

# Bridging the ESG Skills Gap

How ESG Training Enhances  
Reporting and Drives Long-Term  
Business Impact



“Between the artistic design and no-nonsense approach to introducing environmental concepts, Kineo’s climate and sustainability courses are a perfect addition to an ESG program.”

Enterprise Curator, OpenSesame



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# Key Takeaways

As global regulations tighten and stakeholders demand greater transparency, businesses must enhance their ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) reporting capabilities. However, a critical challenge remains: ESG reporting requires input from multiple teams, yet many employees lack the formal training needed to accurately track, measure, and report ESG performance.

ESG training is the missing link. By equipping employees with the necessary skills, organisations can ensure accurate data collection, avoid greenwashing, and align their reports with compliance standards.

In fact, a World Economic Forum poll<sup>1</sup> found that nearly 50% of companies cite low employee engagement as a major barrier to sustainability goals, highlighting the need to build a culture of active participation. Encouragingly, 91% of organisations surveyed by KPMG<sup>2</sup> plan to increase their ESG investments, focusing on dedicated personnel, software, and training to close capability gaps.

## This white paper explores:



Why ESG training is essential for robust reporting.



How upskilling employees leads to both compliance and long-term business value.



Practical steps to embed ESG learning into corporate strategy.



The latest regulatory trends in Australia, the UK, and Asia Pacific.



How Kineo's industry-leading ESG training helps businesses bridge the ESG skills gap and drive measurable impact.

<sup>1</sup> World Economic Forum, From obligation to motivation: Why employee engagement is the key to ESG success.

<sup>2</sup> KPMG, Addressing the Strategy Execution Gap in Sustainability Reporting.



## The purpose of this white paper

This white paper explores how expert ESG training closes the skills gap, improves data accuracy, and ensures compliance with global standards. Investing in ESG education fosters transparency, strengthens stakeholder trust, and supports long-term sustainability.

# The Growing Importance of ESG Reporting

## Why ESG Reporting Matters

Global ESG reporting regulations are tightening, particularly in Australia, the UK, and Asia Pacific. The UK mandates ESG disclosures through the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and net zero reporting requirements. Australia is introducing the Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards (ASRS), effective January 1, 2025, to align with global frameworks. In Asia Pacific, Hong Kong and Singapore have strengthened ESG disclosure requirements, while green finance initiatives across the region drive sustainable investment and corporate accountability.

To stay compliant, businesses must align their reporting with leading global frameworks such as TCFD (Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures), GRI (Global Reporting Initiative), and UNSDGs (United Nations Sustainable Development Goals).

Beyond compliance, ESG is a value driver. Companies with strong ESG practices attract investors, build customer trust, and secure top talent. However, accurate ESG disclosures are crucial. Without proper training, employees may misreport data, leading to regulatory penalties, reputational damage, and financial risk.



## The cost of ESG missteps

In 2023, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) fined DWS Investment Management Americas Inc. (DIMA), a subsidiary of Deutsche Bank AG, \$19 million for making misleading claims about its ESG investment process. Additionally, DIMA incurred a \$6 million penalty for anti-money laundering (AML) violations. This case underscores the importance of ESG literacy in ensuring transparency and compliance.<sup>3</sup>

## The Link Between ESG Training and Compliance

Training plays a critical role in ensuring compliance and credibility. Without ESG literacy, employees may unintentionally misreport data or engage in greenwashing, exaggerating sustainability claims without substantiated evidence. The practical benefits of ESG training:

### Enhance reputation

Employees who understand ESG principles can accurately communicate the company's sustainability initiatives, effectively building trust, and proactively preventing perceptions of greenwashing.

### Meet evolving regulations

Trained teams are more equipped to navigate complex disclosure mandates.

### Reduce risk

ESG-literate employees can proactively identify risks, minimising financial and legal exposure.

