





A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO ORGANISING EVENTS

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INTRODUCTION

It could be said that the most environmentally friendly event is no event at all. We live in the 21st century and all over the world, all year round, different types of events are organised. Whether it is a family gathering, a wedding, a conference, an international exhibition or a music festival, and whatever the size and shape of the event, the keyword is sustainability. All kinds of events use resources, produce emissions and generate different types of waste. The environmental footprint of one event can be huge when we consider all of the aspects.

It is important to keep in mind and understand that organising an event or participating in one has much more to it than just the event itself in terms of environmental aspects and the positive and negative impact it can cause.

Although every event is different and should be planned accordingly, they can still be categorised and common elements found in each of them.

As part of the "Green Events" project we cooperated with many events and helped to implement certain aspects that would make the events more environmentally friendly. In this practical guide we will present you with good practice from green events. We have categorised the events into four case studies.

If you are planning an event, find the case description that is most similar to your event. Decide which topics you would like to focus on and read the more detailed information in the second part of the guide.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

STEP 1

Select a case study

STEP 2

Read about good examples

STEP 3

Get more information and advice on the selected topics

STEP 4

Find inspiration and quick-print signs for your event

Sustainable event management. A practical quide. 2nd edition. Meegan Jones.

CHECKLIST

"ARE YOU FULFILLING THE BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR A GREEN(ER) EVENT?"

Question	Υ	N	N/A
WASTE			
1. Is waste sorting possible at the event?			
2. Are the waste bin signs clear and comprehensible (multilingual and with pictures)?			
3. Have you made sure no disposable plates etc. will be used at the event?			
4. If the use of disposable plates etc. – is unavoidable, have you checked whether they are compostable?			
5. To minimise packaging, have you ordered products in bulk?			
FOOD CHOICES			
6. Have you requested that NO bottled water is served at the event?			
7. Have you asked the participants to bring their own refillable water bottles?			
8. Have you requested that water glasses are NOT prefilled? 9. Have you requested vegen entires?			
9. Have you requested vegan options?			
10. Have you requested sustainable, local food?			
11. Have you requested fair trade tea and coffee?			
12. Have you requested that leftover food be donated?			
MATERIAL C & RUDOUACES			
MATERIALS & PURCHASES			
13. Can you reuse signage and materials?			
14. Have you made eco-friendly and sustainable mementoes and gifts that can be used for more than one occasion?			
15. Have you set up a drop-off point for all unwanted materials and items and made it possible for participants to return their name tags after the event?			
TRANSPORT			
16. Have you informed the participants about public transport options or encouraged carpooling?			
17. Have you organised special buses and/or informed participants about alternative transport options (encouraging them to come on foot or by bicycle)?			
COMMUNICATION			
18. Have you thought about the environmental messages you want to send out to the			
public and how to present the green choices of the event to the participants?			
19. Have you identified the key people you need to talk to about different aspects?			

CASE DESCRIPTIONS

Below you will find descriptions of the most common events you may have to organise. As you will come to realise, the issues you need to tackle in order to make your event more environmentally friendly are roughly the same in many cases. As such, it is important to understand which key issues need to be considered in different settings. The difference lies in how you prioritise the issues and what aspects you are able to control or in which aspects you have the possibility and motivation to make an impact.

You are not expected to deal with everything at once!

The key questions to consider are basically the same for different types of events:



Choosing a venue and accomodation



Transport (accessibility)



Waste sorting



Catering



Other services/purchases
/food providers, printing,
gifts & awards, promotion/



Communication

CASE 1	CASE 2
Indoor event e.g. seminar	Outdoor event e.g. music or food festival
CASE 3	CASE 4
Sports event e.g. orienteering	Indoor fair

C<mark>ASE</mark> 1 INDOOR EVENT E.G. SEMINAR



VENUE FOR 50-200 PARTICIPANTS



LOCATION IN THE CITY



CATERING

/coffee breaks, lunch and/or dinner/



INTERNATIONAL GUESTS AND SPEAKERS



PRESENTATIONS, BROCHURES AND GIFTS

Examples of what made the Valmiera Business Conference a greener event

Transportation:

To minimise the number of participants driving separately by car to the seminar, there was an organised bus from Rīga and back again. This is a good way of reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

Compostable plates:

During the event, compostable plates were used instead of plastic. They are biodegradable and can be collected along with other biowaste.

Local food (with vegan options):

Favouring local/seasonal food and offering vegetarian food are better choices in terms of impact on the environment.

