and economics is broken. We need systemic change.

To transition to renewables in the UK, we need £13 billion. For a global transition, we need $13 trillion. To make this possible, we need everyone to work together.

The politicians that allow our environment to be devastated, promote trade deals that threaten health and social services while exploiting people in the Global South have no problem finding the money to bail out banks or wage illegal wars, and yet routinely fail to invest in public transport and housing or protect workers here and in our global supply chains.

An economic system that allows corporations to profit from climate disaster, also allows them to profit from conflict, inhumane labour conditions, torture, forced migration, mass imprisonment and more. It’s a system that fuels local and global inequality, as the wealthy profit from the same conditions that deprive the majority of people of their basic needs.

Building a solution to the climate crisis includes rebuilding and reviving local economies, rebalancing global inequities, reclaiming democracy from corrosive corporate influence, having a humane response to migration, blocking harmful trade deals, investing in public infrastructure like national rail and affordable housing, and taking back ownership of our essential services.

DO THE MATH II

Simply shifting global investments from fossil fuels to low-carbon industries doesn’t provide half of what is needed to transition to renewables. If all institutions reinvested the money they hold in fossil fuel companies into renewables we would not reach the $13 trillion needed to transition to renewables.

The fossil fuel industry has profited from exploiting the environment and frontline communities from the Niger Delta to the Gulf of Mexico and beyond. Those living on the periphery of world development such as residents of small island states and Bangladeshi and Syrian farmers are among the first to experience the impacts of climate change. Those who have and will suffer the most acutely are also those who are least responsible for the crisis to date.

Arms companies are selling to the Middle-East & North African region while at the same time providing border security services. They should not be able to profit from war twice, first by arming states, and then by helping other states keep the dispossessed out.

Universities should break financial ties with other companies that are driving injustice in the world, including but not limited to arms companies, tobacco and companies complicit in Israeli apartheid. By moving money out of systematically unethical companies, we can begin the process of filling the finance gap, bringing us one step closer to a just transition, and a just world.

“THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS NEITHER TRUMPS NOR DISTRACTS FROM OUR MOST PRESSING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CAUSES: IT SUPERCHARGES EACH ONE OF THEM WITH EXISTENTIAL URGENCY”

NAOMI KLEIN
THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING

$12.1 TRN
LOW-CARBON INVESTMENT NEEDED TO AVOID 2°C GLOBAL TEMP RISE

$5 TRN
GLOBAL INVESTMENT IN FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES

$0.13 TRN
GLOBAL INVESTMENT IN ISRAELI PRISONS AND ISRAELI OCCUPATION

$0.6 TRN
GLOBAL INVESTMENT IN TOP 20 ARMS COMPANIES
WHO SHOULD WE WORK WITH?

In most social change situations there is a struggle between those who want change and those who don’t. To win we don’t need everyone on our side, but we do need a large amount of people to agree with us.

A spectrum of allies analysis will help identify the groups near you who you can collaborate with.

Groups that you might find on campus that could be passive allies open to becoming active allies by joining your coalition:
- Black Lives Matter groups
- Palestine solidarity groups
- Migrant solidarity groups
- Anti-arms campaigners
- Anti-racist campaigners
- Feminist societies
- Workers’ rights campaigners
- Students’ Union
- Sustainability department
- Housing rights campaigners
- Fair trade campaigners
- Save our NHS groups
- Anti-cuts groups
- Liberation groups

BUILDING PRINCIPLED COALITIONS

So, you have decided who you want to reach out to. Coalitions build power and voice. We cannot win alone.

Our organising should reflect the values of solidarity that we want reflected in our sustainable and just world. Coalitions are an indispensable way of building towards the world we want.

Principles of effective coalition building include being open about:
- your motivations;
- how flexible you are about changing your goals depending on feedback from stakeholders;
- your capacity and the different levels of engagement you would all like to contribute;
- whether you will actually show up to an event, sign a petition, or participate in an occupation.

