

Moonee Valley

Sustainable Events Toolkit



SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

Event organisers can play a positive role in implementing and encouraging sustainable activities and behaviour. They can save water and reduce the amount of energy and waste at events. They can also play a role in educating the public and raising awareness of sustainability issues.

Council has set the following goals for Moonee Valley events:

- Water is to be minimised
- Energy use and greenhouse gas emissions are to be reduced
- Waste production and material use are to be limited.
- Council strongly discourage the use of plastics bags at events.

There are a number of simple measures that can be taken in the planning and implementation of an event that can reduce its environmental impact.

This fact sheet covers:

1. Planning an event
2. Education
3. Purchasing
4. Reducing plastics
5. Venue
6. Sourcing energy
7. Conservation
8. Ticketing
9. Infrastructure
10. Decorations
11. Lighting
12. Sound Equipment
13. Toilets
14. Food vendors
15. Reducing waste from food vendors
16. Drinking Water
17. Promotions
18. Printing
19. Signage
20. Merchandise
21. Travel and Transport
22. Auditing

This toolkit is based on the Sustainable Events Planner that has been developed in partnership of the Sustainable Living Foundation and Sustainability Victoria.

The Sustainable Events Planner is a great tool to evaluate and improve the environmental sustainability of an event. The Sustainable Events Planner is available online at www.slf.org.au/eventplanner/home.

Please visit the Directory on the Sustainable Events Planner website for information on suppliers for services and products listed below. Alternatively you can contact the Sustainable Living Foundation on
Telephone: (03) 9663 2525
Email: info@slf.org.au

1. Planning an event

Sustainable practices should be built into the event planning process. Aspects to consider when developing a sustainable events plan include:

- What sustainability objectives do we want to achieve?
- Who is responsible for achieving these objectives?
- What resources are available?
- How do we best use these resources?

2. Education

Develop an education plan designed to communicate the sustainability principles of the event and how these translate into actions. This could be a brief hand-out which could be distributed to project partners, staff, volunteers, contractors, performers, visitors, media - both prior to and during the event. Other ideas are to create re-usable signage at the event outlining the steps you've made towards improving your sustainability practice.

3. Purchasing

Green purchasing can be viewed as buying products and services which have less impact on the environment and human health compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose.

As the event organiser green purchasing can be undertaken in two ways. One is the direct purchasing of products, which your event engages in and is organised internally. The other way is where you contract in services, hire venues, or a third party is involved with providing a service or product.

Council's Green Purchasing Policy identifies the following guiding principles to consider:

- energy efficient and greenhouse friendly products
- products that are water efficient and reduce water use
- products that use fewer resources for their production, during operation or for packaging
- products that use or produce less toxic material
- products that reduce ecosystem and biodiversity disruption

Communicate with your stakeholders the desire to implement green purchasing at your event. Above all, remember that if you do not ask for this to be a consideration it will not be one.

Please refer to Moonee Valley's Green Purchasing Policy and Toolkit for more information on green purchasing principles (www.mvcc.vic.gov.au).

You can find green products and suppliers through the online [Eco- Find database](http://www.ecobuy.org.au/director/ecofind.cfm) (<http://www.ecobuy.org.au/director/ecofind.cfm>). You can search by keyword or product category, and also by location.

If your event is compatible, use the opportunity to have a swap market (e.g. books, cloth). This is a great way to reuse products and patrons love it.

4. Reducing Plastics

The environmental effects of single use plastics are well document and include long lasting impacts on the environment and waterways. Many plastics do not decompose but break into smaller pieces eventually becoming microscopic and remaining n the environment indefinitely.

Event planners are encouraged to:

- Avoid distributing single use plastic bags
- Avoid using single use plastic for packaging and promotional purposes
- Avoid selling or distributing plastics straws, bottles, cutlery
- Avoid distribution of balloons at outdoor events. For further information visit the [Zoos Victoria campaign page](#).

Consider alternatives such as bamboo or wooden products. Ask attendees to bring their own, drink bottles, keep cups and re-usable bags.

For more resources and information on plastic free alternatives, visit www.plasticbagfreevictoria.org or www.plasticfreejuly.org .

5. Venue

A little research into selecting a venue with sustainable practices can make a significant difference in how sustainable your event is.

Aspects of sustainability to consider when selecting a venue include infrastructure, energy use, access to public transport, suppliers aligned to the venue and so on. Make sure you can pick your own suppliers and vendors and if not, select a venue with ones who have sustainable practices.

6. Sourcing Energy

Decreasing the energy use should be a continuous goal for any event. Apart from the environmental benefits it is also a great way to decrease costs and to get the marketing benefits of running a more environmentally friendly event.

