



# Becoming Socially and Environmentally Responsible

An event, large or small, can make an impact on the environment and community so it is crucial to understand the importance of incorporating sustainable practices and becoming socially and environmentally responsible for your event.

## What is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?

*"Corporate Social Responsibility is defined by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development as the continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce, their families and the local community and society at large. More than goodwill, corporate community involvement or strategic corporate philanthropy, corporate responsibility is a genuine attempt by a company to build meaningful relationships between the corporate sector and the rest of society."* Source: Tourism Australia.

## Why is Corporate Social Responsibility so good for your event?

### • Grant Applications

The adoption of social responsibilities within your event can show innovation which will look appealing in your grant application.

### • PR Opportunities

Implementing an effective sustainable events management plan in your event provides great PR opportunities for not only the event but also the stakeholders such as sponsors, suppliers and/or vendors.

### • Patron Satisfaction

Incorporating sustainable practices into an event provides a better experience for attendees and demonstrates the events commitment to the community and environmental sustainability.

### • Increase Sponsor Appeal

Adopting a CSR initiative within large and small scale events provides participating stakeholders (e.g. your sponsors) an opportunity to showcase their goodwill and engage with their customers in a positive and responsible way.

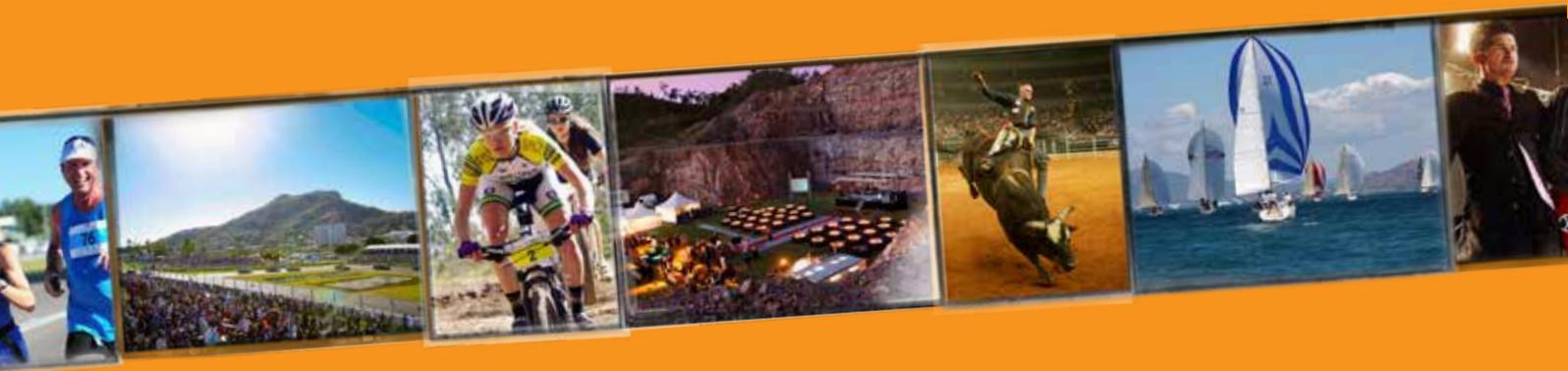
### • Cost Savings

Using CSR activities in the planning, duration and evaluation of your event will provide opportunities to make environmental and cost savings.

## Tips for running a "Green Event"

1. Think "reduce, reuse and recycle" waste
2. Prepare a written environmental policy for your event to share with stakeholders, sponsors, suppliers and attendees
3. Set sustainability goals/objectives for the event
4. Use local businesses rather than importing
5. Work with vendors/suppliers to use biodegradable packaging
6. Consider what marketing material you will use to promote your event and where possible, use social media rather than producing flyers and brochures
7. Use paperless ticketing systems
8. Encourage the use of public transport to events
9. Work with suppliers who use energy efficient equipment
10. Provide your consumers a carbon offset scheme as well as encouraging them to use public transport.





## Avoid "Green washing" - "CSR is not a logo – it is what you do"

Green washing is a term used to describe the efforts of organisations to portray themselves environmentally responsible in order to mask their damaging effects on the environment. Once your sustainability practices are in place it is ideal that you be mindful of green washing by ensuring that your claims are 100% honest.

