

Professor Sally Wheeler  
Vice-Chancellor  
Birkbeck, University of London  
Malet Street, Bloomsbury, London WC1E 7HX  
[vc@bbk.ac.uk](mailto:vc@bbk.ac.uk)

31<sup>st</sup> October 2025

**Letter of commitment to the priorities of the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice**

I, Professor Sally Wheeler on behalf of Birkbeck, University of London, confirm our commitment to the priority areas outlined in the Concordat for the Environmental Sustainability of Research and Innovation Practice.

Birkbeck fully supports the priority areas outlined in the concordat. We will deliver against all the priorities in practice and recognise our responsibilities as a signatory, as set out in the concordat.

By signing this concordat we recognise the need to change how we conduct research and innovation as well as promote wider solutions. We also agree to take shared action now and into the future to reduce and eliminate our own environmental impacts and emissions and achieve the transition to sustainable practices.

Birkbeck is fully committed to the priorities identified under this Concordat. We have convened a group of institutional leaders to head up our work in this area (Chief Financial Officer, PVC (Innovation and Academic Development), Executive Dean (Science), Chief Technology Officer, Chief Property Officer, Deputy Director of Research (Strategy) (Chair – holds institutional responsibility for concordat and funder policy compliance) and, until her retirement on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025, our Deputy Director of Research (Operations) – this role will be replaced by our Deputy Director (Innovation) from 1<sup>st</sup> November) and our Sustainability and Energy Manager, who is the operational leader for this area of work). This group meets monthly to oversee our work towards sustainable infrastructure, sustainable procurement and to develop and review our approach to environmental impact and data reporting. Work to date from this group has included drafting a policy statement about Birkbeck's approach to environmental sustainability, overseeing work to secure LEAF and Green Disc accreditation for lab spaces, a meeting with JISC to better understand how they can support our work towards sustainable infrastructure, interrogation of our environmental impact and data reporting, and ongoing conversations about how to improve our sustainable procurement practices, including a tendering exercise for a new preferred travel provider. In addition, a working group has also been set up under this group to look at our business travel and to develop a refreshed policy and to review our processes and procedures. It is anticipated that this work will complete in the 25/26 academic

year. In other areas, we are strengthening our approach to collaborations and partnerships through a newly established Innovation Support Unit and refreshed policies designed to support sustainable research and innovation. The team is working closely with industry and community partners to co-create learning opportunities, embed external expertise within academic programmes, and expand CPD provision for professionals. Recent initiatives include a CPD course supporting businesses to achieve net zero and a graduate internship with a charitable SME working in net zero consultancy. Our innovation partnerships are increasingly focused on SMEs and aligned with the Government's Industrial Strategy priority areas, driving practical, sustainable solutions with measurable social and environmental impact. We also host the Environmental Education Project, a three-year, philanthropically funded project focused on bringing Birkbeck staff, students and our external stakeholders together to develop diverse, employability-focused educational initiatives in the area of environment and sustainability. These include our annual Climate Festival. Finally, the Birkbeck Research Centre for Environment and Sustainability was formed in December 2023 to take an interdisciplinary approach to tackling the entwined challenges of environmental and climate breakdown and the need to transition to a more sustainable way of life.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Sally Wheeler OBE  
Vice-Chancellor

31<sup>st</sup> October 2025