

# THE GREEN CONFERENCE AND EVENT HANDBOOK

Your guide to working strategically and practically with sustainability

## 2019

Aarhus Events – Aarhus University – VisitAarhus – Worldperfect

TRANSPORT

WASTE

FOOD AND DRINK

ELECTRICITY

VOLUNTEERING

INNOVATION

DOKUMENTATION

# GREEN = SUSTAINABLE

Here at Aarhus Events and VisitAarhus we have a goal: we want to lead the way in making events sustainable. Aarhus University shares our dream and wants to become Europe's greenest university when it comes to hosting conferences.

Our plans are pretty ambitious and we're setting the bar high, so we've put together this handbook to help us achieve our goals.

Luckily for us, the city of Aarhus presents a whole host of possibilities for working sustainably, which we can all benefit from as event and conference organisers.

## Our goal

In addition to our own goals, we're passionate about helping you, whether you're an events organiser or manager, take your next sustainable step, however great or small it may be. The more projects that work sustainably, the stronger the impact,

so even small steps can make a big difference.

Over the next few years, our goal is to make this handbook known to all large events and conferences, meaning those with 50 participants or more.

At Aarhus Events, VisitAarhus and the department of events and communication support at Aarhus University, we've decided to use the handbook to help us plan our upcoming events and conferences. All of these events will be assessed using the criteria outlined in the following pages according to this timeline:

**Year 1:** We'll collect data from participating events and conferences based on the relevant objectives.

**Year 2:** We'll continue to collect data and assess our progress. If our goals are not being met, we'll update our plans.

**Year 3-5:** We'll continue to collect data and update our objectives.

# ABOUT US

The Green Conference and Event Handbook is developed by Aarhus Events, VisitAarhus, the department of events and communication support at Aarhus University and Worldperfect.

Working alongside the Climate Department at Aarhus Municipality, we've defined our aim in terms of sustainability in events and conference management.

Our systematic approach has already proved successful, and we're committed to further developing this way of working.

This handbook outlines the direction we, as organisers of large events and conferences in Aarhus, wish to take. It's built around Aarhus' existing policies and is connected with:

- CLIMATE STRATEGY AND CLIMATE PLAN 2016-2020
- WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015-2018
- CYCLING ACTION PLAN 2017
- BUSINESS PLAN 2018-2019
- SPORTS AND LEISURE POLICY 2018-2021
- AARHUS MUNICIPALITY'S FUTURE PLASTIC STRATEGY

We measure our progress using the Global Destinations Sustainability index (GDS index). This is an international index that measures how sustainable cities are in terms of the way they run conferences and events.

## New Event Strategy 2020-2024

In the near future, Aarhus Municipality will develop and approve a new event strategy focusing on sustainability and the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals.

Across the city, as a result of this handbook, organisers of events of all sizes have already become involved in sustainable and green initiatives. This means that future event strategies can build on previous experience, allowing us to outline common trends and initiatives that could be useful for event and conference organisers.

## Our Method

The design of The Green Conference and Event Handbook reflects a number of operating principles covering several relevant topics. We, as event organisers, work within these principles, and recommend them to other organisers. The handbook includes specific instructions, good advice and guidelines, as well as a series of useful questions that you can ask yourself and your suppliers. Each area of focus outlines some general objectives that we, as organisers, aim for. We want to make it clear, however, that all organisers of events and conferences can contribute with their know-how to fulfil and spread their own sustainable visions.

## The UN Sustainable Development Goals

All of the initiatives described in each section are directly related to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. These are outlined and interpreted at the end of each section and can be used actively by organisers in funding applications, or for the purposes of general communication.

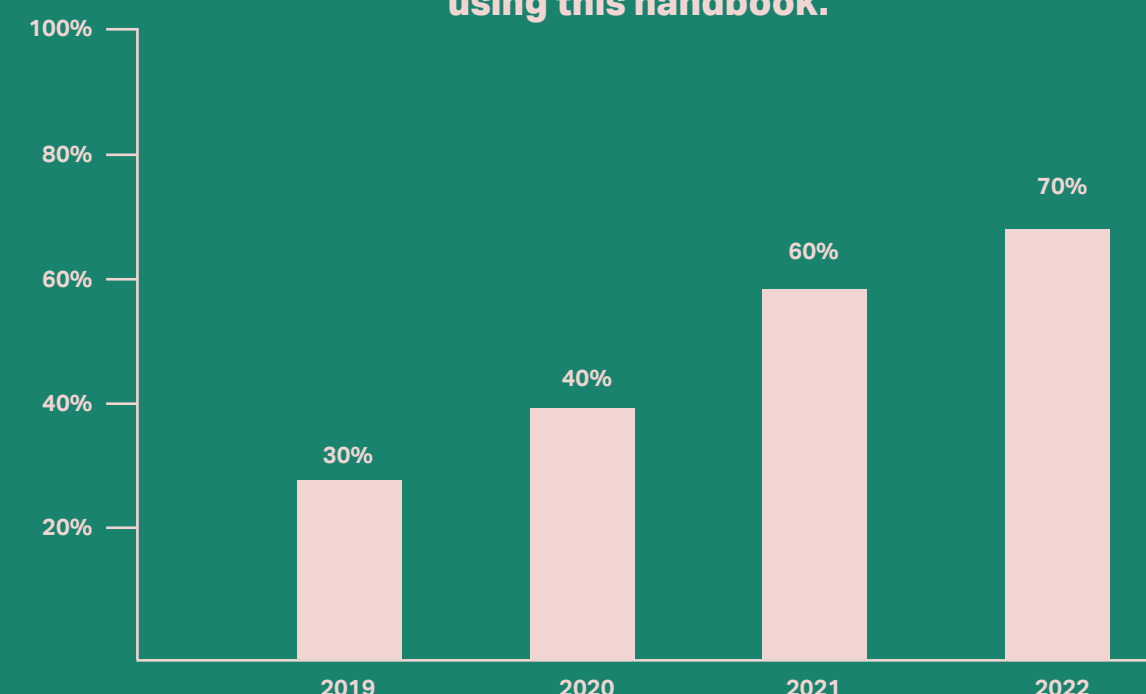
## Process

Working sustainably is all about mindset. We know it's not possible to achieve all our goals in the first year, but we're committed to doing as much as we can, as well as making a plan for how we can do even more next year. We hope that we can inspire others to think in the same way. With this handbook in hand, planning sustainable events should be that little bit easier for all of us.

So, to get started, read the handbook, follow the guide, and, if you have any questions, get in touch with the team at Aarhus Events, VisitAarhus, The Climate Department or Worldperfect.

Let's rock.

% of events and conferences in Aarhus using this handbook.





