



Is That Meeting Space Really Green?

A Meeting Planners' Guide to Evaluating Green Meeting Venues

As a meeting planner, you have the power to drive change in the hospitality sector.

By inquiring about a venue's sustainability practices, you can, over time, help make these practices the norm.



Sample RFP Language

The following questions pertain to key sustainability actions that can be asked of hotels, convention centers, and restaurants. They go beyond the typical questions concerning towel reuse programs and recycling. EPA suggests including the following language in your RFP.

Please respond to the following questions about the venue. Special consideration will be given to those facilities for which the greatest number of affirmative responses is provided.

1. **Does the venue track the following via ENERGY STAR® Portfolio Manager® or another tracking tool?**
 - Energy use Yes | No
 - Water use Yes | No
 - Waste generation Yes | No
 - Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Yes | No
2. **If a hotel, what is the 1-100 ENERGY STAR Score of the hotel?** _____
3. **Is the venue or its parent company an ENERGY STAR Partner?** Yes | No
4. **Does the venue require the purchase of the following:**
 - ENERGY STAR certified products Yes | No
 - WaterSense®-labeled products Yes | No
 - Safer Choice-certified products Yes | No
5. **Does the venue hold the following certifications?**
 - ENERGY STAR® (Hotels only) Yes | No
 - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Yes | No
 - Green Globes® (Hotel only) Yes | No
 - Green Key (Hotels only) Yes | No
 - BREEAM® Yes | No
 - TripAdvisor® GreenLeaders (Hotel only) Yes | No
 - Other [Name: _____] Yes | No

ENERGY STAR Identifies Venues Committed to Energy Efficiency



The Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR® program promotes a commitment to energy management and is recognized by more than 90% of U.S. households. The program provides free tools, training, and technical support to commercial building owners and operators—including meeting venues—to help drive energy efficiency and reduce costs and greenhouse gas emissions. Top-performing hotels can earn ENERGY STAR certification, which identifies them as among the most energy-efficient hotels in the country.

Good energy management can enhance the comfort and productivity of guests at your events. It can also translate into cost savings passed on to you, because energy-efficient buildings cost less to run. The information contained in this document equips you to ask the right questions when deciding where to give your business. You can reward venues that are serious about sustainable energy and water management.

References

- **ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager®:** The industry-standard benchmarking tool for U.S. commercial buildings. www.energystar.gov/portfoliomanager
- **1 – 100 ENERGY STAR Score:** Rates the energy efficiency of buildings compared to their peers nationwide. www.energystar.gov/ENERGYSTARscore
- **ENERGY STAR Certification for Buildings:** Available to hotels that perform in the top 25% of hotels nationwide in terms of energy performance. www.energystar.gov/buildingcertification
- **ENERGY STAR Partnership:** Commit to energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. www.energystar.gov/joinbuildings
- **List of ENERGY STAR Commercial Buildings Partners:** www.energystar.gov/partner_resources/partner_list/ci_partner_list
- **Registry of ENERGY STAR certified buildings:** www.energystar.gov/buildinglocator
- **ENERGY STAR certified products:** www.energystar.gov/products
- **EPA Safer Choice certified cleaning products:** www.epa.gov/saferchoice/products
- **EPA WaterSense certified products:** www.epa.gov/watersense/watersense-products
- **Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) building lifecycle certification:** www.usgbc.org/leed
- **Green Globes® Certification:** Offers green building guidance, assessment, and certification. www.greenglobes.com
- **Green Key:** Provides resources and ratings for lodging and meetings industries. www.greenkeyglobal.com
- **BREEAM®:** Offers green building assessment, resources, and certification. www.bregroup.com/products/breeam/breeam-usa/
- **TripAdvisor® GreenPartner or GreenLeader:** Recognize a suite of sustainable practices. www.tripadvisor.com/GreenLeaders
- **EPA Clean Air in Buildings Challenge Checklist:** https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-03/508-cleanairbuildings_factsheet_v5_508.pdf