greenoffice label

Green Office Labels Guidelines

2025



Green Office
University of Groningen

university of groningen

Green Office Labels

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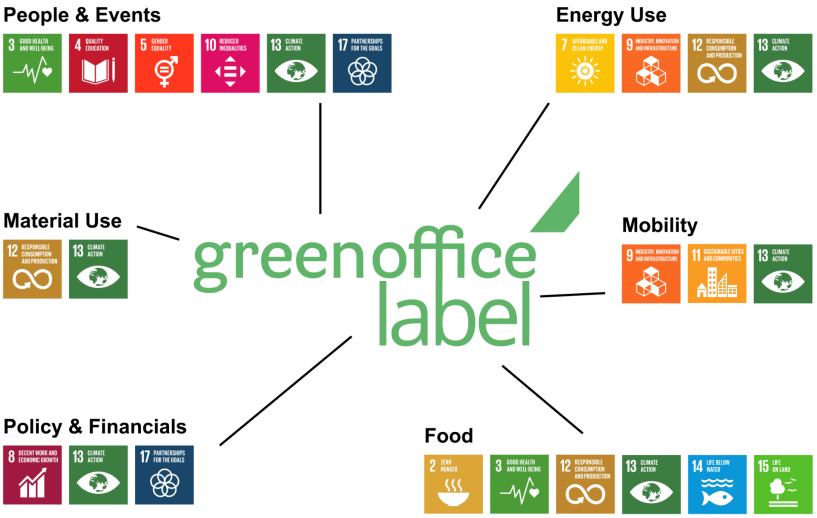
Introduction

In 2017, the University of Groningen's Green Office introduced the Green Office Label programme to acknowledge the urgent need for all university stakeholders to take action against the climate crisis. As student organisations affiliated with the university are a big part of students' lives and play a significant role in setting an example for them, it is crucial that they also contribute to creating a more sustainable university and, consequently, a more sustainable society.

The Green Office Label is a tool for assessing the sustainability practices of student organisations. Organisations are awarded a label acknowledging their efforts and scoring their sustainability using the leaf score, which goes from 0.5 leaves to 5 leaves.



The programme was developed following the University of Groningen's Sustainability Roadmap and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Themes have been adjusted to be relevant to student organisations.



Defining sustainability

Sustainability is a concept that can be interpreted differently by each organisation. Due to each organisation's unique nature, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to becoming more sustainable. Instead, organisations can adopt numerous strategies and pathways to achieve this goal. The Green Office strives to ensure that our scoring criteria and questions are as objective and universally applicable as possible. By doing so, we aim to provide a fair and

comprehensive assessment of an organisation's sustainability efforts while acknowledging the diverse ways sustainability can be pursued.

The Green Office Labels bases its definition of sustainability on the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It covers environmental themes, like energy use and food choices, but also recognises the importance of social sustainability, including inclusivity, diversity, mental health, and accessibility. For more info on this, we recommend reading "Equity is Great, but What Does it Have to Do with Sustainability?" By Loo and Stoeckl, and the "Why sustainability and equity?" chapter of the 2011 UN Human Development Report.

Objectives

We developed the programme not only as a scoring tool but also to inspire change and guide organisations towards important sustainable behaviours, which are not always clear without a clear list of things to look for. The objectives of the Green Office Labels are:

- Allow board members to reflect on their organisations' impacts
- Highlight which areas need improvement to improve sustainability
- Create a friendly competition environment between organisations to drive improvement
- Make sustainability more desirable by highlighting the benefits of receiving an official sustainability score

We hope this will lead organisations to strive to obtain better scores year after year, thus reducing the environmental impact of the University of Groningen and its students.

Eligibility

All student organisations located in Groningen and focused on students of the University of Groningen can participate in the Green Office Labels. The term "student organisations" refers to study associations, student associations, sports associations, religious associations, cultural associations, and other similar associations affiliated with the University of Groningen.

NB: This differs from the Green Office Subsidies, where only CUOS-recognised organisations receiving a board grant can participate.

Benefits

There are many benefits of applying for a Green Office Label. By participating, organisations can:

- **Be more attractive to sponsors:**
  Many companies and organisations are increasingly prioritising sustainability and thus actively seek environmentally responsible partners. By showcasing their commitment to sustainability through the Green Office Label, student organisations can differentiate themselves and attract sponsors who share their values, potentially opening up new funding opportunities.
- **Apply for a Green Office Subsidy:**
  The Green Office Label is a requirement for receiving Green Office Subsidies, which aim

to financially help organisations overcome the sustainability premium associated with many sustainable alternatives.

