

# green event

## Resource Guide

*Campus events can be fun, informative, festive, academic...and they can also be green and sustainable.*

**green event** certification identifies and recognizes campus events whose organizers have taken extra steps to lower their environmental footprint. The program identifies what qualifies as a **green event**, including required and optional criteria. Certification is contingent on documenting all 4 of the required pre-requisite criteria and specified number of the optional criteria. Points and requirements may change over time.

Becoming a **green event** is easy and can reap real rewards – this Resource Guide contains the basic information needed to get started. This certification process is designed to provide resources, guidance, and recognition to campus events whose organizers have taken extra steps to lower their environmental footprint.

### Points Required for Certification

<b>green(er) event</b>	1 point or substantial effort
<b>green event</b>	Composting <b>or</b> Sustainable Food + 2 <i>Innovation points</i>
<b>super green event</b>	Composting <b>and</b> Sustainable Food + 2 <i>Innovation points</i>
* <i>Four (4) Innovation points may be substituted for either Composting or Sustainable Food</i>	

### **Process**

**Step 1:** Convene those involved in planning and executing an event and begin discussions of which of the points you intend to implement.

**Step 2:** Use this Resource Guide to determine the requirements for each point and the necessary documentation; you may also want to consult with the Office of Sustainability.

**Step 3:** Plan your event and tally up your points.

**Step 4:** Complete the checklist, sign, and submit to the Office of Sustainability ([sustainability@berkeley.edu](mailto:sustainability@berkeley.edu)). **Documentation** as described below should be included with the application, *preferably in electronic form only. Photos are especially welcomed.*

**Step 5:** A short review meeting (or phone call) will be scheduled (if needed), where the application will be reviewed and analyzed.

**Step 6:** Provide any additional information or make modifications are requested by the Office audit and review team.

**Step 7:** Certification confirmed – post your new certificate and celebrate! [*Hint: If you complete this process with enough lead time, you can use the certificate in your event marketing.*]

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UC Berkeley hosts a wide array of events every year, ranging anywhere from a departmental brown bag to black-tie galas. Benchmarking these events to one another is complicated, and greening options can vary depending on the scope and location of the event. The effort required for **green event** certification will consequently vary by category.

### Point-by-Point Descriptions and Information

#### *Travel Elimination*

- **Any virtual event automatically receives Green Certification.**

**Description:** Any event can qualify for automatic certification if the work is instead done by teleconference or videoconference. The only requirement is that the event would otherwise have involved the travel of more than one participant.

**Resources:** *Videoconferencing:* UC Berkeley's Education Technology Services (ETS) has highly customizable videoconferencing facilities on campus. Video conferences can be arranged with sites around the world, hosting up to 30 participants with two-way interactivity. Smaller and less complex conferences and meetings can also be accommodated.

*Phone/Web Conferencing:* University of California now has a systemwide agreement for telephone-based conference calling with ReadyTalk. ReadyTalk offers competitive rates for reservationless (on demand) audio conferencing with the option to simultaneously conduct web conferencing in order to add real time visual content to your meeting. All you need is a telephone and a computer with internet access. Learn more about this inexpensive – interactive options: [http://pages.readytalk.com/UCSystem\\_info.html](http://pages.readytalk.com/UCSystem_info.html)

**Documentation:** Event planner should include a description of the event, how many people would have otherwise traveled, and whether teleconference or videoconference was used.

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## *Pre-requisites*

- There is at least one vegetarian option.**
- The venue offers recycled paper, cardboard, and beverage containers (bins must be widely accessible and clearly marked).**

**Description:** Different kinds of recycling can require different amounts of effort, depending on the venue. Any recycling offers reductions in the amount of waste going to the landfill. Departments can request assistance for on-campus events from the Campus Recycling and Refuse Services. Off-campus events will need to ask the venue about recycling options.

**Resources:** More information on the campus recycling program can be found at:  
<http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~recycle/specialevents.htm>

**Documentation:** Departments should provide information on the location of the recycling bin(s) and also on how they will ensure that attendees were made aware of the program. Labels should clearly identify what is and isn't recyclable (see below example), but are also available from CRRS.



- Event/caterer provides information about the green aspects to participants.**

**Description:** Communication and education are a fundamental part of greening events. Participants will likely be interested in the steps that have been taken, and publicizing this information can be relatively easy.

