



Ca' Foscari  
University  
of Venice

four years of  
**sustainable**  
**Ca'Foscari**



# Introduction

This report is a brief account of Sustainable Ca' Foscari's first four years of activity, set up to create a more sustainable University and to educate younger generations towards a culture of sustainability.

Since its start in 2010, the University has achieved much. The project has given enormous satisfaction and brought with it both national and international acclaim even while successfully meeting the challenges and overcoming the obstacles in its way. The Sustainable Ca' Foscari project itself and, importantly, the people involved have, in this time, evolved and matured.

This report outlines the main projects realized by the University in this period.

We invite you to refer to the Observation to the Sustainability Commitments Charter 2013-2015 (CIS 2013 – 2015) published in the General University Report for more detailed information.

## Ca' Foscari at a glance

### a.y. 2013/2014 year 2013

students enrolled	<b>21.186</b>
foreign students	<b>1.176</b>
part-tim students	<b>808</b>
professors	<b>303</b>
researchers	<b>214</b>
external faculty members	<b>251</b>
visiting professors and researchers	<b>79</b>
technical administrative staff	<b>567</b>
external temporary workers	<b>172</b>

# Mapping the four years of Sustainable Ca' Foscari

- 2010** - the first Sustainability Commitments Charter (CIS) is approved
- 2011** - sustainability is included in article 53 of the Ca' Foscari Statute
- 2012** - sustainability becomes one of the prime 10 objectives of the University's Strategic Plan
- 2013** - sustainability is included among the operational objectives of the institution's Departments and Schools

The **Sustainable Ca' Foscari** project was inaugurated in 2010 with an aim to include sustainability as a guiding principle for all University activities. Aware of the important role a **tertiary institution** has in educating future generations and in the spread of learning within society, Ca' Foscari decided to take a frontline position in promoting and realizing **behaviours** and **actions** in favour of social and environmental sustainability.

Sustainable Ca' Foscari thus began as a "special project" limited in scope which, through the years, has involved increasingly wider spheres of University activity under the scientific directorship of **Professor Chiara Mio**, Rector's Delegate on Environmental Sustainability and the University's Social Responsibility.

Ca' Foscari has actively worked towards greater sustainability via activities and projects aimed at **reducing the Institution's impact on the environment and on natural resources** as well as **bettering students, faculty and staff well-being**. A number of **initiatives and events** have also been realized with a view to educating students in sustainability. Our hope is that the teachings students have acquired during their university experience will be considered when taking decisions and actions in the future.

In just four years Sustainable Ca' Foscari has become a **model for sustainable administration** within the spheres of environment, society and economics. A consolidation of the **values** it promotes and the adoption of the new managerial models has also positively impacted the **development of University processes** and activities. These, in turn, have been met by a renewal in University **planning and accounting processes**.

The points outlined in the Sustainability Commitments Charter (CIS) have also been included in the **Performance Plan** along with organizational, transparency and anticorruption objectives. In this way, the Plan has become a tool the institution uses to **better its actions in sustainability** and **evaluate the results it achieves**.

# Engaging with our stakeholders

**2011** - stakeholder identification and needs analysis

**2012** - a panel of external stakeholders consulted for the annual sustainability report

**2013** - a panel of internal and external stakeholders involved in drawing up sustainability policies and writing the annual report

**2014** - “participation and involvement” is included as an objective in the CIS - Sustainability Commitments Charter

Sustainability means **actively listening** to the needs and the requests of those who work and study at Ca' Foscari as well as of those who live in the area. In compliance with this policy, since its outset, the Sustainable Ca' Foscari Programme has factored in moments of consultation with its stakeholders with a **view to open and frank discussion**.

Relations with our **internal stakeholders** - namely, the students, faculty, administration, collaborators and graduates - are of fundamental importance. Their suggestions and comments have aided Sustainable Ca' Foscari in updating and reworking its objectives as well as offering welcomed challenges. In short, their invaluable input has allowed us to **grow**.

Similarly, the activities of networking and meeting with the larger **international community** have been just as important. Canvassing these views and experiences has allowed Ca' Foscari to compare its activity with that of other universities worldwide enabling a fruitful exchange of **good practices** regarding sustainability.

