

Sustainability Guidelines for ISU Events



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Introduction

These Sustainability Guidelines complement the [ISU Sustainability Strategy](#), adopted in October 2023 by the ISU Council that is structured according to four strategic priorities 1. Carbon and Circularity, 2. Ice Rinks, 3. Nature, and 4. Community. All Event Organizers are asked to use the Checklist below when organizing their events. However, in the event of a conflict between these Guidelines and the contractual obligations of ISU Event Organizers, the contract is to take precedence.

Key Steps to consider when using these Guidelines

The following Steps should be completed when implementing sustainability at your event. These steps draw on the recommendations of ISO 20121:2024 Event Sustainability Management Systems and other global good practice.

1. **Assess your starting point:** Take stock of what you have been doing on sustainability and assess opportunities and challenges of getting started. Determine if your event will implement ISO 20121:2024.¹
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Identify and engage stakeholders.
3. **Plan:** Develop your Event Sustainability Plan including:
 - a. **Scope:** Determine scope of your event e.g. time, place, participants.
 - b. Sustainability **mission statement**.
 - c. Identify main sustainability **principles** (ISO 20121 identifies these as stewardship, inclusivity, integrity and transparency),
 - d. **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) to be addressed at the event.
 - e. **Issues** (risks and opportunities) to be addressed including **objectives and targets** and an explanation of how they will be achieved.
4. **Implement:** operationalize the Plan by assigning roles and responsibilities to staff that those with authority for support in the implementation (e.g. Chief Sustainability Officer/Sustainability Manager, Sustainability Committee), dedicating resources, working with suppliers etc. Use the ISU Procurement Guide and the Checklist below to ensure you are implementing your Plan.
5. **Assess Progress:** evaluate performance against the main sustainability issues, ensuring actions are being taken, impact is measured, managed and corrective actions taken.
6. **Report:** All ISU event organizers are encouraged to complete an Event Sustainability Report alongside a Financial Report after the event. It is recommended that the Checklist below is used as a template for the Sustainability Report and would include brief text and photos as well as making a self-evaluation of implementation of the Guidelines. The Sustainability Report may be made public to share good practice and inspire other ISU events.

ISU reserves the right to verify the implementation of these Guidelines in the preparatory and operational phase of ISU events.

¹ ISO 20121:2024 is a management system for sustainable event management. The standard can be applied to all types and sizes of organisations or companies involved in the design, planning and implementation of sustainable events. It is designed in such a way that sustainability can be constantly improved during the management cycle of an event.



ISU SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST

CIRCULARITY AND CARBON

ISU Recommendations	Local Organizing Committee (LOC) Self-Evaluation 0-10 (0 = nothing implemented, 10=fully implemented) Proof (photos/text)
Transport	
Prioritize public transport and low carbon options e.g. green bus fleet, electric vehicles, walk, bike, route optimization, sharing of vehicles, encouraging train vs. plane.	
Ensure clear transport plans including signposting indicating location of the nearest public transport stop/station both online and during the event e.g. online transport map on event website.	
Train drivers in "eco-driving".	
Combine entry tickets with free public transport for spectators.	
Branding and Signage	
Reusable graphic design: consider the possibility to reuse signage and graphics e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using the same logo for multiple events; • avoiding including the date, location and pattern placement However, ensure alignment with ISU requirements on branding and signage.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid non-recyclable plastic fibers, vinyl and PVC. • Guarantee end of life solutions for all textile, signage and branding elements, other than landfill. • Have a full recycling program in place for all event overlay materials and minimize the amount, size and weight of materials to avoid waste However, ensure alignment with ISU requirements on branding and signage.	
All single use items, gifts, flowers and plants should be avoided.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid plastic trophies and medals. • Have prizes of locally produced products e.g. wood trophies, local food, and products (if suitable for international travel). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital signage: Make designs which are flexible and can be used in many situations e.g. on screens with the possibility to add sponsors and partners. • Legacy: When applicable, leave signage as a legacy e.g. tobacco free, access for all, waste management. 	



Uniforms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable sourcing of uniforms for volunteers, staff e.g. use of upcycled material. • Avoid including dates so that uniforms can be reused. 	
Food and Beverage (Catering)	
<p>Commit to sustainable catering options that take into consideration</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> provenance (local); production mode (labels, responsible fishing and agriculture, fairtrade); type of products (vegetarian, vegan); season; degree of transformation. 	
Zero single-use plastic in food and beverage service e.g. by reducing the use of plastic bottles and promoting tap water at premises instead.	
<p>Minimize food waste through e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more accurate forecasting of quantities required; • working with charities to redistribute surplus food; • composting food waste with compost bins next to recycling bins and compost either at the venue or at the municipal level. 	
Event Logistics	
<p>Consider the location of distribution warehouses to allow the best route to venues to minimize impact on communities and optimize travel times considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal loading of vehicles to avoid wasted journeys. • Operating a “quiet night-time delivery” policy. • Selecting freight suppliers that operate modern low-emission fleets and compensate their carbon emissions. • Where practical, using rail and river options instead of road transport. • For overseas logistics, favoring sea freight over air freight, to significantly reduce carbon emissions. 	
Waste Management	
Implement a clear waste management system e.g. recycling containers at venues: plastic/paper/landfill/compost etc.	
Based on a circular economy, conduct waste management considering the 5 Rs: Refuse, Reduce, Repair, Recycle/Compost organics, Reinvent	
Minimize packaging, e.g., through reusables; oblige suppliers to take back packaging; order deliveries in bulk; for cardboard packaging, use of recycled board; Use ecologically advantageous packaging when possible.	



