

Tartu  
2024



acento

# Guidelines for Organising Environmentally Friendly Events



EUROPEAN CAPITAL  
OF CULTURE

# Introduction

These guidelines set out the minimum requirements and recommendations for the organisation of environmentally friendly events.

The guidelines rely on the environmental strategy of Tartu 2024 Foundation and are an important step in its implementation.

The guidelines and supporting material have been prepared in cooperation with Tartu 2024 Foundation, the city of Tartu, and Acento, a consultation company for sustainable events.

All materials are available on the websites of Tartu 2024 and the city of Tartu.

Guidelines have been updated 13.05.2022.

# Topics

Materials and Purchases

---

Catering and Water Use

---

Waste Management

---

Transport

---

Energy and Resource Efficiency

---

Taking Into Account the Environment and Community

---

Communication

---

# Materials and Purchases

## **Minimum requirements:**

- (1) Visitors' badge holders or lanyards have to be reusable.
- (2) Single-use items, except food, should not be given as gifts or souvenirs.
- (3) Decorations have to be reusable.

## **Recommendations:**

- (1) The design and choice of labels and teaching, training and other materials should enable reuse. The organisers should make the return and collection of these materials convenient and clear to visitors.
- (2) Paper materials (invitations, publications etc.) should be replaced with electronic alternatives as much as possible. Where possible, recycled paper or printing on production residues should be used.
- (3) Give as few gifts and souvenirs as possible. If it is necessary, green services and donations/awards should be preferred. As regards physical gifts, local food and culinary experiences and practical items manufactured from environmentally friendly materials should be preferred.
- (4) When ordering inventory, materials and equipment, choose moderate quantities to ensure a minimum amount of surplus. When purchasing larger amounts of material, equipment, etc., it would be appropriate to cooperate with other organisers of similar or simultaneous events to optimise packaging and reduce the need for transportation.
- (5) Avoid over-packaging goods, gifts and other inventory.

# Catering and Water Use

## **Minimum requirements:**

- (1) The use of single-use drinking straws, beverage stirrers and cocktail decorations is not allowed.
- (2) The use of surplus food is ensured: donation or collection by organisers or clients, preferably in reusable containers. It is not permitted to throw away edible food.
- (3) Always use reusable tableware, cutlery and food serving solutions.

## **Recommendations:**

- (1) Allow participants to bring their own reusable drinking bottles and tableware. Provide the opportunity to rinse dishes at the event.
- (2) Enable access to free and clean tap water at the events, place water stations near catering areas.
- (3) If possible, avoid serving bottled water (and other bottled beverages), provide an opportunity to refill reusable drinking bottles.
- (4) Fill drinking glasses according to the needs of the client: do not fill the glass to the brim without the request of the customer.
- (5) In the selection of caterers and catering, ensure that vegan foods are also offered. In terms of catering, at least one vegan dish should be available, and for food events, at least a couple of vegan caterers should be involved.

(6) Caterers who offer dishes made from seasonal and organic ingredients should be preferred and, if possible, priority should be given to caterers who use green energy.

(7) Fair trade coffee, tea, sugar and other food products are preferable.

# Waste Management

## **Minimum requirements:**

(1) The obligation to collect waste by type applies to both participants, organisers and vendors.

(a) The types of waste collected depend on the nature of the event, however, at minimum, mixed waste, biowaste and deposit-subjected packaging and other packaging (if generated at the event) must be collected separately.

(b) The following colours are used to mark waste containers at the event:

- **packaging** – green
- **biowaste** – brown
- **mixed packaging** – yellow (if required in the waste management regulation and if generated by visitors)
- **mixed waste** – black

(c) During the production and organisation of the event, the participating vendors and other partners must collect the following waste separately, including the colour of the containers:

- **mixed waste** – black

- **mixed packaging** – yellow
- **paper and paperboard** – blue
- **if generated, then also biowaste** – brown
- **if generated, then also deposit-subjected packaging** – green
- **if generated, then also hazardous waste** – red
- **if generated, then also liquid waste (including cooking oil)** – distinctive from others

(2) Separately collected waste must be recycled according to type, by handing them over to the waste handler according to type, and then a report on the quantities must be required. In the case of smaller events, the organisers may bring the separately collected waste to the waste station themselves.