Listen, communicate, keep your promises (or let people know in advance if you can’t).

SPECTRUM OF ALLIES

In most social change campaigns it isn’t necessary to bring your opponents to your point of view, even if the opponents are power-holders, although it can hasten the win. It’s only necessary to move each of the pie wedges one step in your direction.

It’s a huge win if you can get a group that was slightly hostile to move into neutrality. It’s a huge win if you can get the group/wedge next to your end of the spectrum to move into activism with you.

Sometimes polarisation happens, and the wedges closest to the opponent move away from you and toward the opponent. You can still win, if a large enough proportion of society takes a step in your direction.
STEP 2 BUILD SUPPORT

Building support is not just about mobilising students and academics but also taking time to socialise, get to know and trust each other, and build people’s confidence enough so they can become active, effective organisers.

As well as building support you also need to show it exists to the university. There are many ways in which you can demonstrate to the university the power of your coalition of support:

LAUNCH PETITION

An effective way to build your campaign and put pressure on your institution is through a petition.

Get started by creating your own online petition using our tool. You’ll have full control over the wording and design of your petition, and the tool allows you to share it easily on social media and build your contacts list – you can email the people who have signed to keep them updated about your campaign progress and events.

Visit our petition site: 
campaigns.gofossilfree.org/partnerships/fossil-free-uk

Just click the New Campaign button to start your own petition.

RUN JOINT STALLS

A real strength of the fossil free movement is that it is an inherently intersectional issue – Climate change is a race issue, a feminist issue and a class issue. It’s all connected and it’s important to observe this intersection.

Running a joint stall on campus with other student groups can unite students organising for other forms of social justice and enhance the movement. It allows access to a broader base of supporters and therefore will reach a wider audience, gaining more influence. A stall made up of eclectic groups and diverse societies can make a powerful statement even before students have heard your key messages.

WRITE A JOINT LETTER WITH ACTIVE ALLIES AND ASK FOR IT TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT AND LOCAL PAPERS

Media exposure is crucial in raising awareness of your campaign and gaining the attention of the wider student body, university administration and larger public.

Publishing a joint letter with active allies (Execs of other societies, Student Union officers, trade union reps, heads of school) is a powerful way of showing support for reinvestment, putting additional pressure on the administration. The more signatures and backing you have the stronger your case will be. Strength in numbers can give better leverage and a coherent coordinated voice to negotiate with.

Fresher’s Fairs provide a great opportunity to gain support and collect signatures. Students are most powerful when they organise and co-operate as a collective body.

FILM SCREENING / BOOK DISCUSSION

Film is a powerful way to effectively inspire a mass audience. It is extremely valuable in campaigning, not only as a means of informing and educating people, but also as an accessible and social way of bringing people together, and introducing them to your campaign.

There are thousands of short and feature length films out there to help you spread the word. Why not start with This Changes Everything by Naomi Klein. The film presents seven powerful portraits of frontline communities, from the Alberta Tar Sands to Montana’s Powder River Basin, from the coast of India to Beijing and beyond.

Books are also powerful mediums for social justice, feeding cultural change and social dialogue. They are both instructive and entertaining, providing a strong tool for the dissemination of facts and ideas, with the power to facilitate personal understanding and encourage social cohesion.

Here are some suggested books for a book discussion:
- This Changes Everything: Capitalism Vs the Climate (Naomi Klein)
- Politics of Climate Justice (Patrick Bond)
- Undoing Border Imperialism (Harsha Walia)

Or check out resilience.org for great articles.

ACCESSIBLE SOCIALS

There are no limits on human variation

“TISHA BROWN
NEW INTERNATIONALIST

“IF WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT BUILDING A MASS MOVEMENT, THEN WE HAVE TO BECOME MORE INTERSECTIONAL IN OUR POLITICS”
and one size never fits all. However, thoughtful planning goes a long way. Make socials accessible to all. Take into consideration aspects such as disability and culture e.g. is the venue wheelchair accessible? Will all prospective members feel comfortable in venues with alcohol consumption?