Energy and Water reduction	
Consider lighting, heating and cooling systems and machinery used to be as energy and water efficient as possible, using renewable energy where possible.	
Measure and control the use of water during the event (especially for ice making/resurfacing and in spectator areas).	
Carbon Footprint	
Prioritise reduction of carbon emissions and insetting prior to offsetting. Insetting could be through investment in the reduction of Green House Gas (GHG) emissions outside of the event’s own operations, but inside the event’s value chain such as ice rinks, skating equipment etc.	
Gather and analyze data related to the carbon footprint of the event including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel: LOC staff, officials, volunteers, spectators etc. i.e. if the LOC has access to such data). • Hotels: number of rooms and energy used. • Catering: number of meals (vegetarian, meat etc.), drinks. • Ice rinks: energy used. 	
Provide a credible account of your carbon footprint and the actions you have undertaken to reduce your footprint, to share knowledge and lessons learned.	
Offset and compensate for unavoidable GHG emissions that occur as a result of the event, consider investing in initiatives that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ lead to a reduction in GHG emissions such as renewable energy; ○ or an increase in carbon storage through nature-based solutions such as forest regeneration around the venue. 	
Accommodation	
Prioritize accommodation within walking distance to the venue or easily accessible using public transport.	
Choose hotels with environmental policies, use renewable energy, have community projects in place and/or are certified for sustainable hotel management practices and/or eco-tourism.	



NATURE

ISU Recommendations	Local Organizing Committee (LOC) Self-Evaluation 0-10 (0 = nothing implemented, 10=fully implemented) Proof (photos/text)
Accreditation, Lanyards, Signage and Decorations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anticipate sustainable sourcing of accreditation materials e.g. on FSC certified paper with FSC logo (avoid non-recyclable plastic fibers). Consider compostable lanyards <p>However, ensure alignment with ISU requirements on lanyards.</p>	
<p>Implement a return system for accreditation badges and lanyards for their reuse. However, ensure alignment with ISU requirements on lanyards.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider paper/cardboard for branding and signage but consider carefully e.g. bamboo has high water consumption, fiber board is not easy to recycle, not all forests are well managed (avoid clear cutting and select FSC certified). Discuss these matters with your signage supplier (however, ensure alignment with ISU requirements branding and signage). If you use wood, engage in a replanting project with a reputable forestry management organization. Plant more trees (in ways that encourage flora & fauna biodiversity) than you utilize – this might be your best impact mitigation solution. 	
<p>Graphic design, gifts, merchandising and branded items should consider the need to reuse a material and sustainability in their sourcing.</p>	
Equipment	
<p>Encourage reuse of material and equipment such as padding, maintenance equipment, skates and other rink equipment at your rink and by other ice rinks and ISU members, and as a last resort, a firm dealing in solid waste that can recycle all materials.</p>	
Communication	
<p>Reduce paper use during competitions by providing information to teams by electronic means e.g. by using the ISU Event app, instant messaging.</p>	



Venue	
Venue designs and fit-out specifications should stipulate “low-carbon” materials, giving preference to eco-certified products that ensure conservation of the natural environment and have a positive impact on biodiversity.	
Ensure conservation of the natural environmental and undertake a biodiversity project around the venue with a credible organization e.g. forestry management, biodiversity conservation.	
Ensure conservation of water resources through responsible use and measurement (especially for ice production/resurfacing and in spectator areas).	
Avoid unnecessary heating or cooling of large volumes of water. Install water saving devices and raise awareness among participants and spectators.	
Minimize adverse impacts on land, water, noise and air quality.	
Use cleaning and maintenance products that conform to environmental and sustainable development criteria and that are not hazardous to nature.	
Provide well-maintained toilets and rubbish disposal facilities, to enable wastewater to be treated and solid waste to be recycled or destroyed with no risk. Inform users of the rules of conduct to be followed: clean toilets, water saving and waste collection.	

ICE RINKS

ISU Recommendations	Local Organizing Committee (LOC) Self-Evaluation 0-10 (0 = nothing implemented, 10=fully implemented) Proof (photos/text)
Refrigeration and Energy	
For indoor ice rinks, use modern, energy-efficient refrigeration equipment avoiding ozone destroying synthetic refrigerating gases including chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), and hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).	
Ensure caution with the use of ammonia, an aggressive natural gas which irritates and suffocates, inhaling may cause irreversible respiratory damage.	



