Proposal to Develop EUR Guidelines on Collaboration with the Fossil Fuel Industry

Insights and Recommendations based on the EUR Sustainability Dialogues Series

Rotterdam, 21 February 2024

Contents

Preface

In this paper, we[1] discuss important considerations, suggest a process, and recommend scope and conditions for developing guidelines for EUR employees and student bodies to work with fossil fuel companies and other industry partners.[2] Our suggestions and recommendations are based on the outcomes of the 12 EUR Sustainability Dialogues (held during October 2023 – February 2024) and include expert input and feedback from EUR colleagues and students. In addition, examples from other universities and knowledge institutes that already have policies on this subject were used. Furthermore, we draw on current discussions among Dutch universities aiming to align guidelines and identify opportunities for collaboration in their implementation.

In December 2023, a first version of this paper was shared with a number of colleagues and discussed at the 3rd EUR Cross School Dialogue on February 5, 2024. This is the second version in which feedback has been incorporated and the text had been edited.

Not surprisingly, key feedback related to the criteria that should be used in determining whether we want to collaborate with the (fossil fuel) industry. Considerations given included other evidence of transitioning when an organisation does not commit to the Paris Agreement, suggesting standards not limited to environmental sustainability but (other) human rights as well, include other university activities (e.g., procurement) and clarifications regarding the scope. Moreover, the question was raised how EUR will deal with major funders or suppliers if they do not comply with the Paris Agreement.

In addition, it should be noted that EUR guidelines for engagement with FFI should be considered as a minimum baseline and individual faculties should have the possibility to further strengthen them if they so wish.

Finally, the document has been rewritten to improve readability. It now contains a clearer description of (1) a proposal to start an inclusive process for developing guidelines and (2) suggestions for the scope and criteria for such guidelines.

This version was sent to CvB on February 22, 2024.

[1] "We" include the organising team of the EUR Sustainability Dialogues including advisors and colleagues who provided feedback, see Annex I for all names.

[2] The focus in this paper is on fossil fuel companies and other industry partners because the transition of these companies in particular is a priority given the urgency of the Climate Crisis. This does not mean that the guidelines cannot also be declared applicable to other organisations.

Overview of recommendations

Recommendations for the process of developing guidelines

- Recommendation 1: Commit to realise guidelines for collaboration with the (FF) Industry.
- Recommendation 2: Ensure Academic freedom.
- Recommendation 3: Guarantee Community input and consent.
- Recommendation 4: Install a Committee of Experts to develop the guidelines.
- Recommendation 5: Provide easy and aligned application.
- Recommendation 6: Monitor independently and transparently.
- Recommendation 7: Develop a communication strategy focused on acceptance and inclusion.

Recommendations for scope and conditions of the guidelines

- Recommendation 8: Start with guidelines for research (and education).
- Recommendation 9: Define company and organisation types and sizes.
- Recommendation 10: Explicate and perhaps differentiate industry scope.
- Recommendation 11: Consider ecological emergency in industry requirements.
- Recommendation 12: Committee of Experts should create guidelines on the 5 conditions.

  The five conditions include:

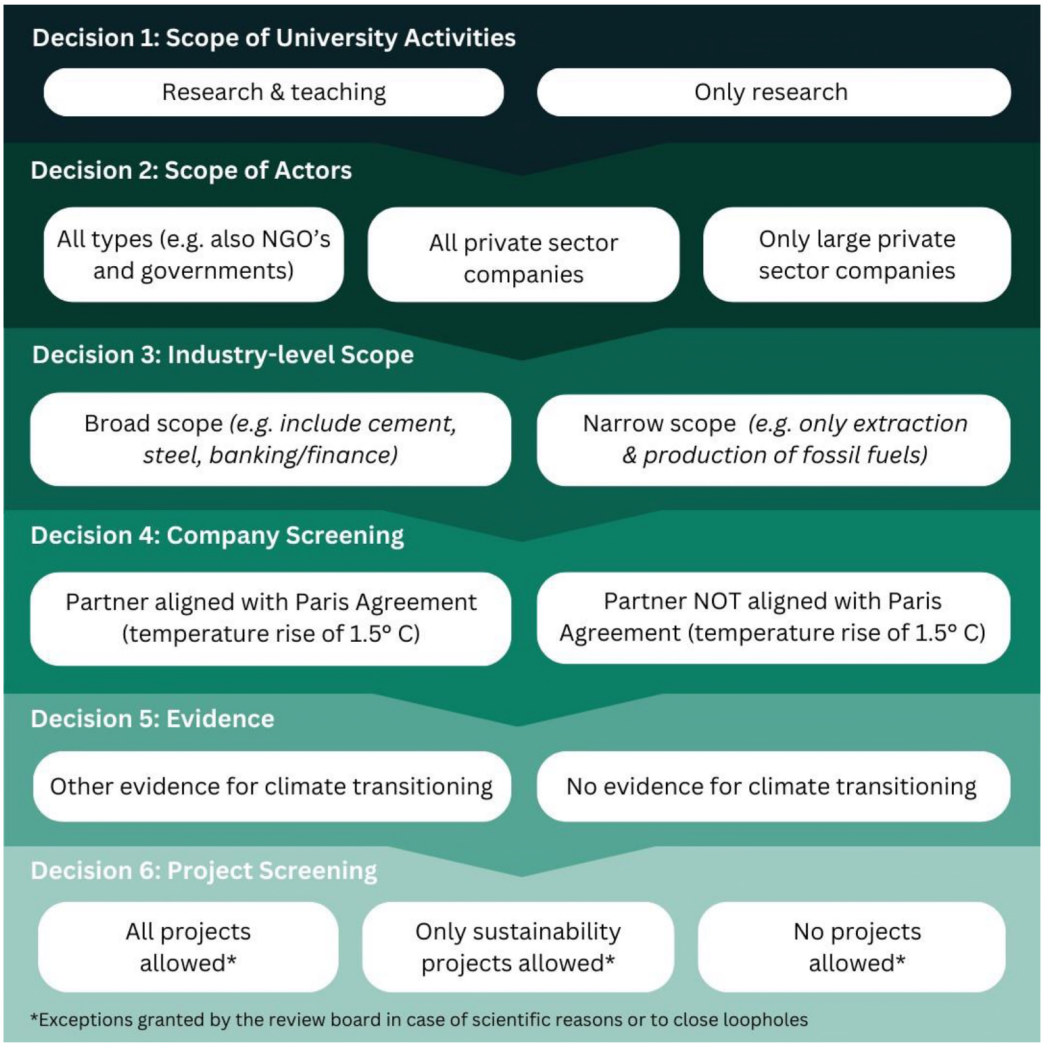
  1. *Companies must implement transition plans to align to the Paris Agreement.*
  2. *Companies must invest in green innovation and renewable energy.*
  3. *Companies must have the goal to shift away from fossil fuels (disinvest in fossil).*
  4. *Companies may not be involved in funding, extracting, or using fossil fuels.*
  5. *Companies must be transparent in their actions and reporting (no green or blue washing), allowing for independent monitoring of their actions.*

- Recommendation 13: Formulate company-level conditions.
- Recommendation 14: Create project-level guidelines as supplement to industry guidelines.

Summary

This is a proposal for creating guidelines for EUR employees and student bodies to work with fossil fuel companies and other industry partners. We recommend that an expert committee - informed by input from the EUR community - will finalize and realize a set of comprehensible and usable guidelines based on a policy with multi-level conditions. It should be clear which academic activities the guidelines cover and what industries, sizes, and types of organisations they apply to. In addition to deciding the scope of the industries and companies, it is recommended to also include project-level guidelines, which can prevent loopholes and allow for exceptions where needed.

The visualisation below summarizes the different steps.



In creating the policy, several things are important to consider, including ensuring academic freedom, alignment with existing policies, and considering not just climate but also ecological effects. The ultimate goal is that we don not work on projects that damages our climate and ecosystems and try to maximize the number of projects with a positive impact.
In order to make it easy for both the EUR-community and industry partners to comply with the guidelines, it is important that they are easy to apply, and clearly communicated. Lastly, it is also recommended to ensure independent (and obligatory) monitoring of the guidelines.

Part I Guidelines development process

In this first part, we describe the process to arrive at EUR-wide guidelines. Based on the experiences of organizing the EUR Sustainability Dialogues, we emphasize the importance of sustainability expertise, active involvement of the EUR community, academic freedom, reliable monitoring, and focused and honest communication.

