

Sustainability Report

2022

EXOVE



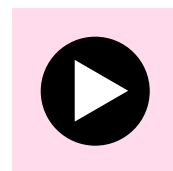


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About us

Exove is a software company with over 15 years of experience in creating and implementing digital services. We develop services for various organisations, from listed companies to startups, and media companies to universities. We use agile methodologies to find the best solutions – always looking into the future.



**Founded
2006**



**Finnish
100%**



**Staff
100**



**Financial status
Stable**



**Offices
4**



**Ownership
Janne Kalliola, CGO &
Union Marketing**

Our Sustainability compass, sustainability actions in 2022 as well as this sustainability report was co-created with Exove Design.

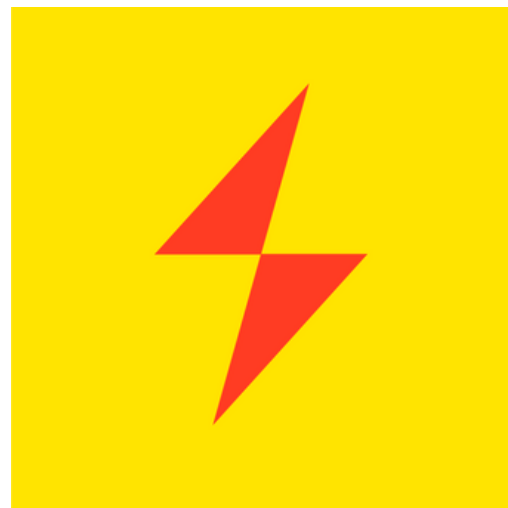
Exove Design is a service design agency that helps to empathize with users and forecast future scenarios in order to design better, long-lasting services. Via their design process & methodology, they co-create impact with engaging service concepts, inspiring user interfaces, compelling communication, future-proof innovations and more.

- Founded: 2011
- Staff: 13
- Ownership: Saku Sairanen, Aki-Ville Pöykiö & Juha Jauhainen

Together, we help our clients achieve digital growth by building digital solutions that are user friendly and work seamlessly.

This is Exove's first ever sustainability report. It has been built on the basis of our Sustainability program, the Sustainability Compass. The report summarizes and describes the actions done in 2022 in order to make progress in each direction of the Sustainability Compass. At Exove we will continue sustainability reporting annually from this year onwards.

Our values



Passion

We have a drive to work a little bit harder and to push a little bit further than the rest. We do not give up and we love what we do.



Expertise

We offer our customers the best expertise in the business. As a company we invest into the continuous development of our staff and we all do our best to grow our own as well as our friends expertise.



Openness

We are committed to openness and transparency. At Exove we share knowledge and information. Our working style is transparent and communication open.



Care

We care for our employees and invest a lot in staff wellbeing and development. We care for each other and for the community. We care about our customers and their business.

Our Sustainability Strategy

We want to lead by example in our industry and improve sustainability in our projects by creating and implementing principles for social and environmental sustainability.

The sustainability program development process for Exove was facilitated by Exove Design. It started with a materiality assessment in early 2021. The design team mapped out different sustainability frameworks, sustainability aspects often seen relevant for IT and possibilities for unconsidered impact even further than that. Insights were gathered both from inside Exove and external stakeholders. To be able to hear out everyone at Exove and get internal validation, an internal hybrid workshop, “The Compass Game”, was arranged. As a result, Exove's sustainability program was finalized - **The Exove Sustainability Compass**.

EXOVERLASTING FUTURE = Exove's sustainability promise

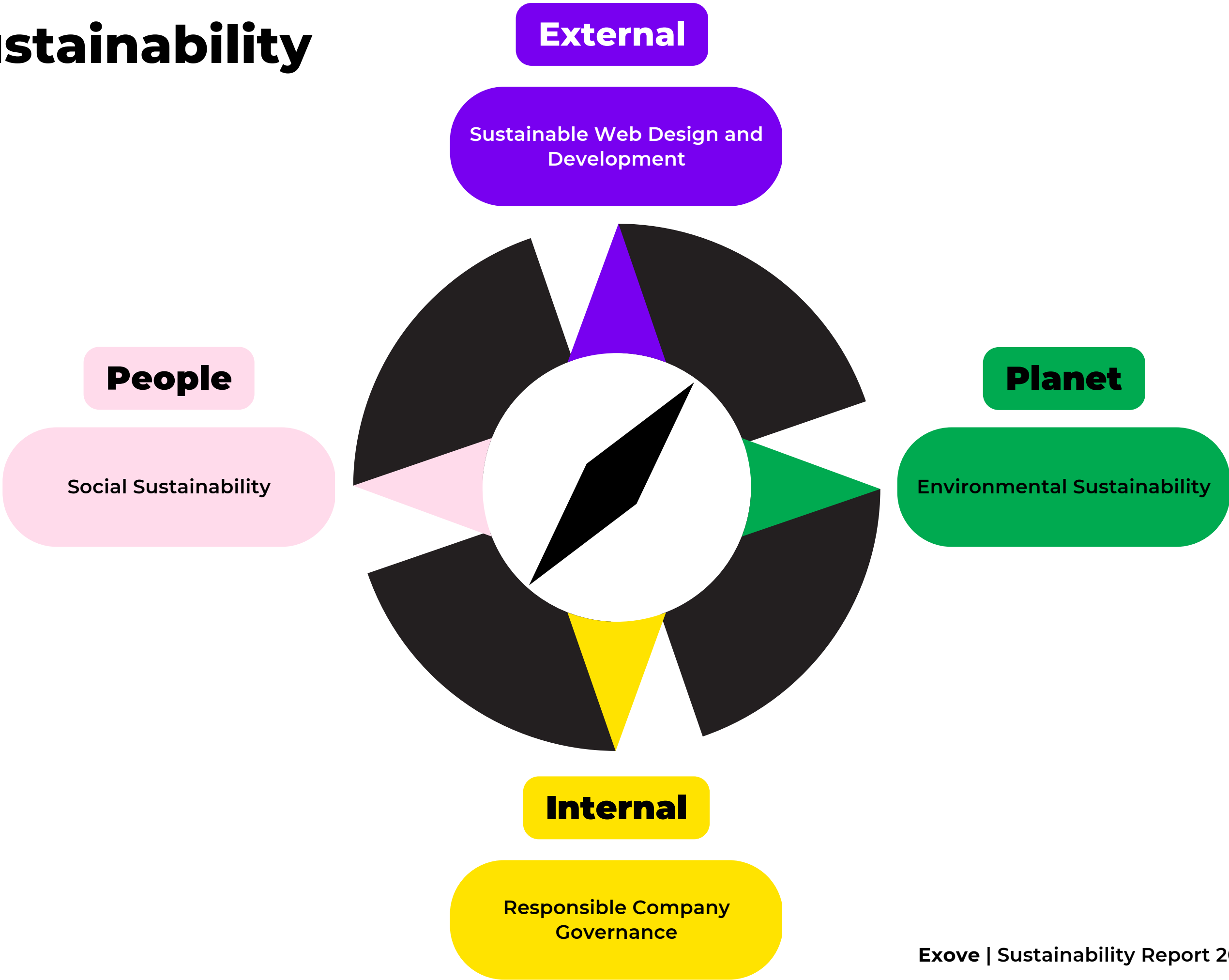
1. A more equal world through digitalisation
2. Solutions with as little environmental impact on the world as possible
3. A safe workplace
4. Economically sustainable and long-lasting solutions
5. Leading the way to a more sustainable digital world