Tight social circles tend to form within groups as you often work better together if your fellow activists are also friends! However, avoid becoming a clique; new members should not feel alienated. Groups that find a way to make prospective members fit in will go far in not only recruiting, but retaining new additions.

Ensure new group members feel welcome at socials. Introduce them, tell them what they can hope to achieve as a member of the group and get them involved straight away.

Why not buddy up new members with older ones on specific tasks? For example, if you have an action coming up and a new member is interested in helping with media and communications, partner them up with an established member to see the task through together. This way you kill two birds with one stone: you do some vital skill-sharing, and help your new member feel comfortable and involved.

CREATIVE ACTION – BOOK PEOPLE & PLANET TO RUN A CREATIVE ACTION PLANNING DAY

Creativity is a crucial part of campaigning. It not only helps you get a message across but is also a fun way to engage new people and attract media attention.

Creative actions can be a clever way of raising awareness of your campaign as they are often unexpected and can surprise your campaign target.

Why not book a creative action planning day with People & Planet? Get in touch! Just contact fossilfree@peopleandplanet.org to arrange a date.

“For us to fight off the worst effects from climate change and help support the people in the global south fighting on the frontlines, we are going to need the help of everyone. That means we need to ensure that our spaces are not only welcoming and safe but also accessible”

TISHA BROWN
NEW INTERNATIONALIST
STEP 3 CREATING A TACTICAL TIMELINE

IDENTIFY TARGETS

Every campaign must have a clear target. Remember, a target is a person who can be forced to give you the goods. They are a decision maker. Institutions, like the US government, or corporations, like Chevron, are not clear targets, because they are large and vague. But individuals within those larger groups, like the US President, or the CEO of Chevron, are clear targets.

Pick some of the key targets who hold the power to make reinvestment in a Just Transition happen on your campus. Refer to your spectrum of allies if this helps. Remember it’s always easier to start with passive allies, friendly neutrals and oblivious neutrals. However, you will want to have identified who those potential active allies should be targeting to make the change happen you want. When it come to investment decisions this is likely to be the Director of Finance, Investment Committee or Vice Chancellor.

DEVELOP TACTICS

After you have chosen your targets indicate with an arrow where you want to move each target group on the spectrum. For example: move selected journalists from “neutral” to “passive allies”. This is now your objective. SMARTen it.

Brainstorm potential tactics. Put each objective on a separate flip chart. Remember: a formal brainstorm is about creativity. It is a process to generate the widest and wildest possible range of ideas. Let the craziest ideas flow. Do not let the critical mind interfere. The focus is on creating new ideas. Do not react to, or criticise, anyone’s ideas at this point.

Choose the most promising tactics for reaching your objectives. Review the list generated by the brainstorm. It is now time to let the critical mind look at the list, and weed out the results. Choose the best tactics and most doable (with the resources and energy you have), to reach your objective.

Build a minimum one year timeline. Draw a line with at least 12 months on your flip chart. Write the selected tactics on post-it notes.

In general early in campaigns we often use educational tactics to inform and build our base - like teach-ins, speaking events, and film screenings. As we build a bigger base, we can then mobilize that base - with rallies that show our power. As a campaign escalates we then meet with power holders and ask them for the change we want. If the power holders do not meet our demands, we then continue to mobilize our base with pressure tactics. Later in the campaign our tactics leverage power to pressure our target, and use protests, media, sit-ins and non-violent direct action to win our demand from our target.

