

GREEN EVENTS CERTIFICATION GUIDE



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is a Green Event?.....	2
General Suggestions.....	3
Guidelines	
Communication.....	3
Waste Management.....	5
Food and Beverage.....	6
Decorations.....	8
Transportation.....	10
Energy Saving.....	11
Glossary.....	12

WHAT IS A GREEN EVENT?

UCLA, along with the entire UC System, has made a far-reaching commitment to sustainability, including a goal of zero waste sent to landfill by 2020. **Sustainability** is defined as meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations. Basically, it's wise management of resources with a long term view. And the best part is, we can all play a role!

With all the events held on UCLA's campus, events are sure to make an impact on the environment. How would you like your campus event to stand high above the rest? When you certify your event as a Green Event, you're letting your guests know, along with the entire campus community, that you are committed to the environment by hosting an event that is eco-friendly, sustainable, and creates minimal waste. And with over 10,000 events on campus each year, your event will be a clear standout when certified with this unique honor. Go green and get noticed!

This guide will walk you through the necessary steps to plan and execute your green event, plus assist you in completing the online Green Events Certification application to obtain the Green Events Certification seal.

Quick Reference Guide

Whether you are familiar with planning sustainable events or are new to this idea, this guide will be a beneficial resource in helping you transform your event into an environmentally friendly one. Many of these suggestions are applicable regardless of the size of your event and venue.

If you have any questions along the way, please contact sustainability@ucla.edu.

Note: There are six categories for a green event listed in the guide: Communication, Energy Saving, Food and Beverage, Transportation, Decorations, and Waste Management. Each category has a table that contains an action item, suggestions to implement the item, and visual resources and references for clarification. Suggestions are color-coded by items to consider **before the event (green)**, **during the event (blue)**, and **after the event (red)**. Some action items are also listed with an intent which gives a brief explanation as to why the action item is included and should be considered in the event-planning process.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- Be realistic - It's not always easy or reasonable to implement everything listed in this guide. But start with ideas that are easiest for you to execute and as you go forward and plan more events, add additional sustainable elements to each new event.
- Make a commitment - Advertise your event as a sustainable one! Let your participants know that you are committed to hosting an environmentally sound event. Then, wow them with an amazing green event. Additionally, communicate with all parties involved in the event process of your sustainability goals.
- Choose products that are recyclable or reusable - Think about sustainability before you place supply orders. Choose products that can be recycled, reused, or produced in a green way. Emphasize the importance of waste reduction and proper waste sorting.
- Thank your participants for contributing - Let your guests know they are taking part of something special for the environment!

- Share your success - Share your success stories with us so that we can feature them on the Events Office's Green Events website. Not only will your event stand out as unique, other event organizers will be inspired to go green as well! Use hashtag _____ when posting any pictures of your green event!

COMMUNICATION Color coding: before the event (green), during the event (blue), after the event (red)

Action Item	Tips	Resource
Go Paperless	<p>Intent: Reduces need for paper, saves trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send invitations, conduct event registration, publicize updates electronically • Use web or email-based registration systems like Eventbrite • Use whiteboards or flat screen TV to post important information during planning sessions rather than printing meeting handouts • Only distribute paper materials (like handouts or notepads) upon request • For handouts, flyers, and promotional materials, create a QR Code and display on a printed handout to direct to a website or page (avoiding numerous flyers) 	<p>Make your QR Code here</p> <p>Eventbrite.com</p> <p>Photo example of electronic schedule</p>
Inform Guests with Invitation	<p>Intent: Inform guests on sustainable intentions of event and allow them to prepare accordingly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage guests to stay at sustainability-minded hotels and sustainable restaurants in the area • Provide sustainable transportation resources like public transit schedules and carpooling services; you can create a list (using Google Sheets) of drivers and connect them to potential carpoolers • Ask event participants to bring their own coffee mugs and water cups, as well as paper and writing utensils <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ You can let attendees know that you will not be offering cups at event ○ Offer raffle prizes for participants and bring back up mugs in case attendees forget 	<p>University accommodations</p> <p>Eco-friendly hotels near campus</p>

