



prospect 
talentbeyondprofit

Survey Report

Sustainability in the not-for-profit sector



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About Prospectus

We create change by connecting people with purpose



For over 65 years Prospectus has been working across the UK and internationally to recruit talented people for non-profits, NGOs, social enterprises, responsible businesses and the civil service.

A certified B Corp, Prospectus is part of a global movement using business for good. We are a recruitment agency with a difference, as all of our team work on a non-commission basis. This ensures we are motivated to offer the best solution and service for both our clients and candidates.

We know that high-quality recruitment requires a structured approach, analytical and innovative thinking, market knowledge, intuition and above all, sound judgement. We challenge and support our clients and candidates to look beyond the obvious. Our experienced teams combine all these attributes with a commitment to excellence and an exemplary track record of appointments accompanying their own networks to engage in each process.

Our ambition is always to exceed expectations and deliver transformative appointments.



Our Values



About the survey

At Prospectus we are on a journey to discover more about what sustainability means to us, our team and our community.

248 RESPONDENTS FROM THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT SECTOR

42% WORKED IN A ORGANISATION WITH 0-50 EMPLOYEES

We have recently assessed our scope 1 and 2 emissions for 2022 and are currently exploring how we assess our scope 3 emissions. We have joined Fit for the Future, a sustainability network housed in the National Trust, and we are actively considering what kitemark accreditation we might work towards to assess, underpin and qualify meaningful sustainability actions.

All of this activity and understanding will help us deliver our sustainability work in an authentic, transparent and impactful way, building internal engagement and allowing us to take the proactive steps we need to take to reduce our carbon emissions and achieve a Net Zero target for Prospectus of 2035.

In addition to the actions we are taking internally, we are keen to amplify voices and knowledge on sustainability externally. To support that strand of our work we put together a short survey to help us better understand the perceptions and values of sustainability in our community. In addition, we included some questions within the survey that covered protected characteristics in order to understand the intersectionality of sustainability and diversity.

We were very pleased to have 248 responses to our survey with a diverse range of respondents

