

## Ithaca College Campus Sustainable Event Guide

1. **Manage food waste:** Food waste contributes heavily to greenhouse gas emissions and floods landfills. In order to manage this, try to have a deadline to RSVP. If the host has an accurate headcount, they will know the amount of food to order and prevent over ordering. If there are extras, look into donating to a local food pantry. The Ithaca College Food Pantry accepts many non-perishable food items that may be left over from the event. There is also the option to trade off food and donate that same money to a different initiative.
2. **Host event in Green Building:** Events can become extremely energy intensive through light usage, air conditioning/heating, food preparations, etc. Hosting the event in a LEED certified building will help offset some of this. At Ithaca College, the Dorothy D. and Roy H. Park Center for Business and Sustainable Enterprise and the Peggy Ryan Williams Center have earned platinum status LEED certification, and the Athletic & Events Center is a LEED Gold Building. While hosting events, you could advertise the LEED status of the event and include some facts and visuals as to how it has achieved this certification.
3. **Make events easily accessible:** Encouraging people to take public transportation or carpooling lessens the greenhouse gas emissions of each attendee. For example, try locating the event somewhere near a TCAT stop at a time when the TCAT provides service. Having bike racks and access to electric vehicle chargers will also be beneficial. It is further important that the event is in a location conducive with those with disabilities.
4. **Provide local/plant-based food:** Serving local food prevents a lot of the greenhouse gasses that are emitted due to travel distances between farms, packaging, catering, etc. By ordering food that is grown or produced a close distance to the event can prevent a lot of transportation emissions. Focusing on a menu that is plant-based is far less energy intensive and healthier as well.
5. **Promote the event virtually:** Prioritize making personal invitations virtual. If you want to promote the event in large, public spaces, try to use a banner that can be reused. If you choose to use paper invitations or flyers, emphasize putting them in places where they will be seen by many, and not be immediately discarded. Many times, handing out flyers lands them directly in the trash. Roughly 26% of all waste at landfills is paper waste.
6. **Prioritize reusable items:** A lot of the materials used at events are single-use and end up in landfills. In terms of food utensils/dishware, there are programs that support using real plates and silverware, rather than disposable plates. The Ithaca Dish Truck is a business that provides plates and silverware for the event ([http://www.dishtruck.org/store/c1/Featured\\_Products.html](http://www.dishtruck.org/store/c1/Featured_Products.html)). Additionally, decorations like balloons often end up as litter- so it is important to look through your school's resources and try to use decorations that can be reused.
7. **Make recycling/compost bins easily accessible:** Having recycling and compost bins visible gives people more of a reason to use them. Recycling and composting are important to reduce the volume of substances that will be disposed of in the landfill. Eco reps at Ithaca College run the collection of compost bins, so coordinating with them may be able to help.

8. **Make gift bags useful:** Many gift bags or goodies distributed at events are often discarded or never used- contributing to the extreme waste in our landfills. Giving out gift bags with sustainable gifts (such as a small potted plant) or something made with strong materials (such as a steel, reusable water bottle), goes a long way. While it may be more expensive, it will be memorable for your attendees and better for the environment.
9. **Selecting vendors:** It is important to select vendors who have similar ethics to your own and the event you are planning to have. Supporting vendors who commit to sustainability and value ethics is important in supporting their mission.
10. **Provide a hybrid option:** Far travel for a short event- whether it be a long car or plane ride- emits extreme amounts of greenhouse gasses. When planning an event where people are traveling far distances, provide a hybrid option. While it will be a different experience than those attending in person, there are ways to make an online event a memorable experience. For those attending, point them to programs to help attendees offset their impact, like the Finger Lakes Climate Fund (<https://fingerlakesclimatefund.org/>).

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Resources:

<https://guidebook.com/mobile-guides/organize-green-event-tips-sustainable-planning/>

<https://www.bu.edu/sustainability/how-to/host-a-sustainable-event/>

<https://cornell.app.box.com/s/dqaeba59k2ap5ls0rym6qkl0fys63f66>

<https://www.zoho.com/backstage/thegreenroom/eco-friendly-events.html>