A Sustainibility Plan for FBK.



FONDAZIONE BRUNO KESSLER

2025
2027

Introduction

In the current context—marked by profound environmental, technological, and social changes—the climate crisis and the digital transition stand out as transformative challenges poised to rapidly and decisively reshape our future. Addressing them with responsibility and vision means recognizing not only the urgency, but also the concrete possibility of contributing to the construction of a fairer, more resilient and sustainable development model, capable of generating growth, widespread well-being and new opportunities.

In this scenario, Fondazione Bruno Kessler – internationally recognized excellence for applied research – is called upon to play a key role: creating knowledge, experimenting with innovative solutions and stimulating change, to produce positive, lasting and tangible impacts on the social, environmental and economic levels.

Building on this awareness, we have chosen to define a clear and cross-cutting path of commitment that shall run through our daily processes, strengthen the Foundation's distinctive assets, be reflected in our governance models, and be integrated into our internal welfare policies. Thus, the Foundation's first Sustainability Plan was created, the result of a shared process that brought together people, skills, and ideas, and that seamlessly brings together the actions we intend to implement in the coming years, defined by quantifiable yet ambitious objectives.

We present it as a structured and dynamic path, aimed at continuous improvement, built on a solid foundation that is already attentive to sustainability issues. We are guided by the belief that sustainability is not a limitation but a key driver of research, innovation, and value creation for the benefit of the whole community.

Ferruccio Resta
Fondazione Bruno Kessler's President



63
years of research
and innovation projects

750+
researchers and
research support staff

2 hub
at Povo (Trento hillside)
and in the heart of the city

12
research centers

160+
PhD students

40.000sqm
Campus

7
laboratories

250+
interns

60+
Staff members' countries
of origin from EU and
non-EU countries



Why a Sustainability Plan

The Sustainability Plan is a strategic document that defines the objectives, actions and measures that FBK intends to adopt to integrate environmental, social and economic sustainability into its activities. It is a strategic tool to align institutional governance with the principles of ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance): the necessary response to current challenges, in line with Europe's position and strategy and with respect for the new generations. The Plan is deployed in the implementation period of the FBK 2024-2027 Strategic Plan and contains **objectives and actions to be carried out from 2025 to 2027.**

Sustainability is the ability to meet the demands of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own, while considering environmental, social, and economic dimensions.

This holistic approach acknowledges the connections between **individual well-being, social equity, and ecosystem health**, fostering a growth model that is inclusive, responsible, and enduring. With this in mind, the adoption of sustainable practices is essential to mitigate the negative effects of climate change and promote responsible technological development.

The climate crisis and the technological revolution are challenges that shape the present and future of many generations. The way we choose to interpret them will shape the society we live in. In this context, adopting an approach to sustainability means, for Fondazione Bruno Kessler, guiding the response to these challenges, ensuring a more equitable and respectful future.

Action trajectories

For the FBK community

Enhancing processes and initiatives to strengthen the sustainability of our activities and the responsible use of the facilities and infrastructure it houses.

