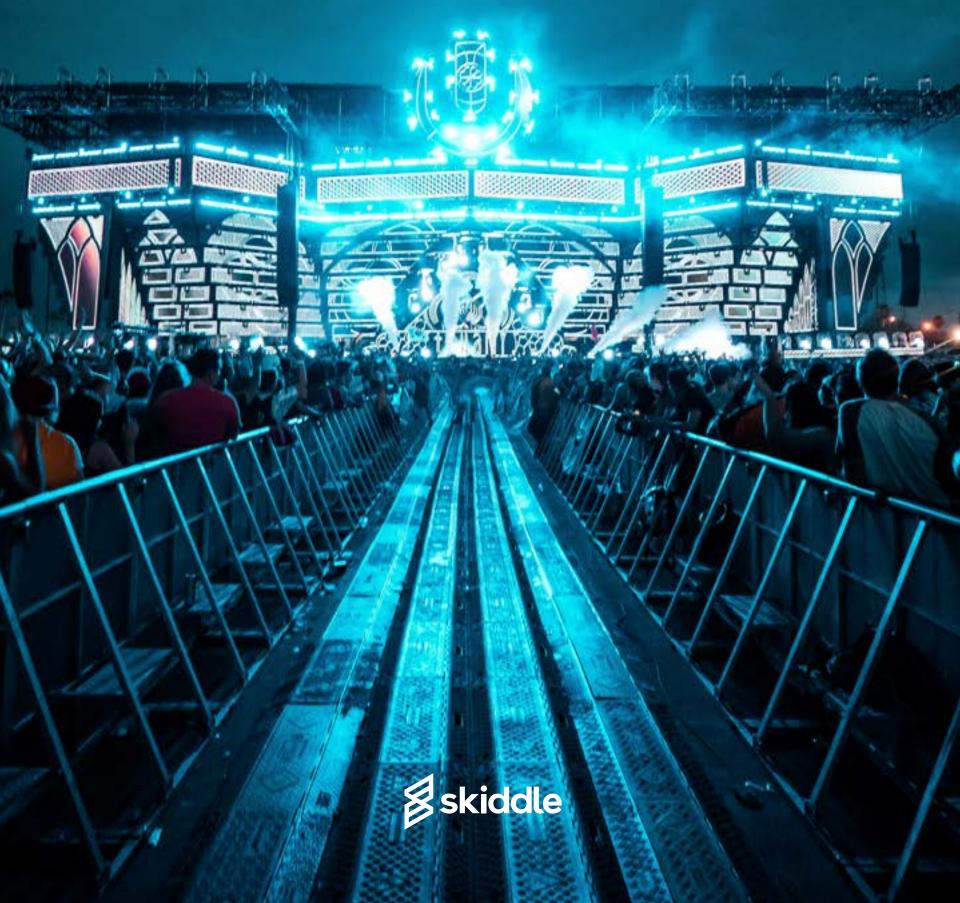
YOUR GUIDE TO HOSTINGA SUSTAINABLE FESTIVAL







The taste of a world far away from the streets you grew up in. The anticipation of the opening guitar chord, keyboard note or bassline from your favourite artist, band or DJ. The freedom of letting loose a field for a weekend with your closest friends.

That first festival could've been the gateway to promoting your own events. A spark that grew into a lifelong flame, the pursuit of providing others with the experience you once felt.

Whether you're twenty, ten, five or a year into your journey as a promoter, you'll understand the joy that festivals can provide. However, events like this come at a cost.

Due to their sheer size, music festivals have a drastic impact on the climate. The second edition of The Show Must Go On Report, published in 2020, states that energy contributes 76% to the onsite carbon footprint of a UK camping festival.

The report also states that UK festivals produce 17,300 tonnes of CO2e annually from diesel use, that the total estimated fuel use of a UK Festival is 7m litres per year, and that the UK events industry uses 380m litres of fuel per year.

This output contributes to the larger climate issues we are facing in the world at the moment. Scientists have been discussing

the issue for years, but thanks to increased recycling measures, figures like Greta Thunberg and groups like Just Stop Oil, climate change is an issue that is front and centre in the mind of society.

A look out of the window says a lot, too. Over the past few years, the UK has seen harsher rainfall, hotter summers and floods.

THAT FIRST FESTIVAL COULD'VE BEEN THE GATEWAY TO PROMOTING YOUR OWN EVENTS. A SPARK THAT GREW INTO A LIFELONG FLAME, THE PURSUIT OF PROVIDING OTHERS WITH THE EXPERIENCE YOU ONCE FELT.

In 2024, the Met Office and the University of East Anglia reported that 2023 was the hottest year on record, going on to write, "The global average temperature for 2023 was 1.46°C above the pre-industrial baseline; 0.17°C warmer than the value for 2016."

Elsewhere, the HECC 2023
Climate Report states, "In July 2021, thunderstorms and heavy rainfall caused two serious flash floods in London, with some areas reporting more than twice the average July rainfall in 2 hours." This caused over 1,000 homes to be flooded by stormwater and sewage.

So, what can we do?

The sheer size of outdoor festivals means we can never fully mitigate the impact they have on the environment. Plus, issues like transport require infrastructure change, which is out of our hands.

But we can make sure our events have a reduced impact. One way we can do that? With sustainability. Sustainability is defined as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

We can introduce the use of renewable energy, look for ways to scale that use, introduce sustainable practices and use the cultural capital of music festivals to encourage attendees to engage with sustainability.

This guide will cover just that. We'll show you the must-haves for organising a sustainable festival, detail sustainable practices you can implement and show you how to promote sustainability measures through your marketing.