“WE INCREASE OUR CHANCES OF VICTORY WHEN OUR ACTIONS TARGET THE PERSON OR ENTITY WITH THE INSTITUTIONAL POWER TO MEET OUR DEMANDS”

YUTAKA DIRTS
MOVEMENT DEFENCE COMMITTEE
STEP 4 LOBBYING

EFFECTIVE LOBBYING: 5 TOP TIPS

1. Who will be your lobby target?
   Who has the power to help you achieve your aims. Also consider who you might have access to that has power over those with power!

2. What can your target actually do?
   Learn what your lobby target has the power to do and not do.

3. What’s their stance on the issue?
   What might be the barriers? Do some research to prepare for their response.

4. Prepare your key ask.
   Lobbying won't work if you're simply having a rant. You'll need a key message and key ask – i.e. what is it exactly you want your lobby target to do?

5. Communicate and cumulate.
   Plan a series of communications, expecting a no at each stage. An open letter, a petition, ask for a meeting. Don't take no for an answer, bring more folk on board and increase the lobby pressure.

LOBBYING YOUR FINANCE DIRECTOR

Large scale reinvestment for a just transition – the campaign’s end goal – is a big ambition. You might find that your university's finance director may not be too enthusiastic about committing to this reinvestment vision or might even be dismissive of the end goal as unrealistic. You may be told to leave reinvestment decisions “to the big boys”. Finance directors might use language that is baffling or offer reinvestment options that don't seem quite right but it may not be immediately apparent what the shortcomings of these options are. You may even be told that university fund directors don’t have control over how funds are reinvested as decisions are made by fund managers. Conversations can feel disempowering.

You do not need to understand all the financial jargon to win this campaign or feel in control of the conversation. The particular financial mechanism a university may choose to reinvest divested funds will be context specific and dependent on myriad of factors such as scale of portfolio, performance of current investments, existing expertise and the institution’s values. Whether a university chooses to reinvest in equities or bonds or another asset class is less important than ensuring that the end activity financed meets the principles of reinvestment.

A common phrase you might encounter is 'asset class'. An asset class refers to a group of financial instruments (or 'securities') that exhibit similar characteristics. Examples of 'traditional' asset classes include equities (publically listed on a stock market or private equity), fixed income or bonds, large property investments, and foreign currency. ‘Newer’ types of asset classes include infrastructure and social housing, signalling increasing interest in these types of investments.

It is possible to invest in fossil fuels or renewable energy through any asset class. No asset class is inherently sustainable, low carbon or superior. Conversely, no asset class is inherently problematic although it is mostly large corporations not small businesses, community owned or worker run projects / companies that are listed on stock markets for buying and selling of stocks and shares (equity). Private equity (as opposed to listed or public equity) investments, however, enable equity investments in companies not listed on stock markets. What matters more is that the company or project
being invested in meets the principles of reinvestment.

Currently 54% of institutional endowments are outsourced to external fund managers and only 25% of endowments are directly managed by our universities. But, regardless of whether investments are managed by a fund manager or by in house staff, universities are ultimately responsible for how endowments are invested and therefore have power to instruct external fund managers on how to reinvest divested funds. Remind your finance director of this.

You might find it beneficial acknowledging, in your conversations with finance directors, that the end goal is ambitious. But stay firm on the scale of this ambition. Finance directors might be receptive to arguments that committing to reinvestment for a just transition will bring the university prestige, especially if their university will be the first to publicly declare this commitment. Consider what your particular university’s core values are or brand identity is and whether you can argue that reinvestment for a just transition is in line with your university’s identity.

Moreover, the campaign is not demanding large scale reinvestment overnight. It’s important to break the end goal into achievable steps, consisting of a number of achievable commitments that universities can make over a period of time to achieve the reinvestment vision. Make clear to your finance director that your coalition is willing to work with the university to work out a timeline and strategy to make and achieve these commitments. Many universities’ pride themselves in listening to student voices and working in collaboration with students – remind your finance director of this.

