



# GREEN GUIDE FOR STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

## Carbon Neutrality by 2037

That's Elon's goal. Sustainability is a University-wide initiative, and student organizations have plenty of opportunities to support these efforts. This guide is will help you integrate sustainability into your meetings, events, and organizational culture.

VIEW ELON'S SUSTAINABILITY MASTER PLAN 2025 TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ELON'S SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS →



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ELON SUSTAINABILITY

# THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



LEARN MORE

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The 17 SDGs are integrated—they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

## How does your organization connect to the SDGs?



# ADVERTISING

There's little to no need to print flyers to advertise your event. Social Media, Phoenix Connect, and Board Storming are a great way to get information out about your event without using any paper.

Student Organizations can also advertise via digital signs throughout campus. Information about how to post on the digital signs is available on the [Moseley Center website](#).

## WHEN PRINTING IS NECESSARY

If printing is necessary, use tree-free paper or paper with recycled content. Printers on campus use these types of paper.

To reduce paper use, print half or quarter sheets.

# EVENTS & MEETINGS

## PLAN AHEAD

Planning ahead will allow you the opportunity to think through many of the suggestions in this guide as well as sustainably source items to ensure your event or meeting is as sustainable as possible.

## LOCATION

Plan events and meetings outdoors when feasible to avoid using indoor lighting and heating/cooling systems.

Please turn off all lights and electronic equipment after the meeting is finished.





## WASTE

Work to generate as little waste as possible. Try to avoid single-use items, whether that's decorations, food service ware, or plastic bags.

Encourage people to take home leftover food or donate unopened items to a local food bank

Provide clearly-labeled compost and recycling bins. (Compost bins can be requested from physical plant via [fixit](#)).

## FOOD

Consider plant-based options, organic foods, Fair Trade products, and locally grown foods whenever possible.

Avoid individually packed products such as single-serve chip bags or beverage bottles/cans.

Incentivize participants to bring their own service ware by allowing them to go first in the food line.



# PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

## DETAILS TO CONSIDER:

**Waste:** Could you purchase a few higher-priced items to raffle off instead of a bunch of lower-priced items?

**Country of Origin:** Purchasing items made in the U.S. not only supports the economy but typically ensures higher environmental and labor standards than items made in developing countries.

**Operation Principles:** Try to find companies that address sustainability on their website or are third-party verified. e.g. B Corp, Climate Neutral, etc...

**Materials:** Use materials that are:

- Reusable, recyclable or compostable
- Made from repurposed or recycled content
- Made from certified organic or naturally grown materials
- Made from renewable materials
- NOT plastic, if possible



## STEPS TO ORDERING SUSTAINABLE MERCHANDISE:

1. Look for products that are sourced, made and can be disposed of in more socially and environmentally responsible ways.

2. Review website of company that makes the product. Many companies will have a section on their website about sustainable qualities in the merchandise and sustainable practices.

3. If you cannot find the information you are looking for, ask the vendor to identify as many of the criteria as possible. It can be helpful to work with a company that specializes in identifying promotional items. They can collect this information from multiple vendors and thus get you a product with the more qualities.



# SUSTAINABLE EVENT CHECKLIST

## ENERGY

- Host event outside to minimize electricity consumption.
- If outdoors isn't an option, host your event in a room with adequate natural lighting to minimize electricity consumption from lighting.

## MATERIALS

- Use electronic invitations and reminders.
- Provide electronic access to presentations and meeting agendas for the event (if necessary).
- Consider reusable decorations instead of single-use items.
- If applicable, think about offering sustainable giveaways, such as reusable items.
- Consider raffling off one larger giveaway instead of a bunch of smaller giveaways.

## DINING

- When you request food through Elon Dining's Mill Point Catering, consider requesting local and/or organic food.
- Provide plant-based options.
- Elon Dining provides free compostable service ware. Reusable service ware is offered for an additional fee. Student organizations can request reusable service ware in the "Event Details" section of their order.
- Request pitchers or carafes for drinks, rather than individually packaged drinks. Request bulk containers for items like salad dressings and condiments. Do not order individually packaged items (e.g., granola bars, candy bars, etc.)
- Try not to over-order food.
- RSVP in advance with enough time to notify catering. Changes need to be made at least three days prior for small events and seven days for large events.
- In your communications write, "Please help us reduce waste at the event. Attendees are encouraged to bring reusables."

## WASTE

- During the event, make sure there is proper signage on bins for landfill, recycling, and compost. Inform attendees of how to sort the waste during the event.
- Confirm that all service ware is compostable.
- Make sure liquid and food containers are CLEAN and EMPTY before recycling them.