No printed handouts:

In terms of saving paper, in most cases there is no need to have presentations printed out and compiled infolders – they can be sent out electronically before or immediately after the event.

Name tags made from cardboard:

To reduce the use of plastic, name tags were printed on cardboard, which is easily recyclable.

Presentation about environmental issues connected to the main theme of the conference:

To raise the environmental awareness of the participants, an expert gave a presentation on plastic and its impact.

The participants had the chance to visit the "Save our paradise" installation, which also tackled environmental issues.

CASE 2 OUTDOOR EVENT E.G. MUSIC OR FOOD FESTIVAL









Examples of good practice from the Viljandi Folk Music festival

Cup deposit system:

Festivalgoers could buy reusable cups or rent them by paying a deposit when they returned the cup. This helped reduce the number of disposable plastic cups used during the festival. There was an agreement in place with most of the caterers that they would use reusable cups with the deposit system to sell drinks.

Compostable plates:

In the team catering area, team members and volunteers were served food on compostable plates (including compostable cutlery) and served drinks in compostable cups.

Waste sorting:

The festival organisers offered waste-sorting stations with clear multilingual labels. They also collected plastic packaging and cardboard from caterers to deposit it for recycling.

Reusing materials to create festival signs:

T-shirts, signs and other materials from previous festivals were reused.

Transportation:

The festival provides the opportunity to use a train to reach the venue, which is the most environmentally friendly option. For bicycles there is a parking area to make it more convenient to leave your bike somewhere. Since the festival is held in a city it is also possible to come by buses and other public transport from nearby towns.

Environmental awareness-raising activities:

There were hands-on activities where festival-goers could learn about environmental aspects. These included waste-sorting games, an energy area with solar panels and electricity-generating bikes. The "Save our paradise" installation, which tackled environmental issues, was open to visitors as well.

Examples of good practice from the Viljandi Folk Music festival

Water refill stations:

There were water refill stations in the festival area and visitors were able to refill their reusable water bottles. A very convenient and popular solution.

Sustainability criteria for caterers:

There are certain requirements which a catering company needs to fulfil in order to earn maximum points in the selection round of catering service providers. For example, they must use ingredients with an ecolabel or other sustainability label and use biodegradable plates.

Communication:

The festival sends a clear message to visitors that it aims to be a green event. They have a section on their website about what is being done and also publish articles about what they are doing.

Examples of good practice from Viljandi Folk Music festival







CASE 3 SPORTS EVENT E.G. ORIENTEERING



Examples of good practice from Seiklushunt events

Compostable plates:

Using compostable plates, spoons, cups, etc. has made it possible to reduce plastic waste that would end up in general waste and beyond that in landfill or being burnt. Compostable items can be mixed with biodegradable waste and are used for this reason.

Waste sorting system:

Events of different sizes use different sets and numbers of waste bins. At weekly orienteering days it is enough to have general and plastic waste bins. At bigger events there are bins for biodegradable plates, recyclable bottles, packaging and general waste. The organisers also collect paper/cardboard – but this is backstage. The number of sets of bins depends on the number of participants. Waste bins, cups, etc. also need attention when situated along the course.

Competition shirts not obligatory:

Many sports competition organisers include race shirts in the competition fee and over time participants end up with a huge number of shirts in their closets they never wear again. Shirts for Seiklushunt events are not included in the participation fee – the participants can choose whether or not to order a shirt and therefore help the environment by not overconsuming if a shirt is not needed.

Paper reuse:

Old A4 orienteering maps are used for repeat printing or collected together over a longer period and then deposited for recycling.

Safety pins:

Even a seemingly small thing like collecting the safety pins that are used to attach competition number tags can make sense. Asking participants to bring pins with them from home should not overburden them either.

Sharing experience with others:

Seiklushunt has an environmental blog on which they describe their journey of becoming more environmentally friendly. The blog (in Estonian) can be found online at

http://roheline.ee/projektid/keskkonnasobralikud-avalikud-uritused/blogi-seiklushundi-rohelised-sammud/

CASE 4 INDOOR FAIR E.G. YOUNG SCIENTISTS' FESTIVAL

Organiser: Estonian Research Council



2500+ VISITORS AND 300 EXHIBITORS

/e.g. students presenting their research projects and organisations presenting their products and services/



VENUE WITH LOTS OF SPACE FOR THE EXHIBIT AREA, ROOMSFOR WORKSHOPS AND MAIN STAGE



CATERING AREA



GIFTS & PRIZES



INFORMATION MATERIALS, COMMERCIALS & LEAFLETS

Examples of good practice from Young Scientists' Festival 2018

Venue:

The format of the event sets quite specific requirements for the venue – an exhibition area, workshop rooms, the main stage, catering and sufficient space for visitors – and there are not many places to choose from. The 2018 Students' Science Fair was held at the Estonian National Museum in Tartu, which opened to the public in 2016. Despite the fact that it is not located in the city centre, it is a modern building with all the necessary infrastructure. The museum is energy class C, which is very good for such a large building.

