

Staff Business Travel

Staff business travel can contribute significantly to an institution's carbon emissions. The process of reducing unsustainable forms of transport, providing alternatives, and promoting these to staff in a way which leads to behaviour change, is a significant task. This document should help inform this process, from getting accurate data to engaging with staff about the alternatives.

Key Barriers to Change

- Habit
- Feeling of entitlement
- Time pressure
- Frequent need for academic travel
- Requirements within role or project
- Desire to travel first class
- Unwillingness to not travel by car
- Lack of confidence in Video Conferencing
- Lack of understanding of the reasons why they should change



Attitudes around the professional requirements or reputational benefits of travelling or flying regularly to attend meetings and events must be addressed both within institutions and by the sector as a whole.

Monitoring and reporting

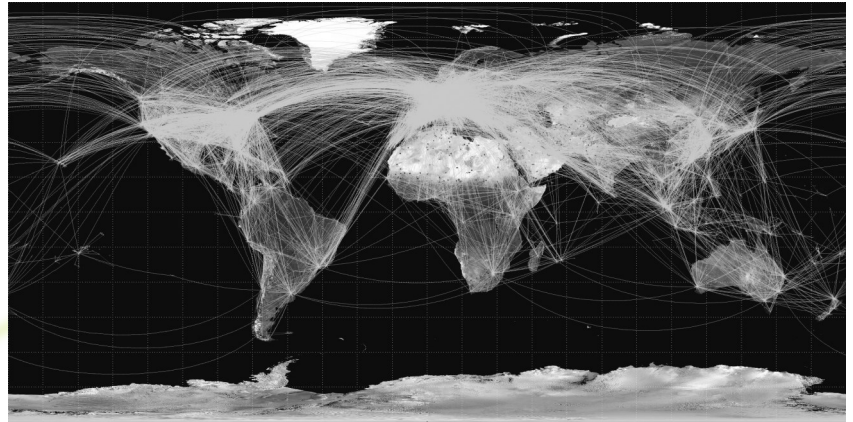
- Monitoring staff business travel can be difficult, as this can include not only flights, rail travel and coaches but also private car journeys that may be claimed for with no details on distance travelled.
- Monitoring the use of video conferencing facilities or virtual meetings can assist in measuring improvements or switches from in-person meetings .
- Taking illustrative data to senior managers or heads of departments can help highlight any unnecessary travel and start the conversation about essential travel.
- Ensuring that any designated travel supplier is used by all staff can support the gathering of accurate data. Data gathering is far more complicated when individuals book privately and charge through expenses.

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Partnerships and Collaborations

Developing partnerships with these departments will be essential for success:

- Internationalisation teams
- Institute of Academic Departments or teachers
- Health and wellbeing coordinator
- HR departments



Engagement

- As the highest proportions of carbon from staff business travel will be from flights, highlighting the key problem areas with a flight map will expose any popular routes that could be taken by train.
- Engaging staff through focus groups can help analyse the behavioural influencers around staff business travel in your institution, and help to target any initiatives to the staff needs/limits
- Communications around climate change rather than economic factors tend to engage staff more, giving understandable equivalents to carbon emissions such as driving equivalent for flights etc.
- Highlight the issues around work/life balance and wellbeing stemming from business travel
- Ensure functionality and satisfaction from staff with the travel supplier to create a greater conversation in prioritising more sustainable travel, and support data gathering.

Example Interventions

- Mandatory prioritisation of rail travel over flying for particular routes
- Carbon compensation on flights that is redistributed into your institution's carbon reduction programmes or used as subsidies for rail over offsetting
- Staff pledges to not fly when rail is available
- Carbon allowances per department for staff travel
- Training, familiarisation, taster sessions in your institution's video conferencing facilities to make this option seem more viable, highlighting the benefit to work/life balance of zero travel meetings.

Information gathered through Staff Business Travel Sharing Series Webinar and presentation from University of Edinburgh project

