



Creating a Sustainability Plan for an Anime and Roleplaying Event

Case: Tracon 2026

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis was made for Tracon, a Tampere-based roleplaying and anime convention. Through the past 20-30 years Finnish con scene has grown and several large events gathering thousands of participants are held each year. As the conventions have grown, so has their need for sustainable practices. According to websites of three of the largest conventions Tracon, Ropecon and Desucon, a sustainability plan has not yet been made for a non-profit convention on this field. The author strives to make this a benchmark for future conventions.

An ESG approach was used in creating the sustainability plan. As an intercultural event, the ESG was extended to include also Finnish Ministry of Education OPH's definition of cultural sustainability.

The actual strategy was compiled using ESG+Cultural sustainability practices deemed most relevant by the thesis author, some of which are already being applied but were included as critical parts of the strategy. The goals were assessed and developed using the thesis author's expertise gained during environmental engineering studies and working with Tracon for several years. Research was also done on the topic of organisational responsibility using theses of similar topics.

The future research needs to implement and repeat the sustainability strategy in practical use to assess its adaptability. There also needs to be more research

done on sustainability in Finnish not-for-profit conventions, as most current research is only done on for-profit events.

Key words: sustainability, Tracon, conventions, event management, sustainability strategy

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ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

TAMK	Tampere University of Applied Sciences
cr	credit
con	short for convention
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance sustainability
cosplay	short for “costume play”, the practice of dressing up as a character from e.g. a book, film or video game
coniitti	common term used for an event organizer in Finnish convention scene
conitea	a common term used for the event organizing board in Finnish convention scene

1 INTRODUCTION

Finnish convention scene has grown in the past two decades a lot, with several events gathering thousands of visitors each year. Finnish anime and roleplaying convention scene is somewhat unique because even many of the major events such as Desucon, Kotae Expo and Ropecon are fully volunteer run, with even the organizers working unpaid. There are also some commercial events being held during the year, such as Arctic Lights Comic Con in Helsinki.

So far, the conventions have not yet made or published a concrete sustainability strategy, even though the growing number of visitors mean an impact on environmental, social and other sustainability matters. As one of the biggest events in the anime convention genre and due to its unique venues of both Tampere Hall and Sorsapuisto park area bringing up different needs, Tracon wants to become a forerunner in sustainability matters.

The sustainability plan is to be used by event organisers, also called “conitea” further on in this thesis, and it is meant to help organisers of different parts of the event take into account the impact on sustainability matters. The plan includes environmental, social, governance and cultural aspects of sustainability. As Tracon is run by a non-profit organisation, Tracon ry, the plan does not focus on economical side of sustainability, such as gaining competitive advantage over other similar events. The Finnish non-profit-run conventions also tend to do more cooperation rather than compete over customers.

The sustainability strategy was created using the factors of ESG, plus Finnish Ministry of Education’s definition of Cultural sustainability. These factors were chosen because they cover a wide set of sustainability matters and can be implemented for a non-profit organisation, as well as a for-profit organisation.

This bachelor’s thesis was made by Kristiina Kuusela, an environmental engineering student in TAMK University of Applied Sciences and an active event organizer in Finnish convention scene. Kuusela has been a member of Tracon or-

ganization board conitea for three years, mainly in charge of info desk operations during the convention. The thesis is worth 15 credits and is part of the 240 cr degree.

2 METHODS

2.1 Survey

The thesis gathered information via a survey conducted by the thesis author. The respondents of this survey were members of Tracon 2025 conitea. The survey was anonymous and was made in Finnish, as the conitea members are all Finnish speakers. The survey was open for responses during December 2025 and there were eight respondents, representing roughly 10% of Tracon 2025 conitea. See Appendix A for the survey questions in Finnish.

2.2 Additional interviews

The thesis also used a lot of material from an interview with Kyuu Eturautti, a long-time active member of Finnish con scene. The interview was conducted via Google Meets. Comments on the thesis were also received from one of the 2026 main organisers Karo Leikomaa. They have both given permission to be named in this thesis.

2.3 Literature

The references for this thesis were mainly Tracon 2025 website, which offered most of the information about the event and the organization, news articles and other theses and scientific articles related to sustainability in event production. The thesis also used a literature database conducted by the thesis author during a previous practical training. Methods to search for relevant literature were Theseus.fi, Google and Andor. The citations were made using Zotero. No generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT) were used in the making of this thesis.

2.4 Other methods

Finally, a lot of information has been gained by the thesis author by personally working with the event since 2023, as a head of info desk operations and since 2026 as a team leader in the customer service team.

The sustainability strategy was partially inspired by the Helsinki Biennial 2025 responsibility plan and from the thesis author's interests of both sustainability matters and organising events. (HAM Helsinki Art Museum, n.d.)

The sustainability strategy has not yet been tested as of February 2026, as the organising board "conitea" has not fully started its work yet. However, comments were asked based on the unfinished version of the thesis from Tracon 2026 main organisers Tiina Uusi-Rasi, Teemu Koho and Karo Leikomaa. The sustainability strategy will be introduced to the conitea during Spring 2026 workshop on March 7th, 2026.

3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Definition of ESG and Sustainability

ESG stands for Environmental, Social and Governance and it is one of the ways to observe and apply sustainable practices in organizations. Environmental sustainability observes how organization impacts the planet through their emissions, resource use, waste management and pollution. Social sustainability observes how the organization handles its human resources and their relationships with stakeholders and customers. Governance sustainability observes the organization's leadership through aspects such as transparency and business ethics. (Byrne, n.d.) Sustainable development can be extended to include also cultural sustainability, along with ESG. (OPH, n.d.)

3.1.1 Environmental Sustainability

The key factors about environmental sustainability of ESG includes climate change, resource depletion and pollution in air, water and land (Byrne, n.d.). Some other factors include the use of natural resources, energy efficiency and usage, waste management, carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions and water use (University of the Built Environment, 2024).

For a convention, environmental sustainability can mean including many of these factors in their sustainability strategy, particularly energy usage, waste management and water use. In some cases, especially for outdoor events, noise pollution is also a factor that should be considered. It is crucial to take note of environmental impacts and organizations should have a clear goal for reducing energy consumption and overconsumption of resources. (Jyrälä, 2023)

3.1.2 Social Sustainability

Social sustainability factors include workplace safety and welfare, human rights, diversity and supply chain relationships (University of the Built Environment, 2024). For a convention, social factors are important especially due to the number of people working in the event, most of whom are volunteer workers.

According to research, by providing tools and empowerment, employees will enforce sustainability transformations (Süßbauer et al., 2019).

3.1.3 Governmental Sustainability

Sustainable governance factors include board composition and diversity, and corporate ethics (University of the Built Environment, 2024). In Tracon, this would be the conitea members and the members of Tracon ry board. Since all the conitea members are also volunteers, it is crucial to figure out ways to have them commit to sustainable practices and incentivise them to continue developing sustainability goals.

3.1.4 Cultural Sustainability

Culture can be described as a framework of human existence, identity, and deep meaningful connections. (Stewart, 2024) According to the Finnish Ministry of Education, cultural sustainability is one of the four dimensions of sustainable development, which guarantees the development and preserves cultures from one generation to another. The goal of cultural sustainability is preserving cultural heritage and enhancing the co-existence of different cultures. (OPH, n.d.)