Transport:

The organisers, in cooperation with the local government, organised free public transport to take people from the city centre to the festival area. A festival wristband guaranteed a free ride. The public transport bus timetable did not provide enough connections, so additional festival buses taking visitors from the festival venue to city and back were ordered by the organisers. The buses had emission norm Euro 6, which causes fewer emissions. The Euro 6 norm buses were used to take the participants from the event venue to their accommodation facilities.

Catering:

Fairtrade tea and coffee, local food and some vegan options were included in the menu. Some of the food products were ecologically grown. Leftover food was packed and given to children's groups and the festival organisers. To raise awareness of local and ecological food, locally sourced apples were handed out to visitors and participants, and information on food origins was presented in the catering area.

Waste sorting:

The venue had its own waste-sorting system, which was planned with the needs of museum visitors in mind. In order to raise awareness among participants and visitors, options for sorting waste were introduced at the event. Therefore additional agreements were made with the museum about emptying the recycling bins.

Examples of good practice from Young Scientists' Festival 2018

Brochures:

Information materials were printed by an environmentally friendly eco-printing company. Where possible, banners and some materials were designed in such a way that they could be used again the following year. A special area was set aside on the table of materials to collect materials no longer needed.

Gifts:

Special attention was given to ensuring that gifts were sustainable and practical. The aim was for the gifts to be useful (something edible or e.g. reusable water bottles or thermoses) and that they would not be thrown away or left sitting on a shelf. The flowers presented to the young authors of the best research work were European in origin.

Reuse:

There was a desk next to the exit where participants and visitors could return their name tags with the programme and lanyard so that they could be reused the following year. Around 40% were returned by participants.

Communication:

There was a separate section on the event's website setting out what had been done to make the event more environmentally friendly. Information was also included on the media campaign – street posters and Facebook posts. During the event different signs were printed which explained to participants and visitors the greener aspects of the fair, and there was an environmental awareness-raising area in which participants could play a waste-sorting game, generate electricity on bikes and test their consumption patterns.

CHOOSING A VENUE AND ACCOMMODATION

When planning an event, often the first thing you will do is decide where to hold it. The destination or venue will have an impact on your event's sustainability goals. When organising events at venues managed by others, you may have little control over many typical sustainability issues and forms of impact. But in this case there are always some key aspects to keep in mind and ask yourself or the service provider (depending on how deep you want to go):

- □ Does the venue/building have an environmental management system?
- Does the building have any "Green Building" or sustainable building ratings?
- □ Find out where the venue sources its primary energy (renewable vs non-renewable energy).
- Is there a well-developed and well-used public transport system which the attendees could use?
- How is waste managed? Are systems available at the municipal level, and have they been implemented at the venue site? Are there supporting businesses providing services to recycle and manage separately collected waste?
- □ Water and water supply: Is tap water of drinking quality?
- Procurements: Does the venue use environmentally friendly cleaning supplies, reusable dishes and the like?

The ideal venue for a seminar is well located and easily accessible by different means of transport. The aim is to minimise the number of participants coming by car, therefore the location of the venue is important. If it is a national seminar your participants will mostly come from the same city and neighbouring areas. If you choose a venue close to a bus or train station, it will be more convenient for them to come by bus or train instead of by car.

The need for accommodation usually depends on the duration of the event, but you should keep in mind that you will have to find a suitable venue (e.g. a hotel) that meets all of your needs. If it is not possible to hold the seminar in the same place you should look into options so that the seminar venue and accommodation provider are close to each other.

If you are looking for a hotel or another company that practices sustainable and environmentally friendly management, you should search for "Green Key" companies.

This prestigious voluntary eco-label represents a commitment by businesses that their tourism establishments adhere to strict criteria. A "Green Key" stands for an establishment's promise to its guests that by opting to stay at such an establishment they are helping to make a difference on the environmental and sustainability level.

