

EXPLANATION: This framework is an outline of what the museum might consider for an organizational sustainability plan. It is based on a framework developed for cultural institutions. It lists 8 possible Goal areas and for each contains a brief italicized note on ideas to consider. The list of Possible Discovery Museum objectives is my list intended to promote discussion rather than being definitive and exhaustive.

Framework of Potential Discovery Museum Sustainability Plan

Introduction

Sustainability definition

Areas of focus

**Operations
Education
Advocacy**

Goals

1. Commit to Increase Use of Renewable Power

Increasing your percentage of renewable energy sources is a key component of reducing overall GHG emissions. Installing onsite renewable generation, like solar panels, is a good long-term strategy if possible. But renewable energy can also be procured through Renewable Energy Credits, renewable power purchasing agreements (PPAs), and in some locations from retail electricity providers or local utilities that offers a high percentage of renewable power. Also consider becoming an EPA Green Power Partner.

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) 100% of electricity from solar power
- b) Convert existing natural gas and oil to solar electric

2. Commit to Understand and Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Understanding your GHG emissions is the first step to making measurable reductions in those emissions. The EPA provides an overview report and CoolClimate Network provides a simple tool for “low emitters” to better understand sources of emissions, as well as how to use that information to set reduction targets. For this commitment, it is as simple as committing to completing a greenhouse gas inventory for your business or organization, but in the future your inventory can be used to make a commitment to set a specific goal.

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) Complete an inventory/audit of museum GHG
- b) Set reduction targets

3. Commit to Reducing Materials Consumption and Waste

There are many ways to reduce the climate impact of packaging including reducing materials (i.e., “source reduction”); replacing virgin materials with post-consumer recycled content; replacing traditional plastics made from fossil fuels with biopolymers; re-designing packaging to be more compact and therefore efficient for transport and storage; using biodegradable packing materials; and recycling at end of the packaging’s life to name just a few practices. Institutions can significantly reduce the impact of materials use through life-cycle planning, choosing low-impact materials, and developing convenient, clear, waste-management approaches. Begin by conducting materials or waste audits for regular activities such as exhibit construction, special events, office operations, food service areas, and gift shops. Then, by piloting new practices in specific departments or single events or time periods, you can develop tools and procedures that significantly reduce waste through simple practices.

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) Review internal operations and adopt practices that eliminate waste materials e.g., use reusable glasses, etc.
- b) Eliminate single use water bottles on site
- c) Introduce low waste products in vending machine and museum store
- d) Reduce waste products generated by programs

4. Commit to Reducing the impact of Transportation

Organizations making a commitment to reduce the climate impact of transportation should consider practices such as measuring transportation greenhouse gas emissions and reducing transit- and travel-related greenhouse gas emissions. Businesses can develop a green transportation action plan to map the movement of goods to market and identify opportunities to increase efficiency. Organizations can buy hybrid and electric vehicles within their own fleet and can reduce the footprint of their workforce through incentivizing public transportation, installing EV charging stations, promoting telework, and locating near transit centers.

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) EVs for TSW teachers.
- b) Promote public transportation/walking/biking access to the museum
- c) Have Speaker Series available online

5. Commit to Reduction in water usage

By committing to adapt to the impacts of a changing climate, companies and institutions can secure their operations and supply chains and conserve natural resources that are stressed due to climate change. While there is much a business can do within their community, primary among these options is reducing water usage. Organizations can commit to increase their own water security through a range of actions, including installing water-saving devices, capturing rainwater for onsite uses, and recycling grey water. Or just commit to get engaged with your community in resilience planning.

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) Inventory water usage and develop reduction goals
- b) Capture storm water and redirect it to groundwater recharge

6. Be publicly committed to sustainability

In adopting a leadership role as an environmentally responsible cultural institution, and institution would commit to pursuing some or all of the following:

- Measure and make public its environmental impacts; set goals for continuous improvement; and evaluate progress and effectiveness.

- Develop a plan and timeframe for becoming climate neutral, and eventually climate positive.
- Demonstrate leadership by exceeding existing environmental codes, regulations, and professional standards as appropriate, e.g. setting energy efficiency goals that would be higher than what existing regulations require.
- Review investments and set a timeframe for investing in a socially responsible portfolio that excludes fossil fuel companies.
- Identify risks resulting from climate change, and take steps to anticipate and mitigate risks and damage for itself and, in collaboration, on behalf of the community.

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) Establish and report public on goals
- b) Use internal measures to demonstrate possible actions

7. Commit to Education and Communication

Commit to offering education opportunities that are designed for staff, adults, and children, and feature information on clean energy, stewardship, individual/household climate actions, climate advocacy, and any other applicable subjects. The importance of building environmental literacy in changing habits and perceptions is profound, and organizations and institutions trusted to convene the community are among the most impactful educators.

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) Developed an enhanced nature/environmental education program that gets in gets in nature, better connected to nature, and taking action on behalf of the environment
- b) Promote thru partnership other similar programs
- c) Foster dialogue and discussion through the Speaker Series

8. Integrate Climate Change into Portfolio Analyses and Decision-Making

Commit to integrate climate change-related risks and opportunities in portfolio analysis and decision-making processes through one or more of the following:

- Analyzing and assessing climate change-related risks and opportunities (e.g. through carbon footprint/scenario analysis)
- Investing in low carbon investment funds and other products (e.g. low carbon indices, climate-aligned bonds).

Possible Discovery Museum Objectives:

- a) Invest the endowment in environmentally responsible investments