

Sustainable Events Checklist

Before the Event

Update January 2024

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| Planning | Organize a pre-conference planning meeting for sustainability |
| | Agree on sustainability goals at the pre-conference planning meeting |
| | Assign leads to sustainability initiatives |
| Communications | List green initiatives on the event website |
| | Use an online registration system with electronic invitations and reminders |
| | Create a QR Code to lead back to conference materials (schedule, menus, etc) |
| | Inform guests in the invitation that they are participating in a sustainable event |
| | Communicate and emphasize your sustainability goals with vendors |
| Location / Accommodations | Brief all volunteers prior to the event about the sustainability aspects of the event |
| | If possible, try to host some events outside or in a room with good natural lighting |
| | Encourage guests to stay at sustainability-minded hotels and sustainable restaurants |
| | Try to keep the activities on the same campus (main, Lees, or RGN) |
| | Choose a location that is accessible via bike with ample bike racks near the event site |
| | Encourage local guest speakers, lecturers, or performers to attend |
| Transportation | Provide a list of local bed and breakfasts and walkable hotels (try to establish a conference price) |
| | Encourage participants to carpool to the event if possible |
| Food | If participants are travelling less than 500 kms, encourage them to use the train or bus |
| | Ask attendees to bring their own plates, utensils, cups, containers, etc |
| | Check with your caterer about food donation policies and where they donate |
| | Secure a guest quantity before ordering food and beverage for the event |
| | Request pitchers or carafes for drinks, rather than individually bottled drinks |
| Waste | Try to order seasonal food options |
| | Request locally produced food and beverages to cut transportation emissions |
| | Request bulk containers for items like salad dressings and condiments |
| | Consider food options that don't require utensils (e.g., pizza, sandwiches, etc.) |
| | Provide the caterer a list materials that are recyclable or compostable on campus |
| | Request smaller food platters to preserve leftovers for donation |
| | Ask caterer not to provide disposable wares (straws, stir sticks, and individual creamers) |
| | Provide reusable containers for participants to bring home leftovers |
| | Avoid individually packaged condiments (use bulk dispensers instead) |
| | Avoid Individually boxed lunches |
| Energy + Climate | Identify ways to cut out unnecessary materials, even if it can be recycled or composted |
| | Create a list of preferred swag and share with vendors and expositors |
| Equity + Health | Ask participants to bring their own coffee mugs, utensils, reusable bottles, paper + pens |
| | Avoid scheduling your events mid-day to reduce energy demand |
| | Hold your event in LEED certified buildings |
| | Register to have your event Fair Trade certified |
| | Ensure a barrier-free space and amenities |
| Equity + Health | Ensure documents and presentation materials follow accessibility guidelines |
| | Include voices of diverse populations in your event's content |
| | Ensure a variety of dietary needs are accommodated (ask during event registration) |
| Equity + Health | When applicable, try to offer a flexible price model |

For more information about Sustainable Events at the University of Ottawa, please visit our website.