It should be clarified beforehand with the venue whether their organisation is implementing environmentally friendly practices, or even better –whether the EMAS or ISO 14001 has been implemented. Go through all of their services you will be using during the seminar and discuss eco-friendly options, or you might be unpleasantly surprised to find that they are unable to fulfil your wishes. If possible, you might also want to look into the building's energy efficiency details.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

If the venue has a waste management system in place, then great. If not, then there may not be many options as to what you can do. Depending on the type of event, you should always think about waste management aspects.



Most events produce mountains of waste, resulting from eating, drinking and setting up the venue (including decor and staging).

Here is some advice on

HOW TO SET UP A WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT YOUR EVENT

- 1. Think about the type of waste your event will create.
- 2. How much waste will be produced?
- 3. What type of waste containers/waste bins would work best for your event?
- 4. How many different types of waste will you collect?
- Use clear labelling and colour coding to make the binsvisible
- Cluster different types of bins together and place themin areas of maximum use.
- Ensure that the bins are monitored and emptied regularly
- 8. For maximum effect, use volunteers to help participants sort waste into the right bins.

It is also important to involve your team and stakeholders when planning and implementing waste sorting at your event. First of all, train your own staff and volunteers how to sort waste and how to educate visitors or participants at the event.

Waste bins need to be emptied at the right time and you need to have enough spare bins. Also consider the logistics of how you plan to empty the waste bins at the venue.

Make sure you know what happens to the waste after you hand it over to the handling company.

For organisers of outdoor events, a specific type of waste comes with such an event, so **sanitary systems** (toilets, hand wash and shower options) have to be organised in case no infrastructure is in place. Ask service providers for tips and advice.

ENERGY & TRANSPORT

If you are holding an international seminar then your participants and speakers will probably arrive by plane. If the speakers' fees and transportation costs are in your budget you can offer to pay for a train or ferry ticket instead (if the travel time is reasonable). You can also select the venue so as to optimise the travel distances of participants.

If you are organising a festival or similar with a lot of attendees, then it would make sense to promote transportation pooling and to enter into agreements with public transport service providers to give participants free transportation (with the organiser paying for it) or reduced ticket prices.

Before organising an event it is always important to consider a virtual meeting as the greenest and most sustainable option. To minimise the greenhouse gas and other emissions associated with travel you should consider whether video conferencing is an option. For smaller events this often works better.

CATERING

When you order a catering service for your event you need to spell out your wishes and expectations early. To make environmentally friendly choices you need to take certain decisions. First of all, ordering local food and finding seasonal fruit etc. may take longer than expected, and you will need to consider that putting together specific menus and finding the right ingredients will take more time.

Here is some advice on

WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN ORDERING CATERING FOR YOUR EVENT

- 1. Offer vegetarian and vegan options
- 2. Request food made from local, seasonal, ecological, GMO-free and fair trade ingredients.
- Avoid bottled water: ask for tap water instead. If for some reason this is not possible, use larger glass bottles of water.
- Request that sugar, honey and milk be served in larger bowls and jugs, not in small packages (i.e. minimise waste by avoiding excess packaging).
- 5. Avoid disposable plates and cutlery. If this is not possible, compostable options should be used. Another option is to arrange a so-called dish library (e.g. with the help of donated tableware) borrow a plate and cutlery, eat your food, then wash the plate and cutlery and put them back.
- Request that leftover food be packed up for you or ask what happens to it afterwards (whether it is donated).
- Make sure that food waste is collected separately and recycled.
- Inform the participants about the responsible choice of food at your event.
- Compostable and biodegradable are not equivalent.

 Always choose compostable products, which are capable of decomposing back into natural elements under composting conditions, typically within a year

If you are organising an event at which there are a lot of different catering providers (e.g. a food fair or music festival), make sure you set a common policy for all caterers.

It is becoming more common for caterers to have to apply for a spot at a festival, and in their application it is possible for you as the organiser to set certain conditions. For example, one option on the menu must be vegan; compostable plates should be used; a disposable cup system should be implemented.

Drinking water should be provided (for free) during events. The local water supply system should be used, where possible. In the case of outdoor events without a local water supply, drinking water can be delivered in large containers. Visitors should be informed before the event and asked to bring reusable water bottles with them.

OTHER PURCHASING & RESOURCE USE

Purchasing and materials can have a major impact on your event's sustainability. Purchasing decisions are made throughout the event's life cycle and the right choices need to be made to reduce the impact of consumption. Using recyclable materials, reuse, favouring organic and fair trade items, buying locally and ensuring workers' welfare should be your steps along the sustainability path. Furthermore, you should ask yourself if you really need all of those things – maybe you can do without.

