

Sustainable Events Resource Guide



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

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Introduction

This Sustainable Events Resource Guide is an appendix to the [Sustainable Events Guide](#) and provides a detailed list of resources and links to ensure products purchased for events are both socially and environmentally sustainable. This guide will take you through preferred options for: sustainable catering; freebies & gifts, carbon offsetting and waste reduction. You should always consult the [Sustainable Events Guide](#) for a detailed explanation for how to run a sustainable event and why the below options are preferable.

Catering

Resources for preferred list of sustainable caterers:

Company Name	Description	Social Enterprise	Location / Delivery
Asylum Seekers Resource Centre (ASRC)	A social enterprise that creates pathways to employment for people seeking asylum.	Y	Fitzroy North. Delivery beyond 10 kilometres is an additional \$3.00 per kilometre.
Mabu Mabu	An indigenous owned, social enterprise caterer that makes native ingredients the hero of the Australian kitchen.	Y	CBD Melbourne. Delivery beyond surrounding suburbs is charged at a rate of \$5 per 5km from Melbourne CBD.
Free to Feed	Free to Feed provides professional guidance to women who have fled their war-torn countries for safety and creates Middle Eastern inspired dishes.	Y	Within 10kms from Fitzroy North. Anything outside of this will be quoted separately or can be collected by a third party.
STREAT	A food systems social enterprise that provides supported pre-vocational training and holistic personal support to marginalised young people aged 16-24 who need a hand.	Y	Delivery to CBD and Inner Suburbs.
The Mission Caterers	With a focus on employment and training for the long-term unemployed living with a mental illness. The Mission Caterers aims to challenge stigma and discrimination to develop social bridges that create social inclusion in the community. The Mission Caterers provides a range of contemporary Melbourne cuisine from breakfast grazing to full catering selections.	Y	Melbourne.
Evagreen	Evagreen is committed to making a positive change with a vegan and plant-based menu. Their	N	Within 30km from Noble Park, Melbourne VIC.

Email address:
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	products are also locally sourced, organic, reasonably priced, and great to serve at events like Orientation days.		
Elizabeth Andrews Corporate Catering	A caterer committed to sustainability by ensuring low-waste packaging and working with farmers to have sustainable practices. They also provide a crockery and cutlery service.	N	Melbourne
Wild Timor Coffee Co.	An ethical and sustainable coffee company that gives back directly to the source of the coffee production. It gives customers a chance to track their impact. A variety of catering is available from the café at Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre in Carlton.	Y	Melbourne
Good&Fugly	This company fights food waste with every box - filled with fresh, seasonal produce direct from farmers. With each box you'll be helping reduce the food waste created by the unrealistic beauty standards of supermarkets and grocery stores that make rejects out of the perfectly imperfect.	N	Melbourne
Crepes for Change (Food truck)	This social enterprise supports young people experiencing homelessness by investing 100% of their profits back into their youth homelessness impact programs. Using their founder's family recipe from La Bretagne, France, their crêpes never fail to impress.	Y	Melbourne

Reusable crockery and cutlery options:

Company Name	Description
Choose to Reuse Events Kit	The Choose to Reuse Events Kit can reduce waste at your next University of Melbourne event by providing reusable items instead of disposable food and drink packaging. The service is available to staff and student clubs organising events at the Parkville campus for a small hire and washing fee. Coffee mugs are now also a part of the service.
Green My Plate	Green My Plate supplies reusable plates and bowls to food vendors, washing and recirculating. This benefits larger events such as conferences, exhibitions and outdoor events and all items are washed in an industrial dishwasher.
Green Caffein	Green Caffein is a FREE reusable coffee cup system for eco-focused cafes and coffee lovers across Australia. Although this service is not specifically set up for events, if you use a café as a caterer, you can request that the vendor signs up to the Green Caffein café network. This is free and easy to do. Contact sustainable-campus@unimelb.edu.au for more information.