FBK for sustainability

Outside FBK

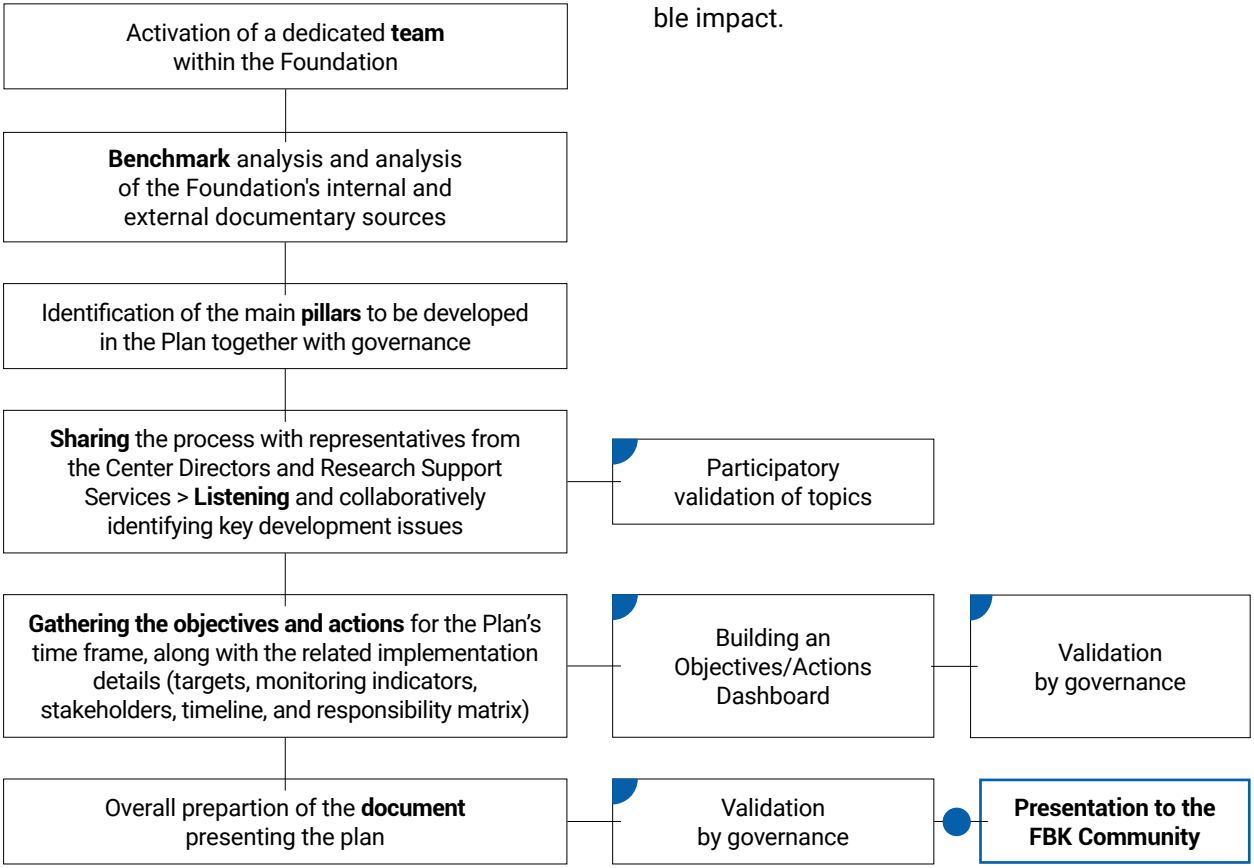
Through the results of "Made in FBK" research and technology innovation that directly contribute to sustainability. FBK's true strength lies in developing technical solutions, knowledge, and skills that generate positive impacts for society. The Foundation’s Sustainability Plan is part of the initiatives outlined in the 2024–2027 Strategic Plan, which translates FBK’s mission into concrete goals and strategic guidelines that serve people and communities.

With the goal of aligning objectives and improvement actions across both trajectories, the Foundation has developed its first Sustainability Plan for the 2025–2027 period.

Methodological note

The Plan follows an international framework that aligns each theme with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), taking a holistic view of sustainability. The process that led to the development of the Plan was procedural and iterative, unfolding through multiple phases and incorporating evaluation and feedback cycles to adjust actions as needed and ensure the greatest possible impact.

Development stages of the FBK Sustainability Plan



How do I read the Plan?

The Sustainability Plan is structured so that each objective is associated with one or more actions to be implemented between 2025 and 2027. Indicators are also specified for effective monitoring of success, goals to achieve, timelines and targets. Within the Foundation's internal processes, each action is assigned a responsibility matrix that specifies who is entrusted with its implementation.

This brochure is a brief introduction to the Sustainability Plan, highlighting and summarizing the actions planned for the coming years. This document does not include the implementation details contained in the full Plan.

To access the full document, please scan the QR code on the back cover.



The 5 pillars



Research and Innovation (R)

the Foundation focuses on the development of sustainable and innovative solutions to address transformative challenges, involving various stakeholders such as universities, public administrations, companies, etc.



Resources and the Environment (E)

focuses on optimizing resources, managing and mitigating waste, promoting sustainable mobility, and raising awareness in the FBK community.



People (S)

promotes an inclusive and stimulating environment, strengthening awareness of sustainability, improving the quality of life of employees and combating inequalities.