Inform Relevant Parties	<p><i>Intent: Allows for more control in making your event sustainable upstream of the planning process</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Always communicate and emphasize your sustainability goals with vendors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Be specific and enforce guidelines at the very beginning 	
Highlight your Event as Sustainable	<p><i>Intent: When aware of the sustainable goals of an event, guests are more likely to adjust behavior accordingly to meet goals</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inform guests that they are participating in a green event (signage and brief announcement during event) ● Thank guests for considerations they've taken to make this a green event 	
Inform Guests on Proper Waste Disposal	<p><i>Intent: Even if you have sustainable products, landfill waste will not be minimized if these products are not properly sorted</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make announcements during and in the middle of the event about proper waste sorting ● Example: event using all compostable-ware should tell their guests that all dining- ware should be placed in compost bin 	

WASTE MANAGEMENT Color coding: before the event (green), during the event (blue), after the event (red)

Action Item	Tips	Resource
Create Reuse Stations	<p><i>Intent: Having a designated area for reusing materials from this event will reduce waste</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a convenient location for participants to return handouts (instructions, campus map, etc.) that can be reused for future events 	

<p>Create a waste plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider products that will be at your event and the proper waste bins needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ex. If your event will only have recyclable service ware and the food will be served on reusable or recyclable platters, there may not be a need for a landfill container. ● Communicate with guests through signage and announcements throughout your event on proper waste sorting ● Contact the Events Office or Facilities Management to help coordinate the delivery, set up, and pick up of waste bins 	<p>For bin service: Use the Grounds Department of Facilities Management to submit a facilities service request (FSR) or call (310) 825-1827</p>
<p>Determine what sort of waste bins work best for your event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Your event manager or Facilities Management representative can assist you with bin/dumpster needs ● Recycling and compost bins cost significantly less than trash bins because there are no landfill fees when recycling or composting waste 	<p>Flow diagram of waste bin type</p> <p>Photo example of landfill waste prevention</p>
<p>Create signage for waste bins</p>	<p><i>Intent: Signage and especially volunteers are effective methods in informing guests on where to dispose of their material</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a list of what goes into each individual bin and have volunteers assist attendees with placing waste in the appropriate bin ● Customize your signage based on the items that will be at the event; you can make a copy of the signage document provided here and use it as a template 	<p>Signage template</p> <p>Signage Maker</p> <p>Photo example of signage for 100% compostables</p>
<p>Right size your waste receptacle needs</p>	<p><i>Intent: Reduces contamination and encourages proper disposal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Events with no food might not need as many containers as ones that do ● If all material is compostable or recyclable, eliminate trash bins from event 	
<p>Collaborate with Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discuss with vendors the possibility of recycling excess materials after the event rather than disposing them 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check with your catering company on food donation policies and where best to donate 	
Donate and Reuse Material	<p><i>Intent: Oftentimes lightly used material can be reused, if not by you, by someone else</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make plans to donate materials and centerpieces after the event • Goodwill is a great place to donate items like linens, art supplies, reusable centerpiece material and more • Collect all items that can be reused later and store them for future events 	Goodwill donation center locator

FOOD AND BEVERAGE Color coding: *before the event (green), during the event (blue), after the event (red)*

Action Item	Tips	Resource
Sustainable Serviceware	<p><i>Intent: Use serviceware that can be reused or can be diverted from landfill</i></p> <p>Preferred:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use plated dinners on reusable dinnerware (ex: ceramic, hard plastic) <p>Secondary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask caterer to provide compostable options for plates, cups, and flatware (soy-based) • If compostable options cannot be used, opt for white or clear recyclable products labeled with recycling codes #1-7 (labeled on bottom of products) <p>Avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Polystyrene #6 aka “Styrofoam” (cannot recycle, will be banned from purchasing through UCLA) • Black plastic (harder for waste facility technologies to identify as recyclable) • Individually boxed lunches • Individual packaged condiments (use bulk dispensers instead) 	<p>Photo of zero waste catering set-Up</p> <p>Sustainable serviceware options</p> <p>Photo example of recycling code</p>

