

**SUSTAINABLE**



**EVENTS**



**GUIDE**



**LA TROBE**  
UNIVERSITY

# INTRODUCTION

This Sustainable Events Guide has been developed to help staff and students at La Trobe University organise and run events that minimise negative impacts on the environment.

A sustainable event is one that has been planned responsibly, considering different environmental aspects such as catering choices, waste generation and disposal, energy consumption and transportation.

## Benefits of a sustainable event



**Reducing environmental impact**



**Modelling leadership and best practice**



**Supporting small, local and ethical businesses**



**Promoting and supporting better working conditions**



**Improving the University's reputation and promoting Corporate Social Responsibility**



**Reducing costs**

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# CATERING

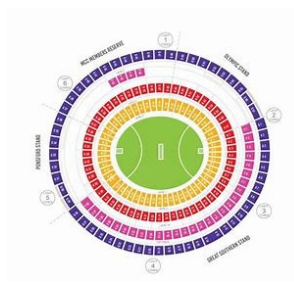


## Why is it important to plan catering responsibly?

Australia produces enough food each year to feed around 60 million people, over twice our current population. About 7.6 million tonnes of food is wasted each year, resulting in 17.5 million tonnes of carbon emissions<sup>1</sup>. Making simple changes to the way you cater your event can have a huge impact on the environment.



**Food waste  
in Australia  
every year**



**Would fill out the  
Melbourne Cricket  
Ground 9 times!**



**CO<sub>2</sub>  
each year**

# When possible, choose...

## Fairtrade

Fairtrade changes the way trade works through better prices, decent working conditions and a fairer deal for farmers and workers in developing countries.



## Organic

Choosing organically produced food is better for the environment, for health, and for animals.



## Seasonally and locally produced food

Avoid food which has been transported over long distances to reduce fossil fuels emissions.



## Plant-based options

Meat and dairy account for 14.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions <sup>2</sup>. That's why choosing plant-based food can be an environmentally positive choice. Increasingly, plant-based options can inclusively address the general population's specific dietary, health, and cultural needs more fully.





# What to do with leftovers?

To avoid leftovers in the first place, **cater to attendee numbers to avoid food wastage**. If possible, ask attendees to register, to get a good idea of the number of participants. Don't forget to **ask for dietary requirements with your RSVP** to ensure you have the right catering mix to avoid wastage.

If you do have leftovers, here's a few options of what you can do:



We all know that there are often leftovers after an event. **Ask participants to BYO containers** so they're able to take food home.

If food is un-touched, you can **reach out to LTU food retailers and offer it to them**.



**Food can also be donated at the Food Bank** (Shop 113, the Agora). They are open 11am – 2pm Tuesdays to Thursdays. They accept food still in packaging with ingredient list, fruit and vegetables, and finger food or similar only if ingredient list is provided.

If it's a large-scale event, and knowing and managing numbers is more difficult, **consider contacting a Food Rescue company to distribute leftover food**. Husband wife duo and La Trobe University Alumni, Ian and Simone Carson, Co-founded [SecondBite](#) in 2005. SecondBite works across Australia, partnering with over 1,300 community food programs to rescue fresh, nutritious food and redistribute it to the people who need it most.



# WATER

The amount of water to make a plastic water bottle can be up to six or seven times what's inside the bottle, and it generates carbon emissions from production and transportation. **Bottled water** is also 200% more expensive than tap water, is often deficient of essential minerals <sup>3</sup>, and it **has an environmental impact up to 3,500 higher than tap water** <sup>4</sup>.

## Here's what you can do at your event

**Provide water refill stations or jugs.** If you don't have any already, you can consider investing in buying new ones, so that you can use them at all future events. For staff, check if you have any in your building's kitchen.



**Set up the event close to one of La Trobe's water fountains** installed across our campuses, so that participants can simply fill up their cup or bottle from there. Check out this [map](#) of water fountain locations on our Melbourne (Bundoora) Campus.

Ask participants to **BYO reusable bottle**.



Email us at [sustainability@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@latrobe.edu.au) to borrow **Reusable Revolution** cups.

