

JUST Centre Sustainability Policy

The JUST Centre aims to embed environmental sustainability considerations into our practices and decision making, to maximise co-benefits for our research and the environment. We have followed the ACCESS guiding principles in preparing this policy, along with guidance from the [UoM sustainability strategy](#).

Environmental Sustainability – Core Elements (ACCESS)

- Environmental sustainability, in the context of environmental social science (ESS) research practice, means focusing – as a primary consideration – on minimising negative environmental impact and maximising environmental benefit.
- Ways of working that are environmentally sustainable will aim, wherever possible, to derive co-benefits for ESS researchers, administrative units and wider civil society, incorporating climate-ecological, social, economic, cultural and personal wellbeing advantages.
- Environmental sustainability considerations should be a positive identifiable element of the professional conduct and development of ESS researchers and administrative units
- Environmental sustainability considerations will need to be cognisant of and aligned to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) considerations, to ensure equal access to opportunities.
- Policies for promoting environmental sustainability should be co-produced to maximise benefit to all concerned.

<https://accessnetwork.uk/guiding-principles/>

Action Area	Suggested Actions
Internal Meetings	<p>Consider opportunities for virtual and hybrid internal meetings, which can often be a more environmentally sustainable option, compared to in-person meetings.</p> <p>Online meetings should be seen as first option to avoid travel when participants are located in different places.</p> <p>Collectively decide how best to create virtual/hybrid spaces as positive, inclusive and meaningful to all attendees and ensure these features are followed consistently.</p>

<p>Workshops/Events/Working Groups</p>	<p>When planning events, consider relative merits of in-person, hybrid and online events; adopt the principle that travel should be reduced but not abandoned.</p>
	<p>Recommend to delegates that any travel that does take place should default to a low-carbon mode, with an order of preference being: walking, cycling, bus / coach, train, car and finally aeroplane. However, as per the JUST JEDI policy, be mindful/respectful that active/low carbon forms of travel are not always possible for everyone.</p>
	<p>Option to use venues with a low environmental impact, e.g. venues with high energy efficiency.</p>
	<p>Facilitate or recommend that accommodation options should prioritise establishments with environmental credentials. Major search engines like Booking and TripAdvisor offer options to search for these options.</p>
	<p>Estimate delegate numbers as precisely as possible to minimise food waste when ordering catering. Do not over order. Have a plan for what to do with any leftovers, such as providing food boxes so participants can take home leftovers, and connecting to a local, non-profit food organisation who can distribute or use surplus food in a sustainable way.</p>
	<p>Liaise with venues and caterers to minimise/eliminate use of plastics, especially single-use plastics.</p>
	<p>JUST-funded catering should be plant-based and meat/dairy free as default, unless there is a good reason not to be.</p>
	<p>Encourage delegates to bring own reusable water bottles. Catered water should also be in reusable bottles and be the most sustainable option available (e.g., tap water).</p>
	<p>Be mindful of the number of attendees, how far each would need to travel, how much time it will take, and the mode of transport they would likely take to attend an in-person meeting.</p>

Communications	Consider carefully the relative merits of digital versus paper copies of communications outputs.
	Where printed copies of outputs are deemed useful, try not to overestimate how many copies you might need (many desks and offices are cluttered with unused/undistributed project brochures/leaflets/reports etc.)
	Ensure physical outputs are produced using the most sustainable methods and materials as possible.
	Examine the sustainability credentials of third-party communications / consultancies / professionals you work with. Try to support local and small businesses and social enterprises where possible.
	Ensure web content is kept lean to balance tensions between sharing sufficient content and minimising the carbon footprint of hosting server.
Research Activities	Consider how choice of topic/research question can contribute to environmental sustainability.
	Consult wider literature on how to reduce the impact of everyday research practices, as relevant to your own methods.
	When planning and budgeting for travel, consider relative pros and cons to balance the mix of online and in-person attendance at e.g., team meetings, conferences etc.
	Consider incorporating evaluations of environmental impact of your research activities
JUST Sustainability Mission Statement	JUST is a research Centre focused on the pursuit of sustainability transformations that are people-centred, 'joined-up' and socially just. We aim to carry out our activities in a way that is true to a JUST ethos, by minimising environmental impacts and maximising social benefits. We aim to transparently share best sustainability practice with our partners, collaborators and suppliers.