

Sustainability Strategy

of the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

Preamble and vision

We have only one home: Earth. Our overarching goal must be to ensure its future viability under any circumstances.

We acknowledge the global climate emergency, the loss of biodiversity and its consequences. We take our social responsibility seriously, putting aspects of ecological, economic and social sustainability center stage across all areas of activity of the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences.

We are a modern university of applied sciences and an interdisciplinary and diverse partner in the fields of education and research. Based in a major metropolitan region, we strive to solve society's most pressing problems through a constant exchange with our partners and the general public. In these capacities, we are most effective when we focus on applying our strengths – do what we do best – and dedicate ourselves to achieving sustainability at the scientific and societal level.

Honoring our commitment to being a role model for sustainability while inspiring others to join our efforts, we are driven by our guiding principle: “Develop know-how, shape attitude, become an ambassador.” We enable and encourage our early-career researchers and all other members of the university to become ambassadors for sustainability in society and business.

As the Frankfurt UAS, we work on solutions for the most urgent challenges we all face: climate protection, environmental regeneration, gender equality and, above all, quality education – because education is the key to solving the problems of the future. Our approach is based on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals as documented in the United Nations’ Agenda 2030.

Within the scope of three clearly defined areas of activity – “studies and teaching”, “research, continuing education, and transfer” and “university operations and campus development” – we develop targeted objectives and measures which ensure that the entire university benefits from the implementation of our sustainability strategy. In doing so, we consistently contribute to the future viability of our society and world and we use the scarce resources at our disposal in a responsible and effective way.

Our strategic goal is to embed sustainability permanently in our thoughts and actions.

I. Sustainability in studies and teaching

Sustainability is a visible, interdisciplinary aspect of all our degree programs. In addition to specialist knowledge and skills, we furnish all our students with a broad understanding of sustainability.

They are taught to consider all dimensions of sustainability – ecological, social, economic – equally and analyse and assess relevant questions accordingly.

We hone our conflict management skills and critical analysis to become good ambassadors of sustainability.

II. Sustainability in research, continuing education, and transfer

In our academic environment, the topic of sustainability is a consistent and high-profile consideration across all research projects. Using our research insights, we create solutions for the sustainable development of a world that is fit for the future.

By sharing our results with society, we seek to consolidate and further this knowledge and advance the sustainability transformation.

In particular, we transfer our expertise and technologies in the field of sustainability to municipalities, businesses and associations using suitable collaboration and communication formats.

On the one hand, we support them transition towards sustainability by developing technical, social and institutional innovations and overseeing their implementation.

On the other hand, sustainability aspects such as the personal development of employees, corporate resource management and digitalisation are integral parts of all our continuing-education programmes. They are consistently designed with their future viability in mind.

III. Sustainability in university operations and campus development

We, the Frankfurt UAS, see ourselves as a living laboratory and a model project for sustainable building, campus and green space planning and transportation. All our construction projects are planned, bid, and implemented with the goal of carbon neutrality in mind. We are mapping our resource and energy consumption to adapt our behavior and infrastructure as needed. This approach will enable us to make our university operations entirely carbon-neutral by 2030.

In this way, we authentically demonstrate our transformation process towards becoming a sustainable university, inviting the general public and the urban community to experience real-life sustainability on our campus.

However, sustainable university operations should entail more than simply achieving carbon neutrality. A holistic approach to harnessing all resources and processes, including the time invested and personal commitment of each and every individual, is of equal importance. In the spirit of sustainability, we use all available resources prudently and with appreciation. That is why we are undertaking a review of our administrative and operational procedures, making full use of the digital options at our disposal.

When it comes to procurement and commissioning, we make all decisions with a sustainability perspective to ensure that no compromises are made for financial reasons. As a matter of principle, Frankfurt UAS only enters into cooperative arrangements with businesses and organizations that are already committed to sustainability – subject to verification wherever possible. Our endeavor to become certified as a Fairtrade University underscores the importance of fair trade practises and sustainable procurement and consumption at our institution.

The well-being of everyone on campus is of utmost importance to us. We ensure healthy studying and working conditions. A good work-life balance, diversity and inclusion are crucial prerequisites for fair employment, teaching and learning, and a pleasant atmosphere among colleagues.

IV. Institutionalising sustainability and a controlling

We are in the process of setting up a **Sustainability Office** at Frankfurt UAS. It is designed to ensure that all activities relating to studying, teaching, research, continuing education, knowledge transfer and overall university operations are aligned and coordinated from a sustainability perspective. Each faculty and department at Frankfurt UAS must delegate a representative to serve as member of the Sustainability Office. They will meet at least twice a semester for the joint development and implementation into measures of initiatives emerging from the entire university community.

To monitor and adjust our behaviour accordingly, the Sustainability Office will report on current projects, carbon footprint reduction, and resource and energy consumption on a relevant platform. It will regularly present a sustainability report outlining the university's progress towards sustainability and the degree to which each measure has been implemented. Indicators and milestones will be defined during the planning process.

A **Sustainability Council** will meet at least once a year. Its purpose will be that of a committee overseeing, promoting, and supporting the development of Frankfurt UAS into a sustainable university.

The Sustainability Council consists of:

- the member of the presidential board responsible for sustainability (chair);
- three representatives of the university's central administration;
- four faculty representatives;
- four students; and
- three external members.

The chair will be chosen from among these members.

In implementing and further developing our sustainability goals, we are wholly committed to fostering a participatory culture in which our professors, employees, and students have the opportunity to play a crucial role. To this end, the sustainability strategy is updated at appropriate intervals.

This strategy paper was adopted by the senate of the Frankfurt UAS on February 17, 2021, and enacted by the presidential board on March 1, 2021. The changes made on May 2, 2023 have come into effect on June 5, 2023.

Professor Kai-Oliver Schocke
President

Professor René Thiele
Vice President

Professor Susanne Rägler
Vice President

Professor Christiane Saure
Acting Head of
Administration