



Halifax Sustainable Initiative Inspiration Guide

SustainableEventsHalifax.com

**DISCOVER
HALIFAX**
BUSINESS EVENTS

This document provides example initiatives and inspiration ideas that event organizers can incorporate into meetings, conferences, conventions, and special events to support sustainability goals. The examples below are organized into the three Sustainable Event Program categories: Climate Action, Local Sourcing, and Community Builder.

Climate Action

CATEGORY

Event initiatives that focus on conserving natural resources, reducing pollution, and protecting ecosystems to support long-term planetary health.

1. Waste Diversion Stations: Implement clearly labeled compost, recycling, and landfill stations throughout the venue with volunteer or staff guidance.

2. Eliminate Single-Use Plastics: Replace disposable water bottles, cutlery, straws, and cups with reusable or compostable alternatives.

3. Low-Carbon Transportation: Encourage delegates to walk, bike, or use public transit through transit passes, walking maps, or shuttle consolidation.

4. Carbon Offset Programs: Offer attendees the option to offset travel emissions or invest in verified carbon offset projects.

5. Renewable Energy: Power the event with renewable energy providers such as Bullfrog Power or venues using green energy sources.

6. Digital-First Event Materials: Use event apps, QR codes, and digital signage instead of printed agendas, maps, and handouts.

7. Sustainable Catering Practices: Prioritize plant-forward menus, seasonal ingredients, and accurate food forecasting to reduce food waste.

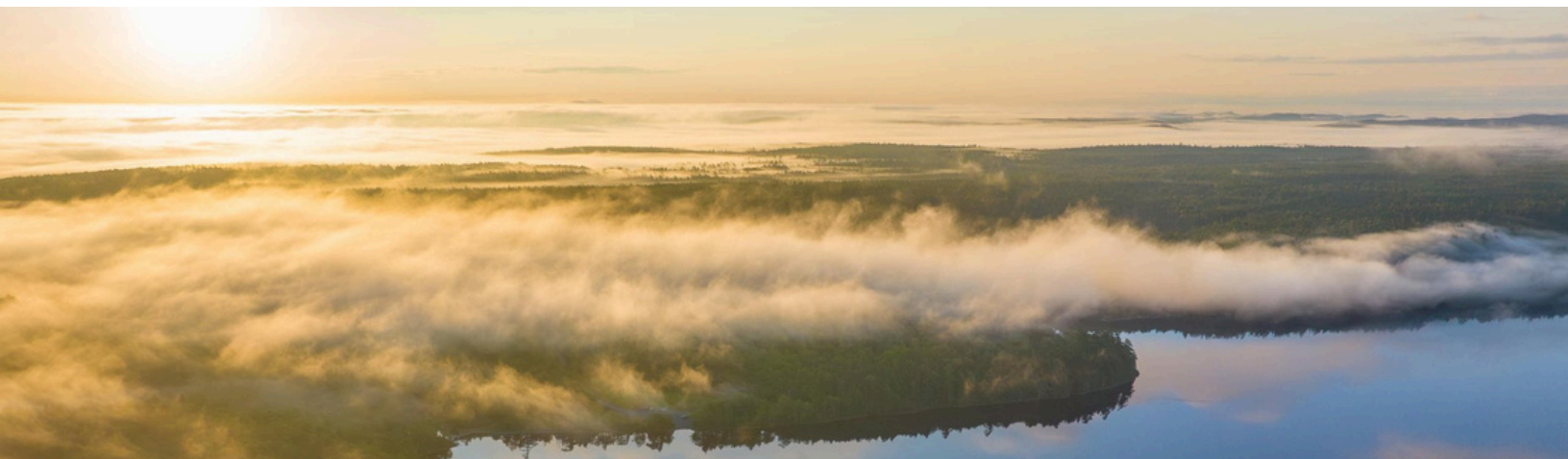
8. Reusable Event Infrastructure: Use reusable signage, booth materials, décor, and name badges that can be repurposed for future events.

