

# Green Commitment for Institutional Bodies, Study and Student Organisations of or affiliated with the University of Amsterdam

## Preamble

### *The Parties to the Green Commitment*

*Being* the Green Office of the University of Amsterdam, with its office at REC JK 1.33, Valckenierstraat 65-67, 1018 XE Amsterdam, The Netherlands (**‘UvA Green Office’**), and any institutional body, study or student association of or affiliated with the University of Amsterdam, of which its office is specified on page four (4) of this document (**‘UvA Body/ies’**), that signed this document, being the Green Commitment for Institutional Bodies, Study and Student Organisations of or affiliated with the University of Amsterdam (**‘Green Commitment’**),

*Recognizing* an increasing concern raised by UvA Bodies regarding sustainability of the University of Amsterdam (**‘University’**), among others, relating to the communication and physical operations of the University,

*Acknowledging* that improving the overall sustainability of the University requires the overall improvement of sustainability of UvA Bodies, since the latter are part of or affiliated with the University,

*Acknowledging* the responsibility of UvA Bodies for the sustainability of their own practices,

*Acknowledging* that UvA Bodies, by pursuing sustainability of their practices, can lead with a positive example for other UvA Bodies, the members of their body and the University, and by leading with a positive example promote the improvement of sustainability at the University,

*Recognizing* a demand for assistance in improving the sustainability of the practices of UvA bodies and a demand for a standard set of guidelines for sustainable practices of UvA Bodies,

*Have agreed as follows:*

## **PART 1**

### **Purpose and scope**

#### *Article 1*

1. By signing the Green Commitment, UvA Bodies and the UvA Green Office become Parties to the Green Commitment. The Green Commitment is a non-binding agreement and cannot be legally enforced. By signing the Green Commitment the UvA Body states its intention to pursue sustainability, as further specified in sub 2 of this article, and the principles of Articles 3 to 8, and the Green Office states its intention to provide support in this pursuit.
2. For the purpose and scope of the Green Commitment, sustainability refers to the aspects of environmental protection of sustainable development (**‘Environmental Sustainability’**), as

described by the Brundtland Commission<sup>1</sup>: “*development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*” The aspects of environmental protection can be put in practice by “*enhancing the ... environmental ... well-being of people and communities, achieving a better quality of life for our own and future generations, in ways that ... enhance the natural ... environment and respect its limits – using only our fair share of the earth’s resources ...*”<sup>2</sup> Environmental Sustainability is further specified in the principles of Articles 3 to 8 (**‘Principles’**).

## *Article 2*

The Green Commitment aims to assist in improving the sustainability of the practices of UvA Bodies and to provide a standard set of guidelines for sustainable practices of UvA bodies, specifically by:

- a. Raising awareness and promoting agenda setting regarding Environmental Sustainability;
- b. Promoting the overall reduction of carbon emissions and ensuring commitment to the reduction of carbon emissions as set out in the Meerjarenaafspraken energy efficiency (MJA3);
- c. Promoting conscious selection of partnerships, consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability;
- d. Promoting conscious decisions regarding catering, consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability;
- e. Promoting conscious decisions regarding waste management, consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability;
- f. Promoting conscious decisions regarding the purchase of products, consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability;
- g. Promoting conscious decisions regarding organizing events and travels, consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability;
- h. Promoting communication about Environmental Sustainability, the progress made in pursuing Environmental Sustainability and initiatives taken in pursuing Environmental Sustainability;

## **PART II** **Principles**

### *Article 3*

1. UvA Bodies should have partnerships, including financial partnerships, which are consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability.
2. Partners, including financial partners, with which UvA bodies have a sponsorship agreement, shall be evaluated with regards to Environmental Sustainability<sup>3</sup>.

### *Article 4*

1. Catering arranged by UvA Bodies should be consistent with the pursuit of Environmental

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<sup>1</sup> World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, *Our Common Future*, 1987.

<sup>2</sup> Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015

<sup>3</sup> With regards to banking, the tool of the Eerlijke Geldwijzer can be of assistance (eerlijkegeldwijzer.nl/bankwijzer).

## Sustainability.

2. When UvA Bodies provide food and/or beverages, the following guidelines apply:
  - a. Vegetarian and vegan options shall be provided.
  - b. UvA Bodies are encouraged to set vegetarian and vegan options as default options.
  - c. UvA Bodies are encouraged to progressively reduce the consumption of meat over time.
  - d. UvA Bodies are encouraged to provide organic and local food.
  - e. UvA Bodies are encouraged to reduce food waste to zero<sup>4</sup>.
3. When UvA Bodies attend events where food and beverages are provided, or when UvA Bodies make use of external catering services, the guidelines of sub (2) of this Article apply and UvA Bodies are encouraged to communicate their ambition in accordance with the guidelines to external parties.

