



# Environmental Sustainability Policy

## 1. Introduction

The Royal Academy of Engineering is a charity delivering public benefit from engineering excellence and technology innovation. We are also a National Academy providing progressive leadership for engineering and technology in the UK and beyond. Our Fellowship is drawn from the worlds of industry, enterprise and research, many of whom are at the front line of the sustainability challenge.

A sustainable society is one in which development meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Engineers have a vital role to play in creating systems and solutions to address the climate crisis and support more sustainable use and management of natural resources.

This Environmental Sustainability Policy provides the framework for the Academy to improve our own sustainability performance by setting, reviewing and delivering upon environmental objectives and targets.

## 2. Policy Statement

The Academy is committed to:

- 2.1. Developing and executing an Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (APPENDIX A).
- 2.2. Leading by example and ensuring we are applying best practice to minimise our environmental impact and improve the sustainability of our activities.
- 2.3. Being transparent about its sustainability objectives, plans, current limitations and future ambitions, including through publication of this policy and our sustainability objectives for 2024/5.
- 2.4. Engaging our Staff and Fellows in its sustainability journey, including the staff-led Environmental Sustainability Action Group.
- 2.5. Learning from and sharing our own learning with others. This includes but is not limited to partner organisations and innovative engineering practices developed within our networks of Fellows and beneficiaries.
- 2.6. At a minimum, we aim to be Net Zero across scopes 1 & 2 by 2050, and will investigate options for near term targets.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1. Trustee Board: Approve the policy.
- 3.2. Director, Policy & International: Executive Leadership Team Level responsible for the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan. Each action within the plan has both an operational and a Senior Leadership Team level owner (Director/Associate Director).
- 3.3. Environmental Oversight Group: Oversee the implementation of the Action Plan including assessment of partners' sustainability.

## 4. Implementation

- 4.1. Implementation of the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan (Appendix A)
- 4.2. The Audit & Risk Committee and Trustee Board will review the progress of the Environmental Sustainability Action Plan every year

## APPENDIX A: ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2024

No	Scopes	Action	Owner/Director	Date	Notes	Degree of control
1	1	Upgrading BMS and Air conditioning systems	Paul Hopkin/ Chris Boyle	Update Feb 2024	<p>We have already upgraded our Buildings Management System (BMS) to shut down air conditioning when windows are open, and moved to motion sensors to regulate lighting.</p> <p>Next steps are to further upgrade the BMS to ensure efficiency and that the degree of air conditioning is correctly sized according to the needs of the rooms.</p>	High
2	1	Partial closure of office	Paul Hopkin/ Chris Boyle	Dec 2025	We are consulting on closing one floor of the building on quiet days, typically Fridays. In a six-floor building and on a pro rata basis this might make an approximate c. 3% reduction in heating on those days.	High
3	1 & 2	Fuel switching & scoping future options for the Academy boiler	Paul Hopkin/ Chris Boyle	Update at March 2025	The Academy has already switched to zero-carbon electricity. The majority of the emissions associated with the building therefore derive from its gas boiler. Moving to a zero-carbon solution is a longer-term project requiring collaboration with the Crown Estate (of which Carlton House Terrace forms a part) and depends on the technical solutions available. The Academy will work to understand the potential range of costs and timescales.	Medium: dependent on developing technological options and collaboration with Crown Estate
4	3	Travel Policy evolution	Meredith Ettridge/ Nick Starkey	Jan 2025	The Academy has a workforce of around 250, a Fellowship of around 1,800, hubs across the UK and projects across the world. Travel is therefore a significant source of scope 3 emissions. Complete cessation of travel is not a feasible option if we are to operate in an effective and inclusive way, but good policies can force choices around numbers traveling, and by what modes and potentially what class.	Medium/low. We have some agency over the frequency and mode of travel. We have much less control over the emissions those forms of travel account for: zero carbon travel is not an available option for air and most surface transport.

5	3	Digital	David Hunt/Chris Boyle	Dec 2025	<p>Azure, which hosts almost all RAEng websites along with our Microsoft 365 applications, has committed to using 100% renewable energy by 2025. DotDigital (our email marketing platform) uses AWS servers already running on 100% renewable energy.</p> <p>We will now undertake an assessment to quantify and scope options to further manage our digital footprint.</p>	Medium/high. We are dependent on our suppliers in terms of emissions. However, more providers are moving to low carbon options, and we largely have choice of provider as contracts are renewed.
6	3	Research	Sarah Dodd/Andrew Clark & Christina Guindy	May 2025 and yearly	<p>We will review at least annually (starting May 2025) how we implement environmental requirements across our grant portfolio. This will be guided by the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice and evolving good practice across the sector. Initial priorities will include cascading requirements of our own funders to recipients in a proportionate way and enabling awardees to make sustainable travel choices.</p> <p>Industrial partners and host organisations of applicants to the new Green Futures Fellowships programme (GFF) will be assessed against the Academy Sustainability Assessment tool with steering group to use those assessments to inform funding decisions on a case-by-case basis.</p>	Medium. While we have some choices available, we need to be proportionate in the burdens we pass to partners, including in LMICs, and there are limits on what we can practicably monitor.
7	3	Investments	Burnham Quail/Chris Boyle	End Oct 2024	The Finance Committee has approved an investment policy that includes an enhanced Sustainable Investment Policy in October 2024.	Medium/High. Our investments are managed by a third party, but there is now a wide range of providers with ESG offers.
8	Other	Partners	Nick Starkey/ Jo Trigg & Samantha Bagchi	Nov 2024	We are instituting a process of assessing funding partners' levels of maturity in addressing their sustainability as discussed above. We plan to have this in place during November 2024.	Medium/high. Partners' policies are not under our control, and we are

						only one voice. But we retain control of who we partner with, and there are increasingly clear and established requirements on major organisations.
9	Other	Measurement	Nick Starkey/ Meredith Ettridge/ Ed Laidler	Jan 2025	<p>We report our emissions, and year on year changes. There is considerable volatility in this given changing working patterns due to COVID and the return to work; rapid increase in staff numbers; the increasing scope of our measurement, which 'adds' further emissions which previously existed but weren't included in the reported total.</p> <p>We will work with our monitoring partner (currently Planet Mark) or a new organisation, to understand how we might provide a more stable indication of progress over a five-year period</p>	High.

## Document Control

Version	Date	Description of Change	Review Cycle	Next Review Date
1.0	March 2020	Creation	2 Years	March 2022
1.5	Nov 2024	Interim update. Enhanced policy statements. Included Environmental Sustainability Action Plan.	N/A	March 2025

Responsible	Accountable	Signature	Date
Director, Policy & International	Trustee Board	Approved in the Trustee Board meeting.	March 2022