

## **SUSTAINABILITY POLICY**

### **THE SPECIAL EVENT COMPANY**

As a company, and as a group of individuals, we are committed to striving for a positive impact in all that we do. This means that we aim to deliver effective and engaging experiences and messages in a manner that positively impacts our clients, our participants, our local communities and the planet.

As an industry, the events sector has been slow to take on board many of the issues associated with sustainability.

We as individuals strive to identify and implement measures to enhance sustainability in all aspects of our lives. This then effects how we as a company operate in our day-to-day business, which in turn effects how we manage our events. In this document, we have outlined how we maintain this strategy.

#### **LIVE EVENT POLICIES:**

Thoughts, opinions and statistics on how the events industry can become more 'sustainability aware' keep changing. We appreciate this, and we are constantly working with suppliers and clients to ensure that each event reflects the most effective solutions in a bespoke manner.

In general, we focus on the following main areas:

- 1. TRAVEL/TRANSPORT**
- 2. LOCATION (VENUE/LAND USAGE)**
- 3. WASTE/RECYCLING**
- 4. LOCAL RESOURCING**
- 5. ENERGY**
- 6. WATER**
- 7. FINANCIAL IMPACT**

#### **1. TRAVEL/TRANSPORT**

This is a hot topic these days, and one that has to be carefully considered when planning an event. It affects everything from how invitees attend, how staff get to the event, how supplies arrive and how waste is removed. The following considerations are made with any project we undertake:

##### **Travel:**

- Consider teleconferencing
- Select venues with easy access to transport hubs if long-haul travel is necessary
- Select venues with easy access to public transport
  - Provide easy directions and maps to help facilitate usage of public transport
  - Provide shuttle service when required to minimize individual travel
- Offer carpooling services for those who do need to drive
- Promote alternative modes of transport, such as cycling
- Offer simple incentives for traveling via more 'green' modes of transport
- When possible, offer accommodation options within walking distance of the venues
- Use low emission vehicles when possible
- Offer appropriate Carbon offsetting options

#### **Transport:**

- Select local suppliers whenever possible.
- When shipping in any equipment (technical or other), ensure that vehicle space is maximized by either shipping other items on the same vehicle, or inquire about sharing the shipment with another client.
- Minimize return shipping by selling/donating as much as possible at the end of the event
- Inquire about use of fuel efficient vehicles

## **2. LOCATION (VENUE/LAND USAGE)**

#### **Existing venues:**

- We strive to work with venues who adhere to their own sustainability policy
- We meet with the representative to discuss current strategies as well as potential ad hoc solutions for our specific project
- We ensure that, when applicable, the venue has the appropriate accreditations
- We ensure that the terms of the agreed contract reflect any sustainability requirements we/our clients require.
- Dependant on the scope of the event, we look to hire venues with natural light, good insulation, etc.
- We try to ensure venue selection that reflects the needs of the group size appropriately, so as to not utilize unnecessary space and resources.
- We try to utilize venues that offer in-house services such as catering and A/V so as to minimize transport requirements related to these services.

#### **Land:**

- Consider contamination risks (chemical, sound, etc.)
- Material damage
- Wildlife effects
- Human effects
- Could we leave the area improved from when we arrived?

## **3. WASTE/RECYCLING**

#### **REDUCE**

- Offer electronic marketing, registration and ticketing
- Utilize electronic solutions for branding/signage when possible
- Create more minimalistic décor/staging solutions
- Consider what items are essential for use at the event. Do you need give-aways such as pens or magnets?
- Consider whether anything needs to be produced/printed to give to guests
- Ask guests to supply items such as pens and pads if writing is required
- Try to ensure that suppliers use minimalistic packaging. (Re-use or recycle whatever packaging is essential.)

#### **REUSE**

- This is even better than recycling, as it uses less energy to accomplish

- Reuse meeting collateral materials - name badge holders, pens, generic signage (avoid using dates)
- Hire/create set/staging solutions that can be used again (either by you or by another client)
- Work with local suppliers to donate used materials in the community. Ex. If you used AstroTurf at your event, donate it to a local gym or football club.
- Request that the venue/caterer donate unused food items to local organizations, such as shelters
- Ensure that vendors/venues have sustainability systems in place to re-use materials – linen reuse policy, water saving devices, etc.