**Resources:** The Checklist and other documentation provided as part of the Green Event certification process will likely be more than enough information to share with participants. In addition, your caterer or event venue may be able to provide signage or other information.

**Documentation:** Department should submit information on the information provided.

- The event either does not include any handouts or handouts are printed double-sided on at least 30% post-consumer recycled content paper.**

**Description:** This measure is aimed at minimizing the amount of waste generated by the event. Too often, there are left-over or unwanted handouts, which are then discarded. Eliminating these items or reducing their impact in other ways may require slightly changing the way the event is planned, but is not often that difficult.

**Resources:** Eliminating handouts may require taking multiple actions – from using electronic invites to using a projector for agendas or other materials to using a website to provide information to attendees. There are numerous sources for one-side-clean paper, including many of the local copy centers.

**Documentation:** Event planners should provide information on whether handouts were used or provide information on those handouts to show that they conform to the criteria above.

### *Composting*

- **The venue (or the caterer) offers composting (bins must be widely accessible and clearly marked). Event/caterer does not use single-use silverware, cups, or plates.**

**Description:** Composting requires more effort than recycling, including the possibility of additional cost. Event planners would need to work with the Campus Recycling and Refuse Services or with the venue or caterer to determine the feasibility of this program.

Offering reusable or compostable kitchenware can reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill, and sometimes helps make an event more formal. However, reusable kitchenware may be a difficult option if caterers or venue are not willing to offer them.

**Resources:** More information on the campus composting program for special events can be found at the CRRS website (<http://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~recycle/>) and in Appendix A.

The best resource about kitchenware is your food provider. Local grocery stores that feature organic foods might also supply compostable cups and flatware. Another option is to offer finger foods, eliminating or reducing the need for plates and/or silverware. Compostable kitchenware is acceptable for certifying this point.

**Documentation:** Event planners should provide information on the location of the composting bin(s) and also on how they ensure that attendees were made aware of the program. Labels should clearly identify what is and isn't recyclable and are available from CRRS.

Department should submit information on the type of kitchenware used at the event.

### *Sustainable Food*

- **At least 20% of the total cost of the food and beverages at the event is fair trade, local or organic.**

**Description:** Different foods – depending on where or how they are grown – can have different impacts on the environment. Event planners are encouraged to ask questions about what options are available from the caterer or restaurant being used by the event and to incorporate greener alternatives where possible.

**Resources:** The best resource is your food provider. More information on fair trade, local (grown within 250 miles), and organic foods and beverages can be found at <http://www.transfairusa.org/>, <http://recipes.howstuffworks.com/organic-food.htm>, <http://www.caff.org/>, and <http://realfoodchallenge.org/>. A list of Berkeley Green Restaurants can be found at [http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/sustainable/business/bizlist/list\\_acqb.htm](http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/sustainable/business/bizlist/list_acqb.htm).

**Documentation:** Event planner should submit the menu for the event, plus documentation on the cost of the fair trade, organic, or local items. For example, if fair trade coffee (\$20) is provided along with pastries (\$75), then the event would be able to certify 2 points ( $\$20/\$95 = 21\%$  of qualifying purchases).

### *Innovation Points*

- The event offers no bottled water (either small personal ones or larger 3-5 gallon coolers).**

**Description:** The [Pacific Institute](#) estimates that producing the bottles for American consumption in 2006 required the equivalent of more than 17 million barrels (2,700,000 m<sup>3</sup>) of oil. While some of the larger water cooler bottles are re-used, many companies may only do so around 25 times before discarding. The Bay area generally has high quality drinking water, so switching to pitchers of tap water may be an easy option.

**Resources:** More information on the I Heart Tap Water campaign on campus can be found at: <http://uhs.berkeley.edu/tapwater/campuscampaign.shtml>

**Documentation:** Event planner should submit a short statement that includes what alternatives to bottled water are being offered (e.g., water filters or pitchers, reusable cups, etc.)

- The event utilizes staff at waste collection points to ensure proper sorting of recycling and compostables.**

**Description:** Sometimes even well-labeled recycling or composting containers can be more effective when someone is on hand to help participants properly sort their waste. This can be labor-intensive, but is also something that student or staff volunteers may be available to do.

**Resources:** You can utilize your planning committee to identify staff and/or students who might be interested in undertaking this task.

