

University of Twente Events Sustainability Guide

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Introduction

This is a guide to help associations become more sustainable. It contains an overview of sustainability at the UT and concrete steps you can take as an association to become more sustainable. If you have any questions, additions to this document or need any other sustainability-related help, please reach out to operational-greenhub@utwente.nl

Sustainability at the UT

In [Shaping2030](#), the mission, vision and strategy of the UT for the coming years, the goal was established to ensure that by 2030 the University of Twente becomes a sustainable organisation. To achieve this, the [SEE programme](#) was established, a university-wide programme for managing the UT's sustainability, energy & environmental performance. [Green Hub Twente](#) is the central point where all knowledge and initiatives related to sustainability within the university converge and reinforce each other. The student-driven Green Hub plays an active role in shaping, realizing, implementing and tracking UT's sustainability policies. It aims at creating a bottom-up movement for sustainability within the UT community and acts as a channel for a network of (young) sustainability professionals and entrepreneurs, empowering them as navigators of organisational transformations to sustainability in business and wider society. At the UT, integrating sustainability in an organisation is defined as a systematic reduction in the use of resources and energy and a decrease in damaging consequences of the activities of the organisation such as pollution to the air, water and soil. All the information regarding sustainability at the UT can be found at <https://www.utwente.nl/en/sustainability/>.

Why should you become more sustainable?

Becoming a sustainable association contributes to preserving the environment and, as a consequence, the quality of life for people all around the world. As an association, you have the opportunity to have a larger positive impact than a single person. You can inspire and lead the way! Furthermore, a sustainable approach focuses on making conscious choices, often leading to reduced consumption, which can be good for your budget as well.

How do I make my events more sustainable?

Communication

Policy

When collaborating with other organizations, involve them in sustainability. For example, if you have an external speaker from a company, ask to tell them something about the sustainability policy of their company. Bring sustainability to the agenda while communicating to the partners/ co-organizers. Communicate to the catering or another partner company that you require waste-free service.

Since sustainability requires collective action, it is vital to inform the participant of the event about the importance to behave responsibly. For example, you can send a letter or announce how to separate waste at your event e.g., importance to collect cups at designated locations.

Sustainable promotion

- **Wasteless promotion:** No more flyers, posters, stickers, seat covers or other materials. Only use digital promotion such as [the UT's LED screens](#), the [SU's event calendar](#), your website, social media or e-mail.
- **Waste-reduced promotion:** If you're not ready yet to transfer to wasteless promotion, there are many things you can do to reduce your promotion waste.
 - o *Use useful materials to hand out:* For example, spread your message on a roll of toilet paper! People will definitely remember your event this way.
 - o *Use a timeless design:* No dates and times on the flyer, refer to the website. This way, you can reuse any left-over flyers.
 - o *Use both sides of the flyer:* This way, you can have smaller flyers and use less paper. Even less paper: use a business card with a QR code!
 - o *Place flyers and posters in the right locations:* you need fewer flyers to reach many people.
 - o *Use a sustainable supplier:* Suppliers like [groenprint.nl](#), [printenbind.nl](#) or [greengiving.nl](#) allow for more sustainable flyer printing.
- **Promote sustainability:** Share that your event is organized sustainably (see chapter 'How do I make my events more sustainable?') to inspire others and make them aware of your sustainability efforts.

Water

Don't hand out bottled water at events, let people bring their own bottle. Also, having tap water as an option with reusable or paper cups is also a sustainable option. If absolutely necessary, organise the central collection of water bottles at the event and make sure that they get recycled by handing them in at the dedicated points.

Waste

For waste, there are two important aspects: preventing waste (producing less waste) and separating any produced waste optimally. Waste can be divided into many categories: plastics, glass, organic, paper, electronic devices, and even data storage (as it takes electronics to store this data).

- **Prevent waste:** ensure you to a pre-estimation: use e.g. google forms to get an exact number of sandwiches to order for a small event

In each category, you can reduce the amount of waste you produce. When you organise an event, minimise the materials you need. For example, can people bring their bottles and their own cutlery?

Instead of using plastic cups, ask the caterer if they can provide a washable glass alternative

- **Separate waste:** Make sure all of your events have separate bins for PMD, paper and organic waste.
- **Educate:** make sure it is clear to your members how to separate their waste. For the clarification of the waste separation rules in the campus bins see the [link](#).

Food & Drinks

Food is a large part of the impact we have on our planet. However, that also means there's a lot we can do to improve that!

- **Reduce the amount of animal products used:** The strictest policy would be to only have vegan food at your association ('s events). Of course, your contribution isn't that black and white, many gradations are possible. You can decide to go (partly) vegan or vegetarian. For example, at half of your events. You can also only nudge people by making vegetarian/vegan the default or the cheaper option.
- **Select your food:** Local and seasonal products require less transportation and refrigeration. Make a sustainable choice for your coffee and tea, such as loose tea instead of tea bags (avoid plastic tea bags, paper ones can be composted). Also, think about purchasing organic or [fair-trade](#) labelled options. Take the packaging of food into consideration. Choose packaging-free options such as fruit or serve products in a bulk rather than individually, e.g. put sandwiches on a tray instead of single packaging. Bring your own bags when picking up food. Serve drinks in glass instead of single-use plastics. Let people bring their own bottle or mug.
- **Consume your food:** Prepare or order the right amount to reduce leftovers. Decide what happens to leftovers, so they're not thrown away. "Too good to go" is an app which makes sure there is no food waste from shops and catering. A food bank is also an option for giving it away to members.

Materials (Procurement & Processing)

As an association, the most visible way of impacting the environment is the materials you buy. Reducing the number of items you buy, directly reduces your impact. Here are some topics that you could tackle:

- **Goodie bags:** It may seem tempting to hand out goodie bags during e.g., the Kick-In. However, this often leads to unnecessary consumption. People don't need another Doppertje! If you do want to hand out a goodie bag, hand out only useful, consumable, local items, and don't forget about the sustainability of the bag itself! Even better, try out a new system, where people only

take what they really want to have. Finally, making the items 'timeless' is a good way to make sure you're not left with leftover items, as you can reuse them later.

- **Thank-you gifts:** Thank-you gifts are similar to goodie bags. Try to give only useful, consumable, local items. Even better, make a donation in their name to a sustainable charity!

Green certificate

Next to this guide, a [checklist](#) is available where you can assess the sustainability of your event. With this checklist, you can design your event in a much more sustainable way and get a 'green certificate' for your event!

How can I get further help?

For further help contact Green Hub by email or come to our office in Bastille 304.