DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION BEST PRACTICES
SUSTAINABILITY BEST PRACTICES

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Food & Beverage
• Food Selection
  » Emphasis on vegan/vegetarian options with attention paid to whether the meal is filling enough - does it include protein, does it include enough variety in items served
    ■ This includes vegan options for desserts
  » Dairy alternative for creamer with coffee
  » No red meat on menu
• Donation Process
  » Ensure that venue/caterer has a food donation process in place
    ■ Request contracts that ensure the food will be donated as promised
  » If there is not a donation process in place, work with the venue or local community to try and implement one for the event
• Packaging & Serving
  » Creamer, sugar, condiments, beverages, and any other relevant items served in bulk containers
  » China service for all meals
    ■ Including coffee & water service, when possible
  » No plastic straws, stir sticks, or other single-use plastic items
  » No single-use packaging
  » Serve “unboxed” box lunches with sandwiches on platters and other items in baskets or in bulk
  » No pre-filling of water glasses to reduce waste
• Food Sourcing
  » Questions to ask caterer:
    ■ Where is the food coming from
    ■ Is it organic, non-GMO
    ■ What is the supply-chain like
  » Attention paid in particular to responsible sourcing of coffee, tea, and chocolate
• Attendee Communication
  » Alert attendees with dietary restrictions how to get their meals in advance of the event, if relevant

Waste Management
Applies to caterer/hotel/venue as appropriate
• Ensure use of tri-bin waste, recycling, and compost options
• Determine whether composting happens front- or back-of-house
• Request hotels offer recycling bin options in guest rooms
• Customize signage to event to indicate items to be recycled or composted

Badges
• Collection and recycling of left-over lanyards and badge covers
• Badges printed on cardstock with no use of badge cover, when possible
• Designations printed directly on badges to avoid use of ribbons or other items that become waste or interfere with the ability to reuse leftover items

Printing
• Event items printed on recycled paper with soy-based inks, and signage on enviroboard
• Avoid including dates or year-specific elements on any signage that has the potential to be reused
• Minimal program printing if an app is used
• If using app only, send out an email in advance advising attendees to print a paper copy of the program before the event, and then just have a handful available onsite
Social Impact Events

**Venue & Hotel**
- Request details on green cleaning policies/practices
- Look for buildings with LEED or other 3rd party sustainability certifications
- Request measurement of waste diversion, energy usage, and water usage
- Inquire as to the use of hand dryers versus paper towels, and recycled-content toilet paper

**Hotel**
- Publicize on website that attendees are encouraged to put up their “Do Not Disturb” sign during their stay and decline housekeeping services
- Look for hotels that don’t use individually-packaged toiletries
- Request ability to measure the water and energy consumption of guests
- Request recycling options in hotel rooms
- Request reduction of in-room single use plastics, including stir sticks, straws, cups, coffee pods and bottled water. Room amenities including shampoo, conditioner, body lotion, soap etc.
- Ask if the hotel regulates temperatures of unoccupied rooms to reduce energy use

**Transportation**
- Use electric buses for transportation of attendees when possible
- Partner with public transportation, scooter, and e-bike companies to promote sustainable transit options
- Select hotels within walking distance of the venue or near public transport

**Communication/Marketing**
- Communicate ways that stakeholders/attendees can contribute to sustainability initiatives
  - Highlight green exhibitor guidelines
  - Send email to attendees asking them to implement certain sustainability initiatives:
    - Bring own water bottle and coffee cup
    - Carpool, use public transportation, or use an alt-fuel vehicle
    - Ask them to put the Do Not Disturb sign on their door and decline housekeeping
    - Link to the event’s sustainability page
    - Ask them to bring reusable containers to take home leftovers
- Give attendees the option to purchase carbon offsets for themselves
  - Or client purchases on behalf of entire event
- Paperless ticketing process

**Purchasing**
- Measure overall purchases, reporting percentage of total purchases that are environmentally friendly
- Items sourced locally
- Emphasis put on purchasing of sustainably sourced items (recycled content, production practices, etc.)

**COMMUNITY IMPACT**
- Give attendees the option to make a donation to a relevant charitable organization during the registration process
- Host a collection or drive as part of the event on-site that benefits the local community
- Arrange a community-impact side event with a local non-profit organization
- Offer full or partial scholarships to attendees from disadvantaged communities

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

**Speakers**
- 50/50 division of speakers between men and women
- 30-40% speakers of color
- If relevant, remind speakers who push back on paying for their ticket that we ask that speakers who have the financial means to fund their own travel/conference ticket to do so, in order to provide more funding for those who cannot
  - Applies when event offers scholarship aid to attendees
- Questions to consider when choosing speakers and topics:
  - Who is on stage?
» Which perspectives are given a platform?
» Do people whose perspectives are often neglected by mainstream work get a chance to participate and present their work?
» Who is granted the most visibility?
» Are new voices prioritized?

Diversity
- Set a target for minority and women-owned businesses in vendor selection
- Goal for percentage of attendees that identify as other than White or Caucasian - have to ask for this data during registration
- Marketing efforts to cast a wider net and bring in a different audience
- Utilize Community Partners to advertise to diverse audience segments/reach new audiences
- Ensure host committee/programming committee represents a diverse group of voices/perspectives

Location
- Invite someone to address the history/context of the venue and its location and its place in the community
- Land acknowledgment - https://native-land.ca/
- Be aware of gentrification issues in areas selected to host the event

Inclusive Practices
- Gender neutral restrooms
- Preferred pronouns on name tags (need to add to registration)
- Private room available for nursing mothers
- Private room available for Muslim community to do their prayers
- Signage available in Spanish or other languages besides English, if deemed relevant
- Create open conversation/break the ice with attendees - ask them in the morning to turn to the person next to them and introduce themselves and say what session they are most looking forward to, or why they are attending
- Considerations for parents - suggestions:
  » List of local children’s resources
  » Explicitly allowing children in sessions
  » Providing childcare, or listing local childcare providers/options
  » Making the agenda public as early as possible so parents can plan accordingly

Accessibility
- Note-taking volunteers
- Send presenters guidelines on designing slideshow presentations
  » Using sufficiently large font sizes, slides with adequate color contrast, and easy to read fonts
- Accessible bathrooms, elevators, and ramps for folks with disabilities
  » Communicate this information clearly on the website
- Adequate walk-way space for passage
- Ensure videos are captioned
- Accessible parking options

Messaging/Communication
- Create a Code of Conduct and post it on the website
- Consider sending a pre-conference reading to attendees that addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Also appropriate for speakers in preparation for their session

Safety
- Announcements at the beginning of event with emergency procedures