

Electricity North West Engagement Sustainability and Inclusion Policy

To support the delivery of our business plan to lead the North West to Net Zero 2023-2028 we have developed a Sustainable Events Policy to manage the environmental impacts of the events we deliver. We aim to minimise any negative impacts from our event related activity and those of the delegates attending our events.

The policy ensures we consider everything from venue, travel, catering, inclusivity and supply chain.

Electricity North West will ensure delivery through;

- Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation;
- Working closely with Electricity North West colleagues, contractors and venues to ensure sustainability principles are integrated into event management;
- Reviewing practices to ensure we meet our sustainability responsibilities and act as an exemplar;
- Provide adequate resources to deliver against the objectives and commit to continue improvement.

Areas we consider as part of our event planning:



Venue



Power



Waste
management



Travelling



Event marketing
and branding



Reduce
paper



Catering



Accessibility



Inclusivity



Safety

1.

Choosing a venue with a good sustainability / environmental performance

This means a venue which demonstrates a commitment to reducing its environmental impact and aims to have a positive impact on their community. This can be done by selecting a venue which meets a recognised standard such as the Green Tourism programme recognised by Visit England and/or are ISO20121 certified or have a robust environmental policy.

- In Manchester venues that meet these criteria can be found on [Marketing Manchester's](#) website
- In Cumbria and Lancashire, we use the [Green Tourism](#) website to search for members
- If a venue does not have a recognised standard you can speak to the venue about their approach to the environment and its community at the time of requesting a quote
- Can the venue offer an online or hybrid event allowing attendees to choose according to their preferences
- Not all venues, particularly smaller venues may be able to achieve an accreditation, so this approach is valid in order not to discriminate against smaller venues. It is possible to make a judgement on the sustainability of the venue by asking a few questions before booking:
 - Do you consider the sustainability / environmental impacts of your business?
 - Where do you source your food from? Is it local and seasonal?
 - Have you eliminated / working to eliminate single use plastic? Or do you provide drinking water in bottles or jugs (and not plastic bottles).
 - How do you engage with your local community?
 - How accessible is your location and building?
 - How do you facilitate waste management?

2.

Transportation

Reducing the environmental impact of colleagues and stakeholders travelling can be achieved by promoting sustainable transport use.

- Consider venues that can be accessed by public transport
- Consider venues located close to the majority of your stakeholders
- Can the venue offer an online or hybrid event allowing attendees to choose according to their preferences
- As part of the event feedback process, ask participants how they travelled to the venue.

3.

Reduce paper and plastic

Reducing the environmental impact of colleagues and stakeholders travelling can be achieved by promoting sustainable transport use.

- Consider the material used to deliver the event and minimise the use of paper and other resources. Instead consider online feedback platforms and online polling, voting and survey platforms
- Eliminate all single use plastics where possible (plastic bottles).

4.

Event marketing and branding

Adopt efficient means of communicating and promoting events:

- Use online platforms to send out invites and reminders.
- Consider how we can repurpose branding material across all events to reduce material and printing. This includes reports and banners etc
- Ensure that marketing material is appropriate for the audience and reflects the local community. This includes the language and tone used and images.

5.

Food and catering

Aim to ensure that directly procured food and catering products are produced to good sustainable and animal welfare standards and that options cater to healthy eating. Wherever possible, reduce the carbon footprint and consider:

- The use of organic, local and seasonal sourced produce to reduce transport miles and energy use
- Introduce more vegetarian and vegan options and keep separate from meat options
- Understand what happens to any food leftovers to reduce food waste
 - Ensure you know number of guests to minimise over catering
 - Provide take away boxes to reduce food waste
- Recognise any dietary cultural / religious requirements of the audience / community
- Where possible use re-usable crockery, glassware, cutlery and tablecloths, but where disposable options are unavoidable use only compostable or recyclable alternatives like paper, wooden or biodegradable plastics
- Consider working with venues that already have water-wise measures in place. For example: rainwater harvesting system, grey water re-use system, dual flush toilets and motion sensor taps in the bathrooms.

6.

Heating and Lighting

- Ensure thermal comfort (adjusting room temperature based on number of attendee, size of room and weather)
- Ensure any air-conditioning is turned off before any windows etc. are opened
- Consider the unnecessary use of lighting, practically in breakout rooms etc. Ensure unnecessary lights are turned off when not in use.

7.

Diversity and inclusion

Promote and encourage diversity and inclusion by ensuring events are accessible, inclusive and appropriate for the intended audience. Inclusion is about creating an environment where every stakeholder and colleague feels they belong, where their contribution is valued, and their differences are embraced. Diversity is about representing the diversity of the area in which we work and the diversity of the customers we serve.

- For initiatives that impact 25 people or more or have a value of over £250k an Inclusivity and Vulnerability Impact assessment (IVIA) should be completed. More information can be found [here](#)
- When planning an event consider accessibility, by requesting information about disability, dietary requirements and accessibility to technology i.e. phones.

8.

Protect the infrastructure of venues and preserve our national heritage.

Protecting venue infrastructure can be anything from sustainable management of historic buildings to imparting environmental aims and objectives to visitors. It should be possible to inspire visitors about the natural world and encourage them to get actively involved.

9.

Managing contractors and suppliers

- As a Real Living Wage employer, Electricity North West must encourage contractors and suppliers to also adopt this approach. Make suppliers aware of the Real Living Wage and encourage them to consider the benefits of adopting this commitment
- Ensure venue, contractors and suppliers are aware of the Modern Slavery Act and has a policy in place to ensure he is compliant with the requirements of the Act
- Ensure contractors and suppliers are a responsible business and consider their social, economic and environmental impact.

10.

Safety and risk assessments

Safety is our number one priority today and every day, not only at our work locations but when we are hosting events. It is our responsibility to ensure we keep our colleagues and stakeholders safe.

- Conduct a risk assessment - identify and assess any risks before, during and after the event. Ensure preventative and protective control measures are in place
- Identify venue fire protocols and fire exits. Share this information as part of the event agenda so all in attendance are aware
- Ensure all event equipment is safely secured and handled correctly - preventing any slips, trips and falls and manual handling risks
- Ensure care is taken when material and equipment is carried from vehicles / storage to the venue and ensure safety is considered when erecting exhibitions, audio visual equipment etc.

