LEAF Grant Support Document

UKRI-MRC

Environmental sustainability

- *Please outline how your proposal will contribute to UKRI's ambitions to support the UK's transition to net zero.*
- *Describing LEAF programme and how it fits to the sustainability commitment of the university.*

At Queen's University Belfast we are committed to social and civic responsibility and to supporting economic growth in an environmentally sustainable way. As part of Strategy 2030, the university committed to embracing the Sustainable Development Goals across all our activities and to transition to a carbon neutral society.

To achieve this, Queen's University are addressing emissions in a range of areas - energy, procurement, travel, water and waste.

Laboratories are incredibly resource and energy-intensive, using 3-10 times more energy per metre squared than a typical office (UCL, 2022). As a result, significant investment to address emissions has been undertaken through Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework Programme (LEAF).

LEAF is a national programme that promotes good practice and embeds sustainable behaviour change within research and teaching laboratories. Sustainable practices that are implemented as a result of LEAF include waste and energy reductions, sustainable education and resource efficiency. The provision of a carbon calculator within LEAF enables labs to quantify their carbon reductions.

Throughout the 2021/2022 academic year, 12 labs participated in the LEAF programme: 10 from the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Life Sciences (MHLS), and 2 from the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS), with all 12 labs achieving a LEAF Bronze Award in May 2022. Due to the success of the pilot, Faculty MHLS have now committed to 100% of eligible labs achieving a Bronze Award by the summer of 2025. This will make a significant reduction in overall carbon emissions produced by the laboratories.

Queen's University are also part of the Irish Green Labs (IGL), a network that focuses on driving sustainability action within our labs.