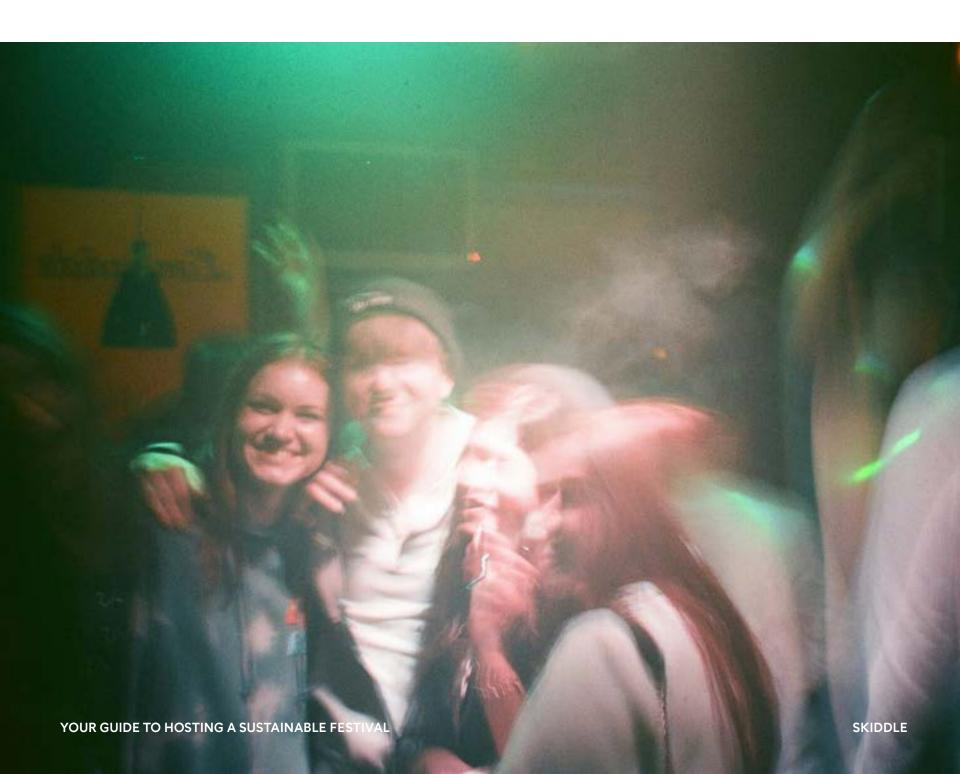
WHAT ARE THE 'MUST-HAVES' FOR A SUSTAINABLE FESTIVAL?

If you're thinking about hosting a sustainable festival, there are several 'must-haves' you'll need to implement.

We're thinking about things like energy sources, waste reduction plans, and plant-based food here. These choices will help your festival run sustainably, help you keep emissions down, send fewer things to landfills and reduce the impact your festival has on the environment.

Think of them as the backbone of your festival. Implement them slowly, and as your knowledge of sustainability grows, build on them to create a festival that works hard to reduce the effects that large-scale, multi-day events have on the climate.

In this section of the guide, we'll take a look at what we consider the must-haves, expanding on why they are crucial for your festival.





TARGETS, TARGETS, TARGETS

Sustainability targets are a must-have for any festival.

Your targets will inform the decisions you make when it comes to sustainability. If you've been running a festival for a while, you'll have an easier time finding out the amount of carbon dioxide, waste and water you use.

However, if you're a first-time festival promoter, benchmarks are your friend. This way, you've got an idea of what the average usage of things like waste, water and carbon dioxide is. Then, you can set sustainability targets based on the benchmarks.

Vision 2025's 'The Show Must Go On' report uses benchmark figures from Julie's Bicycle, a non-profit organisation that mobilises the creative sector to take action on the climate crisis.

Those figures show that as of 2019, festivals use 0.5 litres of diesel per person per day, 2kg of waste per person per day, 1.9kg of CO2e per person per day and 14.3 litres of water per person per day.

Using these figures, you could aim to reduce them by 10% at your first festival, increasing them each year.





SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SOURCES

POWERING A MUSIC FESTIVAL INVOLVES A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF FUEL USAGE ACROSS A WEEKEND.

This includes electricity from generators, stages, sound systems, food stalls and portable toilets. It's said that festivals can use over 30,000 megawatts of electricity, and The Show Must Go On report states that the total annual fuel consumption for U.K. festivals is 4.96 million litres.



Waste vegetable oil biodiesel, hydrated vegetable oil biodiesel and solar power options can be used as sustainability initiatives for your festival. For example, waste vegetable biodiesel emits 85% less Co2, while solar power is 100% emissions-free and can be paired with batteries to power your event's generators.

However, it's crucial to source your biofuel responsibly. Ensure that you find out how your supplier sources biofuel, enquire about the greenhouse gas emissions burned per litre and the supplier's certification.

Monitoring your electricity consumption can also help. Set a maximum threshold based on what the studies suggest and see where your event falls on the scale. That way, you'll have concrete data to work from and have a clear idea of the areas you can work to reduce.





It seems like national media companies brandish pictures of the aftermath of festivals across their websites every year.

While the headlines seem like tabloid fodder, the effects of that waste aren't. The Show Must Go On report states that festivals create 28,500 tonnes of waste annually.

This includes disposable plastics like cups, bottles, food containers and cutlery, as well as items like toiletries, sleeping bags and fancy dress outfits. The report also states that this waste contributes to 24% of the carbon footprint of an outdoor festival. These items end up in landfills, meaning they aren't recycled, composted, reused or repurposed.

So, you'll need a waste reduction plan. Committing to using recyclable materials is a starting point, selling things like water and other drinks in aluminium cans rather than plastic bottles.