Engaging with our stakeholders has become so important that it was **standardized** in 2012. From that date on, a **panel** including members from the University, local and national bodies and institutions is invited annually to comment on the Sustainability Report at its release.

The decision to invest in **new communication technologies** and **resources** in aid of innovation policies has also resulted from ongoing exchanges with all our stakeholders.

As of 2011, Sustainable Ca' Foscari has a website dedicated to this and as of the following year has been active on all the major social networks.

Open communications with our stakeholders has, as always, given positive results and has allowed Ca' Foscari to receive valuable **feedback on its Reporting** and on the activities engaged in. These moments are, in fact, fundamental to our programming future activities and to reviewing those already in place.



# What we have learnt

With Sustainable Ca' Foscari the University has committed itself to identifying practices and technologies which move towards conserving, developing and enhancing an environment to favour well-being. Ongoing research and analysis over the years has allowed us to take significant steps in this direction allowing the University to garner greater experience of sustainable practice.

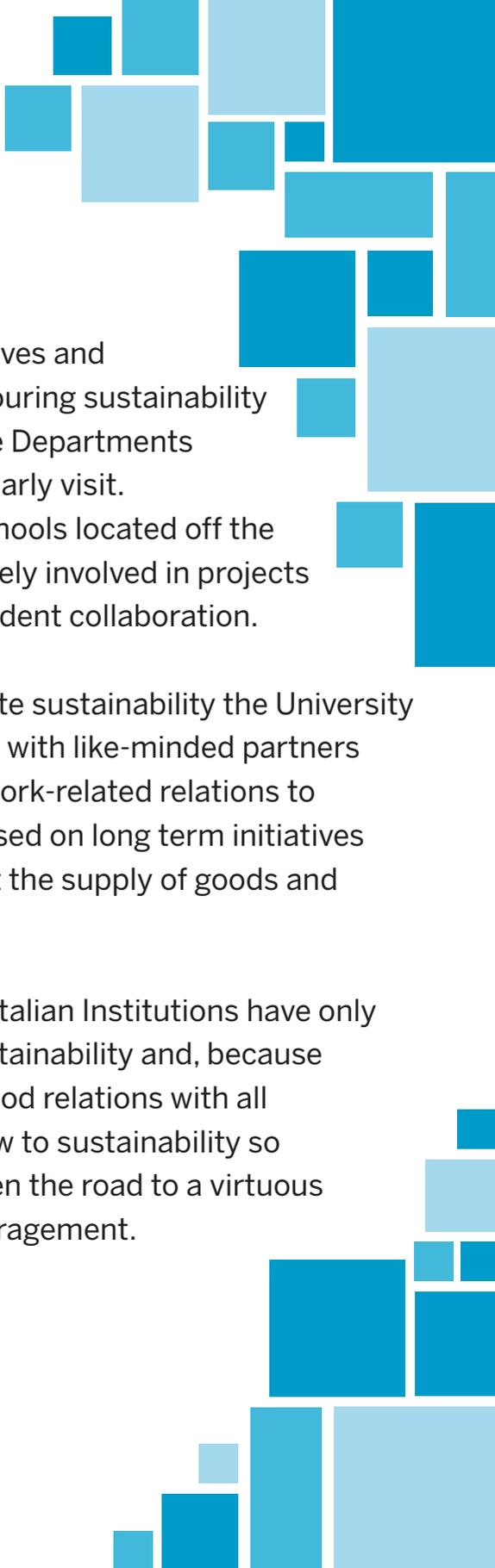
**Dedicated Staff:** a specific office which coordinates activities and initiatives across University bodies and institutions is fundamental within the organization to widen the impact of sustainability. It is also a necessary point of reference for activities involving a wide range of University offices, departments and structures. Further, training courses for staff directly involved in promoting sustainability need to be both across the board and personalized.

**Engagement:** harnessing the dedication, initiative, passion and decision-making abilities of all those involved in the project needs to become a priority and a strategic objective. In fact, sustainability requires that enthusiasms consolidate into everyday practices becoming in this way an overall approach, management behaviour, and that are sustained by coherent systems and processes.

**Student Body Participation:** initiatives and activities involving students and favouring sustainability need to be promoted from within the Departments and University bodies students regularly visit. For this reason Departments and Schools located off the main campus should be more intensely involved in projects and initiatives aimed at fostering student collaboration.