# Closing the ESG Skills Gap: Why Training Matters

## ESG Reporting is a Company-Wide Responsibility

ESG reporting is not just a sustainability team function; it requires input from procurement, finance, HR, operations, and leadership. When employees across all departments understand ESG principles, they can:



**Collect accurate data aligned with regulatory requirements.**



**Integrate sustainability into procurement and supplier decisions.**



**Strengthen ESG commitments through employee engagement and leadership buy-in.**





## The Risks of an ESG Knowledge Gap

Without adequate training, organisations face several risks:

- A compliance-driven, not purpose-driven, ESG approach – Many businesses treat ESG as a box-ticking exercise rather than a strategic advantage.
- Increased greenwashing risk – Employees without ESG literacy may unintentionally overstate sustainability claims, leading to reputational damage.
- Lack of ongoing ESG education – ESG regulations and best practices evolve rapidly, requiring continuous learning.

Only

# 2%

of boards in Fortune 500 companies are sufficiently equipped to guide their organisations in sustainability risks and strategy, highlighting a significant green skills gap at the leadership level.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Reuters, 'Three steps to tackling the green skills gap in the boardroom'

# How ESG Training Strengthens ESG Reporting



## Bridging the Gap Between Learning and Reporting

Employees trained in ESG frameworks, regulations, and data collection contribute to more transparent, accurate, and credible reporting. Leadership also plays a key role. Executives who understand ESG can embed sustainability into corporate strategy and enhance competitiveness.

A real-world example from a global corporation (delivered by Kineo) illustrates just how powerful well-designed ESG training can be. The organisation rolled out a tailored sustainability eLearning program, including two large learning modules across 5,700 employees. The results were outstanding:

**94.5%** Module 1 engaged 94.5% of the target audience, with 65% reporting an improved understanding of the company's sustainability strategy.

**94%** Module 2 achieved a 94% completion rate.



The program was delivered in seven languages across the APAC region, showing the scalability and effectiveness of ESG training at a global level.

## Practical Benefits of ESG Training

- More accurate data collection – Reduces errors in ESG disclosures and enhances regulatory alignment.
- Improved compliance – Ensures reports meet global and regional standards while minimising penalties.
- Stronger investor and stakeholder trust – Transparent reporting builds business credibility and resilience

## Compliance-Driven vs. Purpose-Driven ESG

Compliance-Driven ESG	Purpose-Driven ESG
Meets minimum legal requirements	Embedded in corporate culture
ESG seen as a reporting obligation	ESG is a value driver
Reactive approach to regulations	Proactive, future focused strategies
Limited stakeholder engagement	Open, transparent reporting

**“Sustainability training is critical for our employees because it not only provides knowledge to our teammates but also links to our customer commitment and drives our daily work.”**

Director, Supply Chain Management

What Kineo's clients are saying

# Steps to Integrate ESG Learning into Corporate Strategy

## 1. Conduct an ESG Knowledge Audit Across Teams:

Conduct surveys and assessments to identify knowledge gaps in ESG principles and reporting. Use findings to tailor training programs that address specific regulatory and compliance needs.

## 2. Implement Targeted ESG Training for All Employees:

Provide role-specific ESG training for operations, finance, HR, and leadership, ensuring employees understand how ESG applies to their work. Use interactive modules, case studies, and scenario-based learning to enhance engagement.

## 3. Align ESG Learning with Corporate Reporting Frameworks:

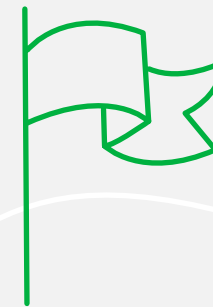
Train employees on key ESG reporting standards (GRI, TCFD, ISSB) and embed reporting best practices into workflows. Offer refresher courses to keep teams updated on evolving regulations.

## 4. Foster a Culture of Continuous ESG Education:

Integrate ESG learning into onboarding and professional development, encouraging ongoing knowledge-sharing through ESG champions and internal forums. Incentivise participation with certifications and recognition programs.

