

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

SHAPING SUSTAINABILITY TOGETHER



PREFACE

As a comprehensive university with a strong research profile, Ludwig Maximilians University Munich (LMU) bears a special obligation to respond to the profound ecological, social, and economic challenges of our time. For us, sustainability is not a peripheral area of activity, but rather an attitude, a guiding principle that is embedded in research, teaching, knowledge transfer, and university operations in equal measure.

With this sustainability strategy, we articulate our commitment to consistently combining academic excellence with social responsibility. It brings together existing initiatives, provides new impetus, and creates a framework for the further development of our university as a driving force for sustainable transformation — both within the university and in dialogue with society, politics, and industry.

We understand sustainability as an integrative, normative, and transformative concept that considers ecological, social, economic, as well as cultural dimensions and requires and enables new forms of scientific and academic cooperation. Our strategy is the result of a participatory process that brings together perspectives from all status groups and disciplines and strengthens a vibrant, interdisciplinary culture of dialogue.

Our goal is to structurally embed sustainability and to continuously develop it through a dynamic, learning process. Its success will depend on the extent to which we succeed in integrating sustainability into decision-making processes, incentive systems, and the daily practices of the university community.

I invite all members of LMU as well as our partners in society, industry, and politics to actively help shape this path. Sustainable development is a shared endeavor — and an opportunity to shape the future responsibly.



Prof. Dr. Ralf Ludwig,
LMU Chief Sustainability Officer





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1. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

LMU leverages its potential as a research-intensive comprehensive university to responsibly address the complex challenges of our time and shape a sustainable future. The university is committed to comprehensive sustainable development, which it views as a global societal challenge and an institutional mission. In doing so, LMU pursues a holistic understanding of sustainability that incorporates ecological, social, economic, and cultural dimensions and their interrelations. Sustainability is understood as a transformative concept that transcends disciplinary boundaries, requires new forms of scientific cooperation, and takes into account the inner values, mindsets, and capabilities necessary for sustainable action. The United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Inner Development Goals (IDGs) serve as a guiding framework in the context of education for sustainable development.

To implement an integrated approach as a comprehensive university with a modern, research-centered educational program, LMU continues to develop its interdisciplinary dialogue. The university uses this dialogue to convey knowledge and new insights to its students and researchers and to empower them to apply this knowledge. To ensure that LMU achieves a sustainable transformation in all its areas of activity, sustainability is embedded as a cross-cutting issue in both central and decentralized decision-making processes. This long-term process involves the active participation of all university members and disciplines and requires constant reflection and joint development.

In doing so, LMU is guided by the following principles:

- Leveraging excellent research and innovation specifically to develop sustainable solutions to global challenges
- Empowering future generations through responsible teaching and education
- Protecting resources and assuming ecological responsibility
- Actively fostering diversity and pluralism within the university community
- Promoting well-being and health as a foundation for sustainable work and learning
- Positioning LMU as a driving force for societal transformation

This sustainability strategy is embedded in the University Agreement (Hochschulvertrag) as well as in LMU's overall strategy. It builds on prior work and draws on existing initiatives, activities, and structures. In the spirit of a "whole institution approach," it encompasses all central areas of the university: governance and the university community; research; studies,

teaching, personal and career development; campus and resource management; as well as innovation and societal dialogue.

To implement the strategy, a roadmap will be developed through a participatory process. It builds on the cross-cutting objectives already established in the respective areas of action and translates them into concrete measures, responsibilities, and timelines. The process follows a dialogic approach, involves all stakeholder groups at LMU, and aims to activate existing resources, leverage synergies, and establish clear structures.



