

SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITIES AND EXPECTATIONS



**BUSINESS
EVENTS
VICTORIA**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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We acknowledge Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) for their partnership and industry expertise applied in developing the content for the Business Events toolkits. Operating since 1975, MEA is the Australian event industry 's oldest and largest peak body. It serves its members and educates the industry holistically, dedicating itself to promoting professionalism and providing excellence across more than 14 industry sub-sectors. MEA promotes growth in the events sector by creating business opportunities, delivering both accredited and bespoke training and professional development, building a skilled and informed workforce, and advocating on behalf of industry to all tiers of government.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

Business Events Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Aboriginal Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay our respects to them, their connections to land, sea, and community. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future Traditional Owners.



BUSINESS EVENTS TOOLKIT

Explore the other toolkits



Overview of the domestic business events sector

Business events basics - getting ready to host a business event



Business events marketing guidelines

Proposals - responding to requests and creating winning proposals



Sustainability - opportunities and expectations

Managing the business event



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UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABILITY EXPECTATIONS AND SOME TIPS AND IDEAS FOR MANAGING EVENTS AND OPERATIONS MORE SUSTAINABLY

All events play an important role in contributing to the sustainability of regions, communities and the environment and sustainability practices tend to be expected by the business events sector specifically and the event industry overall.

Business events tend to mean people moving from one area to another, by car or plane or bus and it is expected that there will be some environmental impact. However, meeting face to face is important for the social and economic sustainability of the country, the state and regions and meet the needs of us all for human interaction. As face to face events are a big part of the industry, the industry expects that everyone involved will do what they can to plan and manage events sustainably.

Expectations of sustainability in events begins with organisations; event companies tend to use sustainable products in their organisations (from office equipment to toilet paper) and expect that those organisations they work with do the same. It's worth doing an environmental audit of your own premises or workplace. See resources at the end of this toolkit for help with this.

Acting sustainably and promoting your actions helps differentiate your brand from competitors and shows values that the business event sector appreciates, and this is not limited to younger buyers and attendees.

Many event businesses have a sustainability policy which encompasses overarching statements and some practical key performance indicators or goals. Here are some sustainability goals and tips that meet the expectations of the event industry.

Promoting your sustainable actions differentiates your business brand and demonstrates your values.

Food and beverage (F&B)

- Local produce is always highly regarded because it showcases the best of the region and helps form a sense of place for event attendees
- Buying as much produce (food, drinks, services) from the local area also minimises the environmental footprint, support local jobs, and build capacity and capability in event management in the region and leave a legacy for the host community
- Using water stations and encouraging attendees to bring their own, reusable water bottles
- Discouraging the use of plastic bottled water
- Collaborating with food rescue services if available to donate unused product
- Diverting uncollected food waste to organic bins
- Developing a formal sustainable procurement policy for your organisation and negotiate and contract according to it

Marketing and event management

- Print infrequently and use shared online storage so event team members can all access documentation electronically
- If printing is needed, and we can't get away from it completely, use certified carbon neutral paper
- Meet via video conferencing when planning the event to avoid the time it takes to travel to meetings and the environmental impacts of doing so
- Marketing materials tend to be electronic these days; the printed brochure or flyer is less common and allows you to update quickly and without waste but also limits printing costs and the impact of wasted paper resources
- Minimise printed materials at the event by using online brochures or an event App which will have the additional benefit of allowing you to both communicate with a large audience at once and gather information and feedback from them in real time
- Partner with organisations who have strong sustainability credentials

Energy usage

Reduce total energy usage and, where possible, maximise the use of renewable energy. Some practical ways to do this are:

- LED lighting or solar lighting, if possible, eg: for festoon lighting or portable toilets
- Having lights in facilities, offices or other spaces that come on automatically when the space is in use but switch off when it is not in use
- Updating equipment where possible to newer, more environmentally friendly models

- Contact your energy retailer for advice on installing energy efficient devices where you can
- Have computers switch off automatically at the end of the day
- Measuring the amount of energy used and reporting on this to your buyers and contractors to show your environmental credentials and encourage participation

Waste

Minimise waste at events by reducing what is thrown away – some practical ways to do this are:

- Buying products and services from the local area to reduce the environmental impact
- Upcycle where possible with reusable décor and food service items (noting impact on water usage is also a consideration here)

Recycled Products and Recycling

Encourage the use of recycled products and recycling – some practical ways to do this are:

- Looking for suppliers that use recyclable materials, eg: the exhibition sector is very aware of the impact of non-reusable exhibition standards on the environment and many companies now offer a more environmentally friendly option
- Provide the Australian Standard coloured recycling bins, lids and signage to help attendees to do the right thing
- Speciality recycling if needed for any larger volumes of soft plastic, cardboard and other recyclable materials
- Asking suppliers to the event to provide evidence of correct disposal at an appropriate processing facility to ensure integrity of the system



Sustainable Transport Options

Encourage sustainable transport options – some practical ways to do this are:

- Encourage travel by coach as many attendees will come from a single location; those not planning tourism activities pre or post event could be transported together. One coach is more sustainable transport wise than thirty plus cars
- Encourage the use of public transport where possible, even if to a nearby hub for collection by coach thus limiting the environmental impact
- Encouraging car sharing in your own organisation but also to the event

Engage in Social/Cultural Sustainability

- Acting with integrity and respect for all to sustain the community you work with and belong to
- Respecting and supporting traditional owners and including official welcomes or other ceremonies in events where relevant
- Paying appropriate award and other rates
- Meeting financial obligations on time to staff and contractors
- Working collaboratively with partners and negotiating fairly
- Treating everyone with respect and kindness
- Providing meaningful opportunities to team members to expand their skills and knowledge, thus building capacity in our team, our community and the industry
- Hiring local people wherever possible



FURTHER RESOURCES AND HELP

Resources for managing sustainable events and businesses:

Ecotourism Australia “Strive for Sustainability Scorecard”

<https://www.ecotourism.org.au/strive-4-sustainability-scorecard-portal>

Environnemental Audit Tool

<https://business.vic.gov.au/business-information/sustainability/environmental-audits-and-impact-assessment>

Engaging with ISO 20121:12 Events Sustainability Management System

Offers guidance and best practice information to help manage an event and control its social, economic and environmental impact

EarthCheck: a global benchmarking and certification company which provides third party accredited environmental and social performance certification for companies in tourism related fields, such as events <https://earthcheck.org/>


National Carbon Offset Standard: a way to be a ‘certified’ carbon neutral via an Australian Government standard for organisations, products and services, events or building and precincts

<https://apo.org.au/sites/default/files/resource-files/2017-11/apo-nid128006.pdf>

MEET IN REGIONAL VICTORIA.

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