The Building Sustainability @Cal's GO! Team may be able to assist departments in obtaining this point. For information on their services, contact them at least two weeks in advance of your event ([anna.szendrenyi@berkeley.edu](mailto:anna.szendrenyi@berkeley.edu)). The Campus Recycling Office may have more information available when you are ordering the composting and recycling bins. The Office of Sustainability ([sustainability@berkeley.edu](mailto:sustainability@berkeley.edu)) may also be a resource.

**Documentation:** Event planners should provide information on how many staff have been identified to help sort waste.

- The event offers only consumable or green-themed give-aways. (Only available for events offering give-aways to all attendees)**
- The event uses only sustainable centerpieces.**
- Event reduced impact of promotional flyers – either by eliminating entirely, having 50% of flyers printed on one-side-clean paper, or 100% of flyers printed on 100% recycled content paper. (Only available to student groups)**

**Description:** These three measures are aimed at minimizing the amount of waste generated by the event. Too often, there are left-over or unwanted give-aways, which are then discarded. Eliminating these items or reducing their impact in other ways may require slightly changing the way the event is planned, but is not often that difficult. The same is true for centerpieces and nametags and signage.

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**Resources:** There are numerous sources for consumable or green-themed give-aways. You can contact the Office of Sustainability ([sustainability@berkeley.edu](mailto:sustainability@berkeley.edu)) for questions about what might be considered green-themed (think water bottles, reusable grocery bags, packet of native seeds, etc.). Examples of sustainable centerpieces include potted plants, local flowers, cut tree branches, candles or fruit that guests can take home. There are numerous sources for one-side-clean paper, including many of the local copy centers.

**Documentation:** Event planners should provide information on whether give-aways were used or provide information on those give-aways to show that they conform to the criteria above. Event planners should also provide information on the centerpieces used. Student groups should provide information on whether they eliminated flyers or what percentage were on one-side-clean or recycled content paper.

- **Event offers ability to purchase carbon offsets for plane travel (via the entry fee or another easy method). (1 point)**

**Description:** Air travel by attendees can be unavoidable for some events. According to the [Sightline Institute](#), air travel (per passenger and per mile) has a similar impact as driving alone in terms of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

**Resources:** There are many options for purchasing a carbon offset – where you contribute to a project (like tree planting or renewable energy) that reduces greenhouse gas emissions. The concept is to contribute enough so that the emissions reduced equal the emissions you want to offset, in this case from air travel. One option is UC Berkeley's [Climate Action Fund](#), which helps members of the campus community estimate the greenhouse gas emissions related to their air travel and make up for this impact through a charitable donation to campus reduction projects. Other options include [TerraPass](#) or [NativeEnergy](#), although event planners may choose their own.

**Documentation:** Event planners should include information on the carbon offset plan offered, how it was advertised, and how many attendees participated.

- **Departments can also earn points for sustainability initiatives not listed above, subject to approval.**

**Description:** There are more initiatives event planners can undertake beyond those provided above, so this section for “Innovation Points” was created. Many different types of projects will receive points in this category – here is where event planners can use their creativity to reduce their impacts. These initiatives might include a way to reduce energy or water usage, or the caterer might support a green suppliers network or use alternative transportation. Some examples are described below, but the points in this category are not limited to these options.

**Resources/Examples:**

- Event planners establish a policy – that covers all or most events – to address certain criteria listed here.
- Event uses a caterer that supports a green suppliers network or uses alternative transportation.
- The event only serves Marine Stewardship Council approved seafood.
- The event donates any leftover food.
- Participants are asked to bring their own beverage containers.
- Event uses a caterer that serves buffet-style or otherwise avoids using excess packaging sometimes used on pre-made servings.

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- Event includes speakers on sustainability-related themes.
- Event gives either a discount or acknowledgement to those who use public/alternative transport to get to and from event.

