Alessia Xu

Chemical Engineering and Analytical Science

Outstanding volunteer (student)

Incredible Edible Manchester Initiative

Alessia started volunteering with Incredible Edible Manchester (IEM) in October 2015 as she felt passionate about doing something to help make a difference in the community. In her second year, she became an IEM project lead, managing two sites and a greenhouse to grow free organic fruit/veg for the local community. This is vital at a time when food poverty levels are high and there is an obesity crisis in Western Society. Alessia continues to volunteer for IEM today and together with her co-leads organises events and recruits volunteers across the year.

In 2016, Alessia became the Community and Environmental Representative for the Whitworth Park Hall of Residence Association; she actively engaged with other residents to lead projects to encourage them to think differently about the world and become more sustainable. Some of her work included an organic herbs giveaway during Earth week, the promotion of the clean-up of public spaces, and the showcase of relevant documentaries. She also embarked on a project to get an edible green space on campus at Whitworth Park on the model of Incredible Edible.

Through her roles Alessia has shown exceptional leadership skills, engaging other students to get on board and make a difference.

How Alessia has made a difference

Leading IEM, Alessia has introduced many people to the concept of sustainable Zero Km Food and encouraged individuals to learn how to grow their own vegetables and adopt more healthy eating habits. Since Alessia’s initial efforts to create a plot on campus, Whitworth Park Hall of Residence now has a whole green area dedicated to promoting green community engagement among the resident students.

Alessia and her co-lead are currently working hard to promote collaborative projects between IEM and other local community groups to fully integrate the student volunteer network within the wider Manchester community.