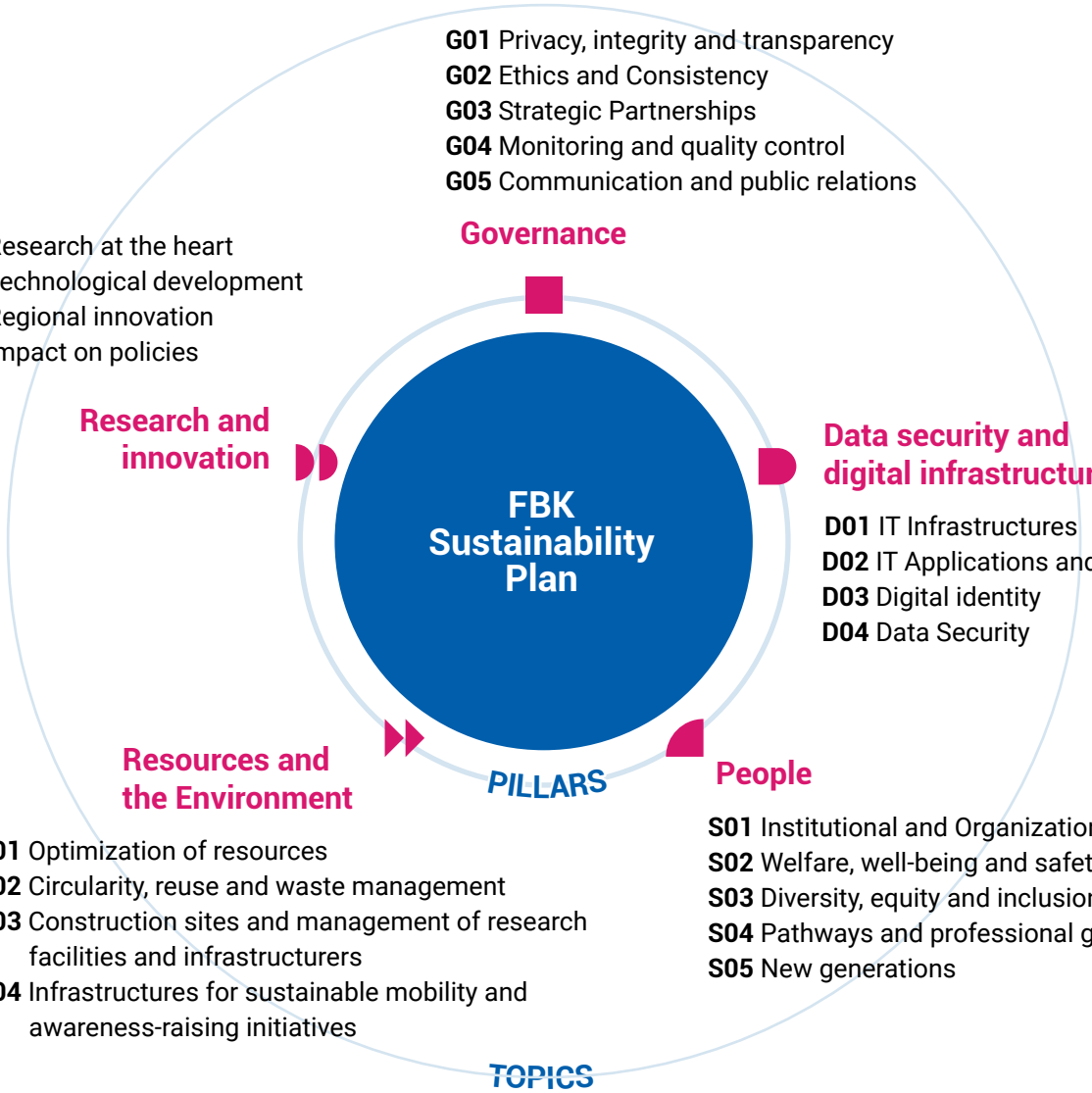
Governance (G)

It aims to strengthen a transparent and responsible organizational culture, integrating ESG criteria into internal processes to effectively guide towards sustainability actions.