If you must use disposable single-use products, please consult the [UoM Single-Use Items Standard](#) below:

- All new tenancies on campus must follow this standard.
- The packaging supplier(s) must hold the following certification(s) or equivalent: ISO9001 Quality Management; and ISO14001 Environmental Management
- We may ask for disclosure of the materials and their sources to ensure compliance with [Australian Modern Slavery Act \(2018\)](#) and The University of Melbourne's Social Procurement Framework.
- For all paper-based products, Chain of Custody and Forestry Management certification must be held for each item. Certification will only be accepted if provided by one of the following entities: Forest Stewardship Council (FSC); or Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) or Sustainable Forestry Initiative (entity provides Forestry Management certification only)

Specific Item Requirements		
Item	Component	Prohibited Materials
Coffee Cups	Cup	Only paper-based items are permissible.
	Lid	No requirements.
	Linings / wraps	
Food and beverage (excluding coffee cups)	Container & Trays	Only paper-based items are permissible (that can be processed via commercial composting).
	Liner	All components must be compostable to standard AS4736-2006 or AS5810-2010. Foam and plastic based components (including Polylactic Acid - 'PLA') are not permissible.
	Lids	
	Utensils & straws	
Serviettes & wipes	Serviettes	Only paper-based items are permissible (that can be processed via commercial composting).
	Wrapping	Individually wrapped serviettes/wipes are not permissible.
Carry	Trays	Only paper-based items are permissible (that can be processed via commercial composting).
	Bags	
Bottled beverages	Bottle	Glass and aluminum are permissible. Foam and plastic based products (including Polylactic Acid - 'PLA') are not permissible.
Packet food (e.g. chips)	Packet	No requirements.

Freebies, Gifts, Prizes & Decorations

Category	Product	Company Name	Product sustainability highlights
Gifts/Prizes	Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good examples include Chinese money plants, Swisse Cheese, Monsteras, Devils Ivy or Spider plants. • They are available in suitable sizes and usually under \$30 and are easy to take care of. They can be bought at Bunnings (in store only). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero waste • Improves air quality • Lasts a lot longer and gives back to nature • You can also buy these beautiful pots that support Indigenous communities to accompany the plants.
Gifts/Prizes	Wine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hidden Sea • Good will wine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hidden Sea wine, for every 1 bottle of wine bought they remove and recycle 10 plastic bottles from the ocean • Good Will Wine raises money for Australian charities as 50% of the profits go to a charity of your choice.
Gifts/Prizes	Adoptions/ Tree Planting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Wildlife Fund • Edgars Mission • Animals Australia • Koala Hospital • Australian Koala Foundation • Fifteen trees • Tree Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not only zero waste but making a positive benefit to society • Good for you and the planet • Helping animals that are in need of protection • Planting trees to help create a carbon sink
Gifts/Prizes	Vouchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceres • Royal Botanical Gardens Aboriginal Heritage Walk • Class Bento • Free to Feed • Coffee vouchers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers environmental education workshops and courses • Provides educational opportunities to gain knowledge and skills to be able to teach others and raise awareness about sustainability • Learning is always a good thing • The Sustainability Team has a stamp to imprint on coffee vouchers, stating that they can only be redeemed with a reusable or Green Caffeen cup

Gifts/Prizes	Soap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warndu 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handmade soap by the Yawuru Jarndu Aboriginal Corporation • Infused with Western Australian bush botanicals. • Profits donated to the Aboriginal Women's Art and Resource Centre • Natural ingredients and ethical
Gifts/Prizes	Indoor herb garden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flora and Fauna Microherbs • Flora and Fauna Mini Gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes growing your own herbs • Sustainable and ethical
Gifts/Prizes	Lunch containers and lunch wraps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retub • Onya Life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes reuse • Made from recycled plastic • BPA free • Zero waste
Gifts/Prizes	Zero Waste Giftboxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go For Zero • Biome • Eco Green Living • Seeds and Sprouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes zero waste and reuse • Gives people the tools they need to start their zero-waste journey
Gifts/Prizes/Freebies	Chocolate / hazelnut spreads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pana • Loco Love • Bennetto 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegan • No individually wrapped chocolates • Low waste (only cardboard packaging) • Is consumed rather than thrown away • Fairtrade
Freebies	Keepcups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order at cost price from the Sustainability Team • Promotes reuse rather than disposable
Freebies	Water Bottles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability Team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Order at cost price from the Sustainability Team • Promotes reuse rather than disposable
Freebies	Food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evagreen vegan baking • Fruit such as Local Organic Delivery, Farmer's Pick and Good and Fugly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero waste • Not as resource intensive as it is to buy products
Decorations	Bunting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eco Party Box • Green Your Event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say no to Balloons! Balloons harm both the environment and animals. • Fabric or paper (not plastic) bunting doesn't cost the earth.
Decorations	Plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any peperomias look amazing on a table. A few examples are listed below. • Moonlight peperomia • Spider Wort Peperomia • Hypoestes • They can be bought at Bunnings (in store only). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero waste • Improves air quality • Lasts a lot longer and gives back to nature • You can also buy beautiful pots to accompany it. Try and find sustainable pots.
Decorations	Confetti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Econfetti • Blue Mountains Eco Confetti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodegradable and compostable confetti often won't break down by itself • Use dried leaves and flowers • Buy them or make your own • You can also source them from Etsy but stay away from biodegradable and compostable
Decorations	Hire or procure second-hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment hire from the University • Facebook Marketplace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less resources being used and therefore less greenhouse gasses produced • Circular economy
Decorations	Other ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar powered fairy lights • Invitations can be sourced on seeded paper 	NA