- **Understand their environmental impact and identify areas for improvement:**
  The programme also gives organisations insights into their performance across various sustainability criteria and helps them identify areas for improvement. With these insights, organisations can create actionable plans for progress over the coming years, setting clear sustainability goals and outlining the steps needed to achieve them.
- **Demonstrate their commitment to sustainability and inspire awareness and action in members:**
  In the face of the urgent climate crisis, it is critical that everyone, including student organisations, takes immediate action to mitigate its effects. Student organisations have an ethical responsibility to lead by example and contribute to creating a more sustainable future.
- **Identify best practices, learn from their peers, gauge relative performance and find motivation:**
  The Green Office Labels also enable organisations to compare their sustainability efforts with those of other participating organisations. We encourage dialogue among organisations to share and learn best practices. By fostering a spirit of friendly competition, the programme also encourages organisations to strive for excellence in sustainability.

How it works

Participating in the Green Office Labels is easy:

1. Review the questionnaire questions in these guidelines
2. Gather the evidence needed to verify some answers
3. Answer the questionnaire on the online application form and submit the evidence document. We recommend distributing the work among the board members
4. Receive a physical label certificate at the Green Office Labels award ceremony

If you encounter any technical difficulties with the submission or have questions about the process, please contact the Green Office at greenoffice@rug.nl well before the deadline so any issues can be resolved in time.

Scoring Criteria

The Green Office Label score is designed to assess an organisation's sustainability practices objectively. It evaluates the organisation's policies and performance across six key categories, each with a different weight on the total score:

Category	Weight (%)
Policy & Financials	20
Energy Use	15
Material Use	20
Food	20
Mobility	15
People & Events	10

An additional category, “Extra”, allows organisations to share sustainability aspects they’d like to share but were not included in the questionnaire. This category does not weight the final score calculation, but can add points to other categories.

To calculate the final score, category scores are calculated individually first and then normalised to percentages:

$$Normalised\ category\ score\ =\ 100\ \frac{Score}{Maximum\ obtainable\ -\ Non\ applicable}$$

Not applicable questions do not contribute to the category scores; thus, organisations are not penalised for irrelevant questions. The final score is then calculated as a weighted sum. Leaf scores are calculated by rescaling the final percentage score by five and rounding to the nearest half number.

The Questionnaire section at the end of this document provides all questions, possible answers, and their corresponding point values.

Evidence

To ensure the accuracy and credibility of the Green Office Labels, organisations must provide evidence supporting their responses to some questions in the questionnaire, allowing the Green Office to validate their claims. Only questions marked with “Evidence Required” need evidence.

Evidence must be compiled into a main evidence document and other supplementary documents, all of which can be submitted at the end of the questionnaire. The template for all documents will be provided and must be followed strictly. The template for the main evidence document will indicate when supplementary documents are required.

Submitted evidence does not need to be an official document: It can take various forms, such as a collection of pictures, screenshots, invoices, documents, correspondence, or any other relevant material that supports the organisation's responses.

While the Green Office prefers all evidence to be submitted in English, submitting documents in Dutch is permissible. In such cases, it would also be a courtesy of the Green Office team to provide an English translation.

Needed Links

- Online submission form
- Main evidence document

Additional and separate evidence documents are linked in the main evidence document. They are Google Drive documents, so please make a copy by pressing “File>Make a copy” to fill them in. Fill these out using Google Docs and Google Sheets, and **paste the sharing link in the main evidence document**. Please ensure to set their visibility in the sharing menu so that “Anyone with the link” is a “Viewer”.

Timeline

- April 19th: Programme opens to all organisations

- May 13th: Q&A Session | Green Office, 14:00-16:00 (also available online)
- **May 30th: Submission deadline**
- TBA: Green Office Labels award ceremony & borrel | Senaatskamer

Please double-check the times and dates in email announcements, as the above timeline is subject to change. We recommend putting these dates in your calendar.

Privacy Policy

The University of Groningen is committed to protecting individuals' privacy rights and handling personal data responsibly, following applicable privacy laws and regulations. Any personal information collected in the Green Office Label programme will be processed carefully and securely. For more details, please see the University of Groningen's General Policy on the Protection of Personal Data.