Environmental deposits – which we'll cover later – can also help, as can striking up a partnership with a sustainable camping equipment company.

You could offer deals to your customers or sell the equipment on-site. Once the weekend is over, encourage attendees to hand in any tents that a re still in working condition and donate them to a charity that helps out refugees. You'll be reducing waste and helping out a good cause.



WATER MANAGEMENT

SO FAR, OUR GUIDE HAS HAD A FOCUS ON REDUCTION.



However, water is a little different. You'll need it for multiple things at your event - drinking, showering and washing, for example - so it's best to try and reduce wastage, keep leaks to aminimum and avoid water pollution.

When it comes to water management, you'll need to think about attendees, crew, talent and contractors. Each group will have different water needs. Consider what those needs are and factor them in when planning.

Percussion taps can help you manage water waste, as they automatically turn off after a short time.

Storing wastewater in a safe and correctly monitored place, carrying out risk assessments of areas that could be affected by spillages and ensuring vendors have the correct drainage facilities are all crucial to avoiding water pollution.





Let's face it: no one wants to think about festival toilets. They're a sight, smell and subject that can churn the stomach of the most experienced festival promoter.

However, choosing eco-friendly toilets can help your festival become more sustainable. The road transportation of waste and blue liquid used to help flush can cause greenhouse gas emissions, which is why it's advisable to opt for compost toilets when looking to make your festival greener.

That's because they are free of the chemicals used in regular festival toilets, using sawdust to cover the results of a trip to the loo, with the human waste being collected and composted afterwards.

You'll also save on water, too. Compost and long drop toilets use no water for flushing and a small amount for cleaning.

So, fewer chemicals, a better smell for your attendees and less water used all around. Sounds like a win-win to us. However, they can be expensive, so it might be something you introduce on a small scale and expand as time goes on.



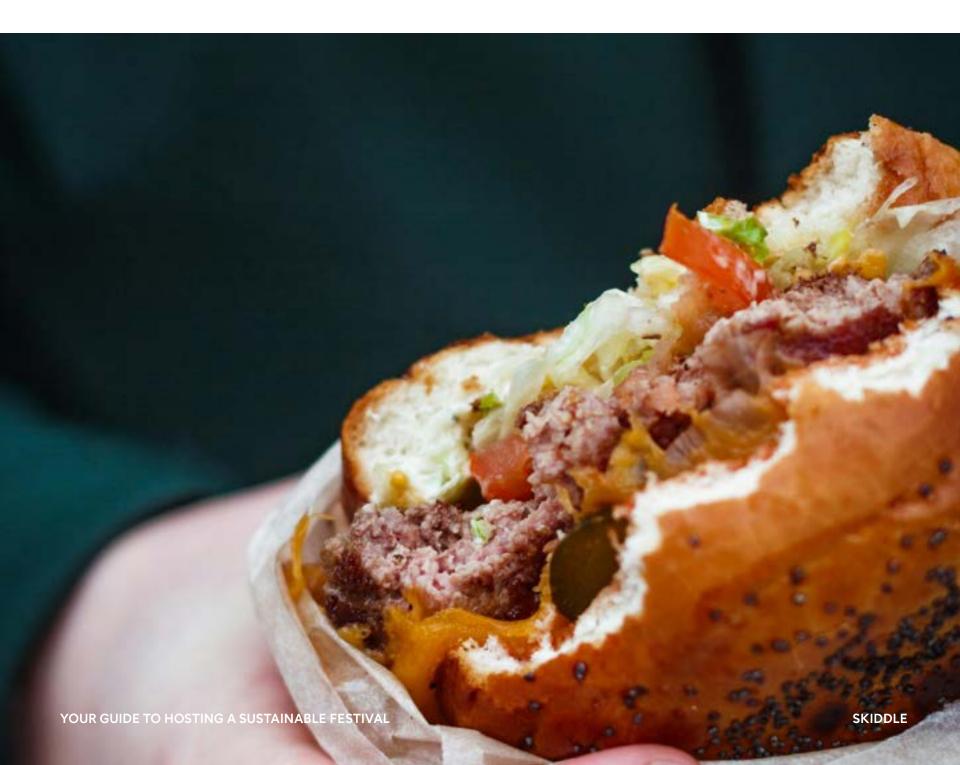
SUSTAINABLE FOOD CHOICES

Sustainability and food go hand in hand. They're both hotly debated topics, with the numbers showing that the production and transport of meat have a massive effect on the climate.

For example, a study reported by The Guardian back in 2021 showed that "The entire system of food production, such as the use of farming machinery, spraying of fertilizer and transportation of products, causes 17.3bn metric tonnes of greenhouse gases a year".

Now, we're not advising you to rip up your food strategies and serve plant-based products at this moment. However, the statistics are food for thought. See what we did there?

It might be that you try to strike a balance between meat and plant-based products, trial plant-based vendors and carry out surveys on what your customers want. This way, you can set yearly targets based on research from the experts and your attendees. Starting slow and building up is always a sound idea.



HIRING A SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR



HIRING A SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR

IT'S AN INVESTMENT IN THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF YOUR FESTIVAL.



Sustainability Coordinators are becoming more popular as society's attitudes to the environment change.

According to 'The Show Must Go On' Report, 68% of festivals now have a team member responsible for sustainability initiatives on their team.

But what exactly does a Sustainability Coordinator do?