Sustainable Food Options	<p><i>Intent: Consider the environmental impacts of the foods you consider serving; Beef production is a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and water consumption</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider serving vegetarian or vegan meals ● If serving meat, seek humanely raised meat and sustainable seafood options 	
Communicating with catering about sustainable options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request zero waste catering ● Request humanely raised meat and sustainable seafood options ● Consider menu choices to reduce disposables (i.e. no box for boxed lunches, finger foods that work for a napkin) ● When providing caterer with attendee estimate, avoid ordering more food than is reasonably needed ● Request smaller food platters that can be replenished during the event to keep potential leftovers secure ● Request caterer to pour water only upon request ● Request caterers to supply to-go containers, so guests can take leftover food home after the event 	Catering services that offer zero waste options
Sustainable Beverage Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Serve Fair Trade certified beverages such as coffee or tea ● If serving alcoholic beverages, research sustainably brewed beer and biodynamic wines ● Use refillable 5 gallon water coolers instead of offering individual water bottles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other water dispensing options: water fountain & mobile water trucks ○ Offer a raffle prize for people who bring refillable bottles if appropriate for you event ● Avoid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Straws ○ Single- use stir sticks for coffee and tea ○ Individual packaged creamer 	
Food Donations	<p><i>Intent: Food waste has a high environmental impact in terms of emissions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check California Retail Food Code for donation guidelines ● Ask catering company about leftover food policy as well ● Take excess food home or donate to shelter after event ● Keep large and medium sized reusable containers to transport food donations 	Food donation policies LA County Food Redistribution

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify your department's food donation methods and implement them • Food leftovers from events can be donated to local shelter, CPO food closet (on-campus), or 580 Cafe (on-campus) if kept covered and in a secure environment 	Initiative
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DECORATIONS Always consider using materials that can be reused for future events

Color coding: *before the event* (green), *during the event* (blue), *after the event* (red)

Action Item	Tips	Resource
Paper Choice	<i>Intent: Less resources to produce and more sustainable process</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrap paper or paper made with a high percentage of post-consumer material • Processed chlorine free or total chlorine free paper to reduce toxins 	
Printing	<i>Intent: Less harmful to the environment than their petroleum based counterparts</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print double-sided • Opt to print in black and white • Print on recycled papers • Use soy or vegetable-based ink 	
Utilize practical centerpieces options	<i>Intent: Consider using decorations that will be useful and will not contribute to landfill waste</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use live herbs and other plants as centerpieces and offer them to guests to take after the event • Use fruit baskets as centerpieces and offer them to guests as they leave or to enjoy during the event • Use locally grown flowers or decorative water and stone vases centerpieces 	

Lighting	<p>Intent: Consider more energy-efficient options and options that have a smaller environmental impact in the production and disposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use LED lights to light your event when possible ● Minimize the use of petroleum-based candles; alternatives include beeswax candles and battery operated votives 	
Decorations	<p>Intent: Consider decorations that can be reused or those with less of an impact upon disposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid the use of balloons as they are not biodegradable; Instead use banners, flags, ribbon streamers, paper pom-poms, or paper lanterns ● Alternatively ask local vendors or schools to donate artwork and use as decoration ● Use reusable table linens to cover tables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If reusable linens are not available, use unbleached butcher paper and compost them after your event ○ Request vendors to send linens without plastic wrapping ● Purchase gifts or giveaways that are recycled or can be reused 	<p>Giveaway ideas: reusable utensils, produce bags, and drinking straws, solar powered charger, sustainable apparel, coffee tumbler</p> <p>Check UCLA approved vendor list</p>
Provide reusable name badges, table tents, and markers	<p>Intent: Disposable sticker badges are not recyclable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reusable badges can be collected at the event's conclusion and used for future gatherings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Can also create name tags with paper and safety pins ● Reusable table tents with whiteboard material can be purchased or DIY by laminating paper table tents 	<p>Reusable name cards; Reusable name placard; Reusable table tent; Refillable markers</p> <p>Photo example of recyclable name tags (paper and safety pins)</p>

Post information on whiteboards/ flat screen TVs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using signage for schedules and program information can reduce the need for printed flyers and booklets 	
Encourage guests to take home items	<p>Intent: Always aim to reuse or recycle materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can make this a fun activity by raffling centerpieces, decorations, or artwork to guests or offering them for reuse at other events 	

