



## 1. How to Plan a Sustainable Event

Planning a sustainable event means you plan your event with a set goal to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills by reducing, reusing, and recycling where possible. Clever event planners can even plan zero-waste events by purchasing catering with compostable wrappings, serving food in bulk and avoiding individually-wrapped food items, and refusing any single-use plastics from vendors.

Having clear signs posted about which waste goes where, and having enough waste stations (we recommend one waste station for every 50 attendees) is key. You can make a [Facilities Service Request](#) (one week in advance) to have extra bins for compost, recycling, and trash (if needed). There is signage available on the [Green Labs Events website](#) for things like recycling and compost. Caltech Green Labs has made a [Sustainable Event Vendor Agreement form](#), which can be used to ensure vendors are respectful of Caltech's sustainability requirements and are responsible for any waste they produce while on campus. This agreement also asks vendors to use recyclable materials at the event, and to not bring items such as single-use plastic bags or non-recyclable marketing items like beach balls, stress balls, or bracelets.

Consider using [Caltech Dining Services](#), which offers a [zero-waste service](#) if you add this to your [Facilities Service Request](#) (at least one week in advance to guarantee availability). This means CDS will bring washable plates, utensils, and cups, and will provide meals in washable containers. Drinks are provided in carboys for easy dispersal.

For smaller events, lab members can bring their own reusable plates, cups, or utensils, or the event planner can provide them from one of the shared kitchens. As an alternative, you can purchase eco-friendly, compostable plates and utensils such as [these](#), [these](#), or [these](#), and compostable cups such as [these](#) or [these](#). You can also purchase drinks in recyclable cans or recyclable CRV plastic bottles, which are readily recyclable on campus.

A few other good resources for eco-friendly events include [dish soap](#), [sponges](#), [scrubbers](#), [napkins](#), [beeswax wrap](#) or [bags](#) for leftovers, and [disposable plates](#). And, of course, we can't forget the most necessary of all products: coffee! A few good eco-friendly options for this ever-necessary, and life-giving substance include coffee [stir sticks](#), [compostable K cups](#) and other [reusable capsules](#) or [reusable k-cup](#) coffee pods with [disposable filters](#). Lastly, but certainly not least, eco-conscious and/or ethically-sourced [coffee coffee coffee coffee](#).