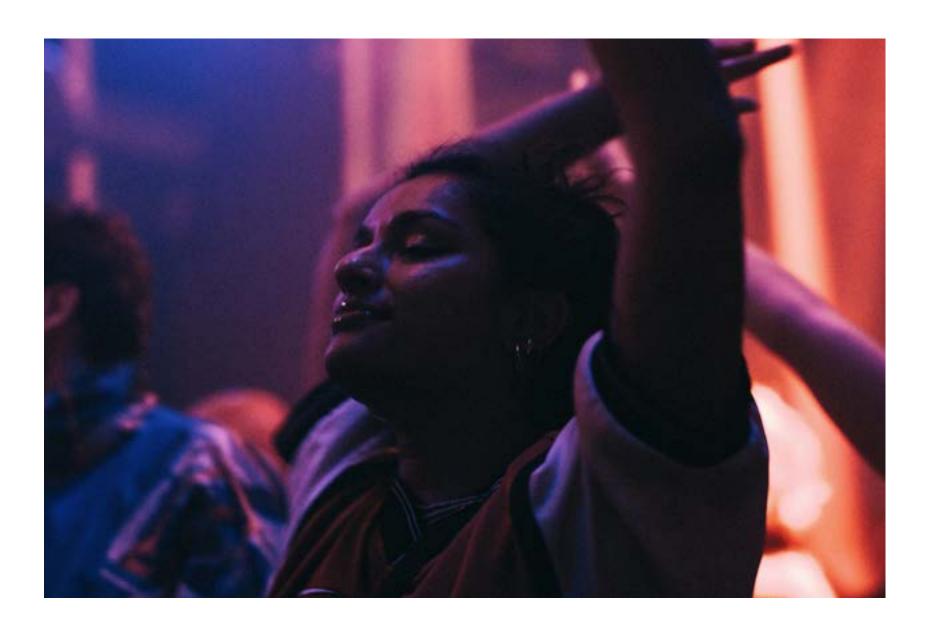
Well, they use their experience to help bring your sustainability goals to life. They'll have the knowledge and understanding of climate-friendly approaches, a helpful contacts list, research skills and the ambition to help make your festival as green as possible.

They'll bring new ideas to the table and help analyse your data so you can set targets and decrease your C02e over time.

It's an investment in the present and future of your festival.

HOW CAN YOU ENCOURAGE ATTENDES TOACT SUSTAINABLY?

HOW CAN YOU ENCOURAGE FESTIVAL ATTENDEES TO ACT SUSTAINABLY?



When you're hosting a sustainable festival, a large part of the challenge is encouraging your attendees to act sustainably.

It can be helpful to break it down into three parts: when your attendees travel to the festival, when they are at the festival, and when they leave.

Their actions in each of these stages will help you achieve your sustainability goals, contributing to an overall sustainability mission alongside the must-haves we set out in the previous section of the guide.

But you'll need incentives. In this section of the guide, we'll show you a few ways you can encourage your attendees to act sustainably, covering the before, during and after phases and sharing the incentives that will hopefully help you to engage your audience.



PARTNER WITHATRAVEL COMPANY

Travelling to a festival can affect the environment. You've got thousands of people all going to the same place, often driving in cars from multiple directions.

The Show Must Go On Report states that the travel of audiences, artists, crew and suppliers has "consistently been found to make up at least 80% of an event's carbon footprint."

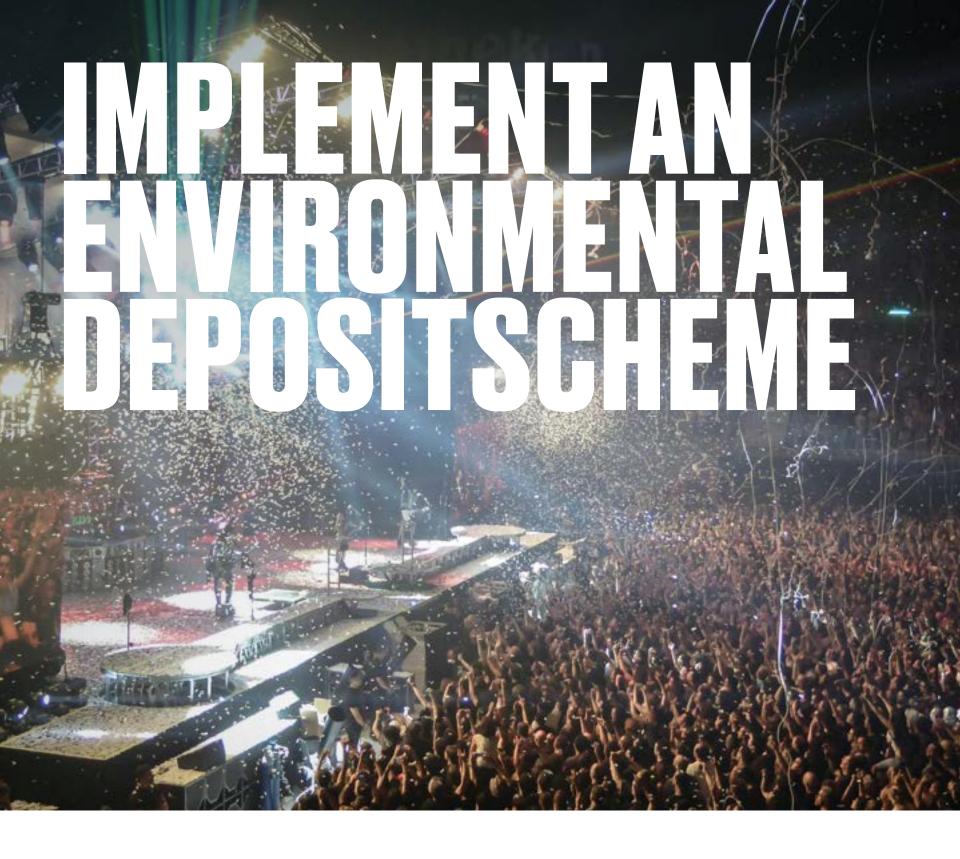
For now, we'll focus on audience travel. It's tricky to get exact data on the effects, but it's clear that by encouraging alternative ways of travel, the 80% figure would come down.

