



University
of Dundee

Carbon Offset Policy & Guidance

Version 1.0

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Carbon Offset Policy & Guidance

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1.0 Introduction

In 2020, the Wellcome Trust introduced a new carbon offset policy for travel which forms part of their grant conditions which all organisations applying for funding must follow from 1st October 2021. The University of Dundee is committed to being compliant with all obligations regarding grant applications to the Wellcome Trust and therefore this document provides guidance to those completing the Wellcome Trust application form to ensure full compliance with all requirements.

1.1 Scope of the policy

This guidance applies to all applications for funding to the Wellcome Trust and any other provider which requires that carbon emissions from travel are offset as part of their grant conditions.

2.0 Effective date

This policy was approved by the Research & Knowledge Exchange Committee on XXXXXX and is effective from 1st October 2021.

2.1 Review dates

The policy will be reviewed every three years or more often as required.

3.0 The Wellcome Trust carbon offset policy for travel

The Wellcome Trust have introduced the policy to support the reduction of the environment impact of all travel they fund.

3.1 Expectations

Wellcome expect all organisations applying for funding to minimize the number of journeys taken by using alternatives where possible (eg video conferencing), to choose travel that has a lower carbon impact where practical, and to offset the carbon emissions of journeys they do make.

3.2 Costs

Wellcome will pay for all essential travel costs (even if the low carbon option is more expensive – such as train instead of air travel), project related resources or activities which provide an alternative to travel, and/or costs to offset the carbon generated by essential travel.

No costs will be reimbursed for core infrastructure that a host organization should provide and under no circumstances should these be included in any grant application (eg high speed broadband, licenses or software for video conferencing packages, HD screens).

3.3 Requirements in relation to University of Dundee applications

The University does not have a separate carbon offset policy currently. Therefore, all grant applications to Wellcome must use the guidance in this document to calculate the carbon footprint of all travel and include the offset cost associated with this. The University will arrange for costs to be paid to a carbon offset provider on an appropriate basis – this should not be facilitated by

individual grant holders.

4.0 Guidance for completing the carbon offsetting section of the Wellcome Trust Application form

There are 6 sections in the Wellcome form in relation to carbon offsetting:

- Are you requesting costs to offset the carbon emissions involved in your travel?
- How much are you requesting for carbon offset costs?
- How much carbon will this offset (in tonnes)?
- Are you requesting costs for alternatives to travel, so you can travel less?
- How much are you requesting for these alternatives?
- How much carbon will you save by using alternatives to travel (in tonnes)?

4.1 Are you requesting costs to offset the carbon emissions involved in your travel?

This is required for all travel paid for by Wellcome so all applications must input “YES” to this question.

4.3 How much carbon will this offset (in tonnes)?

As part of the process, all applications should itemize estimated travel (locations, number of trips, method of travel). To calculate the carbon emissions associated with this travel, Wellcome requires that a recognized standard is applied (citing the International Civil Aviation Organisation and the UK government conversion factors for greenhouse gas 2019 as examples).

The University recommends that the following online tool is used for air travel

[Flight emission map](#)

Please note that this has a more holistic approach to calculating carbon emissions than the International Civil Aviation Organisation version (and therefore calculates a higher carbon footprint for all travel). Whilst the tool does not provide an exact calculation for every possible journey, it is advised that applicants always use appropriate alternative journeys to assess the carbon emissions of their proposed travel (taking a prudent approach). Please also note the calculator provides information for a single trip in economy so care should be taken to provide for return flights. In the very rare instance that approval is given for alternative class flights then the carbon emissions should be multiplied with the following values – premium economy (x1.6), business class (x3.0), first class (x4.0).

For all other travel then the UK government conversion factor information is recommended to calculate the carbon emissions involved (note this includes car, rail, taxi, bus and ferry travel).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2019>

The template provided in appendix 1 can be used to consolidate the carbon emissions for each grant application.

4.3 How much are you requesting for carbon offset costs?

The cost applied for carbon offset costs must represent the total carbon emissions to be offset (as calculated in 4.2 multiplied by the University recommended cost of carbon (per tonne). Whilst there is

no single definitive view on the cost of carbon, the University recommends that £40/tonne is used for all grant applications (noting this reflects at least c.\$50/tonne and is therefore aligned to the cost estimated by the Environmental Defense Fund and the Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition).

The template provided in appendix 1 can be used to calculate the cost of carbon emissions.

4.4 Are you requesting costs for alternatives to travel, so you can travel less?

The University encourages all staff to consider alternatives to travel or to travel using less carbon intensive options. Wellcome allows applications to include costs associated with this and therefore the application should answer “YES” to this question if funding for alternatives to travel is requested.

4.5 How much are you requesting for these alternatives?

There are two elements that can be included in this section – both additional travel costs and project related resources.

Additional travel costs should only be applied for when it is clear that low carbon alternatives are more expensive (for example train journey compared to air travel). If alternative travel options also require additional nights’ accommodation, then it is acceptable to include this cost also.

There are many digital resources that can be used instead of travel and the University supports many of these. Whilst it is possible that additional resources may be appropriate for specific projects, it is recommended that the applicant contact UoDIT to discuss this before any request for funding is made under this section. It is not possible to claim for resources for core infrastructure that the University should provide, nor is it possible to claim for additional infrastructure in relation to this.

4.6 How much carbon will you save using alternatives to travel (in tonnes)?

This should be the difference between the full travel emissions and the alternative travel option. Where journeys are replaced by project resources (eg online resource) then the full travel emission for the journey should be included.

Version Control

Date of change(s):	Version changed:	Summary of changes	Changed by:	Approved by:

Appendix 1



Table to support the calculation of carbon emissions

Destination	Carbon emissions for a return trip (tonnes)	Number of journeys	Total emissions (emissions x journeys) (tonnes)	Adjustment for flight class (where required)	Total emissions (tonnes)	Cost per tonne (£)	Total carbon cost to offset (£)
Eg – Hong Kong	4.8	2	9.6	none	9.6	£40	£384

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