

HKUST Sustainable Events Guidelines

GUIDANCE FOR STAFF, FACULTY, AND STUDENTS TO IMPROVE
CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE

HKUST Sustainable Events Guidelines

Events are one of the key areas with great opportunities for waste reduction. In particular, large events produce a significant amount of waste during a short period of time. Examples are Congregation, student society promotion period, orientation camps, large dinners and receptions, and Open Day (Information Day).

These Sustainable Events Guidelines suggest ways to organize and manage the events more sustainably through collective efforts by the departments, offices and student bodies across the campus.

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1. *Communication and Waste Management*

To organize events in a sustainable way, it is important to first set the Green Initiatives objectives for different stakeholders to understand your event will be green and sustainable. Communicate with event participants about the green elements and practices of the events to promote a positive brand image and demonstrate as green role model. Promoting and organizing event smartly may also save you money, resources and increase efficiency. The goal of setting up objectives to meet are, 1) to include sustainability at the planning stage of events, 2) to show the importance to organizer itself, related staff departments or societies, possible participants and any other interested stakeholders such as the media, and 3) to promote concrete measures at the events, such as waste separation and recycling. Offices/societies are encouraged to adopt the following actions:

- ✧ Include sustainability items and clearly establish their importance at the planning stage of events, including waste reduction, waste management and other possible items.
- ✧ Identify the types of waste to be produced and estimate the amount to be generated in the event.

- ✧ Propose waste reduction and management strategies for each identified waste category (See appendix for possible measures).
- ✧ Communicate with participants and promote green messages on different media platforms and all stages of the events. Useful information includes green tips, recycle instructions and BYOB (Bring you own bottle) tips can be posted on event website, social media etc.
- ✧ Include the green tips or messages above if brochures are printed and distributed.
- ✧ Make announcements to remind participants to recycle; when necessary, set up Green information booths and assign Green Ambassadors to assist recycling facilities and ensure the recyclables are properly collected in large scale events.
- ✧ Record the amount of different types of waste produced with assistance from the cleaning contractor or from a waste audit for reference of future events. If possible, compile an event waste management summary report.

2. *Promotions*

Promoting events to other students and colleagues can often place undue burdens on our consumption and waste streams. The goal of these guidelines is to facilitate less impact from communications strategies in terms of printing, publishing, displays, handouts, and inter-office communications. Offices/societies are encouraged to adopt the following actions:

- ✧ Reduce printing by utilizing electronic resources for communications. For example, use electronic media for invitations, registration, announcement, updates such as e-card, online form, social media, university e-board.
- ✧ Make presentations electronically available. Ask participants to bring wireless device to access online documents throughout the event.
- ✧ Design your promotional materials (e.g. banners, souvenirs, leaflets, brochures) in a way that can be reused in the future by department/society, such as avoiding information that can be outdated, design them with precise content.
- ✧ When it is necessary to print, accurately estimate the quantity needed to avoid waste.
- ✧ Use 100% recycled paper or paper from sustainable sources (such as FSC certified) with soy-based ink printing, double-sided (PTC orders meet these criteria). Consider the newly-introduced product of FSC certified water resistant paper for producing event banner with much lower cost and durable feature with similar performance to the foam board or vinyl banner. Or consider the biodegradable cloth banner option for outdoor decoration.

3. *Sustainable Use of Materials*

The use of materials on campus – and how we treat them afterwards – is a key area where

sustainable offices/societies can make a difference. The following guidelines are intended to prioritize the minimization of wastes through different means. Offices/societies are encouraged to adopt the following actions:

- ✧ Try to get your event materials that are recyclable, compostable or reusable. Avoid using Styrofoam products.
- ✧ Choose sustainable decorations. Reuse decorations from past events to reduce waste and decorate in a way that can be easily dismantled and separated for recycling.
- ✧ Establish convenient recycling collection locations with proper signage and separate recyclable (paper, plastic, metal, glass, food waste) from general trash. Offices should contact FMO housekeeping team and Student Societies should contact SAO in advance to arrange for extra recycling bins and collection. Encourage participants to support separation and recycling during the green event. Helpers or volunteers can be assigned to check periodically to ensure that diverted items are going into the appropriate containers.
- ✧ Minimize the give-away and printed materials if they are not vital to the goal of event. Communicate message through online channels or information board to reduce wastage.
- ✧ Choose practical and environmentally friendly souvenirs such as items contain recycled content, biodegradable, reusable materials. Reduce packaging for individual items. Virtual gifts and options on souvenir or a rebate are possible ideas
- ✧ To show token of appreciation to guest/speaker, donation to charity can be an option to reduce materials generated.
- ✧ Check out the HKUST green purchasing policies to identify and support green products.
- ✧ For left-over souvenirs, reuse them in future events or donate to charities/community centers for people in need.