# WHY DO WE NEED A GREEN CONFERENCE AND EVENT HANDBOOK?

## Aarhus University

Anders Frølund, Head of Events and Communications Support

When it comes to hosting conferences sustainably, Aarhus University wants to be the best in Europe. We're already well on our way, and over the past few years many of the initiatives mentioned in the handbook have already been tested at our 300 annual conferences. As a university and a research institution, we feel that it's extra important that we show our students and staff that taking responsibility for the environment is a natural part of holding a conference, but we can't do it alone. This handbook and its underlying collaboration illustrates how important it is for the whole city to work together to achieve this goal.

Using this handbook, and through various collaborations, we hope not only to make our own events more sustainable, but to inspire other universities to do the same.

## The Climate Department

Henrik Müller, Head of Climate Department, Aarhus Municipality

Aarhus has a very ambitious climate plan and we have a clear strategy of how to achieve it. One of our areas of focus is local green engagement, where we strive to communicate, showcase and cultivate a sense of ownership for our city's green transition. In our work, events and conferences are essential, as this is where we physically meet our citizens and guests.

With the publication of this handbook we have taken another important step towards encouraging more people to work sustainably. By seeing or experiencing a green idea at an event, you are more likely to be open to new ideas at events in the future.

## Aarhus Events

Jørn Sønderkjær, Head of Events

One of Aarhus's strengths is that we can, and want to, work together across the board. As a city, we are particularly strong when we join forces in the area of sustainability. For this reason, Aarhus can help set new goals and standards for integrating sustainability into event management.

With this handbook, Aarhus Events can help improve a number of events in the city, from smaller sports, cultural and knowledge-sharing events to big festivals with tens of thousands of guests. We look forward to taking the next step and helping event organisers implement their ideas.

## VisitAarhus

Allan Tambo, Head of Business Tourism

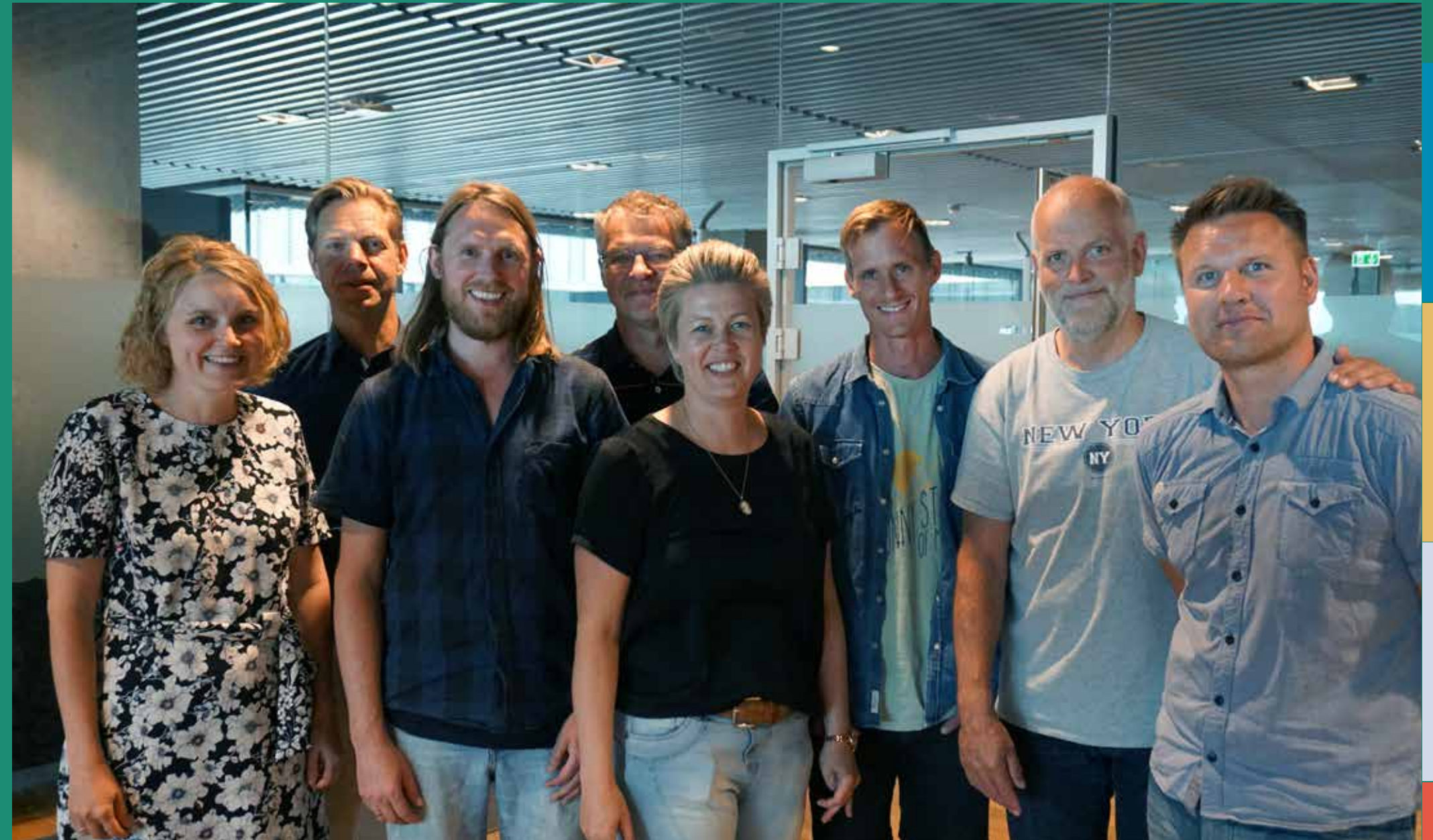
Sustainability is increasingly becoming a crucial part of the bidding process when it comes to hosting large congress events. This handbook and the collaboration that led to its creation strengthen our position as a sustainable congress city, both nationally and internationally. It also allows us to encourage local organisers and the tourism industry to work together and do their bit to make the city as sustainable as possible, helping us attract valuable visitors.

## Worldperfect

Søren Stochholm, Partner

Through our work with NorthSide and The European Capital of Culture 2017, and most recently the Hempel World Sailing Championships, we have acquired a lot of experience in working with sustainability and large events. Alongside the rest of the group, we've chosen the advice and contacts that we think will be the most useful for organisers on the ground.

We've made this handbook easy to follow, so that any event organiser can use it to improve their sustainability. You don't even have to develop a full strategy. It's that simple.