Event planners should pre-assess all their energy needs and determine the best sources of energy for these needs such as solar power, biodiesel or GreenPower.

Cycling for power is a great hit with kids. Please check the Sustainable Events Planner for more details on the human powered energy trailer that directly inputs into the mains electricity grid.

Depending on the size and type of event, event managers may choose to generate their own renewable energies or switch to GreenPower through a service provider.

Event organisers may select a venue or site that can provide some of these alternative sources of energy and it should also be pre-determined whether the venue can provide a monitoring service of all the energy used throughout the event. If not, there are other organisations that can do the job with adequate support from venue owners and the event organisers.

7. Conservation

Conservation in this instance refers to the preservation of the natural and built environment where the event is being held. Event organisers should look to be proactive in discouraging litter and damage to these environments on-site and limit any unavoidable direct effects from the event and mitigate these if possible.

An approach of 'leave no trace' is encouraged which means that there should be no detrimental signs that an event was held at the site post-event.

8. Ticketing

Online registration processes, paperless ticketing systems and reusable ticketing-related products are just a few ways an event can become more sustainable and efficient.

The paper option could be created by using post-consumer recycled paper or card. The paperless option would involve online registration with only the event organiser being required to print a list of registered participants.

Ticketing products such as name badges, lanyards, and information packs can go a long way towards making your event sustainable.

Ensuring that these products are made from environmentally friendly materials (e.g. recycled paper and plastics), or are being reused will help the event organisers save on costs and will help make the most out of the materials and energy that were consumed when manufacturing these products.

9. Infrastructure

An important aspect of décor and infrastructure of an event is how these materials are dealt with post-event such as being reused, recycled or disposed of.

Exhibitor stands, tents and equipment provided should be made from sustainable products and it should be ensured that these can be reused at other events.

10. Decorations

Decorations can be a major contributor to waste. They are often produced for one-off needs and not allowing for reuse at other events. Decorations should be sourced with the intention of future reuse. For example, if the event has sponsorship and event banners, keep these and the dates and sponsors on separate panels so as dates and sponsors may change every year, the event can still reuse these banners.

11. Lighting

Energy efficient lighting can be achieved by selecting low-wattage artificial lighting and/or employing natural light sources. Traditional incandescent bulbs are more energy intensive than fluorescent and tungsten halogen alternatives. LEDs are less energy intensive and generally last longer for a small amount of extra expenditure of capital. However, as always, it's best to reduce energy use by making the most of natural light as much as possible at your event.

12. Sound Equipment

Large and complex PA systems at events can require a significant amount of energy and equipment to run. PA systems and sound equipment should be strategically setup in and around the event site to maximize the effectiveness of the equipment used. Ensuring that this process is as efficient as it can be will require less energy and equipment consumption and also save event organisers on unnecessary costs.

13. Toilets

Toilets can account for a significant amount of the water used at an event. Many event organisers may not realise the potential of how much they can reduce their event's impact through water saving measures, using reusable water for toilet flushing, producing compost through compostable toilet systems and supplying low-impact materials such as 100 per cent post-consumer waste toilet paper.

14. Food vendors

Sustainable food practices can range from the types of food that is made available to making concessions for exhibitors and stall holders applying sustainable practices themselves. Requesting ethical and sustainable food sources from event caterers and food vendors can go a long way towards reducing the overall impact of your event.

Focus on providing food that addresses a range of sustainability factors. These can include foods that are:

- locally sourced - to reduce carbon emissions from transport miles
- in-season organic - to avoid harmful pesticides
- fair trade accredited - to support workers' rights
- vegetarian or vegan - to reduce energy and water use from resource-intensive livestock farming

Food Vendor Agreements are an ideal way to start working towards a more sustainable food services system. This document will allow event organisers to enforce sustainable practices not on just themselves but also external vendors who participate at the event.

Please contact Council's Environment unit to receive a Food Vendor Agreements template on environment@mvcc.vic.gov.au or 9243 9999.

Please visit Council's online Business Directory for an overview of local caterers and food suppliers (www.mvcc.vic.gov.au).

15. Reducing waste from food vendors

A Wash Against Waste (WAW) system can be employed to promote sustainable cleaning and food serving practices. WAW systems provide food vendors with the opportunity to serve their meals on reusable crockery that can be collected after use, transported back to the WAW station, cleaned using environmentally friendly cleaners and solar-powered water, and then returned to vendors for further use. Please visit the Sustainable Living Foundation's website for more information (<http://www.slf.org.au/waw>).

Ensure that stall holders are aware of the impact of food packaging on the environment and are taking action in improving their methods of packaging. The most preferred option is to minimize the packaging itself and then ensuring that it's reusable and recyclable.