## Measuring Sustainability Aspects and Promotion

To make the most of your sustainability initiatives it is vital that you measure the impact that you have made on the environment and community while comparing them to the goals that you have set. An example of this would be if you are providing particular recycling bins for aluminum cans it's recommended that you measure the number of cans you have collected and what influence this initiative would have on the environment. Practices like these make for a great PR angle and also gives a sense of satisfaction to you and your stakeholders.

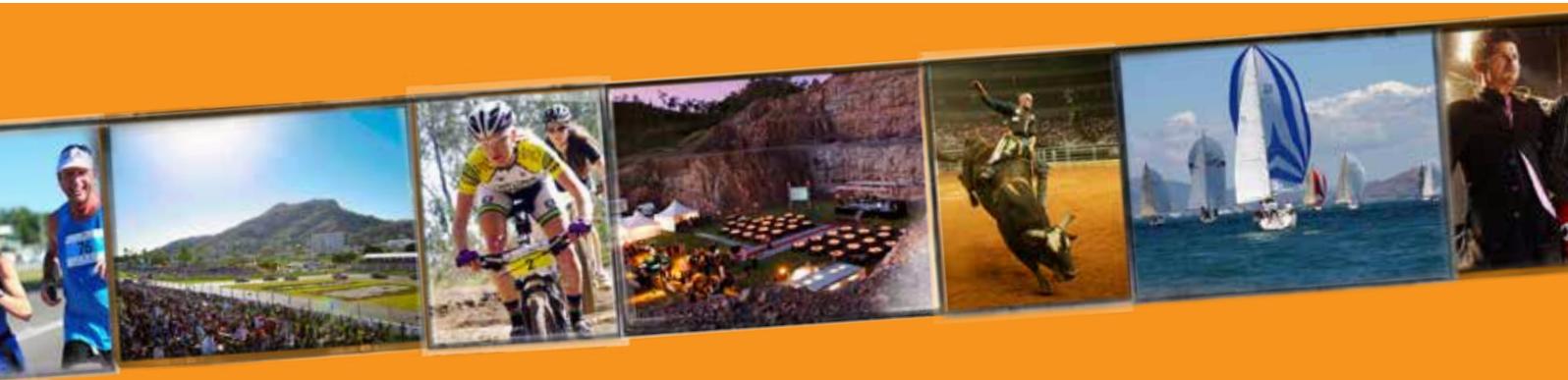
## Useful Links

Tourism Australia;  
<http://www.tourism.australia.com/industry-advice/sustainability-toolkit.aspx>

EC3 Global  
[www.ec3global.com](http://www.ec3global.com)

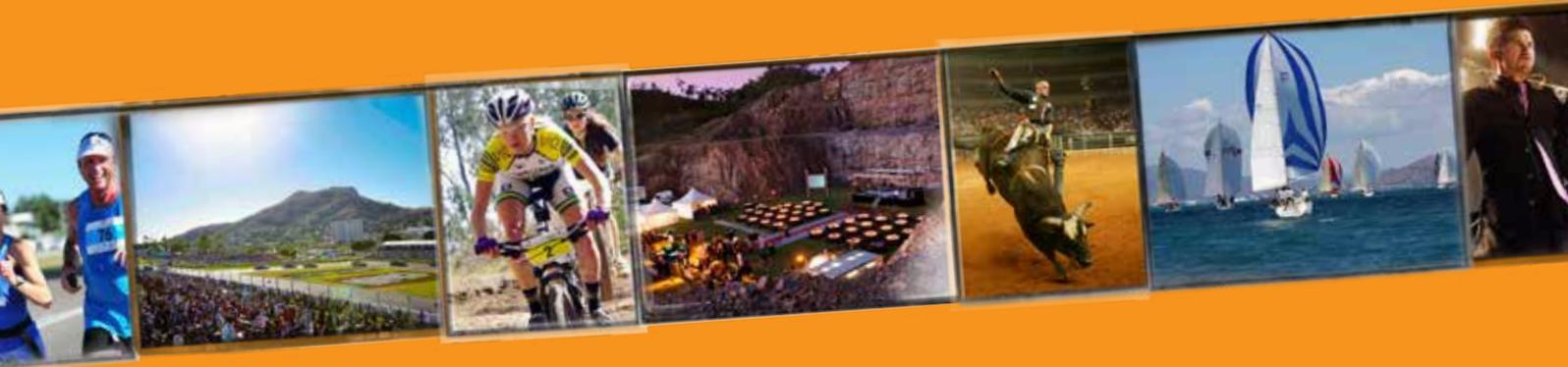
Sustainable Events Planner;  
[www.slf.org.au](http://www.slf.org.au)