Questionnaire

The Green Office Label questionnaire contents and associated points per question are reported below.

We are committed to continuously refining and improving the questionnaire to ensure that the criteria remain relevant, fair, and effective in assessing sustainability performance. We welcome and appreciate any comments, suggestions, or constructive criticism you may have regarding the questionnaire or any other aspect of the programme.

0. Organisation Information

0.1 Formal name of your organisation as stated in the articles (statuten)

[Text]

0.2 What is the type of your organisation?
Please select one of the following options that best describes your organisation.

[1] Study association
[2] Student Association
[3] Sports associations
[4] Religious association
[5] Cultural association
[6] Other (specify)

0.3 How many engaged members does your organisation have?
Please indicate the number of engaged members, i.e. members who regularly interact with the organisation in any way.

[Text]

0.4 Does your organisation commonly use another name, such as an abbreviation?

[1] Yes
[2] No

0.5 Alternative organisation name
Please provide the other commonly used name for your organisation.
(Shown if 0.4 is "Yes")

[Text]

0.6 How should we refer to your organisation in official documents of the Green Office Labels (such as the certificate)?
(Shown if 0.4 is "Yes")

[1] Only the full official name, e.g. "Green Office Association Test."
[2] Only the commonly used name/abbreviation, e.g. "GOAT."
[3] The full official name followed by the other name in brackets, e.g. "Green Office Association Test (GOAT)."

1. Policy & Financials

1.1 To what extent does your organisation mention sustainability in your policy documents?
By policy, we mean binding decisions that cannot easily be reversed, such as decisions taken during general members' assemblies.

[1] It is central to our identity and purpose (200 points)
[2] It is strongly emphasised (150 points)
[3] It is moderately emphasised (100 points)
[4] It is briefly mentioned (50 points)
[5] Not at all (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., excerpt from your statutes, minutes or resolution from a General Members' Assembly adopting a sustainability clause.

Why do we ask?
Having policies to drive sustainability ensures that, if future boards are not keen on sustainability, they are still held to the standard of all the implemented policies before them.

1.2 Does your organisation have explicitly designated roles on the board responsible for its sustainability?
This can be an additional role, such as a sustainability officer or a common role, such as a chairperson, who has been deemed responsible for sustainability.

[1] Yes (200 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., internal regulation assigns sustainability duties to a named role.

Why do we ask?
Ensuring that responsibility is placed on one person avoids the diffusion of responsibility effect.

1.3 Does your organisation have a committee that deals with sustainability issues?

[1] Yes (200 points)
[2] No (0 points)
[3] No, we don't deem it necessary, e.g., the organisation is too small, different systems are in place (N/A)

Evidence Required: e.g., official documents discussing the sustainability committee.

Why do we ask?
A sustainability committee ensures that multiple people passionate about sustainability can contribute to the organisation's sustainability.

1.4 Does your organisation have a binding document in which a multi-year plan on sustainability is laid out?

[1] Yes, we specify targets to reach, measurement metrics, and year-by-year steps to achieve them (300 points)
[2] Yes, we specify targets to reach and year-by-year steps to achieve them (200 points)
[3] Yes, we specify targets to reach after a multi-year period (100 points)
[4] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., the multi-year sustainability plan PDF.

Why do we ask?
Setting explicit sustainability goals is crucial for effectively implementing sustainable practices and allows transparency and accountability. SMART goals are encouraged.

1.5 Does your organisation have a written policy on waste separation?
This includes deposits on cans and plastic bottles.

[1] Yes, for all our activities and operations (100 points)
[2] Yes, for our members and/or board areas (50 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., waste-separation policy text.

Why do we ask?
Ensuring that as much of the generated waste as possible is properly recycled contributes to reducing the need for new raw materials and landfill saturation.

1.6 Does your organisation produce a yearly or more frequent sustainability report?

[1] Yes (300 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., the latest sustainability report.

Why do we ask?
Transparency is essential to allow members to hold boards accountable for the organisation's sustainability.

1.7 What is your organisation's total budget?
Please provide your organisation's total budget in euros for the budgeting cycle (e.g. September - August, or per annum) used throughout this academic year.

[Text]

Evidence Required: e.g. annual budget spreadsheet.