From the left: Kirsten Rudbeck and Allan Tambo, VisitAarhus, Rasmus Hørsted Jensen, Worldperfect, Anders Frølund, AU, Charlotte Kirk Elkjær, Aarhus Events, Søren Stochholm, Worldperfect, Jørn Sønderkjær, Aarhus Events, Thomas Mikkelsen, Climate Department, Aarhus Municipality

TRANSPORT

WASTE

FOOD AND DRINK

ELECTRICITY

VOLUNTEERING

INNOVATION

DOUMENTATION



# INTRODUCTION TO THE SECTIONS

This handbook describes the general areas that we, as organisers, work through in our planning. These are also areas that every event organiser should consider in terms of sustainability. We have included all relevant aspects of an event, so each section provides an entry point in how to work sustainably.

## Procurement – the first choices

It can be difficult to judge where you can make the biggest impact with sustainable choices and actions, but procurement is definitely one of the areas where you can have the biggest positive impact. As a buyer, you can demand a certain standard when sourcing products and services so that they live up to your sustainability requirements. The first step to purchasing sustainably is making great connections.

Procurement also covers accommodation and choice of venues. Our policy is always to ask about a location's sustainability initiatives and policies. You'll find that many hotels and venues strive for certification by programmes such as The Nordic Eco Label and Green Key. We want to encourage all organisers to enter into a dialogue with hotels and venues, for example not to be afraid to make demands about waste management, organic food and energy consumption.

## How to use this handbook

In the following pages, you can dive into any of the various sections and find inspiration for sustainable initiatives for your event.

In each section, you can find our goals, which match the goals that Aarhus is working towards.

You will also find a guide for organisers, which includes our recommendations for each of the focus areas. They are mostly guidelines we ourselves follow, but they are also recommendations that apply to other event organisers in the city.

Each section includes a case study, so you can take inspiration from other sustainable events and conferences.

At the end of each section, you can see which of the UN Sustainable Development Goals the initiatives support.

At the end of the handbook you'll find a checklist that will help you see what to do and when. The checklist is there to help you with your sustainable decision making and provide you with an overview of the entire process.





# TRANSPORT

We want to hold conferences and events that support the transition to fossil-fuel-free transport. Our goal is to encourage people to walk, ride bikes or use public transport such as electric buses in as many situations as possible.

## OUR GOALS

- **more conferences and events use bicycles as part of their transport needs**
- **more conferences and events make use of electric buses**
- **fewer private bus trips in Aarhus for conferences and events (excluding public buses)**
- **visitors from outside the city are satisfied with the sustainable transport options**



## HOW TO MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE OR EVENT GREENER: TRANSPORT

### AN ORGANISER'S GUIDE

#### To and from Aarhus

Make sure your visitors know about all the transport options to Aarhus. You can encourage them to take the train rather than a plane by showing them that the total travel time is often similar. Include transport as a deciding factor when it comes to booking keynote speakers: sometimes video conferencing can be just as effective, especially for speakers who can only participate for short amounts of time. You should also consider parking facilities for electric cars, the potential for carpooling from airports and larger cities and public transport options to and from airports.

#### To and from venues

There are many fossil-fuel-free transport options in Aarhus:

The city is small enough to make walking to and from venues is a feasible option. You could even arrange organised "walking buses", using student assistants as guides. These can become fun events in themselves, such as storytelling tours or sightseeing parties. Just remember to pack rain ponchos or umbrellas in case of rain!

Aarhus is a cycling city so there are many opportunities to use city bikes. It's also possible to order extra city bikes for your event. Remember to introduce foreigners to the rules of cycling in Denmark and, of course, make sure they know how to ride a bike.

Public transport in Aarhus is extensive and the new light-rail makes it possible to trav-

el easily to and from the city centre. Make sure you communicate the public transport options, including where the stops are and where you can buy tickets etc. so as to encourage your guests to use them rather than take a taxi. If you need buses, consider booking an electric bus (which we hope will soon be possible in Aarhus).

#### Choice of location

When choosing where your event will take place, consider where your guests are coming from, where they are staying during the event and how often they will be moving around in Aarhus. The sustainable choice is often the most obvious!

Look into accommodation options and restaurants in terms of your chosen venue to make sure that they are close to each other.

#### Communication

Before the event even begins, let your guests know that your event encourages the use of sustainable transport. Provide them with bus plans, show them where to sign up for shared transport options etc. and let them know what's happening before and during the event. Having thorough information about alternative transport options makes it easier to make sustainable decisions.

If your event or conference receives international guests, consider offering CO2 compensation through tree-planting schemes upon registration.



## TRANSPORT:

# THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This chapter addresses the UN Sustainable Development Goals in terms of transport. Here are the most relevant.

## 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



### TARGET 3.9

By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.

By reducing the use of petrol and diesel cars, we help improve air quality in the city by reducing pollution. The physical activity involved in walking and cycling also has a positive effect on your guests' concentration.

## 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



### TARGET 9.1

Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure

By using and thereby encouraging cycling as well as public transport, we draw people's attention to the whole transport system that needs to be developed to suit our modern lives. From city bikes to light rail and city buses – there are many good and inspiring initiatives in our city, which both visitors and residents can be inspired by. It can also be a faster way of getting from A to B so the sustainable alternative is also often the most efficient mode of transport.

## 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



### TARGET 11.6

By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management

When you choose to take an electric vehicle (such as the light rail), you contribute to cleaner air by reducing the number of petrol and diesel taxis on the road. Public transport is also a great way for your guests to see the city and meet the locals.

## 13 CLIMATE ACTION



### TARGET 13.3

Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

By choosing to walk, cycle or take public transport and by encouraging carpooling, trains rather than planes and climate compensation via planting trees, you reduce your event's climate footprint. You also nudge your participants to think more environmentally friendly.

## CASE STUDY:

# HEMPEL WORLD SAILING CHAMPIONSHIPS AARHUS 2018

Free public transport, no visitor parking, electric cars for internal use and lots of extra city bikes made available.

### The challenge:

The event's 400,000 extra visitors put pressure on a transport system that was already busy.

### The innovation:

For this World Sailing Championships, the organisers made a deal with Midttrafik (the transport agency for the Central Denmark Region) that allowed all organisers and participants to travel for free on the light rail and city buses. On top of this, extra Donkey Republic city bikes were brought in for the event and free shuttle buses were introduced. Internal transport at the event was primarily electric cars and small electric golf carts. To encourage the use of public transport, we wrote in the visitor

material that there was no visitor parking available. Instead of seeing the lack of additional parking spaces as a limitation, we made sure to point out all of the sustainable alternatives on offer.

### The potential:

If 400,000 people are able to move successfully around a large event using bicycles and public transport, the transportation problem for smaller events is definitely surmountable. If Aarhus made all events car-free they would be setting a fantastic example to other cities.

### Collaboration partners:

Aarhus Events, Midttrafik, Worldperfect, E.ON, Donkey Republic.

