



**American Institute of Architecture Students
Green Meetings Guidelines
Adopted July 2008**

The AIAS is committed to conducting environmentally responsible meetings. The AIAS supports energy efficiency and waste reduction in the built environment, encourages energy-conscious design and technology, and supports programs for efficient use of nonrenewable resources. The AIAS will use as many sustainable/environmentally friendly best practices and policies as possible. Those best practices and policies should include, but are not limited to recycling, waste management and conservation. The practices listed below are an expression of our commitment.

Green Guidance

Questions to Consider

- Can this meeting take place by conference call or video/Web conference?
- Is the destination city's local airport accessible by public or mass transportation?
- Is the destination city airport a hub for any airline? Does it have direct, non-stop routes in and out of the city?
- Is the destination city convenient for most of your members? This will be especially true for smaller committee meetings.

Ideas to Reduce Use

- For smaller meetings, board meetings, and invitation only meetings – provide flight itineraries for ride share information.
- Provide local airport shuttle information.
- Provide public and mass transit information to the attendees; including maps if possible.
- Select meeting venues in the hotel or within walking distances of the hotel.

Printed Materials

General Guidelines

- Always meet or exceed EPA standards for recycled paper. These standards can be found on the EPA website at www.epa.gov.
- All printed materials should list the amount of recycled content in the paper.
- Always use double-sided (back to back) copying and printing.
- Do not use goldenrod or fluorescent colored paper because it is hard to recycle.
- Limit the use of glossy paper to applications where it significantly improves the publication (e.g., high-quality photography)

Promotional Materials

- Use electronic advertising, promotion, and registration whenever possible.
- Make materials self-mailers whenever possible and do not tab self-mailers unless necessary.
- Print with vegetable-based ink (unless inadvisable because of the paper used).
- Use mailing labels with water-based adhesives.

Confirmation Materials

- E-mail confirmation of registration.
- Mail only any significant changes to the event program. All other confirmations and information will be available online and mailed only when requested.

Onsite Materials

- Collect plastic name tag holders for reuse, with collection boxes at all registration, exhibit, and exit areas.
- Also ask hotels to collect name badge holders at the check-out desk.
- Hold a prize drawing from the recycled badges.
- Use reusable or recyclable signs.
- Ask sponsors and others who provide materials to: (1) ensure they meet or exceed EPA standards for recycled content, (2) avoid goldenrod or fluorescent colored paper, and (3) avoid glossy paper.
- Encourage speakers to provide electronic copies of handouts and any visual presentations and post them on our Web site.
- Request that speakers gather business cards or other contact information and email presentation materials to interested attendees after the event.
- When paper copies are preferred, request speaker handouts prior to the event and copy them according to this policy.
- Ask speakers/moderators who will provide handouts themselves to comply with the policy.
- Identify for the speakers onsite copy locations that will accommodate this policy's printing requirements.
- Educate attendees that speakers were asked to comply with this policy.

Food & Beverage Functions

Eliminating Disposable Service Ware

- Require all facilities to use china service. If the facility can demonstrate that china service cannot be used (for safety or damage control reasons), biodegradable disposable service ware in conjunction with a compost program should be used.
- Eliminate the use of plastic stir sticks with any beverage service. Reusable spoons should be used at coffee service.
- "Box lunches" must be served buffet style.
- Request cloth napkins and table cloths. In cases where this is not feasible, request highly compostable napkins.
- Have cocktail napkins available at bar service, but instruct bartenders not to automatically give them with each drink.
- Provide attendees with event mugs. Ask that they use them each day for coffee/water service.

- Make sure that mugs will be usable with the facility's beverage service containers (i.e., that they fit under coffee urns, etc.).
- Collect mugs from those who don't want them after the event and donate them to a local charity or school.
- Encourage attendees to use their mugs at facility water coolers. Put signs on water coolers reminding attendees to use their mugs.
- Understanding that most facilities have contracts in place with beverage companies, work with the facility to understand what kinds of containers are being used for beverage service (glass bottles, cans, etc.). Ensure that recycling collection containers are available for the beverage containers being served.
- Work with facilities to eliminate the unnecessary use of glasses (e.g., if beer is being served in bottles, see that glasses are given only on request).
- Check if beer can be served in kegs and provide reusable glasses to eliminate unnecessary container waste.