4. *Catering*

In many of our events, we arrange catering for the participants. By sustainably consuming the food and materials, we can reduce our impact on the environment. Offices/societies are encouraged to adopt the following actions:

- ✧ For any events that involve food, ensure that food waste is minimized (by ordering the right amount and take home any left-over food).
- ✧ When you order food, ask for reusable cutlery, mugs and tableware to reduce disposable items. If disposables are necessary, please request biodegradable materials.
- ✧ Contact FMO housekeeping team to arrange the extra recycling bins/stands for caterer use, and recyclables collection arrangement. Arrange volunteer ambassadors if needed to encourage

participates to separate waste properly with signage guidance. For Food waste, contact CSO for options and arrangement of food waste collection and recycling. For small scale event, you may consider borrowing a 4.8L food waste collection bin from the Sustainability Unit for use.

- ✧ Develop a plan for what to do with any left-over food, including request to caterer for donation to food charities like Food Angel or Feeding Hong Kong And check out our green team project of food sharing among campus members [USTFood](#) .
- ✧ Avoid bottled water. Provide tap water or use bulk water dispensers with reusable mugs for participants and guests. Encourage participants to bring their own reusable bottles to refill. Check out the water fountain locations in UST at [green.ust.hk](#).
- ✧ Avoid carton beverages. Provide beverages in bulk containers. Clean, separate and recycle beverage containers, including cans, PET bottles and glass bottles.
- ✧ Offer vegetarian meal, organic food option. Source seasonal food ingredients from locally grown or neighboring area such as mainland China to reduce food miles of carbon footprint produced during transportation.
- ✧ Consider cutting down on the list of items at buffets.

5. Others

There are also other ways that we can organize events sustainably and creatively. Offices are encouraged to adopt the following actions:

- ✧ Plan in advance for how to organize the events in a sustainable way. Communicate with all partners and parties in advance. As a leading university, participants will appreciate your effort in contributing to a better environment.
- ✧ Choose event venue with natural light and warmth or event hold event outdoor to save energy and light.
- ✧ Choose suppliers that provide eco-friendly options to support your green event, locally-sourced materials, or support the social enterprise.
- ✧ Give small token advantages e.g. free drinks/prioritized food to those who bring their own reusable drinking mug/bottle.
- ✧ Encourage participants to take public transportation to event venue. Provide public transportation information before the event. Suggest ride-sharing or arrange group transportation from station to venue.
- ✧ Promote a healthy and happy lifestyle through your events is promoting sustainability in our community.
- ✧ Turn off all electronic equipment and lights after use or when not in use.

6. Green Event Checklist

Reference to “Waste Reduction Guidebook for Large Scale Event Organizers” issued by Environmental Protection Department, please refer to P.35-38 for the Green Events Checklist.

[Click here](#) to download the Guidebook

7. Appendix

✧ Useful Contacts (HKUST)

Actions	Related Department or Office	Contact
(For Staff) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arranging Recycling Bins• Recyclables Collection Arrangement	FMO (Housekeeping Team)	23586421
(For Student societies) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arranging Recycling Bins• Recyclables Collection Arrangement	SAO	2358 5819
Arrangement of Food Waste Collection and Recycling	CSO	23586333
Printing Promotion Materials In a Sustainable Way	PTC	23586818
Consultation	Sustainability Unit, HSEO	23588227, green@ust.hk

✧ Donation and Recycling actions for different items

Items	Actions	Name of Organization	Contact
Surplus Food	Donation	Feeding Hong Kong Food Angel FoodGrace Foodlink Foundation	https://www.feedinghk.org/ https://www.foodangel.org.hk/ http://www.foodgrace.com/ http://www.foodlinkfoundation.org/
Books	Donation	Christian Action HKUST Business Cohort Community Textbook Give and Take campaign	http://www.christian-action.org.hk/ https://www.facebook.com/Hkustcohort

Clothing	Donation	Friends of the Earth	Collection point on campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seafront, Hall 6 • Tower C, Lo Ka Chung University Center
Carton Beverages	Recycle	DrinkCarton Program, Green Power	https://www.facebook.com/DrinkCarton/ http://www.greenpower.org.hk/
Food Waste	Recycle	Organic Waste Treatment Facilities of HK Government	Collection point at <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LG7 Refuse Chamber • Loading Bay B3 (LG1) • Common Rooms on each floor in Student Halls • Staff Quarters
Wood	Recycle	Local Recycler	Collection point in LG7 outside refuse chamber (near lift 3)
Metal	Recycle	Local Recycler	Collection point in LG7 outside refuse chamber (near lift 3)
Glass	Recycle	Government Recycling Scheme	Recycle collection point on campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loading Bay A1 • Lo Ka Chung University Center • Atrium outside library, academic concourse, behind UG Hall 2 and 6, all staff quarters
Styrofoam	Recycle	Missing Link Styrofoam Recycling Scheme	Collection point in LG7 inside refuse chamber (near lift 3)