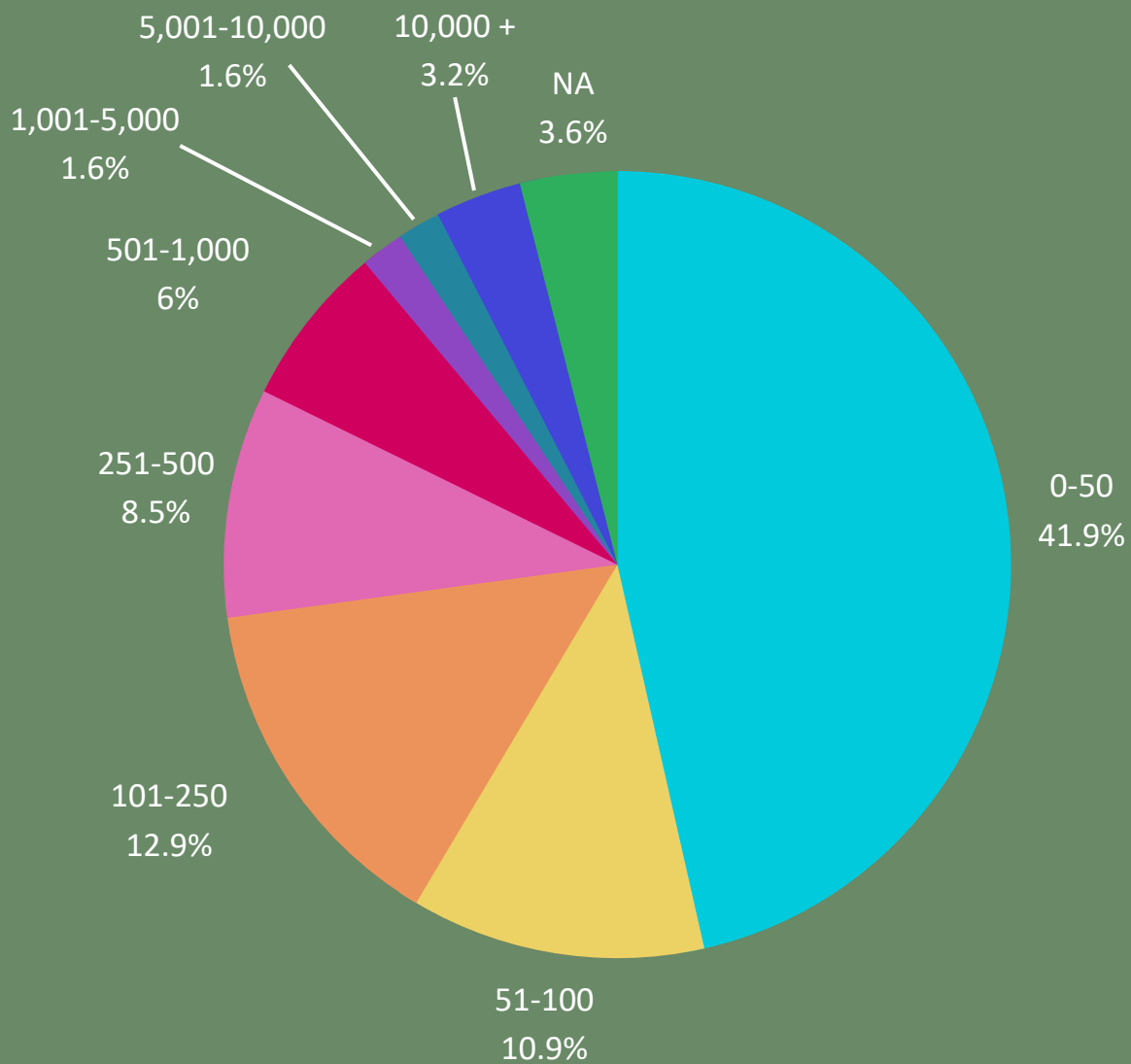


Research Methods

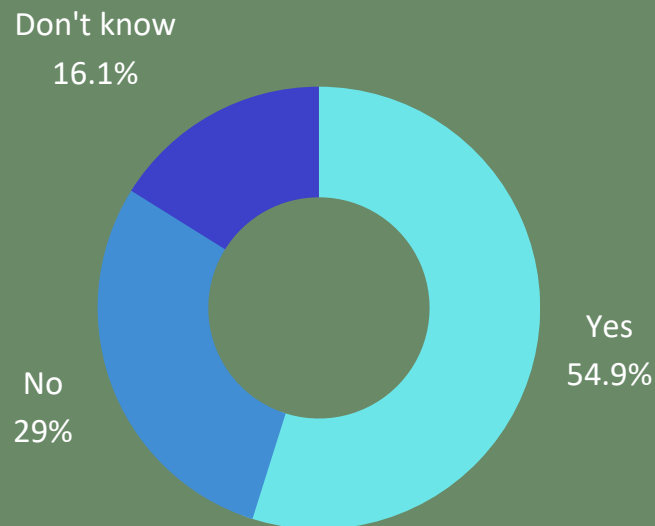
This report is based on the results of a survey conducted by Prospectus in April 2023. We promoted the survey on social media channels including LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter and sent out email campaigns to our network.

The results

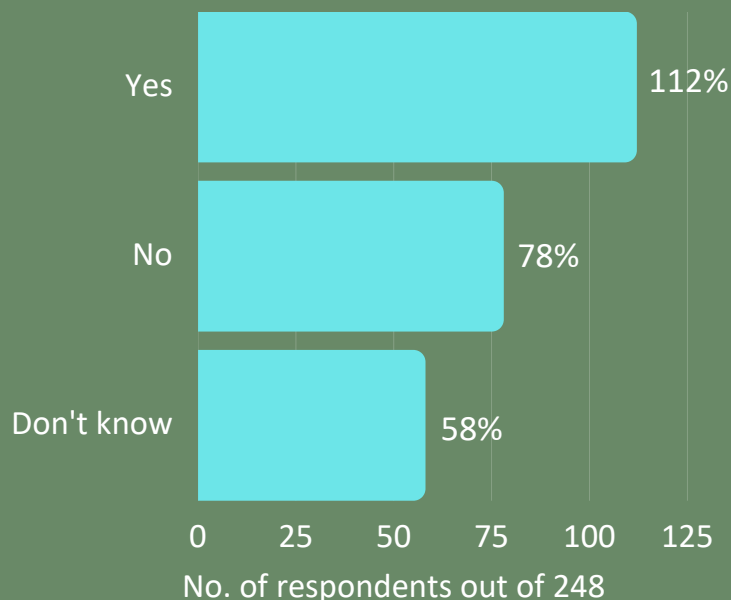
What size organisation do you work for?