Also visit these websites:

- [http://groups.haas.berkeley.edu/netimpact/2008/Net\\_Impact\\_Green\\_Event\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://groups.haas.berkeley.edu/netimpact/2008/Net_Impact_Green_Event_Toolkit.pdf)
- <http://administration.berkeley.edu/howto/meetings.htm>
- <http://www.nrdc.org/cities/living/gevent.asp>
- [http://www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green\\_meetings\\_report.pdf](http://www.conventionindustry.org/projects/green_meetings_report.pdf)
- <http://www.fs.fed.us/sustainableoperations/greenteam-toolkit/documents/NationalRecyclingCollolitionGreenMeetingsReference.pdf>
- <http://www.sustainable.org/information/susevent.html>

Documentation will vary by initiative. Contact the Office of Sustainability ([sustainability@berkeley.edu](mailto:sustainability@berkeley.edu)) or the Berkeley Events Network with any questions.

## APPENDIX A: Composting Service at UC Berkeley

### UC Berkeley Special Event Composting Options

January 1, 2010

Campus Recycling and Refuse Services offers two levels of composting service for your special event; basic composting service and Composting Plus service.

#### **Basic Composting Service:**

This service included delivery and pick up of our outdoor plastic compost bins to your loading dock/service area only. It does not include compostable plastic liners, interior collection bins or any interior delivery service.

#### **Basic Composting Service**

Bin Size	# of pick ups		
	1 time	2 times	Accommodations
32 gallon bin	\$ 10.00	\$ 20.00	0-30
64 gallon bin	\$ 17.50	\$ 35.00	30-60
96 gallon bin	\$ 25.00	\$ 50.00	60-120

*Note: 100% wet waste in a 96gal bin weighs 175lbs.*

*The 96gal is best used when commingling biodegradable dishware.*

#### **Composting Plus Service:**

This service includes delivery and pick up of outdoor plastic compost bins to your loading dock/service area. It also includes 3 compostable plastic liners per outdoor compost bin, smaller interior compost collection bins, logistics consulting and assistance by trained student workers from the GO Team prior to your event, attractive and informative signage for your bins, and "Trash Talkers" at your event, students who are stationed at compost/recycling/waste areas to help event goers to discern how to best handle their discards.

#### **Composting Plus Service**

Bin Size	# of pick ups	
	1 per event	2 per event
32 gallon bin	\$ 54.50	\$ 72.50
64 gallon bin	\$ 59.50	\$ 82.50
96 gallon bin	\$ 64.50	\$ 92.50

#### **Service Days:**

Current service days are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday in the early morning. Both larger service bins and any smaller interior collection bins should be placed out for collection at the end of the day, the day before collection day. Billing can be split for service days- ie: (5) 64 gallon carts collected Tuesday & Friday, (5) 96 gallon carts collected Friday only.

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### **Equipment:**

Larger service bins are provided through our vendor. Smaller interior collection bins belong to Campus Recycling and Refuse Services (CRRS). Delivery and pick up at event site is provided by CRRS. For special events, vendor can only supply 10 containers max per event. CRRS can supply up to \_\_\_ smaller interior collection bins. Larger bins may be available from an alternate vendor as needed (1-4 cubic yards). For basic composting service, compostable bags must be purchased by the customer, and used when composting materials. Bags are available through EPS <http://www.excellentpackaging.com/pages/1/index.htm> , at Follet campus stores and other vendors.

### **Process:**

Customer must open a work order with PP-CS (642-1032) for service. Campus Recycling and Refuse Services (CRRS) will then contact customer to get specific service information and will contract with the vendor to provide these services for the customer.

For customers who chose Composting Plus service, CRRS will also coordinate with GO Team students and will connect event planners with GO Team students for logistics planning.

### **Acceptable Materials in the Food Waste Composting Program**

#### **All Food:**

For Example: fruits, vegetables, bread, pasta, rice, meat, fish, seafood, cheese, bones, egg shells, and coffee grounds

#### **All Waxed & Food Soiled Paper Products:**

For Example: milk cartons, coffee filters, tea bags, napkins, paper towels, paper plates, paper cups, paper food trays, waxed paper cups, waxed paper fry boats, pizza boxes, waxed paper To-Go containers, waxed cardboard produce boxes, biodegradable dishware and cutlery.

**NOTE:** *If a paper product has a shiny coating made from wax only, we can take it. If the shine is from a plastics-based product, we don't want it.*

#### **All Plant Materials:**

For Example: plant trimmings, flowers, leaves, grass, wood, sawdust, wooden crates, wooden chop sticks

### **Unacceptable Contaminants**

Plastic, glass, tin, aluminum, styrofoam, cooking oil, broken crockery/ceramic.