**Relations with Suppliers:** to promote sustainability the University aims to establish beneficial relations with like-minded partners and suppliers. Our desire is for our work-related relations to confirm reciprocal commitments based on long term initiatives and promotional events, and not just the supply of goods and services.

**Relations with other Institutions:** Italian Institutions have only recently felt the need to address sustainability and, because of this, it is important to establish good relations with all institutions involved and adopt a view to sustainability so that all can share their ideas and open the road to a virtuous cycle of reciprocal motivating encouragement.



# The Sustainability Commitments Charter

The CIS is the principle University document that maps the University's long-term plan of sustainable action and objectives, and is used to audit and evaluate all achievements.

It is the across the board operational document which puts Objective 10 of the Strategic Plan into effect, by enhancing teaching on sustainability, increasing research and favouring the adoption of processes and sustainable behaviours.

The Sustainability Commitments Charter is revised and adjusted annually following a review of University activities and a check of obtained objectives.

A number of changes have been made to the CIS over the years in its growth from an initial experiment to becoming a full-fledged project. In the 2013-2015 CIS, the overall number of undertakings has decreased, widening the scope of the remaining objectives, indicators have become more specific and many of the projects and experimental actions started in previous years have become standard practice.

The 2014- 2016 CIS puts strategic objectives and operational objectives on a par relinquishing the term "strategic".

Now activities defined by law and standard practice have been excluded from the Charter and minor objectives have grouped under banners wider in scope. Further, for the first time, the 2014 – 2016 CIS has completely taken into account all the comments and suggestions gathered from the stakeholder panel meeting held in October 2013. And, to increase comprehensibility to the wider public, commitments have been grouped together in 8 larger areas and reworked. The new divisions take into account the 4 University's principal activities and, that is, Governance, Teaching, Research and Supply Chain as well as the 4 major stakeholders, Students, Staff and Faculty, Environment and Community.

Thanks to the CIS Ca' Foscari has a major impact on the community providing a clear and open channel of communication transmitting the values, principles and priorities undertaken by the University with the added benefit of increased credibility.

# Teaching and Research

- 2010** - outline of study programmes and subject specific research projects
- 2011** - definition of procedures to identify sustainable teachings and publications
- 2012** - Sustainability Competencies Project and outline of sustainable research competencies
- 2013** - first graduates to attain Sustainability Competencies

Ca' Foscari sustainable teachings aims to take full advantage of the sustainable educational programmes offered by the University to enable students to choose their courses from a **sustainable prospective**. In the 2011/2012 academic year a **study of sustainable teachings** is carried out documenting sustainability in its three dimensions (environmental, social and economic) and taking into consideration all the study programmes available at the University.

A further **categorization of individual teachings** identified subjects with even partial sustainable themes expressing them as **University Credits** (CFU).

Identifying teachings held in **sustainable manners** completed the analysis. In other words, enquiries and actions were made to

promote teachings which reduce the use of paper resources and favour interactive online resources and open source software.

Similarly to teachings, Ca' Foscari decided to **increase research on social and environmental topics** that cross over into all the fields of study offered by the University.

Put into practice, this commitment saw the University support the startup of projects which closely examined the theme of sustainability from a scientific point of view and which explored diverse analytical perspectives.

The institution also fostered the sharing of technologies and different scientific approaches. What resulted was the creation of **multidisciplinary synergetic relations** which matched study programmes offered by the University with research in sustainability.

The number of specific **research projects** has risen significantly over the years and **existing competencies** held by faculty have been put to full use.

Sustainable Ca' Foscari is committed to relating all the research projects and **publications** on sustainability on an annual basis.

# Sustainability Competencies

A significant initiative launched by Sustainable Ca' Foscari with regards to teaching are the Sustainability Competencies Project (CDS).

Started in 2012, this scheme aims to promote the development of topics surrounding sustainability in all its aspects and, further, proposes to widen the culture of sustainability in participants. The acquisition of sustainability competencies targets the Ca' Foscari student body as a whole, is on a voluntary basis and results in 1 extracurricular credit (CFU) for the student.

Students who acquire the credit (CFU) relative to sustainability competencies receive a special mention during their graduation and are given a certificate.