## INITIATIVES:

- **PARTICIPANTS: 400,000**
- **CAR PARKING SPACES: NONE**
- **INTERNAL TRANSPORT: ELECTRIC CARS AND GOLF CARTS**
- **BICYCLE PARKING SPACES: LOTS**
- **CITY BUSES AND LIGHT RAIL: FREE FOR ORGANISERS AND VOLUNTEERS**
- **SHUTTLE BUSES: FREE FOR EVERYONE**
- **NUMBER OF KM CYCLED: 15,000**

### TOP TIP FROM THIS CASE:

**Communicate the lack of parking spaces as something positive.**



# WASTE RESOURCES

We want to hold events and conferences that work toward, and support, our objective of becoming waste free. Our goal is that all our events and conferences should work actively to minimise, recycle and reuse waste from events.

## OUR GOALS:

- **LESS WASTE:** We want to minimise the amount of waste by, for example, offering guests refillable water bottles instead of disposable water bottles.
- **MORE RECYCLING:** We aim to sort waste into at least the same number of categories as Aarhus Waste and District Heating.
- **MORE REUSE:** We will strengthen our collaboration with the city recycling centre REUSE.

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE AND EVENT GREENER: WASTE MANAGEMENT

### AN ORGANISER'S GUIDE

The most important thing to do is to reduce the amount of waste produced at your event, or even eliminate it completely. You could consider borrowing items from REUSE, avoid offering giveaways, or simply reuse items at your next event.

The next most important thing is to collect all the event waste. Aarhus is a city surrounded by beautiful nature and is located next to the sea. We have a strong commitment to making sure that rubbish doesn't end up out in nature, floating in the sea, especially in the new harbour area, or as litter in the city. The city's vision of becoming the cleanest city in Scandinavia requires effort.

If you're planning an outdoor event, your first port of call should be the Centre for

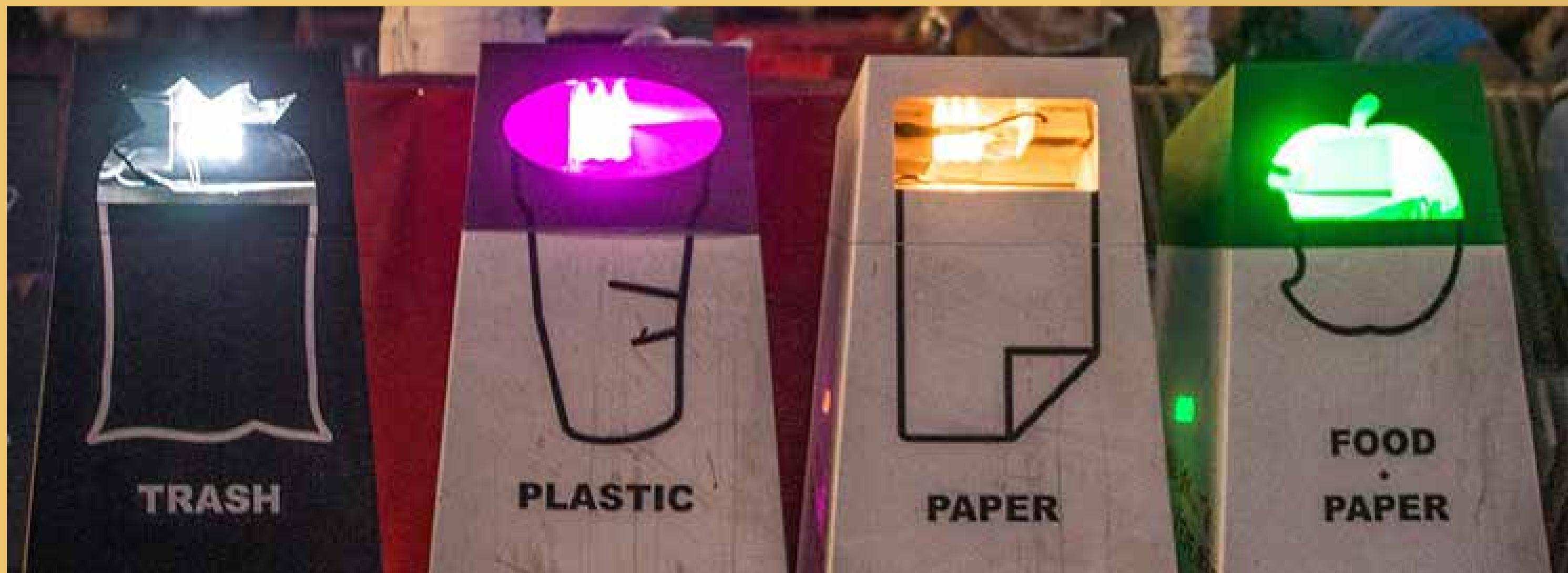
City Usage help platform [www.brugaarhus.dk](http://www.brugaarhus.dk). Ask about specific locations in order to design the best possible waste plan.

Aarhus has a number of innovative waste management companies that have developed effective management systems for events. Remember to ask your waste management provider about the possibility of sorting waste in both the visitor and backstage areas and consider what types of rubbish you will be dealing with. If you are serving draft beer, think about facilitating the collection of beer glasses, which are relatively easy to recycle. At larger events, you could even look into the option of washing and reusing the glasses.

As a conference organiser, you will often find yourself limited by existing frameworks at your chosen location, but don't be discouraged. In Aarhus, many venues have ambitious goals in the pipeline. Push venues in the right direction by asking about waste sorting options when you make your booking. And remember to ask for waste sorting systems for conference visitors so they too, can be part of your sustainable initiatives.

If you want to sort waste at your event, it's important to make sure that sorted waste is kept separate and is not mixed up in the same container at the end. Remember to always ask where the waste ends up and what level of cleanliness the waste plant requires.

In general, as an organiser, you will find that visitors increasingly expect to be able to sort their own rubbish at events.



## WASTE RESOURCES:

# THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This chapter addresses the UN Sustainable Development Goals in terms of waste resources. Here are the most relevant:

## 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



### TARGET 11.6

By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management

By taking more responsibility for our waste, we work directly towards reducing our own environmental impact and thereby also that of the city as a whole. We can take an important step by reusing, recycling and reducing the amount of waste we produce in a much greater way than we have done so far. As an event/conference organiser we can lead the way and show how simple it is to do.

## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



### TARGET 12.4

By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment

As an event or conference organiser, we have a responsibility for resources and waste at an important point of their life cycle. If we decide that waste at our events gets sent to incineration, it gets incinerated. If we decide to facilitate recycling of waste, it might get recycled. If we decide to reuse our waste, we might be so lucky that someone gives it a new life.

### TARGET 12.5

By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

We have a lot of decisions to make as organisers, which can make a big difference to the environmental impact our visitors make. By setting up a water bottle project, we can help reduce the number of disposable water bottles bought and so on.

