

CARBON SMART EVENT GUIDE



Australian
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How to use this guide

ANU has a commitment to reducing its environmental impact. On-campus events are a vital component of the ANU experience but are also a source of emissions.

This guide was developed using four guiding principles from the [ISO 20121 Sustainable Event Framework](#) and is designed to assist you in reducing your environmental impact associated with your events.

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For more general events planning advice see [ANU Events toolkit](#).

Guiding Principles



Event Design



Catering



People, Travel and
Accommodation



Be Bin Smart



Guiding Principles

Commit

Seek commitment from all key event stakeholders to increase your likelihood in designing a sustainable event. Plan to hold discussions around reducing your environmental impact at the conception phase of the event and include costs for reduction strategies in your budget.



Plan

Identify any aspects of your event that may generate scope 3 emissions, and allow time for discussion, changes, or innovations to be made.



Implement

Implement sustainable alternatives for your catering, waste management, procurement of items, and attendee activities such as travel.



Assess

Conduct an audit of your scope 3 emissions and use as a baseline to compare with future events. Key areas for data collection may include waste, estimated GHG emissions, travel data, materials, and attendee feedback.

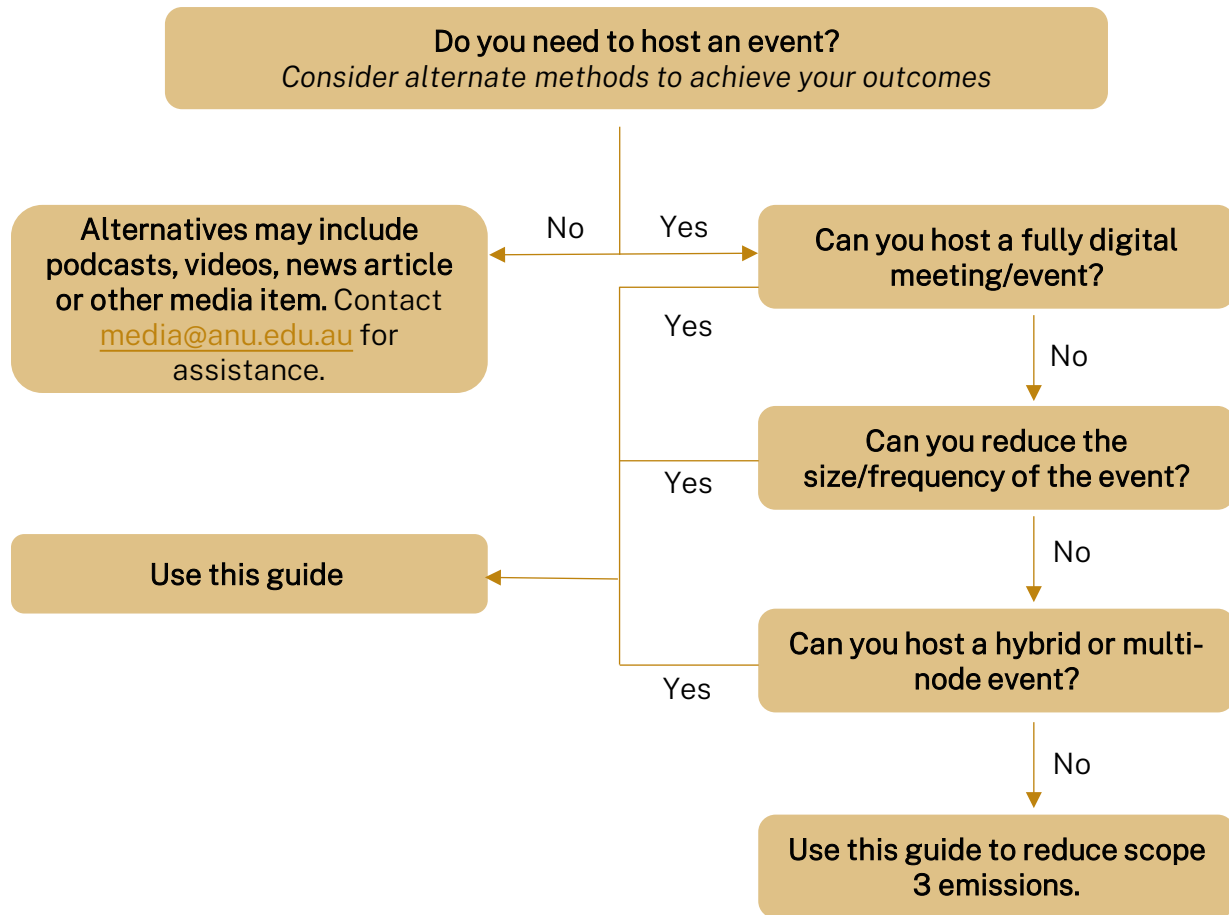


Event Design

Do you need to host an event?