The certificate is on Shiro Alga paper, offered by Favini srl, and is realized with algae, reaped from lagoon areas to avoid the de-oxygenation of lagoon waters, combined with FSC fibres.

1221 students adhered to the project in the 2013/2014 academic year.

## Environment, carbon and resources

**2010** - agreement signed with the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea (MATTM) for the Carbon Management Pilot Project

**2011** - publication of the Guidelines on Carbon Management for Italian Universities

**2012** - definition of four new University policies on the environment

**2013** - LEED Certification and Carbon Management mitigation plan

Ca' Foscari has made the **full optimization of resources** its first objective in order to reduce any negative impact the Institution may have on the environment. A series of actions have been implemented to improve the management of energy and water resources in order to protect the delicate ecosystem in which Ca' Foscari is found.

The first actions carried out by the University were works to reduce the running costs of its outdated heating and water systems, to install new highly functioning heating systems and to substitute obsolete lighting systems with energy efficient lighting replacements. Constant and automatic checks are made on consumptions in order to plan specific interventions even if it has not been possible to reduce consumption in every area.

# the LEED Certification

The Ca' Foscari palace was rewarded the LEED EB: O&M, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, Certificate in September 2013, becoming the oldest "green" building in the world.

Due to its context, Ca' Foscari has become a significant case study, it being a historical building dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> Century with only limited interventions possible due to heritage listing restrictions.

The LEED Certification, promoted by the US Green Building Council, is a rating system which evaluates the degree of buildings' resource management, maintenance and efficiency.

It also represents a useful guide on how to cut management and maintenance costs and how to implement eco-friendly actions of immediate application.

The challenge is to now divulge the know-how and apply the LEED energy efficiency criteria to other historical buildings in Italy.

In fact, **cutting consumption** often means cutting the number of services the University offers. Witness to this, for example, are the open days held on Sundays, public holidays and in the evenings, the necessary use of server cooling plants and the air conditioning systems in University laboratories.

Ca' Foscari embarked on its **Carbon Management Pilot Project** in 2010 with the support of the Ministry of the Environment and Protection of Land and Sea (MATTM). The project aims to monitor and reduce emissions and to promote behaviours among students, staff and faculty that lower their impact on the environment. A model to **calculate CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** of complex structures, such as Universities, was created. Also, the Guidelines on Carbon Management for Italian Universities was published. Ca' Foscari's commitment to standardize its Carbon Management plan continued in 2011 signing a new agreement with the MATTM called **Addendum** with the objective of fostering and promoting responsible eco-friendly lifestyles. More specifically, Ca' Foscari has also developed the **CO<sub>2</sub> Calculator**, that spurs students, staff and faculty to check and reduce their own carbon emissions, helping them to adopt strategies and corrective actions.

The University regularly conducts assessments, audits and issues energy performance certificates. In 2013 the University drew up a **plan to reduce carbon emissions** involving both the Real Estate and Purchasing Area (ASIA) and the Pro-rector for Buildings and Estates.

# The Ca' Foscari gardens

Over the years our support of a **digitalized** and **paperless** University has been ongoing. All major paper procedures have been substituted by equivalent digital procedures found on the University website. This has allowed us to become more efficient, offer improved and more accessible services and streamline our internal procedures. It has also meant that the use of paper and resulting waste materials has been reduced.

Among the initiatives engaged in, is “Ca' Foscari digital publishing”, the University online publishing house, the electronic submission and storing of theses along with the elimination of academic transcript booklets. An estimate **€ 80,000** has been saved yearly.

The **Ra.Di.Ca. – Recycling at Ca' Foscari Project** has seen the use of recycling bins in all its buildings since 2010. It is thanks to current policies and agreements with our major suppliers that **80% of waste materials** at the main university buildings are recycled.

Finally, the University has been active in procuring goods and services by e-procurement via the **Electronic Marketplace** allowing it to observe green social and environmental principles.

While gardens are not typical of Venice, the University has, in recent years, worked towards expanding and improving the 15 000 m<sup>2</sup> of gardens, shrubbery and outside areas that make up its estate. When planning the greenery, special care has been taken in choices made of plants and trees, water irrigation systems and the recouping of plant cut-offs. In recent years, the University has adopted a low impact approach in its gardening projects and practices to best exploit, protect and make use of these areas. Projects have been tailored for the main garden areas and a number of initiatives have been realized to render them more manageable and eco-friendly. Herb gardens that require less water have been planted and grass cuttings are used as lawn fertilizers. Drip irrigation systems are in place and allow for efficient watering while saving on water consumption. Lastly, where possible, the pesticides and fungicides previously used have been substituted with biological products.