EUR needs guidelines for working with Fossil Fuel Industry

The topic about collaborating with the fossil fuel industry (FFI) is timely and urgent; it is currently discussed at most other Dutch and international universities, and there is a pressing expectation (internally and externally) that EUR should speak out in line with its vision and strategy: creating positive societal impact. EUR can play a particularly important role in contributing to necessary socio-economic transitions towards more sustainable and eco-friendly societies in the face of the Climate Crisis, given its outstanding expertise in the social sciences and humanities. Collaboration with industry and other societal stakeholders is an important way of creating such impact. At the same time, risks of negative impact on societal transitions and to the university's reputation can come from collaboration with unreliable partners through greenwashing or a proven track-record in deliberately mis-leading the public about facts on climate change.

We believe that EUR has a moral obligation to act in line with the climate and ecological emergency. As an employer and educator, we aim for a livable future for our employees and students. As an organisation receiving public funding we need to act responsibly and committed to sustainability policies. As a part of this, we must ensure that we do not support polluting companies.

There are voices in our community that want to break all ties with the FFI, voices that say we need guidelines for when we collaborate under what conditions and also voices that do not think policy is necessary. We have tried to do justice to the differences in opinions by giving everyone the opportunity to have their say. This was possible during the EUR Sustainability Dialogues and also afterwards, by inviting EUR colleagues and students to provide (online) feedback on the outcomes.

After the first EUR occupation (November 2022), the EUR Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration (February 2023), the first results of the EUR Industry Engagement Monitor (September 2023) and the EUR Sustainability Dialogues (October 2023 – February 2024), it is now time to specify and implement guidelines for collaboration. Furthermore, a significant group from our community is asking for clarity.

Recommendation 1: Commit to realise guidelines
In line with the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declaration and the outcomes of the Sustainability Dialogues, EUR leadership (CvB and Deans) must now commit to realizing guidelines according to the process proposed in this document, including final decision-making before summer 2024 in order to have the guidelines implemented at the start of the next Academic Year (2024-2025).

Guidelines should be developed in a clear and transparent process by a Committee of Experts

We need a careful and expert-based process to formulate guidelines. Academic values and academic freedom are important considerations and side-constraints in the debate. Independence of research and teaching, as well as core-values of honesty, transparency, and responsibility, as established in the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018), needs to be ensured at all times.

Additionally, we aim to maintain our integrity, independence and good name of our institute and contribute to trust in science. Especially collaboration with the fossil fuel industry, but potentially also collaboration with other partners can contribute to an erosion of trust in science. A proven negative track record of some industries, such as tobacco or fossil fuel industry, of intentional misinformation of the public about facts on the effect of smoking or about climate change, lead to scientific and public mistrust. This leads to risks that collaboration affects the credibility of research findings and universities in general, including EUR.

Next to that, we take the Erasmian Values seriously by:

- Aiming at **positive societal impact** on the socio-economic transition towards a more sustainable future,
- Contributing to tackling urgent global challenges as **world citizens**,
- Taking ethical responsibility in our collaborations and **entrepreneurial activities**,
- Cultivating **open-mindedness** and a **critical mindset** in the process that will lead towards the FFI policy by including different voices.

Whether there is a risk of reduced academic freedom through guidelines for collaboration with industry, or whether guidelines are even a requirement for institutional protection of academic freedom when collaborating with private partners will depend on the criteria, scope, and in particular the level of regulation. Using an independent scientific monitoring mechanism can be a way to restore and strengthen trust in science.

Recommendation 2: Ensure academic freedom
Scientific integrity towards any kind of partners or funders coming with the freedom to publish and educate without any restrictions or conflicts of interests must be fully guaranteed. Protection of academic freedom on an institutional and individual level can be ensured in a policy of multi-level conditions.

In the development of such a policy, we should be committed to the same approach used when organizing the EUR Sustainability Dialogues: the content – in this case the suggestions and recommendations – comes from the EUR community. The outcome – in this case: policy in the form of guidelines – is supported from the top. Moreover, the insights and suggestion reflected in this document have been shared with the EUR community for further comment and feedback. We wanted to guarantee transparent opportunities for participation and create trust into the process.