# Green Checklist

- Prepare a written environmental policy for your event to share with suppliers, delegates and speakers
  - Estimate the total carbon footprint and plan to offset the carbon emissions produced at the event. Detail this in your costing so it is clear to the client
  - Look at past event energy use and wastage and find ways of reducing this. Track your results after the event
  - Plan your event precisely (looking at numbers, duration, size of venue and number of rooms required) then select the right venue to use minimum energy and resources
  - Ensure your tender clearly states your commitment to the environment and request all respondents outline their policies
  - Establish a policy that encourages all suppliers to submit proposals and quotes electronically
  - In all communications with exhibitors and contractors request that waste and packaging be reduced
- Travel selection**
- Consider using airlines with offset programs
  - Travel with companies that implement green policies
  - Fly visitors by the shortest route, not the most affordable
  - Choose a venue that is easily accessible by public transport or by foot
  - Accurately monitor the number of delegates needing transport at each stage of the event and match this to the transport vehicle size
  - Offer traveller tickets to promote public transport use
  - Where possible use delegate shuttles and hybrid vehicles
  - Consider bike use by providing bike racks /bike concierge
  - Reduce site inspections and use local scouts to gather information
  - Offset carbon emissions for transport
- Give preference to venues with a sound environmental policy
  - Work with the venue to ensure lights and air conditioning are switched off when not in use
  - Consider venues that use 100 percent accredited GreenPower and that can be easily accessed by public transport
  - Choose venues that have environmental accreditation eg. Green Star ratings or Green Globe accreditation
  - Consider venues that use as much natural light and natural ventilation as possible
  - Find out if the venue is taking steps to improve or establish its accreditation
  - Ensure the venue has good waste reduction procedures and uses biodegradable supplies
  - Ensure the venue supplies separate bins for delegates to be active recyclers
- Accommodation**
- Use or recommend hotels within walking distance of the venue and with proactive waste, water and energy management practices
- Power and water supply**
- Ensure toilet suppliers are using grey water and correctly dispose of black water
  - Ensure all equipment, in particular in exhibitions, is turned off at night
  - Consider limiting air conditioning at venues during the set-up and pack-down phase
  - Investigate alternatives to using air conditioning during the event
  - Hold the event during the day to utilise natural light and reduce power consumption
  - Ensure suppliers use modern, energy efficient technology



### Food and beverages

- Ask to see the green policy of the hotel or caterer
- Aim to reduce food miles by using local rather than imported food and beverage supplies
- Plan menus using in-season, fresh, local, organic food
- Request fair trade food suppliers
- Include a larger number of vegetarian options and advise delegates of these options
- Select fish from sustainable fish supplies
- Avoid unnecessary packaging and plastic bags
- Ask caterers to use reusable table cloths/crockery/cutlery
- Where appropriate limit use of imported and bottled water
- Use water glasses plus jugs with tap water
- Where possible use bulk dispensers for sugar, salt, and condiments. Avoid individually wrapped sweets
- Ask delegates to sign up for the meals in advance to avoid food wastage
- Allow attendees to pre-select a meal size, offering smaller meals options

### Printed material and information

- Use new media/electronic technology to reduce paper use
- Collect and reuse name badges
- Offer electronic registration and market electronically via website and email
- Use recycled paper (post consumer waste) and print on both sides using vegetable inks
- Offer all relevant information, presentations, papers and web links via electronic media
- Consider requesting delegates bring pens and note pads
- Consider using SMS for seating and registration details

### Waste reduction and recycling

- Reduce waste by keeping track of attendance and tailoring supplies and food according to final numbers
- Make informed purchasing decisions and support use of recycled and biodegradable materials
- Encourage delegates to separate waste
- Reduce use of gift bags or satchels
- Ensure excess food is donated to charity or composted
- Ensure non-toxic cleaning materials are used at the venue
- Create incentives for suppliers to return unused products
- Educate delegates on how they can help reduce waste

### Activities

- Plan to include sessions on relevant environmental issues
- Offer off-site activities that are naturebased with minimal environmental impact
- Suggest a community activity for delegates which helps restore the environment
- Give an eco-friendly award to the greenest exhibitor

*Tourism Australia has produced this check-list to assist business events operators to plan and deliver cleaner and greener events. It is based on the following core principles: reduce waste, reuse and recycle – then offset the carbon emissions.*