16. Drinking Water

Drinking water can be supplied in bulk via mobile drinking fountains or at water points connected to water tanks. Event organisers should encourage visitors to bring reusable water bottles to the event through promotional material.

City West Water provides mobile drinking fountains for not for profit events in Moonee Valley free of charge. Please visit City West Water's website for more information (http://www.citywestwater.com.au/our_community/mobile_water_fountain.aspx).

For commercial events in Moonee Valley drinking trailers can be hired from a number of organisations including Splashdown: www.splashdown.com.au.

For conferences and meetings, avoid distributing bottles of water or plastic cups by encouraging the use of jugs of water and reusable cups. It is always better to reduce the use of, or reuse, drinking bottles rather than recycling them.

17. Promotions

Event organisers should consider ways to promote their event through less paper-intensive measures including online promotions, multiple-users posters and flyers, reducing the size of disposable flyers and ensuring materials consumed are sustainable (e.g. recycled paper and environmentally friendly ink).

One of the benefits of making your event more sustainable is the benefit of promoting these sustainable practices implemented at your event. This could be done to attract more people to attend your event, attract more sponsorship deals, attract higher quality speakers and get more media coverage for your event.

18. Printing

The key elements to environmentally friendly printing are as follows:

- Choose a commercial printer that adopts best practice in environmental printing
- Check for credible accreditations
- Request soy-based inks which is ink made from soybeans or vegetable oil
- Print on 100 per cent post-consumer recycled paper. This is paper made from old paper that has been de-inked and processed.

19. Signage

There are many ways to lower the environmental impact of signage production including making signs which can be reused or recycled, as well as those made from eco-friendly materials.

Where possible, signs should be kept as broad and general as possible so that it can be reused at future events or other events. Signage can also be produced using environmentally friendly materials including recycled and biodegradable materials.

20. Merchandise

If an event, or its vendors, is selling merchandise at an event, event organisers should consider the impacts of materials used to make the merchandise. Things to consider around merchandise are:

- reusability
- recyclability
- durability
- energy consumption
- efficiency of materials
- harmful toxins
- workers' welfare

This means that environmental and social considerations have been made and incorporated into the production of the merchandise.

Please check section 3 on Purchasing.

21. Travel and Transport

This includes travel and transport that is associated directly with the event in the lead-up, during and post-event. Public transport, mass transport and carpooling systems are some ways to lower carbon emissions associated with an event. Event organisers will need to ensure that easy site access is available for different modes of transport.

Moonee Valley Travel Smart Maps showing walking, cycling and public transport options in Moonee Valley are available at Council's Civic Centre.

Public transport

Public transport is a great way to ensure that travel-related emissions that would otherwise be emitted through private transport alternatives will be greatly reduced. To increase the chances of attendees travelling via public transport, event organisers can take a few simple actions to encourage this activity such as:

- ensuring that there are numerous public transports options running to and from the event (or within walking distance to the event)
- encourage the use of public transport through promotions by partnering with public transport providers or through providing other incentives such as giving discounts for event entry to those travelling on public transport to the event
- discourage any air travel by festival attendees and participants and always encourage coach/rail travel as a priority to reduce the emissions attributed to their travels
- schedule any programmed activities at the event to coincide with public transport timetables to ensure that attendees can catch public transport and not miss out on any activities of special interest to them.

Please visit the Metlink website for information on public transport in Moonee Valley (<http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au>).

Bicycle Services

Event organisers should also encourage event participants and attendees to travel by bicycle when possible. Event organisers may want to consider providing one or all of the following information and services:

- Bike Valet - a service where bikes are kept in a secure location while attendees and others enjoy the event. A lucky valet ticket competition could be run as an incentive.
- Bike Repairers - a service to deal with minor bicycle issues that may arise on the way to or at the event
- Bike Path Routes - accessible routes on the way to the event information should be provided where possible
- Bike Loans - the event may want to rent or purchase a number of bikes to encourage staff to ride to and from the event or with preparations leading up to the event.

Please contact Council's Environment unit to find out about availability of portable bike racks on environment@mvcc.vic.gov.au or 9243 9999.

Carpooling

The notion of carpooling is one aspect of 'sustainable transport' and relates to maximum-occupancy vehicle travel (according to the legal limit). By promoting carpooling, people are encouraged to travel together in the same vehicle, normally where departure points are close-by or 'en route' to a shared destination.

Remember to promote carpooling through event promotions, any websites and registration materials. You may also want to offer incentives such access to preferred parking spots or even discounted registration / entry fees to encourage carpooling.

Freight

Event organisers should reduce greenhouse emissions from freight through bulk purchasing, dual purpose trips and planning ahead.

