

Sustainable Sydney

For Australia, nature and culture are inextricably linked. We are renowned for our rugged landscape –the uninhabited outback, stretches of sandy beaches and even urban green spaces. Coupled with our love of the outdoors, it comes as no surprise that sustainability is a priority for the entire country.

Sydney was ranked equal first for sustainability and the natural environment in [PWC's Cities of Opportunity](#), the global report that compared 30 cities on measures such as health, safety, transport and innovation. The city is on a mission to progress Australia's sustainability credentials and Business Events Sydney is a supporter in driving this initiative forward.

Sustainable Sydney 2030 Program

The City of Sydney's flagship program, [Sustainable Sydney 2030](#), was developed for the growth of the city following extensive consultation with residents, workers, and businesses, to understand what kind of city they wanted to be a part of. The aim of this program is to help make the city as green, global and connected as possible by 2030, and has been designed to transform the way residents and visitors live, work and play.

Below are the goals to help make Sydney as green, global and connected as possible by 2030, which are also detailed in a snapshot of the Sustainable Sydney 2030 program available [here](#).

GREEN with a minimal environmental impact, green with trees, parks, gardens and linked open spaces, with healthy ecosystems and where the air, land and waterways are clean, with highly efficient buildings and transport systems, green by example and green by reputation. Addressing climate change is the biggest challenge we have locally and globally. Improving energy efficiency and identifying alternative sources of energy, including renewable energy, continue to be a priority.

GLOBAL, as Australia's international gateway with world-renowned tourist attractions and sustained investment in cultural infrastructure and facilities. With premium spaces for business activities and high-quality jobs in the city centre and social, cultural and recreational facilities to attract and retain talent. It means embracing innovation and new technologies to stimulate creativity and collaboration.

And, CONNECTED physically by walking, cycling and high quality public transport; connected 'virtually' by world class telecommunications; connected communities through a sense of belonging, contribution, social well-being and quality; and connected to other spheres of government and to those with an interest in the city. Let's not forget greater cultural vitality from high rates of participation in artistic expression, performance, events and festivals.

Sustainable partners

As the city's leading international convention bureau, Business Events Sydney (BESyd) recognises the importance of Australia's sustainability agenda, particularly when it comes to the business events industry. Sydney's accommodation and entertainment sector is currently responsible for 47% of the city's commercial waste, 21% of the city's carbon emissions and 14% of drinking water consumption. By partnering with ecologically responsible service providers, venue owners and tourism operators alike, we are able to connect clients with a network of stakeholders that take action.

- Sydney Airport

- The latest Airport Environment Strategy includes goals to: protect nationally significant Airport Wetlands; develop a water recycling plant that saves an Olympic sized swimming pool of water every four days; and invest \$5 million into eco-friendly ground service transport.
- At large, Sydney Airport is committed to: being a good neighbour to its surrounding communities; curbing carbon emissions, ensuring the safety and security of employees and airport users; and applying sustainable practice to all planning, design, and construction it undertakes.
- In terms of credibility, Sydney Airport's sustainability approach is rated in the top 15% for its industry by the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. The Airport is considered an industry leader, with an AA rating from the MSCI ESG Indexes, and a Level 3 Airport Carbon Accreditation.
- International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney)
 - Our main conference venue, ICC Sydney, is part of a socially responsible and environmentally sensitive convention, exhibition and entertainment precinct. Using best practice benchmarks, ICC Sydney reports on KPIs to measure its energy, water and waste reduction commitments.
 - The Darling Harbour Live project, where ICC Sydney is located, is registered to the internationally recognised *Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®)* green building certification program and is set to achieve a Gold Certification. During construction, there was a target to achieve 90% material diversion of waste to landfill. Now fully constructed, ICC Sydney operates with optimal resource efficiency due to smart, design strategies that are integrated with cost efficient and renewable technologies.
- Qantas
 - Have developed 'Future Planet' initiatives that are aimed at cutting down fuel consumption through improved aircraft efficiency techniques – data analysis, reduced aircraft weight, the use of biofuel, and electric service vehicles on the ground – all to meet a reduced fuel target that has been set for 2020.
- Barangaroo
 - Sydney is home to Australia's first large-scale carbon neutral community, Barangaroo, which is testament to the importance this government places on sustainability and sustainable practices that sets the benchmark for sustainability.
- Sydney Olympic Park
 - Through Environmental Guidelines known as the 'Green Games' Sydney Olympic Park has remediated 160 hectares of contaminated land and contained nine million cubic metres of excavated waste on-site, Australia's largest land remediation project.
 - Its venues and facilities incorporate materials selection, pollution control, waste management, and energy and water conservation – including Australia's first large scale urban water recycling system that saves approximately 850 million litres of drinking water each year.
- AccorHotels
 - The Planet 21 sustainable development program; outlines the organisation's aim to tackle food and buildings across four strategic groups (employees, customers, partners and local communities).

