



Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council Annual Conference

Sustainable Event Policy

The Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council annual conference welcomes the Wisconsin business community to a direct business-to-business exchange of sustainability experiences, challenges, tools, solutions and ideas. We bring businesses together to share resources, experiences and strategies that help businesses become more sustainable.

Through making our Sustainable Event Policy public, we are striving to be a leader in sustainable event practices, to have transparency in our actions, and to encourage others to follow in our footsteps.

Conference Mission

The Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council annual conference welcomes the Wisconsin business community to a direct business-to-business exchange of sustainability experiences, challenges, tools, strategies and ideas. The conference is designed to bring businesses together to share resources that help businesses on their path toward sustainability.

The conference is organized, planned, and managed by University of Wisconsin-Madison students, and helps them understand and apply sustainable business practices in the conference planning process.

Our goal is to establish Wisconsin not only as a destination for “sustainable businesses”, but as a home for businesses from all sectors with an interest in sustainability.

We hope to mentor, recognize and support any businesses with an interest in sustainability. We also announce and recognize Green Masters level companies. These companies have scored in the top 20% of all applicants to the Green Master’s Program and are leading our state in the area of sustainable business practices.

Our Values:

- **Diversity** – Variety in size, location and sector of companies represented at the conference mirrors our desired diversity for participants along lines of gender, race, sexual orientation, age, color, culture, national origin, income, disability, or any other form of diversity.
- **Transparency** – We strive to be transparent about decisions and activities that affect society, the economy and the environment, including criteria for choosing the venue of our conferences, and are willing to communicate these in a clear, accurate, timely, honest, and complete manner.
- **Continuous improvement** – Sustainability is a path, it is not the destination. Just as we ask our participants to improve each year, we strive to make each year’s conference better than the previous one.
- **Integrity** - The conference is held to the highest level of integrity in event production and content. Conference dealings are without bias and conducted with the highest standard of ethical consideration.

Commitment to sustainable development

The Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council with the support and encouragement of Cool Choices integrates principles of sustainability into each conference. Our event uses the Triple Bottom Line (Economic, Social, and Environmental performance) to develop a definition of sustainability that we can work with.

\$10 from each ticket is used for carbon off-sets, and we ask attendees to minimize the carbon footprint of their travel choices. Stainless steel water bottles are used to replace plastic water bottles and a

vegetarian lunch is served. We compost all food waste and have set a zero waste goal. We are committed to sourcing materials locally and ensuring that all people in our supply chain are treated fairly. In short, we will ensure that each conference walks the sustainability talk.

Through making our Sustainable Event Policy public, we are striving to be a leader in sustainable event practices, to have transparency in our actions, and to encourage others to follow in our footsteps. We embrace the philosophy of inclusivity, integrity, stewardship and continuous improvement as outlined by the ISO 20121 framework.

Stakeholder Engagement and Inclusivity

The annual conference is designed to meet the needs of our stakeholders:

- C Suite Officers, Board Members, Senior Managers
- Small Business Owners, Plant Managers, Sustainability Coordinators
- Green Teams
- Students Interested in Sustainability
- Other Stakeholders

The annual conference brings outstanding speakers together in a design that maximizes interaction with the audience and facilitates networking. We commit to making the investment of time by attendees productive and memorable. Conference topics are carefully selected through our conference survey, student recommendations of current issues, and steering committee recommendations.

Potentially interested parties in the conference and its production are identified, and their input is used in the planning of the event.

Objectives / Targets/ Measures

Energy

Energy conservation will be employed through selecting venues that have energy conservation programs in place. Attendee travel impacts will be minimized through promoting carpooling and use of public transport. Choosing a vegetarian menu reduces the carbon footprint. \$10 from each registration is used to purchase carbon offsets through [Native Energy](#), [Terra Pass](#), [Atmosfair](#), [The Carbon Neutral Company](#) and [Climate Care](#).

Objectives:

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Targets: reduce total GHG from attendee transport by 25% (as compared to an average conference)

Target: reduce total venue GHG emissions for the conference by 25% (as compared to an average conference)

Target: Increase numbers of attendees that carpool, ride a bike, walk, or use public transportation to attend conference by 10%

Waste

The conference is designed to minimize all waste associated with the event. Promotional printed materials advertising the conference are minimized, no direct mailing is done and “swag” at the event is minimized. Only carefully selected, durable premiums will be provided to attendees. Our goal is to work toward achieving zero waste.

Objectives:

Reduce solid waste created

Target: Reduce total waste to landfill by 75% (as compared to an average conference)

Target: Compost 100% of food waste (pre and post consumer).

Target: Recycle 100% of recyclable waste (paper, metal, cardboard, etc)

Sourcing

Local sourcing for food, labor, and other services will be employed when feasible. Preference will be given to suppliers and venues that adhere to the principles of sustainable development and meet our event sourcing criteria.

“Food miles” will be considered in choosing a menu and vendors.

Water

Water conservation efforts will be promoted and followed at the conference. Venues will be selected that have “water filling stations” available. Each attendee will receive a stainless steel water bottle for use at the event. Attendees will be able to fill their water bottle for personal use, thus eliminating excess water drawn for pitchers and no plastic water bottles will be available.

Event Legacy: Attendees will learn about the benefits of not using bottled water at the conference and will have the opportunity to sign a no bottled water pledge. After attendees leave the conference we want to encourage positive change into the future.

Objective: Reduce attendee use of bottled water

Target: Get 25% of attendees to sign the no bottled water pledge

Social Justice and Human Rights

The Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council believes everyone should enjoy equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities. We support the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights, fair labor, and safe working conditions through our event production, sourcing and venue selection processes. The following practices are in place for the annual conference:

Pricing for the event is tiered to help enable students to attend.

Accessibility issues, including access for the disabled and elderly are part of the venue selection process.

Food leftover from the event will be donated to a local charity or food bank.

Proceeds from the event are used to support graduate students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison

Event Follow-up and Continuous Improvement Process

The Wisconsin Sustainable Business Council is committed to the continuous improvement process to ensure each year's conference improves our sustainability performance and meets our attendee's expectations. We pledge to take the following actions annually to focus upon improving our event:

- Conduct periodic internal audits to ensure compliance with Sustainable Event Policy
- Review and share our performance on all targets
- Review and report on survey/feedback results
- Annually update sustainable event policy to incorporate key improvement opportunities

This review process will be led by the students with guidance from the steering committee.