

DARIAH goes Green: Internal Environmental Guidelines

1. Introduction & Principles

DARIAH is committed to sustainability and responsible environmental stewardship. As an RI, we recognize both the opportunities and responsibilities we have in reducing our environmental impact, starting from within the DCO. These internal guidelines are intended as a practical starting point, subject to evolution based on feedback, capacity, and measurable progress.

Core principles:

- Transparency over greenwashing: We acknowledge our footprint and aim to mitigate it at the source.
- We understand that not all members across Europe operate with equal resources and flexibility.
- We target areas where the DCO has direct influence (e.g., travel, data storage, communication practices).

2. Travel

Travel is the most immediate and measurable contributor to our footprint.

Actions:

- Annual tracking of DCO travel (flights, train, car): collect distances traveled and means of transport.
- Favor train travel over air travel for trips under 6 hours where possible.
- Consider virtual participation by default for intra-European meetings when in-person presence is not essential.
- For events requiring travel:
 - Consolidate travel (e.g., schedule meetings back-to-back to reduce trips).
 - Prefer central venues accessible by rail for physical gatherings.

3. Digital Communication

While remote work reduces travel, it brings its own footprint. We aim to reduce unnecessary digital energy consumption.

Video conferencing (e.g. DARIAH Zoom):

- Encourage “video-off” for long meetings with a lot of participants, turning it on mainly when directly speaking/addressed.
- Encourage instant messaging (pe Slack, WhatsApp) instead of emailing for operational communication.
- Optional: adopt profile image with “Camera Off – Going Green” visual to normalize practice.
- Avoid unnecessary screensharing during meetings if all participants have access to the documents.
- Record Zoom meetings only if absolutely necessary. If necessary, store only sound files and not images. Delete the recordings when not useful anymore.

Email practices:

- Introduce an annual or biannual “Inbox Spring Clean” initiative, e.g., during Joint Face-to-Face (JF) meetings.
- Delete emails with large attachments after saving the files to Google Drive.
- Encourage reduction of long email chains and unnecessary CCs.

4. Digital Infrastructure

Our choice of platforms and data storage has a measurable impact.

Actions:

- Prefer cloud services and data centres that publicly report their environmental metrics and rely on renewable energy (e.g., some German providers).
- Conduct a basic audit of the energy footprint of the DCO’s main digital tools (e.g., Google Drive, video platforms, data storage services).
- Conduct a regular Google Drive cleaning (which is also important for GDPR reasons)

5. Office Practices & Physical Infrastructure

Where feasible, small changes in daily operations can contribute meaningfully.

Actions:

- Coordinate with building management (e.g., CMB) to assess and understand the environmental performance of DCO office spaces.
- Share recommendations on sustainable office habits (e.g., printing less, shared resources, temperature control).
- Implement digital-first documentation and archiving practices.

6. Data & Measurement

We begin with small, manageable metrics to understand and improve our practices.

Short-term measurements:

- Annual travel footprint for DCO staff (in km and type of transport).
- Digital storage volume and platform sustainability credentials.
- Qualitative overview of video conferencing and digital communication habits.

Medium-term goals:

- Visual representation of DCO's footprint (travel, digital, storage).
- Explore collaboration with partners who are already conducting greenhouse gas assessments (e.g., France's "bilan carbone" process).