- The group asks guests to reuse towels and the savings made on water and energy are used to fund tree planting – one tree is planted every minute using this funding.
- AccorHotels kitchens reduce food wastage and offer high-quality and local food product, some of which has been grown in privately owned gardens.
- Merlin Entertainments
 - Implement an environmental policy that looks to: develop the group's high standards on managing marine habitat and wildlife across their animal collections; review the impacts of their projects on biodiversity; plan practical and cost-effective water; waste and energy conservation and pollution control measures that are associated with the group's operations. And finally, Merlin communicates these initiatives (water reduction, energy reduction, awareness campaigns and recycling) to guests, employees, contractors and suppliers.

Sustainable Destination Partnership

There are several initiatives in place for Sydney, including the [Sustainable Destination Partnership](#) launched this year at the Opera House, of which BESydney are an associate member. The Partnership is led by the City of Sydney and holds organisations accountable for using and promoting environmental ratings, improving waste management, cost-effective retrofits, on-site solar or procuring renewable energy, and – where possible – connecting to recycled water.

In this Partnership, Sydney's leading hotels, event centres, cultural institutions and tourism bodies are working together to improve environmental performance and build Sydney's reputation as a leading sustainable destination.

Sustainability training for business

There are a range of sustainability training courses on offer for Sydney businesses. The NSW Government and City of Sydney have developed programs that equip businesses, both small and large, with the knowledge and skills required to improve an organisation's energy efficiency, environmental performance and operational costs.

Sustainability Advantage NSW program

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/sustainabilityadvantage/index.htm>

Waste Wise Events

<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/recycling-and-reuse/business-government-recycling/waste-wise-events>

Sustainable Destination Partnership

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/business/business-support/greening-your-business/sustainable-destination-partnership>

Smart Green Business Program

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/business/business-support/greening-your-business/smart-green-business>

City Switch Green Office

<http://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/business/business-support/greening-your-business/cityswitch-green-office>

Sustainable event guideline

The benefits of planning a sustainable event include:

- Organising sustainable events involves conserving energy, reducing waste, using local products
- Applying the following sustainability approach can result in financial savings, improved reputation for your organisation, improved delegate experience, and stronger relationships with the local community.
- By planning an event, you are raising awareness and inspiring change

Food and water

- *Use local producers with low impact menus instead of services that import their supplies*
- *Encourage use of seasonal produce and fair-trade/eco-friendly labelled products*

Transport

- *Encourage delegates to use public transport, walk or cycle to the event*
- *Provide delegates with maps that include public transport routes and options*

Energy and waste

- *Calculate the carbon and offset for the event and partner with companies that offer carbon offset programs*
- *Encourage food and beverage services to recycle, and organise compost bins*
- *Use recyclable materials for merchandise and goodie bags*
- *Minimise the use of plastic bottles, instead consider glass bottles or water stations*

Accommodation and venues

- *Ensure venue operators use environmental performance ratings to benchmark and identify opportunities for improvement; and publicly report their ratings*

Communication and evaluation

- *Ahead of the event – make your commitment to sustainability known to during the promotion of your event. Advise participants, suppliers and partners of your sustainability goals.*
- *Distribute collateral digitally where possible*
- *Loan or hire equipment, instead of buying inefficient equipment for single use*
- *During the event – take note of participant’s experience to report on afterward*
- *Provide delegates with the chance to engage in the event’s sustainability goals*

Community engagement

- *Contract local suppliers*
- *Offer delegates the opportunity to engage in community activities, including nature-based experiences*
- *Provide opportunities for delegates to contribute to local charities*

Sydney Transport

Sydney promotes and delivers a variety of sustainable transport options, both public and active, providing visitors with more choice while reducing our impact on the environment. Starting on arrival, Sydney Airport is already served by two railway stations that offer 13-minute trips to the city, along with a bus service and cycling facilities.