Multiculturality is focused on gaining knowledge and learning about cultures and accepting other cultures, while interculturality focuses on understanding, respect and developing communication and relationships between groups of different cultural backgrounds. (OPH, n.d.) As a roleplaying and anime convention, Tracon has a great opportunity to have people from different cultural backgrounds join together in common interests.

3.2 ESG in Event Production

An event is time and space specific, has been planned and it has a goal. An event can be organised by a business or a not-for-profit organisation, but when it brings in revenue it starts to be called event industry. (Jyrälä, 2023) Regardless of the organiser, a convention is still being produced in a similar manner, with a team of organisers in charge of certain parts of the production and volunteers or paid workers hired to run the event's functions.

According to research done for this thesis, there is not much existing data of how ESG has been used in a volunteer-run event production. ESG is mainly used in corporates and used for guidance for investors. However, ESG could still be used as a framework in this case as Tracon is a large-scale event, with environmental and social impact. The ESG framework is in this case used mainly for categorizing different sustainability matters involving event production.

Another challenge is in sustainable governance, as Tracon does not have a corporate structure and incentives are not handed out to conitea members or Tracon ry board members, as they all are volunteers. Therefore, with sustainable governance the sustainability strategy has been modified to fit the event's needs and has limited use in the strategy.

4 TRACON AND THE CON SCENE IN FINLAND

Finland has a strong culture of volunteerism and volunteer-run conventions especially among the roleplaying, sci-fi and anime enthusiasts. Tracon, which is an abbreviation for Tampere Roleplaying and Anime Convention, is one of the oldest and most visited events in Finnish con scene. Tracon 2025 was the 20th Tracon event held since the early 2000's. The customers need to buy a ticket for the main convention held in Tampere Hall and to access programs and coat and luggage storage, but the convention has also grown to include parts of Sor-sapuisto park next to Tampere Hall, which can be accessed without a ticket. The convention is mainly aimed for visitors from their early teens to adults, but it is visited by people of all ages. (Kähkönen, 2017; Tracon, n.d.-d)

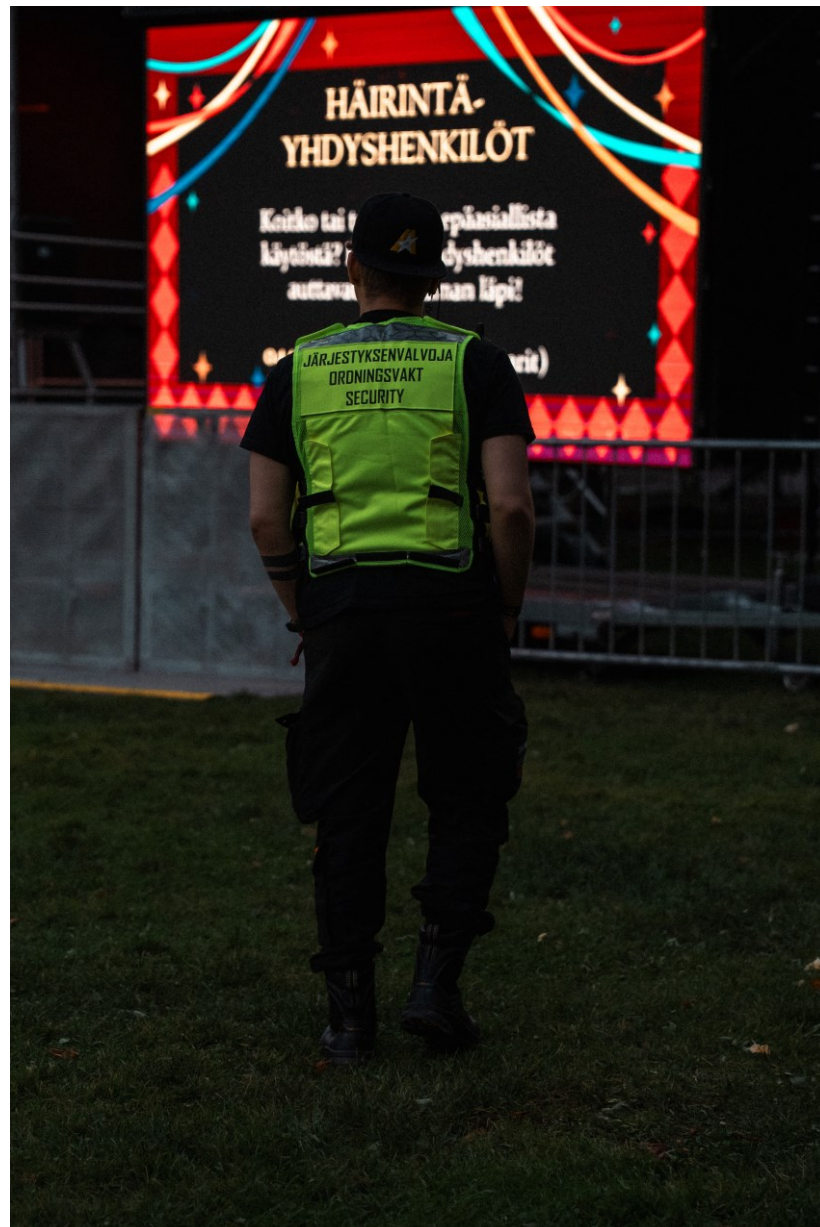


Figure 1: Even security is mainly handled by volunteer workers in Finnish anime and roleplaying conventions. Photographer: Kelmiphotography

Starting from Tracon 2026, the organization structure has been updated and has been divided into teams with assigned team leaders. This new structure gives an opportunity for team leaders to take more charge in sustainability issues and help other conitea members to apply sustainable practices into their part of organization.

Many, if not most, of the Finnish anime and roleplaying conventions are completely volunteer-run events, usually organised by non-profit organisations (e.g., Tracon, Desucon and Ropecon). There have been for-profit conventions run by

companies, such as Animecon 2018 (Suomen con-tapahtumat Oy), Heroes: Comic Con Finland (Easyfairs) and Arctic Lights Comic Con (Suomen Messut Oyj). (Heroes Comic Con Finland, 2026; Levänen, 2019; Messukeskus, n.d.)

Traditionally, organisers and guests of Finnish volunteer-run conventions have been sceptical towards for-profit conventions. Some of the critique towards e.g. Heroes: Comic Con 2025 included the use of AI art or unlicensed products sold on Artist Alley. Meanwhile, Tracon has made clear rules against AI art and unlicensed products being sold in the convention's Artist Alley and vendor hall. (Laine, 2025)

4.1 Survey results

For this thesis, a survey was conducted (Appendix A). The respondents were members of Tracon 2025 conitea and in total there were 8 respondents. The survey was conducted anonymously, with no identifying information collected. None of the questions were mandatory. The survey was conducted in Finnish, and the questions have been translated to English by the thesis author.