Why do we ask?
This metric is used to verify question 1.9.

1.8 How much of the budget has your organisation allocated for sustainable efforts?
Please provide the sum of your organisation's budget for sustainability efforts in euros for the budgeting cycle (e.g. September - August, or per annum) used throughout this academic year.

[Text]

Evidence Required: e.g., budget allocation spreadsheet and invoice summary for sustainability projects.

Why do we ask?
This metric is used to verify question 1.9.

1.9 How much of its budget has your organisation allocated for sustainable efforts?
Please calculate this using the formula [Budget for sustainable efforts] / [Tot. budget] * 100. Please round to the nearest integer.

[1] 25-100% of the total budget (200 points)
[2] 15-24% of the total budget (150 points)
[3] 10-14% of the total budget (100 points)
[4] 5-9% of the total budget (50 points)
[5] 0-4% of the total budget (0 points)

Why do we ask?
The budget spent on sustainable efforts quantifies the organisation's efforts towards sustainability. While it doesn't provide a full picture, it is a good base.

1.10 What bank does your organisation use for financial matters?
Some banks invest in the fossil fuel industry and other non-ethical sectors. See EerlijkeBankwijzer for more information.

[1] ASN / Regiobank / SNS bank (300 points)
[2] Triodos Bank (200 points)
[3] Rabobank / BunQ / NIBC (100 points)
[4] ABN-AMRO/ Van Lanschot /ING (0 points)
[5] Other (specify) (Points to be determined)

Evidence Required: e.g., bank statement, screenshot of bank logged-in page.

Why do we ask?
One of the most impactful things you can do as an organisation or individual is deposit your funds in banks that do not use your money to fund fossil fuels.

1.11 Did your organisation participate in the latest edition of the Green Office Subsidy programme?
Participation also counts if the Green Office denied your subsidy.

[1] Yes (200 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., decision letter, confirmation email.

Why do we ask?
Participating in the Green Office Subsidy programme shows the organisation's commitment to sustainability.

1.12 Does your organisation account for carbon emissions (equivalents)?
Estimating scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions can be done with carbon accounting software or a spreadsheet.

[1] Yes, and we make yearly emissions public (200 points)
[2] Yes (100 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., a screenshot of carbon accounting software or a spreadsheet.

Why do we ask?
Carbon accounting helps to measure the organisation's impact and identify where it can be reduced further.

2. Energy use

2.1 Does your organisation communicate the importance and ways to reduce energy use to its members?

[1] Yes, we encourage members to save energy both in organisational settings and at home (200 points)
[2] Yes, we encourage members to save energy in organisational settings (150 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., screenshot of social media posts or newsletters.

Why do we ask?
Reducing energy use is essential to avoid unnecessary fossil fuel combustion, directly (like the methane in a boiler) or indirectly (like a power plant to compensate for electric heating).

2.2 Appliance Inventory
Please answer this question in the evidence document.

[1] I have filled in the appliance inventory evidence document(200 points)
[2] I would like to skip this question (0 points)

Evidence Required: completed evidence document.

Why do we ask?
Taking stock of your organisation's appliances and their energy labels can help you identify inefficient appliances and determine what needs replacing.

2.3 Does your organisation use renewable electricity?
This can mean purchasing renewable electricity from an energy company or having your own renewable energy source.

[1] Yes (200 points)
[2] No (0 points)
[3] Not applicable, e.g. the organisation doesn't have a physical location or doesn't have a say in the purchased energy (N/A)

Evidence Required: e.g., electricity contract, photo of on-site solar panels.

Why do we ask?
Using renewable electricity avoids unnecessary combustion of fossil fuels.

2.4 Does your organisation have a physical board-only area unavailable to members?
Storage-only locations are not included.

[1] Yes
[2] No

2.5 With how many other organisations is the board-only area shared?
Please specify the number of other organisations with which the board-only area is shared.
(Shown if 2.4 is "Yes")

[Text]

2.6 Is the board-only area managed by the University of Groningen?
Please specify whether the area is managed by the UG and located in a university building.
(Shown if 2.4 is "Yes")

[1] Yes
[2] No

Evidence Required: e.g., photo of room sign, address.