## 5. Monitor, Measure, and Improve ESG Learning Outcomes:

Track training completion rates, assessment scores, and reporting accuracy to measure impact. Use data-driven insights to refine training programs and ensure ESG learning evolves with business and regulatory changes.



96%

of the world's leading 250 companies (G250) now report on sustainability or ESG matters, indicating that such reporting has become standard practice among major corporations.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> [KMPG](#), 'Big shifts, small steps'

“It’s easy to access the module and to fill the assessment. Most of the materials were related to my job and easy to understand — it helped me carry out my work duties and increased my sustainability awareness.”

Senior QA Engineer

What Kineo’s clients are saying

# The Long-Term Business Impact of ESG Training

## ESG Training as a Business Strategy

To distil the impact of ESG training, three key outcomes emerge:

- **Beyond compliance** – Moving from reactive reporting to embedding ESG in corporate values.
- **Talent edge** – Strengthening employee engagement and employer brand.
- **Strong market positioning** – Gaining investor confidence and competitive advantage.



McKinsey research shows that "triple outperformers" — companies excelling in growth, profitability, and ESG — achieve 2% higher annual shareholder returns than those focused solely on financial metrics, proving ESG enhances shareholder value.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> McKinsey & Company, 'The triple play: Growth, profit, and sustainability'

# What Differentiates Kineo's ESG Training?

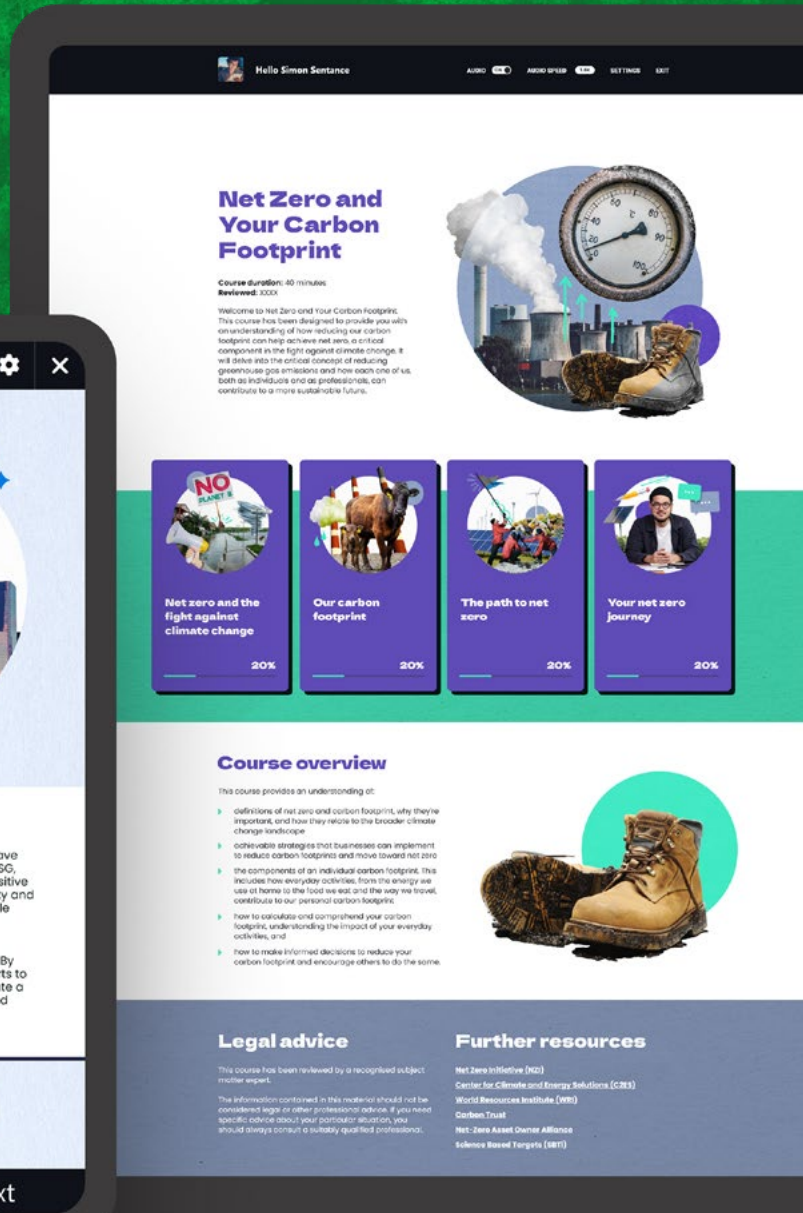
At Kineo, we believe that ESG training is not just about meeting regulatory requirements — it's about driving real business change. Our approach ensures that organisations don't just comply but lead in sustainable business practices.