Food Service

- All condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, jelly, butter, sugar, creamers, etc.) should be served in serving containers and not in individual packets.
- If the facility claims this cannot be done because of health regulations, ask for proof of this health policy.
- Ask to have food served without garnishes or use edible garnishes.
- Where possible, donate surplus food to local shelters, soup kitchens, etc. Donations should be in compliance with the U.S. Food Donation Encouragement Act.
- Let attendees know about any donation programs already in place at the facility.
- Request Offer fair trade, shade grown, organic coffee (if affordable).
- Request organic produce, and free-run chicken/eggs/meats (if affordable).
- Offer vegetarian meal selections; vegetables consume less land base and energy to produce.
- When applicable, ask attendees to sign-up for meals, by letting you know what meals they will be attending. This will reduce food waste and costs.
- Allow attendees to pre-select their meal sizes beforehand. Some people may not want all of the courses; others may want smaller portions. Pre-selection will cut down dramatically on food wastage.
- Tables should not be pre-set with coffee cups or other glass/dishware if they will be washed even if they are not used.

Food Composting

- Look into providing food composting. Depending upon what local facilities are available, either work with the city or local university to compost food scraps, or offer free booth space/demonstration space in return for a food compostor onsite at the event.
- If either of these options is not available, check to see if there is a local pig farm that can take food scraps.
- Work with the facility to educate them on food composting services that they can incorporate into their facility.

Contracts

- Include the food and beverage requirements in this policy with your Request for Proposal during the initial site selection process (See Appendix A).
- Put all food and beverage policies in the contract with all convention centers, hotels, and other facilities.
- Contract should state that any current recycling program that is in place at time of signing of the contract will be in place during the event and that the facility is willing to cooperate on enhancing any recycling programs.
- Develop a checklist for event staff and volunteers to use before the start of the event to ensure the above policies are being adhered to.

Onsite Facilities

Recognition

- Set up a recognition program to recognize facilities or vendors who have an extensive program in place, have made improvements in their current program, or have gone above and beyond to work with you to accommodate these requirements.
- Recognize cooperation in event newsletters, send a letter of thanks, and possibly even recognize them in person at a general session.
- Include information on the facilities or vendors in information given to the press.

Materials to be Recycled

- Paper (mixed or separated, depending on existing system)
- All beverage containers (e.g., glass, plastic, aluminum cans) that are being served (there should be recycling markets for any containers served); corrugated paper (done behind the scenes - recycling containers not needed in public areas); and any other materials that can be handled locally in the existing system (composting, etc.).

Meeting Room Setup

- Notepads and pens should not be placed at each seat. Instead small stacks should be placed in the back of the room.
- Table linens, including skirting, should be limited. If possible, tables should not be skirted to reduce laundry requirements.
- Lights and air conditioning should be turned off (or reduced) when the room is vacant.
- Water should be provided in bulk (no bottled water) with glassware.

Collection Containers

- Containers should be placed in the following areas: registration areas; general session and concurrent session areas (work with facility on placement either in common areas or in individual rooms).
- Exposition hall and any main food and beverage areas.
- Ensure trash cans are adjacent to recycling containers.
- Ask hotel to place containers at front desk on the last day for collecting name badge holders

Signage

- Container areas should be well identified visually (pipe and drape behind them, signage, etc. to make them easily recognizable).

- Make sure to educate attendees on what can be recycled and where.

Onsite Concessionaires

- Work with onsite concessionaires to help them identify ways to reduce waste, recycle or to use recyclable products.
- Try to find vendors who will donate recycled content products (napkins, serviceware, etc.) for concessionaires to use. This will give exposure to the vendor and will educate concessionaires on the use of recycled products.
- Ask concessionaires to serve beverages to attendees in their event mugs.
- Have signage at concessionaires and give recognition to onsite concessionaires who are willing to cooperate in these areas.