Does your organisation have a sustainability strategy?

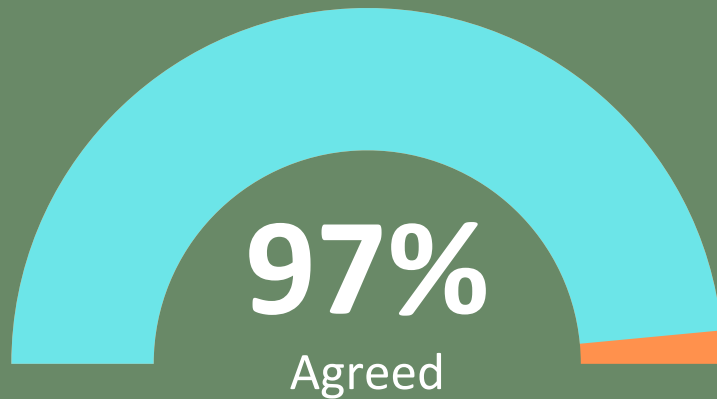


Does your organisation have a net zero target?



We saw that 54.9 % of organisations had a sustainability strategy whilst only 31.8% had a Net Zero target with the size of the organisation (defined by the number of employees) not having a significant impact on that response. The only outlier to that was organisations with over 10,000 employees where those responses jumped up to 75% saying “yes”

'Sustainability should be a key consideration for all organisations'



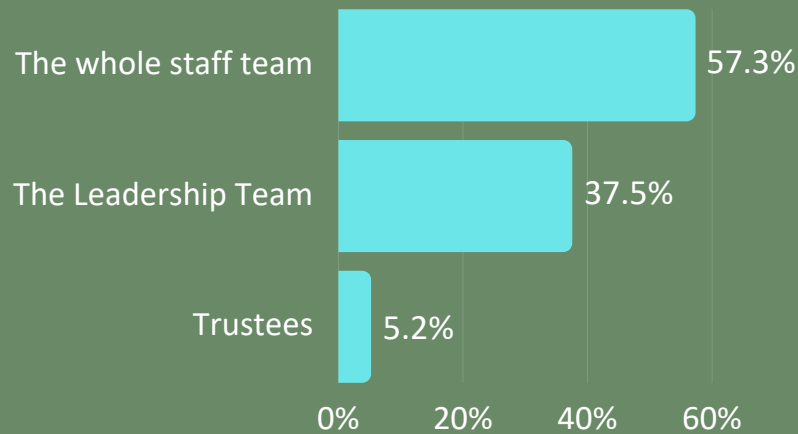
'Good sustainability credentials make an organisation an attractive place to work'



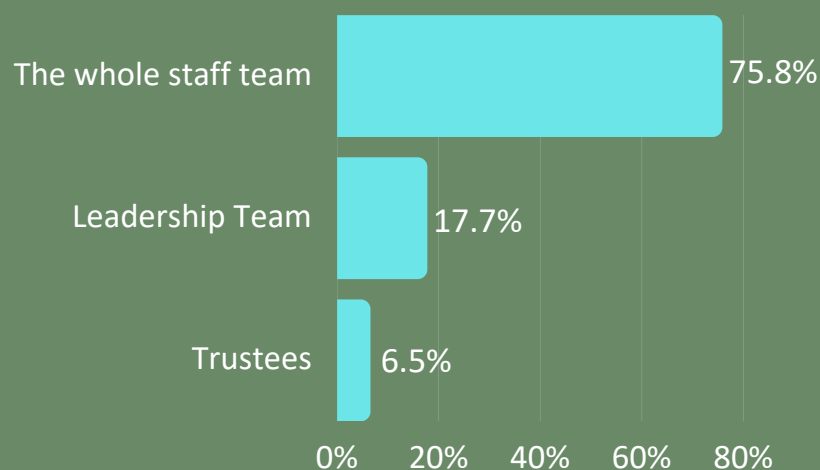
What is clear is that there is a strong view that sustainability should be a key consideration for all organisations and good sustainability credentials make an organisation an attractive place to work with c. 95% of people agreeing with this statement.

However, only around half of the people surveyed knew their organisation had a net zero target or sustainability strategy. Could this be an opportunity for recruitment and retention?

