

Sustainable Events: Supply Chain





Sustainable Events: Supply Chain



Events are made up of multiple elements, many of which require purchasing decisions. Event managers and stakeholders can play a significant role in making informed choices throughout the supply chain. These procurement choices can influence the wider industry, promoting new products and services that are more environmentally responsible, ethical and have local, social and economic benefits.

Sustainable supply chain choices impact not only the organisations involved but the greater community and therefore provide an opportunity to promote low impact actions at events.

To ensure a sustainable supply chain for events, planning and documentation is essential:

- Develop a sustainable procurement policy
- Communicate policy objectives
- Negotiate and contract according to the policy
- Engage early with stakeholders to confirm policy commitment
- Assess, seek feedback and report outcomes



Success story

The City of Adelaide's 2019 [New Year's Eve](#) Event engaged South Australian artists and stallholders to provide entertainment and refreshments, showcasing local talent and reducing the carbon footprint of the event.

This checklist can be used as a guide to achieving a sustainable supply chain for events. Simply select actions that are applicable to your event and ensure regular reviews for continued improvement.



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Sustainable procurement policy

- ☐ Identify issues that are important to your organisation such as climate change, water conservation, human rights, air quality, animal welfare or accessibility/inclusion.
- ☐ Translate important issues into sustainable supply chain values i.e. fair trade, local, seasonal, carbon neutral.
- ☐ Document the event priorities into a vision statement which can be implemented into overall operations, i.e. 'striving to deliver better events for the planet.'
- ☐ Assess areas which can be influenced and plan objectives accordingly.
- ☐ Ensure objectives are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely.
- ☐ Document SMART objectives in a publicly available Sustainability Policy.
- ☐ Map out the supply chain to clearly understand how the policy affects stakeholders

Communication

- ☐ Share the Sustainability Policy with all stakeholders, making expectations and objectives clear.
- ☐ Prioritise electronic communication methods to reduce resource use.

Negotiation and contracts

- ☐ Discuss sustainable supply chain objectives with stakeholders, negotiating the service or product offering to suit.
- ☐ Document negotiations and objectives in written contracts that are signed by all stakeholders for a clear and shared commitment.
- ☐ Contract appropriate local stakeholders who support the sustainable supply chain objectives and work collaboratively towards shared goals and new initiatives.
- ☐ Partner with stakeholders to facilitate the reuse and recycling of equipment, materials and consumables and/or encourage environmentally conscious products and technologies.

Engagement

- ☐ Meet with stakeholders in-person to develop relationships and support a strong commitment to the sustainable procurement policy.
- ☐ Ensure all stakeholders understand contracted elements such as organic produce, compostable packaging or fair-trade certification.
- ☐ Discuss performance indicators, feedback procedures and assessment.



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Assessment and reporting

- ☐ Request data to support objectives. This may be in the form of certification evidence, material content specifications, usage data, product stewardship information or origin information.
- ☐ Assess performance against contracts and agreed objectives.
- ☐ Seek feedback for continuous improvement.
- ☐ Document outcomes to track progress over time and set new goals as appropriate.
- ☐ Share outcomes with stakeholders and the community.

Areas to consider

- ☐ Waste reduction
- ☐ Local, seasonal products and/or services
- ☐ Recycled, reusable materials
- ☐ Energy efficiency
- ☐ Transport impacts
- ☐ Marketing and engagement methods and materials
- ☐ Water efficiency
- ☐ Air quality impacts
- ☐ Carbon neutrality
- ☐ Third-party certifications
- ☐ Environmental credentials

This checklist was informed by multiple existing resources including those from the Cities of Brisbane and Melbourne. Kind thanks to everyone working in this space.