# Sustainability Strategy Development

The development of a Sustainability Mission Statement and a Sustainability Policy demonstrate your museum’s commitment to sustainability. It helps focus on making the museum more environmentally friendly, highlights areas where improvements can be made, is integral to funding applications and can be an important point of reference.

Sustainability entails meeting current human needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It involves preserving ecosystems and natural resources while ensuring a balance between human resource consumption and Nature's replenishment capacity.

## Sustainability Statement or Sustainability Policy?

Every museum has a different approach and different statements and policies in place. Some museums opt for a Sustainability Statement, some museums write a Sustainability Policy and others write sustainable approaches into already existing policies. We recommend that you do all of it, to incorporate sustainability as much as possible into your daily proceedings and to get the best results.

It can be confusing, which is why we have prepared some very short definitions for Sustainability Statements and Sustainability Policies, along with recommendations on how to use them.

**Sustainability Statement:** A statement recognises the need for action, sets out your museum’s values, commitments and vision and briefly explains that actions will be taken to achieve your goals. It usually comprises 2-5 sentences. This is ideal to be placed on your website and welcome desks, to raise public awareness and openly state your commitment to sustainability.

**Sustainability Policy:** A policy accomplishes a similar goal to the Sustainability Statement, but is more specific and it is possible to reference or add further policies, like for example: travel, waste, procurement etc. Sustainability policies typically are not much longer than one page. This is ideal to help support action and guidance for internal operations, as well as to use them as a point of reference for projects, funding applications and further developing strategies. Once your Sustainability Policy is done, it is a good idea to include sustainability practices into other policies as well.

**Sustainability Action Plan:** An action plan builds on the framework set out in your statement and policy and details your museum’s specific short-, medium- and long-term goals to keep track of activities and continuously evaluate your progress. This is a great way to cultivate and advance your sustainability journey.

## Sustainability Mission Statement – How to?

A Sustainability Mission Statement should always contain the following components: Recognition, values, commitments & vision, activities and goals.

Here are some examples for Sustainability Mission Statements, which you can use to adjust to your personal needs:

1. Acknowledging the importance of sustainability for museums, we are committed to integrating sustainability into all aspects of our operations, guided by our vision, mission, and values.

Sustainability encompasses various facets, including environmental stewardship, community engagement, financial stability, and skill development. Our goal is to foster individual and community growth within a sustainable framework for success.

Our sustainability framework comprises:

Being a trusted partner sought after by organisations and individuals.

Creating a special place that attracts visitors and garners support.

Providing a preferred workplace conducive to personal and professional growth.

Being a responsible steward of our environment.

1. At our museum, we recognise the vital importance of sustainability, especially in the context of museums, where preserving cultural and natural heritage is paramount. By embracing sustainability, we ensure the longevity of our resources and contribute to a healthier environment for future generations.

Our core values include respect for cultural diversity, environmental stewardship, and community engagement. We are committed to integrating sustainability into every facet of our operations, from exhibition design to daily practices. This commitment is embedded in our vision of fostering understanding and appreciation for cultural heritage while minimising our ecological footprint.

Actions we will take include implementing energy-efficient technologies, reducing waste, and promoting sustainable transportation options for staff and visitors. These will help in achieving our goals of carbon neutrality and enhancing accessibility to underserved communities.

1. As advocates for environmental conservation, we understand the critical role museums play in promoting sustainability and fostering dialogue about pressing environmental issues. By adopting sustainable practices, we aim to minimise our ecological impact and inspire others to do the same.

Our museum values inclusivity, innovation, and stewardship of cultural and natural resources. We are committed to integrating sustainability into our institutional culture and operations, guided by a future-oriented vision of resilience and responsible resource management.

Actions we will take include implementing green building practices, reducing water and energy consumption, and promoting eco-friendly transportation options. Our goals include achieving LEED certification, hosting educational programs on environmental sustainability, and serving as a catalyst for positive change within our community.

1. As custodians of cultural heritage, we understand the importance of sustainability in preserving our planet for future generations. By adopting sustainable practices, we uphold our responsibility to protect both cultural objects and the environment.