Sustainability is present at Exove in many ways. In 2022 the size of Exove and Exove Design's Sustainability Lead team grew from one to three, and the team has been meeting weekly to discuss current sustainability themes and advance our sustainability initiatives. In biweekly staff meetings, the whole staff has been updated about current sustainability topics and actions, as well as given practical sustainability tips to follow in their daily life and work.

On top of this, a monthly sustainability meeting brings together a group of sustainability-minded people from different parts of Exove, such as management, people operations, administration, and marketing. This way sustainability thinking and actions reach many areas of the organization. Anyone interested in being involved in sustainability matters can reach out to the Sustainability Leads, or participate in discussions on our sustainability-related Slack channels.

The Exove Sustainability Compass





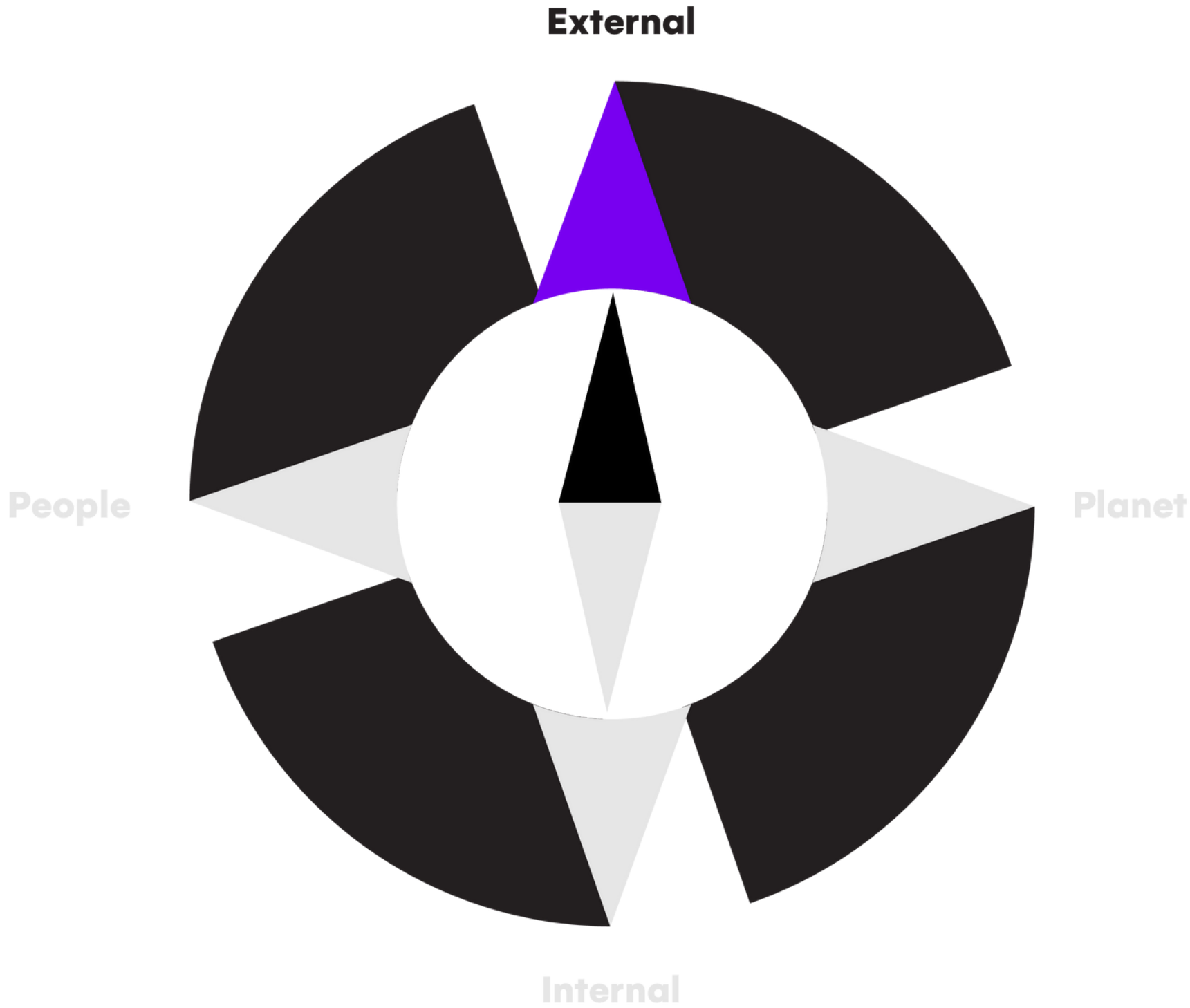
The Sustainability Compass guides both our internal and external actions regarding social and environmental responsibility. The four directions in our compass cover our influences internally, as well as externally with clients and partners:

1. Sustainable web design and development
2. Social sustainability
3. Environmental sustainability
4. Responsible company governance

This report follows the structure of the Sustainability Compass and related subtopics.

Sustainable Web Design and Development

We want to cover both social and environmental aspects in our processes and outcome, and lead the way in the sustainable ICT world. Sustainable web design and development cover the ways of working in client projects as well as the actual web services produced as a result.



01

Creating sustainable web services

We commit to creating digital services in a sustainable way. Our goal is to create energy-efficient and future-proof services that work on any devices and even on poor connections.

We aim to contribute to sustainability throughout the whole value chain of web services. We are happy to collaborate and work with organizations who share the same values and also commit to sustainability.

We at Exove have formed a tight partnership with UpCloud Oy, with whom we offer carbon neutral cloud-based web services. With UpCloud we share similar values regarding sustainability, and a passion to produce responsible and successful digital services to our customers. We have been working together with UpCloud for a while already, and recently carbon neutrality has become one of the spearheads of our collaboration. We are eager to see what we can achieve through our continuously developing partnership.

Not only do we create sustainable web services through our own processes at Exove and Exove Design, but also want to participate in building a digital world that is sustainable for clients that directly aim for increasing sustainability. In late 2022, Exove Design was chosen as a service design partner to Tieke (Tietoyhteiskunnan edistämiskeskus ry) in a project concepting an online tool for IT-companies for estimating the environmental effects of their IT-services.



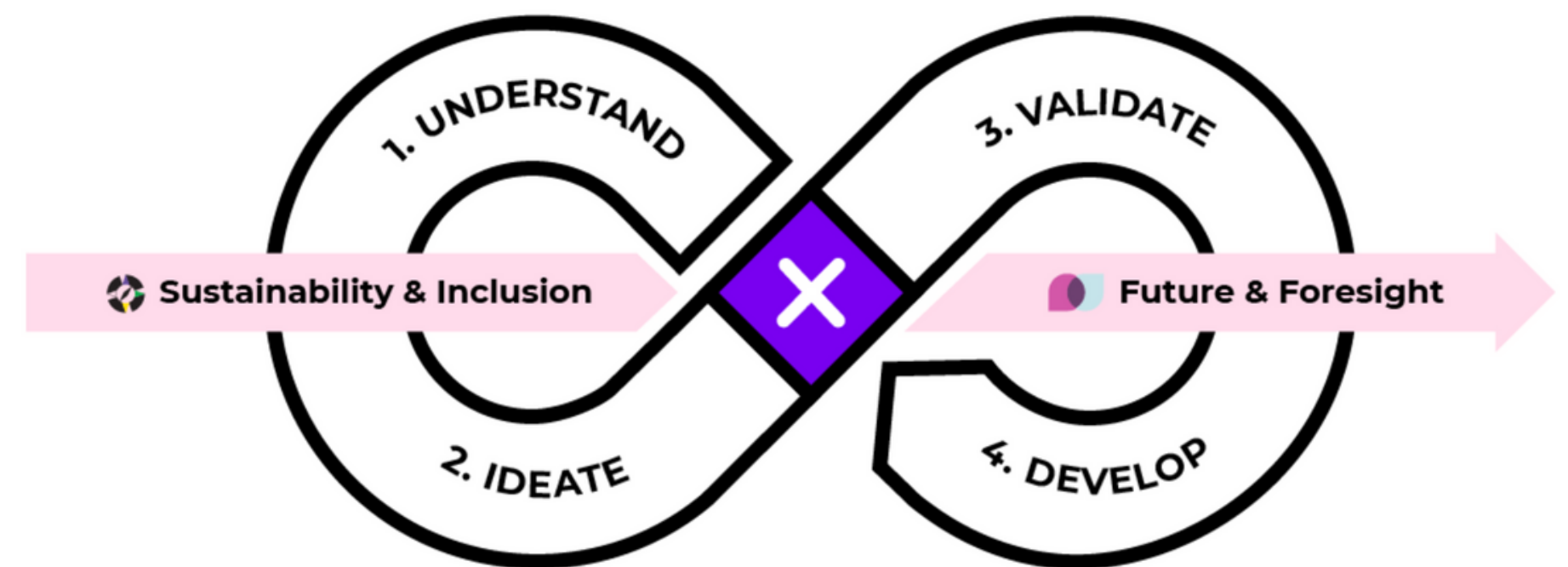
02

Reinforcing design ethics and inclusive design

Together with Exove Design, we want to create a long lasting, sustainable digital world. So we strive to design digital services that include all users and are minimalistic with regards to energy use.