Question 1. was a free text question about what sustainable development in Tracon means to you. Here are the answers translated from Finnish to English by thesis author:

Respondent #	Answer
1	We should try to make material purchases so that they would be usable the following years.
2	Renting or borrowing things, sustainable choices in food, materials and other things.
3	We should not cause unnecessary waste or loss, material or immaterial.
4	<p>We should avoid single-use purchases and favour those that can be either reused multiple times or repurposed in other ways. Not everything has to be purchased solely for Tracon, things can also be borrowed to and from other parties. Encourage recycling and try to also make it easily possible (glass recycling bins for Ramune beverage bottles etc.)</p> <p>In social perspective, we should strive to create an environment where information and knowledge spread and pass on to future participants. New organisers should have the possibility to take part and find their own way of doing things, but not every “wheel” has to be invented from scratch.</p> <p>Offer guests a chance to enjoy a quality event where they want to visit year after year and offer different interest groups the possibility to find likeminded people and also possibly find new interests.</p>
5	I feel it’s something to strive for.

The rest of the questions in the survey were multiple choice questions. In questions 4, 5 and 6 the respondents could pick multiple answers.

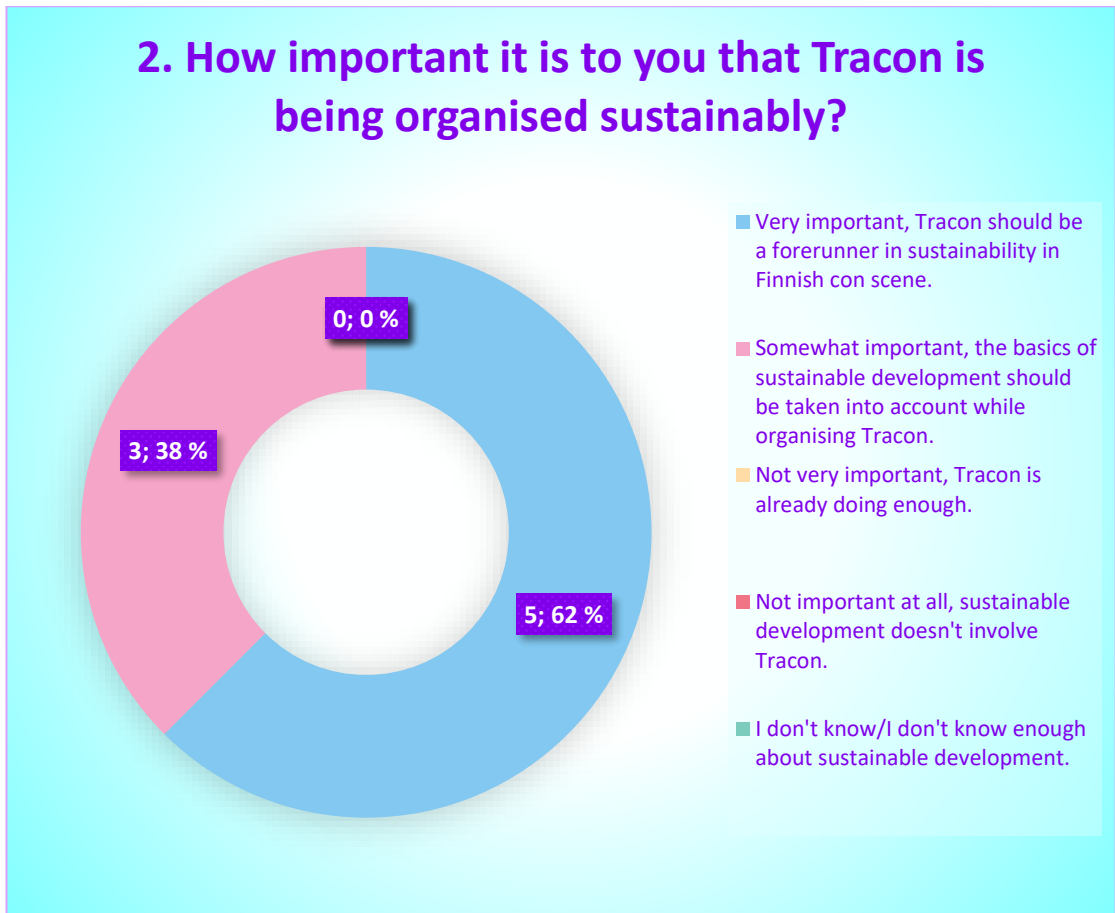


Figure 2: Answers to survey question 2. (Appendix A)

All respondents agreed that sustainable development is at least somewhat important in organising Tracon, with majority agreeing that it is very important.



Figure 3: Answers to question number 3. (Appendix A)

Most of the respondents agreed that sustainability matters involve everyone in conitea. Only one person thought that achieving sustainable development goals should be left to main organisers. One person replied that there should be a specified person in charge of sustainability but Tracon ry board could set guidelines for the goals.



Figure 4: Answers to question 4. (Appendix A)

Most of the respondents agreed that most effective ways of informing volunteer workers about sustainability in Tracon are social media posts, the collective volunteer info session held before the event and via Tracon.fi website. The one “Other” answer said that “by practical means, not just words but as part of everyday activities”.