2. STRATEGIC FIELDS OF ACTION

2.1 Governance and the University Community

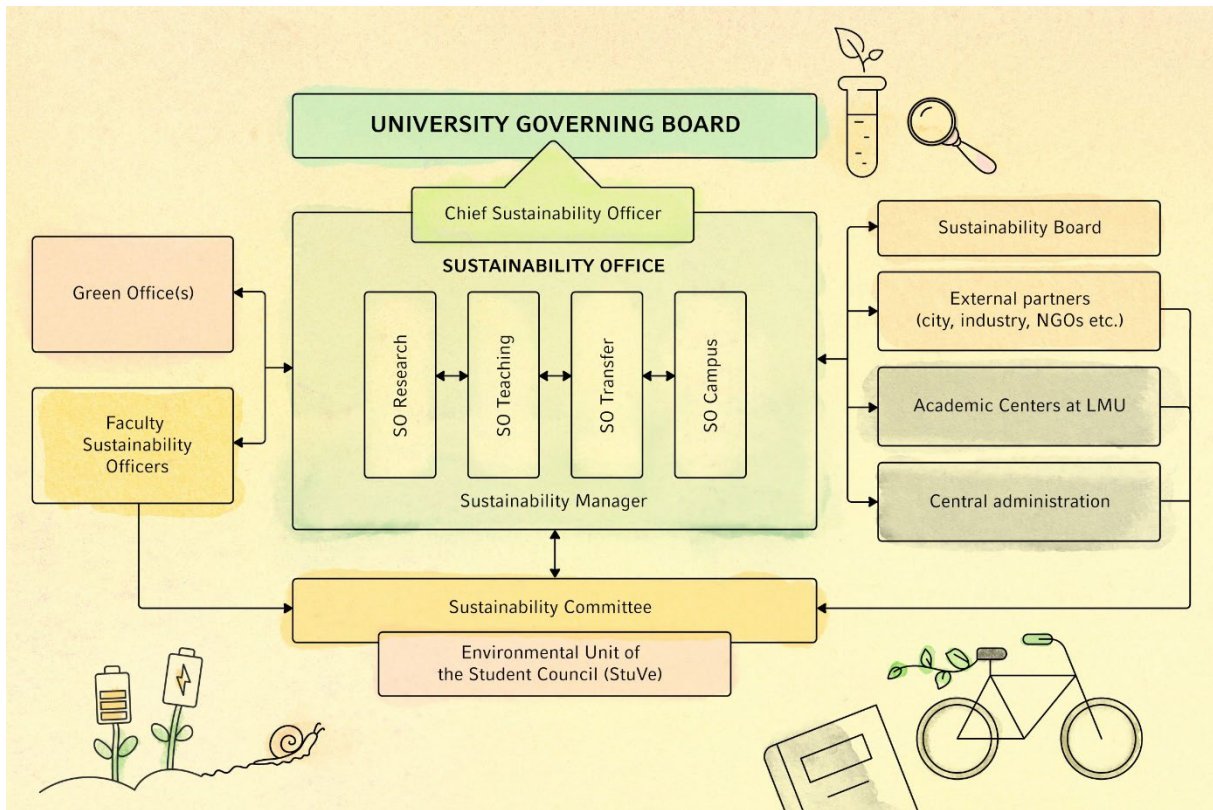


LMU is committed to embedding sustainability structurally within its decision-making processes and organizational framework. This institution-wide commitment provides the framework for the successful implementation of the sustainability strategy.

LMU views sustainable development as a shared responsibility of the entire university community. Students, faculty, researchers, and staff contribute to the development of a vibrant culture of sustainability and are supported, involved, and given visibility in their initiatives. Students in particular help drive LMU's sustainable development; their perspectives and ideas are incorporated into the sustainability strategy, and they actively participate in the implementation of the resulting measures through co-creative and participatory formats. A culture of communication that emphasizes dialogue and transparency, as well as physical and digital spaces for interaction, promote the flow of information, participation, and networking. At the same time, the university's existing advisory and support services are being expanded and enhanced to address sustainability issues in line with needs. The goal is to professionally support sustainable processes, connect relevant stakeholders, and foster exchange within LMU as well as with national and international partners.

Diversity, equal opportunity, and an inclusive organizational culture are central principles of LMU's understanding of sustainability. Tools such as the Gender Equality Plan and the Anti-Discrimination Policy ensure equal opportunities for development and participation for all groups. Through targeted human resources development and an appreciative and inclusive work, research, teaching, and learning environment, LMU strengthens individual potential, a sense of belonging, and the long-term commitment of its employees and students. In recruitment and appointment procedures, contributions to the university's sustainable development will be given greater consideration alongside academic expertise.