Sydney is extremely accessible, offering safe [paths](#) for visitors who are wanting to explore the city by foot, as well as [cycle way guides](#) and [cycleway finders](#) for tourists wanting to commute to and from destinations by bike. Access to the Sydney transport network – which includes trains, busses, ferries and the light rail – is simple. The [Opal Card](#), a reusable and reloadable smartcard, allows travellers to use all public transport services both within and outside of Sydney's CBD.

Over the last seven years the NSW Government has been focused not only on reducing the backlog of current infrastructure, but also on future investment in projects that will improve access between economic hubs and major cities. As such, plans like 'Metropolitan NSW', have been developed in an effort to support population growth by providing residents of Sydney's three major areas (Eastern Harbour, Central River City and Western Parkland) with 30-minute access to jobs and services, including those in the Harbour CBD. In a similar effort, the Government's 'Regional NSW' will link freight and service routes to metropolitan markets and suppliers to improve the region's productivity and business operations.

Within the CBD itself, projects are underway to enhance walking and cycling links that will reduce traffic congestion while improving the ease of business within and around Sydney's Harbour. One such example is the transformation of George Street into a mainly pedestrianised area, bringing more eateries and shopfronts to the city. Also being developed is the 'Innovation Corridor', which connects the city's Bay precincts with start-up hubs in Pyrmont and Ultimo, and with the health and education institutes that are dotted around inner-Sydney. The latter project aims to increase the city's flow of ideas as well as Sydney's international competitiveness.

Low Carbon Sydney

Sydney is home to national research and innovation hub the CRC for Low Carbon Living (CRCLCL). The organisation combines Australian researchers with experts in property, planning, engineering and policy to enable the development of low carbon products and services – and inherently reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the urban environment.

Scientists involved in this initiative are able to analyse and explain some of the more severe climatic phenomena in the built environment; show cutting edge solutions to mitigate the problems; propose and exhibit successful adaptation mechanisms for the urban and rural environment; demonstrate effective (and validated in real practice) policies to improve sustainability in the built environment; increase urban resilience; fight energy poverty; provide appropriate shelter and protection for the low income population; and improve the living conditions for the vulnerable population.

Beyond this, the NSW Government – through the UrbanGrowth NSW project - has committed to being carbon neutral, water positive and generate zero waste across its project portfolio by 2028; create world class liveable communities; and enable 60-80,000 direct jobs focused on education, health and knowledge intensive sectors.

Participation in the Global sustainability Index

Sydney is proud to be one of the first cities in the world and the first in Australia to join the [Global Destination Sustainability Index](#) (GDS-Index). The index aims to promote the sustainable growth of international meeting destinations, highlighting best practices and responsible business tourism. The GDS-Index white paper was launched at IMEX on 15 May 2017 showcasing Business Events Sydney as a leader in sustainability. The white paper presented some of Business Events Sydney's green initiatives focused at promoting sustainability.

In the company of contributing environmental leaders such as Copenhagen, Zurich, Stockholm and Stuttgart, the index looks to bring cities together to benchmark and improve the social and environmental performance of their city and its business events industry.

As the organisation responsible for securing international events for Sydney, we believe Sydney should take a lead in smart sustainable development. By benchmarking the city's environmental and social performance we can better understand our strengths and challenges, and develop strategies for improvement that will inevitably create value for our clients.

Launched by the International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) and global event agency MCI Group, the Index is unique in that it focuses on the ability of the destination and its supplier base to support corporate, association and government planners to organise a sustainable event. It helps destinations to engage clients around sustainability, align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and drive the adoption, promotion and recognition of sustainable practices in their city.

For the research, BESydney partnered with several of the State's stakeholders to gain a more informed overview of Sydney's achievements and current plans, including the City of Sydney, Tourism Accommodation Australia and the Restaurant & Catering Industry Association.