

BESA Sustainability Policy

1. Purpose

BESA seeks to reduce the environmental impacts of its operations, events and value chain while supporting staff, members, partners and suppliers to make informed and responsible choices. This policy sets out the principles, responsibilities, controls, and review arrangements that will guide BESA's environmental performance and journey towards long-term ambition to reduce its carbon footprint.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all BESA employees, directors, contractors, and consultants. Its principles also inform how BESA selects and works with venues, event suppliers, partners, and other third parties. It covers office and homeworking activities, business travel, events, procurement, digital operations, waste, energy, water and communications.

3. Our commitments

BESA will:

- Assess the environmental impacts of our operations and set interim targets and long-term goals for continuous improvement. We will regularly review these targets.
- Comply with all relevant environmental legislation and regulations.
- Ensure that all our services are developed in a way that is complementary to this policy.
- Define and communicate responsibilities to management, employees and contractors, ensuring everyone is aware of their individual obligations.
- Take environmental considerations into account within our procurement and supply chain.
- Encourage all partners and other key stakeholders to commit to improving environmental performance.
- Reduce our organisation's use of energy and water, and minimise waste through reduction, reuse and recycling wherever possible, whether employees are working in the office or from home.
- Consider the level of travel required and the mode of travel, encouraging lower-carbon transportation options for both employees and suppliers.
- Work with environmental specialists as required.

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- Prepare and promote our environmental policy and action plan.
- Designate responsibility for coordinating environmental initiatives and employee engagement.
- Where appropriate, increase recycling practices and optimise the use of technological equipment.
- Promote and encourage low-carbon travel choices.

4. Priority action areas

4.1 Carbon, energy and ways of working

- Track material sources of emissions, including office attendance, homeworking, business travel and international travel, using the BESA carbon tracker and retained supporting evidence.
- Review calculation of assumptions and emissions factors annually, recording the source and version used.
- Reduce avoidable consumption of energy, water and materials in the office and support practical lower-impact behaviours when staff work from home.
- Extend the useful life of equipment where safe and practical, and ensure responsible reuse, recycling or disposal at end of life.

4.2 Sustainable events and member engagement

Because events are a significant part of BESA's activities, sustainability will be considered from planning through to post-event review. BESA will embed practical, proportionate and evidence-led sustainability actions across its event calendar, while also using its role as a trade association to support and encourage members to adopt more sustainable practices.

- Where practical and proportionate, include environmental criteria in venue and supplier selection, such as accessible public transport, energy and waste practices, responsible catering and sustainability credentials.
- Reduce printed materials and single-use items, favouring reusable, recyclable or digital alternatives.
- Encourage lower-carbon delegate, staff and supplier travel and provide clear public transport information.
- Seek to gather core sustainability information for major events, including venue, travel, materials, catering and waste data where available.
- Invite exhibitors, sponsors and delivery partners to follow BESA's event sustainability expectations.
- Complete a proportionate post-event sustainability review and record actions for the next event cycle.
- Use online delivery for webinars, meetings and training where this will reduce unnecessary travel and still meet the purpose of the activity.

- Promote lower-impact event delivery through actions such as QR codes and digital resources, reusable lanyards, recyclable signage and name badges, reuse of exhibition materials, improved waste separation and lower-carbon catering choices where practical.
- Collect attendee, speaker and sponsor travel information for major in-person events where appropriate, recognising that travel is often one of the largest sources of event-related emissions.
- Support members through sustainability-focused events, webinars, special interest groups and working groups, including opportunities to hear from experts, share good practice and identify common challenges and opportunities across the education suppliers' sector.
- Champion member progress by recognising organisations that support lower-impact operations, schools and the wider education sector through relevant BESA initiatives and awards.

4.3 Travel and transport

- Assess whether travel is necessary and use virtual participation when it can meet the objective effectively.
- Prefer rail and public transport over higher-carbon alternatives where practical, considering accessibility, safety, cost and operational requirements.
- Record business and international travel consistently so that emissions can be calculated and reviewed.
- Combine meetings and activities where sensible to avoid repeat journeys.

4.4 Procurement and suppliers

Environmental considerations will be proportionate to the value, risk, and impact of each purchase. For significant or recurring suppliers, BESA will consider:

- Environmental policy, targets, or carbon reduction plan.
- Ability to provide relevant environmental data.
- Resource efficiency, waste prevention, reuse, and circular economy practices.
- Responsible sourcing and supply chain transparency.
- Evidence supporting environmental claims.

Where a supplier cannot yet meet an expectation, BESA may agree with a proportionate improvement action rather than exclude the supplier automatically.

4.5 Digital sustainability

- Choose fit-for-purpose digital services and equipment, considering energy efficiency, longevity, support and responsible end-of-life arrangements.

- Reduce unnecessary duplication and retention of files and recordings, in line with BESA's information governance requirements.
- Use virtual formats thoughtfully, recognising that digital activity also has an environmental impact.
- Include sustainability questions in the review of material technology providers where appropriate.

4.6 Climate risk and resilience

BESA will annually consider how climate-related disruption could affect offices, staff travel, events, venues, suppliers, technology and member services. Significant risks and reasonable mitigations will be recorded within the relevant organisational or event risk process.