2.7 How are lights managed in the board-only area
(Shown if 2.4 is "Yes")

[1] Lights are motion-sensor controlled or manually controlled with reminders to turn them off when not needed (100 points)
[2] Lights are manual, but there are no reminders to turn them off (0 points)

[3] Not-applicable, e.g. lights are not controlled by the organisation (N/A)

Evidence Required: e.g., photo of motion-sensors, photo of reminders.

Why do we ask?
Simple reminders go a long way to avoid wasteful energy use.

2.8 How is heating managed in the board-only area?
(Shown if 2.4 is "Yes")

[1] When used, the heating thermostat is set to a maximum of 19 degrees Celsius (150 points)
[2] When used, the heating thermostat is set to more than 19 degrees Celsius (0 points)
[3] Non-applicable, e.g. the heating thermostat is not controlled by the organisation (N/A)

Why do we ask?
Reducing heating by even 1 degree can significantly affect your organisation's energy use.

2.9 Does the board-only area have reminders near appliances to turn them off when they're not necessary?
(Shown if 2.4 is "Yes")

[1] Yes (100 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., photos of reminders.

Why do we ask?
Simple reminders go a long way to avoid wasteful energy use.

2.10 Does your organisation have a physical members' area?
Hybrid board-member locations also count.

[1] Yes
[2] No

2.11 With how many other organisations is the member's area shared?
Please specify the number of other organisations with which the member's area is shared.
(Shown if 2.10 is "Yes")

[Text]

2.12 Is the member's area managed by the University of Groningen?
Please specify whether the area is managed by the UG and located in a university building.
(Shown if 2.10 is "Yes")

[1] Yes
[2] No

Evidence Required: e.g., photo of room sign, address.

2.13 How are lights managed in the member's area
(Shown if 2.10 is "Yes")

[1] Lights are motion-sensor controlled or manually controlled with reminders to turn them off when not needed (100 points)
[2] Lights are manual, but there are no reminders to turn them off (0 points)
[3] Not-applicable, e.g. lights are not controlled by the organisation (N/A)

Evidence Required: e.g., photo of motion-sensors, photo of reminders.

Why do we ask?
Simple reminders go a long way to avoid wasteful energy use.

2.14 How is heating managed in the member's area?
(Shown if 2.10 is "Yes")

[1] When used, the heating thermostat is set to a maximum of 19 degrees Celsius (150 points)
[2] When used, the heating thermostat is set to more than 19 degrees Celsius (0 points)
[3] Non-applicable, e.g. the heating thermostat is not controlled by the organisation (N/A)

Why do we ask?
Reducing heating by even 1 degree can significantly affect your organisation's energy use.

2.15 Does the member's area have reminders near appliances to turn them off when they're not necessary?
(Shown if 2.10 is "Yes")

[1] Yes (100 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., photo of reminders.

Why do we ask?
Simple reminders go a long way to avoid wasteful energy use.

3. Material use

3.1 Does your organisation encourage members to avoid excessive paper waste?

[1] Yes (100 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., photo of poster next to printer, screenshot of printing portal.

Why do we ask?
Reminding members to be mindful of their paper use can help reduce excess paper waste.

3.2 What type of paper does your organisation use when printing?

[1] We never print, or we use sustainable printing paper and/or ink (100 points)

[2] We don't use sustainable printing paper and/or ink (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., invoice for paper purchase, photo of paper boxes.

Why do we ask?
While not printing is the most sustainable option, a sustainable option can still help reduce your organisation's impacts when printing is necessary.

3.3 How does your organisation decide to distribute periodic printed material such as almanacks, yearbooks, or magazines?

[1] We only distribute the material digitally (200 points)
[2] We ask members to sign up to receive them and print only the necessary amount (10 points)
[3] We print based on the demand seen in the previous year (50 points)
[4] We optimistically print an estimate and hope we have no leftovers (0 points)
[5] Not applicable, e.g. we don't distribute periodic material (N/A)

Evidence Required: e.g., sign-up system, screenshot of digital distribution.

Why do we ask?
Periodic printed material can accumulate quickly. Only the necessary amount should be produced to avoid wasteful leftovers.

3.4 During your organisation's activities and events, most of the decorations used are:
The term "durable" is subjective, but use your best judgment.

[1] No decoration is used, or it is made out of reusable, durable, and sustainable materials (200 points)
[2] Reusable and durable (100 points)
[3] Reusable but not very durable (50 points)
[4] Single-use (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., photos of durable decorations.