TRANSPORTATION

Color coding: before the event (green), during the event (blue), after the event (red)

Action Item	Tips	Resource
Plan events with travel in mind	<p>Intent: Consider environmental impact and emissions of travel and transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose event locations and accommodations that minimize travel of attendees When attendees are predominantly UCLA staff, faculty, or students, hold your event in a convenient location on campus to reduce travel costs Schedule events during off-peak traffic hours like late morning or early afternoon, as idling in heavy congestion is a gas guzzler 	
Take green transportation to the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide guest with information on public transport options, such as: LA Metro, Santa Manta Blue Bus, Culver City Bus, LADOT Commuter Express, FlyAway, City of Santa Clarita Transit, Antelope Valley Transit Authority, Amtrak Thruway Bus Service Encourage participants to bike and walk to the event when feasible and provide access to secure bicycle storage and/or racks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expert tip: Offer raffle prizes to those who take green transportation 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide shuttle service or carpool options to the event when possible • Encourage participants to use rental cars as a last resort, and if necessary request hybrid of electric vehicles • Often special parking spots for EV vehicles 	
Non-idling Vehicles	<p><i>Intent: Greenhouse gases are still emitted when vehicles are idling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request vendors to turn off their vehicles instead of idling when making deliveries or during set-up 	

ENERGY SAVING Color coding: before the event (green), during the event (blue), after the event (red)

Action Item	Tips	Resource
Avoid mid-day events indoors	<p><i>Intent: During afternoon hours energy demand is the highest and also more expensive than other times of the day</i></p>	
Utilize natural light	<p><i>Intent: Reduce the event’s energy impact and take advantage of our LA sunshine</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold events during daylight hours and in locations that can be lit naturally 	
Make sustainable choices for temporary power needs	<p><i>Intent: Opt for the cleaner energy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you must use portable electricity, it’s best to use a solar generator rather than traditional propane or diesel generator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Request an eco-friendly generator directly from a vendor 	Eco-friendly generator rentals list

<p>Non-idling Vehicles</p>	<p><i>Intent: Greenhouse gases are still emitted when vehicles are idling</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Request vendors to turn off their vehicles instead of idling when making deliveries or during set-up 	
<p>Power Strips</p>	<p><i>Intent: Easier to turn off power power strips, consumes less energy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use power strips for all electronic equipment (laptops, projectors, etc.) and shut off power strips during breaks or between sessions 	
<p>Rechargeable Batteries</p>	<p><i>Intent: Disposable batteries contribute to e-waste</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use rechargeable batteries for electronic devices (cameras, laser pointers, etc.) 	

GLOSSARY

Sustainability

Meeting the needs of present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Compostable

Product that is capable of disintegrating into natural elements in a compost environment, leaving no toxicity in the soil. This typically must occur in about 90 days. However, most compostable-ware is industrial compostable, meaning that they must be broken down with heat and other processes at a facility before they are readily available as compost.

Biodegradable

Product with the ability to break down, safely and relatively quickly, by biological means, into the raw materials of nature and disappear into the environment.

Post consumer material

Material that has been diverted or recovered from landfill that can be reused and recycled

Soy based ink

Ink that can be used for printers made from soybeans that is more environmentally friendly and is said to have truer/ brighter colors and makes paper easier to recycle

Fair Trade

A trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers

Greenhouse gases

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere and subsequently make Earth's surface warmer than it would be without the gases. Include carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide.

Biodynamic

A holistic, ecological, and ethical approach to farming, gardening, food and nutrition. Similar to organic practices but considers farm as a single organism and therefore integrate all living organisms within farm process

E-waste

Consumer and business electronic equipment that is near or at the end of its useful life with a large environmental impact if thrown to landfill ([E- Waste Recycling Resource at UCLA](#))

APPENDIX

- [Map of all compost dumpsters on campus](#) (marked in green)
- [List of recommendations](#) for generator rentals, catering services, and sustainable serviceware
- [UCLA Vendor List](#): A list of UCLA approved vendors to purchase many items