In 2022, Exove Design renewed their entire design process with a sustainability approach, estimating how the process could be even better from environmental and social viewpoints. After assessing and developing current ways of working, the design process was re-visualised with sustainability and inclusion as the key starting points when digging into the needs of the users and potential users of each service created.

Further, Exove Design's service & UX/UI design team has created an ever-evolving Sustainable Design checklist to keep in mind versatile ways of working and methods to embrace planet- and people-centric sustainability throughout the process.



Visualization of Exove Design's renewed design process

Towards a greener ICT sector

Green IT and green code have recently been a topic of wide discussion, which we have been actively taking part in. Climate change and the energy crisis in Europe are forcing everyone to reassess energy consumption, and this should also include that of software.

The ICT sector accounts for 4-10% of global energy consumption and 1.5-5% of greenhouse emissions, and these numbers are growing. 1) Emissions are generated from end-user equipment, transmission networks, and data centers – from both their construction and usage. However, this issue is still not addressed at an adequate level.

Due to the growing customer expectations for fast and frequent deployment of new software, efficiency and environmental impact is rarely among key priorities. Further, as the technical constraints of the programming environment have diminished over the last decades, the quality of software has deteriorated, leading to unnecessary energy consumption: due to exponential growth in processing power, networking capacity, and cheap hardware, there simply is no incentive to optimize. However, extending environmental responsibility to software development is very important in order to reach climate goals.

In December 2022 we published the Vihreä Koodi (Green Code) book written by Exove's founder and Chief Growth Officer Janne Kalliola. An English translation of the book was published early 2023. The book aims to define and harmonize the understanding of green code and provide tools for developing software in a more energy-efficient way. It lays out reasons for the inefficiency of current code as well as solutions and recommendations for developers, designers, software companies, and users.

You can download an e-copy of the book on the [Exove website](#). (Note, we do ask for your e-mail but you can download Green Code book without subscribing Exove's news or #DreamFriends newsletter.) However, please do not print the book: the carbon footprint of the paper needed is about 400 gCO₂eq.

1) Ministry of Transport and Communications: Climate and environmental strategy for the ICT sector.