## RECYCLE

- Try to employ closed loop recycling. This way, the materials we purchase are already recycled, and can continue to be recycled.
- Recycle mixed paper, aluminum, glass, cardboard, printer cartridges and nametags
- Assign a team member to monitor venue and vendor compliance
- When used, disposable plates, cutlery and cups made of 100% post consumer product
- Share “green” practices with attendees

## 4. LOCAL RESOURCING AND SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT

We know that we alone cannot achieve what needs to be done. Therefore, our supply chain is key. This means that we strive to source and partner with vendors who share our enthusiasm for green solutions and ethical procurement. We also appreciate that shared best practices lead to new solutions and discoveries and we are always learning as well as educating.

- For both sustainability and economic reasons, resourcing as much as possible locally is a smart strategy.
- Local suppliers will know what is available, and will have more of a vested interest in your event.
- Supply and deliver of goods and services that will require less travel and as a result, will produce fewer emissions.
- These local partnerships will have a positive effect on the community, and could leave a lasting legacy that could improve the entire area.

Vendors who adhere to ethical and sustainable procurement policies will have already done the required due diligence, and will assist us, and our guests, in ensuring that all participants on the supply chain are treated fairly.

## 5. ENERGY

Controlling energy usage throughout an event is a more complicated, yet effective way of offering sustainability solutions. The options will rely heavily on chosen vendors as to the means of saving energy, as well as money.

We consider whether the use of the following energy sources can be achieved. We consult with venues and suppliers to review whether these sources, or alternative solutions, can effectively and efficiently be employed.

- Solar technology
- Bio fuels
- More efficient use of existing energy sources
- Creative energy sources such as used cooking oils

On a smaller, yet more manageable scale, we strive to achieve the following:

- Monitor power consumption

- Select venues with good insulation
- Alter thermostat settings by even one degree
- Select venues with energy saving policies in effect
- Use low energy lighting and equipment when possible
- Ensure all is switched off when not in use

We also offer Carbon Offsetting solutions. These can vary, and we work with each client to determine what they are aiming to achieve, and whether a CO2 offsetting scheme can achieve this. When choosing a solution, it is important to consider the knock on effects, as some schemes can create further negative effects.

## **6. WATER**

Water is used in many ways during events, and the overall impact is not always obvious. Water usage in a venue will be very different than water usage at an outdoor event, and we consider each option.

### **DRINKING WATER:**

- Unless essential, we request that tap water be used at events.
- When bottled water is required, we source ethical brands, who use minimal packaging. We also ensure recycling of all bottles.

### **INDUSTRIAL WATER USAGE:**

- How are toilet and kitchen facilities set-up?
- Are there water saving solutions already in place?
- Can more alternatives be implemented?
- Are there dual flush or reduced flush toilets?
- Are there sensor activated taps?

### **WASTE WATER AND POLLUTION:**

- We consult with venue and vendors to ensure that all cleaning solutions and any other waste water are disposed or appropriately so as to not cause damage to the local environment.
- When possible, we request that all cleaning products be environmentally friendly.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPACT**

We acknowledge that in some instances, solutions that address all of these requests are more costly. We believe that it is important to continue to work with vendors in order to ensure that they, and we, are negotiating the best solutions at the best prices possible.

In many instances, the financial benefits will not be immediately apparent, but will be seen over time. For example, eco friendly materials produced for a first conference may cost 10% more than standard supplies, but if they are used again and again, the price per use is reduced substantially.

## **PRE/POST EVENT POLICIES:**

### **EVERY DAY OFFICE POLICIES:**

- We rely on our Sustainability Officer to maintain good working practices, both in our everyday work lives, as well as on-site
- We recycle waste in our office (paper, plastic, glass, and other industrial materials)
- We use energy saving supplies whenever possible
- We turn off all electronics at the end of each day
- We only use lights in rooms where required
- We minimize use of air conditioning and heating
- We allow for remote working when applicable
- We invested in a company car in order to promote carpooling. For example, for site visits and to and from events.
- We implement CSR and community involvement programs, to include Pro Bono work with organizations such as Teenage Cancer Trust, Teen Cancer American, Leukemia & Lymphoma Society and Make a Wish Eastern North Carolina.