

Sustainable Event Guidelines

As part of Yale’s commitment to creating a sustainable campus, the university has developed new *Sustainable Event Guidelines* which aim to **reduce the environmental impact of events held on campus**.

The new program, developed jointly by the Office of Sustainability, Yale Recycling, the Yale Sustainable Food Project (YSFP), and Yale Catering, provides event planners and organizers with a set of practical steps that can be taken to “green” an event. While the guidelines are not a comprehensive list of every possible action that can be taken, they make available a set of minimum standards which address the environmental impact of an event in areas such as energy, transportation, waste, materials use, and food.

Depending on the number of prescribed actions that are incorporated into an event, the event is awarded a **gold, silver, or bronze** rating. Events achieving a gold, silver, or bronze rating will be highlighted on the Office of Sustainability web site.

If you have any questions about these guidelines, please contact [Bob Ferretti](#) at the Office of Sustainability.

Rating	Requirements
GOLD	<p>8 or more Action Items</p> <p>For events that will have a food component: A sustainable menu by Yale Catering -or- A self-designed sustainable menu (including 10 or more items)</p>
SILVER	<p>6 or more Action Items</p> <p>For events that will have a food component: A sustainable menu by Yale Catering -or- A self-designed sustainable menu (including 7 or more items)</p>
BRONZE	<p>4 or more Action Items</p> <p>For events that will have a food component: A sustainable menu by Yale Catering -or- A self-designed sustainable menu (including 5 or more items)</p>

- Required Items -

Raise Awareness

- Educate participants about the sustainable aspects of your event. If you are working with Yale Catering educational material related to the food will be provided.

Event Summary

- Complete an [event summary form](#) and return to the Office of Sustainability for event certification.

- Action Items -

Energy

- Hold the event during the day and in a location that will provide adequate natural lighting.
- Calculate the carbon footprint of the event and purchase renewable energy certificates (RECs) to offset the event's CO2 emissions. ^

Transportation

- Encourage and incentivize the use of alternative transportation. Highlight bike routes to the event location and ensure that an adequate number of parking spaces for bikes are available. Provide resources on public transportation in the area including routes and schedules as well as the location of bike racks.
- Offer virtual conferencing. Make your event a Webinar or video conference for attendees who are not local.

Waste

- Coordinate with [Yale Recycling](#) to have the appropriate number of recycling receptacles in place (cans/bottles/mixed paper). If you hire caterers who will be present on site cooking and/or serving food, ensure that their staff comply with your efforts to make it a sustainable event by using the appropriate trash/recycling receptacles provided to them. If you are working with Yale Catering, recycling bins will be provided.

- Collect and reuse plastic name tag holders.
- Coordinate with a local food bank or soup kitchen to donate any left-over food.
- Provide **biodegradable** "To-Go" containers for participants to take left-over food with them. These can be purchased through Corporate Express and Eastern Bag and Paper via [Sci-Quest](#).

Advertising/Printed Material

- Go Paperless: Post event information, downloadable versions of programs, handouts, and itineraries on a web site for event participants.
- Ensure that program guides, handouts, and other written materials are limited and, when needed, printed on 100% post consumer paper and double sided using a vegetable-based ink. ([Yale RIS](#) can accommodate this)
- For reoccurring or annual events, avoid printing dates and slogans on signs, posters, and banners so that they may be easily reused.
- 100% Paperless Advertising: Promote and invite electronically. Require participants to register or RSVP electronically as well.

Food

- Work with [Yale Catering](#) to put together a sustainable menu
- Prepare a sustainable menu yourself using our [sustainable menu checklist](#).

*For events that will not have food as a component, evaluation will be based on Action and Required Items only.

^ Carbon emissions can be calculated by working with [Tom Downing](#), Yale's Senior Energy Manager 432-7204, and a carbon offset provider. Carbon offset providers include, but are not limited to [Carbon Fund](#), [Native Energy](#), [Sterling Planet](#), and [Terra Pass](#).