Recommendation 3: Guarantee community input and consent
The EUR community must be given the opportunity to provide input for the process of guidelines development. Not all opposing views can be reconciled nor can be ensured full consensus regarding the future policy. Instead, the EUR community can be asked what is needed in order to consent[3] to the proposed guidelines for collaborating with FFI Industry.[4]

[3] The principle of consent is essential in Deep Democracy, an approach to inclusive decision-making in which the minority is explicitly asked what it will take to go along with the majority decision (which has been made and has not changed).
[4] This means that a draft of the policy should be published early enough to make sure that people have time to react and indicate what they need to consent.

Finally, a Committee of Experts (CoE) should be tasked with drawing up EUR-wide guidelines. The CoE must also draw up an implementation plan including procedures necessary for the application, monitoring and sanctioning of these guidelines. With reference to recommendation 3, we recommend asking the EUR community for sharing (test) cases to make sure that policy and implementation corresponds to 'the reality' at EUR. The CoE should include experts from the EUR community[5], student representatives, and representatives of professional services. Committee members should be compensated with adequate FTE and their commitment need to be acknowledged within Recognition and Rewards trajectories. The CoE should be led by a figure of authority. Mirroring other higher-education institutes it is recommended that this would be a EUR Lead Academic on Sustainability, or a EUR Chief Sustainability Officer.

Recommendation 4: Install a Committee of Experts
A Committee of Experts under respected leadership should be installed for formulating a set of comprehensible and usable guidelines based on a policy with multi-level conditions for collaborating with FFI and procedures for their implementation.

Implementation and monitoring need to be consistent, supportive but mandatory

By implementing guidelines, we need to balance the need to check all conditions for collaboration without creating a bureaucratic monster. The procedures of applying the guidelines in practice must be clear, quick, and easy to access. It is important to offer employees reliable and transparent procedures in order to maintain their trust and cooperativeness. Additional workload, e.g., in the already time-consuming preparation of research collaborations, should also be avoided as far as possible. Ambiguities in problematic cases should not be at their expense.

For this, we have three concrete suggestions. First, for the application of the guidelines an instrument comparable to the EUR Ethics Monitor could be installed. A safe and internal online environment where collaboration and contracting can be reviewed and documented. Secondly, contact persons per School offering support in applying the guidelines could be appointed. For ambiguous or dilemmatic cases clear solution-oriented procedures should be installed, for instance a Moral Case Deliberation Committee.[6] And thirdly, for making our expectations and requirements transparent to our partners, a Code of Conduct or Conditions for Collaboration should be formulated and published.

Lastly, to ensure feasibility of the application of the guidelines (and monitoring procedures) coherence and coordination is necessary on different levels: within the EUR, within the national and international academic landscape and with external partners. Alignment within the EUR is necessary with (but not limited to) the EUR Global Engagement Policy, the Sustainability Programme Plan, and the Erasmus Industry Engagement Monitor. External alignment with policies and procedures at national and international universities is strongly desirable to strengthen its positive effectiveness regarding the climate and ecological emergency. Moreover, alignment with third parties and industry

[5] Committee members could be recruited with the help of the Faculty Organisers and Thought Leaders of the EUR schools involved in the Sustainability Dialogues.

[6] Moral Case Deliberation is a mechanism often used in medicine and healthcare to discuss ethical dilemmas. It is aimed at improving the quality of (in this case) research and education within the context of the case; the increase of professional moral competencies; and improving the quality of research and education at the organizational level by fostering a collaborative learning process and connecting moral deliberation with policy.

partners is recommended to make sure that they can easily deliver the information that we need from them and organize themselves to meet our guidelines.[7]

Recommendation 5: Provide easy and aligned application
Offer employees, students, and third parties reliable and transparent procedures to maintain their trust and cooperativeness. Guidelines must be easy to apply in academic practice and (internally and externally) aligned with existing policies and procedures.

Monitoring should focus on supporting researchers and teachers in making appropriate trade-offs based on the guidelines. For example, specific cases ("grijs gebied") can be submitted to these committees and they can handle objections. Independent monitoring is of crucial importance to improve learning and decision making. Moreover, transparent monitoring may have the positive side effect of contributing to restoring trust in science.

Monitoring can happen for instance through committees on School level (similar to existing Ethical Committees). Given that one role of monitoring is to close potential loopholes and prevent from green/blue washing[8], independence of the committee and sufficient distance to the project's beneficiaries needs to be guaranteed. The procedure needs to be obligatory.[9]

Consideration may be given to adopt the academic principle of peer review. Each School committee should include at least one member from another discipline in order to validate and improve the monitoring (acting as the critical friend).[10]

Recommendation 6: Monitor independently and transparently
We recommend that in addition to monitoring compliance, monitoring should also focus on enhancing learning and promoting unambiguous decision making. Moreover, clear procedures for future adjustments of the guidelines should be installed.

