



Go Green

A quick guide to planning a sustainable event

Why make your event sustainable?

In line with King's Vision "to make the world a better place", you can help by ensuring your event is sustainable. Events can leave a huge carbon footprint on the environment but there are simple steps anyone can take to reduce this. But where do I start? What can I do? And how can I do it?

Start planning

As an academic, research student and/or Administrator this guide will help you host a sustainable event. There are a few things that you can prepare and discuss with your team before setting a brief:

- How can we change the way we execute the event?
- What choices can we make to become more sustainable?

There are plenty of ways you can make changes, from venues to catering and overall event production. In order to know what changes can be made, you need to know their potential impacts. Below is a list of ideas you can think about yourself and / or discuss with your event planner if you have one.

Go paperless

This is a great start with huge impact as it is cost effective and good for the environment. Social media channels like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are useful tools to share information in greener ways. They can be used to link to a substantial web presence, and doesn't add an extra layer of complexity for the user.

Digital platforms enable you to share real time information, save a huge cost on printing and reprinting if changes occur, and increase engagement. A web presence means people can access the information from their personal computers, smartphones, or King's College supplied computers.

- Instead of mailing invites create an event page (Eventbrite can be used for this), or send out through GDPR compliant mailing lists
- Send out event programmes via email so attendees have an electronic copy they can access anytime
- Keep attendees up to date using social media pages, and encourage attendees to communicate, share information and keep attuned to any changes.
- Make good use of your website to share information and connect with others across the world
- Create an event page using one of these platforms to add schedules, maps, allow attendees to network and form relationships via community notice boards.

Transportation and location

You can help reduce the carbon footprint of your event in numerous ways:

- If you have international guests, encourage them to use public transport. If you have multiple guests arriving at the same time maybe look at organising a group pick up
- Provide people travelling from outside London with options of public transportat, including the closest Underground stations and bus stops
- Provide guests with a list of local amenities such as shops and restaurants which serve vegetarian and vegan foods and prioritise recyclable materials
- Provide guests with information on landmarks that are within walking distance should they wish to take in the sights
- If your event is held in multiple locations, provide walking routes and public transport information, including timetables. May also look at providing [cycling](#) information for travelling around central London
- If you know that a bulk of your attendees are coming from out of town, source eco-friendly or “green” hotels that are within walking distance of the event

Food and beverages

King’s Venues use sustainable suppliers but there are a few other factors that can be considered when planning your catering that will impact the environment. Opting for a full vegan or vegetarian menu makes a difference. You could also:

- Ensure you cater for only what you need
- Develop partnerships with companies that link unused food to charities, such as [Olio](#)
- Select a smaller variety of beverage choices rather than a full range to minimise wastage.
- Encourage guests to bring reusable water bottles and provide information about the closest water fountains

These options will also help keep costs down, so you have more to spend in other areas.

Event production

The following simple steps can contribute to producing a more energy efficient and sustainable event.

- Being attuned to how lighting could be kept to a minimum during the event
- Planning the event so that AV presentations are completed in one go ensuring that the equipment is turned off when not in use
- Requesting that heating is turned off once people arrive at the event. The room will heat up naturally with body heat.

Requesting that aircon is only turned on when required at the event

Event waste

A great way to minimise waste is to think about sourcing things that can be used for future events. Strive for creative ways to reduce event waste. For example:

- Avoid using lanyards – if you really must use them, collect them back at the end of the event to reuse
- Use a sticker rather than a badge to display names
- Use recyclable materials where possible for event materials (e.g. notepads or conference bags). Encourage attendees to use recycling bins around King's College when disposing recyclable items
- Avoid printed posters and banners and opt instead for digital displays
- Circulate conference programmes digitally, and have a few copies available for attendees that may require them for accessibility requirements)

Virtualevents and sustainability

Check out our ['Go virtual events'](#) guide for information on sustainability and virtual events.

For more information about the College's approach to sustainability refer to useful links:

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/aboutkings/strategy/sustainability>