



**rijksuniversiteit
 groningen**

green office

Green Office Green Label

Student Organizations of the University of Groningen



Introduction

In 2017, the Green Office of the University of Groningen introduced the Sustainability Checklist. This idea rose from the acknowledgement that all parties of the university need to take action to tackle the climate crisis. As associations affiliated with the university play a big part in giving an example to the students, it is important that they also strive for a more sustainable university and thus society.

The Sustainability Checklist is a tool that can be used to measure how sustainable a student organization is. All organizations and associations that are located in Groningen and focus on students can participate in the Sustainability Checklist. This is different from the Sustainability Subsidy, which can only be requested by associations that are officially recognized by the CUOS.

The Sustainability Checklist that is provided in this document can be used to check how sustainable your association or organization is. If you decide to fill out the checklist and send it to the Green Office, you might be awarded a label in recognition of your efforts. If you are awarded a Green Label, the logo can be put on your site for members and companies to see. In the following years, the association can further improve its sustainable practices and get a higher label.

It is important to note that every organization or association interprets sustainability in its own way. As every association is different, there are no rigid guidelines and many solutions are possible to make your organization more sustainable.

How it works

A total amount of 100 points can be obtained. These points are divided into three sections:

- Organization
- Facilities
- Career and Education

All associations need to fill out the section on 'organization.' The other two sections only need to be filled out if they are applicable to your association. The amount of points that can be obtained for each subsection can be found in the checklist. Considering this amount of points, the committee that assesses the label applications can choose to award the whole amount of points, only award half of the points or award no points. The amount of points that is obtained is calculated as a fraction of the amount of points that can be obtained for the specific situation of your association. By using this method, associations of all kinds can apply for a label and have an equal chance of receiving one.



Organization

The first section is applicable to all associations. If this is not the case for any reason, the association is not eligible for a Green Label. This is an overarching section regarding the general operations of the association concerning (waste) policy, paper use, catering, inventory, mobility and motivating members.

70 points can be obtained in this section.

Facilities

The second section only applies when the association has a facility which it can exert influence on, such as a board room, members room, premises or club house. This section concerning energy use, furnishing and decoration, and working environment.

20 points can be obtained in this section.

Career and education

The third section applies to associations that are related to the career perspective and education of the members. In general, this is the case for study associations, but maybe also applicable to student organizations that are responsible for the development of their members in this field.

10 points can be obtained in this section.

If you feel like this checklist does not cover all your efforts, make sure to list these efforts in the additional part.

Proof

Appropriate evidence should be provided when filling in the checklist. This evidence can be provided in the shape of citations, photos and screenshots of orders, documents etcetera. If possible, send the policy plan, budget and strategic plan along to enforce your statements. In cases where sustainability is questioned; articles, sites and journals can be linked to provide proof. Also books such as 'De verborgen impact' from Babette Porcelijn can be used. This book, among others, can be borrowed from the Green Office.

Labels

The distribution of labels will adhere to the following ratio of obtained points and maximum points.

Golden label	0.85 - 1.0
Silver label	0.7 - 0.85
Bronze label	0.5 - 0.7
No label	0.0 - 0.5



Procedure

A template is provided and should be used when filling out the checklist. The filled-out template needs to be sent to greenoffice@rug.nl before the deadline provided in the email you received.

Each explanation in the template should start with an explanation of what actions the association takes concerning the subject. Hereafter, describe what the current state of the association is, as well as the changes that are made in the academic year of 2019 - 2020. In this description, be concise and clear. If the checklist was submitted last year, you can copy the relevant information into the checklist for this year to save some effort. When you do this, clearly state it in the explanation.

It is important to provide support, reasoning and explanation for why you consider the changes you have done 'sustainable'. Do your research before writing down the sustainable changes. This knowledge can be used to explain how these changes contribute to a more sustainable association.

Award ceremony

An award ceremony is organized to award the labels to associations that have received enough points for a bronze, silver or gold label. After the award ceremony, feedback will be provided including the amount of points you received for each subsection. The outcome of the checklist is not open for discussion. However, general feedback on the checklist is welcome.