The early steps in the campaign should be “Money is moved out of fossil fuels” and “commitment to reinvest 10% of the university’s endowment funds in renewable energy” – they are low hanging fruits in that it should be relatively easy for your uni to do this. NUS & Community Reinvest’s Positive Investment Briefing and Community Reinvest and Platform’s Reinvesting Pensions reports provide examples of actively managed fossil free funds as funds specialising in renewable energy investment. Use the examples in the reports to make the case to your finance director that the first two steps are achievable. If you are met with reluctance or opposition, demand to know what the barriers are and use different campaign tactics (e.g. direct action) to hold your university to account.

**MONEY IS MOVED OUT OF FOSSIL FUELS**

Fossil Free / Low Carbon indices and Fossil Free / Low Carbon Funds are the most commonly available financial mechanisms that enable near or full divestment and reinvestment in a plethora of companies and projects via a single package. Specialist asset managers also offer a variety of funds in different asset classes aimed at certain sectors. These managers assess companies according to social and environmental impact criteria or actively choose to work with enterprises that fit their categories.

Low carbon indices either track companies with comparatively smaller carbon footprints or exclude fossil fuel companies altogether. Such indices are advantageous as they can also reduce exposure to other carbon intensive industries such as monoculture industrial agriculture. However, disadvantages include: no guarantee of reinvestment into top sustainable companies; investments may be into companies like Vodafone and Amazon that have been criticised for avoiding taxes and undermining the economy; indices only include companies traded on stock markets and do not include direct investments in renewable infrastructure or social housing.

Here are the suggested steps your campaign could take towards reinvestment in a Just Transition:

**COMMITMENT TO REINVEST 10% OF ENDOWMENT IN RENEWABLE ENERGY**

Universities can fulfil their commitment to reinvest 10% of divested funds in renewable energy through a variety of approaches. They can invest directly in campus renewable projects, in community-owned renewables in the UK or beyond (sometimes also described as ‘impact investment’), or through tailored funds that specialise in renewable energy or low carbon infrastructure investments (See Positive Investment Briefing and Reinvesting Pensions report for examples).

Once the first two steps have been achieved, it will be time to push the envelope. The next steps “University committed to diversify into just transition” and “University agrees to policy compliance with student reps” are key to ensuring that reinvestment a) doesn’t stop at low hanging fruit options b) actually achieves just transition.

**STRATEGIES FOR DIVERSIFYING INTO JUST TRANSITION**

There are a number of technical approaches an institutional investor can take to go beyond moving money into a
fossil free fund to enable reinvestment for a just transition. These include:

- Creating a specialist mini portfolio or new asset class within the fund’s overall portfolio with specific instructions that incorporate reinvestment principles and goals. These instructions are sometimes called ‘mandates’ given to external fund managers and in-house managers. Funds divested from fossil fuels are invested via this new specialist portfolio. Nearest equivalent examples include: Strathclyde Pension Fund and Greater Manchester Pension Fund. This also links into step ‘University agrees to policy compliance with student reps’.
- Within existing portfolios and asset classes, universities can diversify away from fossil fuels and into renewables and other socially useful investments.
- Two or more universities can pool together expertise and funds to enable larger scale investment than would be possible by either investor on their own.
- Build in-house investment management expertise for the divest-reinvest transition

Hire a fund manager to oversee the divest-reinvest transition with a track record in linking Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) with financial performance. Environment Agency Pension Fund has followed this approach.

Ask your finance director whether they have considered these approaches, which approach they will be utilising, and why. Make sure to scrutinise your university’s response and hold them to account.

**UNIVERSITY AGREES TO POLICY COMPLIANCE WITH STUDENT REPS**

Diversifying refers to investing in truly transformative ways that will enable just transition. There are a some projects ready for investment that meet these criteria but there are not nearly enough projects. Campaigns such as Switched on London, Solar SOAS and others are working towards creating transformative investable projects. It is possible that social movements for universal public health and affordable housing will, over time, lead to the creation of transformative investable projects.

