



END OF PROGRAMME REFLECTION

Leadership in Action • Mexico City • 2026

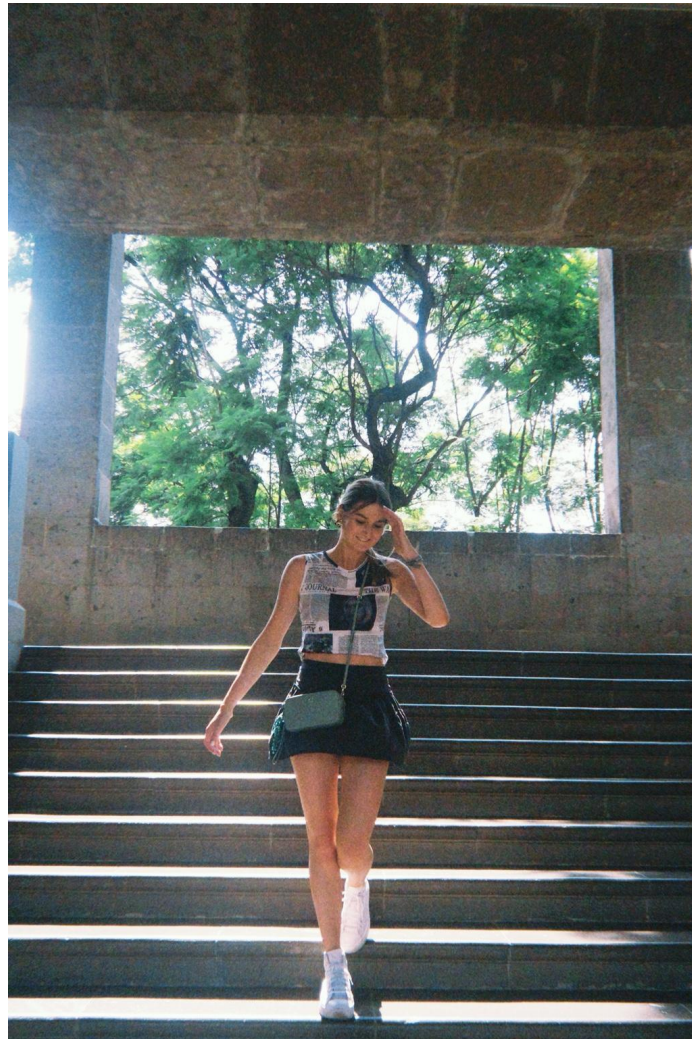
Rennueva • Circular economy • Community • Leadership

The experience

My Leadership in Action project took me to Mexico City to work with Rennueva on plastic waste and circular economy solutions. The project combined environmental research with practical problem-solving, teamwork and community-focused thinking.

Living and working in a new country made the experience much bigger than the project itself. I had to adapt quickly, collaborate with people from different universities and learn from a completely different environmental and cultural context.

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION • MEXICO 2026



Exploring Mexico City during the Leadership in Action programme.

Working with Rennueva

One of the most valuable parts of the programme was seeing recycling beyond the theory. Visiting Rennueva made the scale and practical challenges of plastic collection much more real, particularly for difficult materials such as EPS.

It also showed me that a successful recycling system has to consider collection, storage, transport, businesses and communities - not only what happens to the material at the end.



EPS collected for recycling at Rennueva.



Collected plastic ready for the next stage of recycling.

What I learned

The project reinforced that environmental solutions cannot be designed around technology alone. Collection systems only work when they also make sense for businesses, communities and the people using them.

I became much more aware of the importance of communication, incentives and designing around existing systems. It strengthened my interest in circular economy and practical environmental engineering.



Learning and working together during the programme.



The end of program cultural picnic celebration

People & collaboration

Working with scholars and volunteers from different countries was a major part of the experience. We had different academic backgrounds and ways of approaching problems, which meant learning how to communicate clearly, divide work and bring different ideas together.



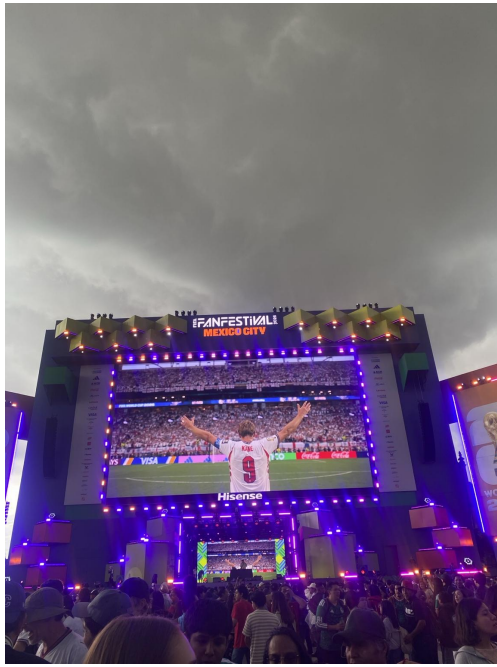
Exploring Mexico together outside the project.



Some of the best parts were the ordinary moments with my new friends.

Experiencing Mexico

Outside the project, I tried to experience as much of Mexico City as possible. Historic sites, museums and cultural events gave me a much better sense of the city and made the six weeks feel completely different from simply travelling somewhere for a short visit.



The World Cup fan zone in Mexico City.



Exploring Mexico's history and cultural museums



A boat day in Xochimilco.



Visiting the pyramids at Teotihuacan.

Culture, food & everyday life

Food and everyday life were a huge part of the experience. Trying new places and local food made Mexico City feel more familiar as the weeks went on.



Trying new food in Mexico City.



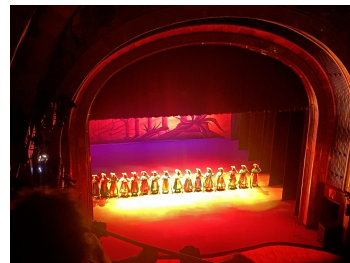
Exploring cafés around the city.

Mexican culture

One of my favourite cultural experiences was seeing the Ballet Folklórico de México at the Palacio de Bellas Artes — a memorable way to experience Mexican music, dance and tradition.



Outside the Palacio de Bellas Artes.



Ballet Folklórico de México.

Final reflection

The programme gave me much more than a finished environmental project. I came away with a better understanding of how sustainability works in practice, more confidence working in an international team, and a stronger appreciation for the role of communities in environmental change.

It also gave me six weeks to live somewhere completely new, meet people I would never otherwise have met and experience Mexico beyond the project. That combination of professional learning and personal experience is what I will remember most.



Mexico 2026 — Leadership in Action.

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