It's why a travel partner is a great place to start. Y ou could strike up a deal with a local firm or explore options with a sustainable coach company. These firms provide coaches and shuttle buses, with an emphasis on offsetting the carbon they produce.

Then, set up schemes that incentivise customers to travel via public transport. This could be an increase in coach pick-up points around the nearest city to the site, discounted coach tickets in collaboration with the coach company or coach travel included in the ticket bundle for your festival.







An Environmental Deposit Scheme is a simple idea. Attendees pay a deposit at the beginning of the festival, usually around £10 and are given a bag.

Throughout the festival, attendees fill the bag with their litter from across the weekend, handing it back to you at the end of the weekend in exchange for their deposit.

Alternatively, you can ask attendees to show you their fully packed tent or a picture of the cleared-up area they were camping in. This way, you have proof that they have packed up their tent and haven't just left it behind.

An Environmental Deposit Scheme makes sustainability a two-way street. Instead of preaching to your audience and telling them what to do, you're encouraging them to get involved with sustainability measures, setting a precedent that the festival site should be treated with care.

The fact that money is involved gives attendees an extra incentive and they can leave the festival knowing they've helped contribute to keeping the festival clean and tidy.



PROMOTE CAR SHARING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT

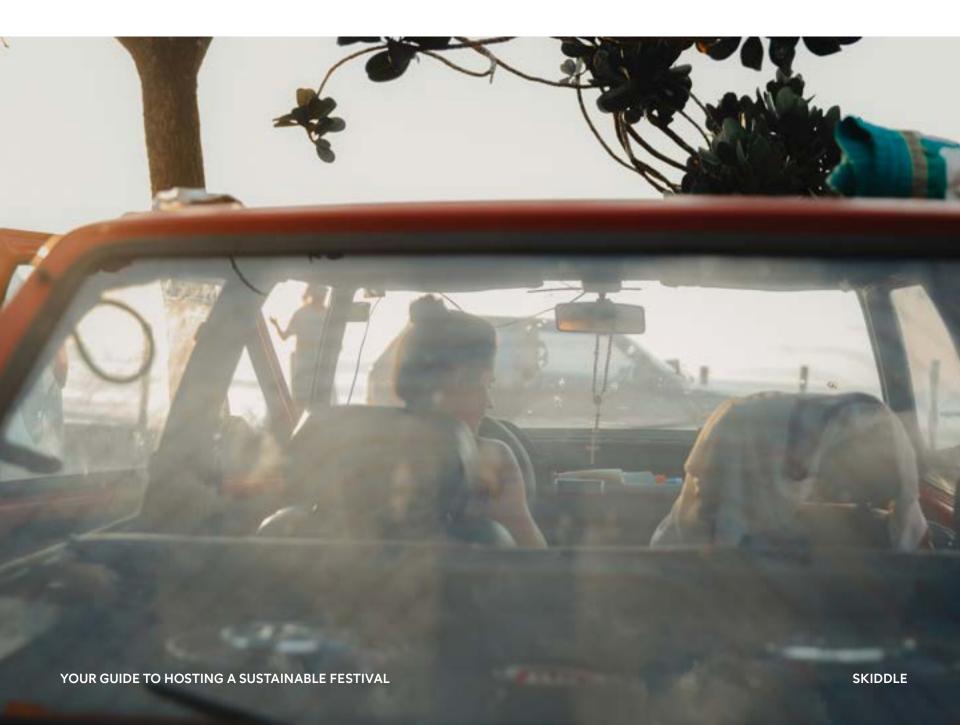
Elsewhere, promoting apps like LiftShare can help. While people will still be travelling by car to get to the festival, more people will be in those cars, lessening the overall amount on the road.

You can also encourage travel via public transport. However, there are risks involved here. Public transport can be unreliable, with cancellations and the prospect of being unable to get directly to the site.

To mitigate this, consider using shuttle buses that go from the nearest train station so that people have a clear route and can still get to the site if their train gets cancelled or is late.

Finally, consider charging more for car parking passes. Make it clear to your attendees that sustainability is one of your goals, explaining that the funds from the higher cost of parking will be used to cover the cost of your alternative travel options.

This can further incentivise people to leave the car at home for the weekend.





ENCOURAGE THE USE OF REUSABLE BOTTLES AND CUPS

We've seen a change in attitudes to plastic over the years. We're encouraged to use less plastic, with companies opting to sell water in aluminium cans rather than plastic bottles.

That's because plastic isn't recyclable, ending up in landfills and contributing to waste emissions.

You can encourage people to use less plastic at your festival, too. One way of doing this is by encouraging the use of reusable water bottles and installing water taps around the site so people can refill when they need to.

There is a lot to pack when preparing for festivals. So, it's inevitable that people may forget to bring a reusable bottle with them. To combat this, consider selling reusable bottles at a cut price, decorating them with your festival branding to make them stand out.

Elsewhere, you can use reusable cups when serving drinks. Some festivals have introduced a scheme where attendees buy a cup, use it, hand it in at the end of the night in return for a token and then hand in the token for another cup the next day.

This saves attendees from having to carry the cup around with them all the time, incentivising the use of reusable utensils and reducing the use of plastic across the festival as a whole.