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instead of flowers for table decorations use pot plants or fruit bowls for centre pieces • Order furniture from the Reuse Centre or hire furniture rather than buy it • Repurposed and recycled products are best • Use or giveaway fairtrade cotton tote or paper bags 	
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Reducing Waste

Category	Company Name	Description
Bin Hire	University of Melbourne Bin Hire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire extra waste and recycling bins for your event via Service Now (staff only). For organics bins email sustainable-campus@unimelb.edu.au.
Cleaning Service	University of Melbourne Cleaning Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you require extra cleaning after your event, log a request through Service Now (staff only).
Donate fabric and clothes	Upparel RecycleSmart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will repurpose and recycle old clothes and fabric • Can repurpose items even if they have a date and logo
Recycling unusual items	Planet Ark – Recycling Near You	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsure where to recycle certain items? Check out this website to find out. • Recycles anything from batteries to event equipment
Donate sets and event props and cardboard	Campuses and other departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You could collaborate with other departments and campuses such as VCA Southbank campus to see if they would like to use event props for their sets or the Abbotsford ELC if they would like any cardboard for their projects that they create. Get creative and reach out to your contacts or post in Yammer.
Suppliers	Suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask your suppliers to reduce their packaging waste when sending you products. For example, if you buy individually wrapped hoodies, ask them to package this in groups of ten in one big plastic bag rather than individual.
Food waste	Oz Harvest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ordered too much? Waste not want not! Donate by filling in the 'Become a Food Donor' & select "it's a one-off donation" then follow the prompts. OzHarvest rescues good quality, surplus food, free of charge from registered businesses only. This food is then delivered to charity agencies in the local area.
Stationary	Seeded Paper Name Tags	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees can plant their name tags, or you can collect them and give them to the Sustainability Team to plant.
Stationary	Go Paperless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital sign in sheet using Qualtrics or digital registration using the Eventbrite app • Use an app to have all your conference or program information digital • Reduces waste as paper makes up the largest share of waste materials tossed out after events. • Don't print anything as it might be out of date very quickly from a brand perspective.
Reusable crockery and cutlery	Choose to Reuse Events Kit Green My Plate Green Caffein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These services can reduce waste at your next event by providing reusable items instead of disposable food and drink packaging. • The Sustainability Team can provide you with a stamp for any coffee vouchers that you give away that it can only be redeemed using a reusable or Green Caffein Coffee Cup

Carbon Emissions

Company Name	Description
Carbon Neutral	Purchase carbon offsets, tree plantings and a carbon calculator.
South Pole	Provides the tools needed to achieve a carbon neutral event.
My Climate	Carbon calculator.
Cool Climate	Carbon calculator.

Education and Awareness

Program	Description
Communications	<p>Let your attendees know that they are attending a Sustainable Event! Students are much more likely not to expect a freebie if they know it's a sustainable event.</p> <p>Communications prior to the event:</p> <p><i>"In line with the University's Sustainability Plan 2030/The University of Melbourne's commitment to sustainability, we ask all attendees to..."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remind people to bring reusables like a water bottle and keepcup ➤ Ask people to take active transport ➤ Request that people bring their own stationery and notepads or even better – opt for digital devices for note taking <p>Communications during the event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ask the Sustainability Team for PowerPoint slides to include in your presentation ➤ Invite the Sustainability Team to present at your event or host a stall ➤ Use digital signage to promote your Sustainable Event ➤ Have QR codes that link people to a section of your website that outlines how your event is sustainable. This website can be updated for each event so you only need to print once. <p>Communications after the event:</p> <p><i>"We are proud to share our commitment to sustainability at [EVENT NAME] as per the University's Sustainability Plan 2030/The University of Melbourne's commitment to sustainability.</i></p> <p><i>We did this by..."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Summarise how your event was sustainable: Catering, materials, engagement, offsets ➤ Communicate that your event was sent as a case study to the Sustainability Team and/or that you were able to complete Green Impact toolkit actions by hosting it
Green Impact	Get recognition for running a sustainable event through Green Impact by signing up your team and completing actions within the program around sustainable events.
Student Volunteering	Promote our volunteering program to your students or enquire about our volunteer database to help at your events.
Acknowledgment of Country	It is important to start with an Acknowledgment of Country at your events. An Acknowledgement of Country recognises the valuable and unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original owners and custodians of the land, waters, and skies of this nation. It is a significant and symbolic reconciliation gesture, which is undertaken by