Contracts

- Include these requirements in this policy with our Request for Proposal during the initial site selection process (See Appendices A and B).
- Contract should state that any current recycling program that is in place at time of signing of the contract will be in place during the event and that the facility is willing to cooperate on enhancing any recycling programs.
- Develop a checklist for event staff and volunteers to use before the start of the event to ensure the above policies are being adhered to.

Offsite Events

Materials to be Recycled

- Paper (mixed or separated, depending on existing system)
- All beverage containers (e.g., glass, plastic, aluminum cans) that are being served (there should be recycling markets for any containers served); corrugated paper (done behind the scenes - recycling containers not needed in public areas); and any other materials that can be handled locally in the existing system (composting, etc.).

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Signage

- Container areas should be well identified visually (pipe and drape behind them, signage, etc. to make them easily recognizable).
- Make sure to educate attendees on what can be recycled and where.

Contract

- In the RFP, ask facility about recycling program currently in place. This will be used in the process to choose location.

- Work with the venue on identifying what kinds of waste are generated and whether they are recycled by the venue. Work with the venue to develop a recycling program for materials not currently recycled.
- Contract should state that any current recycling program that is in place at time of signing of the contract will be in place during the event and that the facility is willing to cooperate on enhancing any recycling programs.

Receptions Hosted by Others

- Other hosting organizations or partners working with you on the event should be requested to follow the same our Offsite Events policy.

Tours

- Tour coordinators should attempt to collect recyclables on the bus and take them to recycling containers at the convention center or hotels.

Exhibit Hall/Exhibitors

The goal is to make recycling for exhibitors a positive experience and not to be so restrictive or make recycling so difficult that exhibitors are discouraged from participating in the event.

Give-a-ways

- Ask exhibitors not to over-package give-a-ways.
- Set up a collection for any “useful” give-a-ways that would normally be thrown away and donate them to local shelters or schools.
- Ask exhibitors in advance what kind of give-a-ways they may be donating so arrangements can be made for them. (Have a form requesting this information in the registration materials).
- Ask exhibitors that give-a-ways be reusable items or items made from recycled materials.

Exhibitor Promotional Materials

- Give exhibitors the green policies for promotional materials and ask that they adhere to them.
- Let exhibitors know in advance the expected number of attendees to help them plan for an appropriate number of handouts/give-a-ways to bring.
- Discourage exhibitors from bringing large quantities of collateral to the show, which often ends up in the trash because they don’t want to carry/ship it back at the conclusion of the show.
- Encourage exhibitors to bring small quantities and then mail materials to clients from their offices after the show or refer clients to their Web site.
- Suggest exhibitors avoid printing dates and slogans on exhibit materials so that they may be easily reused.

Packing Materials

- Ask exhibitors to save and reuse the boxes they sent to the event so that they can repack with them.
- Ask exhibitors to minimize trash by reusing packing materials.

Recycling During the Exposition

- Try to find a vendor to donate “desktop” recycling bins for each exhibitor. Ask the exhibitors to empty them at large recycling stations in the hall.
- Set up recycling stations throughout the exposition hall for both exhibitors and attendees. Have these areas identified on the floor plan of the exposition hall that is printed in the program book.
- Provide exhibitors with maps of the recycling stations available during the exhibit hours and where the recycling stations will be during teardown. Have staff walk around and personally deliver maps and explain the recycling program. If this is not feasible, give maps to exhibitors at the Registration Desk.

Close of Exposition

- Develop a “check-out” system reminding exhibitors to recycle any materials not being sent back or letting volunteers know that any materials left can be recycled. This system can also be used to provide customer service for exhibitors and can also include collecting exhibitor evaluation forms.

Recognition of “Green” Exhibitors

- Develop criteria to recognize “green” exhibitors and send to the exhibitors in advance.
- Give exhibitors a check list onsite for self-evaluation of recycling efforts.
- Recognize exhibitors who meet a required level of the criteria in post-event materials and at the following year’s event (special notation on their booth signage or other signage that they can display at their booth).

Hotel Sleeping Rooms

Linen/Towel Program.