Which groups are responsible for implementing sustainability at your organisation?

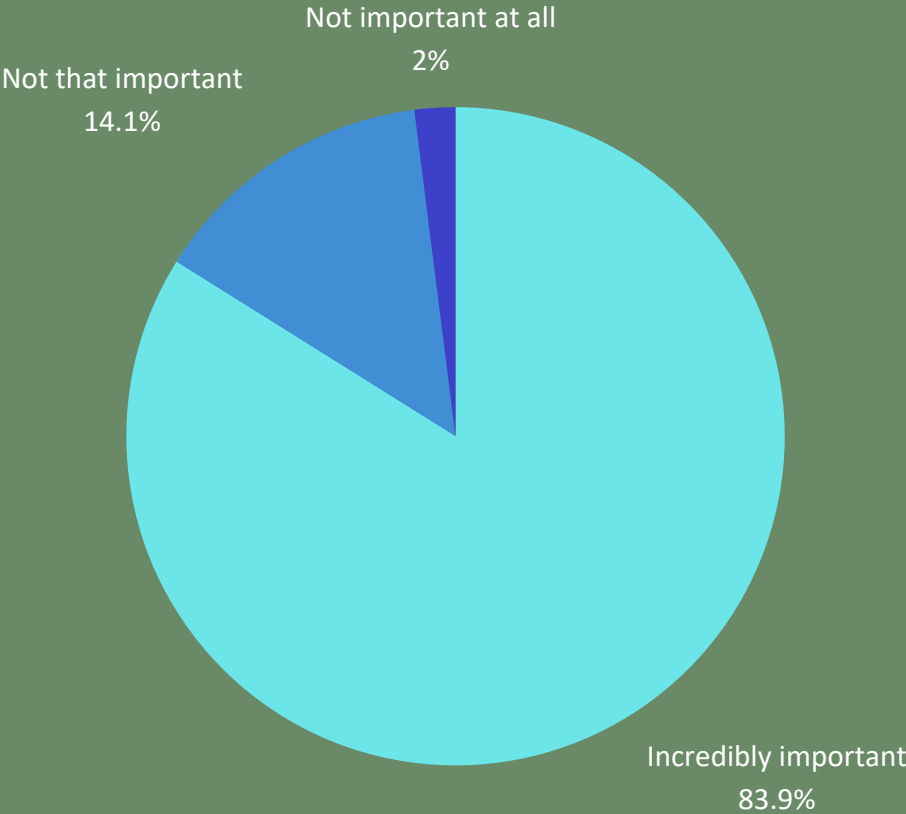


Which groups should be responsible for implementing sustainability at your organisation?