Clear communication is key for acceptance of the guidelines

To ensure broad participation ("breed draagvlak") – and thus ultimately broad consent to the policy by the EUR community – there must be a focused effort to inform and engage colleagues and students. During the EUR Sustainability Dialogues, we noticed how difficult it is to inform and keep everyone informed in a timely manner about what is taking place and how they can contribute to it.

[7] It could make sense to involve industry partners in the development of the guidelines and the application procedures. Here it must be communicated clearly to the EUR community and to these partners that their involvement will not lead to offering them loopholes or watering down the policy but is restricted to checking practical feasibility.
[8] Caution is needed to ensure that guidelines cannot be circumvented. During the EUR Sustainability Dialogues, it was emphasized several times that we must be aware of possible risks: companies will look for ways to avoid our conditions (find loopholes), companies consider or present themselves as greener than they are (green- and/or blue washing) and how do we do justice to the green differences between companies? In addition, it should not be possible for researchers, teachers, and students to avoid the guidelines.
[9] This is a difference to the Ethics Monitor where Ethics Committees sometimes struggle with communicating to colleagues and convincing them that they should do the check (before and not after starting research).
[10] It might be worthwhile considering an independent scientific monitoring mechanism on national level as it would exceed the role and capacities of individual universities and has the potential for synergies. This is already discussed on national level, and we recommend that these efforts should be supported by EUR.

Communication efforts include providing transparent and clear information about the process. This will mean developing of a clear engagement narrative and being open about challenges and how we are dealing with them, because there will be unclear cases ("grijs gebied") where trade-offs will not be clear-cut.

We should also communicate about how to address potential concerns – for instance on curtailing academic freedom of the ability of third parties to meet criteria – and addressing minority views as well. Again, based on the experience during the Dialogues, we recommend letting a dedicated communication advisor develop a communication strategy.

Recommendation 7: Develop a communication strategy focused on acceptance and inclusion
With a clear communication strategy, we increase support for the guidelines and colleagues and students can actively contribute by being involved in formulation, implementation and/or monitoring of the guidelines.

Part II Scope and conditions of guidelines

In this second part we make suggestions about the scope of the guidelines. To begin with, the guidelines shall not only apply to future collaborations, but also to all ongoing collaborations. A fast and reliable review of existing collaborations is important here (as well as legal advice on existing contracts if needed) so as not to unduly confuse or unsettle the partners involved on both sides. Then we distinguish between the scope of university activities (research, education, operation), type of organisations, scope of industries and scope of adverse ecological impacts.

In addition, we elaborate on proposals made to formulate conditions for collaboration. These are based on the outcomes of the EUR Sustainability Dialogues and have been inspired by several approaches of other Dutch universities.

Scope of the guidelines

We will need to make explicit what scope of university activities will be covered. In principle, there should be guidelines for all university activities, including research, education, engagement, and operation. However, it is more realistic to start with guidelines for research (and teaching) and then develop policies for other activities. Regarding research activities, further attention might be needed for guidelines for collaboration in research consortia (Convergence Initiatives, Horizon Europe projects, contract research) where potential research partners might set other standards for collaborating with / being funded by third parties. Furthermore, engagement with highly polluting companies within teaching and other activities, such as operational collaborations, collaborations of student associations, and recruitment days are also impactful and need to be addressed as explicitly and precisely as possible.

Next to this, we propose guidelines that will apply to all EUR colleagues and students. A broad scope will increase its impact. Yet, to guarantee that this broadness does not negatively influence the actual implementation, differentiated policies may be required for different types of university activities including teaching and research.

Recommendation 8: Start with guidelines for research (and education)
Start with developing guidelines applicable to all groups within the EUR-community involved in research and education. Make the guidelines applicable to ongoing and future collaborations. Then guidelines can be developed for other university activities.

We will need to clarify which types of organisations are covered. Much focus is on private-sector companies, but policy may also extend to a range of organisations or entities including non-governmental organisations and civil society groups, and even governments. To enhance credibility, this should include the university itself.