Data security and digital infrastructure (D)

considers cybersecurity as a vital ally for sustainability, promoting an integrated strategy for sustainable digital innovation and cybersecurity.


FBK Sustainability Plan
PILLARS
TOPICS
Governance
G01 Privacy, integrity and transparency
G02 Ethics and Consistency
G03 Strategic Partnerships
G04 Monitoring and quality control
G05 Communication and public relations
Research and innovation
R01 Research at the heart
R02 Technological development
R03 Regional innovation
R04 Impact on policies
Data security and digital infrastructures
D01 IT Infrastructures
D02 IT Applications and Services
D03 Digital identity
D04 Data Security
Resources and the Environment
E01 Optimization of resources
E02 Circularity, reuse and waste management
E03 Construction sites and management of research facilities and infrastructurers
E04 Infrastructures for sustainable mobility and awareness-raising initiatives
People
S01 Institutional and Organizational Culture
S02 Welfare, well-being and safety
S03 Diversity, equity and inclusion
S04 Pathways and professional growth
S05 New generations

R Research and innovation

FBK contributes to sustainability through:

- the vertical development of specific sustainable technologies aimed at effective and resource-efficient adaptation and mitigation;
- a horizontal approach, providing enabling tools such as artificial intelligence and digital platforms that integrate sustainability into traditional options, promoting economic and business development.

Topics

R01 Research at the heart
It focuses on generating knowledge and predictive models, increasing scientific publications and funding dedicated to research on sustainability.

R02 Technology development
Transform research results into practical and scalable applications, identifying and quantifying the impact of sustainable technologies through indicators such as levels of technological maturity (TRL).

R03 Regional innovation
It strengthens the local innovation ecosystem by collaborating with universities, research centers, public administrations and companies on strategic issues such as digitization and environmental sustainability.

R04 Impact on policies
It engages with institutions and policy makers to support science-based policy development, participating in strategic tables and informing policy with research results.



Plan actions

What we'll do between 2025 and 2027

Research and innovation

R01 Monitoring of % of funding and publications on sustainability **[R01A1, R01B1]**

Raise awareness among researchers through guidelines **[R01A2]**

Define a research strategy on sustainability issues (governance guidance document) **[R01B2]**

R02 Identify technologies related to sustainability (developed by/with FBK) and technological maturity **[R02A1, R02A2]**

Increase in technology development projects and tools in the field of sustainability **[R02B1]**

Define a technology development strategy on sustainability issues **[R02B2]**

R03 Development of local joint laboratories with companies **[R03A1]**

Participation in large projects with the PA **[R03A2]**

R04 Participation in strategic panels and related networks to support the development of local, national, European and international policies **[R04A1, R04B1]**

Drafting of policy recommendations on sustainability issues **[R04A2, R04B2]**

Inform and contribute to policies using research results **[R04A3, R04B3]**

E Resources and the Environment

In addition to the value it creates for society through research and technological innovation, FBK aims to be a model organization that upholds sustainability principles by applying a virtuous approach to internal resource management. Over the years, the Foundation has pursued a structured path in this direction, with the goal of reducing its ecological footprint. This pillar aims to optimize resource use by pursuing a path that reduces environmental impact.

Topics

E01 Optimization of resources: energy and reduction of consumption, emissions and water
It affects the key objectives for the period 2025-2027 that include the improvement of energy efficiency, the greater use of self-produced renewable energies and the awareness of staff in terms of energy savings.

E02 Circularity, reuse and management of waste
It focuses on improving the management of waste through its reduction, reuse and better separation, thanks to an ever-increasing awareness raising within FBK.

E03 Construction sites and management of research facilities and infrastructure
In pursuing goals related to designing new construction projects and managing research facilities and infrastructure, FBK prioritizes sustainability by adopting measures that gradually reduce CO_2 emissions from its buildings.

E04 Infrastructure for sustainable mobility and awareness-raising initiatives
FBK encourages the adoption of means sustainable in home-work commute and promotes sustainable mobility through new enabling structures, remote work, reduction of the impact of institutional travel and awareness of active lifestyles with less environmental impact.