Green Code

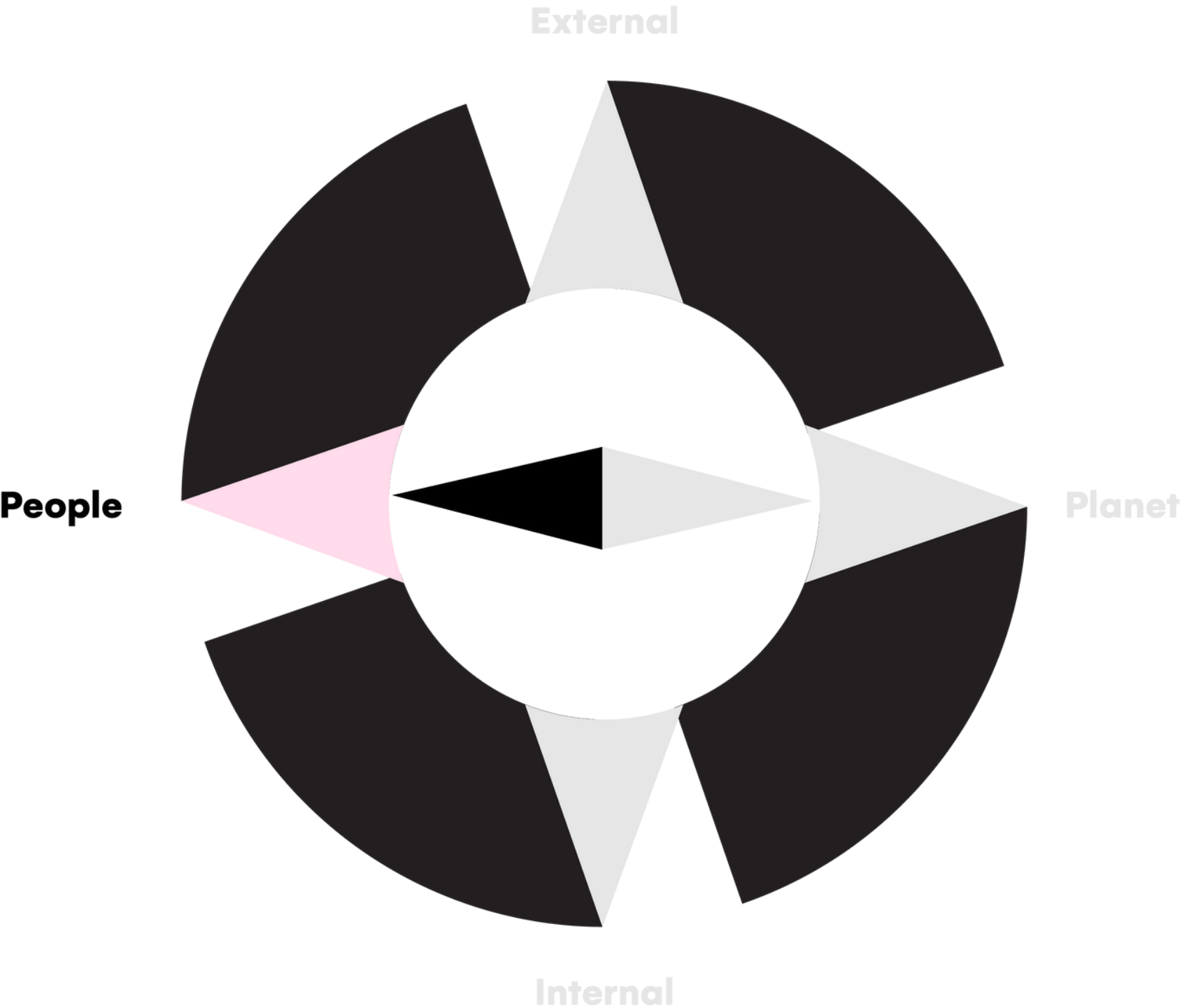
Janne Kalliola, Exove

Foreword by Professor Jari Porras, LUT University

EXOVE

Social Sustainability

We embrace our responsibility regarding social sustainability both in internal and external contexts. We constantly build the Exove culture and practices to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). We strive to embrace our societal responsibility e.g. through training future talent, working to make Exove a safe space for all employees and aiming to increase diversity in the IT industry.

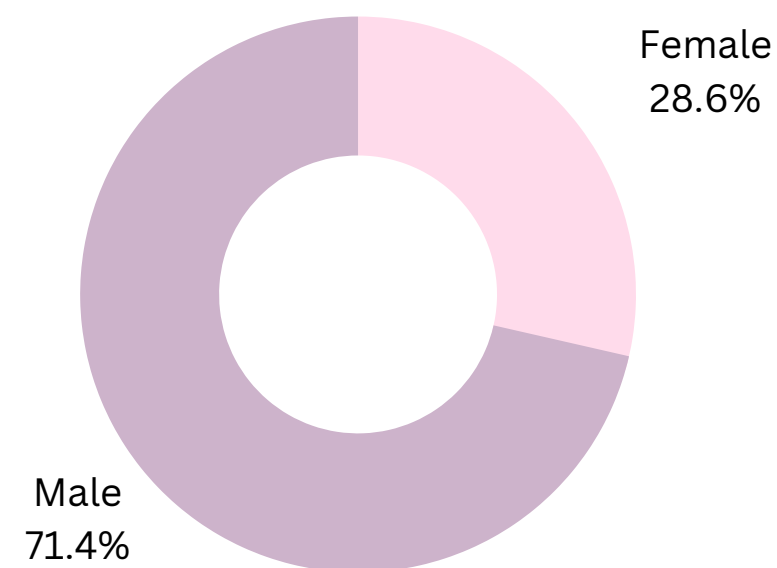


01

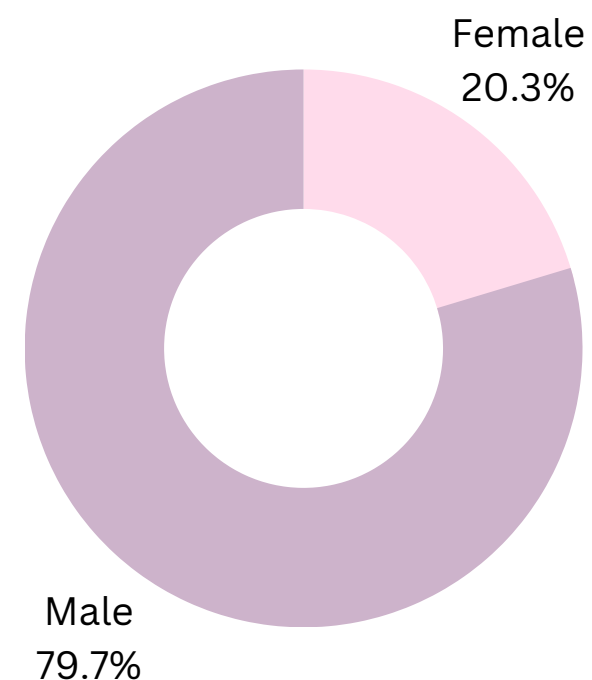
Trainee program offering opportunities for future talent

Exove's trainee program ran for the 10th consecutive year in 2022. This year the trainee program was renewed and developed significantly based on feedback from earlier years. Additional training and support was offered for trainee mentors in order to improve mentoring quality and strengthen the trainees' support system. In addition, a sustainability training session was added to the onboarding program, along with other improvements. In 2022 we had 10 trainees in total at Exove and Exove Design. Most of them stayed after the trainee-period and are currently still working with us, some full-time and some part-time alongside their university studies.

Gender ratio at Exove
(end-of-year 2022)



Gender ratio of technology roles
(end-of-year 2022)



02

Improving diversity in the IT industry

We want to facilitate access to careers in the IT industry for people with different backgrounds and starting points. By announcing our trainee program in various channels, we have been able to hire people from different educational backgrounds.

We carried out an internal inclusivity audit for the communication in our trainee program application process in order to ensure we are using inclusive language. Yet, we know the work is never done! The trainee program job advertisements were published in English so that non-Finnish speakers could also apply for the positions.

In order to support young professionals aiming to enter the IT industry, Exove has multiple ongoing collaborations with student associations in different schools and cities. In 2022 excursions for university students were held in Helsinki, Tampere, and Oulu. The excursions were held in English, and had participants from different backgrounds.

Employee Resource Groups are vital in the co-creation of a more diverse and inclusive company culture. These employee-led groups foster diversity and inclusion by providing platforms for peer support and raising awareness. Private Slack groups have already been created for women, LGBTQIA+, and neuro-divergent Exovians – and all of the groups are available for anyone who identifies themselves as belonging in one. Further, employees are encouraged to start a group for any purpose they feel the need for.

