

Sustainability Policy Template



This template was designed to assist your organization in the development of a sustainability policy. It lays out the elements needed to create your organization's sustainability policy broken into the following sections: vision, principles, important issues, our commitment and scope, objectives and reporting. There is an explanation of the section and an example of what that element might look like. Each policy should be unique and tailored to your specific company's values and structure.

In addition to this being an organizational policy template, it may also be used to develop a policy specific to your conference or event. This format integrates elements required under ISO 20121 Event Sustainability Management Systems.

This document is intended as a sample only.

Vision

The vision statement should be a sentence of approximately 10 words that concisely describes your ideal outcome, product or service.

✓ **EXAMPLE:** We strive to produce better events for a better planet.

Principles

As you plan events you will need touch-points that help you decide what is important. A list of principles that are most relevant to you will help you know how to best respond to an opportunity or challenge in a way that aligns with your sustainability vision. In this section you may also want to reference important protocols or commitments your company may already have. For example, if you are a signatory to the UN Global Compact, or another principles-based document.

✓ **EXAMPLE:** Our approach to business is guided by commitments to the following principles: Leadership, Inclusivity, Transparency, Integrity, Stewardship and Continuous Improvement.

Important Issues

There are many important issues in the world. Which ones are most important to your organization? Here is one way to understand how issues and principles are different: If Issues are the things you think are important to address, **Principles** guide how you approach and respond to issues.

✓ **EXAMPLE:** Our business faces many challenges and opportunities. Due to their direct impact on us and our stakeholders we have prioritized the following issues that need to be addressed: Climate change, water conservation, accessibility, health and safety and financial solvency.

Our Commitment & Scope

Sometimes, your ability to act on your policy can be affected by what you control and influence. So it makes sense your policy should clarify any boundaries. Are there certain individuals, organizations or events to which it will always apply? Are there variations? In addition to any voluntary commitments to act, you should also touch on your duty to act under prevailing law. This gives important guidance, especially if you operate in jurisdictions where laws may be different.

✓ **EXAMPLE:**

- This policy will apply to all events hosted by our organization. This is assumed to include events we host and pay for, including sponsorships. Staff and contractors are expected to uphold objectives under this policy to the fullest extent possible within prevailing budgets and to inform management of financial and other barriers to achieving goals.
- We acknowledge we have limited influence over third parties whose events we may attend but do not organize, such as trade shows where we exhibit. While we cannot control the decisions of these parties, we commit to educate them of our policy and encourage them to align operating practices with policy objectives.
- Our attention to environmental, social and economic responsibility includes working within the law and voluntarily exceeding legal requirements in order to be innovative and demonstrate leadership on the issues that are important to us and our stakeholders. As we design experiences, execute events and evaluate our success we are able to choose every day in big and small ways how our actions and words build a better quality of life for our employees, clients, event participants and suppliers.

Objectives

Your commitment should be broken down into key objectives that are SMART: **specific, measurable, achievable, relevant** and **timely**. Your operational policies and projects can go more specifically into how you apply these objectives. Strong sustainability policies will also be specific on how each objective is measured by identifying an **indicator** and a **target**. An **indicator** is what you measure while **targets** state what level of performance you want to achieve for what is measured. Try to make your targets reasonable and achievable to ensure that you are able to reach your goals, and build on your successes in a positive way.

✓ EXAMPLE:

We commit to:

1. Minimize environmental impacts in the areas of waste, water, energy and air quality.
 - *kWh energy use at office: Reduce to under than 21,000 kWh this year.*
 - *Emissions produced by staff air travel: Reduce to fewer than 15 MT per FTE project manager.*
2. Give back to communities by volunteering and donating resources.
 - *Value of pro-bono work: \$60,000.*
3. Ensure our supply chain has responsible social and environmental practices.
 - *Percentage of vendors used who meet company minimum sustainability guidelines: 75% of vendors compliant.*
4. Create innovative approaches to minimize negative environmental impacts, improve economic bottom lines and integrate the social elements in to delivering meetings.
 - *Number of sustainability innovations introduced for client projects: 5 minimum.*

Reporting

State your intention to report progress against your sustainability goals.

✓ EXAMPLE:

1. We will externally report on our progress against these goals once per year.
2. Internal senior reviews will be held at least once per year.
3. Management reviews will be conducted quarterly.

Senior Event Marketing Manager

Date