Plan actions

What we'll do between 2025 and 2027



Resources and the Environment

E01 Upgrade the East building's cooling plant and monitor its consumption **[E01A1]**

Installing a solar thermal system and heat pump boiler to supply water for the cafeteria **[E01A2]**

Install photovoltaic panels on some of the recently built roofs **[E01B1]**

Publish resource consumption to inform the FBK community **[E01C1]**

E02 Replace paper towels with air hand dryers to reduce non-recyclable waste and reliance on single-use products **[E02A1]**

Change the location of the special waste storage to reduce disposal-related trips **[E02A2]**

Implementing awareness-raising initiatives for staff **[E02B2]**

E03 Recovery of thermal waste from laboratories for new buildings and development of new infrastructures design direction according to NZEB criteria **[E03A1]**

Configuration Certified software for standardization, monitoring and efficiency of plant maintenance processes **[E03B1]**

E04 Use of infrastructure for electric and regular bicycles - racks and maintenance stations **[E04A1]** and evaluation for the use of software that encourages sustainable mobility **[E04B1]**

Consultation with competent authorities to assess the extension of bike trails and > frequency and availability of public transport **[E04C1]** continuing the subsidies already promoted to encourage use **[E04C2]**

Development of guidelines that discourage the use of air transport for business travel **[E04D1]**

For future vehicle purchases, choose at least mild hybrid models, prioritizing fully electric vehicles for short-distance use **[E04D2]**

S People

Sustainability is built through the contribution that people can express, so it is essential to foster a healthy, inclusive and motivating environment.

Topics

S01 Institutional and Organizational Culture
The first step in embedding a culture of sustainability into the institutional mission and organizational processes is to convey the Plan's values and actively engage the entire FBK community in its development.

S02 Welfare, well-being and safety
Personal well-being is fundamental to motivation; for this reason, FBK prioritizes work–life balance and a high-quality working environment, promoting flexible work arrangements and investing in corporate welfare.

S03 Diversity, equity and inclusion
Monitoring gender equality and promoting the professional inclusion of people with disabilities is a duty and, at the same time, an opportunity.

S04 Career paths and personal growth
Recognizing and valuing talent is a key competitive factor. FBK supports the growth of research staff and invests in training of all staff to seize the opportunities of the digital transition.

S05 Younger generations
Strengthen the links between education and research to bring the two worlds closer, offering young people workshop-based programs and innovation of curricula. Increase doctoral opportunities with a special focus on sustainability while offering doctoral students the opportunity to access cutting-edge research and innovation.



Plan actions

What we'll do between 2025 and 2027

S
People

S01 Share the strategic aspects of the Sustainability Plan with to the FBK community **[S01A1, S01A2]**

Engage the FBK community in a gathering of ideas **[S01A3]**

S02 Build the Collina Intercompany Network by applying the Intercompany Plan for Territorial Welfare Services **[S02A1, S02A2]**

Publication of the Regulations for the sustainable management of remote work and future coworking local hubs **[S02B1]**

Consolidation of the Agile Working Reciprocity Pact **[S02C1]**

S03 Maintain gender focus in the 2024-2027 POE Staffing Plan by performing accurate analysis and monitoring of gender distribution data **[S03A1]**

Strategy to enhance the attractiveness and recruitment of people with disabilities into research groups **[S03B1, S03B2]**

S04 Identify, through the Talent Development Program, the distinctive professional and organizational dimensions of the research staff **[S04A1]**

Identify the digital skill needs of administrative staff and provide targeted training courses to support a sustainable digital transition. **[S04B1]**

S05 Support active teaching programs and training for young emerging profiles, and strategic advice for schools/ universities **[S05A1, S05A2, S05A3]**

Support doctoral students through the development of training programs and doctoral scholarships attentive to sustainability **[S05B1, S05C1]**

G Governance

Sustainability is achieved by fostering an organizational culture that is transparent, responsible, and participatory. To accomplish this, it is essential to ensure strategic alignment between objectives and institutional decisions, integrating ESG criteria into planning and management processes.

Topics

G01 Privacy, integrity and transparency
FBK aims to increase data protection awareness ["AI Act and GDPR"]. Privacy is an essential and enabling element in generating a positive impact on society. In particular, compliance with European data protection requirements is key to maintaining the integrity and the credibility of research activities.

