

# Dalhousie University Sustainable Events Certification

Sustainable event planning seeks to minimize water and energy consumption and waste production at meetings, conferences, or other group engagements. Sustainable events also entail the promotion of environmental values and education on sustainable practices. When we plan more sustainable events, we put these values into action. Every event, no matter how small, offers us an opportunity to create an inclusive space for social gathering, to manage our financial resources responsibly and to minimize our campus community's impact on the environment. This checklist breaks event planning down into everyday actions that we can all take to help advance sustainability on campus and to make meaningful change. Use it to assess your current event planning practices, try some new things and to get recognized for your achievements as a campus leader in sustainability.

- Evaluate each action item listed in the Sustainable Events Checklist to determine if it applies to your event. If an action item is impossible to achieve in the context of your event, put a "No" under the "Applicable?" column and deduct its points from the total number of available points in the Checklist. - For example, if you are hosting an outdoor event, mark the action item "We will host our event in a LEED certified building" as "Not Applicable." If you have successfully completed an action item, please mark it as "Applicable" to your event.
- The percentage of applicable items that you have completed represents your total score.

**Bronze Level** = Minimum 40% of applicable points

**Silver Level** = Minimum 55% of applicable points

**Gold Level** = Minimum 75% of applicable points

**Platinum Level** = Minimum 90% of applicable points

- Once you have completed this checklist, email [Kareina.dsouza@dal.ca](mailto:Kareina.dsouza@dal.ca) to set up your event planning audit.
- Once your audit is complete, you will receive the promotional material for your event.



## Sustainable Events Checklist

| Logistics and Planning |                        |       |   |
|------------------------|------------------------|-------|---|
| Applicable?            | Total Points Available | Score |   |
|                        | 1                      |       | Event planners read and sign off on a sustainability policy for the event at the start of planning  |
|                        | 1                      |       | Assign at least one person on planning committee to ensure the implementation of sustainability and accessibility practices   |
|                        | 1                      |       | Attendees pre-register or RSVP to limit over purchasing   |
|                        | 1                      |       | Event is promoted as a "Sustainable Event" once certified   |
|                        | 1                      |       | Use an electronic event invitation and registration process (e.g. email, eSignatures, paperless tickets, Google Forms).   |
|                        | 1                      |       | Event is 100% paper-free or uses very little paper  |
|                        | 1                      |       | Distribute documents electronically (e.g. via email, mobile app, handouts given as PDFs, or G Suite).   |
|                        | .5                     |       | Print name tags on recycled paper, avoiding self-adhesive name tags.  |
|                        | .5                     |       | Reuse plastic name tag-holders, collect them after the event  |
|                        | .5                     |       | Print promotional materials and handouts on double-sided paper.   |
|                        | 1                      |       | Print on labelled third-party certified paper containing recycled content.  |
|                        | 1                      |       | Whenever possible, create promotional signs out of materials which can be repurposed or reused at other meetings / events (e.g. avoid dates on banners or sandwich boards so they can be reused in future years). |
|                        | 1                      |       | Create decor out of materials that can be repurposed or reused at other events (e.g. reusable centerpieces).  |
|                        | 1                      |       | Use erasable boards, blackboards, or projector instead of paper flip charts most of the time.   |
|                        | 1                      |       | Event is held in a venue chosen for its energy efficiency and sustainable amenities, i.e. a LEED-certified building, a space with natural lighting, or outdoors.  |
|                        | .5                     |       | Tell another organization about the Sustainable Events Certification program via email, twitter etc.  |
| Score:                 |                        |       | /   |

| Communications |                        |       |   |
|----------------|------------------------|-------|---|
| Applicable?    | Total Points Available | Score |   |
|                | 1                      |       | Inform and encourage attendees to use sustainable transportation to get to the event, such as cycling, walking, public transit, carpooling or using a carshare before event |
|                | 1                      |       | Communicate the sustainability goals and features of the event to participants before, during, and after the occasion   |

|          |   |  |  |
|----------|---|--|--|
|          | 1 |  | Encourage participants to bring their own coffee mugs, dishware, bags etc.   |
|          | 3 |  | Inform attendees how and where to sort waste into Paper, Recycling, Organics and Garbage by reviewing <a href="#">Dalhousie Waste Management Guide</a> and pointing out the closest waste management system. |
|          | 1 |  | Tell participants how to sort common items at the event  |
|          | 1 |  | Ensure accessibility and inclusivity features are communicated to event attendees.   |
| Score: / |   |  |  |

