

Sustainability in Action Spotlight

Convocation

Since 2010, the Convocation team at Trent University has worked to reduce the environmental impact of this key event, reflecting the sustainability principles students have embraced during their time here. This focus on green living is a natural way to celebrate their achievements and inspire them to carry these values into their future careers. In collaboration with the Sustainability Office, the team continues to explore innovative ways to integrate sustainability into every aspect of the ceremonies.

Operationalizing Sustainability

- Bottled Water-Free Ceremonies: Starting in 2010, Convocation eliminated bottled water, reducing waste and showcasing Trent's leadership in sustainability.
- Minimal Waste Efforts: In 2023, Convocation introduced a completely digital program and implemented minimal waste lunches to further decrease environmental impact.
- Graduation Green Pledge: Since its inception in the early 2000s, this pledge has encouraged graduates to commit to sustainable practices. In 2023, over 50% of graduating students participated, demonstrating their dedication to environmental stewardship.
- Continuous Improvement: Convocation works closely with the Sustainability Office to adopt best practices and explore new ways to enhance the event's sustainability each year.



Trent Green

The Convocation team, in collaboration with the Sustainability Office, presented sustainable event practices to the North American Association of Convocation Officers (NAACO). This effort showcases leadership in fostering broader change and inspiring other institutions to adopt sustainable practices in their own convocation ceremonies and events.

Actionable Insights

Convocation's efforts show how tradition and sustainability can work together. Here are key ideas to inspire your team:

- Eliminate Single-Use Plastics: Follow Convocation's lead in reducing waste by eliminating bottled water or other single-use items in your events or operations.
- Engage Your Audience: Consider creative ways to involve your stakeholders, like the Graduation Green Pledge, to build awareness and commitment to sustainability.
- Embrace Digital Solutions: Transitioning to digital materials can significantly reduce waste and showcase your unit's innovation.
- Leverage Partnerships: Collaborate with the Sustainability Office or other experts to continuously improve and adopt best practices.
- Foster Knowledge Sharing: Build networks and share best practices, like the Convocation team's presentation to NAACO, to inspire sustainable actions across institutions.

Trent Sustainability Office