G02 Ethics and Consistency
Integrity, sustainability, and ethics are cross-cutting values that shape not only the quality of our research, but also the management of all the Foundation's assets.

G03 Strategic Partnerships
Promote broad and lasting partnerships with diverse actors to offer a range of integrated services, focusing on trust and stability, and giving priority to partners who contribute to sustainable development goals.

G04 Monitoring and quality control
The highest quality of research is an asset for competitiveness and reputation; it is expressed in research products (providing governance and research managers data and innovative reporting regarding scientific production) and in the management of processes (through the certification activities of the UNI EN ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System).

G05 Communication and external relations
Increase brand awareness in terms of sustainability, consolidate FBK's presence at sustainability events and strengthen institutional relations for sustainable development.



Plan actions

What we'll do between 2025 and 2027

G Governance

G01 Establishment of a personal data management and protection model "AI Act and GDPR compliance" based on responsible and shared procedures and good practices **[G01A1]**

G02 Establish an internal Ethics Committee for homogeneous disciplinary areas **[G02A1]**

Revise the Code of Conduct and strengthen the provisions related to sustainability **[G02B1, G02B2]**

Develop new reward criteria for bid evaluation **[G02C1]** and standardize their use by incorporating dedicated forms into tender procedures **[G02C2]**

Monitor suppliers with environmental and social certifications and/ or company policies **[G02C3]**

G03 Creation of a strategic partnership management process document with guidelines for sustainability scoring **[G03A1]**

Introduce a pilot sustainability clause in collaboration agreements **[G03B1]**

G04 Create working group to take care of reports regarding scientific production and personal achievements **[G04A1, G04A2]**

Adopt a model for the routine and special maintenance of the Quality Management System certification (UNI EN ISO 9001:2015) **[G04B1]**

G05 Participate in major events with high quality talks **[G05A1]**

Strengthen institutional relations to promote collaboration on environmental sustainability issues **[G05B1]**

Intensify relations with the media at the local and national level on sustainability issues **[G05B2]**

D Data and digital infrastructure security

The combination of the growing use of artificial intelligence and the increasing remote nature of work require more flexible, efficient, and resilient solutions to prevent interruptions, attacks, and security breaches. The security of an organization's data and infrastructure thus becomes a vital ally for sustainability. For these reasons, this pillar is about secure and resilient digital assets.

Topics

D01 IT Infrastructure
The virtualization of resources and the optimization of IT infrastructure make it possible to respond with agility to new operational needs, reducing dependence on physical structures, enhancing computational and energy efficiency.

D02 IT Applications and Services
Configuring systems for maximum accessibility and flexible remote work and promoting cybersecurity collaboration are priorities.

D03 Digital identity
FBK takes a proactive approach in updating technologies and identifying new opportunities for digital identity integration.

D04 Data Security
To ensure constantly updated security standards, FBK is committed to maintaining ISO/IEC 27001:2022 certification and will invest in training users on cybersecurity awareness and digital threats, with particular reference to privacy and systems protection.



Plan actions

What we'll do between 2025 and 2027

D

Data and digital infrastructure security

D01 Remote self-management capabilities of FBK server power systems for energy savings, optimization of advanced computing systems, and timely reporting **[D01A1]**

Monitoring and prevention: device health control and real-time warnings about ongoing attacks **[D01B1]**

D02 Remote work increasingly accessible by reinforcing actions already implemented on single sign-on, Zero Trust Network Access strategy, applications, moving to the cloud and virtualization of landline telephony through web applications and apps **[D02A1, D02A2]**

Joint initiative between the Center for Cybersecurity and the Digital Solutions & IT Infrastructure Service to establish a first-response task force for incidents involving training, consulting, or support service compromises **[D02B1]**

D03 Gap analysis to identify actions to be taken to promote the integration of digital identity **[D03A1]**

D04 Annual plans developed by the Joint Lab outlining actions to strengthen preventative defense capabilities **[D04A1]**