03

Accessible web services

Accessibility plays a key role in building inclusive digital services, and it is an important core principle in our way of working. We believe accessibility is closely related to inclusivity and a human-centered way of thinking, which are both highly valued at Exove and Exove Design. Our aim is to improve accessibility through not only technologies and design, but also website contents, which we also help our clients with.

The accessibility point of view is present in our projects from the very beginning, already in the definition and design phases. We also offer accessibility audits to our clients in order to help them with the accessibility of their existing web services by recognizing possible points for improvement with the help of the accessibility criteria.

Many of us are very passionate about accessibility: Exove Design employees are highly experienced on the topic, and Exove has an in-house certified accessibility specialist. On top of that, we have an active and enthusiastic Accessibility Guild that continuously develops our internal accessibility processes and related service offering, as well as discusses relevant accessibility topics.

In 2022, the Accessibility Guild has, for example, investigated common accessibility pain points of web services, and formed task forces around them in order to develop solutions and guidelines in the coming year. All employees are welcome to participate in the guild meetings or discussions in Slack, without the pressure or committing to extra tasks – even listening in on the topic is valuable!



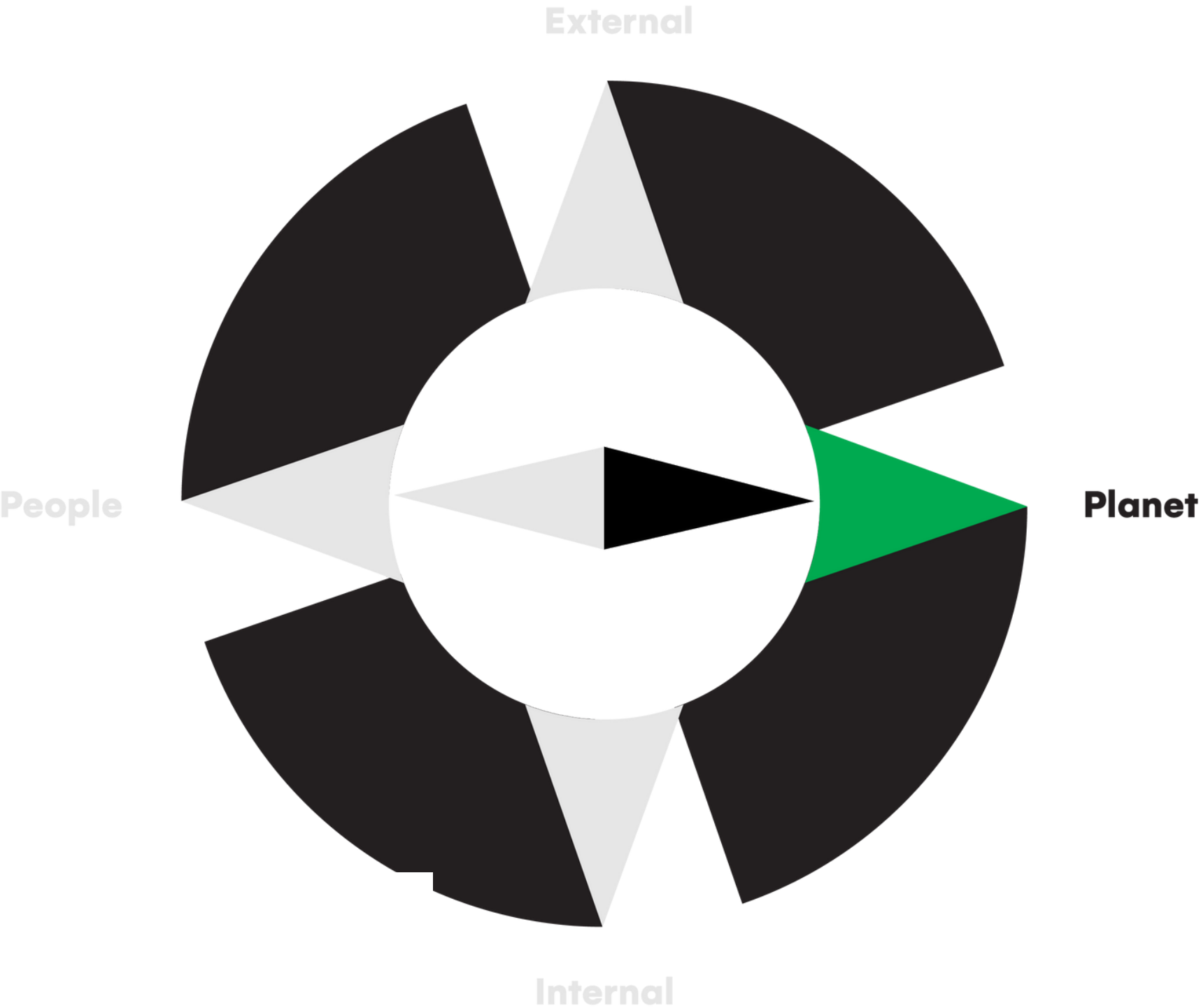
04

Whistleblowing

In 2022, we developed a method for whistleblowing, which was launched at Exove in early 2023. It is used internally for reporting any misconduct or hidden threats, and therefore crucial for openness and transparency. The whistleblowing tool was developed based on the EU's Whistleblowing Directive (EU Directive 2019/1937) which demands protection against negative consequences for those who report misconduct.

Environmental Sustainability

Climate change and resource shortages are causing various crises in the world that lead to inequality and loss of biodiversity. We aim to contribute to solving these issues through the advancement of material and energy efficiency. Carbon footprint is only one part of the whole picture of our environmental thinking, but something worth reporting on its own. In the future, we want to clarify an even bigger picture of our environmental sustainability effect – to avoid carbon tunnel vision.