Are there other ways that you can encourage engagement with your content or achieve your outcomes?

See the ANU Communications and Engagement [event design guide](#) for ideas and recommendations on how best to promote engagement.



Event Design

Lower emissions options



Fully Digital Events

Digital events significantly reduce emissions*.

To assist with planning – please see [Going Digital – Quick Event Guide](#).



Reduce size and frequency of in-person events

Reduce the size of events by limiting to key stakeholders or reducing the frequency of events by hosting a digital event one year, and an in-person the following year.



Hybrid events

Hybrid events contain both digital and in-person elements and not only reduce emissions, but can increase engagement to wider audiences.



Multi-node events

Multi-node events contain multiple local elements across various locations. Multi-node events can cater for in-person connection, and limits travel

Less emissions

More emissions

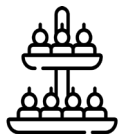


*It is acknowledged that hosting a digital meeting/event does still emit GHG emissions from activities that would not have happened otherwise (i.e. network data transfer energy use, lifecycle of digital devices etc). However, a recent study (Faber, 2021) indicated that up to 66% of emissions can be reduced by hosting digital only events

Catering



Does your event require catering?
Can you host a BYO event instead?
Can you time your event to be between usual meal-times?



Can you host an event with morning or afternoon tea instead of lunch, or a reception instead of dinner?



Ask participants to confirm if they will be eating at the event to avoid over catering and generating waste.



Ask participants their preferences if you are serving more than one option. I.e. would they prefer a pastry or yoghurt pot for morning tea to avoid over catering options.



Ask the caterer to reduce portion sizes, or to hold back food and replenish as needed so that it can remain refrigerated and used the following day, or safely donated.



Avoid over catering for 'just in case'?
Advise caterers on accurate attendee numbers.



Consider offering whole fruit instead of fruit plates so the fruit can be reused or donated.



Consider a vegan or vegetarian menu.



Leftover food can be donated around campus ([ANUSA](#)) or to places such as [Communities@Work](#), [OzHarvest](#) or [St Johns Care](#).



Catering



Drinks

Serve tap water in jugs with glass cups, and tea/coffee in crockery where possible.



Request participants bring their own water bottles and keep cups.



Purchase fairtrade certified products wherever possible.



Host non-alcoholic events.



Suggested Caterers

See the [Sustainable service providers](#)* shared document for a list of caterers that have sustainable practices.



To understand if a caterer is sustainable you can check that they:

- ☐ Have a sustainability policy
- ☐ Use local suppliers where possible
- ☐ Offers seasonal selections
- ☐ Emphasise vegan and vegetarian options
- ☐ Reduce/eliminate waste
- ☐ Composts food scraps (both before, during and after event)



*The sustainable service providers list can only be accessed **by ANU staff and students** through a University SharePoint account.

People, Travel and Accommodation

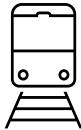


People

Invite international or interstate to participate digitally.



If in-person presenters are preferred, try to prioritise those that do not require air travel.



Where this cannot be done use the [ANU carbon smart travel guide](#).



Accommodation

Consider accommodation that is close to the event venue to minimise travel, are members of the Sustainable Development Partnership, and have sustainability policies.



Travel

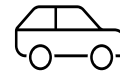
Host all activities in the same venue, or within walking distance.



Encourage shared vehicle travel using maxi-cabs.



Encourage attendees to use active travel to get to and from the event venue. Provide information about how to cycle, walk or travel via public transport to and from event venue.



Encourage carpooling by attendees. If possible, allow local participants to connect and decide where appropriate.