22. Auditing

Auditing refers to the evaluation of the effectiveness of an event's sustainability plan or the overall environmental performance of an event. Auditing allows areas of improvement to be identified and action to be taken to become more sustainable and energy-efficient. The outcome of any actions taken as a result of environmental audits will often ultimately lead to cost benefits such as in energy use and water consumption as is reducing waste transported to landfill. These ongoing cost savings alone are well worth the relatively small cost incurred through the auditing process.

Generally, auditing is conducted by taking samples of a range of event activities and testing them against certain indicators such as industry standards and recommendations or self-imposed targets.

There are several companies that can assist with auditing and also offer further advice on sustainable event practice. However, if you have the experience within your production staff, you can carry out your own auditing to assess how your event is performing in terms of energy use, water consumption and/or waste generated. Some auditing can also be conducted through visitor surveys regarding aspects such as modes of transport used by visitors.

Sustainable events checklist

This checklist guides you through some of the questions to ask when assessing the environmental impact of your event.

	Questions	Y	N	NA	Comments
Planning					
1.	Has the event appointed someone who is responsible for planning and monitoring the effectiveness of your sustainable event practice?				
Education					
2.	Does the event have an educational strategy to promote its sustainable practices pre and during the event?				
3.	Does the event ensure staff and volunteers understand and are committed to the sustainability actions pre, during and post the event?				
Purchasing					
4.	Does the event plan to develop green purchasing guidelines for all its production needs including contractors, products and service providers?				
5.	Does the event plan to utilise local suppliers, reducing travel and supporting the local community where possible, for all its production needs?				
Venue					
6.	Has the event organiser engaged with prospective venues to include them in the events sustainability plan?				
Sourcing energy					
7.	Does the event plan to measure and monitor energy consumption?				
8.	Does the event ensure onsite temporary utilities draw on renewable energy sources? (e.g. wind, solar, biodiesel)				
Conservation					
9.	Does the event ensure that any damage to site from temporary structures, shelters, flooring and general production is monitored and restorative measures will be taken?				
Ticketing					
10.	Does the event use online ticketing systems or tickets made from post-consumer recycled paper or card.?				
Infrastructure					
11.	Are exhibitor stands, tents and equipment made from sustainable products and suitable for reuse at other events?				
Decorations					
12.	Are decorations sourced with the intention of future reuse. (e.g. generic banners with dates and sponsors on separate				

	panels so they can be reused)				
Lighting					
13.	Does the event plan to schedule its program to maximize daylight conditions to reduce the need for lighting?				
14.	Does the event plan to utilise reduced energy-consuming LED lighting for stage, operational and feature lighting requirements?				
Sound equipment					
15.	Does the event plan to utilise more energy efficient PA systems or reduce consumption?				
Toilets					
16.	Does the event plan to utilise recycled water for toilet flushing, composting toilets or waterless urinals to eliminate water and chemical use?				
17.	Will the event utilise 100 per cent post-consumer waste toilet paper?				
Food vendors					
18.	Does the event have a food vendor agreement that sets out policies on waste management, types of food packaging, food preferences, cleaning practices etc?				
19.	Has the event considered the viability of implementing a reusable crockery/cutlery Wash Against Waste system to service the food vendors and eliminating single use serving items?				
20.	Has the event specified that preference will be given to stall holders supplying organic, vegetarian, fair trade and local produce?				
Drinking water					
21.	Does the event intend on supplying drinking water to minimise the sale of bottles and encourage the use of reusable containers?				
Promotions					
22.	Has the event considered how it could use its sustainable event practice as a positive marketing tool to attract visitors, stall holders, sponsors, presenters and media?				
23.	Does the marketing strategy focus on reducing advertising material for example, emails instead of printed flyers, reduced size flyers pointing to a website for further information?				
Printing					
24.	Does the event plan to implement sustainable printing practices for all its printing requirements? (e.g. soy based ink, recycled paper)				
Signage					
25.	Does the event use reusable signage made from sustainable materials?				

Merchandise				
26.	Does the event have a merchandising standard for all participating vendors, which will include eliminating unsustainable promotional giveaways?			
Travel and transport				
27.	Does the event promote and encourage walking, cycling, carpooling and the use of public transport?			
28.	Does the event plan to provide suitable and secure facilities to cater for cyclists?			
Auditing				
29.	Does the event plan to measure its ecological footprint across all areas of the events production to measure environmental sustainability of the event??			
Energy				
30.	Does the event plan to reward or provide incentives for low energy use stall holders?			
Plastic Reduction				
31.	Have attendees been encouraged to bring their own bottles, cups and bags?			
32.	Have stall holders been encouraged to consider alternatives to plastic?			
33.	Has the event promotion materials communicated the impacts of plastic on the environment and encouraged alternatives?			