SPREADING THE WORD ON SUSTAINABILITY



Social Media gives us a direct line to the world from our pockets. With that direct line, we can utilise organic content to entertain our audiences, paid media to find new attendees and content marketing to add value and information to their social feeds.

So, why not treat your sustainability efforts in the same way? After all, you're putting in the work to make sure your festival is as sustainable as possible; having more awareness around that can only be a good thing.

Plus, as we mentioned earlier, music festivals have cultural capital. By educating, informing and showing what you're doing, you can influence people to look at matters differently while connecting with people who already share your view. Ultimately, you'll be fostering change on the ground and in the digital world.

This section of the guide will show you how to create and execute a social media strategy for sustainability. We'll look at setting goals, using SMART principles, share some ideas for social media posts and expand on why we chose those ideas.





But before we get into any type of content creation, we need to talk about goals. At this stage, you'll need to sit down with your team, theorise and nail down what you want from social media.

For your main social media strategy, you'll likely be posting content that helps you raise awareness of your festival. Lineup, stage and guest announcements – all things that can help you sell tickets.

With sustainability, it's slightly different. You don't want to come across as using the cause as a ticket-selling gimmick. That would turn away the people you are trying to appeal to, leaving your actions and posts without credibility.

So, for the most part, we think it's important to focus on creating informative and entertaining content which shows the what, how and why behind your sustainability efforts.

With this approach, you can focus on increasing brand awareness and engagement. With more brand awareness comes a greater knowledge of the work you are doing, helping you to reach more people on the subject of sustainability. With more engagement, you've got a way of tracking how people are reacting to your output.

Alongside this content, you can post educational content, citing facts and figures from reputable sources, as well as being transparent about whether you've achieved your goals and how you plan to increase your targets year after year.





No, we don't mean the CBBC art show from the 90s and 2000s. But we did enjoy that very much. SMART is an analysis tool used in lots of different industries to ensure that objectives are achievable in a certain time frame. It stands for:

S - Specific

M - Measurable

A - Achievable

R - Relevant

T - Time Bound

For this section of the guide, let's use a festival looking to achieve brand awareness around their sustainability efforts. The SMART goals could look like this:

- Specific Building awareness and engagement around our sustainability efforts.
- Measurable Use engagement rate and impressions to see who is engaging with the content.
- Achievable Engagement rate and impressions close to or higher than the average.
- So, we had the idea of using brand awareness and engagement as our focus for sustainability content and we've put together an outline which helps us determine the success of our output.

- Relevant Informative and entertaining content that tells our audience, existing and new, the things we are doing for sustainability at the festival, and educational content about sustainability in general.
- Time Bound Five posts a week starting five weeks before the festival

OFFISIS GANGER OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPERTY

YOUR GUIDE TO HOSTING A SUSTAINABLE FESTIVAL

SKIDDLE

WHAT TYPE OF POSTS CAN I CREATE?

NOW, HERE'S THE EXCITING PART.



When it comes to creating content around sustainability, the world is your oyster. A quick internet search brings back an abundance of studies, guides, statistics and research that y ou can cite to create educational content.

If you're looking for more of a general approach, that will help. Just make sure to credit your sources correctly.

Then, it's a case of going deeper into what you're doing at your festival. Maybe you've introduced an Environmental Deposit Scheme and want to let your customers know about it.

If you have a travel partner, you can promote this across your socials, too. We'll cover this in more detail further down, but this is the part where you can promote your festival tickets.

Let's have a look at how to execute these ideas, shall we?

FIVE REASONS WHY

WE'RE INTRODUCING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL DEPOSIT SCHEME



Create an eight-slide carousel post. Lead with an intro with a call to action (CTA) to continue swiping through the slides, a slide to explain the scheme, five slides detailing your reasons and an outro slide.

If you have a specific visual identity for your social posts, make sure to use it here so everything looks consistent.

Carousels are an effective tool on Instagram. They allow you to go beyond the immediate nature of the app, giving you a platform to expand further on the things you are doing to promote sustainability at your festival.

They help with engagement, too. In a report carried out by Socialinsider, it was found that carousels have an average engagement rate of 1.92% per post, with the study also finding that carousels with a CTA to swipe left brought the average engagement rate to 2%.



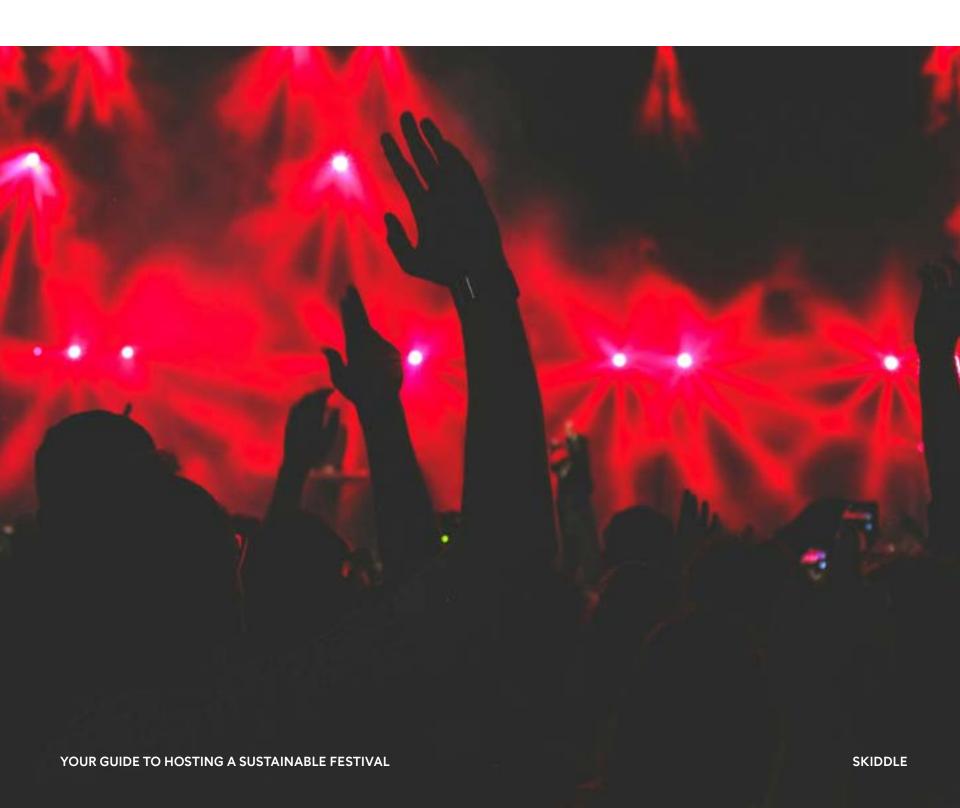
HOW YOU CAN BE SUSTAINABLE AT OUR FESTIVAL

