

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANISING MORE SUSTAINABLE EVENTS



As part of the Beyond the Tales project, in-person events and other formal and multiplier events will be organised and it is important to lead by example by trying to reduce our own carbon footprint. By following sustainable guidelines at our own events, we are setting an in-person example of carrying out the principles we pursue on paper.

These are the main areas you should consider when planning (more) sustainable events:

MOBILITY

Mobility and transport - not just of participants, but also of organisers, members of the media and the delivery of goods, typically create the biggest percentage of events' carbon footprint.

- Choose a venue location that is well connected by public transport, accessible by bike (make sure there are bicycle stands or rent-a-bike stations nearby) or by walking and encourage people to carpool if no alternative mode of transportation is available to them.
- Enable event visitors to utilise public transport by coordinating the event times with a public transport schedule.
- Encourage people to opt for sustainable mobility options (include a map with public transport stops and schedules, cycling and walking paths and bike parking stations).
- Promote environment friendly transport by offering incentives to participants who opt for any of the alternative modes of transport.
- When possible and where appropriate, organise online/hybrid events or live streams in order to enable the attendance of people who do not live in the area of your event without them having to travel long distances.

CATERING

Catering is a very visible element of events and as such provides a great space for organisers to prove their commitment to sustainability.

It is important to follow the 7 principles that determine sustainable and environment-friendly food and drinks. The order of the principles that should be considered in terms of reducing green house gas (GHG) emissions is the following (starting with the most efficient one):

1. **Plant-based** (Avoid serving animal products).
2. **Organic** (Purchase produce from organic farms, offer certified organic foods).
3. **Food that is not wasted** (Try ordering just enough food for the amount of people attending and use up leftovers afterwards).
4. **Seasonal** (Offer catering that is based on seasonal ingredients).
5. **Produced locally** (Choose local suppliers when ordering food and drinks).
6. **Packaged as little as possible** (Provide food without excessive wrapping, plastic bags and unnecessary containers).
7. **Processed as little as possible** (Avoid serving processed food, serve fresh produce that mirrors the local identity).

VENUE

By choosing a venue you are indirectly determining energy consumption, waste disposal, mobility and accessibility and catering. If possible, choose a venue that is **accessible by public transport, by bike or walking** and one that already has a **recycling system** set up. If possible, find a venue that is **energy efficient** and suitable for the number of guests that are attending in order to avoid having to cool it or warm it up. Also enable everyone access to running water in order to avoid having to provide bottled water.

You cannot always choose a venue but you can always influence the way your event runs within it.

ORDERING GOODS

When thinking about the goods for your event, there is a **hierarchy of sustainability** that you should consider in order to reduce the environmental footprint of your event.

First of all – the best purchase is the one you don't make. Also think about reducing the use of disposable materials, such as paper (for example with printing). When choosing goods and products for the event that cannot be avoided, consider alternative forms of obtaining them, such as reusing, borrowing, exchanging. Lastly, if purchasing cannot be avoided, think about the **quantity of goods** you might need in order not to create unnecessary waste. You should also think about the **origin and the production conditions** of the product. **Certificates of environmental and societal responsibility** make it easier for you to choose the right products (Fairtrade, EU Ecolabel, EU Organic logo).

WASTE DISPOSAL

Similar to purchases, the best type of waste is such that you don't create. You should think about waste disposal and waste reduction in the planning phase of the event. This is when you can do the most in the area of waste prevention.

You should aim for creating **little to no waste** by ordering exact amounts of food and goods. Try **reusing as many things as possible** at a later date, for example by using reusable cutlery and cups. If waste is created, the best thing to do is to **recycle or compost** as much as you can so make sure you provide the right bins at your event.

COMMUNICATION

A sustainable event is an efficient communication channel for sustainable practices – participants, organisers, suppliers, sponsors and other participants familiarise themselves with sustainable practices and hopefully they will leave the event inspired to later incorporate them in their everyday and work routines.

Prior to the event inform participants of ways of how they can contribute to the sustainability of the event (e.g. send out maps of rentable bikes/bus stops, suggest bringing reusable water bottles for tap water), share the goals you are looking to achieve (e.g. reduce events' carbon footprint compared to previous year) and share your intentions with others and encourage them to join your sustainability journey.

During the event visibly mark sustainability efforts at the event (e.g. put cards listing food sources and benefits of plant-based food on catering tables) and motivate participants to multiply sustainability messages of the event on social media (e.g. by tagging sustainable catering providers or using specific sustainability hashtags).

After the event, inform the participants and the partners of the success of the environment-friendly steps you have taken at the event and make sure you are communicating the impact that taking those steps has produced (e.g. let them know they helped you reduce carbon footprint of the event by a certain %). Share simple tips and steps you have made at your event (with pictures) on your social media channels, newsletters or website to motivate others to do the same.

For your events, choose activities with the greatest potential to reduce negative environmental impact and great communication potential. Make sure you only communicate what you have achieved and avoid greenwashing.



CEPS Projectes Socials
<http://www.asceps.org>



Co-funded by
the European Union

Walk the talk guidelines were created as part of Beyond the tales project. The project is co-financed by the EU Erasmus program. The contents and materials made during the project are a product of the authors. The comission is not responsible for use of this information.