# Students

**2011** - the first sustainable award “Differenziatest”

**2012** - Carbon Footprint Calculator developed

**2013** - student participation in the Garbage Patch State Art Project

Ca' Foscari is committed to promoting **student well-being** and satisfaction, supporting study schemes and increasing the efficiency and efficacy of its services.

The University is intent on developing efficient instruments for students to learn about sustainability both inside and outside of the teaching hall. Low impact and comfortable study environments are provided.

Student participation is vital for the University. Awards, seminars, study days on sustainability, projects and theses on related themes are just some of the activities promoted to **encourage sustainable behaviours and lifestyles.**

Many other initiatives and occasions have been provided to **forward student participation.**

In collaboration with Ca' Foscari Short Filmfestival, the **Short&Sostenibilità** (Short&Sustainability) competition was created to stimulate students to address the issues of economic, social and environmental sustainability in 5 minute videos. Together with the Shylock CUT Association, the 2013 edition of the **Concorso Cambiamenti Climatici – The Grand Challenge** award was held. The entire Ca' Foscari community was invited to submit works on climate change from the creative perspective of language used in social medias alongside narrative and images.

**THE GARBAGE PATCH STATE Project** was developed in 2013 as a response to the enormous and growing quantities of waste found in oceans. Students were given the opportunity to get to know the work and the artist - Maria Cristina Finucci - firsthand and to give free reign to their own creativity by actively working on the project.

Each year the University participates in national and European initiatives such as the **M'illumino di meno** (which means “I am using less light”; it is a famous Italian campaign on energy saving), the **Energy Week for Waste Reduction** and the **European Sustainable Energy Week** campaigns.

# Sustainable Campuses

The Sustainable Campuses Project began within the SELISI School (School for Economics, Languages and Entrepreneurship) at the Treviso campus in 2013 as an extension of the sustainable management model. This model, already successfully implemented at the main University building, will now be applied to Departments, Schools and Campuses. It will see the active involvement of students and staff in managing and exploiting the teachings, research, initiatives and events promoted to that purpose in each single building. In short, Ca' Foscari stakeholders have been invited to adopt Sustainable Ca' Foscari in its entirety. Sustainable actions such as recycling, the Book-cycler, the "Il mio Campus sostenibile" competition and special events like the EU Week for Waste Reduction, the Green Week and the EcoCampus Day have been hosted and promoted at the Treviso Campus. Thanks to the efforts of the PiGreco T student association, local institutions and, principally, the Municipal Council and the Fondazione Cassamarca, students and the wider community have actively been involved in sustainable activities.

# Staff and Faculty

- 2011** - increased number of stipulated agreements in support of parenthood
- 2012** - increased hours of teleworking
- 2013** - University Sustainable Social Fund (F.A.S.S.) activated

The University works to foster faculty and administrative staff potential by **developing training** courses and **favouring well-being** and support to families and parenthood.

We are dedicated to increasing **automated procedures**, making innovative instruments and work spaces available that are safe, sustainable and which increase work efficacy and efficiency.

A number of **agreements** have been signed off with external institutions and firms that allow Ca' Foscari staff to access specific services at reduced costs.

Apart from yearly **public transport** concession passes for commuters, agreements were entered into with "Giunti al Punto" bookshops for the acquisition of **reading materials**, with **crèches** and **tax consultants** to help staff with their yearly tax return, **summer camps** for the children of employees as well as for sojourns at affiliated **hotels**.

# University Sustainable Social Fund

The University Sustainable Social Fund (F.A.S.S.) was created in 2013 to foster the well-being of technical and administrative staff by putting initiatives into effect to support sustainable mobility, the family, residing in Venice and continuous professional training.

The University has decided to subsidize up to 25% of travel costs for all employees buying public transport season tickets. Family support schemes are in place for employees with an annual income of € 40.000 or lower.

Subsidies are available for employees whose children are enrolled in crèches, pre-schools and primary and secondary schools and summer camps. Aged care and disability allowances are made available to assist families.