For this post, sit down, brainstorm and create a list of ways attendees can be sustainable at your festival. You will want a lot of reasons here, so t hink of as many as you can.

Once you've drawn up a list, write some brief copy expanding on the main point, design them and post one or two every week.

With this technique, you're reinforcing your message of sustainability, showing people things they might not have thought about in the process.

Our alternative idea for this post would be to film the reasons as short reels. This way, you can get your team involved, showing the people and personalities behind the scenes.



CARVS ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT



CAR VS ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT – WHICH IS THE BEST METHOD TO GET TO OUR FESTIVAL



Audience travel has a huge effect on the climate.

Unfortunately, part of this issue is out of our hands. The world is designed for car travel, so as festival promoters, we don't have full control over the issue.

But that doesn't mean we can't do our bit. If you have a travel partner, your social media page is the place where you can promote it and encourage people to use alternative ways of travel.

For this post, create an intro slide with a CTA to keep swiping, three slides covering car travel, three slides covering alternative transport and an outro slide telling attendees where they can buy coach tickets to your festival (if you have them).

Statistics will help here. For both ways of travel, talk about the emissions and how they affect the environment. Give your audience the facts and let them make their own decision.



AFTER THE FESTIVAL

The promotion doesn't stop after the festival has happened.

In the lead-up to the festival, your focus will be on educating and informing your audience about your sustainable actions. However, afterwards, you want to show the results of that work.

The after-period also gives you the chance to publish longer-form video content, which we'll cover in more detail below.







An Environmental Deposit Scheme is a simple idea. Attendees pay a deposit at the beginning of the festival, usually around £10 and are given a bag.

Throughout the festival, attendees fill the bag with their litter from across the weekend, handing it back to you at the end of the weekend in exchange for their deposit.

Alternatively, you can ask attendees to show you their fully packed tent or a picture of the cleared-up area they were camping in. This way, you have proof that they have packed up their tent and haven't just left it behind.

An Environmental Deposit Scheme makes sustainability a two-way street. Instead of preaching to your audience and telling them what to do, you're encouraging them to get involved with sustainability measures, setting a precedent that the festival site should be treated with care.

The fact that money is involved gives attendees an extra incentive and they can leave the festival knowing they've helped contribute to keeping the festival clean and tidy.

SUSTAINA BILITY RESULTS



SKIDDLE

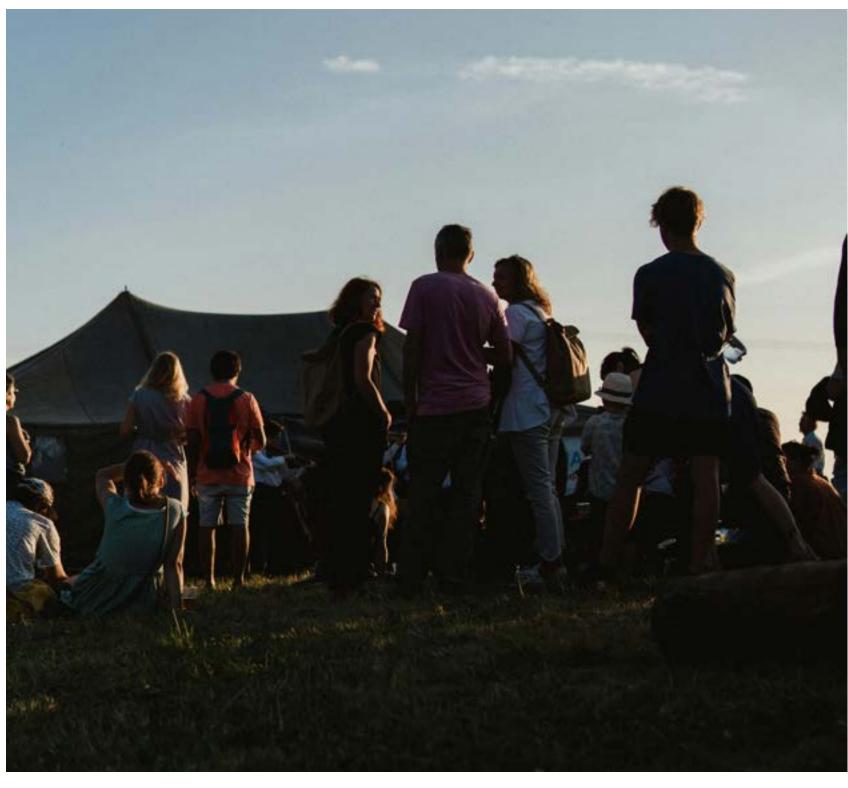
YOUR GUIDE TO HOSTING A SUSTAINABLE FESTIVAL

SUSTAINABILITY RESULTS

Earlier in the guide, we mentioned that you'd need to set goals for your C02e before the festival.