## 13 CLIMATE ACTION



### TARGET 13.3

Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

By working directly with recycling, waste reduction and promoting reuse, you reduce the CO2 emissions from your event because it results in fewer new items being produced. When you spread the message of what you are doing, you can inspire your visitors.

## WHAT TO DO AS AN EVENT ORGANISER:

By talking to your waste management company, you can develop an effective sorting plan for both backstage and in the visitor's area. Consider sorting waste into the following categories:

### Visitor area

- Cardboard and paper
- Food waste and compostable tableware
- Trash
- Hard plastic

### Backstage area

- Hazardous waste (batteries, light bulbs etc.)
- Cardboard and paper
- Bottle deposit
- Trash
- Wood (remember to buy FSC certified wood, which is not pressure treated)
- Iron and metal

- Garden waste
- Glass

It is possible to combine some of these categories to save space and make sorting easier, but make sure the waste will be separated at a later date at the receiving recycling plant.

### Strive to promote recycling by:

- Offering people the opportunity to come and collect decorations and other reusable materials that you no longer need. You can either give it to REUSE or list it on one of the Facebook groups "Gives bort - Aarhus" (give-away Aarhus) or "Storskald I Aarhus kan du finde her!" (Find larger waste items in Aarhus here!).

See the checklist at the end of this handbook.

## WHAT TO DO AS A CONFERENCE ORGANISER:

Ask your venue about the possibility of sorting waste into the following categories:

### Visitor area

- Cardboard and paper
- Food waste and compostable tableware
- Trash

### Backstage area

- Hazardous waste (batteries, light bulbs etc.)
- Glass
- Bottle deposit
- Hard plastic

It is possible to combine some of these categories to save space and make sorting easier, but make sure the waste will be separated at a later date at the receiving recycling plant.

- Collecting name tags at the end of the event
- Offering people the opportunity to come and collect decorations and other reusable materials that you no longer need. You can either give it to REUSE or list it on one of the Facebook groups "Gives bort - Aarhus" (give-away Aarhus) or "Storskald I Aarhus kan du finde her!" (Find larger waste items in Aarhus here!).
- Avoiding handing out tote bags with complimentary items but set up a "freebie table" so guests can actively choose whether or not they want a tote bag or complimentary items.
- Avoiding handing out disposable water bottles. Offer refillable bottles or cups instead.

Use the checklist at the end of this handbook

### TOP TIP:

**View waste management as a way of communicating about sustainability**



# FOOD AND DRINK

We want to hold conferences and events that create zero food waste, serve locally produced organic food and drink and reduce the use of food with a large carbon footprint. Our goal is for all conferences and events to work actively with these issues.

## OUR GOALS:

- **Avoid food waste:** We want to minimise our food waste, both by preventing it and by finding outlets for leftover food that has already been produced.
- **More organic food:** we want to increase the proportion of organic food served at events.
- **More locally produced food:** we want to establish a strong collaboration with local food and drink producers.
- **We want to use fewer foods with a large carbon footprint** such as meat, as well as fruit and vegetables that have a large climate impact.

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE OR EVENT GREENER: FOOD AND DRINK

### AN ORGANISER'S GUIDE

Prevent food waste by plating up portion-sized meals, offering sandwiches 'to-go' or by setting up the buffet on smaller tables: A spread doesn't need to be extravagant to look good. Make sure you arrange the buffet in a way that allows you to put out new dishes only when the first ones have been emptied.

Avoid food waste by finding an outlet for surplus food that has already been prepared. You could do this by collaborating with external partners such as Too Good To Go, a local food bank or a homeless shelter.

Organic and local production: Always ask your supplier whether it's possible to use

organic food. Your supplier will usually be able to adjust the menu so that this doesn't break the budget. For example, you could reduce the amount of meat to allow for more organic and locally produced food.

Assess how you can avoid foods with a large environmental footprint such as meat or fruit and vegetables produced in energy-intensive manner. You could do this by offering vegetarian or vegan food produced locally.

It's a good idea to encourage people to sign up for events so you're able to order exactly the right amount of food.





## FOOD AND DRINK

# THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This chapter addresses the UN Sustainable Development Goals in terms of food and drink. Here are the most relevant:

## 1 NO POVERTY



### TARGET 1.3

Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable

By setting up a system for events and conferences to hand out surplus food to those less fortunate, we help out local homeless shelters.

## 2 ZERO HUNGER



### TARGET 2.1

By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round

By giving surplus food from conferences and events to homeless shelters in the city, we support those in need and provide them with a good, healthy meal.

## 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



### Target 12.3

By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses

By working proactively to minimise food waste, you are directly fulfilling the goal of halving consumer food waste. By handing out leftover food at the end of events to people in need you are also supporting a good cause.

## 13 CLIMATE ACTION



### TARGET 13.3

Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

By being climate-conscious whilst working with food and thinking about using less meat, considering production methods as well as transport, we can help raise awareness about how small, everyday decisions have an impact. We are also able to influence people by introducing them to new menu options.

## CASE STUDY:

# EVENTS AT AU

Meat as an add-on

Aarhus University (AU) serves vegetarian food as standard, so when people sign up for an event they have to actively choose if they want meat. AU Events and Communication Support has tested this out, making sure participants are made aware of the reasons behind the change, and feedback has been positive so far. They plan to continue rolling out this scheme at future events.

It's important to make people understand that this is an environmental decision and not an economic one. When AU has justified its decisions as being climate conscious, it has received either positive comments or no comments, which suggests that the initiative has been well received.

Meat-free catering also paves the way for some other innovative ideas. AU launched SDG 4.2 at a recent conference. This involved serving:

- at least 60% organic food
- samples of a new "recycled" beer from the Engineering College (brewed with new ideas and old bread)
- samples of futuristic snacks (seaweed, mealworms and grasshoppers)
- sustainable tableware
- re-useable water bottles with tap-water
- sign-up for events so that the catering can be adjusted to serve the actual number of guests

These are just some of the ways that the university conferences are able to help the environment.

## TOP TIP:

**Make it clear that your sustainable initiatives are not ways of saving money – but are ways of being environmentally friendly.**



# ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION

We want to hold conferences and events that support our objectives by saving energy and choosing the most sustainable option for energy and electricity consumption. Our goal is for all conferences and events to work actively with these issues.

## OUR GOALS

- **Low energy consumption:** We choose the most energy efficient solutions from our suppliers.
- **More renewable energy:** Where possible, we choose venues that use renewable energy and communicate this to our visitors.
- **Phase out diesel generators:** We choose generators that run on 2nd generation biodiesel or other, more environmentally friendly, alternatives.