3. University of Queensland (n.a.),  
4. The Guardian (2021, August)

# WASTE

Before organising your event, ask yourself “What is going to create waste?”. Consider how that waste can be reduced, reused, or recycled.

## REDUCE

- Go **paperless**. Use technology such as the LTU website, email lists, social media and other electronic resources, such as Eventbrite, to promote your event and send information to attendees.
- Ask your caterer for **reusable crockery**, or [email us at sustainability@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@latrobe.edu.au) to use [Reusable Revolution items](#) (plates, bowls, cups, cutlery).
- **Avoid single-serve sauce packets** and provide a condiment station instead.
- **Avoid any other single use items**, like straws and unnecessary packaging.

## REUSE

- Instead of using disposable items like balloons, consider **decorations that you can reuse**
- Invest in good quality banners and signage which can be reused at future events and recycled at end of life. Keep it generic and avoid using a specific date.
- **If you plan to give away merchandising, choose sustainable items** (for example, you could give out fair trade products like chocolate and tea, reusable cotton bags, coffee cups, etc.). If you decide to give away branded material, remember not to add dates or specific information which may date the produce and prevent you from using them at a future event.



# RECYCLE

It is extremely important to ensure that you have enough bins for the waste that your event will generate. This will help to prevent overflowing bins or litter on the ground. At La Trobe, we have different bins for different waste streams.

## Getting the bins

General waste (red), commingled recycling (yellow), and food/organic waste (green) bins are available for events at LTU campuses. Request bin supply and emptying through [ARCHIBUS](#) by selecting “cleaning” in the “problem type” section. Insert your event location, time, number of bins and your contact details. If you are a student, [ask the Clubs team](#) to submit the request for you.

## Locating the bins

Ensure your bins are in easy, prominent locations and are clearly labelled. Click here to download printable LTU waste posters to use at your event.

## Disposing of waste correctly

It’s crucial to know what goes where to avoid bin contamination and to make sure everything is disposed of correctly. There is signage you can borrow from the student clubs office, and you can [email](#) a request to use this. If you’re a staff member, [email us at sustainability@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@latrobe.edu.au).



# TRANSPORT

## TRANSPORT EMISSIONS IN AUSTRALIA

**3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Largest source of  
greenhouse gas  
emissions**

**50%**

**Produced by cars**

**60%** ↗

**Increase since  
1990**

When planning a sustainable event, you should not forget about transport! It is one of the major causes of carbon emissions in Australia, with cars playing a huge part <sup>5</sup>. Through event communications and promotion, encourage your event attendees to take active and sustainable transport such as walking or cycling or public transport rather than driving, and encourage car-pooling.

## Walking and cycling

Provide cycling or walking routes to your venue to make it easy for people to plan their visit! You can view an array of bicycle and walking route maps on the [VicRoads website](#), to distribute in your event comms. Find out more about cycling initiatives offered by LTU on our [Cycling page](#).



# Public transport

You can communicate information on public transport sharing the [Public Transport Victoria \(PTV\)](#) website, containing information about all public transport in Melbourne. For campus specific information, you can find out more on our [Public Transport page](#).



# Car-pooling

Encourage attendees to find buddies to car-pool with to reduce the pollution caused by on road vehicles, or use a car-pooling app like [Kapuddle](#).



# University fleet vehicles

If you are a staff member and are traveling for an event, use University fleet vehicles and choose either hybrid or electric.



# Virtual events

Consider if the event really needs to be in person, or if it can be fully virtual instead. In a post-covid world, people got used to joining events from the comfort of their own homes. It might even increase participation, especially if you're organising a seminar, a panel, or something that doesn't require participants to meet in person.



# ENERGY

[La Trobe is committed to a program](#) which will see our University achieve Net Zero Carbon Emissions by 2029. By reducing the emissions created due to your event, you are helping us achieve this goal!

## How to reduce energy usage at your event

### Lighting

Hold your event during the day in a venue that will provide sufficient natural light. You can also consider using an outdoor space if it is feasible. If you must use lights, make sure they are turned off when not in use.