A transparent and effective governance structure systematically embeds sustainability at all institutional levels. It establishes clear responsibilities, promotes coordinated processes, and ensures the effective implementation of the sustainability strategy. The governance structure encompasses the following responsibilities:



Sustainability in LMU's Governance Structure

The University Governing Board views sustainability as a strategically important cross-cutting issue and has therefore appointed a Chief Sustainability Officer (CSO). The CSO plays a central coordinating and strategic role in integrating sustainability into LMU's overall strategy. The CSO is supported by a Sustainability Office, which includes Sustainability Officers for the areas of research, teaching, knowledge transfer, and campus operations, and is coordinated by a Sustainability Manager. Together with the Sustainability Office, the CSO promotes close collaboration between faculties, students, administration, and external partners; coordinates the implementation of the sustainability strategy at a central, cross-faculty level; supports the development and updating of the roadmap; and is responsible for reporting. The University Governing Board decides on the financial support and prioritization of sustainability measures.

A Sustainability Committee, consisting of representatives from all staff groups and academic disciplines — and particularly from the student body — serves as a strategic advisory body to the CSO and the Sustainability Office across all areas of action. In this role, it contributes in particular to the further development of a long-term sustainability vision and establishes a culture of interdisciplinary dialogue as the foundation for well-informed decision-making processes. In addition, it provides recommendations for the further development of sustainability projects and measures and is actively involved in building a network with local and regional partners from business,

government, civil society, and NGOs. Furthermore, the CSO establishes a Sustainability Board, which, as an external advisory body, regularly evaluates the activities of the Sustainability Office and provides recommendations for continuous improvement.

In each faculty, Faculty Sustainability Officers serve as focal points for sustainability issues. They initiate and coordinate faculty-specific sustainability measures, identify cross-faculty synergies, and promote exchange within the university. In doing so, they contribute to the further development of sustainable structures and to raising the profile of relevant initiatives. In close collaboration with the Faculty Sustainability Officers, Green Offices within the faculties or subject groups support the implementation of specific sustainability measures.

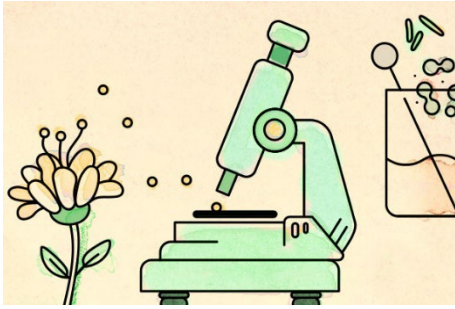
The Safety, Health, and Sustainability Unit is responsible for occupational safety, biosafety, and fire protection. It coordinates central climate protection management, waste management, and animal welfare, and oversees the student Green Office in Martinsried. The Energy Team supports the introduction of an energy management system as well as the implementation of technical measures for energy efficiency.

Social sustainability measures are jointly supported and implemented by several central and decentralized stakeholders. At the executive level, this area of activity falls under the responsibility of the Vice President for Equity, Talent Management and Diversity. Strategic initiatives and coordinating functions in the areas of conflict resolution and anti-discrimination, family-friendliness, gender and sexual identity, healthy campus, inclusion and participation, and cultural diversity are carried out by the LMU Diversity Management (ZDM). The Equal Opportunities Representative, the University Women's Representative, and the Women's Representatives in the faculties are responsible for implementing measures related to gender equality and make a significant contribution to promoting equal opportunity. Measures to promote physical and mental health are coordinated and implemented by the Central Health Manager and the In-House Medical Services. The Staff Council represents the interests of employees, exercises its legally protected rights of co-determination, and is involved in the design and implementation of relevant measures, particularly regarding working conditions, health, and work-life balance. In addition, the Center for People and Leadership Management and the Personnel Recruitment and Development Unit make important contributions to the promotion of leadership skills, the professional development of employees, and long-term staff retention.

The Environmental Unit of the Student Council brings together and coordinates student volunteer efforts in the area of sustainability and serves as a central point of contact for student-initiated projects and participatory initiatives.



