

Guidelines on Sustainability

Decided by the management on September 9, 2025

The term sustainability outlines one of the greatest global challenges of our time and requires universities particularly acting responsibly to preserve the foundations of human life. Zeppelin University (ZU) is aware of its social responsibility defining sustainability as a key theme in research, teaching, and operations accordingly. The university sees itself as an innovation lab for sustainable solutions.

ZU is intensively engaged in research and teaching on the topic of sustainability through various chairs and centers. Examples include the Institute for Sustainable Economy, the ZF Center for Sustainability Research, and the fields of environmental psychology and cultural sustainability.

In 2020, ZU defined its goal of becoming climate neutral by 2035. The university supports the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and strives to make them the guiding principle for its actions and decisions.

Since 2021, ZU has been reporting on its greenhouse gas emissions in a sustainability report. The university is transforming itself by own measures and projects aiming to continuously reduce its greenhouse gas emissions.

ZU promotes environmental, social, and economic responsibility at all levels and in all areas. The university strives to use resources efficiently within its own scope of action. This is derived from, among other things, its voluntary goal of climate neutrality by 2035 and overarching frameworks. For example, the Baden-Württemberg State Higher Education Act stipulates that universities shall promote sustainability and contribute to social progress (Section 2 (5) LHG BW). In its five-year strategy (*Struktur- und Entwicklungsplan*), ZU is guided by other overarching goals such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The guidelines for sustainability

The following guidelines serve as a general orientation for sustainable action at ZU in research, teaching, and operations. They promote the sustainable implementation of activities at the university in the mentioned divisions. They serve to help minimizing the ecological footprint of institutional processes, raising awareness of sustainability issues, and establishing best practices. They apply both at the individual level of each university member and at the institutional level of the university.

Sustainability is a priority at Zeppelin University. The Sustainability Management unit, established in 2021, reports directly to the managing director and is responsible for sustainability reporting, coordinating and implementing sustainability projects, and

raising awareness within the university.

ZU regards its own efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as a contribution to the climate goal of the city of Friedrichshafen. In its sustainability projects, the university relies on cooperation with other stakeholders such as companies, municipal institutions, and civil society actors.

The implementation of sustainability measures at ZU relies on the contributions of university members in the spirit of a whole institution approach. An idea management system enables university members to forward individual ideas and contributions to the department in charge, and various communication channels (newsletter, podcast, intranet, events) make sure awareness-raising of sustainability issues is constantly increased.

| **Careful use of resources:** Waste should be avoided and, where unavoidable, recycled. Purchased items such as IT- and office equipment should be long-lasting and used as long as possible.

| **Avoiding and reducing greenhouse gas emissions:** Greenhouse gas emissions shall be avoided and reduced through own measures. As a last resort, compensation measures within the university's own sphere of influence may be considered for remaining, inevitable greenhouse gas emissions.

| **Energy efficiency and resource conservation:** All electricity procured is renewable or generated in-house (PV systems). A certified energy management system (ISO 50001) ensures that energy consumption is constantly decreasing. Water and energy are used as efficiently as possible.

| **Sustainable mobility:** ZU's travel policy stipulates that public transport is set as standard for business trips. Air travel is not permitted within a no-fly zone for short-haul flights. Rental cars and taxis are only allowed in exceptional cases. Travel should be kept to a minimum (consider video conferencing). Travel occasions should be bundled whenever possible.

| **Event management:** The venue, transport, catering and materials used at events should take sustainability aspects into account. The canteen and catering service do not use disposable containers. Meals are prepared freshly and use, if possible, with regional ingredients. ZU is a certified Fairtrade university and uses Fairtrade certified products. Attention is paid to sustainable travel and accessibility to the event location.

Virtual meetings and events are preferred.

| **Sustainable procurement:** When procuring goods and services, attention shall be paid to environmentally friendly and durable characteristics (e.g., procurement of copy paper exclusively recycled paper according to the Blue Angel standard). Disposable products are not used (e.g., cafeteria and coffee machines).

| **Green IT:** Long-lasting IT devices are procured. ZU relies on cloud-based applications gradually replacing less efficient local servers. Working is possible from anywhere within the framework of the agreed teleworking options, which reduces travel. Local hardware is reduced to the minimum necessary.

| **Awareness raising:** Various events and campaigns raise awareness of sustainability issues among the university community (e.g., City Cycling, mobility survey, operational health management measures). In this way, university members are empowered to act independently and sustainably within the university and beyond. The sustainability management unit supports the networking of stakeholders inside and outside the university and advises on the implementation of sustainability measures and events. Sustainability as a subject is anchored in research and teaching through a whole institution approach.

| **Communication:** The ZU Sustainability Report provides regular updates on sustainability projects and the development of the university's greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to the intranet, other communication channels include a sustainability newsletter, a podcast, and the university's social media channels. The university shares its best practices and takes inspiration from outside sources in various networks with external stakeholders.

| **Research and teaching:** ZU is strategically developing the topic of sustainability in research and teaching. Research on sustainable economics is being consolidated at the Institute for Sustainable Economy. Environmental psychology is being strengthened as a new profile element with its own chair. In teaching, the topic of sustainability is being strengthened with an interdisciplinary elective focus.

More detailed information on all sustainability projects and Zeppelin University's carbon footprint can be found in the sustainability report at <https://www.zeppelin-university.com/university/sustainability>.