9. Water Conservation: Install water refill stations and encourage attendees to bring reusable water bottles.

10. Sustainable Venue Selection: Choose venues with environmental certifications, energy-efficient lighting, recycling programs, and water-saving systems.

11. Hybrid & Virtual Participation: Offer hybrid participation options to reduce travel-related emissions and improve accessibility.

12. Measure & Report Impact: Track waste diversion, energy use, carbon emissions, and sustainability outcomes post-event.





Local Sourcing

CATEGORY

Event initiatives that support economic and social growth by investing in local people, places, and products over non-local alternatives.

1. Local Procurement Targets: Set measurable goals for percentage of local suppliers or local spend within the event budget.
2. Local Food & Beverage: Source catering ingredients, beverages, and menu items from local farms, fisheries, bakeries, breweries, and producers.
3. Local Vendors & Suppliers: Use local AV companies, florists, printers, transportation providers, décor suppliers, and production teams whenever possible.
4. Locally Made Gifts & Swag: Provide attendee gifts or VIP amenities created by local artisans, makers, or social enterprises.
5. Feature Local Speakers & Moderators: Highlight local thought leaders, entrepreneurs, Indigenous voices, and community experts within event programming.
6. Support Local Entertainment: Hire local musicians, performers, artists, and cultural groups for receptions and networking events.
7. Showcase Regional Experiences: Incorporate local culinary tours, cultural experiences, maker markets, or neighbourhood activations into the attendee experience.
8. Use Local Printing & Fabrication: Source event signage, installations, and fabrication locally to reduce shipping emissions and support local businesses.
9. Partner with Local Tourism Operators: Collaborate with local guides, tour operators, and attractions for delegate experiences and excursions.
10. Prioritize Seasonal Menus: Design menus around ingredients that are locally available and in season.
11. Source Sustainable Seafood & Agriculture: Work with local suppliers committed to responsible harvesting and sustainable agricultural practices.
12. Community Marketplace: Create opportunities for local businesses and creators to sell or showcase products during the event.

Community Building

CATEGORY

Event initiatives that prioritize equity, diversity, inclusion, community development, regional legacy, and awareness of local issues and communities.

1. Partnerships with Community

Organizations: Collaborate with local non-profits, charities, and community groups to support meaningful local impact.

2. Food Recovery Programs: Donate surplus food to local shelters, food banks, or community kitchens after the event.

3. Accessibility Measures: Provide accessible venues, gender-inclusive washrooms, ASL interpretation, captioning, sensory-friendly spaces, and mobility accommodations.

4. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policies: Build diverse speaker lineups, inclusive procurement practices, and equitable participation opportunities into event planning.

5. Student & Community Passes: Offer discounted or sponsored passes to students, emerging professionals, or underrepresented groups.

6. Volunteer & Mentorship Opportunities: Create volunteer programs, mentorship sessions, or networking opportunities for local students and community members.

Additional Considerations

- Establish sustainability goals and measurement criteria early in the planning process.
- Communicate sustainability initiatives clearly to attendees before and during the event.
- Encourage attendees, suppliers, and partners to actively participate in sustainability efforts.
- Track outcomes and collect feedback to improve future sustainable event initiatives.

7. Indigenous Engagement: Incorporate Indigenous welcoming ceremonies, sharing circles, cultural teachings, and Indigenous-owned suppliers where appropriate.

8. Local Impact Experiences: Organize community cleanups, tree planting, shoreline restoration, or social impact activities as part of the event program.

9. Mental Health & Wellness Supports: Provide quiet rooms, wellness programming, and mental health resources for attendees and staff.

10. Inclusive Hiring Practices: Work with organizations that support employment opportunities for newcomers, youth, or individuals facing barriers.

11. Showcase Local Culture: Highlight local history, storytelling, public art, and cultural traditions throughout the attendee experience.

12. Legacy Initiatives: Develop initiatives that create long-term benefits for the host community beyond the event dates.