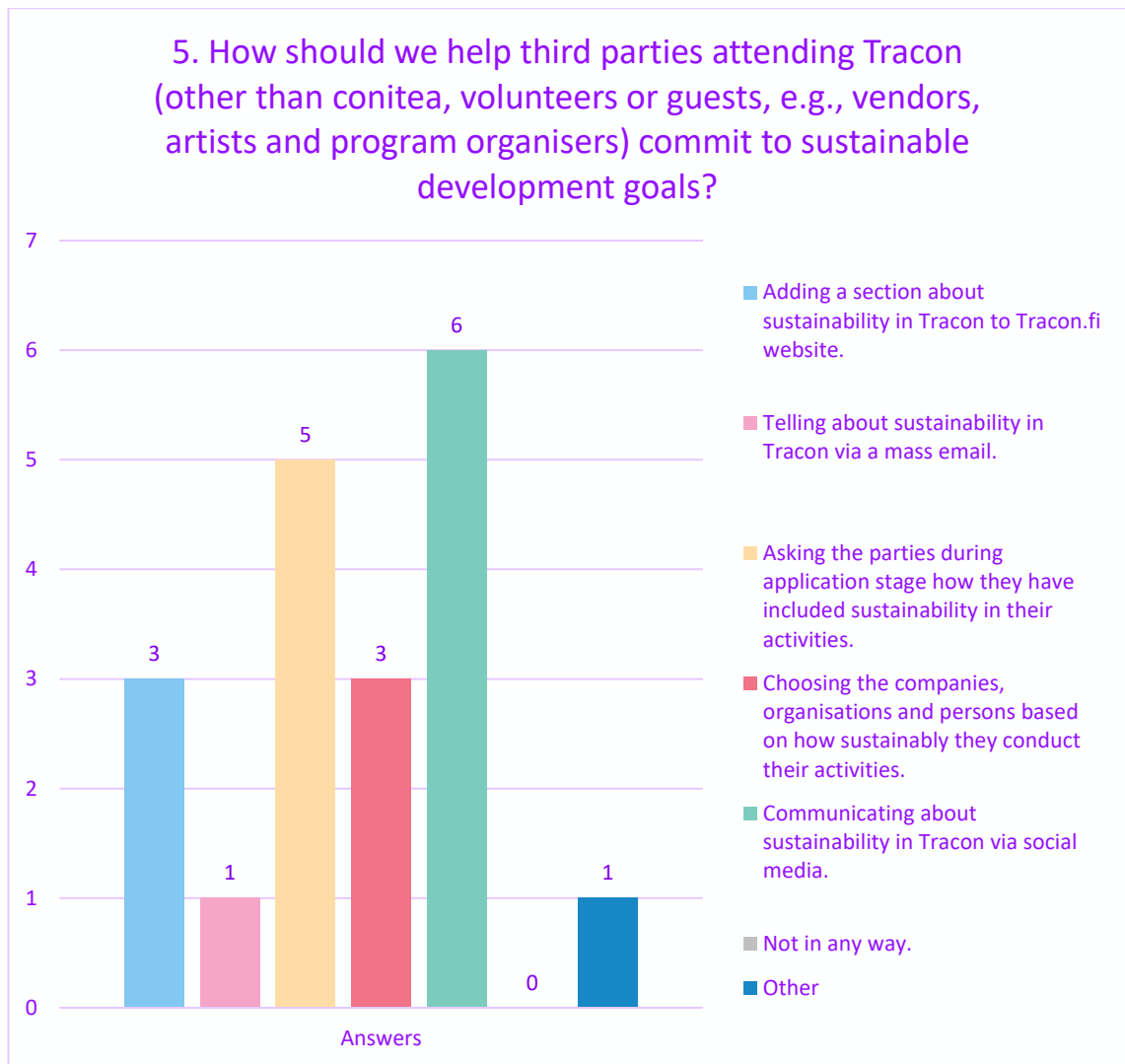


Figure 5: Answers to question 5. (Appendix A)

Most respondents agreed that the most effective ways to help other parties involved in Tracon (non-guests, non-volunteer workers and non-conitea) commit to sustainable practices in Tracon are again social media and asking the parties during application process about their sustainability practices. The “Other” response said that “with everyday practical methods, such as offering a recycling for cardboard boxes during the event and not just after, and by doing cooperation with the other parties, such as with logistical solutions, when possible. Also adding a biowaste recycling bins for food trucks in Sorsapuisto park”.

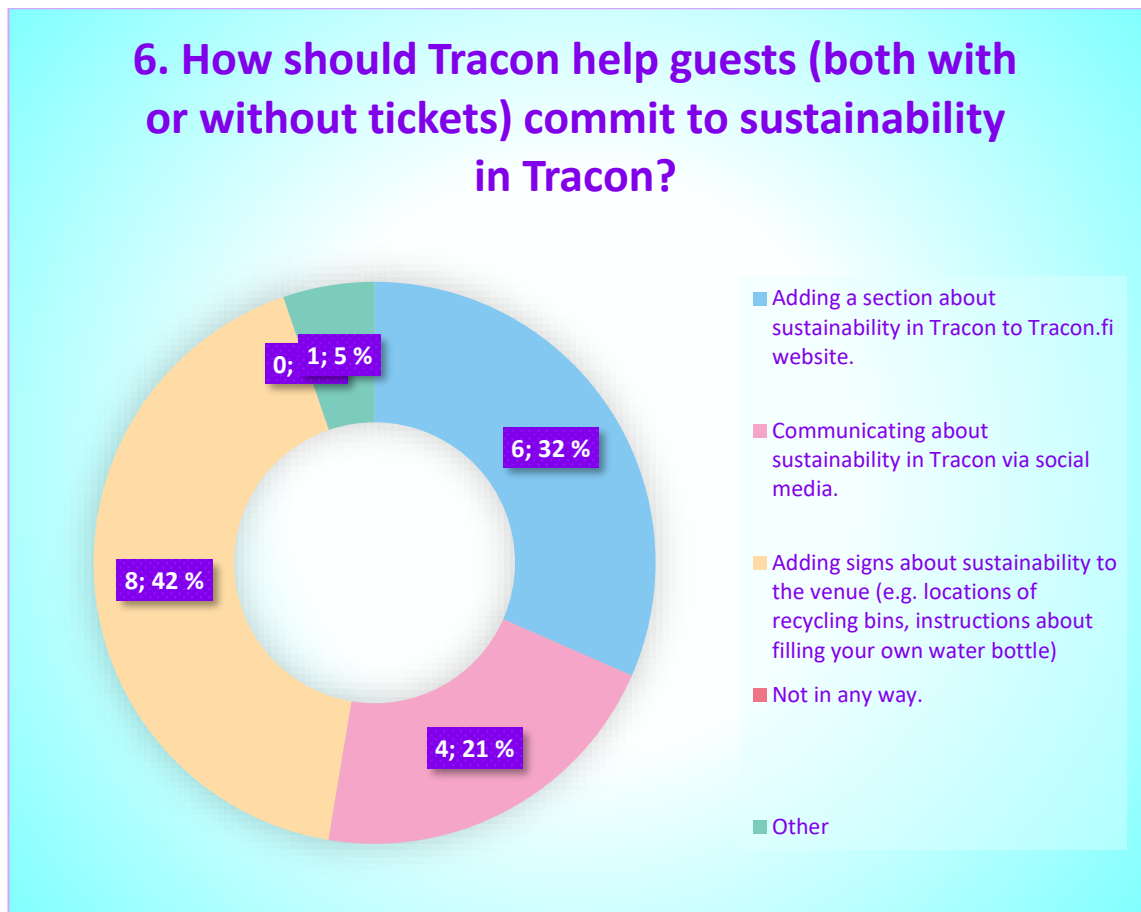


Figure 6: Answers to question 6. (Appendix A)

Most respondents agreed that the most effective ways to help guests of Tracon commit to sustainability are adding clear signage about sustainable practices to the venue, and via Tracon.fi website. The “Other” response added that “There should be clear signs for glass, biowaste etc.”.

4.2 How is a sustainability plan helpful for Tracon 2026?

The purpose of this sustainability plan is to help Tracon develop their practices to a more sustainable direction, while also documenting the ways they are done. According to the survey conducted, most respondents agreed that Tracon should be a forerunner in addressing sustainability issues. See chapter 4.1 for the results of the survey.

While some practices are already taking place in the production of Tracon, it is important to keep record on the ways things are done. This also helps future organisers continue the practices seen most effective.

Sustainability is not only environmental; the sustainability plan introduced in this thesis also includes social, governance and cultural sustainability. This is because the event involves lots of different operations and parties, which have different sustainability challenges.

4.3 Sustainability in other Finnish events

In other events, there has been some assessments made about ecological footprint. For example, during the “Mestarit” tour in 2022, information about energy and fuel consumption was gathered and calculated, and the accommodation of tour members was focused on Scandic hotels, which has made an effort to limit their environmental impacts on energy usage, water usage, food, biodiversity, chemicals and purchases. The tour also used recycled textiles on performance outfits. The audience was encouraged to use public transport to reach the tour venues. (Jyrälä, 2023)

Live music industry has implemented ethical guidelines in March of 2023 which have been decided in cooperation with the Event agency advocacy organisation SOA ry and Live music advocacy organisation LiveFIN ry (on January 19th, 2026, SOA ry has been merged with LiveFIN ry). The guidelines are based on values of respecting others and making sustainable and ethical business decisions. (Jyrälä, 2023; SOA ry, 2026)

5 SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES IN TRACON

In this chapter, we will go through the sustainability practices already applied in organizing the event. The information was gathered from a personal interview with Kyuu Eturautti, who has been handling a lot of the purchases in Tracon 2025 and has worked with the event for many years in different roles.

