

Sustainability Statement

Version 1

April 2026



Our Commitment to Sustainability

Open Voice Lab is committed to operating in a way that is environmentally responsible, socially conscious, and economically sustainable. As a small, agile consultancy, we recognise that our direct environmental footprint is modest. However, we believe that responsible practice at every scale matters, and that organisations working in public engagement have a particular responsibility to model the values they promote.

This statement sets out our approach to sustainability across our operations, the services we deliver, and the wider contribution we make through our work with public sector organisations.

Environmental Responsibility

Digital-first Delivery

The nature of our work is inherently low-impact. Open Voice Lab specialises in digital engagement and online consultation, which means the majority of our service delivery takes place remotely. We design and deliver digital engagement strategies, online consultation programmes, and hybrid participation models that help our clients reduce their own reliance on large-scale in-person events, with associated savings in travel, venue hire, and printed materials.

Where face-to-face delivery is required, we plan activity efficiently to minimise unnecessary journeys, and we combine site visits and delivery days wherever practicable.

Travel and Carbon Emissions

As a mobile organisation without fixed office premises, our directors work primarily from home. This eliminates a daily commute and significantly reduces our operational carbon footprint. When travel is required for client meetings, training delivery, or engagement activity, we will:

- Prioritise rail and public transport over private vehicle use wherever practical
- Use video conferencing for meetings and briefings where in-person attendance is not necessary
- Plan multi-purpose trips to avoid single-purpose journeys
- Avoid unnecessary travel by building remote and hybrid delivery options into our default offer

Paperless Operations

Open Voice Lab operates without a physical office, which means our administrative processes are digital by default. We do not maintain paper filing systems, and we minimise the production and distribution of printed materials. Where printed materials are required for engagement activity, we use only what is necessary and seek to use recycled or sustainably sourced stock.

Equipment and Procurement

We aim to make considered and proportionate purchasing decisions. Equipment is bought to last, maintained in good condition, and not replaced before the end of its useful life. Where new equipment is required, we consider energy efficiency, durability, and responsible manufacture as part of our selection criteria.

Social Sustainability

Equality, inclusion and Access

Social sustainability is at the heart of what Open Voice Lab does. Our core purpose is to help public sector organisations hear from more people - including those who are often excluded from traditional consultation and engagement processes. We believe that meaningful participation in public services is a social good, and that inclusive engagement practice contributes directly to more equitable outcomes.

In everything we do, we seek to:

- Design engagement that is accessible to people with a range of digital skills, literacy levels, and accessibility needs
- Support clients to reach underrepresented and seldom-heard communities
- Challenge tokenistic or exclusionary engagement practice
- Ensure that digital tools and methods do not create new barriers to participation

Community and Public Sector Focus

We work exclusively with public sector organisations and community-facing projects. Our work directly supports the delivery of better, more responsive public services. We are committed to building the long-term engagement capability of the organisations we work with, rather than creating dependency on external consultancy. Building capability, not dependency, is a core principle of how we operate.

Wellbeing and Fair Working Practice

We are committed to operating in a way that is fair and sustainable for everyone involved in our work. This includes:

- Maintaining reasonable working hours and protecting time for rest and recovery
- Ensuring that associates and freelancers engaged by Open Voice Lab are paid fairly and promptly
- Supporting the wellbeing of those delivering our work, particularly following emotionally demanding engagement activity
- Applying our own equality, dignity and respect commitments to all working relationships

Economic Sustainability

Open Voice Lab is built on a model of sustainable, proportionate growth. We do not over-commit, and we price our work to reflect the genuine value and expertise we bring, whilst remaining accessible to public sector clients working within constrained budgets.

We are transparent in our costs and avoid hidden charges. We seek long-term relationships with clients based on trust and impact, rather than maximising short-term revenue. Where we work on a project basis, we are honest about scope and realistic about what can be achieved.

We maintain appropriate professional indemnity and public liability insurance, and we manage our finances responsibly to ensure the long-term viability of the organisation.

Continuous Improvement

We recognise that sustainability is not a destination but an ongoing commitment. As a small and growing organisation, we acknowledge that our current approach to sustainability is proportionate to our scale, and that there are areas where we can develop and improve over time.

We commit to:

- Reviewing this statement annually and updating it to reflect changes in our practice
- Considering sustainability as a factor in operational decisions, procurement, and service design
- Being honest about the limits of what we currently do, and realistic about what we are committing to

- Encouraging our clients to consider the sustainability implications of their engagement practice, including through the promotion of digital and hybrid approaches

Approvals and Review

Approved by: Rachel Richardson and Alexia Mitton, Directors, Open Voice Lab Ltd

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