GREEN EVENT GUIDE

Thoughtful changes can make a big impact.

sustain.gatech.edu
Georgia Tech is committed to creating a sustainable campus. Everyone in the Tech community plays a role in achieving this goal. Between food, transportation, and communications events can be resource intensive and have significant negative impacts on the environment. This guide will help you to host an event that will:

1. Minimize water use;
2. Minimize energy use and reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
3. Reduce food and materials waste;
4. Showcase your leadership in the field of sustainability;
5. Educate attendees on best practices; and
6. Support the local economy and sustainable businesses through purchasing decisions.
TOP 5 WAYS TO REDUCE YOUR IMPACT

1. Use Reusable Serving Ware
2. Avoid Printing Materials
3. Serve Organic, Local, & Seasonal Food
4. Promote Recycling & Composting
5. Select a Location Accessible by Public Transit
The **Green Event Checklist** will help you plan and host an environmentally friendly event, whether it’s a department wide gathering, a small staff meeting, or a large conference. Follow the guidelines, assign roles, and identify a timeline to ensure tasks are completed. If you have any questions, please reach out to the Office of Campus Sustainability, sustain@gatech.edu.
Green Event Checklist

BEFORE YOUR EVENT

Planning & Promotion

- Meet with members of your team and come up with goals to create a sustainable event.
- Elect a Green Champion to spearhead your sustainability efforts if you are working within an events committee.
- Go paperless! Send out all event communications (e.g., invitations & reminders) via electronic means (e.g., email, social media, & websites).
- Create timeless banners and signs and plan for reuse. Laminate and leave out information that changes each year to make it easier.
- Email agendas & presentations beforehand rather than printing day-of.
- If printing handouts is a must, use recycled-content paper, one inch by one inch margins & print double sided.
- Let the Office of Campus Sustainability know you want to host a Green Event! We can consult and answer any questions to make your event a sustainable success! Email: sustain@gatech.edu
Food & Beverages

- Provide reusable dishware, silverware, & linens.
- If using disposable serving ware, provide compostable or recyclable dishware, utensils, & napkins.
- Ask guests to bring their own water bottles, mugs, and/or cups.
- Provide food, beverages and condiments in bulk!
  * Opt for two-litter bottles or pitchers rather than single serve beverages. Avoid bottled water.
  * Provide full size dispensers of condiments such as milk, creamer, sweetener, mayonnaise, mustard, etc.
  * Select buffet or party platter options instead of box lunches.
- Serve bite-sized foods that do not require utensils.
- Serve only vegetarian and/or vegan options or request guests to opt-in for meat dishes.
- Request organic, seasonal, and/or locally produced (grown within 500 miles of campus) foods.
- Request that coffee and tea products are Fair Trade or Shade Grown.
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Purchasing & Waste

- Request clearly labeled recycling bins be placed next to trash bins.
  - Request bins through the Office of Solid Waste Management & Recycling—they will deliver and pick up the containers free of charge!
- Minimize giveaways or provide environmentally friendly ones. This could include carbon offsets for travel, materials made with recycled content or reusable bags, mugs, or bottles. See our Sustainable Giveaway guide for ideas!
- Arrange to compost food waste and, if applicable, compostable dishware, utensils, & napkins.
  - Composting food waste must be coordinated through an off-campus vendor. Georgia Tech has existing connections to Southern Green Industries and Compost Wheels. They can drop off empty compost bins and pick them up after the event.
  - Inform the location building manager that a vendor will need access to the facility’s loading dock for drop-off and pick-up of bins.
  - Ask the compost vendors what types of waste they will take and ensure only those materials are at the event.
- Reduce or eliminate any non-recyclable containers the caterer might use. Let us know if a caterer was supportive of your green efforts!
- Décor should be reusable and non-perishable.

Location & Space

- Select a sustainable venue—there are many high-performance buildings on campus. See them all on our sustainable building map! Also consider whether your space:
  - Is pedestrian, bicycle, and/or public transit friendly; or
  - Has ample natural light
- Notify guests, via electronic communications, of public transportation options, walking routes, and bike rack locations before the event.
- Provide a video or teleconferencing option for remote participants.
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DURING YOUR EVENT

- Announce sustainable event efforts during your event to encourage attendees to do their part. Mention that your efforts contribute to the Institute’s sustainability goals.
- Set thermostats to 68 degrees in the winter & 76 degrees in the summer.
- Announce waste disposal options before, during, and/or after the meal, especially if there is composting available.
- Place volunteers next to trash, recycling, and/or composting bins to help participants correctly dispose of their items.
- Collect and reuse name tag holders. Make an announcement to attendees as a reminder.
- Make leftover food available to students and colleagues.
  * Arrange to drop off left-over food to Klemis Kitchens, a student-led kitchen that rescues food that would otherwise go to waste to support students at Georgia Tech.
- Communicate your sustainable efforts at your event. Have banners, signs, and statements in strategic locations such as on the buffet table, in the agenda or program, and next to waste bins.
- Have a raffle for anyone who brought their own cup or bottle and for anyone who walked, biked, or used transit to
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AFTER YOUR EVENT

- Announce the impact of your green event. Work with vendors to provide data that informs if your event’s impact (e.g., Percent of waste diverted from a landfill).

- Ask participants to evaluate the sustainability aspects of the event.

- Let the Office of Campus Sustainability know about your successful green event! Email: sustain@gatech.edu

- Tell your colleagues about your experience hosting a green event and be a resource to them for their green events.

- Share your experience with the Event Coordinators Network!