5.1 Environmental sustainability

5.1.1 Choosing materials

Many posters and maps that are printed are done choosing materials that can stand the test of time and have multiple uses for several years. The use of laminated prints has been decreased in order to lessen the use of plastic and instead e.g., paper prints, canvas or KAPA (cardboard and polyurethane) prints are used, depending on the purpose and location of the print. Weather resistant prints are all done using local printing companies, supporting local businesses. However, Eturautti also mentions that the environmental impact on prints used outdoors cannot be easily measured. (K. Eturautti, personal communication, 15 December 2025)

For sustainability strategy, a list of how many prints and posters are ordered or printed each year should be done, highlighting how many become obsolete each year. This is done to see how Tracon can decrease the amount of paper waste and work on increasing the production and usage of multiyear materials.

5.1.2 Buying sustainably

In the interview, Eturautti said that it is important to choose sustainable suppliers when purchasing products. Most products are purchased either using local suppliers or at least EU based manufacturers, as they comply with environmental and human rights regulations. (K. Eturautti, personal communication, 15 December 2025) Using local expertise and supporting local small businesses can have a positive effect on innovation, growth and production. (Jyrälä, 2023)

5.1.3 Cooperating with other cons

Tracon has worked with other cons for several years now, especially when it comes to knowledge exchange and many people organize several events (e.g., both Tracon and Ropecon). Con's also share some purchased products and loan e.g., walkie-talkies and cell phones with each other, so that not every single convention has the need to purchase their own ones. The con's also share safety equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers and fire blankets) and furniture (e.g., shelving). The cooperation could be expanded to include other goods as well, such as vehicles.

5.1.4 Noise pollution

Tracon has held music and dance performances in Sorsapuisto park area on live stage. This causes some noise pollution to nearby houses surrounding the park. Tracon also hosted a Tracon by Night event in 2025 on Friday night of the event, which had music performances, a rave tent and maid café karaoke held in the Sorsapuisto park area. (Tracon, n.d.-b) For this, Tracon applied for extended noise permit until midnight. However, some local residents did complain about the noise, despite flyers being delivered to nearby apartment buildings informing them about the event.

5.2 Social sustainability

5.2.1 Volunteer workers

Tracon, as well as many other conventions in Finland, are run almost entirely by volunteers. Therefore, it is critical that volunteers, whether they are members of conitea or workforce, are well taken care of. Tracon arranges food for all volunteer workers for two or three days, depending on the number of working hours, as well as instructions for each task done during the event, as well as accommodation for all who needs one. There is also a breakroom called "Green room" for volunteer workers, which always has coffee, tea and sandwiches available during the event. (Tracon, n.d.-e) There are first aid workers available during the whole event. (Tracon, n.d.-c)

For many young volunteers, Finnish con events can offer their first work experience, even if there is no work contract in place. Volunteers can also be professionals in their own field of expertise, such as photographers, who see volunteering as a way to enhance their skills. Most are motivated by the thought of helping organize their favourite event and positive experiences motivate volunteers to come back next year. (Kähkönen, 2017)

5.2.2 Dealing with issues

As an event with thousands of participants, both volunteer workers, guests and conitea members, there is always possibility for conflicts. For the event, a new fault reporting system was launched and was used by guests to report about any issues found during the weekend of the event. Tracon info desk workers also handled complaints and issues brought to them and made sure the people in charge got information about any issue. Along with info desk workers, security officers are key persons in dealing with and gathering information about any issues. (K. Leikomaa, personal communication, 13 February 2026; Tracon, 2025b)

Tracon also has volunteers working as harassment contact persons, whose duties are handling sensitive cases concerning any situation that has caused discomfort to the guest, be it harassment, bullying or any uncalled behaviour witnessed or experienced during the event. The harassment contact persons could be reached via phone number during the event, plus via email one week before and after the event. (Tracon, n.d.-c)

5.2.3 Accessibility and safety

Tracon has a named person responsible for accessibility, making sure that the issue is addressed in different ways in the convention. For example, Tracon has a quiet room equipped with dimmed lighting and earplugs for people with different kinds of neurodivergent or other special needs, meant for relaxation and calming down out of the hustle and bustle of crowds. (Tracon, n.d.-a)

Tracon has launched an accessibility badge for people with disabilities or other special needs. The voluntary badge is meant to help people with special needs to express their need for adjustments or accommodation, for example if they

need a special seat in concert hall due to hearing or visibility issues or panic attacks, or if they need a chair while queueing. (Tracon, 2025c) The badge is not mandatory to get these sorts of accommodations, though, and volunteer workers and visitors alike are encouraged to understand that people may need adjustments for different reasons (Tracon, 2025a). The response has been positive from con visitors, according to both verbal and written feedback.

Tracon also recruits harassment contact persons to work during and after the convention. Harassment contact persons are reachable via phone or email and are trained to deal with different kinds of issues that may occur during the convention. (Tracon, n.d.-c)

5.3 Sustainable governance

A crucial part of applying sustainable practices in organizing events is continuity despite changes in organizing parties. For this reason, it is important to have organizers commit to sustainable practices and developing sustainability goals for each event.

According to the survey conducted by the thesis author for Tracon 2025 conitea (Appendix A), 63% of respondents said that Tracon should be a forerunner in sustainability practices in Finnish con scene, while the rest said that Tracon should apply at least the basic minimum of sustainable practices. Seventy-five percent also agreed that sustainability should involve everyone in conitea.

5.4 Cultural sustainability

5.4.1 “Meeting place over ideological borders”

According to Kyuu Eturautti (K. Eturautti, personal communication, 15 December 2025), Tracon has always strived to be a “meeting place over ideological borders”. Organizers have always represented a variety of political and ideological views, but all have one thing in common: the love for organizing an event from fans to fans.

While Tracon is a non-political event, they have banned modern military outfits or outfits resembling them after Russia's attack on Ukraine. Tracon also discourages any cosplay, outfits or symbols that mock or insult someone's ethnicity, religion, cultural heritage, sexuality or gender identity, as they are not in line with Tracon's values, and their guidelines on cosplay are updated frequently.

(Tracon, n.d.-c)

5.4.2 Public image, multiculturalism and interculturality

In late 2025, a picture featuring Miss Finland 2025 winner Sarah Dzafe pulling the corners of her eyes in a mocking manner went viral on social media, leading her having to give up the title. Two members of the parliament Juho Eerola and Kaisa Garedew and one Member of the European Parliament Sebastian Tynkynen, all representing The Finns Party, then went to publish pictures of themselves pulling their eyes in a similar manner on social media "in solidarity to Dzafe", leading to unfortunate visibility in Japanese and Chinese newspapers. The eye-pulling was deemed highly offensive, leading the Prime minister of Finland Petteri Orpo to publicly apologize on behalf of the members of parliament. (KBS World, 2025; Pekonen, 2025)

This social media debacle caused experts on East Asian culture deem the image of Finland become somewhat tarnished in the eyes of Japanese, Chinese and Koreans, even though Finland had enjoyed quite positive image in these countries. According to Mika Kukkonen, the director of Foreign Ministry's Unit for Public Diplomacy, the scandal most likely didn't cause permanent damage (Huusko, 2025), while the Docent of Asian Studies and vice president of Finnish Japanese Society Lasse Lehtonen claims Finland should understand how severe effects these sort of scandals could have long in the future, especially due to delayed response from the Prime minister Petteri Orpo (Lehtonen, 2025).