Developing a reinvestment policy that incorporates reinvestment principles against which a university’s reinvestment decisions can be scrutinised enables us to identify which projects are appropriate to invest in, where areas for improvement are required in current reinvestment approaches and gaps in reinvestment options. A clear policy with a compliance process will be useful to ensure that instructions or mandates given to fund managers actually incorporate reinvestment principles and goals. Demand that student representatives are involved in the development of this policy to ensure that the principles for reinvestment are not watered down. Hold your university to account through direct actions and other tactics.

“THE END OF FOSSIL FUELS IS HAPPENING; ACHIEVING 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR ALL IS INEVITABLE. THOSE BETTING ON A FUTURE BASED ON FOSSIL FUELS WILL CONTINUE TO LOSE, CITIZENS GLOBALLY ARE DEMANDING A JUST TRANSITION TO A GREEN FUTURE”

**KUMI NAIDOO, DIRECTOR OF THE AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY CENTRE**

**THE END GOAL IS LARGE SCALE REINVESTMENT INTO A JUST TRANSITION**

We are in the early stages of this journey. Later stages might seem fuzzy now. That is okay. Work with your coalition partners to secure divestment from arms and other socially and environmental problematic activities and to build pressure for large scale reinvestment.
STEP 5 PUBLIC FACING CREATIVE ACTIONS

It’s very unlikely that just lobbying your targets will win them over, you will almost certainly need to run a public facing campaign as well. For a campaign to be effective, creativity is crucial to engage, connect and leave a lasting impression by reaching people at deeper emotional levels, conveying what cannot be said with mere facts. Using art, culture and creativity in a campaign can fundamentally transform your approach and dramatically amplify the impact. There are several key principles for a successful creative campaign:

THINK NARRATIVELY
A clear narrative makes the campaign real and credible to people. It is not necessarily facts that makes a story powerful but rather, how the story is able to create meaning in the hearts and minds of the listeners. When developing campaigns and designing actions, it’s crucial to step outside our own perspective and analyse how the issue is perceived by others who may not share our assumptions.

To win a campaign and make real change, framing is often a critical step. Conceptual frames are key. When framing a narrative, it is important to consider how the issue can be most compellingly portrayed to effectively convey the message. The aim of a creative action isn’t simply to be creative, but to have a desired impact on a particular audience. The purpose of a creative action is the reaction of those who experience it.

Effective creative action must be explicitly and strategically designed to serve the larger strategic goal of provoking a shift in the public conversation.

STAY ON MESSAGE
Message discipline is the art of communicating what you set out to communicate in ways that are clear, memorable and consistent. Everything from talking points, slogans on a banner and visuals created for an action should all align to support the core message. Pay attention to details. During an action, everything your audience sees or hears is inevitably a part of your message.

The right balance of art and message can move both hearts and minds. However, striking this balance can be difficult. Keep focus on the audience and your goals. What do you want your action to achieve? Evoke sympathy? Provoke deep soul-searching on the issue? Get people to take action? Creativity can help you achieve all of these things, but only when creativity and message are in balance.

SHOW DON’T TELL
For a creative campaign to be effective, it must be image-driven too. In other words, show, don’t tell. Important issues are often difficult to talk about – they’re too big, far away, abstract or complex. However, a picture is worth a thousand words. So, make it visual. A message can be spelled out more effectively using visuals, props or music than with a simple leaflet or placard by helping to bring things down to human scale.

Facts rarely speak for themselves, so lead with story. Although it is essential that your message is factually accurate, facts should serve only as the supporting details for the story, not the hook that makes the story compelling.

Use powerful metaphors. With a metaphor you can say something for what it is, rather than have to give an explanation. To find a compelling metaphor, look for something that effectively embodies what you are trying to communicate.

A well–designed action is able to explain itself, and should offer multiple ways into the issue. Your audience should reach their own conclusion, rather than feeling like they are being told what to think.