| Exhibitor Involvement |                        |       |  |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------|--|
| Applicable?           | Total Points Available | Score |  |
|                       | 1                      |       | Communicate your event's sustainability features and goals to all exhibitors or vendors                                |
|                       | 1                      |       | Samples or giveaways should align with the event's sustainability message  |
|                       | 1                      |       | Integrate sustainability concepts into vendor contracts, by mandating reusable or compostable sample cups, for example |
|                       | 1                      |       | Request that no single garbage bins be provided for each booth   |
| Score: /              |                        |       |  |

| Procurement |                        |       |   |
|-------------|------------------------|-------|---|
| Applicable? | Total Points Available | Score |   |
|             | 0.5                    |       | Review <a href="#">Dalhousie University Sustainable Procurement Checklist</a>   |
|             | 2                      |       | Utilize a social enterprise (a company that contributes to the social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being of Nova Scotia)  |
|             | 3                      |       | Do not provide "thank you gifts" giveaway items and door prizes and make a donation to charity.   |
|             | 1                      |       | Only provide "thank-you" gifts, giveaway items and door prizes that model the <a href="#">Sustainable Procurement Checklist</a> . They should be durable, able to be reused and/or be a prompt for sustainable behaviour. |
| Score: /    |                        |       |   |

| Catering    |                        |       |  |
|-------------|------------------------|-------|--|
| Applicable? | Total Points Available | Score |  |
|             | 1                      |       | Event has no bottled water   |
|             | 2                      |       | Event follows the <a href="#">Canada Food Guide's</a> recommended proportions of vegetables, fruits, protein and whole grain foods |
|             | 5                      |       | Food and condiments served with reusable dishware  |
|             | 1                      |       | Food and condiments served with compostable dishware   |
|             | 5                      |       | Coffee is served in reusable mugs  |
|             | 1                      |       | Coffee is served in compostable mugs   |
|             | 1                      |       | Food is clearly labeled with dietary information and source (farm, vendor, etc.), as appropriate                                   |

|  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
|  | 1 |  | Ask about dietary restrictions and provide labelled options (vegetarian/vegan, allergies, kosher, halal, etc.) |
|  | 2 |  | Serve only fair-trade tea and coffee   |
|  | 1 |  | Make a plan for the potential of surplus food  |
|  | 1 |  | Serve finger food to minimize dishware needed  |
|  |   |  | Score: /   |

| Waste Management |                        |       |  |
|------------------|------------------------|-------|--|
| Applicable?      | Total Points Available | Score |  |
|                  | 5                      |       | Event is zero waste (no garbage is generated at event)   |
|                  | 1                      |       | Understand how to sort waste into Paper, Recycling, Organics and Garbage by reviewing <a href="#">Dalhousie Waste Management Guide</a> |
|                  | 1                      |       | Abide by Pack It Up, Pack It Out signage   |
|                  | 3                      |       | For large events such as conferences, hire or arrange for volunteers to provide education at core waste stations.                      |
|                  |                        |       | Score: /   |

| Transportation |                        |       |   |
|----------------|------------------------|-------|---|
| Applicable?    | Total Points Available | Score |   |
|                | 1                      |       | Event is walkable from provided/recommended accommodations  |
|                | 1                      |       | Encourage out-of-town attendees to take a shuttle or bus to and from the airport.                               |
|                | 1                      |       | Use video teleconferencing tools for meetings, planning sessions, and more to reduce travel.                    |
|                | 2                      |       | Shuttle, carpool, group walks, and/or bike rides are arranged for transportation to, from, and/or during events |
|                |                        |       | Score: /  |

| Social Good |                        |       |  |
|-------------|------------------------|-------|--|
| Applicable? | Total Points Available | Score |  |
|             | 1                      |       | Develop a land acknowledgement and practice pronunciation beforehand                                   |
|             | 1                      |       | Choose a venue that is physically accessible (e.g. entryways and washrooms are wheelchair accessible). |
|             | 1                      |       | Offer to provide interpretation services through Accessibility Resources upon request if applicable.   |
|             | 1                      |       | Post directions to the nearest all-gender washrooms.   |
|             |                        |       | Score: /   |