Ensure caution with hydrocarbons like propane and isobutane, which are natural gases and pollute less, but are highly inflammable and explosive.	
If systems still use CFCs or ammonia, ensure a leak detection system with an alarm is installed, with regular checking and maintenance and consider replacing the system.	
Consider the use of refrigerating systems that use water, carbon dioxide (CO2) or helium.	
Pay particular attention to the systems which produce and distribute the cold using renewable energy where possible and consider investing in renewable energy e.g. solar panels on the roof of your ice-rink, wind, geothermal, hydro etc.	
Use electric ice resurfacing machines as an emission free option, ideally linked with solar or renewable energy for charging.	
Heat the arena efficiently using sustainable energy sources to meet the required temperatures.	
Lighting and Digital	
Replace incandescent light bulbs with energy-efficient, lightbulbs.	
Adapt ice-rink lighting to the minimum requirements e.g. 'house lighting' rather than 'competition' or 'entertainment' lighting as often as feasible and suitable for event media/TV requirements (however, ensure alignment with ISU requirements).	
Consider the digital footprint of the event e.g. TV broadcaster, visiting TV, video size, website traffic, YouTube live streams, social media, emails, in venue TVs and Video boards etc. (however, ensure alignment with ISU requirements).	
Water	
Consider reverse osmosis technology to purify the water used in ice creation without chemicals.	



COMMUNITY

ISU Recommendations	Local Organizing Committee (LOC) Self-Evaluation 0-10 (0 = nothing implemented, 10=fully implemented) Proof (photos/text)
Community Programmes	
Promote and support programs that position ice rinks as social and cultural community hubs by promoting diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility to ice skating, particularly for youth and persons with disabilities, refugees, migrants etc. through inclusive design, community events with athletes, complimentary tickets, reduced price tickets etc.	
Promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the ISU disciplines through social media campaigns.	
Provide venue access, parking, sanitary facilities, catering facilities and seating for young families, disabled or elderly spectators, staff and volunteers.	
Colorblind awareness when designing rink wayfinding.	
Education	
Engage athletes and fans in sustainable initiatives to inspire action e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops and webinars; • Sustainability Ambassadors/Teams/volunteers; • Pre/post Events that engage with the local community e.g. for local children; • Video boards during the event – announcing sustainability initiatives, educating the audience about the technicalities of the competition e.g. judges, how they score, values of jumps etc. 	
Provide a sustainability info desk at venues (possibly supported by local authorities).	
Make publicly available the Sustainability Plan for the event.	
Integrate sustainability into the performance objectives of all staff.	
Seek opportunities for virtual meetings rather than always meeting physically particularly in the event preparation phase.	



Sponsors and Suppliers	
Enable local and regional businesses to become ISU Event suppliers and prioritize local and regional sourcing.	
When sourcing for an event, consider: 1. Where does it come from? 2. Who made it? 3. What is it made of? 4. What is it wrapped in? 5. What will happen to it afterwards?	
Have local event suppliers commit to act in a socially responsible manner, respect sustainability practices and respect basic human rights, working conditions, health and safety for all workers in the supply chain through the signature of a Sustainable Sourcing Commitment (see ISU Sustainable Procurement).	
Encourage local event sponsors to support your sustainability efforts with specific sustainability activations.	
Seek new sponsors or partners who are aligned with sustainability goals.	
Governance & Athlete Safeguarding	
Be vigilant about health and safety standards, competition manipulation, safeguarding, doping, bribery, fraud, and corruption legislation and guidelines, ensuring decent working conditions, respecting human rights and equality for all participants and for the event direct workforce, event volunteers, and supply chain workforce.	
Designate an OC representative to serve as a liaison with the ISU Safeguarding Officer and provide guidance to event participants regarding how to report an incident of suspected or observed abuse or harassment. Refer to ISU's Safeguarding Guidelines on how to Receive and Report Complaints and the Checklist Guide for Safeguarding at ISU Events	
In the locker rooms and changing areas, post signage stating that the taking of photos or videos is prohibited (unless for exceptional reasons and with the informed consent of those filmed/photographed).	
For Junior events or lower, have plans for monitoring locker room and changing areas during practice sessions and the competition to ensure entry/use is only by permitted persons.	

All ISU event organizers are encouraged to complete a Sustainability Report after the event that addresses the recommendations contained in these Sustainability Guidelines. Please send to sustainability@isu.ch and cc. your ISU Event contact.



Useful links

ISU

- Sustainability: [Sustainability | International Skating Union \(isu.org\)](https://isu.org/sustainability)
- Code of Ethics : [ISU Code of Ethics 2024](https://isu.org/code-of-ethics)
- Safeguarding : [Athlete Safeguarding | International Skating Union \(isu.org\)](https://isu.org/safeguarding) including [ISU Safeguarding Policy](https://isu.org/safeguarding-policy);
- Anti-doping : [Anti-Doping | International Skating Union \(isu.org\)](https://isu.org/anti-doping)

International Olympic Committee (IOC)

- IOC Safe Sport: [Safe Sport \(olympics.com\)](https://olympics.com/safesport)
- [IOC Sustainability](https://olympics.com/sustainability)

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