At this point, it is unclear whether this situation has effect on the image of Finnish conventions or makes it hard to get guests of honour visit the events. However, conventions can support positive country image by showing a tolerant, friendly and passionate side of Finnish con scene for visitors coming from abroad.

6 SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY FOR TRACON 2026

6.1 The sustainability strategy

This chapter will introduce the sustainability aspects that should be assessed and applied to organizing Tracon 2026. Some of the practices mentioned are already being applied but are mentioned as they are deemed critical parts of the strategy. The sustainability strategy will be introduced to Tracon 2026 conitea as a PowerPoint presentation during Spring 2026 workshop day.



Figure 7: Visual representation of Tracon's sustainability strategy for 2026.

6.1.1 Environmental sustainability

For environmental sustainability, the goals chosen are 1) improving recycling in both Tampere Hall and Sorsapuisto park area, 2) reducing single-use products, 3) reducing food waste and 4) buying responsibly and in cooperation with other cons.

Recycling and waste management is a big issue with the event, as thousands of visitors roam Tampere Hall and Sorsapuisto park area. Specific aspects of waste management include the recycling of glass beverage bottles and food wrappers that are sold by the Sorsapuisto park area vendors. According to the survey results, 42% of respondents thought it would be useful to add more signs and info about recycling and add more recycling opportunities for guests visiting the event.

Single-use products are another issue raised; specifically plastic water cups offered by the water canisters. The event has several spots for drinking water and offering cups to drink from is seen as a preventative health issue, as people in crowds or during hot weather can get unwell and thus use more first-aid resources. It could be useful to add more signs encouraging people to use their own water bottles and use social media to remind them to bring one to the event. Drinking bottles could also be sold as Tracon merchandise. Leikomaa suggested in her comments that there could be a deal made in future with food vendors where having e.g. coffee served in customer's own cup or mug would give a small discount. (K. Leikomaa, personal communication, 13 February 2026)

Currently it is unclear whether data is collected from accumulated food waste from Greenroom's, either in park or in Tampere Hall. It would be beneficial to start gathering data about how much food is bought for the Greenrooms and how much is left after the event to determine the amount of waste produced. Leikomaa suggested that it would also be helpful to remind volunteers via email to bring their own mugs to Tracon, so that there would be less need for single-use paper cups (K. Leikomaa, personal communication, 13 February 2026).

Tracon has already strived to purchase products in a sustainable way by supporting EU-based and local suppliers. (K. Eturautti, personal communication, 15 December 2025) All purchases should be added to a data sheet with all relevant information (why the purchase was made, for which purpose, where was it purchased etc.), so that there is transparency in the supply chain.

6.1.2 Social sustainability

For social sustainability, the goals chosen are 1) further improving accessibility matters, 2) choosing sponsors and stakeholders whose values align with Tracon's sustainability goals, 3) committing volunteer workers into sustainable practices and 4) communicating Tracon's sustainability strategy and goals to visitors, stakeholders, vendors and sponsors.

Since 2024, Tracon has had someone in charge of accessibility matters concerning the event. This should be a continuing practice, and data should be collected from guest and volunteer experience to further improve the issues raised.

Tracon is an event made by volunteers for those passionate about roleplaying, LARP's and anime culture. The sponsors, vendors and other stakeholders should reflect Tracon's values also in sustainability issues, regarding e.g., sustainable supply chains and social issues.

Tracon has hundreds of volunteer workers on duty during the event, as well as the days before and after. It is crucial that the volunteers understand Tracon's sustainability goals and are committed to also working towards them. According to survey respondents, most agreed that the best way to commit volunteers to sustainability goals is to communicate about them on social media, closely followed by adding a section about sustainability goals to Tracon website and informing about the goals in a collective volunteer info session.

Finally, it is important to communicate Tracon's sustainability strategy and goals to the wider audience of visitors, stakeholders, vendors and sponsors. According to survey respondents, most agreed that the best medium is social media and Tracon website. According to research literature, there, however, is also a paradox when it comes to responsibility communication, as stakeholders may become more suspicious the more organization communicates about their responsibility practices, if there are no practical examples given by the company (Bruun & Rydenfelt, 2023; Mettälä, 2024). Therefore, it seems to be important to find a balance in communication and be transparent and open.

6.1.3 Sustainable governance

For sustainable governance, the goals chosen are 1) organizer commitment and 2) applying sustainability goals in every part of the event organization.

The Tracon conitea members and Tracon ry board members are all unpaid roles, meaning there is no monetary incentive or compensation for upholding sustainability standards. Therefore, it is critical that they are committed to sustainable practices regardless of compensation, because they feel that it's important to do so. This could be done by educating conitea and Tracon ry board members on sustainability issues and also assessing the economical side of saving money on event budget on the long run. It is crucial that all conitea members are aware of how their part in the event production have an impact on environmental, social and economic sustainability.

Upholding sustainability standards and being transparent about practices could also bring good PR on Tracon's way by attracting sponsors and marketing opportunities.

6.1.4 Cultural sustainability

For cultural sustainability, the goals chosen are 1) embracing multiculturalism and intercultural exchange and 2) upholding positive country image.

Since Tracon offers program numbers on different interests, e.g., anime, manga, music and roleplaying, it is important to offer a wide range of cultural exchange. Having guests of honour representing different parts of both Tracon's interest groups but also different cultures. For example, inviting a cosplay guest of colour could offer a great view on how cultures can be mixed together in cosplay. Guests of honour are already an important part of Finnish conventions and fan culture, bringing positive brand image to the convention. Intercultural exchange focuses on understanding and respect between different cultures, and guests of honour can help bringing this forward in Finnish convention culture.

By embracing different cultures in a respectful way, Tracon can also uphold positive country image. As mentioned in chapter 5.4.2, Finland suffered a social

media debacle regarding racist imaginary spread by former Miss Finland and some members of parliament, which can be hurtful to Finland's country image in East Asian countries. Therefore, Finnish conventions and their love and respect towards East Asian pop culture can be a mending aspect in upholding positive country image.

6.2 How to implement the sustainability goals into practice

A model suggested into planning steps while applying sustainable practices into different parts of the event organization is the PDCA model. Its straightforward approach is applicable to different parts of event production and helps each member of conitea and team leaders develop steps towards more sustainable practices.