Within private-sector companies there are also substantive differences to consider such as between large companies and small and medium enterprises (SME) on climate and ecological action. For example, a large company may have the resources and competencies to set Net-Zero targets and emissions reductions pathways whereas a SME is less likely to have these at their disposal.

Recommendation 9: Define company and organisation types and sizes
For private-sector companies the scope of sizes and types of companies covered by the guidelines will need to be defined. Inclusion of partners beyond private sector is feasible and needs consideration.

Next to this, we will need to define the scope of industries the guidelines apply to. Ideally, guidelines are not limited to FFI and focused on company Greenhouse gas (GHG) performance. GHG emissions come from many different economic sectors with some more substantive (e.g., energy, heavy chemicals, steel, cement, aviation, etc.) than others. Similarly, some industries (e.g., forestry, agriculture, mining etc.) have much higher impact on ecological systems (land use change, resource extraction etc.) than others. Societal impact would of course be highest if all industries that cause substantial adverse ecological impacts are covered by the University's policy.

Policy will need to determine the scope of which industries/ economic sectors should be included. Guidelines that permit continuing to work with companies in some highly polluting industries but not others will appear arbitrary, misaligned, and illogical. A scientific analysis is needed to ensure that guidelines do justice to the differences in emissions, climate, and ecological impact in the best possible way. A stepwise approach can be adopted for instance, to start with some industries/economic sectors together with a clear plan to expand these to other industries over time.

Recommendation 10: Explicate and perhaps differentiate industry scope
Transparent and specific requirements for collaboration with various industries are needed. This could for example mean stricter guidelines for certain industries (e.g., extraction and production of fossil fuels) and/or tailor-made criteria to ensure companies are on the transition towards the Paris Agreement.

Finally, we have to consider adverse ecological impacts. Companies have a broad range of impacts such as GHG emissions that drive climate change, destruction of ecological habitats that drive biodiversity loss and loss of ecological functioning, and releases of nitrogen into marine and land systems. Companies may be taking action to remediate adverse impacts on one environmental dimension, while not taking any substantive action to address adverse impacts on another.
While much focus is on the climate emergency, the guidelines should also consider how to incorporate the ecological emergency. This may be through immediate conditions for engagement (e.g., the project/company should not create substantive ecological harm) or creating 'ratchet' mechanisms whereby conditions for engagement regarding the ecological emergency may be incorporated when deemed feasible and operational. We will elaborate on this when we discuss the conditions for collaboration in the next section.

Recommendation 11: Consider ecological emergency in industry requirements
In addition to measures to address climate urgency, guidelines should also include approaches to prevent and reduce ecological harm to the environment.

Conditions

Conditions for engagement with third parties could take many shapes and forms. This is already evidenced by the diverse approaches underway across Dutch higher-education institutes. From the

EUR Sustainability Dialogues, we distilled five different clusters of conditions[11] for collaboration with companies that were suggested and supported by many participants:

6. Companies must implement transition plans to align to the Paris Agreement.
7. Companies must invest in green innovation and renewable energy.
8. Companies must have the goal to shift away from fossil fuels (disinvest in fossil).[12]
9. Companies may not be involved in funding, extracting, or using fossil fuels.[13]
10. Companies must be transparent in their actions and reporting (no green or blue washing), allowing for independent monitoring of their actions.

These conditions provide a clear direction as to which collaboration partners are considered acceptable and which basic objectives are central to the EUR-community (meeting Paris Agreement conditions, transforming towards low-carbon / net positive impact and transparency). However, it should be noted that these results are not yet adequately representative of the opinion of the EUR community and, above all, require further specification and validation.

Setting conditions will need to consider various aspects such as the stringency, the scopes as explained above, and their feasibility of operationalization. Setting conditions must be carefully worked through, including building hypothetical scenarios. Different conditions might be needed for different types of EUR partners (large vs. small companies, funding partner, sponsor, product suppliers, service providers, project partners). This requires dedicated resourcing and time. Final decisions on conditions must be taken by figures of decision-making authority and in positions of accountability.

Recommendation 12: Committee of Experts should create guidelines on the 5 conditions
The CoE should be resourced to come to final conditions. We recommend that EUR's policy covers all high emission industries or even broader: is industry agnostic and centers on company GHG performance (condition 1, 2, 3) In addition, there should be guidelines on funding (condition 4) and transparency (condition 5).