01

Towards carbon neutrality

One of our most significant sustainability goals is reaching carbon neutrality. An important step in this process was the calculation of Exove and Exove Design's 2021 carbon footprint to understand what it consists of and how it can be reduced in the future. To mitigate Exove's future carbon footprint, we are working on our Carbon Policy, which includes clearly set actions and targets for all emission categories.

However, although we strive to minimize the harm caused by our activities to the environment, a certain amount of emissions is generated in our operations that we currently cannot affect. This amount of carbon equivalents we have decided to offset from year 2021 onwards.

The carbon footprint of Exove and Exove Design for 2021 was about 82 tonnes CO₂ equivalent, including Scope 1 and 2, as well as Scope 3 emissions. Next we will start the process of calculating our emissions for 2022.

82t CO₂e

Exove & Exove Design
Carbon Footprint 2021



02

Advancing circularity

We aim to decrease the use of natural resources on our part by reducing new material purchases, reusing what can be reused, and recycling what cannot to the highest possible extent.

In order to increase the lifetime value of company property, we have extended the laptop rotation policy up to 5 years and renewed the employee personal budget to allow for purchasing higher-quality phones that last longer. Laptop and phone auctions have been a best practice at Exove for a long time, and they were held also in 2022.

At Exove's main office in Helsinki, all workstation desks and chairs have been bought as restored second hand furniture from Martela Outlet. In Tampere, Oulu and Tallinn this is also the target in future furniture purchases – when the time comes to renew them. In addition, most of the furniture in the Helsinki office meeting rooms are recycled and we try to fix broken furniture before discarding them.

Recycling is included in the Exove Code of Conduct and encouraged to all employees. Our main office in Helsinki recycles everything that is currently possible in the property. In other offices we aim to do the same – yet, we realized during the carbon calculation process that recycling could and should be further improved.

Responsible Company Governance

We want our culture to support willingness to learn (Passion and Expertise, remember?) and to Care for each other – with Openness. Communality and taking care of each other is our most important internal focus.

Responsibility means actions for us. In 2022, a new Code of Conduct and a new technology career model were internally introduced. The career model further improved salary transparency and finding a career path within the company.



Taking care of employee wellbeing

It has always been important to us to have the voice of our employees heard. For years we did this through an annual staff survey, but started to question whether this frequency was truly allowing us to know how employees are doing. We found a solution from Winningtemp, a survey tool that keeps in touch with our employees through weekly questions. Winningtemp gives a visual impression of the employees' engagement and wellbeing in different categories such as leadership, meaningfulness, and job satisfaction. The platform is anonymous, and also acts as one channel for our employees to raise and discuss possible issues. Managers and system admins are notified of any negative responses, and aggregated data about the responses is visible to all employees.

We implemented the tool in March 2022, and it has been received well by the staff which is visible in the high response rate of 80%. The data has been used on team days to find teams' strengths and places to grow together. Further, the feedback and results are viewed monthly by People Operations and the managers, and quarterly by management. It is important for us to really follow if our initiatives are working as wished and creating a positive impact on our people.

Also in the beginning of 2022, a new occupational health provider was chosen with better mental health practicalities to support our staff in their daily lives.

Exove wants to be a pioneer and lead by example in supporting modern work life needs and work-life balance in the post-pandemic time. This is done for instance by supporting remote, on-site and hybrid working and granting employees freedom to choose their preferred ways of working. As part of the 2022 Summer Day, a workshop was held with the theme "Future of Work", where all Exove and Exove Design employees participated in discussing and defining current work life needs, pros and cons, and other themes related to different ways of working. After the workshop, the administration and management teams at Exove have continued working on the Future of Work theme, and they have found a few focus points to tackle in the spirit of improving and supporting employees' work-life balance.

02

Training and personal development

Our Continuous Training Days are held several times every year. We had a total of three Continuous Training Days in 2022, which included topics such as new technologies, green coding, and client expectation management, to name a few. We also renewed the employee training budget so that employees can now apply for a budget to cover training of their choosing wherever they wish to develop their expertise. Additionally, the personal budget previously used solely for phones and other work appliances can now be used for professional training expenses.

Further, we have allotted a time slot every other week for short demo sessions, which are informal events for sharing knowledge, presenting projects and ideas or whatever might be interesting for others. Demo sessions can be freely booked and held by any staff member.

We want to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to influence their own future and role in the company. Personal development talks are arranged twice a year, offering employees the chance to discuss any interests and future goals with their manager.

Guilds are an integral part of our culture and also work as pillars for employees' personal development. We have active guilds related to support, security, knowledge sharing, and UX to name a few. Employees can join any guild in order to develop their knowledge and skills, and anyone can even start their own guild about a topic that they find interesting and useful for themselves and the company – a great example of this is the Accessibility Guild, which was founded in 2021. It has brought together many accessibility enthusiasts across Exove and Exove Design, and actively promotes accessibility knowledge as well as develops accessibility related processes within the company.



03

Transparency

We are committed to transparency, which stems from our core value of openness. We embrace this in our actions and communication both internally and externally.

We have a staff meeting every two weeks, where employees share information and discuss current topics. Every member of staff is welcome to participate and can present and share any information they find relevant. Staff meetings normally include greetings and updates from our CEO and management, as well as information about company financials and Winningtemp survey results, for instance. There are also biweekly updates, news and tips shared by the sustainability team and different guilds. At every staff meeting, anyone also has a chance to publicly thank and praise their colleagues by giving out quick rewards.