## HOW TO MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE OR EVENT GREENER: ENERGY

### AN ORGANISER'S GUIDE

In Denmark, we have a well-integrated electricity grid and a large part of our electricity is produced by renewable sources. The table below shows the proportion of energy coming from different sources over one year: you'll see that a lot of it is renewable. This means that here in Aarhus using mains electricity is preferable to using a diesel generator. If you really need to use generators at your event, you can enquire about models that are able to run on second generation biodiesel or other more environmentally friendly alternatives.

There is also the option of using 100% wind energy. It costs a little bit more but it

guarantees that wind production covers the electricity that you use. This is done through a system of "wind certificates". Several electricity companies are able to supply wind energy to your event. If you are interested in doing this, you can contact your electricity company before your event and provide them with an estimate of how much electricity you think that you'll be using. Make sure you display the wind certificate at your event, and, when it's over, you can review how much electricity was actually used and let your guests know.

Oil	1%
Solar	2%
Nuclear	3%
Waste inceneration	4%
Natural gas	7%
Hydropower	12%
Biofuels	14%
Coal and brown coal	17%
Wind	40%

This is where the electricity comes from (the grid).  
Source: Energinet.dk, data from 2017



## ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION

# THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This chapter addresses the UN Sustainable Development Goals in terms of electricity and energy consumption. Here are the most relevant:

### 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



#### TARGET 3.9

By 2030, substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination

By avoiding diesel generators, we also avoid polluting our local air. In Aarhus, local air pollution causes 20,000 sick days a year (data from 2017).

### 7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



#### TARGET 7.2

By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix

By using electricity generated by renewable sources, we increase the proportion of renewable energy in the total electricity consumption. And by making our choices public, we can inspire others to make similar choices.

#### Target 7.3

By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency

By working specifically with energy efficient solutions at our conferences and events we influence the market in a more efficient direction. We also directly contribute to our goal.

### 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



#### TARGET 11.6

By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management

Using less electricity from non-renewable sources will lower the negative environmental impact of our city. By phasing out diesel generators, we also move to improve local air pollution.

### 13 CLIMATE ACTION



#### TARGET 13.3

Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

By increasing the amount of renewable energy in your energy consumption, you reduce your CO2 emissions.

## CASE STUDY:

# HEMPEL WORLD SAILING CHAMPIONSHIPS AARHUS 2018

The electricity used at the World Sailing Championships was provided by wind energy.

## The challenge:

Given that all 12 Olympic sailing categories use wind as their main source of power, it makes sense for the event hosting them to use wind power too. Unfortunately, it's not possible to determine exactly what kind of electricity comes out of the socket, but it still makes sense to power your event with wind.

So, here's how it works: First, you estimate the amount of electricity that you will be using at your event and then you order that amount of wind energy to cover it. You can't always guarantee that the actual electricity that you use is wind generated, but you do have a guarantee that somewhere, wind turbines are producing an amount equal to the electricity used at your event.

The main sponsor of the sustainability programme at the World Sailing Championships in Aarhus, E.ON, were keen to advertise the fact that 100% of the electricity used at the event was wind generated. The westerly wind provided energy for the sailors and the off-shore wind park Rødsand II provided energy for the event.

## The potential:

Many more events could be run on wind energy, but most organisers don't know that it is an option.

## Collaborating partners:

Aarhus Events, Worldperfect, E.ON

**PARTICIPANTS: 400,000**

**ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION: 45 MWH**

**PERIOD: 1-8/2018 - 31-8/2018**

**TONS CO<sub>2</sub> REDUCED: 8.5**

## TOP TIP:

**Look into which providers can help you with sustainable energy.**



# VOLUNTEERS

We want to hold conferences and events that support our objectives by connecting volunteering and sustainability. Our goal is for all conferences and events to work actively with these issues.

## OUR GOALS

- **Increase awareness and consciousness about sustainability through volunteering**
- **Make it easier for volunteers to work with a sustainable mind-set**
- **Encourage a diverse range of people to volunteer, so that all ages, backgrounds, ethnicity and labour market associations are represented**
- **Cultivate a greater sense of social inclusion and include more socially vulnerable people in volunteering work**

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE OR EVENT GREENER: VOLUNTEERING

### AN ORGANISER'S GUIDE

In Denmark, we have a strong tradition of volunteering, which is reflected in the fact that a large part of the Danish population volunteers regularly or has tried volunteering. Community and a sense of belonging are very important in volunteering. The focus should lie, therefore, on the individual, regardless of whether they are volunteering at a local sports club or an organisation that relies on volunteers to hold larger events. When you work with volunteers at your event or conference, it is important that you don't see them as a source of free labour, but rather as individuals who contribute with their own free time because they feel that the project means something to them. It is important to motivate them and listen to them so that they feel that they are part of something bigger. Volunteers offer a great deal and it is important to acknowledge them and the contribution they bring.

Volunteers can play a crucial role in carrying out sustainability strategies before, during and after your event or conference. Volunteers are often the face of your sustainability strategy and carry out the many practical tasks involved in reaching the goals that you have set out as an organiser. For this reason, it's important to prepare and train the volunteers to carry out their tasks, but also to make sure that they understand the connection between sustainability and the job that they will be doing. When volunteers understand the reasoning behind the tasks they are asked to do, they will often be more engaged and interested, which will rub off on visitors to the event.

Volunteers can play a role in encouraging visitors to help the event's work with sustainability. You can either push for this by training volunteers in sustainability yourself or by recruiting volunteers with relevant experience who can teach the other volunteers.





## VOLUNTEERING

# THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This chapter's goals and recommendations address the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The most important goals are shown here

## 4 QUALITY EDUCATION



### TARGET 4.7

By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

When we include sustainability training as a fixed part of our volunteering programme, we help promote values that support a sustainable future, just like we also get the necessary information across.

## 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



### TARGET 10.2

By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status

By working actively to include diversity in our volunteer team, we as conference and event organisers help establish an inclusive and free space.

## 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



### TARGET 11.6

By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management

By using less energy from non-renewable sources, we reduce the negative impact on our city. Phasing out diesel generators is part of our effort to reduce local air pollution.

## 13 CLIMATE ACTION



### TARGET 13.3

Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning

When we start to collect waste, and view it as a resource, it helps raise awareness of the issue as well as give food for thought on the climate debate in general. The less waste that gets sent to incineration, leads to less new manufacturing and recycling provides CO2 savings.

## CASE STUDY:

# RETHINKER - A COMMUNITY FOR VOLUNTEERS

VisitAarhus has set up the community ReThinker, which is a community for volunteers in Aarhus. As a member of ReThinker, you get offered various different volunteering opportunities. ReThinker has become a well-known "brand" in the city and they regularly get contacted by people and organisations looking for volunteers and those looking for advice on the subject of volunteering. This means that volunteers from the ReThinker community are in regular contact with many different types of events and activities.