MAKE THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE
Many injustices are invisible to the mainstream, often obscured by distance, ideology, or simple chemistry. If you can’t see it, you can’t change it. When these injustices are brought into full view, the game is changed, making the need to take action palpable. There are several kinds of “invisibility”, each one shaping the approach you take.

Distance. Despite climate chaos submerging small island nations in the Pacific and compromising the livelihoods of those in the Global South through a combination of drought, rising temperature and increased water stress, for most people in the Global North it’s out of sight, out of mind.

Numerous creative interventions have sought to make accelerating climate changes more visible, from highlighting the threat to low–lying nations by holding a cabinet meeting underwater, to painting anticipated future sea levels on city streets and buildings. People with privilege often have the luxury of distancing themselves from the consequences of their actions. When tackling abstract issues that seem distant, highlighting the human cost helps to bring the issue home by making it personal, visceral and local.

Ideology. Those that have the luxury of not seeing an uncomfortable truth often simply won’t, even if it’s in front of their faces. Through judicious reframing, injustices made invisible by ideology can
STEP 5 PUBLIC FACING CREATIVE ACTIONS

be brought to light, redefining what is part of the story and, more importantly, what is not. Attention can be focused on what was previously “outside the frame” by creative actions that expose the faulty assumptions of the status quo.

Chemistry. Although many pollutants cannot be seen by the naked eye, they cause great harm. The key is to bring that harm into public view, like the makers of the movie Gasland, who with a single powerful visual demonstration of lighting some Pennsylvania tap water on fire, powerfully refuted years of industry denial. The first and most important step in resolving previously hidden problems is by exposing them.

**CHOOSE YOUR TARGET WISELY**

Our chances of victory are increased when our actions target the person or entity with the institutional power to meet our demands. Social change comes through struggle, which involves articulating clear demands and applying targeted pressure on those in power to comply with those demands. There is nothing more demoralising to those that have put many long hours into a fun and creative action than to hear the target of the action say: “I don’t have the power to do that for you, even if I wanted to. The guy you want is next door.” When planning campaigns and actions, it is crucial to have an understanding of our targets and what makes them tick, making sure to focus on those with the power to meet our demands.

Remember that not every target is vulnerable in the same way. An occupation, creative disruption or blockade may be effective against one target but not against another. What works once may not work a second time. Consider what actions can be taken that are outside their experience? Nothing rattles a target more than something they are not prepared to deal with.

Actions that are designed well can force your target into a situation where they have to respond, with all their available options playing to your advantage.

**DO THE MEDIA’S WORK FOR THEM**

To get media coverage of your creative action, give them a story they can’t refuse: one that makes your point very clearly, with great visuals, an unexpected twist or a lot of humor. Often, a journalist may already want to cover an issue, so this assist will give them the excuse or extra ammunition they need to sell it to their editor. Make the journalists’ job as simple as possible by providing them with what they need: a concise press release, photo with clear permissions, or a good video containing all the facts and figures that clearly illustrate your point.

“ACTION LOGIC CREATES POWERFUL STORIES THAT MOVE HEARTS AND CHANGE MINDS. NOT ONLY IS IT TRUE THAT ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS, BUT, PARTICULARLY IN A HOSTILE MEDIA CLIMATE WHERE ACTIVISTS ARE OFTEN FLAGRANTLY MISREPRESENTED, IT’S IMPORTANT THAT OUR ACTIONS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES”

JOSHUA KAHN RUSSELL
THE RUCKUS SOCIETY
ELEME NTS OF A CREATIVE PERFORMANCE

1 EXAGGERATION TO ABSURDITY
Starting from reality and taking things further and further is an entertaining technique to create a momentary illusion that exposes injustice through satirical exaggeration. Use humour to point to simple, undeniable realities. But combine serious and playful elements in your performance. While you’ve got people’s attention, in the middle of all the absurdity and exaggeration, make sure you get your serious point across.