Our museum values stewardship, innovation, and community engagement. We are committed to integrating sustainability into our institutional ethos and operations, guided by a vision of environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

Actions we will take include implementing energy-efficient technologies, reducing water consumption, and promoting sustainable transportation options. Our goals include achieving carbon neutrality, minimising waste generation, and fostering environmental literacy among our visitors and stakeholders.

## Sustainability Policy – How to?

Once your Sustainability Mission Statement is written, you are ready to start drafting your Sustainability Policy, as the statement will be the ideal basis for this next step.

Further to having your Sustainability Mission Statement, you will need to do the following:

* Define the purpose and scope of your policy: Is it a general Sustainability policy? Will you later want to add more specific policies? Is it connected to other, already existing policies?
* Contextualise with reference points to aid credibility: e.g. This policy is in alignment with the Paris agreement / UN SDGs / local agreements etc.
* Develop Policy Principles and values, based on the ones in your overall Mission Statement / Strategic Plan and your Sustainability Mission Statement. This step is helpful to further define your museum’s sustainability goals.
* Establish Policy Implementation and evaluation mechanisms, like key performance indicators and set targets, to be able to evaluate your progress throughout.
* Draft your policy.
* Include a person of contact in the policy, who is responsible for the implementation and reviews.
* Get approval of the policy: The policy needs to be signed, dated and endorsed.
* Communication & Implementation: Share the new policy with everyone in the team and make it accessible to any visitors who are interested to assure its greatest possible success. Also provide further resources for your staff and volunteers to make sure that everyone understands their role in the new policy’s implementation (For this you can refer to our resources document).
* Make sure the policy is reviewed and updated annually, in order to stay relevant.

With kind permission from Ki Futures, in the following you can find a draft-policy, which you can adjust to your needs:

**Introduction**

[Organisation name] is committed to promoting sustainable practices and upholding the principles outlined in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. We recognize our impact on society and the environment, locally and globally, and are committed to taking action to address our activities and ensuring best practices and communicating this within our community. This policy outlines our framework for action on sustainability within the organisation.

**Principles**

1. Compliance with Relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice [Organisation name] will manage and control its environmental risks in a sustainable manner by complying with all relevant and applicable legislation and codes of practice. We will seek to operate within the government's commitment to energy, sustainability, and good environmental practice. The [relevant framework or legislation] sets out key objectives and criteria on which sustainable development activities should focus.

2. Incorporating Sustainable Development Issues into Policy Decision-Making [Organisation name] will endeavour to incorporate sustainable development issues into future policy decision-making at all levels.

3. Conservation of Energy, Water, and Natural Resources [Organisation name] will support and encourage the conservation of energy, water, and natural resources and the reduction of waste through reuse and recycling wherever possible.

4. Minimising Harmful Effects [Organisation name] will ensure that the risk of any potentially harmful effects through any of its actions is minimised wherever practicable, thereby aiming to reduce the impact on the environment.

5. Procurement of Goods and Services with the Least Environmental Impact The procurement of goods and services with the least environmental impact in production, delivery, installation, use, and disposal will be considered by [organisation name] wherever practical and appropriate. Contractors and suppliers will be encouraged to develop environmentally preferable goods and services and to be aware of sustainability issues.

6. Education and Communication [Organisation name] will undertake to communicate its sustainable development policy to staff and stakeholders, educate and motivate its employees and contractors to understand the principles of sustainable development, operate in an environmentally and socially responsible manner, and conserve resources wherever practicable.

7. Identifying Sustainable Development Priorities [Organisation name] undertakes to identify sustainable development priorities and to develop plans to address them.

**Approved by:**

List the relevant approving bodies, such as the Trustees, Board, Executive Director, and Staff

**Conclusion**

By implementing this sustainability policy, [organisation name] aims to promote environmental stewardship and social responsibility throughout its operations and to contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. We will continually review and improve our sustainable development practices to ensure that we are meeting our commitments and making a positive impact on our communities and the planet.