As a result of interest from their volunteers, and the fact that volunteers come into contact with many different people, ReThinker has developed a link between sustainability and volunteering. The thought behind this connection is to encourage a greater level of enthusiasm for sustainability amongst volunteers, which they can take with them when they are out and about volunteering.

The connection between sustainability and volunteering is established by "educating" the volunteers in sustainability. They achieve this through several different initiatives. One such initiative is to hold inspirational talks and educational trips where volunteers can learn about sustainability in general but also how they can incorporate sustainability into their work at events. In addition to this, volunteers can be invited on field trips, where they can experience how businesses work with sustainability. One example is the ways in which businesses work with different resource management systems.

The multi-faceted approach that ReThinker uses, gives the volunteers greater knowledge, understanding and insight into sustainable transitioning.

## TOP TIP:

**Tell your volunteers about your sustainable initiatives and give them a sense of ownership by including them in your project**



# INNOVATION

We want to hold conferences and events that support our city's goals by helping us all to make innovative changes. This means that everyone's ideas and solutions can help us all move in a more sustainable direction. Our goal is for all conferences and events to work actively with these issues.

## OUR GOALS

- **We want to develop innovative solutions that help our society take a more sustainable direction**
- **We want to generate innovative ideas that can help events and conferences in the future**
- **We want to share good ideas with our wider network**
- **Innovation should help equality**
- **Through innovation, we will help our city's development and growth**

## HOW TO MAKE YOUR CONFERENCE OR EVENT GREENER: INNOVATION

### AN ORGANISER'S GUIDE

Making events sustainable requires you to think innovatively and alternatively – break old habits. Solutions can often be found right in front of us when you first start thinking about different ways of doing things. We want to use the sustainable solutions that are easy to adapt but if there are no obvious alternatives available then we will consult our network to find and innovate new solutions. Sustainability and innovation often go hand in hand and demand a good deal of creativity.

One example is REUSE that collaborates with a lot of events to collect materials, that can help reduce the need to buy new. One example of this is furnishing a lounge

area with second-hand furniture, supplying used tableware for catering etc.

Innovation is also about collaborating. It's difficult to do everything on your own, you need to draw on volunteers, collaborating partners, guests and suppliers. Innovation in this area can help you think in terms of relevant partnerships and collaborations and help push suppliers to think more sustainably.

#### **Future:**

Live video feeds of keynote speakers

Organic Aarhus (100% organic)

REUSE 2.0 – buy nothing, reuse everything.





## INNOVATION:

## THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

This chapter's goals and recommendations address the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Depending on what area you are working with, your initiatives will promote different SDGs.



## INNOVATION THROUGH GOOD EXAMPLES

### Meat as an add-on (AU)

By requiring participants at conferences at Aarhus University to make a conscious decision as to whether or not they want meat, and by communicating the thought behind this decision, the University made people think about their food habits.

### Petrol-eating fungi (VM)

Sailing World Championships, Aarhus 2018. When the teams fill up their boats with petrol, a little bit of fuel always leaks out in the water. The participants are fed up with it, but it's such a small amount nothing has been done about the issue. At the Sailing World Championships in Aarhus, we experimented with some myco-remedies; fungus spores that can eat petrol.

### Waste sorting and visitor-involvement and communication (Northside/VM)

Tell Tell me and I forget. Show me and I might remember. Involve me and I understand. By offering people the option of recycling, we don't just communicate sustainability, we invite people to join us. This is one of the reasons that 94% of guests associate NorthSide with sustainability.

### Washable beer jugs at NorthSide

Instead of throwing beer jugs away, we started to send them to be recycled. The next step was to reuse them directly by washing them and refilling them. Beer

jugs went from being a net cost to a net saving as a result of having to buy fewer jugs.

### Plate Mate

The glasses that got collected from NorthSide 2017 came back in 2018 as plates. The new Plate Mate – like reinventing the wheel, just slightly less revolutionary.

### The waste sorting bag – TRASHBAG

A waste sorting bag for coach boats had never been developed before. It proved to be a popular invention.

### Electric bus

Hopefully it will be possible to transport your guests around in an electric bus in the near future. The biggest event organisers in Aarhus have made a joint promise to our local bus company to guarantee them a certain number of trips. This gives the bus company more security when it comes to considering an investment in electric buses.

### REUSE

One man's rubbish is another man's treasure. REUSE is an engaged collaboration partner that encourages conference and event's organisers to assess their options in terms of using recycled items, before they have to go out and buy. REUSE is especially good if you need help with collecting items such as furniture for events.

### TOP TIP:

**See sustainability as a tool for innovation**



# CHECKLIST

## TRANSPORT

### Before the event

- ☐ Estimate number of guests
- ☐ Identify transport requirements
- ☐ Find collaboration partners and/or sponsors
- ☐ Contact guests about transport options
- ☐ Book transport

### During the event

- ☐ Collect data

### After the event

- ☐ Evaluate how well the systems worked
- ☐ Publish the results

## WASTE RESOURCES

### Before the event

- ☐ Estimate number of guests
- ☐ Find collaboration partners and/or sponsors that can supply sustainable solutions
- ☐ Estimate the amount of waste that will be produced, and what types there will be
- ☐ Order waste solutions such as bins that allow for sorting
- ☐ Make arrangements with your waste management supplier about the recycling of unsorted waste
- ☐ Put together a communication plan to inform guests about the waste arrangements

### During the event

- ☐ Monitor the systems

### After the event

- ☐ Evaluate the systems and follow up where the waste ends up
- ☐ Publish the results

## ELECTRICITY AND ENERGY CONSUMPTION

### Before the event

- ☐ Assess activities that will require electricity
- ☐ Find collaboration partners and/or sponsors that can supply green energy
- ☐ If necessary, choose generators that run on 2nd generation biofuel
- ☐ Put together a communication plan to inform guests about the efforts made to save energy

### During the event

- ☐ Monitor energy consumption

### After the event

- ☐ Evaluate the guests satisfaction with the event's energy saving initiatives
- ☐ Publish the results

TRANSPORT

WASTE

FOOD AND DRINK

ELECTRICITY

VOLUNTEERING

INNOVATION

DOCUMENTS



FOOD AND DRIK

Before the event

- ☐ Estimate number of guests
- ☐ Find collaboration partners and/or sponsors that can supply sustainable solutions
- ☐ Order waste solutions such as rubbish bins that allow guests to sort food waste
- ☐ Make arrangements with organisations that can take leftover food, such as a food bank or biogas plant
- ☐ Put together a communication plan to inform guests about the food

During the event

- ☐ Monitor the systems

After the event

- ☐ Evaluate the participants' satisfaction with the food
- ☐ Follow up on any agreements made with recycling and communication partners
- ☐ Publish the results

