



## Sustainability plan

This plan aims to support ECTMIH 2023 sustainability commitments in all aspects of the planning, implementation and evaluation process. Sustainability is defined as meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations (Vos, 2007).

### VENUE

Action Item	Tips
Building policies	<p>Why: Buildings contribute 32% to the total energy use. Policies and infrastructure can contribute to energy saving.</p> <p>Ask if the building has an eco-label and/or specific policies that can be implemented for climate-friendly meetings. Examples are: energy efficient options, or options for energy reduction such as windows that can be opened and lights that can be switched off automatically. measures to reduce the generation of waste and to reuse, recycle and or repurpose unavoidable waste. Is there a possibility to select non-toxic and green-labeled cleaning products and limit the use of toxic chemicals.</p>
Location policies	<p>Why: Accessibility of the main venue, such as walking distance from the city centre and public transportation services</p> <p>Select accommodation near the city centre and /or next to public transportation services.</p>

## TRAVEL

Action Item	Tips
Avoid air travel where possible	<p>Why: Air travel alone is responsible for approximately 3.5% of anthropogenic climate change.</p> <p>Inform participants of the environmental footprint of various transportation forms. Encourage European participant to travel to the location by train;</p> <p>Possibly partner with environmentally-friendly travel companies.</p>
Travel planning	<p>Why: Planning ahead can lower the environmental impact and emissions of attendee travel and transportation</p> <p>Choose event locations and accommodations that minimize travel of attendees</p> <p>Schedule events during off-peak traffic hours like late morning or early afternoon, as idling vehicles in heavy traffic generate more greenhouse gas emissions</p>
Sustainable transportation	<p>Why: Giving attendees options makes it easier for them to travel sustainably</p> <p>Provide participants with sufficient information on public transportation possibilities in their welcome package, including clear and visible information, maps, and time estimations for their walk or use of public transport between various locations.</p> <p>Encourage participants to bike and walk to the event when feasible and provide access to secure bicycle storage and/or racks</p> <p>Provide shuttle service or carpool options to the event when possible</p> <p>Encourage participants to use rental cars as a last resort, and if necessary request hybrid or electric vehicles</p> <p>Provide guidance for EV charging stations for electric vehicles</p>
Idling vehicles	<p>Why: Greenhouse gasses are still emitted when vehicles are idling</p> <p>Request vendors to turn off their vehicles instead of idling when making deliveries or during set-up.</p> <p>Possibly partner with environmentally friendly (transportation) companies.</p>

## COMMUNICATION

Action Item	Tips
Inform vendors	<p>Why: Allows for more control in making your event sustainable early in the planning process</p> <p>Always communicate and emphasize your sustainability goals with vendors</p> <p>Be specific and enforce guidelines at the very beginning.</p>
Promote your event as sustainable	<p>Why: Guests are more likely to adjust their behavior if they are aware of your goals</p> <p>Inform guests that they are participating in a green event before (on invitation) and during (signage and brief announcement during event)</p> <p>Thank guests for the considerations they have taken to make this a green event</p> <p>Include sustainability in the public engagement activities (planning)</p>
Guest invitations	<p>Why: Inform attendees on sustainable intentions and allow them to prepare accordingly</p> <p>Encourage guests to stay at sustainability-minded hotels and sustainable restaurants.</p> <p>Provide sustainable transportation resources like public transit schedules and carpooling services; you can create a list (using Google Sheets) of drivers and connect them to potential carpoolers.</p> <p>Ask event participants to bring their own coffee mugs, utensils, and water cups, as well as paper and writing utensils</p> <p>You can let attendees know that you will not be offering cups at the event</p> <p>Offer raffle prizes for participants and bring back up reusable mugs in case attendees forget</p>
Paperless	<p>Why: Reduces demand for paper and deforestation that impacts environmental health</p> <p>Send invitations, conduct event registration, and publicize updates electronically.</p> <p>Use web or email-based registration systems.</p> <p>Use projectors, whiteboards, or flat screen TV to post important information during planning sessions rather than printing meeting handouts.</p> <p>If printed materials are absolutely necessary, create a QR Code and display on a printed handout to direct to a website or page. Encourage participants to do the same. (avoiding numerous flyers or calling cards).</p>

## FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Action Item	Tips
Sustainable food options	<p>Why: Sustainable foods have a lower environmental impact on the planet</p> <p>Provide and promote the use of local, seasonal and fresh products for all meals;</p> <p>Base food orders on confirmed attendee numbers (no more than 15% more than the number of confirmed attendees).</p> <p>Choose plant-based meals as the default and have guests opt-in to meat options</p> <p>Ask attendees in advance for their food preferences;</p> <p>Preferred: plant-based meals, vegetables, local fruits and nuts, whole grains, legumes</p> <p>If serving meat options, seek ethically-produced meat and sustainable seafood options</p> <p>Avoid beef, lamb, and dairy products</p>
Sustainable serveware	<p>Why: Sustainable serveware can be reused or composted, meets Single Use Plastics Policy</p> <p>Preferred:</p> <p>Use plated dinners on reusable dinnerware (ex: ceramic, hard plastic)</p> <p>If disposables are necessary, foodware products must be made from 100% fiber-based materials to be compostable and beverage containers must be glass, aluminum, or paper-based.</p> <p>Ask caterer to provide 100% fiber-based compostable options for plates, cups, and flatware</p> <p>Avoid: individually boxed lunches and individually packaged condiments (use bulk dispensers instead), plastic foodware or cutlery, including PLA or styrofoam</p>
Communicate with catering about sustainable options	<p>Why: Caterers must be on board with the sustainable needs of the event to be successful</p> <p>Request zero waste catering</p> <p>Consider menu choices to reduce disposables (i.e. individual lunches with minimal packaging or finger foods)</p> <p>When providing caterer with attendee estimate, avoid ordering more food than reasonably needed</p> <p>Request smaller food platters that can be replenished to keep potential leftovers secure; opt to serve at table;</p> <p>Request caterers to pour water only upon request or provide water dispensers</p> <p>Request caterers to supply 100% fiber-based to-go containers, so guests can take leftover food home after the event</p> <p>Ensure any leftover food is donated</p> <p>Plan in advance the management of leftover food</p>

<p>Serving Beverages</p>	<p>Why: Reusables and non-plastic alternatives are less wasteful than plastic disposables          Use refillable five- gallon water coolers instead of offering individual water bottles          Other water dispensing options: water fountain &amp; mobile water trucks          Offer a raffle prize for people who bring refillable bottles if appropriate for you event(should still be planned)          Avoid: straws*, single-use stir sticks for coffee and tea, individually packaged creamer, single-use plastic bottles          * except when addressing the needs of people with disabilities</p>
<p>Food donations</p>	<p>Why: Donating food prevents food waste that could result in greenhouse gas emissions          Ask catering company about their leftover food policy          Take excess food home or donate to a food bank (<a href="https://www.voedselbankutrecht.nl/">https://www.voedselbankutrecht.nl/</a>) or food recovery organization after the event.          Keep large and medium sized reusable containers to transport food donations</p>

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**

Action Item	Tips
Waste Reduction	<p>Why: Minimizing waste is the most impactful method for waste management</p> <p>During the event planning process, identify ways to cut out unnecessary materials, even if it can be recycled or composted.</p> <p>Reduce where possible and promote reusables, for example by using infographics.</p> <p>Minimize waste by keeping the event simple</p>
Reuse stations	<p>Why: Having a designated area for reusing materials from this event will reduce waste and save you costs for the next event</p> <p>Collect all items that can be reused later and store them for future events</p> <p>Provide a convenient location for participants to return handouts (instructions, campus map, name tags, etc.) that can be reused for future events</p>
Waste Infrastructure	<p>Why: Having the appropriate waste bins makes sorting and disposal easier</p> <p>Events with no food might not need as many containers as ones that do</p> <p>If all material is compostable or recyclable, eliminate trash bins from event</p>
Signage	<p>Why: Signage will make it easier for guests to properly dispose of their waste</p> <p>Provide a list of what goes into each individual bin and have volunteers assist attendees with placing waste in the appropriate bin</p> <p>Customize your signage based on the items that will be at the event;</p>
Collaborate with vendors	<p>Why: Vendors must be on board with the sustainable needs of the event to be successful</p> <p>Discuss with vendors the possibility of reusing or donating excess materials post- event rather than disposing of them</p> <p>Check with your catering company on food donation policies and where best to donate</p>
Venue	<p>Why: Vendors must be on board with the sustainable needs of the event to be successful</p> <p>Discuss the venue what possibilities exist to reduce and reuse waste.</p>
In-event communication	<p>Why: Even sustainable products needs to properly sorted to minimize waste impact</p> <p>Make announcements during and in the middle of the event about proper waste sorting</p> <p>Check during the event that this is happening</p>