Finally, extra funding has been provided to families facing particular difficulties. And, a lump sum contribution is made available to newly hired employees to establish residency in Venice and its immediate surrounds.

To foster **continuing vocational training**, enrollment fees to University degree programmes, master's programmes, standalone courses and language courses at the University Language Centre (CLA) have been reduced for staff and faculty.

Further, as of the 2011/2012 academic year, each year 10 administrative staff are given the opportunity to **enroll free** of charge in First and Second level Master's degree programmes offered by the University.

Our objective is to offer training courses to keep employees' skills up-to-date and bolstered in a context that is undergoing revolutionary administrative change.

Activities proposed by the **CRC - Ca' Foscari Community Centre** regarding health and safety, free time and travel as well as sporting activities are also included in the above initiatives.

# Community

**2010** - Ca' Foscari joined The Global Compact and the Principles for Responsible Management Education networks

**2011** - Sustainable Ca' Foscari for Art at Venetoneight

**2012** - Ca' Foscari Sociale project start-up

**2013** - Sustainability in University Rankings study day

Ca' Foscari means to increase its involvement in the Venetian territory, by identifying local needs and **involving the major players** in the search of synergies and partnerships that create new value.

The Institution is also committed to promoting a **policy of sustainability** among the local, national and international community by holding promotional and scientific events.

Sustainability pervades all the major events the University organizes for residents. **Venetoneight** and **Artnight** are just two of the many events arranged by Sustainable Ca' Foscari together with University faculty and local institutions such as the **Academy of Fine Arts of Venice**.

Our dedication to the local territory is also seen in specific projects such as the **Ca' Foscari Sociale Project** launched to boost relations and competencies in favour of national and international **voluntary services**.

Ca' Foscari distinguishes itself on the **international scene** for its wholehearted collaboration with organizations promoting sustainability worldwide.

In 2013, University efforts culminated in the **Sustainability in University Rankings** event, a study day dedicated to promoting the integration of sustainability indicators in international university classifications.

The 2014 **Sustainable Campuses Project** was launched to encourage a thorough scientific examination of areas linked to sustainability. With this project Ca' Foscari aims to give credit to the events on Sustainability organized by University **Departments** and to offer support in promoting planned events.

We, at Ca' Foscari, are in fact convinced that it is fundamental the wider **community** be involved first hand in the events, relations with external stakeholders and the circulation of scientific results. We hope, in this way, to achieve **real social integration**.

# Ca' Foscari sociale

To increase awareness of the University's civic role and, at the same time, to be more visible and effective in the area, Ca' Foscari has launched specific projects to enter the sphere of territorial welfare. It is in this way that the Ca' Foscari Sociale Project was inaugurated with a view to putting together and satisfying the different needs manifested by non-profit associations active in the area with people desiring to do volunteer work.

Our objectives are twofold. We endeavour to increase the University's social role by evidencing individual's professionalism and their sometimes hidden abilities and, then, we work to making these abilities fully available to the diverse volunteer community.

An agreement was signed on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 with the seven Voluntary Service Centres of the Veneto Region to structure relationships with these partners.

From the outset, participation has been very active and, as a result, an on-line wall has been created to rapidly match offer and demand.

