

## Climate protection statement

The University of Göttingen and the University Medical Centre Göttingen regard climate protection as one of the greatest challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The institutions recognise the urgent need for action and are aware of the unique societal responsibility and role model function of universities and health care institutions that obliges to contribute to regional, national and international climate protection measures as well as to help shaping the associated transformation process. The University and University Medical Centre will use all measures within their range of possible actions to reach climate neutrality by 2030. To this regard they engage in four fields of action

1. Research
2. Education
3. Third Mission, as well as
4. University and clinic operations.

As largest organisation and employer in the city and region, university and university medical centre are supporting the Climate Plan 2030 of the City of Göttingen with all their climate protection measures. They strengthen the **cooperation with local and regional actors** as well as the **partners of the Göttingen Campus** in order to contribute to the global climate protection goals.

University and University Medical Centre are currently developing a comprehensive action plan, which will articulate concrete goals. The measures shall be ambitious, but at the same time have a high probability to be implementable. The presidium has decided to expand the team of the Green Office to ensure the coordination of the endeavour. In its recent meeting in May 2021, the senate of the university has decided to establish a senate commission on the topic “Climate protection”.

### 1 Research

Research and Teaching relevant to the field of climate protection is conducted at many faculties, institutes and centres of the university in cooperation with regional, national and international partners. The research- and teaching activities among others address topics such as sustainable land use, eco systems, biodiversity, use of natural resources, renewable energy supply, climate-friendly mobility, digital transformation, agricultural and environmental law, migration, consumer behaviour and health and wellbeing. The different research fields all contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases, limit the effect of climate change, to implement adaptation measures as well as to tackle the consequences of climate change.

In line with the university’s overall strategy and in support of the Climate Plan Göttingen 2030 the university will **publish an overview of all relevant focus research areas on its website**. This shall promote the support and further development of subject specific and interdisciplinary research in all disciplines as well as the intensification of disciplinary and inter- and transdisciplinary exchange regarding question of climate protection. Taking up regional, national and international research questions on climate protection and the transparent publication of research results shall contribute to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

### 2 Education

The University of Göttingen supports the concept of Education for Sustainable Development. This includes the broad inclusion of topics that are relevant to sustainability and climate protection into subject-specific, cross-subject and research-oriented educational offers. In its study programmes, the university supports the development of competences among its student body that empower them to shape sustainable

development. The university sensitizes students to forward-looking and global thinking within the framework of their studies, enables them to act and design independently and sustainably, and motivates them to participate in social decision-making processes. Countless thematic relevant study courses, certificates and modules as well as other educational offers will be published on the mentioned central website of the university in order to give prospective as well as matriculated students guidance for their studies. In the future, final theses of students and doctoral candidates shall be increasingly used for the development and introduction of climate protection measures on campus.

### 3 Third Mission

Building upon its core competences research and education the University of Göttingen is supporting and developing various third-mission activities. These include the areas of knowledge and technology transfer as well as business start-ups from within the university and continuing education or the communication of scientific knowledge to a broader audience. The university will expand this field of action and especially the dialogue with society with the openings of **Forum Wissen**, the **Thomas Oppermann Cultural Forum** or the **Museum for Biodiversity**. There a focus will lie on topics that are relevant to climate protection. **Public lecture series** and **events** on different issues related to climate protection shall improve broader societal understanding of the topic and showcase possible solutions. Strategic partnerships like the European University Network ENLIGHT shall support the exchange and implementation of Best Practices (in research, education, third mission and operations) as well as support the establishment of local living labs for climate protection activities.

### 4 University and clinic operations

The biggest challenge in order to achieve climate neutrality lies in the transition of the university's and university hospital's energy supply (heat, electricity, cold). In this context, the security of the energy supply for the university hospital with its patient care must be guaranteed to a very significant extent. The university hospital will include as many climate protection measures as possible in the new construction plans for patient care.

The Georg-August-Universität Göttingen and the University Medical Centre Göttingen have been promoting and implementing climate protection-relevant measures at the operational level for quite a while. Examples include the energy supply project 2016 and (currently) 2030, the expansion of regenerative technologies, geothermal exploration, the operational energy management established more than 10 years ago, financial support for energy-saving measures, the energy-efficient refurbishment of buildings, and the promotion of walking and cycling at the university. These projects shall be consequently continued and further developed as well as new projects initiated where necessary. In particular this includes the **Energy Supply 2030** project which examines a switch to renewable primary energy, as well as the **Master Plan 1.0** to increase energy efficiency, the further development of **energy controlling** and building automation systems to improve user behaviour. The university medicine will pay respect to these aspects while implementing its Master Plan, especially during the current realization of building stage one of the new hospital buildings. The implementation of the concepts for the university and clinic operations will depend on the legal and financial framework.

Besides the mentioned measures the university will expand its concepts regarding **the efficient use of its rooms, home office** as well as **mobile working** and minimise its use of **resources for working materials and -processes**. The re-orientation of the central procurement towards more climate-friendly products (like the past transition to recycling paper) as well as Divestment (as decided in 2018) shall go along with the mentioned activities as long as there are economically tolerable. Together with cooperation partners events shall be prepared and executed in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, food and drinks offered in

the university's and university medicine's canteens and cafeterias shall be produced and provided more climate friendly. The **Green Office** coordinates the development of new concepts for **mobility** (mobility on campus, commute of staff members and students, business trips) as well as **climate neutrality**.

### Climate protection goals of the Student Service Göttingen

The Student Service Göttingen follows the implementation of its climate protection goals with great engagement in all areas of service – in student accommodation, in the gastronomy on campus, childcare and counselling. This includes the complete transition to the external purchase of green electricity for all facilities by 2025 and the consideration of energy-saving opportunities in renovations.

Student Services is taking a step beyond the change of the energy purchase and the minimization of energy use in its canteens and cafeterias. A holistic review of the canteens and cafeterias CO<sub>2</sub>-balance have demonstrated that its CO<sub>2</sub>-balance is significantly influenced by the amount and type of offered food. For this reason, Student services is massively reducing the proportion of meat-based dishes on offer from 2021 onwards, while at the same time increasing the proportion of attractive vegetarian and vegan dishes.

By implementing these climate protection measures Student services as partner of the University of Göttingen and the student body will actively contribute to the permanent decrease of CO<sub>2</sub>-emissions on campus.