Donate and reuse material	Why: Lightly used material can be reused, if not by you, by someone else Make plans to donate materials and centerpieces after the event Liaise with arts & culture committee to explore how sustainability commitments can be incorporated within their programming Collect all items that can be reused later and store them for future events
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## ENERGY SAVING

Action Item	Tips
Event timing	Why: During afternoon hours energy demand is the highest and also more expensive than other times of the day Avoid scheduling your events mid-day as this increases energy demand
Natural light	Why: Reduce the event's energy impact and take advantage of our Utrecht sunshine Hold events during daylight hours and in locations that can be lit naturally
Temporary power needs	Why: Generators that use renewable energy do not release greenhouse gasses If you must use portable electricity, it's best to use a solar generator rather than traditional propane or diesel generator Request an eco-friendly generator directly from a vendor
Lighting and power	Why: LED bulbs are more efficient and power strips are easier to turn off Make sure all decorative lighting uses LED bulbs Use power strips for all electronic equipment (laptops, projectors, etc.) and shut off power strips during breaks or between sessions
Rechargeable Batteries	Why: Disposable batteries contribute to e-waste Use rechargeable batteries for electronic devices (cameras, laser pointers, etc.)



## DECORATIONS

Action Item	Tips
Centrepieces	<p>Why: Minimize waste by using centerpieces that will be useful and not thrown away</p> <p>Use live herbs and other plants as centerpieces and offer them to guests to take after the event</p> <p>Use fruit baskets as centerpieces and offer them to guests as they leave or to enjoy during the event</p> <p>Use locally grown flowers or decorative water and stone vase centerpieces</p>
Event Decorations	<p>Why: Decorations that can be reused or sustainably disposed reduce landfill waste</p> <p>Avoid the use of balloons as they are not sustainable. Instead use reusable banners, flags, ribbon streamers, paper pom-poms, bubble machines, or paper lanterns</p> <p>Use reusable table linens to cover tables</p> <p>If reusable linens are not available, use unbleached butcher paper and compost them after your event</p> <p>Request vendors to send linens without plastic wrapping</p>
Encourage guests to take home items	<p>Why: Always aim to reuse before recycling or composting materials</p> <p>You can make this a fun activity like holding a drawing for centerpieces, decorations, or artwork to guests or offering them for reuse at other events</p>

## GIVEAWAYS

Action Item	Tips
Prioritize experiences over products	<p>Why: Swag, merch, and freebies frequently end up in the landfill after a short time</p> <p>Try giving away event tickets, food, or fun opportunities</p> <p>Set up fun activities like photo booths to get brand marketing</p>
Choose sustainable and useful products	<p>Why: Sustainable items that are beneficial are more likely to be used by guests long term</p> <p>Preferred</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Reusable utensil kits and straws</li><li>Reusable, washable produce bags</li><li>Solar powered chargers</li><li>Durable, reusable water bottles (the kind people actually want to use)</li><li>Durable, reusable coffee/tea tumblers</li><li>Ethically made natural fiber apparel (cotton, hemp/bast fibers, etc.)</li></ul> <p>Don't use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Fidget spinners</li><li>Silicone bracelets</li><li>Novelty sunglasses, earphones, and other low quality items</li><li>Branded plastic bottles, hand sanitizers, lip balms, etc.</li><li>Branded pins, buttons, keychains, magnets, etc.</li><li>Foam stress relievers/stress balls</li><li>Writing utensils</li></ul>