The PDCA model was first developed as a repeated cycle for improvement by Walter A. Shewhart, which was then expanded by Edward Deming and further altered by Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) into its currently recognisable form. The PDCA model is used in developing corporate practices but can also be used in not-for-profit events. The benefits of using PDCA model are 1) improving efficiency and productivity, 2) getting many small improvements done during the year instead of focusing on a single large one, and 3) continuous improvement doesn't require the continuous changing of practices but it also values the standardization of practices. (Lean Enterprise Institute, n.d.; Lindroos, 2025)

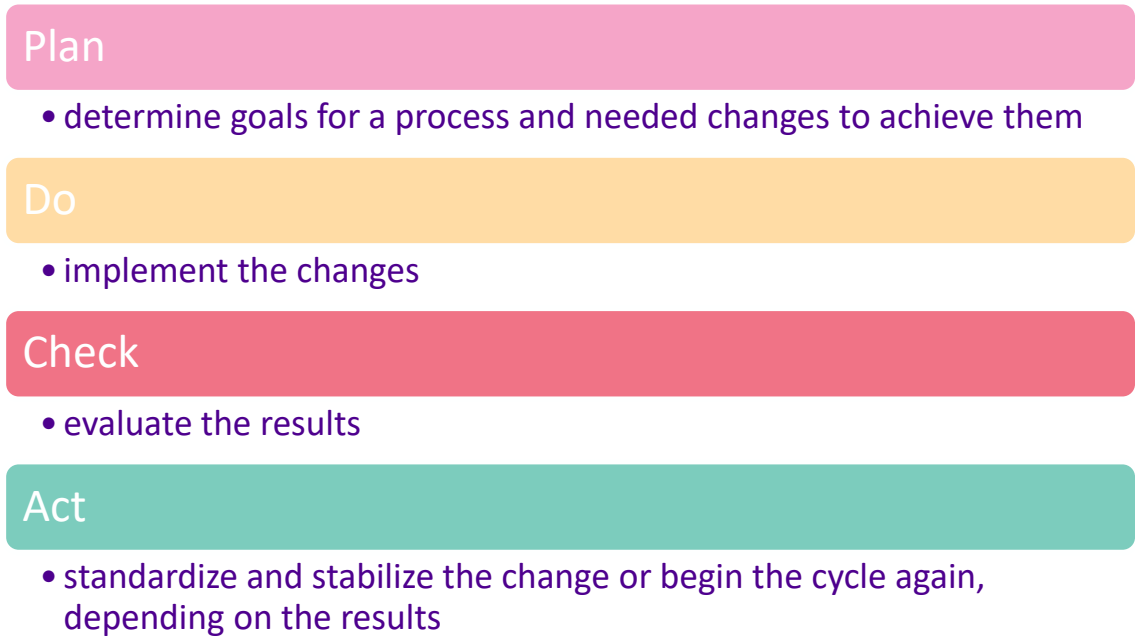


Figure 8: The PDCA model can be applied to sustainability strategy planning. (Lean Enterprise Institute, n.d.)

The four parts of PDCA model are Plan, Do, Check and Act.

In **Plan** phase, the practice that needs to be improved is identified and a measurable goal is set for it. This could be, for example, reducing paper cup use in Greenroom by encouraging people to bring their own cups instead, and therefore purchasing less cups than the previous year.

In **Do** phase, the new practice is set for implementation as planned. For example, the number of paper cup packages opened and used are counted and documented.

In **Check** phase, the results are assessed and compared to the set goal to see if the plans and actions were effective. It is critical that results are always assessed because without the assessment it is impossible to see how practices have improved. For example, how many paper cups were used this year and was there a need to purchase more during the event or was there a surplus.

In **Act** phase, the plans are assessed once more. If the plan was not effective, it needs to be checked, and the process has to be repeated from start. If the plan was effective, the practice can be implemented into everyday use. For example,

if there was a surplus of paper cups left, the plan of reducing the paper cup use was successful. If there was a need to buy more cups during the event, there could have been a problem with informing volunteers to bring their own cups, which means information has to be improved for the next year and this could be planned with the communications department.

7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The topic of sustainability is wide, and it is not easy to assess goals for different kinds of events. In addition, the idea of sustainability strategy is new to Finnish convention scene, meaning there is no template to be used. The thesis author hopes that this work will encourage other large conventions to adopt the idea of making a concrete sustainability strategy for their event and act as a benchmark. While many conventions already take sustainability matters into consideration, it is important to also highlight it to visitors and stakeholders, improving transparency.

The sustainability strategy introduced in this thesis is only the beginning point for Tracon and there should be one done for each event. The goals can be expanded and updated with growing needs and challenges arising. It might be helpful for other large non-profit conventions such as Ropecon, Desucon and Kotae Expo to adopt and implement a sustainability strategy for their event production.

Since this is the first Finnish thesis done on the topic of sustainability in convention production, there are several future research needs. For one, the sustainability strategy must be tested in practice by the event and replicated in other events to see if the strategy can be applied in practical use. The literature on Finnish volunteer-run conventions and especially their sustainability is limited, and future research should focus on sustainability aspects of especially larger Finnish conventions. Another challenge in making the thesis and gathering information was the small number of respondents in the survey, meaning another survey could be conducted at a later time or another event to gain a broader range of responses.

As a learning opportunity, this thesis was very important for researching and using different kinds of sources in the writing process. The idea came from the author's own interest towards both sustainability matters and working in event production. The result aims to be a working sustainability strategy that is also adaptable for different conventions and their goals. Documenting sustainability practices and transparency in communication are both key elements to working

towards a more environmentally friendly event and building trust and cooperation between conventions, their guests and other involved parties.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Survey conducted by Kristiina Kuusela for Tracon 2025 organizers

Opinnäytetyö: Kestävyys Traconissa

Tämä kysely on tarkoitettu Traconin conitealle ja sillä kartoitetaan conitean ajatuksia kestävästä. Kyselyn vastauksia käytetään anonymisti osana Kristiina Kuuselan opinnäytetyötä. "Kestävällä kehityksellä viitataan paikallisesti, alueellisesti ja maailmanlaajuisesti ohjattuun muutokseen, jonka tavoitteena on säilyttää ja taata hyvät elämän mahdollisuudet nykyisille ja tuleville sukupolville. Tulevaisuuden tarpeiden ja hyvien elinolosuhteiden takaaminen edellyttää sitä, että päätöksenteossa ja toiminnassa otetaan luonnon kantokyvyn ja moninaisuuden säilymisen asettamissa rajoissa tasavertaisesti huomioon ympäristö, ihminen ja talous, niin paikallisella kuin globaalilla tasolla. Kestävä kehitys onkin monia erilaisia näkökulmia leikkaava tavoite, joka jaotellaan neljään eri ulottuvuuteen: ekologiseen, taloudelliseen, sosiaaliseen ja kulttuuriseen kestävyYTEEN." (Lähde: [OPH.fi](#))

Kun lähetät tämän lomakkeen, se ei kerää automaattisesti tietojasi, kuten nimeä ja sähköpostiosoitetta, ellei anna niitä itse.

1. Mitä kestävä kehitys Traconissa merkitsee Sinulle?

Kirjoita vastaus

2. Kuinka tärkeää sinulle on se, että Traconia järjestetään kestävästi?

Erittäin tärkeää, Traconin tulisi olla kestävyiden edelläkävijä suomalaisessa con-skenessä

Melko tärkeää, Traconin järjestämisessä olisi hyvä huomioida kestävä kehityksen peruseriaatteen.