## Article 5

1. Waste management of UvA Bodies should be consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability.
2. The waste hierarchy - prevent, reuse, recycle - applies for all relevant practices of UvA Bodies. The following guidelines apply:
  - a. The production of unnecessary waste shall be prevented. Therefore:
    - i. Printing shall only be done when this is necessary.
    - ii. UvA Bodies are encouraged not to purchase products with unnecessary packaging.
    - iii. UvA Bodies are encouraged to progressively reduce the use of disposables and single-use products over time<sup>5</sup>.
  - b. If prevention of waste is not possible, UvA Bodies are encouraged to reuse products.
  - c. If the reuse of products is not possible, materials shall be recycled. Therefore, waste shall be separated and disposed into the correct bins.

## Article 6

1. The purchase of products by UvA Bodies should be consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability.
2. When purchasing products, the following guidelines apply:
  - a. When not necessary, no new products shall be purchased.
  - b. UvA Bodies are encouraged to repair existing products.
  - c. UvA Bodies are encouraged to purchase second-hand or refurbished products.
  - d. When a product needs replacement, UvA Bodies are encouraged to purchase products with a relatively low negative environmental impact. For electrical appliances energy labels shall be taken into account<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Measurements to reduce food waste to zero can include careful planning of the amounts needed and providing the opportunity to take home leftovers, e.g. by promoting to bring tupperware.

<sup>5</sup> In order to assist UvA Bodies with the reduction of the use of disposables and single-use products, the UvA Green Office sets up a renting system for reusable plates, cutlery and cups. Information on this can be found on the website, [www.uvagreengreenoffice.nl](http://www.uvagreengreenoffice.nl).

<sup>6</sup> With regards to assessing the environmental impact of a new product, [energielabel.nl/apparaten](http://energielabel.nl/apparaten) can be of assistance.

3. UvA Bodies are encouraged to bring no longer used products to Hergebruik<sup>7</sup> or a second-hand store.

#### *Article 7*

1. Travels organized by UvA Bodies should be consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability.
2. When organizing travels, the following guidelines apply:
  - a. Distance shall be taken into account when organizing travels.
  - b. UvA Bodies are encouraged to travel by train, bus or ferry rather than by airplane.
  - c. UvA Bodies are encouraged to offset travel carbon emissions.
  - d. The Principles of Articles 3, 4 and 5 of the Green Commitment shall apply similarly to travels organized by UvA Bodies.

#### *Article 8*

1. Communication by UvA Bodies towards third parties should be consistent with the pursuit of Environmental Sustainability.
2. When communicating with third parties, the following guidelines apply:
  - a. UvA Bodies are encouraged to communicate their pursuit of Environmental Sustainability and signing of the Green Commitment to their committee chairs, members and other third parties.
  - b. UvA Bodies are encouraged to communicate their progress in pursuing Environmental Sustainability and implementing the Principles of the Green Commitment to their committee chairs, members and other third parties.
  - c. UvA Bodies are encouraged to inform their members about Environmental Sustainability.

### **PART III**

#### **Miscellaneous**

#### *Article 9*

No reservations to the Green Commitment can be made.

#### *Article 10*

1. Compliance to the Green Commitment shall be monitored by means of self-assessment. UvA Bodies shall communicate, in a format considered suitable by the UvA Body, to the UvA Green office their progress in pursuing Environmental Sustainability and implementing the Principles of the Green Commitment. Yearly updates shall be requested by the UvA Green Office.
2. On request of UvA Bodies, the UvA Green Office shall provide assistance in pursuing

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<sup>7</sup> Hergebruik is the repository depot of the University of Amsterdam (marktplaats1.sharetribe.com). An agreement exists and contact can directly be established via hergebruik- fs@uva.nl.

*Article 11*

The Green Commitment will be effective as from the 13th of February 2020, or, if a UvA Body signs the Green Commitment after the 13th of February 2020, the Green Commitment will be effective as from the date of signing the Green Commitment by both the UvA Body and the UvA Green Office. The Green Commitment will be effective until the ending of the academic year in which the Green Commitment was signed. The Green Commitment shall every academic year be extended for one (1) additional academic year, unless on or before October 31st the UvA Body provides to the UvA Green Office written notice of its desire not to automatically renew the Green Commitment.

*Thus signed by:*

UvA Green Office

Represented by:

Date:

Signature:

[Name UvA Body]

Residing at: [address UvA Body]

Represented by:

Date:

Signature:

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<sup>8</sup> The UvA Green Office can be contacted via [greenoffice@uva.nl](mailto:greenoffice@uva.nl).