Why do we ask?
Decoration choices can generate significant waste, especially cheap, single-use ones that break easily. Reusable, durable materials minimise environmental impact over time.

3.5 How does your organisation handle gifts to members, such as goodie bags?
Gifts also include sponsor-provided items. Stickers are not considered here.

[1] No free items are bought/ordered to be offered to members (200 points)
[2] Free items are offered on demand, and efforts (such as asking a sponsor) are made to ensure they are sustainable and functional (150 points)
[3] Free items are offered to members who signed up for them individually (not as a bundle) and are ordered based on demand (100 points)
[4] Free items are offered to members for them to pick and choose (50 points)
[5] Free Items are provided as a bundle (such as a bag) to members (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy document excerpts, email thread with sponsor, demand indication system.

Why do we ask?
While nice to receive, free goodies and gifts are often left completely unused or directly thrown out. Think of how many branded sunglasses or stress balls you have received in goodie bags, only to never use them again. Even useful ones, like reusable bottles, can be left unused, as people may already have them, and having two water bottles is not useful. This is why, other than not giving gifts in the first place, having members pick the gifts they want significantly reduces waste.

3.6 Does your organisation have a written policy regarding member gifts, such as goodie bags?
Gifts also include sponsor-provided items. Stickers are not considered here.

[1] Yes, it bans free items (200 points)
[2] Yes, by which free items must be offered on demand, and they must be sustainable and functional (150 points)
[3] Yes, by which free items must be offered on demand (100 points)
[4] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., a PDF of policy documents, minutes of policy adoption.

Why do we ask?
A formal policy helps ensure consistent, sustainable gifting practices across successive boards and events.

3.7 Does your organisation have a system to track already-owned items?

[1] Yes, and we refuse financing to members or committees who buy something that was already owned instead of reusing it (200 points)
[2] Yes, it is known to all committees, but there are no consequences for buying duplicates (100 points)
[3] Only partially (e.g. only one category or for one committee) or poorly updated or known to members (50 points)
[4] There is no system in place (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., inventory spreadsheet or management software, policy excerpt instructing committees to consult the inventory.

Why do we ask?
An inventory system prevents duplicate purchases, saving resources and cutting unnecessary costs.

3.8 How does your organisation handle its stickers?

[1] Our organisation doesn't use stickers (150 points)
[2] Sustainable materials are used for all the stickers, and there's a policy to enforce this (100 points)
[3] Sustainable materials are used for all the stickers, but there's no policy to enforce it (50 points)
[4] Sustainable materials are used in part of our sticker collections (25 points)
[5] Stickers are bought with no consideration for their sustainability (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g. an invoice of sticker purchase

Why do we ask?
Even small items like stickers can add up; choosing sustainable materials reduces plastic and chemical waste.

3.9 How many stickers did your organisation order during this year?

[Text]

Evidence Required: e.g., a collection of invoices.

3.10 Does your organisation prioritise buying second-hand items whenever possible?

[1] Yes, we have a policy that requires it (200 points)
[2] Yes, but we have no official policy about this (100 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., photo of used furniture, policy excerpt requiring second-hand purchases.

Why do we ask?
Purchasing used items reduces new production demand, reducing resource extraction and embodied emissions.

3.11 Does your organisation have any measures to reduce the purchase of excessive new clothing items?
These could include reducing the number of committee clothes to one per member, updating them if necessary, or replacing committee clothing with committee pins or patches. Buying second-hand also counts.

[1] Yes (200 points)
[2] No (0 points)
[3] Not applicable, e.g. we do not buy apparel items (N/A)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy documents.

Why do we ask?
Limiting new apparel orders reduces overconsumption, textile waste, and associated environmental impacts. Fast fashion, which is in most clothing shops nowadays, has an extreme environmental impact.

3.12 Does your organisation have any measures to reduce the environmental impact of clothing items purchased?
These could be, for example, buying clothes made with sustainable materials or sold by sustainable brands or second-hand shops.

[1] Yes (100 points)
[2] No (0 points)
[3] Not applicable, e.g. we do not buy apparel items (N/A)

Evidence Required: e.g., invoice from a second-hand shop or a sustainable clothing supplier.

Why do we ask?
Sourcing from eco-friendly brands or using sustainable materials minimises your organisation's social and environmental footprint.