Opportunities for Impact

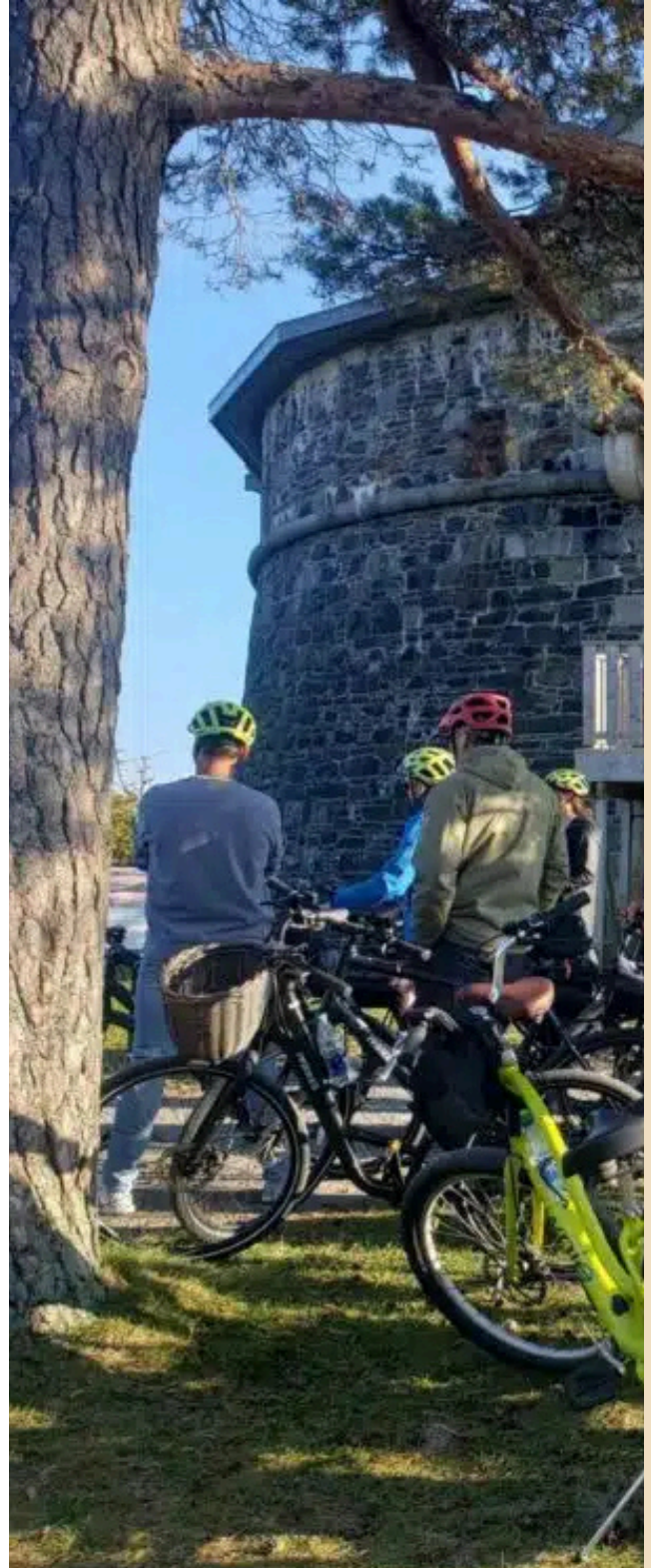
Discover Halifax recently launched a new initiative featuring pre-designed opportunities helps meetings and conferences create meaningful environmental, social, and economic benefits for the region.

Through sustainable event practices, local partnerships, and community-focused initiatives, organizers can integrate purpose-driven experiences that support local businesses, reduce environmental impact, celebrate diverse communities, and leave a lasting positive legacy in Halifax.

The program encourages planners to move beyond traditional event success metrics and create experiences that contribute to a stronger, more sustainable, and more inclusive destination.

Guide to Hosting Sustainable Business Events in Halifax

For more inspiration and guidance around hosting more sustainable events, check out our Sustainable Business Events Guide.



More Support Awaits

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