VOLUNTEERING

Before the event

- ☐ Estimate number of volunteers required
- ☐ Tell your volunteers about your sustainable initiatives
- ☐ Make sure that the volunteers understand their role in working with sustainability
- ☐ Ensure diversity in your team of volunteers

During the event

- ☐ Make sure that the volunteers know about the sustainable initiatives

Efter event

- ☐ Ask to what extent the volunteers have adopted the sustainable initiatives they have learnt
- ☐ Publish the results

INNOVATION

Before the event

- ☐ Estimate the potential for innovation
- ☐ Find collaboration partners that work in innovation and see if any new ideas pop up
- ☐ Create good conditions for innovation - make space and allow people to experiment

During the event

- ☐ Try things out - make time to focus on new initiatives

After the event

- ☐ Evaluate the solutions - assess whether they could be of some benefit to others
- ☐ Publish the results



# DOCUMENTATION

Event	Date	Responsible	
TRANSPORT			
Objective		Yes	No
More events and conferences use bicycles as part of their transport needs	My event uses cycling actively for transport		
More events and conferences use electric buses	My event uses electric buses		
The number of trips made by bus (excluding public transport) in Aarhus for events and conferences decreases	My event utilises private buses (note how many trips in the Yes column)		
Visitors from outside the city express satisfaction with the sustainable transport options on offer	Proportion of participants that express satisfaction (%)		
WASTE RESOURCES			
Objective		Yes	No
Less waste: we want to minimise the amount of waste that we produce by for example, offering refillable water bottles instead of disposable ones	My event strives to minimise waste by offering refillable plastic bottles		
More recycling: We will sort out waste into a least the same number of fractions as Aarhus Waste and District Heating deal with	My event allows guests to sort waste		
More direct recycling: We want to expand our collaboration with Reuse	My event collaborates with Reuse		
FOOD AND DRINK			
Objective		Yes	No
Avoid food waste: we want to reduce food waste, both by preventing it and by redistributing already produced food	My event works to reduce food waste		
More organic food: We want to increase the proportion of organic food and drink	Proportion of organic food and drink (%)		
More locally produced food: We want to develop our collaboration with local food and drink producers	Number of local suppliers (%)		
More vegetarian and vegan food: we want to increase the selection of vegetarian and vegan food	Proportion of vegetarian/vegan food (%)		

ELECTRICITY			
Objective		Yes	No
Reduce energy usage: We choose the most energy efficient solutions from our suppliers			
More renewable energy: To the extent feasible, we choose venues where there is the possibility of choosing renewable electricity and tell people about our choice	My event has chosen venues with the option of renewable energy where it is possible.		
Phase out diesel generators: We use only generators that are able to run on 2nd generation biofuel or use another more environmentally friendly alternative where mains electricity is not available	My event has chosen environmentally friendly generators (such as 2 <sup>nd</sup> generation biofuel) where mains electricity is not available.		
VOLUNTEERING			
Objective		Yes	No
Generate a greater awareness and consciousness about sustainability in volunteering	My event communicates it sustainable initiatives to volunteers.		
Encourage more volunteers to think about sustainability	Number of volunteers who say that they work with a sustainable mindset		
Ensure diversity in amongst your volunteers so that different ages, backgrounds, ethnicity, labour marker affiliation and social backgrounds are represented.			
Encourage a greater level of social inclusion by including more socially vulnerable people in volunteering			
INNOVATION			
Objective		Yes	No
We want to create more innovative solutions that can help our society move in a more sustainable direction	The number of innovative solutions for sustainability that my event works with		
We want to have more innovative ideas that can help improve many events and conferences in the future.	Number of innovative ideas		
We want to share these good solutions in our network	My event shares good solutions		
We want to promote equality through innovation	Find more at cfaarhus.dk		
Through innovation, we will work for a city in growth and development	Find more at cfaarhus.dk		



# DOKUMENTATION

Event (single event/conference)	Date	Responsible		
TRANSPORT				
Objective		2019	2020	2021
More events and conferences use bicycles as part of their transport needs	Number of events where bicycles are used			
More events and conferences use electric buses	Number of events where electric buses are used			
The number of trips made by bus (excluding public transport) in Aarhus for events and conferences decreases	Number of bus trips (excluding public transport) to events			
Visitors from outside the city express satisfaction with the sustainable transport options on offer	Percentage of participants who express satisfaction (%)			
WASTE RESOURCES				
Objective		2019	2020	2021
Less waste: we want to minimise the amount of waste that we produce by for example, offering refillable water bottles instead of disposable ones	Average amount of waste produced per guest (kg)			
More recycling: We will sort out waste into a least the same number of fractions as Aarhus Waste and District Heating deal with	Number of events that sort waste			
More direct recycling: We want to expand our collaboration with Reuse	Number of events that collaborate with Reuse			
FOOD AND DRINK				
Objective		2019	2020	2021
Avoid food waste: we want to reduce food - waste, both by preventing it and by redistributing already produced food	Number of events that work to reduced food waste			
More organic food: We want to increase the proportion of organic food and drink	Percentage of organic food and drink (%)			
More locally produced food: We want to develop our collaboration with local food and drink producers	Percentage of local products (%)			
More vegetarian and vegan food: we want to increase the selection of vegetarian and vegan food	Percentage of vegetarian/vegan food (%)			

ELECTRICITY				
Objective		2019	2020	2021
Reduce energy usage: We choose the most energy efficient solutions from our suppliers				
More renewable energy: To the extent feasible, we choose venues where there is the possibility of choosing renewable electricity and tell people about our choice	Number of venues used that offer renewable energy			
Phase out diesel generators: We use only generators that are able to run on 2nd generation biofuel or use another more environmentally friendly alternative where mains electricity is not available	Number of generators using 2nd generation biofuel			
VOLUNTEERING				
Objective		2019	2020	2021
Generate a greater awareness and consciousness about sustainability in volunteering	Number of volunteers that know about the sustainable initiatives			
Encourage more volunteers to think about sustainability	Proportion of volunteers that say that they work with a sustainable mind-set			
Ensure diversity in amongst your volunteers so that different ages, backgrounds, ethnicity, labour marker affiliation and social backgrounds are represented.				
Encourage a greater level of social inclusion by including more socially vulnerable people in volunteering				
INNOVATION				
Objective		2019	2020	2021
We want to create more innovative solutions that can help our society move in a more sustainable direction	Number of innovative solutions used at the event			
We want to have more innovative ideas that can help improve many events and conferences in the future.	Number of innovative ideas			
We want to share these good solutions in our network	Number of solutions in different areas such as conferences/network meetings etc			
We want to promote equality through innovation	Find more at cfiaarhus.dk			
Through innovation, we will work for a city in growth and development	Find more at cfiaarhus.dk			