The guidelines may adopt different levels of conditions ranging from industries and companies to projects, including systematically combining conditions across levels. This becomes more pertinent where broad scopes are adopted.

For example, a narrow scope of only covering engagements with a narrowly defined fossil fuel industry may call for no engagement with any partner unless the fossil fuel company is demonstrably on a transition path towards the Paris targets (condition 1-5) and the project advances sustainability transitions (project-level). A broader scope covering engagements across multiple highly polluting industries will likely need a more nuanced partner-level approach as to enable the university to work

[11] A frequently mentioned condition was also Academic freedom: EUR must have total scientific independence with freedom to publish and educate. This condition is included in the Dutch Code of Conduct Research Integrity which is mentioned in part I of this document.
[12] Reference is made to the outcomes of the 28th UN Climate Change Conference, which was closed with a call to 'transition away' from fossil fuels (COP 28, December 13, 2023): UN Climate Change Conference - United Arab Emirates | UNFCCC
[13] This condition was an important point for many participants of the Dialogue, but also the most controversial and contested point, also in reactions to document, as this might cover all companies and may be make any kind of collaboration impossible.

with high sustainability performing companies in these industries (beyond sustainability transition projects).

Multi-level guidelines

Conditions on the company level ensure that the company itself is transitioning. At the same time, conditions on the project level ensure that individual projects contribute to tackling the climate and ecological emergency, while partly allowing for exceptions to specific guidelines if it can be proven that know-how necessary for certain research cannot be obtained in another way.

Company-level conditions enable assessment of which organizations the university may freely engage with, and which may be partnered with only under additional stricter project-level conditions. At the company-level, conditions would reflect that organizations should be striving to take sufficient climate and ecological action. Climate scientists offer that crossing the global warming of the Earth's surface above 1.5 degrees is associated with substantive planetary risks (Paris Agreement).
Companies in highly polluting industries taking sufficient climate action will have appropriate net-zero/positive targets and emissions reduction pathways. This will involve shifts away from fossil fuel production and consumption. Companies in highly polluting industries taking ecological action may similarly offer ecological net-zero/positive targets and pathways for biosphere enhancement.

However, it is recognized that this kind of ecological action is at a much earlier stage for companies than commitment to climate action, and therefore there are limitations with setting workable conditions now. Current efforts by scientific committees at many Dutch universities to establish such conditions, as well as the rapid development of the science-based target initiative, hold the promise that workable conditions will be developed in the near future. In the meantime, conditions, or principles, employed by the financial sector and investors can be used, such as the Oxford Principles for Climate Conscious Investors.[14]

Recommendation 13: Formulate company-level conditions
Company-level conditions offer clear and simple guidance with which companies' free collaboration is encouraged and for which partners this is not the case.[15] If a partner fails these company-level conditions, project-level conditions can serve to allow for exceptions.

At a foundational level, guidelines seek to avoid university activity that impedes sustainability and low-carbon transitions of industries and societies. In addition, it allows for exceptions if the research cannot be conducted in another way and acknowledges the contribution the University can make through projects that induce and support sustainability and low-carbon transitions.
All projects at EUR should not impede sustainability and low-carbon transitions of industries and societies. Project-level criteria serve to close loopholes and allow for exceptions in the light of exceptional circumstances. If a broad scope of industries is adopted (e.g., cement, steel, heavy chemicals etc.), project-level conditions need to apply to engagements with highly polluting

[14] See: https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/publications/oxford-martin-principles-for-climate-conscious-investment/ and The We mean business coalition: https://www.wemeanbusinesscoalition.org/. Or principles established by Dutch institutional investors: https://www.pggm.nl/media/oviptdxp/dutch-investor-statement-oil-and-gas.pdf.

[15] This would include coverage of the Scope 1, 2 and 3 of GHG emissions (unless technical conditions for the relative minimality of Scope 3 emission size are met). Partners meeting these conditions may be freely engaged with in all types of projects – whether or not they are associated with sustainability transitions.

companies that are not aligned with climate and ecological science for action. This may require that projects are only permitted when they support sustainability and low-carbon transitions. If a narrow scope of industries is adopted, guidelines may need to apply to all companies (e.g., companies involved in extracted and production of fossil fuels). Policy with this narrow scope may then seek to also cover projects conducted by companies outside the industry scope that have potential for substantive ecological impacts (e.g., a project conducted with a company outside of the fossil fuel industry that may inhibit sustainability transitions).

