Hubrecht Institute Sustainability Strategy

We have formalized our actions and commitment to lowering our environmental footprint. As a research institute focused on human health, we acknowledge our responsibility for global health. Building on the bottom-up efforts of our active Green Team, we formulated 4 main goals with objectives and steps embedded in the structure of our institute, with ambassadors in every research group.

Led by our Sustainability Officer, we will execute the goals and objectives, consulting our experienced employees and researchers. Collaboration with institutes in our building and the Utrecht Science Park will be further expanded to achieve our mission.

"Reducing our environmental impact is not a burden but a logical extension of who we are and what we stand for."
Geert Kops
Director

"I'm proud that we've put together a set of goals and actions that give us direction."
Hannah van de Kerkhof
Sustainability Officer

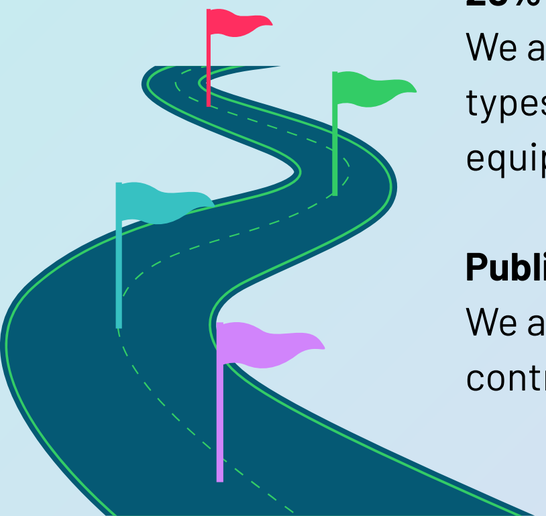
Long-term targets

Gas-free
We aim to transition to a fully gas-free building so that all our energy use can be supplied by renewable sources.

30% overall greenhouse gas emission reduction
Through behavioral changes, alternative methods, and operational improvements, we aim to reduce total greenhouse gas emissions by 30% across all scopes.

100% recycling of all recyclable waste
We will maximize recycling by ensuring all recyclable materials are properly separated and directed to recycling or take-back schemes.

20% reduction in energy intensity
We aim to reduce the energy intensity of our research by 20%. This covers the energy needed for different types of work, equipment, and laboratory processes—not just the number of researchers. By optimizing equipment use and workflows, we will achieve the same research output with less energy.



Publications on sustainable research
We aim to generate and share new insights on sustainable research practices through publications that contribute to the broader scientific community.

HUBRECHT INSTITUTE

Goals and actions

1 Reduce energy-based emissions

Building operations

- Optimize operations, e.g. opening hours
- Upgrade infrastructure, e.g. solar energy and LED lights

Scientific equipment

- Cold storage protocol for freezers and liquid N_2
- Encourage efficient equipment use
- Require energy label reviews

Energy-efficient data processing

- Implement data storage guidelines
- Promote energy-efficient coding and computation

2 Reduce waste generation

Increase recycling rates

- Enhance waste separation
- Initiate new waste streams

Optimize consumables and chemical use

- Reduce solvent and glove use
- Reduce single-use plastic consumables

Optimize water use

- Reduce water consumption
- Repurpose wastewater

3 Reduce supply chain emissions

Reduce emissions from purchases

- Promote purchase and use of sustainable alternatives
- Reduce the purchase of new products and equipment
- Encourage suppliers to decarbonize

Reduce travel and commuting emissions

- Promote public transport and biking for commuting
- Encourage low-emission travel options

4 Increase awareness and engagement

Communicate about sustainable practices

- Share knowledge and practical tips across all internal media
- Publish an annual sustainability report

Contribute to the scientific community

- Organize researchers, encourage adoption and innovation
- Conduct research on sustainable practices
- Actively participate in national and international networks

Implementation

The successful implementation of this sustainability strategy requires collaboration and engagement across all levels of the institute, with different roles contributing to the development, coordination, and adoption of sustainable practices.



Management
Management supports and actively stimulates the integration of sustainability into research practices as part of the institute's strategic goals.



Sustainability Officer
The Sustainability Officer coordinates the sustainability strategy, monitors progress, and provides guidance and expertise on sustainability topics across the institute.



Sustainability Champions
Each research group appoints a Sustainability Champion who acts as the link between the Sustainability Officer and their team. Using a train-the-trainer approach, Champions help implement new measures within their groups and collect feedback from daily practice.



Green Team
The Green Team is a voluntary committee of employees who are personally motivated to contribute to sustainability at the institute. The team supports grassroots initiatives, provides practical input from the labs, and organizes engaging activities to raise awareness and foster a culture of sustainability.

Call to action

Follow our progress via our website and socials.

Want to green your laboratory environment? Find more information on Green Labs NL.

Questions or ideas? Reach out to sustainability@hubrecht.eu.

Let’s make science more sustainable!