**“The content is fantastically curated as well as created and forms a great actionable blueprint and operational starter kit for organisations trying to articulate their sustainability goals.”**

Director, Edvantech

What Kineo's clients are saying



## Kineo at a glance

**2.5 million**  
course completions  
annually

Proven impact at scale

**20+ years**  
years of industry  
leadership

Trusted expertise in corporate  
learning.

**4.5/5 stars**  
rated

Consistently high learner  
satisfaction.

**Tailored**  
your way

Custom-fit courses that adapt to  
your brand, industry, and multilingual  
needs for fast, personalised training.

**WCAG 2.1**  
compliant

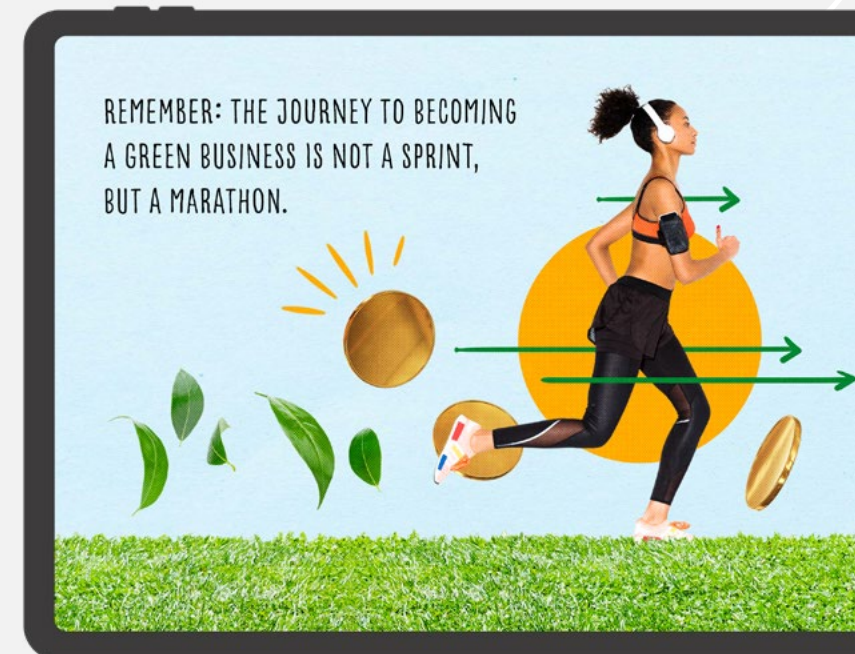
Ensuring accessibility for all learners.

## Take the Next Step

Empower your workforce with industry-leading ESG training to strengthen reporting, ensure compliance, and drive business impact.

Explore Kineo's ESG courses today

[Book a free consultation](#)





## Designed for results

Everything we do at Kineo stems from a simple idea – if we design a better learning experience, together we'll get better results.

Kineo helps the world's leading businesses improve performance through learning and technology. We're proud of our reputation for being flexible and innovative, and of our award-winning work with clients across the world.

Whatever your business challenge, we will partner with you every step of the way to find the learning solution that fits best – and delivers results.

So, how can we help you?  
Get in touch about your digital learning challenges.

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