Recommendation 14: Create project-level guidelines as supplement to industry guidelines
Guidelines on the project level can allow for exceptions to the above-mentioned industry requirements in case it can be proven that the required knowledge necessary for the research cannot be obtained in another way.[16]

It is noted that one of the main arguments for regulation on the project level is that restrictions of collaboration with companies would restrict the (negative) academic freedom of researchers. One of the main arguments for regulation on the company level is an institutional protection of (positive) academic freedom in the light of evidence that the funding (by FFI) influences the research outcomes (Almond et al, 2022) and to protect individual researchers to face conflicts of interest.

[16] Strict conditions and a reversal of the burden of proof should be warranted. As this is a point more salient for the natural sciences than the legal, social sciences and humanities, it can be discussed whether allowing for such exceptions will be necessary at the EUR.

Annex I Authors of and contributors to this document

The following colleagues were involved in writing this paper (in alphabetical order):

- Katharina Bauer (ESPhil)
- Natalie Borcea (ESH, student at ESL)
- Natasza Ciepal (ESH, student at ESSB)
- Emma Daanen (DIT platform)
- Dorota Falkowska (Sustainability Programme, Strategy Office)
- Mariecke van der Glas (Sustainability Programme, Strategy Office)
- Romina Hamel (DIT Platform, student at RSM)
- Levi Hunter (ESH, student at ESE)
- Derk Loorbach (DRIFT)
- Ginie Servant-Miklos (ESSB)
- Emma Tram (DIT platform)
- Marieke de Wal (DIT platform)

Expert input: Constanze Binder (ESPhil) and Steve Kennedy (RSM).

In addition, the following colleagues have read and approved the first version of this document (in alphabetical order):

- Murat Arsel (ISS, Thought Leader EUR Sustainability Dialogues)
- Pieter Bakx (ESHPM, Faculty Organisor EUR Sustainability Dialogues)
- Lex Burdorf (Erasmus MC, Thought Leader EUR Sustainability Dialogues)
- Sarah Craig (RSM, Energy Transition Team)
- Mariangela Lavanga, ESHCC, Thought Leader EUR Sustainability Dialogues)
- Eva Rood (RSM, Positive Change Initiative)
- Jan Stoop (ESE, Faculty Organisor EUR Sustainability Dialogues)
- Ana Vasques (EUC, Faculty Organisor EUR Sustainability Dialogues)

And:

- Erasmus Sustainability Hub (ESH)
- Young Erasmus Academy (YEA)

Finally, the University Council and the Trust Fund have received both versions. They have indicated that they need more time for a balanced substantiative response to this proposal.

Annex II Sources

Outcomes EUR Sustainability Dialogues series, where EUR's ties with the FFI have been discussed, including: the 1st Cross Sector Dialogue (October 23, 2023), the Sustainability Dialogue at RSM (November 23, 2023), and the results presented at the 3rd Cross-school Dialogue (February 5, 2024).

EUR examples: EUR institutes who have developed policy regarding collaboration with FFI, including ISS and DRIFT.

Examples of project-, company and industry conditions at other universities, including Princeton University, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, and University of Amsterdam.

External viewpoints (video messages during the 1st Cross School Dialogue) of Greenpeace Netherlands, the Ocean Clean-Up (including their 3rd party engagement policy) and BP Netherlands.

Erasmus Industry Engagement Monitor 2023

Bibliography

Almond, D. et al (2022). Favourability towards natural gas relates to funding source of university energy centers, Nature Climate Change 12: 1122- 1128.

Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (2018), https://www.nwo.nl/sites/nwo/files/documents/Netherlands%2BCode%2Bof%2BConduct%2Bfor%2BResearch%2BIntegrity_2018_UK.pdf

Sharmina, M. (2022). Academia-industry ties under scrutiny, Nature Climate Change 12: 1086-1087.

Supran G. et al (2023). Assessing ExxonMobil's global warming projections, Science 379: 1-9, https://www.science.org/doi/epdf/10.1126/science.abk0063.

Topping, N. (2023). Grace on Fossil Fuel Industry Ties: A report into the impacts of implementing the Grace on fossil fuel industry ties on Cambridge University's mission, Cambridge University: .