- For hotels that do not already change towels and bed linens as requested, have them commit to doing this for event attendees. Hotel will provide cards that guests can use during their stay to let housekeeping know whether they want their towels and bed linens changed.
- Let attendees know in advance to expect this policy.
- Attendees will be instructed to call housekeeping at the hotel if the hotel is not following the instructions.

Hotel Toiletries/Soap

- For hotels that do not have bulk dispensers in the bathrooms for shampoo, soap, etc., or do not have a program already in place to donate these used containers: Collect and donate opened hotel toiletries and soap. Work with local supporters to find organizations who can use opened hotel toiletries and soap. Have a collection box set up on the last day at the hotel front desk.
- Ask hotel to provide cards that individuals can leave in the bathroom stating that they do not want to have their toiletries replaced. These cards will be distributed to guests at hotel check-in.
- Attendees should be encouraged to bring their own toiletries and soap (and not use the hotel’s) but the collection system is set up for those who do use these items.

Recycling

- Check to see if the hotel has in-room recycling containers or is able to collect recycling items from the trash. If not, instruct attendees to bring any recyclables from their hotel room to the collection stations in the meeting areas of the hotel.

Contracts

- Include these requirements in this policy with our Request for Proposal during the initial site selection process (See Appendix A).
- Contract should state that any current recycling program that is in place at time of signing of the contract will be in place during the event and that the facility is willing to cooperate on enhancing any recycling programs.
- Develop a checklist for event staff and volunteers to use before the start of the event to ensure the above policies are being adhered to.

Communication

Program Book

- Include details of the onsite recycling/ waste prevention program, including: what materials will be recycled and where recycling bins are located; what behind -the-scenes recycling is taking place at the convention center, hotels, off-site facilities, etc.; notice of any special deals that onsite concessionaires are offering that promote waste prevention; other waste prevention measures taken (e.g. reusing name badges and signage, mug program, confirmation materials on the Web, etc.). Information should start with an introduction about why the program is in place.
- When affordable, print the program book in a sustainable way (e.g., recycled paper, etc.).

Event Newsletters

- Include information in onsite newsletters.
- For a multi-day event, include information on the programs that are in place on the first day, reminder information on the second day, and “before you leave” information (e.g., drop off name badges) on the third day.

General Sessions

- Include details of the onsite recycling/waste prevention program at general sessions and let attendees know how they can participate in the program.

Concurrent Sessions

- Have moderator make reminder announcements at concurrent sessions.

Booth in the Exposition Hall

- Include a display or other information at your booth to explain our “Green Meeting” efforts.

Off-Property Events

- Make announcements at the event or have the Recycling Advisors instruct attendees on recycling at off property events.

Encouraging/Rewarding Attendees

- Provide attendees seen properly recycling with “I was caught green handed” buttons, pins, etc. to help provide an incentive and reminder for attendees to recycle and prevent waste
- Have enough buttons/pins for all attendees, as the goal is that all attendees will have one by the end of the event.

Recycling Advisors

- Designate volunteers to serve as recycling advisors and identify them with special badges, shirts or ribbons.
- Recycling advisors will help identify recycling areas to attendees and encourage attendees to recycle.

Evaluation of Recycling/Waste Prevention Efforts

Recycling Committee Reporting

- Provide the committee that is coordinating the event recycling with reporting standards so they can document the amount of materials collected onsite.
- Ask the committee to also provide a post-event report with comments about lessons learned and suggestions for improvement for following years.

Attendee Evaluation

- On the event evaluation form, ask attendees to comment on the recycling program. Some specific questions to ask:
 - Were you well informed of the recycling programs in place and how you could participate in them?
 - Was the recycling program made easy or difficult?
 - Were there adequate recycling bins located throughout the meeting space at the convention center and the hotels where meetings/events took place? If not, please explain where there were not adequate recycling bins.
 - Were recycling bins/areas clearly identifiable?
 - Were recycling bins clearly marked as to what materials went into each bin
 - Were there any events where you feel adequate recycling/waste prevention did not take place?
 - Did you use your mug throughout the event? If not, why not?
 - Are there any areas where you feel we can do a better job to prevent waste (promotional materials, onsite materials, etc.)?
 - Did you have any contact with the Recycling Advisors? Were these individuals helpful?
 - Did you participate in the hotel’s not changing your bed linens/sheets program? Did the hotel follow your instructions on this program?
 - Suggestions for general improvement?