### **Recommendations:**

(1) Collection by type is supported by clear and comprehensible labelling on the waste containers/frames in Estonian and in other languages, if necessary. Labels must be marked with the same colour and preferably with iconography as well. To this end, there are free waste container label design files available.

(a) To provide additional clarity for visitors, it is beneficial to add product samples to containers or labels or put them in the waste container as 'starter'.

(b) Green ambassadors who instruct visitors in sorting waste at waste stations are an effective measure for improving the quality of waste collection by type. Volunteers, the youth work brigade, and students can successfully be used for that purpose.

# Transport

## **Minimum requirements:**

(1) To provide information to visitors about transport options as an alternative to coming alone in a car; to provide information to foreign visitors about the options for compensating for the climate impact of air travel.

## **Recommendations:**

(1) When choosing the event venue, take into account its accessibility by public transport and bicycle, if possible. Always inform participants on how they can come to the event by public transport and where the parking areas are in order to avoid traffic jams at events that take place in the city centre.

(2) If possible, organise special buses or trains. Include a recommendation on each data medium/promotional material to come to the event by public transport, bicycle or on foot.

(3) In the case of some events, organisers may be recommended to sell tickets on a vehicle-by-vehicle basis, i.e. one ticket per vehicle, regardless of the number of passengers.

# Energy and Resource Efficiency

## **Minimum requirements:**

- (1) In the case of events lasting for several days, the use of electricity outside event hours at the venue should be reduced to a minimum in a way that does not prevent the event from taking place.
- (2) If the venue allows, a permanent electricity solution should be chosen as the energy source instead of temporary power generators.
- (3) The organiser must ensure that there is no resource loss (e.g. dripping taps, leaking pipes) during and after the event.

## **Recommendations:**

- (1) Energy from renewable sources should be preferred at the event. In the case of special transport, preference should be given to low CO2 emission vehicles (e.g. gas buses and Euro 6 emission standard compliant buses).
- (2) When selecting equipment for the event, ensure that it is as energy-efficient as possible. Use electricity-consuming devices at the lowest possible capacity that is required to run the event.
- (3) Use equipment that reduces the waste of resources: give preference to hand washing stations with a pump or timer, motion sensor lights, refillable disinfectant containers instead of single-use ones, etc.

# Taking Into Account the Environment and Community

## **Minimum requirements:**

- (1) The location must remain in equally good condition after the event as before the event.
- (2) Any damage to the landscape must be rectified.
- (3) The owners of surrounding properties must be notified of the event at least one week in advance.

## **Recommendations:**

- (1) Reduce light and sound pollution from the event that may disturb people living nearby and their pets (light installations should be preferred to fireworks wherever possible; do not leave full lights or music on at the venue for the whole night, etc.).
- (2) When organising transportation/parking, make sure it disturbs local life to the minimal extent possible. Provide information of any temporary changes as soon as possible.
- (3) If possible, involve the local community and people in the organisation of the event, offering them voluntary work or discounted admission, trading opportunities, etc.

# Communication

## **Minimum requirements:**

- (1) Environmental rules must be forwarded to visitors as well as be publically available at least one week before the event.
- (2) Environmental rules must be forwarded to partners/vendors in writing at the time of the conclusion of cooperation agreements or early enough before the event so that the partner/vendor is able to fully comply with the environmental rules.
- (3) The environmental rules are explained to both visitors and partners on-site during the event.

## **Recommendations:**

- (1) Consistent and repeated communication of the environmentally friendly principles used is necessary. These must be communicated to the audience, team, partners, and vendors and at presentation areas. Simple language must be used, avoid professional vocabulary.
- (2) Establish clear and simple guidelines to explain environmental and waste management rules that reach target groups in time (e.g. vendors, participants at presentation areas, and others). Environmental management rules must be reminded to production and construction teams, vendors/presentation areas and partners on-site shortly before the event and during the event.
- (3) Raising the awareness of environmental friendliness must be supported by the event's public communication and infographics at the event (signs, labels, etc.).

# Happy Environmentally Friendly Event Organising!