2.2 Research



LMU is a place of free, knowledge-driven scholarship, where diversity and pluralism are actively embraced, and which makes effective contributions to sustainable development in the spirit of social responsibility. As a research-intensive comprehensive university with a broad range of disciplines, it leverages its unique potential to examine sustainability from various academic perspectives and to develop innovative solutions for addressing global challenges.

For LMU, sustainability in research also means shaping its scientific practices in an ecologically, economically, socially, and ethically responsible manner. This includes ongoing efforts to ensure that research processes are resource-efficient, a reflective approach to the societal impacts of research, addressing research safety issues, the further development of ethical standards — including animal welfare — and the promotion of open and accessible science in the spirit of Open Science. These principles contribute to the further development of a sustainable research culture at LMU.

LMU promotes research on and with artificial intelligence (AI). AI is understood both as a technical tool for sustainable development and as a subject of critical reflection — particularly with regard to ethical, societal, and environmental impacts. The goal is to responsibly harness the potential of AI, actively shape its development, and link it interdisciplinarily with sustainability research.

LMU's Clusters of Excellence make key contributions to sustainable development at the highest international level—for example, through basic research on the energy transition, the fight against neurodegenerative diseases, and a deeper understanding of cultural diversity and social communication. In doing so, LMU underscores its commitment to combining scientific excellence with responsibility for a sustainable future.

LMU raises the profile of its sustainability-related research and sharpens its distinct sustainability profile within the research landscape. Existing centers such as the Munich Center for Sustainability (MZN), the Center for International Health, and the Rachel Carson Center for Environment and Society serve as platforms for networking, coordination, and raising the profile of these research activities.

2.3 Education, Teaching, Personal and Career Development



As one of the largest universities in the German-speaking world, LMU bears a special responsibility for the academic education of future generations. It combines academic excellence with research-driven teaching and empowers students and early-career researchers to actively and responsibly shape societal transformation processes by equipping them with future-oriented skills.

LMU views academic education as a form of personal development — it fosters critical reflection, responsibility, and a sense of purpose as the foundation for sustainable action.

Sustainability is a central component of LMU's educational mission and is integrated into studies, teaching, and professional development. In the future, sustainability skills are to be systematically taught and strengthened in all degree programs. To this end, LMU builds upon existing formats in bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs as well as certificate programs, and continuously develops them further. LMU promotes an innovative teaching and learning culture that strengthens co-creation, interdisciplinary thinking, and a sense of scientific responsibility, and empowers students to actively shape their own learning. It also specifically supports volunteer and civic engagement as part of a holistic education for sustainable development.

LMU aims to create a work, teaching, and research environment that combines academic excellence with responsible, sustainable action for all student groups at every stage of their careers. Sustainability aspects are integrated early on into the qualification processes of undergraduate and teacher education students, master's students, doctoral candidates, and postdocs to foster competencies in sustainable thinking, academic integrity, and social responsibility. Programs for researchers and academic support staff will also be further developed in the spirit of lifelong learning to raise awareness of sustainable development issues throughout the entire university community. International collaborations — such as through research alliances or graduate programs — open up additional opportunities for development and experience and foster global perspectives as well as intercultural exchange.

As part of a comprehensive career development strategy, LMU creates structured opportunities for predictable and transparent career paths both within and outside academia — such as in science management, science communication, or roles in politics, administration, business, and civil society. This approach explicitly includes research support staff as part of a holistic human resources development strategy.

2.4 Campus and Resource Management



LMU pursues ambitious sustainability goals on its own campus and, given its diverse and, in some cases, historically significant building stock, faces particular structural and energy-related challenges. It is committed to systematically and continuously developing its operational structures with a focus on resource conservation, energy efficiency, and climate neutrality, and strives to go beyond compliance with legal requirements in the area of environmental protection. The goal is responsible and sustainable operations that comprehensively take ecological, economic, and social aspects into account. In doing so, LMU also strengthens the environmental awareness of its staff and students and supports them in acting in an environmentally conscious manner and actively engaging with issues of sustainability. It strategically leverages the unique potential of its university forest for ecological sustainability, science-based management, and interdisciplinary research.