PURCHASING QUESTIONS:

- 1. Where did the product come from?
- 2. Who made the product?
- 3. What is it made from?
- 4. What does it come packaged in?
- 5. How will it be disposed of, or can it be used again?

SUPPLIES THAT EVENTS USE:

- 1. Event merchandise
- Signs, decorations & banners
- Paper & printing
- 4. Ticketing & wristbands
- 5. Timber, paint & cleaning products
- 6. Promo items, gifts, awards & mementoes
- 7. Food, beverages & drinking water
- 8. Food and beverage serviceware
- 9. Audio-visual equipment, infrastructure & staging
- 10. Fencing & barriers (security & cleaning)



COMMUNIC ATION

Communication within the organising team to achieve the green goals set is essential. All of the parties involved, including service providers, must be informed about environmental sustainability goals and activities

If you are following certain green steps, then let participants (and the public more broadly) know about it as well.

Set aside a separate section on your website about your green initiatives. If you have a Facebook event, make call-to-action posts so that people use carpooling, promote public transport options and post about the waste system you will use (with illustrative photos of the bins and information about what waste goes where, etc.).

You can also include this information in the invitation letter. In addition, prepare helpful, informative signs to be set up on site (where tap water can be found, where visitors should place their plastic name cards in order to be reused, etc.).

SIGNS FOR PRINTING

All signs in high quality for printing you can download at

www.http://www.webmultishop.com/daba-musu-paradize/





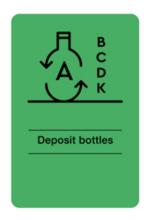


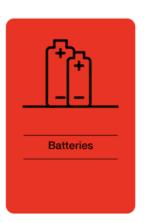












INSPIRAT<mark>ION</mark> GALLERY

Good examples from events "SMALL STEPS TO A GREENER EVENT"

PICTURES FROM YOUNG SCIENTISTS FESTIVAL, ESTONIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL, 2018

Examples of how to communicate what you have done to make your event more environmentally friendly - e.g. at this event we are sorting waste, we encourage you to drink tap water, we offer fair trade tea/coffee/sugar

/Pictures from Young Scientists Festival, Estonian Research Council, 2018/



Examples of how to communicate what you have done to make your event more environmentally friendly.





Environmental awareness-raising area for visitors: information about waste sorting and waste sorting game; information brochures and leaflets about ecolabelled food.





Environmental awareness-raising area for visitors: "energy area", electricity generating bikes and competition to generate enough electricity to heat water to boiling point.





Environmental awareness-raising area for visitors: possibility for visitors to test their consumption habits and read about how to make more environmentally friendly choices.





Different choices you can make in the catering area: not so good ones vs better ones. It is better for the environment if you favour portions in bulk instead of many small packages.



Fair trade tea/coffee/sugar and honey. An even better example would be if the sugar was not in small packages, but in a bigger bowl.



More sustainable and practical gifts, and a drop-off area where participants can leave their name tags so that the organisers can reuse them.



EST-LAT PROGRAMME EU COOPERATION DAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2017

On 23 September 2017 in Ape and Vastse Roosa the Estonia-Latvia Programme celebrated cooperation between the two countries at a joint event entitled "Tour de LatEst on a kick-bike". For the third time, fans of kick-biking enjoyed the ride. In 2017 the "Tour de LatEst" cycling route and the Ape-Mõniste road were both explored. Estonians and Latvians, plus a few foreign guests, worked jointly on the revival of Ape Manor Park (Latvia) and then moved on to Vastse Roosa (Estonia) for workshops and to celebrate the day.







Coffee break without disposable dishes.

Using refillable water containers

Wooden plates

EST-LAT PROGRAMME EU COOPERATION DAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2017

Waste sorting: multilingual signs are very useful at for internationational events.



EST-LAT PROGRAMME EU COOPERATION DAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2017

Environmental awareness-raising workshops: kids make crafts from recyclable materials; DIY cosmetics.





Waste sorting station.







Cup deposit system at the festival.







Energy area: awareness-raising and fun activities for participants.







Water bottle refill station.



Compostable plates, cups and cutlery were used for catering in the team area.





Environmental awareness-raising activities during the festival: information about making better choices for the environment and thinking about the consequences of our actions.







NGO SEIKLUSHUNT (SPORTS EVENTS)







OTHER EXAMPLES

Waste sorting and information stand.



WASTE SORTING AT TARTU STREET FOOD FESTIVAL 2018



WASTE SORTING IN TARTU NATURE HOUSE PARK DURING OUTDOOR EVENTS