Be Bin Smart at your event

At ANU, we're moving toward a smarter waste-sorting system to keep valuable materials circulating and out of landfill. Proper sorting helps reduce contamination and increases recycling rates. Our [new bin system](#) uses up to five distinct bin streams to capture more materials before they reach landfill. Not all stations will have every bin type, so ensure you check what's available at your event location.



Reduce and reuse first

Minimise waste by choosing re-usable items wherever possible such as coffee cups, drink bottles and marketing materials.



Brief your colleagues or peers

Make sure those supporting you with your event understand which items go in which bins.



Plan ahead

When booking your venue, check which bin types are available.



Monitor and adjust

Check bins during the event to prevent contamination, a quick reminder can make a big difference.

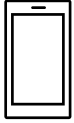


Use clear signage

The [Be Bin Smart Toolkit](#) provides downloadable posters and bin "diet" visuals to help guests sort their waste correctly.



Be Bin Smart – Reducing waste



Go Digital

Communicate through digital platforms
Use mobile apps or digital documents
instead of printed programs.



Swap poster sessions for digital
presentations.
Ask sponsors/exhibitors to provide digital
assets instead of physical ones.



BYO

Ask participants to bring their own
pens/paper/water bottles/bags and
compendiums.

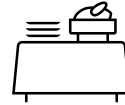


Encourage attendees to bring their own
reusable bottles/mugs. If feasible,
incentives for this behaviour could be
implemented (i.e. free coffee,
discounted registration).



Suppliers

Use ceramic plates, metal cutlery and
mugs/glass cups.

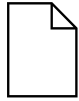


Request caterers use reusable tableware
and supply food in reusable containers
instead of plastic film.



Ask suppliers to avoid wrapping items in
plastic film. Alternatives can be paper
bags, or reusable containers.

Be Bin Smart – Reducing waste



Sorting Waste

Use non-coated paper for name tags in lanyards and put in the blue paper and cardboard bin.



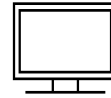
If the new waste streams are unavailable at your location, use clearly identified bins for recycling, organic waste, and landfill waste for your attendees. We recommend adding mention of correct waste disposal as part of your 'housekeeping' announcements.



Ensure you are monitoring the level of the bins, and swap them out when full.



Request attendees/ exhibitors and suppliers leave with everything they brought with them.



Reuse communications tools

Reuse as many existing materials as you can, or design signs and banners to be reused for future events.

- Avoid dates or specific information on banners/ wayfinding signs
- Avoid custom build stands or displays
- Use generic ANU banners (ask events@anu.edu.au to borrow theirs)
- Use digital monitors instead of printed signs

Gifts

If it is necessary to provide gifts to presenters, consider giving a donation in their honour to a charity, environmental program, or local consumable product.

GET IN TOUCH

For practical support or ideas on running your low-carbon event talk to the ANU events team, if you have questions about the guide contact the ANU Green team.

E: events@anu.edu.au and ANUgreen@anu.edu.au



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Resources used to develop this guide

Below is a list of resources utilised to put together our low carbon events guide. You may find these resources useful to delve deeper into your low emissions events journey.

- [ISO 20121 Sustainable Event Framework](#)
- [Global greenhouse gas emissions from animal-based foods are twice those of plant-based foods](#)
- [Catering to the Climate: How earth-Friendly Menus at EVents can help save the planet](#)
- [Case study: omnivore and vegetarian diet comparison at a sustainable consumption conference](#)
- [Life cycle assessment \(LCA\) of reusable and single-use coffee cups](#)
- [Reusable vs. Disposable cups revisited: Guidance in life cycle comparisons addressing scenario, model, and parameter uncertainties for the US consumer](#)
- [Plastic-free events \(Adelaide University\)](#)
- [Is the reusable tableware the best option? Analysis of the aviation catering sector with a life cycle approach](#)
- [The impacts of relocating a logistics facility on last food miles](#)
- [The case of Melbourne's fruit and vegetable wholesale market](#)
- [Consumption choices to decrease personal carbon footprints of Finns](#)
- [Food miles or carbon emissions? Exploring labelling preference for food transport footprint with a stated choice study](#)
- [An overview of the waste hierarchy framework for analysis the circularity in construction and demolition waste management in Europe](#)
- [Waste hierarchy index for circular economy in waste management](#)