To manage and monitor the success of sustainable operational processes, LMU is establishing a structured resource and energy monitoring system that enables the systematic identification of savings potential and promotes sustainable energy generation on campus. In this context, greenhouse gas accounting is gradually expanded to create a solid foundation for the development and implementation of a reduction pathway to lower emissions. This includes the development of an integrated, institution-wide climate protection concept. In doing so, LMU relies on an internal reinvestment model for energy efficiency and on-site power generation, which enables an independent investment pathway toward the decarbonization of building operations. It aims to gradually achieve climate neutrality through its own efforts without offsetting, in order to meet the goals of the Bavarian Climate Action Act (Bayerisches Klimaschutzgesetz).

On this basis, LMU is also implementing its sustainability strategy through concrete measures on campus: The university promotes sustainable mobility, supports the expansion of environmentally friendly food options, and implements innovative concepts for material and resource sharing. A particular focus is on the strategic development of sustainable investment and procurement processes. Waste and wastewater management is also continuously optimized in line with a resource-conserving circular economy. In construction projects, LMU pursues a sustainable approach to the extent possible within the framework of existing planning and implementation options for externally managed building structures.

In addition, LMU uses digitalization projects specifically as a strategic tool to detect efficiency potential, optimize resource use, and further strengthen sustainability monitoring.



2.5 Innovation and Societal Dialogue



LMU views innovation as a holistic design process that encompasses new ways of thinking and acting, as well as new structures and collaborations, to facilitate social change in the interest of sustainable development. Social innovations play a particularly important role in this context: they address societal challenges through new social practices, organizational forms, and collaboration

models, and aim to develop sustainable and inclusive solutions that go beyond purely technological innovations. In this context, knowledge transfer is seen as a key for translating scientific findings into concrete contributions toward solving local, national, and global challenges.

To this end, LMU relies on long-term partnerships with civil society organizations, cultural institutions, businesses, and policymakers — always while maintaining scientific independence and transparency. The goal is to integrate scientific findings into societal processes in a responsible and impact-oriented manner and to systematically strengthen the relevance of sustainability research. Real-world laboratories are an important tool in this context: as experimental learning and research spaces, they open up new avenues for participatory approaches to sustainable development—scientifically guided and directly applicable in practice.

LMU researchers provide evidence-based contributions and recommendations on issues of climate protection, sustainability, and societal development in high-level national and international bodies. In this way, LMU actively contributes to scientifically grounded policy and societal advisory services.

At the same time, LMU promotes an open culture of innovation. It offers entrepreneurship programs and supports innovation projects focused on social, ecological, economic, and cultural sustainability to foster the implementation of sustainable ideas and business models originating from the university.

LMU strengthens its capacity for dialogue in the field of sustainability through diverse participatory, communication, and exhibition formats that connect scientific perspectives with societal interests. High-visibility exhibition formats on topics such as biodiversity within the framework of “Ludwig, Max + U” or collaborations with schools on sustainability and climate

issues foster exchange and bring research to life. To enhance the public impact of researchers, LMU also offers training programs in science communication and supports initiatives that deepen the exchange between science and society.



3. IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING

The implementation of LMU's sustainability strategy is taking place in stages. Building on the defined objectives, a structured roadmap is being developed that defines and prioritizes specific measures and indicators, while also allowing for the further development and refinement of the objectives as the process continues. The collection and analysis of relevant data enable continuous monitoring of progress and lay the foundation for the evidence-based refinement of sustainability measures.

A sustainability report documents the progress achieved and the challenges identified, as well as the planned next steps, and makes these developments visible to the university community and external stakeholders. At the same time, the strategy is adapted to new findings, framework conditions, and needs.

Responsibilities for implementing the sustainability strategy are clearly anchored in LMU's governance structure. Its implementation takes place with the active participation of all university constituencies.





Ludwig Maximilians University Munich
Sustainability Office
Elisabethplatz 22
80796 Munich
www.lmu.de/lmugreen
sustainability@lmu.de

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