If all goes well, you'll achieve them. Once you've crunched the numbers and worked out the differences, post the results to social media.

It'll tell your audience that you're committed to sustainability practices. Once you get a few years into organising, you can show a decrease in your emissions.



OUR SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY



OURSUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY



We think this idea would work great as a brand storytelling video piece.

Essentially, brand storytelling does what it says on the tin. You're telling the story of why you're choosing to focus on improving sustainability at your festival. You can get your team involved, shoot footage, conduct interviews and go in-depth on the subject matter.

It's a chance to solidify your reputation as a festival that takes the matter seriously, helping your audience connect with your brand.





When your festival is all said and done, it's crucial to record the effects of your sustainability measures.

The data from one year will inform the choices made in the next, creating a consistent feedback loop. You'll be able to measure your emissions, see whether you have hit your targets, look at where you need to improve and implement the changes in the next year.

You can also share the findings in your marketing. Transparency is paramount here, as you want to show your attendees that you're serious about the subject, keeping your credibility intact. Skewing the numbers in a situation like this will only hurt the overall cause and your image.

In this section of the guide, we're going to look at a few tools you can use to measure the impact of your festival.



JULIE'S BICYCLE-CREATIVE CLIMATE TOOLS

Julie's Bicycle is a not-for-profit organisation which focuses on mobilising the arts and culture industry to tackle climate change and take action on the subject.

Since its launch in 2007, Julie's Bicycle has provided consultancy services to 50 organisations as part of their Creative Green programme in 2021 and 2022; over 2,000 organisations in 43 countries use their free resources and their Resource Hub contains over 250 resources to help the arts and culture industry to improve their environmental impact.

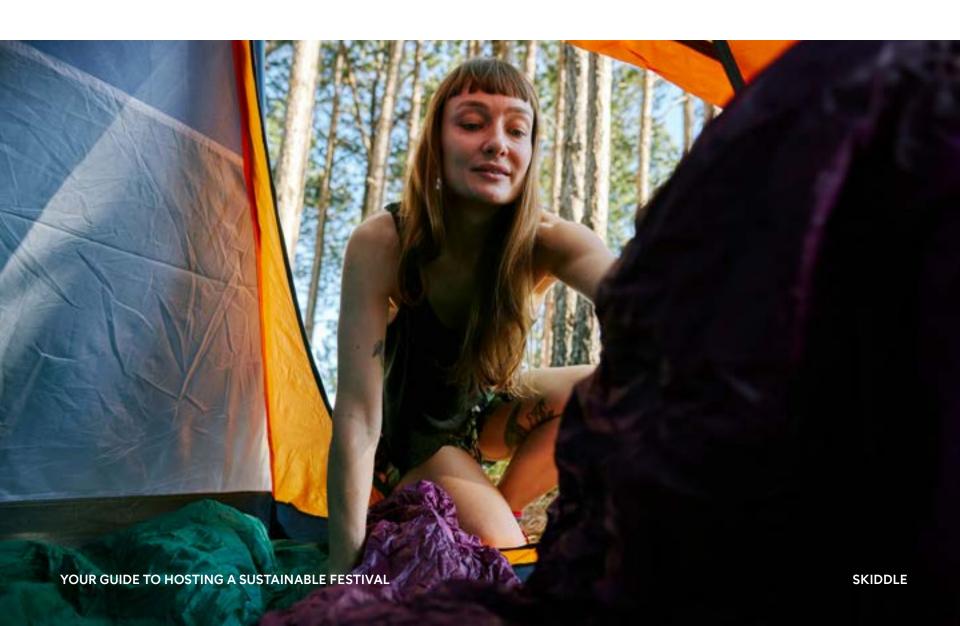
One of their resources is the Creative Climate Tools. Free to use, the CC Tools is a carbon calculator which helps you record and measure the impact of your festival.

You can also use the Beyond Carbon Survey, which lets you record your sustainability measures and help you develop practices in areas you haven't looked at previously.

As we said, the CC Tools is free to use and all you have to do is sign up for an account, enter some key details about your company and off you go.

Julie's Bicycle can also expand the CC Tools, offering a wider range of services should you be interested.

CLICK <u>HERE</u> TO VIEW THE CC TOOLS AND GET STARTED.





FUTURE FESTIVAL TOOLS

Future Festival Tools was launched in 2022. Like the CC Tools, they are free-to-use resources, allowing festival promoters to track their environmental performance.



To do this, the organisation offers a self-assessment tool which covers strategy, energy, waste, water, food and transport. If you're a new festival, you could measure the impacts in these areas, using the results to improve for the next year.

Once you've completed the self-assessment, Future Festival Tools will recommend the next steps in each area. Elsewhere, there are free E-Learning modules in the areas mentioned above; a Trainers Handbook and a series of case studies, which can help you with inspiration for your own festival.

CLICK <u>HERE</u> TO EXPLORE FUTURE FESTIVAL TOOLS.

THANK YOU

If you've reached the end of the guide, thank you. We hope the things we've written give you an idea of how to begin to shape your own sustainable festival.

FANCY READING MORE CONTENT LIKE THIS?

Every Thursday, our weekly, promoter-focused newsletter hits the inbox of over 14,000 subscribers, sharing event promotion insights and interviews with leading industry names. All you need to do is sign up for a free Skiddle account.

Click <u>HERE</u> to sign up and open the door to knockout marketing advice.