### Heating and cooling

Avoid choosing a venue that is too large for your number of attendees as excess energy will be used to heat or cool the whole space. Set the thermostat to 24–26 in summer, and 18–20 in winter, to reduce energy usage.

### Electrical equipment

Remember, electrical equipment will still use power when on standby mode! Be sure to turn off projectors, screens, microphones and computers when not in use.



# COMMUNICATION

## Before the event

- Advertise your event as a green event and explain the ways in which you are doing this in a succinct way. Attendees are more likely to think of your event favourably if they know about your initiatives.
- Encourage attendees to participate in the sustainable practices you are promoting such as BYO water bottle, using the correct waste bins and participating in active transport. Reminding them throughout the pre-event comms is extremely important so the information is drilled into their memory.

## During the event

- Remind attendees of the sustainability practices put in place and encourage them to cooperate with these.
- You could have a person volunteering as Sustainability Event Officer, with the responsibility of making sure participants are respecting the sustainability practices being implemented.

## After the event

- Send out communications to thank attendees for attending and respecting the sustainability practices.
- [Tag LTU Sustainability on Instagram](#) so more people can be aware and use this guide!



# USEFUL LINKS

Below you'll find a list of links and contact details you might need for your event. It includes some of La Trobe's contracted suppliers, which have been vetted for modern slavery, sustainability and ethical sourcing.

## Get in touch

- Email us at [sustainability@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@latrobe.edu.au)

## Catering options

- Most of the food retailers on campus offer catering options. You can contact them and ask them what their sustainable food options are (for example, if they have local, seasonal, organic, fairtrade and/or plant-based options).

[Food retailers Bundoora details](#)

[Food retailer Albury Wodonga details](#)

- [Mabu Mabu](#) is an Indigenous owned catering offering native food
- [Peter Rowland](#), LTU's contracted caterer

## Leftovers

- Email [La Trobe Student Union](#) for information about donations to the Food Bank (Bundoora)
- [SecondBite](#) is a national food rescue organisation

## **Water**

- [Water fountains map](#) (Bundoora Campus)

## **Printing services**

- [IVE Group](#)

## **Stationery& merchandising**

- [COS](#)
- [The School Locker](#)

## **Indigenous suppliers**

- Search for suppliers using [Supply Nation's](#) or [Kinaway's](#) online databases

## **Transport resources**

- [Bicycle and walking routes map in Victoria](#)
- [Public transport information](#)
- [Information about transport at LTU](#)
- [Cycling resources](#)
- [Kapuddle](#), car pooling app

# CHECKLIST



## Ready to organise your sustainable event?

Make sure you're not missing anything with the checklist below, to organise an event as sustainable as possible.

I have...

☐

considered food choices, opting for foods sourced sustainably and ethically, and with a low environmental impact.

☐

a plan for leftovers.

☐

organised water jugs and/or asked participants to byo bottle.

☐

considered how I can avoid waste, avoiding single-use items as much as possible.

☐

organised bins needed for the day of the event.

☐

organised pick up for the waste signs, or printed some myself.

☐

provided information about sustainable transport options before the event.

☐

chosen a location properly sized for the number of participants I'm expecting, to avoid unnecessary energy usage to heat or cool down the space.

# REFERENCE LIST

Climate Council (2017), <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/FactSheet-Transport.pdf>

Food Bank (2023, July), <https://www.foodbank.org.au/food-waste-facts-in-australia/?state=vic>

The Guardian (2021, August), <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2021/aug/05/environmental-impact-of-bottled-water-up-to-3500-times-greater-than-tap-water>

The World Bank (2021, October), <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/brief/moving-towards-sustainability-the-livestock-sector-and-the-world-bank>

University of Queensland (n.a.), <https://sustainability.uq.edu.au/projects/recycling-and-waste-minimisation/real-cost-bottled-water>

Thank you for making the effort to organise  
a sustainable event.

You're contributing to our efforts to create  
a more sustainable future for everyone!



For further information, questions or  
feedback, please email us at  
[sustainability@latrobe.edu.au](mailto:sustainability@latrobe.edu.au)