Checklist

Organization		Points
A. Sustainability in the policy/strategic plan	To ensure that the association is directed towards sustainability and to show this to the members and future boards, it should be included in the policy plan/strategic plan. When these plans are composed, link these to the sustainability goals of the University of Groningen.	5
B. Waste	<p><i>1. Separation of waste</i></p> <p>Discuss how plastics, glass, paper and organic waste are recycled in the facilities of the organization and when doing activities. In your explanation, if applicable, also include how electronic devices are recycled.</p>	5
	<p><i>2. Reduction of waste</i></p> <p>Discuss how the organization generates less waste. Include in your explanation how the members are motivated and facilitated to use less resources.</p>	5
C. Paper use	Discuss how paper use is reduced. Discuss the policy on printing promotional material. Also include the almanak, magazines, programme booklets etcetera. Describe how the choices on amount and type of paper for printing are made. This website indicates on the base of various labels how sustainable a paper source is.	4
D. Catering	<p><i>1. Vegetarian/Vegan food</i></p> <p>Discuss how the organization reduces the consumption of animal products and how members are motivated to do this in their personal life. Take the possibility to indicate a preference to eat vegetarian/vegan along in your explanation.</p>	5
	<p><i>2. Local and seasonal food</i></p> <p>Discuss where the food that is used during activities is bought and where this food originally comes from. On the website of 'Het Voedingscentrum' you can see what vegetables are in season for the time of the year.</p>	4
	<p><i>3. Leftovers</i></p> <p>Discuss what happens to the leftovers from activities involving food. Include the members weekend and introduction camp in your explanation.</p>	3
E. Inventory	<p><i>1. Gadgets</i></p> <p>Discuss the process of purchasing gadgets. Include the choices that are made concerning the product line of the association. Also include the items members receive for free or in goodie bags in your explanation. Take presents for visitors into account as well.</p>	5



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	<p>2. <i>Use of items</i></p> <p>Discuss the items that are used during activities for the course of the activity and the decoration. Include where the items are purchased and what happens to the items and decoration after you have used them.</p>	6
	<p>3. <i>Clothing</i></p> <p>Discuss the purchasing of committee clothing or team clothing. Include what happens to this clothing after the year ends.</p>	4
F. Mobility	<p>Discuss the transportation of the members and visitors to activities. Within this category, think about company visits, sports matches, congress organization etcetera. Include when public transport, bicycles, cars and planes are used.</p>	5
G. Motivating members	<p>1. <i>Activities</i></p> <p>Discuss how the activities of the organization address sustainability. Describe not only the impact of an activity, but also the awareness that it creates. Also note, out of the total amount of activities how many are either low impact or create awareness regarding sustainability.</p>	6
	<p>2. <i>Exemplary role</i></p> <p>Discuss how the association expresses the path to sustainability. Include the social media and how sustainable initiatives are highlighted. If applicable, also include in your answer how the label from last year is showcased.</p>	5
H. People	<p>1. <i>Mental health</i></p> <p>Discuss how the mental health of your members is supported and maintained. Elaborate on how the association highlights the possibilities.</p>	4
	<p>2. <i>Inclusion</i></p> <p>Discuss the inclusion of all types of members into the association/organization. Discuss the accessibility for less abled members to the facilities and the organization. Include the possibility to indicate a disability when signing up for the association/an event in your explanation.</p>	4
	Total	70

Facilities		Points
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A. Energy use	Discuss what measures are taken to reduce the energy use of the association. Include the lighting, heating and use of electrical devices in your explanation. Note: clarify what the association can and cannot influence.	8
B. Sustainable furnishing / decoration	Discuss how the facilities are furnished and decorated. Include where the furnishing is bought and how the furnishing is maintained.	6
C. Housekeeping	Discuss how a healthy working environment is maintained. Include clean air, ergonomic seating and clean surroundings in your explanation.	6
	Total	20

Career and Education		Points
A. Highlight sustainable career opportunities	Discuss where the sustainable career opportunities lie in your field of study and how these are highlighted. Also include the method in doing this (congress, case, presentation, social media etcetera.)	5
B. Sustainable education and research opportunities	Discuss how courses, minors and other sustainable education options are highlighted.	5
	Total	10

If not everything can be explained in the categories mentioned above, it can be addressed in the additional section. No points can be obtained in this section, but it can give a clearer image of the association.