2 TAKING THINGS TO THEIR LOGICAL CONCLUSION
This is less obvious than comic aspects of a performance. Over branding a BP sponsored event offering people badges and stickers with big BP logos and offering to do BP face painting... People aren’t sure if it’s real or you’re spoofing.

3 TERRIFYING HONESTY
When you bring hidden wrongs into full view, you change the game, and ultimately make the need to take action palpable. Stand up and expose what’s hidden behind closed doors. We know what they are doing and what their actual motives are. Dramatically exposing these truths in terrifying honesty can be a shocking and entertaining way of garnering public support as well as undercutting the moral authority of your target.

4 WISHFUL THINKING / IDEAL WORLD SCENARIO
Wishful thinking: Assuming the identity of a big evildoer and announcing they’re doing something wonderful has proven to be an effective way to embarrass a target and force them to respond. For example, the Hoax where the Yes Men impersonated a spokesperson for Dow Chemical – the company responsible for the Bhopal disaster, when an industrial gas leak killed thousands of people – appeared live on BBC World News and announced the impossible: Dow accepted full responsibility for the Bhopal disaster, and had created a $12 billion dollar plan to compensate the victims and clean up the site. This of course turned out to be too good to be true and Dow Chemical was forced to issue a statement indicating it had NOT apologised for the Bhopal disaster and would NOT be compensating the victims. The damage was done, as any move Dow could make would make them look bad and draw further attention to their role in the disaster.
Ideal world scenario: We often spend so much time trying to stop bad things from happening that we rarely take the time to sketch out how things could be better, let alone actually creating a little slice of the future we want to live in. Give a glimpse of the future we’re working for to demonstrate how another reality is possible, making such a world feel not just possible, but irresistible.

5 MUSIC
Musical performances can be a good way to break the seriousness. Who doesn’t love a good song and dance number? And how much more exciting when the musical performance breaks out unexpectedly. This can also be a great way to reveal the hoax to the audience and break character.

6 INTERACTIVE
When pulling off a prank or staging some kind of media spectacle, use your immediate audience as unwitting actors. Interact with people in the audience while in character. Interactivity allows the audience to engage with the prank and ultimately, the campaign.

7 STAY UNDERCOVER
Sometimes you don’t have to reveal on the day. Never break character/ cover at all, but then tell people later/off camera, filming their reactions.
**DECOLONISATION** The undoing of colonialism; the process of recognising and healing the violence of empire, and resisting the ways in which colonial legacies continue to act in the present.

**REPARATIVE JUSTICE** The material compensation for, and public recognition of, systematic exploitation suffered by a community – historically and/or presently. Must also involve the ongoing process of resisting underlying causes of such exploitation, to ensure its permanent eradication and prevent its return.

**SELF-DETERMINATION** The ability of a community to exercise democratic control over their resources, land and political representation.

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

**POLITICS OF LIBERATION** An understanding of fighting oppression that emphasises bottom-up, grassroots struggle, rather than top-down institutional leadership.

**DIVESTMENT** The withdrawal of all investments (including stocks, bonds and/or investment funds) from a particular industry or company deemed unethical.

**PRIMARY PRODUCTION** The acquisition of raw materials for industrial purposes.

**GLOBAL NORTH/GLOBAL SOUTH** A socio-economic and political divide that broadly corresponds, but is not beholden to, geographical location. The Global North refers to regions that have a disproportionately high amount of capital and political power, such as North America, Australia and Western Europe, and the Global South to those with disproportionately little - such as Africa, Latin America and ‘developing’ parts of Asia. However, indigenous communities located within the Global North – such as Aboriginal Australians and Native Americans – are considered part of the Global South, due to shared histories and characteristics of racialised colonisation.

**INTERSECTIONAL** 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.

**EXTRACTIVIST** Used to describe companies that extract as much of a high-demand resource as quickly as possible, with little to no regard of the social, human and environmental impact.