As Exovians had requested more transparency regarding their pay, salary ranges for our technology roles were published together with the new career map in 2022, and shared openly within the organization. In 2023, we aim to publish the career maps and salary levels also for other, non-technology roles in the organization and include pay ranges in our job announcements too.

From the year 2022 onward, we are starting a habit of public reporting on sustainability in the form of this sustainability report. Sustainability reporting is not yet mandatory for small and medium sized companies in the EU, but by starting the reporting practice early we aim to prepare for the upcoming requirements as well as be transparent to our stakeholders.

04

Code of Conduct

This year we published a renewed Code of Conduct, which guides us to operate openly, ethically, and according to our values. It delineates the ways in which we work, communicate, and report to stakeholders. In essence, it provides the resources we need in order to make ethical decisions. The Code of Conduct was presented in a staff meeting and is internally accessible to all employees. All staff members are encouraged to refer to the Code of Conduct and enforce its use with clients and partners as well.



Going Forward: 2023 Sustainability Plan

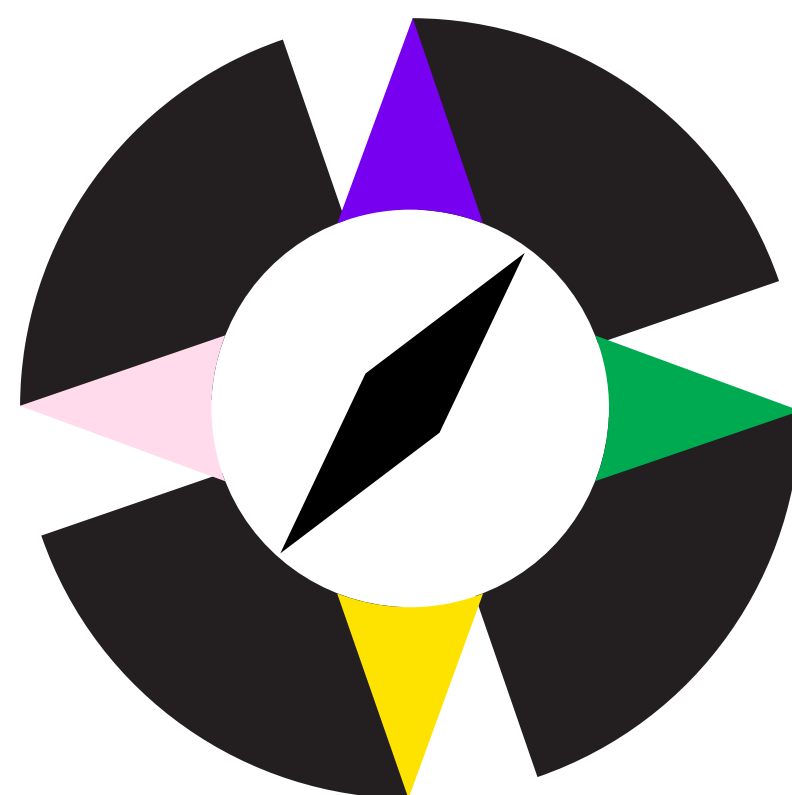
Our current sustainability strategy was developed in 2021, and we are now reporting on it for the first time in 2022. In 2023, our aim is to set clear and measurable goals for our sustainability-related activities. We are currently defining an actionable plan for 2023, including sustainability priorities and measures for each direction in our compass. Here are a few examples of what we will be focusing on during the current year.



Sustainable Web Design and Development

Web development is at the core of our business, so we want to keep including sustainability thinking in our development processes. As is stated in our sustainability promise, we want to advance equality and sustainability through our digital solutions.

In 2023 we plan on developing the Green Coding initiative that has started in 2022. We aim to further increase awareness of the topic through the Green Code book, as well as advance the initiative by developing guidelines and best practices for green coding.



Environmental Sustainability

This year we will be focusing on minimizing our carbon footprint. In February 2023, Exove was granted the Koodia Suomesta (Code from Finland) Carbon Neutrality Label as an acknowledgement for our carbon minimization actions. We have calculated and compensated for our 2021 emissions, and will soon begin calculating 2022 emissions. The purpose of offsetting our emissions was not just to calculate and offset them, but to find out how we could reduce our carbon footprint in the future so that we would not have to resort to purchasing compensation units.

We have made a precise plan for minimizing our emissions, which outlines measures and goals in eight different categories: energy use, premises, IT platforms and peripherals, data connections, travel, food, gifts and rewards, and subcontractors. To name a few minimization measures, we aim to use renewable energy and carbon-neutral data centers and network connections whenever possible, as well as embrace circularity in our procurement actions,

Social Sustainability

In 2023 one of our focus points will be on themes related to diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI). We are planning to organize a training for our managers about inclusivity and tackling social biases. Our goal is to later expand the training to the whole staff.

Other goals we have for improving inclusivity this year include creating a guideline for our communications about special occasions such as Women's, Men's, Mothers' and Fathers' Days, and promoting inclusive language use as well as the insignificance of language requirements. In addition, when forming new teams or making changes to existing ones, we aim to pay close attention to diversity within them.

In 2023 we are also planning to establish a channel for public whistleblowing next to the internal one we took into use in 2022.



Responsible Company Governance

With the sustainability report for the year 2022, we want to start a habit of annual sustainability reporting in order to maintain transparency and trust. As this is the first ever report made at Exove, in the years to come we aim to develop our sustainability reporting process and the report itself, and one of our goals for this year is to improve our sustainability reporting process.

Overall we aim to focus more on transparency, clear and open communication, and improving internal information sharing in the company. A concrete goal we have for the year 2023 is to share career roadmaps and salary ranges also for other than technology roles within the company.

EXOVE