3.13 Does your organisation have any measures to reduce plastic use?

[1] Yes, we have a policy enforcing the reduction of plastics (200 points)
[2] Yes, but we don't have a policy about it (100 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., plastic-reduction policy text, photos of reusable cups.

Why do we ask?
Reducing single-use plastics is essential to reducing pollution, resource depletion, and waste. It is important to remember that plastic is made from finite fossil fuels. Using a super durable material like plastic for single-use items is incredibly wasteful.

4. Food

4.1 The food offered during the organisation's activities and events is:

[1] Entirely plant-based (400 points)
[2] About half vegetarian and half plant-based (300 points)
[3] Fully vegetarian (250 points)
[4] More than half vegetarian (100 points)
[5] Less than half vegetarian (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., photos of catering spread that is clearly plant-based, menus or invoices.

Why do we ask?
Food choices (meat vs. plant-based) are a major driver of greenhouse-gas emissions, land use, and water consumption; changing them is the most impactful action individuals can take. Beef is the most impactful food, so even just switching from beef to chicken or pork can drastically reduce your organisation's impact. See this article by Our World in Data for more information.

4.2 Is there a written policy ensuring the offered food is (partially) plant-based?

[1] Yes (300 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy document mandating plant-based food.

Why do we ask?
A formal policy ensures sustainable food standards even if future boards disagree.

4.3 Does your organisation ensure that the food offered is organic or bio?

[1] Yes, and there is a written policy to ensure it (100 points)
[2] Yes, but there is no written policy (50 points)

[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy excerpt requiring organic certification on food orders, grocery or catering invoice.

Why do we ask?
Organic sourcing reduces pesticide use and supports biodiversity and soil health.

4.4 Does your organisation ensure that the food offered is seasonal?

[1] Yes, and there is a written policy to ensure it (100 points)
[2] Yes, but there is no written policy (50 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy excerpt requiring seasonal food orders, grocery or catering invoice.

Why do we ask?
Seasonal produce typically requires less transport, storage energy and artificial inputs.

4.5 Does your organisation ensure that the food offered is Fair Trade?
(when applicable, such as for coffee or chocolate)

[1] Yes, and there is a written policy to ensure it (100 points)
[2] Yes, but there is no written policy (50 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., invoices for fairtrade-certified products.

Why do we ask?
Fair Trade certification promotes ethical labour practices and social sustainability in global supply chains.

4.6 How does your organisation handle food leftovers?

[1] We distribute them among members, or we donate them, and there is a written policy guideline to make it mandatory (300 points)
[2] We distribute them among members, or we donate them, but there is no written policy guideline to make it mandatory (200 points)
[3] There is no set system to handle leftovers (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy on leftovers distribution, donation confirmation from a food bank.

Why do we ask?
Proper redistribution or donation of leftovers cuts food waste and makes better use of resources. Given the vast impact of our food supply chain, not wasting food is extremely important.

4.7 How does your organisation order food?

[1] We write food quantity, attendance, sign-ups, and leftover amount after every event, so we can better estimate how much food to order to reduce leftovers (200 points)

[2] We order it based on the sign-ups or simple estimation, but we don't consider previous events data (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., screenshot of spreadsheet tracking historical food ordering vs. consumption.

Why do we ask?
Tracking past consumption and leftovers enables accurate forecasting, reducing surplus and waste.

5. Mobility

5.1 Organisation's trips
Please answer this question in the trip evidence document.

[1] I have filled in the trip evidence document (Max. 600 points)
[2] I would like to skip this question (0 points)

Evidence Required: completed trip evidence document.

5.2 Does your organisation have a written policy for plane use?
Note: 'Banning' could be implemented in many ways, such as not issuing financial reclaims

[1] Yes, it bans plane use for trips shorter than 9 hours by train or less than 800 km (University Policy) (300 points)
[2] Yes, it bans plane use for some trips, but not as many as the University Policy (150 points)
[3] Yes, it discourages plane use (50 points)
[4] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., travel policy document.

Why do we ask?
Short-haul flights have disproportionately high emissions; a clear policy helps enforce low-carbon travel.

5.3 Does your organisation have a written policy for car use?

[1] Yes, it bans car use for trips that can be taken with public transport (200 points)
[2] Yes, it discourages car use (100 points)
[3] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy document.