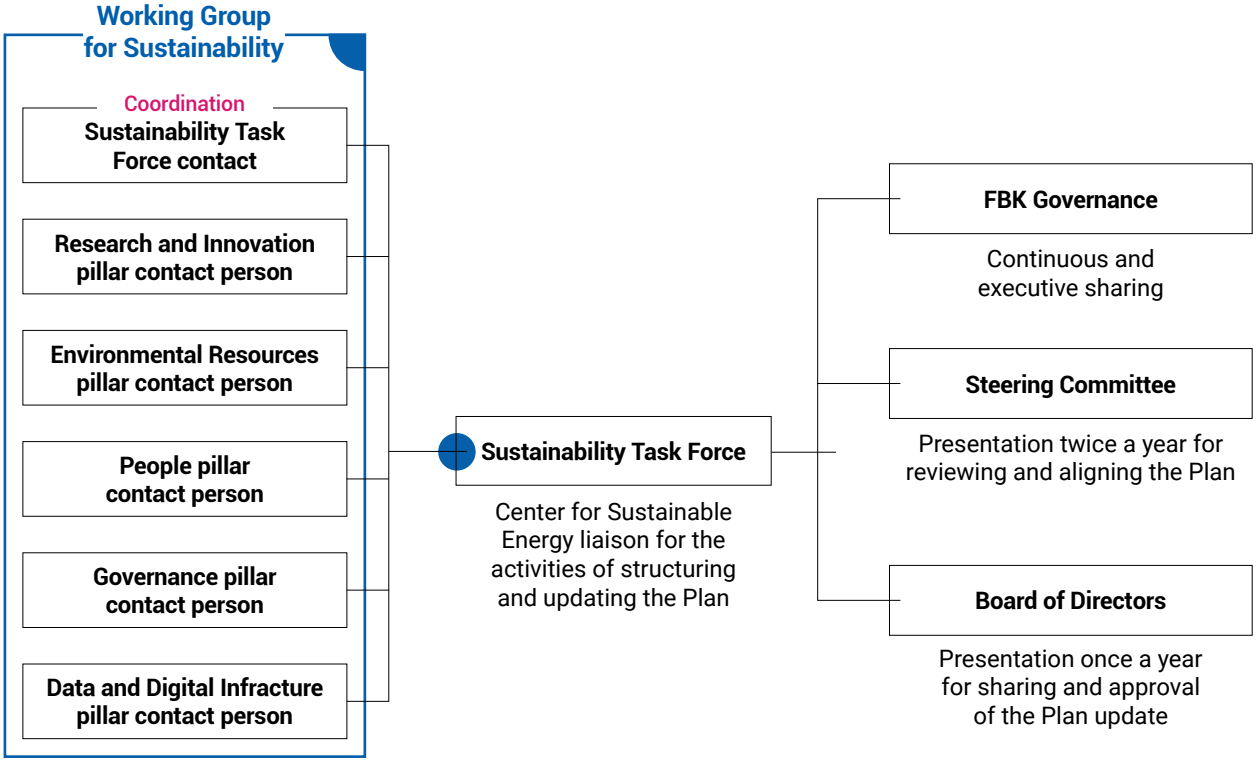
Continue to provide training programs to update and expand staff security skills **[D04B1]**

Shared model for routine and special maintenance of the Information Security Management System certifivations (ISO/IEC 27001:2022) **[D04C1] [D04C1]**

Sustainability Roadmap

To develop long-term, effective, and cohesive sustainability policies across the Foundation, we need to identify key priorities and allocate resources to the most strategic sustainability issues. This requires a dedicated sustainability governance structure — an oversight group that guides the development of a comprehensive, coordinated program and ensures that all planned actions remain coherent and aligned.

The development of this initial Plan for the Foundation is a step in that direction, providing a coherent framework for implementing actions that enhance sustainability, well-being, safety, and the overall value of research. The work starts from an internal reflection to structure an organizational scheme that will monitor the various actions. The working group consists of experts from different backgrounds and interacts with FBK bodies.




Welding
Goggles

Scientific advice coordinator
Luigi Crema, *Director of FBK's Center for Sustainable Energy*
Sara Stemberger, *Researcher at FBK's Center for Sustainable Energy*
Petra Centis, *Researcher at FBK's Center for Sustainable Energy*

Graphic design and layout
TAG Trentino Alta Formazione Grafica
Communication and external relations Unit

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This is our idea of sustainability: care, day in and day out.

See
the Plan