	Indigenous or non-Indigenous people who are not Traditional Owners of the land upon which the statement is made.
Bin Signs	Use our bin signs at your events to promote what can go in what bin and to avoid contamination at your events.
Bin Warriors	Contact the Sustainability Team to have student volunteers stand by the bins at your event to instruct attendees – larger events only.

Top tips

Sustainability considerations when ordering catering:

Under order by 10% to account for no-shows and avoid food waste
Have the menu be at least 80% vegetarian. It is better to have a fully vegetarian/vegan menu.
Food is made locally, and the ingredients sourced locally to avoid carbon emissions from transport and travel.
Food is made ethically. This includes everything from free range eggs to ensuring the fish is pole caught if you are having meat on the menu.
Food is in season.
Food is certified organic.
Consider if the food and beverages are fairtrade, utz and/or rainforest alliance and made from ethical ingredients.
The caterer has a social procurement policy to ensure modern slavery is not present in the supply chain.
You could engage with the vendors and retailers on campus for all your coffee and catering needs

Avoiding waste with catering top tips:

Avoid the big 4 waste items: plastic bottles (including bottled water), plastic straws, plastic bags, disposable coffee cups.
Encourage attendees to bring their own water bottles and either provide water stations for them or direct them to the UoM water station map for them to fill up water for free on campus.
Do not give out free plastic drinks at events, this goes directly against what the university is trying to achieve (zero waste to landfill).
Caterer has effective means of disposing of leftover food. You can hire organics bins from the choose to reuse events kit and drop off food waste at the waste hub or the drop off stations in student precinct.
The caterer considers how to minimise packaging. For example, they serve dishes and condiments on platters or in bulk as opposed to individually wrapped items.
The caterer has an existing partnership with a food bank or donation centre to avoid food waste or a partnership with the university to redistribute food.

Ask your caterers to be zero-waste. Below is a template email you can use to send to your caterers:

<p><i>“Good morning/afternoon,</i></p> <p><i>I would like to place a catering order for a [EVENT TYPE]. The details are below:</i> <i>EVENT TITLE, NUMBER OF ATTENDEES, CATERING ORDER, DELIVERY AND PICK UP TIME, DELIVERY ADDRESS, CONTACT</i></p> <p><i>Please note, this is to be a fully sustainable and zero-waste event. As such, this includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>No disposable, biodegradable or compostable crockery and cutlery.</i> ▪ <i>Reusable crockery and cutlery only.</i> ▪ <i>No cling wrap on food or individually wrapped items of food – is it possible to deliver the items in either reusable containers (not plastic containers) or paper-board recyclable packaging? If not, we will accept foil, however not clingwrap.</i> ▪ <i>a 100% vegetarian menu, locally, seasonally, and ethically sourced ingredients etc.</i> ▪ <i>We also ask, if the food has any sauces, no plastic containers for this.</i> <p><i>Thank you for your assistance.”</i></p>

Below is a template email you can use to send to your FOOD TRUCK caterers:

"Good morning/Good afternoon,

We would like to hire your food truck for [EVENT]. The details are below...

EVENT TITLE, NUMBER OF ATTENDEES, LOCATION ADDRESS, CONTACT

Could we please request a quote for your food truck service.

Please note, this is to be a fully sustainable and zero-waste event. Can we please ask that you do not provide any disposable, compostable or biodegradable crockery and cutlery.

We will be hiring the [Choose to Reuse/Green My Plate/providing our own crockery and cutlery] and we ask that you do not bring any disposables."

Prepared by:

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To find out more:

Visit our website: sustainablecampus.unimelb.edu.au

Check out our [A-Z waste](#)



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