Why do we ask?
A car-use policy encourages members to choose greener transport, cutting emissions and congestion.

6. People & Events

6.1 How many activities did your organisation organise this year?

[Text]

Evidence Required: Completed activities evidence document.

6.2 How many of the activities organised had sustainability as (part of) the theme?
As a general rule of thumb, activities with sustainability themes in their title are considered. Please calculate this using the formula [Sustainability-themed activities] / [Total. activities]* 100. Please round to the nearest integer.

[1] 25-100% of the activities (300 points)
[2] 10-24% of the activities (200 points)
[3] 5-9% of the activities (100 points)
[4] 1-4% of the activities (50 points)
[5] <1% of the activities (0 points)

Why do we ask?
Tracking your sustainability-themed events shows how actively you promote and educate on these issues.

6.3 How many of the activities organised had mental health as (part of) the theme?
As a general rule of thumb, activities with mental health themes in their title are considered. Please calculate this using the formula [Mental health-themed activities] / [Total. activities]* 100. Please round to the nearest integer.

[1] 25-100% of the activities (150 points)
[2] 10-24% of the activities (100 points)
[3] 5-9% of the activities (50 points)
[4] 1-4% of the activities (25 points)
[5] <1% of the activities (0 points)

Why do we ask?
Social sustainability includes member wellbeing; mental health events show commitment to support networks.

6.4 How does your organisation communicate sustainability-related things to its members?

[1] Sustainability is mentioned periodically on ALL organisation media channels, such as in newsletters, social media, blog, website, etc. (200 points)
[2] Sustainability is mentioned periodically on some media channels, such as in a newsletter or on social media (150 points)
[3] Sustainability is only mentioned statically, such as on the website (50 points)
[4] Sustainability is never mentioned in communication to members (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., social media posts, newsletter issues, website blog entries, editorial calendar showing scheduled sustainability content.

Why do we ask?
Regular messaging is crucial for member engagement and behaviour change. It is

important to remind others that everyone is trying to be more sustainable to motivate sustainable action.

6.5 Does your organisation have an official confidential trust person to whom members can go to resolve conflicts, seek help, or file a complaint?

[1] Yes (200 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., policy document on the trust person's role.

Why do we ask?
A dedicated confidential officer fosters a safe and inclusive environment, part of social sustainability.

6.6 Does your organisation provide members with mental health resources?
Mental health resources could include crisis hotlines or information about university therapists.

[1] Yes (200 points)
[2] No (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., screenshots of information provided to members.

Why do we ask?
Offering formal resources or referral information is a tangible way to support member well-being.

6.7 How does your organisation ensure activities are accessible to all members?
Accessibility involves making information, activities, and/or environments sensible, meaningful, and usable for as many people as possible.

[1] Accessibility is accounted for during activities, for instance, by explicitly asking during activity sign-ups (200 points)
[2] Accessibility is not accounted for during activities unless directly asked (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., screenshot of sign-up form with accessibility questions, policy or guidelines document on accessibility.

Why do we ask?
Accessibility measures promote diversity and inclusion, key pillars of social sustainability.

6.8 How does your organisation use gender-neutral language in communication?

[1] We do not use gendered language in any communication, and we default to gender-neutral pronouns like "they" (100 points)
[2] We make an effort to avoid gendered language, but it doesn't happen all the time (50 points)
[3] We do not use gender-neutral pronouns, and we do not avoid gendered language (0 points)

Evidence Required: e.g., communications style guide, newsletter and social media examples.

Why do we ask?
Inclusive language helps create an equitable environment where all members feel respected.

7. Extra

Points not directly attributed: answer can add points in previous sections

7.1 Are there other sustainable initiatives by your organisation that you would like to share that were not touched upon in the above questionnaire?

[1] Yes (Please specify in the evidence document)
[2] No

Evidence Required: e.g., “we run a weekly repair cafe…”

Why do we ask?
We want to capture any additional efforts or innovations you’ve implemented so that they can be recognised and potentially scored.

Points not directly attributed: answer can add points in previous sections

7.2 Were there questions in the above questionnaire for which none of the options applied to your organisation?

[1] Yes (Please specify in the evidence document)
[2] No

Evidence Required: e.g., “Question 3.4 does not apply to us because…”

Why do we ask?
We want to capture any additional efforts or innovations you’ve implemented so that they can be recognised and potentially scored.