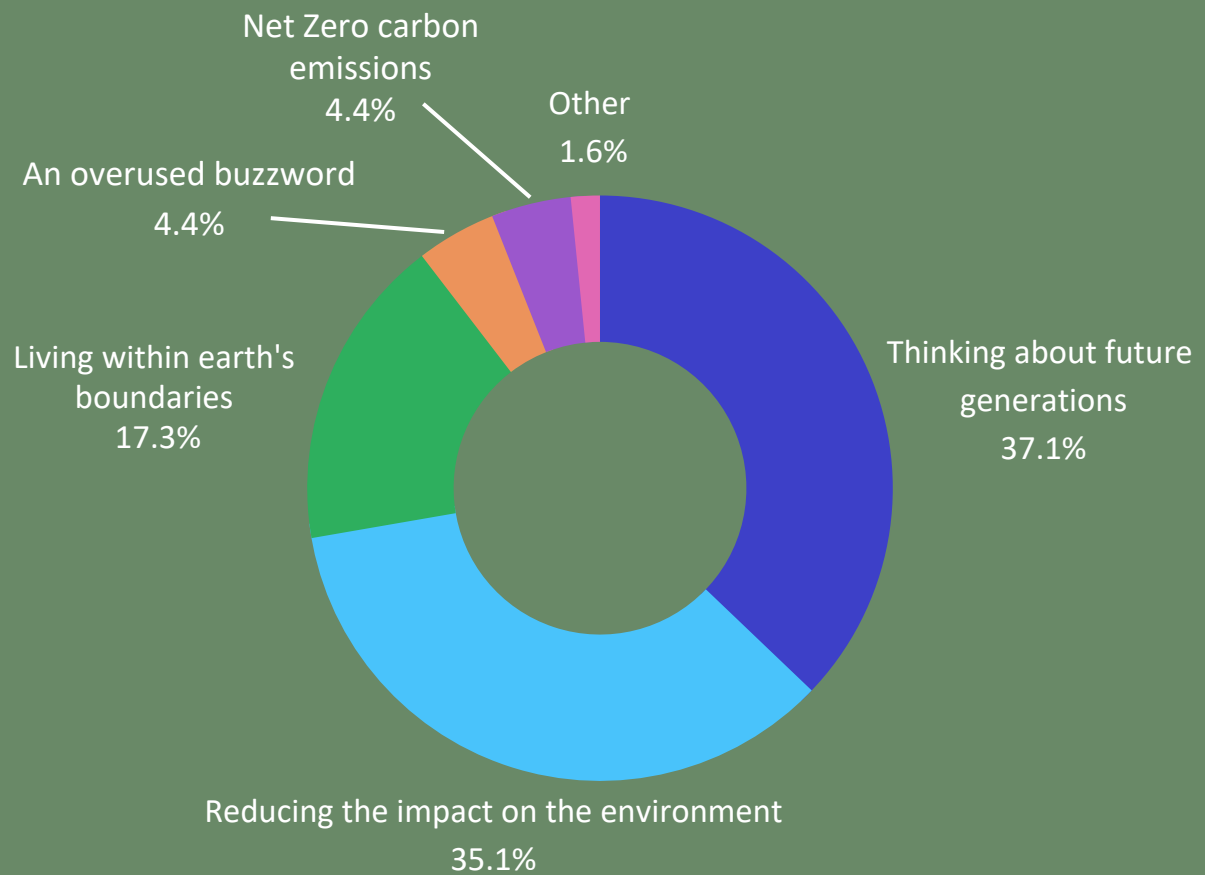


In terms of responsibility and engagement, we found it very interesting that there was big swing from 56.7% of people thinking 'the whole staff team are responsible' for implementing sustainability but in fact, 75.9% of people think 'the whole staff team should be responsible' for devolving across the whole team. This swing was also largely a result of taking the responsibility from the Leadership team, which dropped from 38% in 'are responsible' to 17.5% in 'should be responsible'. A potentially rare instance for not pushing responsibility for action “up” and real opportunity for team engagement.

How important is it for you that your organisation takes sustainability seriously?



What does the term 'sustainability' mean for you?



Are there any organisations you admire for their sustainability strategy?

Most popular

Patagonia	13
Greenpeace	6
Marks and Spencer	5
United Nations	4
Unilever	4
Friends of the Earth	3
IKEA	3
WWF	3
Arup	2
Catholic Relief Services	2
Ellen MacArthur Foundation	2
Innocent Drinks	2
Riverford Organic	2

Patagonia was the most referenced organisation that people admired for their sustainability credentials but there was an exhaustive list of over 240 different organisations. We were pleased to see one person mention Prospectus too!

Is there anything else you would like to share that you think is important to note?

For many organisations, people and governments, sustainability remains a nice to have. I find this strange, given what we already know.

Sustainability shouldn't be determined by any particular sector, it is for all sectors (and societies) to be responsible players.

Government need to implement minimum standards in offices regarding sustainability at work, similar to H&S Laws and checks, that's the only way to get staff and leadership onboard, otherwise changes aren't obligatory and there is no real pressure on staff to change.

We all (organization and individual level at home) should reduce our negative impacts on the environment for the benefits of future generations.

Who can fund sustainability activities or plans of my organization if need arises?

If an organization needs funds to ensure that the interventions are sustainable, who is ready to fund the activity?

I think sustainability issues must be seen as a Social/ Economic Responsibility of organisations and failure to adhere to sustainability issues must be seen as an affront to the social laws of a country.

It would be great if sustainability was more explicitly talked about so I had more information about individual organisations' approaches.

Just that companies need to recognise the radical change that is need for 'sustainability' to become something that is actually meaningful and enough to make dent in the huge challenges needed at global and govt levels. Using it as a buzzword and greenwashing is infuriating and a lot of consumers and employees see right though it, so if you want to be sustainable, do it from a place of honesty and authenticity.

Work from home should be a default option wherever possible.

For me, the big question is not whether sustainability is important, it's about how it gets prioritised against a number of other important issues.

