

## CAST Sustainability Charter

Our '[Engaging](#)' research theme seeks to embed low carbon transformation in our own research culture and practices and recognises that there is potential for our choices to influence the sustainability strategies of our host institutions, funders, and partners.

We recognise that academic research is a high-carbon activity, primarily as a result of emissions from flying to conferences, project meetings, and fieldwork. This perception of academics as high emitters can impact how our work is received, and public trust in our research may be undermined where our activities are seen to conflict with our ethos and aims. As a result, we have a responsibility to confront our own environmental impact in a way that is aligned with seeking out genuinely transformative solutions

This charter is a living document that will develop as we explore new ways of working. We consider it a statement of our collective commitment to a low-carbon research culture whilst acknowledging that the circumstances and values of individual team members are not identical; behind any sustainability policy lies a series of very human decisions that we must make in our multiple roles such as researchers, parents, carers, and citizens. We welcome comments and feedback and will use these to help us review and shape the charter.

We have identified a series of actions and, in recognition that our choices in some areas are constrained by the policies and practices of our host institutions, a series of opportunities for advocacy. Actions and advocacies are linked to the four challenging areas that underpin our research: food and diet, travel, material consumption, and how we heat and cool our buildings.

### Transport and mobility

**ACTION:** We will reduce all CAST travel, avoiding face-to-face meetings where a virtual option is available and choosing meeting locations to minimise travel. We will reduce long haul travel by avoiding, as far as possible, travel beyond Europe. We will avoid flying for domestic and European travel, actively supporting overland travel where team members wish to do this. We will increase the accessibility of our events by making virtual attendance possible where appropriate.

**ADVOCACY:** We will work within our institutions to share experiences of remote participation/hosting of events, and encourage this to be taken up as standard, promoting examples of good practice in remote participation and academic engagement.

### Food and diet

**ACTION:** We will ensure that vegetarian catering is standard at our events, conferences, and meetings and aim for at least 50% wholly plant-based options. We will work with suppliers and restaurants to manage food waste.

**ADVOCACY:** We will work within our institutions to share experiences of plant-based catering and encourage this to be taken up as standard, celebrating and providing positive feedback to caterers and suppliers with a high quality and lower-carbon offering.

### Material consumption

**ACTION:** We will prioritise reducing our consumption of resources and consumables. Where purchases are unavoidable we will integrate sustainability considerations into all purchasing decisions, hire or choose refurbished, store and maintain resources with care, and repair and share where possible.

**ADVOCACY:** We will propose solutions and champion best practice for reducing resource use within our host institutions, share and highlight examples of innovative sharing models, and advocate for procurement systems that make it simple to choose products and services with a lower environmental footprint.

### Heating and cooling

**ACTION:** We will make low-energy choices to achieve thermal comfort in our own working spaces and share guidance on heating and cooling office spaces where it is helpful to do so. We will include the sustainability credentials of conference venues and hotels in our decision-making processes.

**ADVOCACY:** We will seek to understand the institutional contexts in which we operate, influence our host institutions to reduce energy demand for heating and cooling, and support colleagues and students to find thermal comfort in less energy-intensive ways.