Exhibitor Evaluation

- On the exhibition evaluation form, ask exhibitors to comment on the recycling program. Some specific questions to ask:
 - Was the recycling program made easy or difficult?
 - Were there adequate recycling bins located throughout the exhibit hall?

- Were these recycling bins clearly identifiable?

Criteria for Future Site Selections

Site Selection Evaluation

- Evaluation of future sites for events will include a recycling/waste prevention checklist with a point system to help evaluate convention centers and hotels. (See Appendix C).
- The headquarter hotel (where we have at least a 200-room block on a given night) and convention center must meet a minimum rating to be considered for a future event.
- Preference will be given to hotels that have been certified in a “green” program (as long as the hotel also meets our other meeting requirements).

Appendix A

AIAS Food & Beverage Policy

- No food or beverages are to be served on disposable serveware; china must be used. Facility will state, before contract is signed, any additional costs for china service.
- Washable spoons (not disposable ones) should be used instead of plastic stir sticks with any beverage service.
- “Box lunches” must be served buffet style.
- Facility agrees to instruct bartenders not to automatically give cocktail napkins with drinks (OK to have them available for those who want them).
- Cloth napkins and table cloths should be used. If this is not feasible, compostable napkins should be used.
- Facility must state in advance what kind of beverage containers will be used (glass bottles, plastic bottles, cans, etc.). If facility does not provide recycling of these containers, we will provide containers and facility agrees to let us place containers near bar areas and throughout the event space. Facility agrees to instruct bartenders/wait staff to use appropriate recycling containers.
- All condiments (ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, jelly, butter, sugar, creamers, etc.) must be provided in bulk serving containers and not in individual packets. Serving containers must not be disposable containers.
- Food should be served without garnishes or use edible garnishes.
- If the facility does not currently have a food donation program in place, facility agrees to work with us, at no cost to us or the facility, to provide food donation. This donation should be in compliance with the U.S. Food Donation Encouragement Act.
- If facility does not currently have a food composting program in place, facility agrees to work with us, at no cost to us or the facility, to provide food composting.
- If facility does not currently have a recycling/reuse program in place for food packaging (e.g., cardboard boxes), facility agrees to work with us, at no cost to us or the facility, to provide recycling of food packaging.
- All bartenders are to be properly trained in alcohol awareness and intervention procedures, and to demand age verification at their discretion and refuse to serve anyone who appears to be intoxicated.

Appendix B

Recycling/Waste Prevention Requirements for Hotels

- Hotel must be willing to commit that any recycling/waste prevention activities that are indicated on this checklist will be in place during the time of our event.
- Hotel must be willing to commit to working with us to implement any waste prevention/recycling programs at the hotel during the time of our event.
- Hotel must be willing to let us set up recycling containers (unless already provided by the hotel), with signage, in public areas, on guest room floors, and in meeting rooms. Hotel also agrees to have a small recycling container(s) at the front desk on our check-out day(s) to collect name badge holders and also to collect opened hotel toiletries/soap. We will be given the items that are collected (we will be reusing the name badge holders and will be donating the opened toiletries/soap). We agree to work with the hotel on placement of these containers.
- Hotel agrees to notify our guests upon check-in about the recycling/waste reduction programs in place and how the guests participate in these programs.
- Hotel must be willing to honor the AIAS Food & Beverage Policy. Any items that will require an extra charge or cannot be accommodated must be identified and specified in the contract.
- Hotel agrees to instruct their employees on the requirements and make sure they are adhered to.
- Contract should state that any current recycling program that is in place at time of signing of the contract will be in place during the event and that the facility is willing to cooperate on enhancing any recycling programs.
- A contract addendum will be provided to the hotel to include in the final contract.