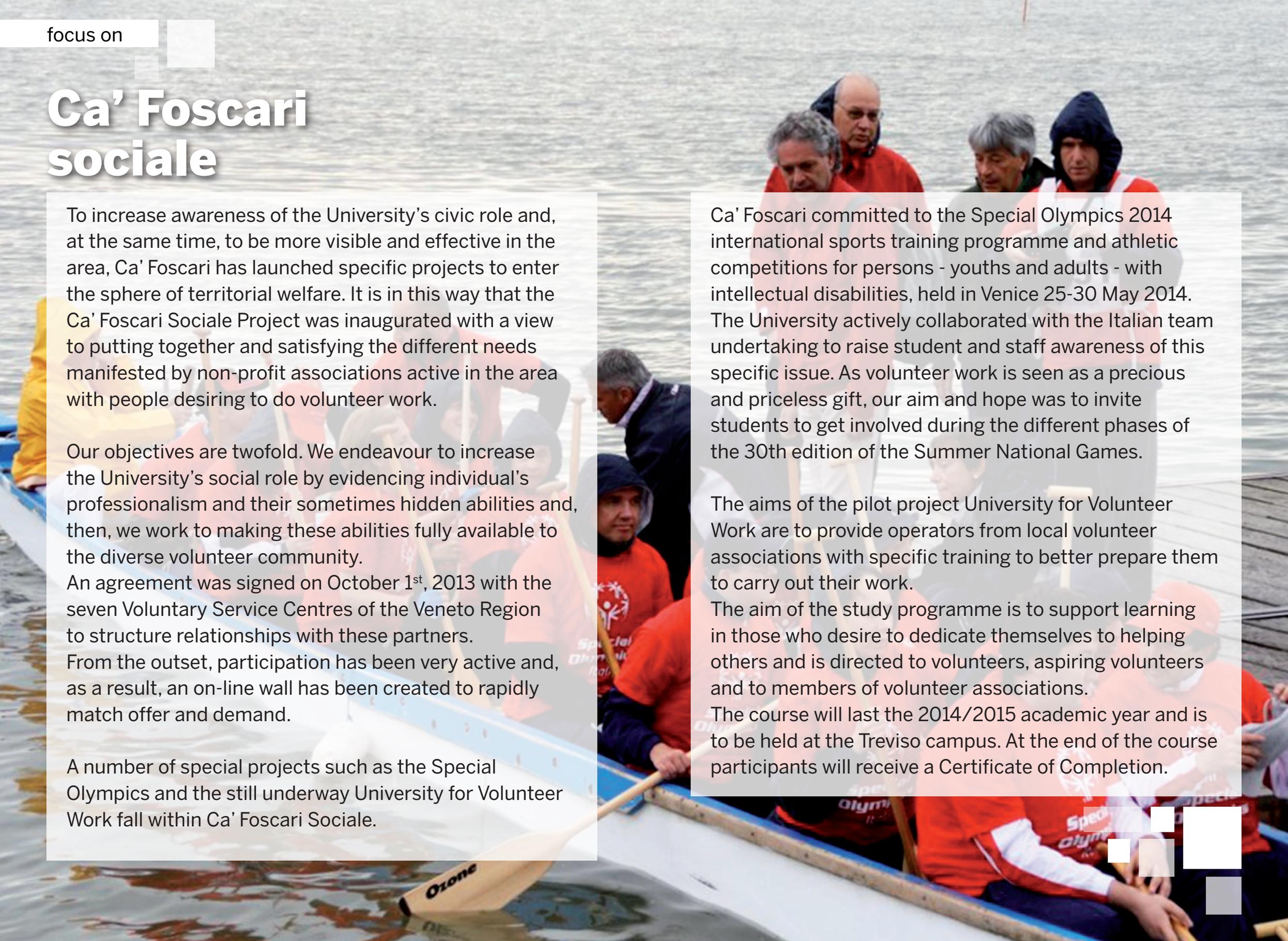
A number of special projects such as the Special Olympics and the still underway University for Volunteer Work fall within Ca' Foscari Sociale.

Ca' Foscari committed to the Special Olympics 2014 international sports training programme and athletic competitions for persons - youths and adults - with intellectual disabilities, held in Venice 25-30 May 2014. The University actively collaborated with the Italian team undertaking to raise student and staff awareness of this specific issue. As volunteer work is seen as a precious and priceless gift, our aim and hope was to invite students to get involved during the different phases of the 30th edition of the Summer National Games.

The aims of the pilot project University for Volunteer Work are to provide operators from local volunteer associations with specific training to better prepare them to carry out their work.

The aim of the study programme is to support learning in those who desire to dedicate themselves to helping others and is directed to volunteers, aspiring volunteers and to members of volunteer associations.

The course will last the 2014/2015 academic year and is to be held at the Treviso campus. At the end of the course participants will receive a Certificate of Completion.





## **sustainable Ca'Foscari**

Special Projects Office  
Dorsoduro 3246, Venice, Italy

+39 041 234 8038 / 7074 / 8076 / 8077  
sustainability@unive.it

[www.unive.it/sostenibile](http://www.unive.it/sostenibile) - [www.unive.it/sustainability](http://www.unive.it/sustainability)  
[www.twitter.com/CFSostenibile](https://www.twitter.com/CFSostenibile)  
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