Ei erityisen tärkeää, Tracon tekee jo tarpeeksi

Ei lainkaan tärkeää, kestävä kehitys ei koske Traconia

En osaa sanoa/En tiedä kestävästä kehityksestä tarpeeksi

3. Kenen vastuulla on huolehtia kestävä kehityksen periaatteiden toteutumisesta Traconia järjestettäessä?

Pääjärjestäjien

Tracon ry:n hallituksen

Koko conitean


Erillisen kestävyysvastaavan

Ei kenenkään


Muu

4. Kuinka Traconin työvoimaa (ei-coniteaan kuuluvat henkilöt) pitäisi sitouttaa kestävän kehityksen periaatteisiin? 

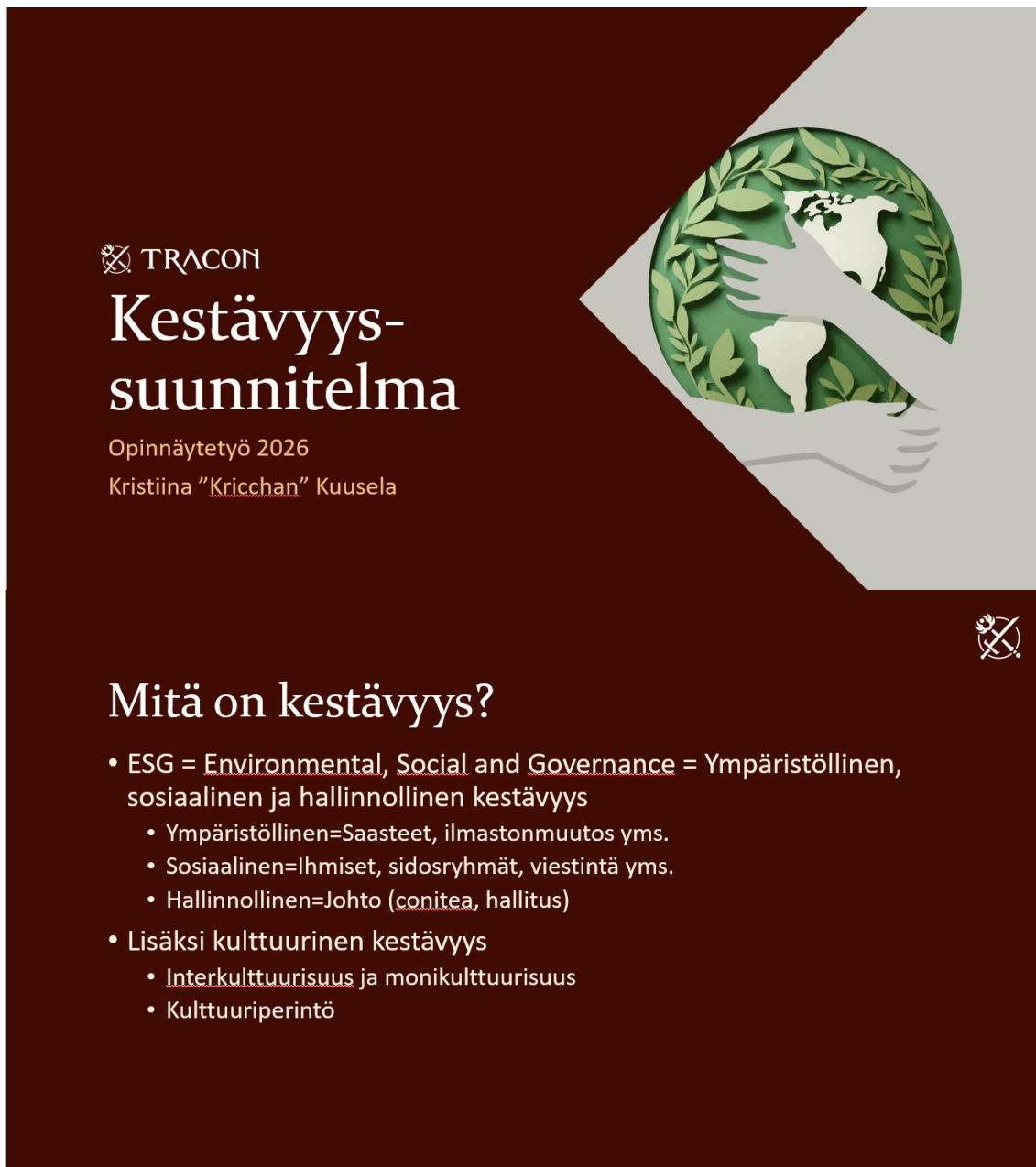
- Lisäämällä työvoimawikiin osio kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa
- Kertomalla jokaisen työpistekohtaisen ohjeen yhteydessä kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa
- Lisäämällä osio kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa nettisivuille
- Kertomalla kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa yhteisen työvoimainfon yhteydessä
- Kertomalla kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa massasähköpostin muodossa
- Viestimällä kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa sosiaalisessa mediassa
- Ei mitenkään
- Muu


5. Kuinka Traconin sidosryhmiin kuuluvat henkilöt (muu kuin conitea ja työvoima, esim. myyjät, taidekujalaiset ja ohjelmien pitäjät) pitäisi sitouttaa kestävä kehityksen periaatteisiin? 

- Lisäämällä osio kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa nettisivuille
- Kertomalla kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa massasähköpostin muodossa
- Pyytämällä tietoja sidosryhmiltä hakuvaiheessa siitä, kuinka he ovat huomioineet kestävyysasioita toiminnassaan
- Valikoimalla Traconiin pääsevät henkilöt, yritykset ja yhteisöt sen perusteella, kuinka kestävästi he toimivat
- Viestimällä kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa sosiaalisessa mediassa
- Ei mitenkään
- Muu

6. Kuinka Traconin kävijät (rannekkeelliset ja rannekkeettomat) pitäisi sitouttaa kestävä kehityksen periaatteisiin? 


- Lisäämällä osio kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa nettisivuille
- Viestimällä kestävästä kehityksestä Traconissa sosiaalisessa mediassa
- Lisäämällä opasteita kestävään kehitykseen liittyen tapahtuma-alueelle (esim. kierrätyspisteiden sijainnit, ohje oman juomapullon täyttämisestä)
- Ei mitenkään
- Muu



 TRACON

Kestävyys- suunnitelma

Opinnäytetyö 2026
Kristiina "Kricchan" Kuusela



Mitä on kestävyys?

- ESG = Environmental, Social and Governance = Ympäristöllinen, sosiaalinen ja hallinnollinen kestävyys
 - Ympäristöllinen=Saasteet, ilmastonmuutos yms.
 - Sosiaalinen=Ihmiset, sidosryhmät, viestintä yms.
 - Hallinnollinen=Johto (conitea, hallitus)
- Lisäksi kulttuurinen kestävyys
 - Interkulttuurisuus ja monikulttuurisuus
 - Kulttuuriperintö



Kestävyyssuunnitelma

Tracon 2026



Ympäristöllinen kestävyys Traconissa

- Kierrätyksen lisääminen
 - Ramune-pullot ja ruokakääreet
- Kertakäyttötavaran vähentäminen ja uusiokäytön lisääminen
 - Vesimukit
- Ruokahävikin vähentäminen
 - Mm. Green Room
- Yhteishankinnat ja yhteiskäyttö
 - Yhteistyön lisääminen eri conien välillä



Sosiaalinen kestävyys Traconissa

- Saavutettavuuden ja esteettömyyden kehittäminen
 - Kävijäkokemusdatan kerääminen, analysointi ja toteutus
- Työvoiman sitouttaminen vastuulliseen toimintaan
 - Wikiin perehdytystä kestävyysaiheista, kun relevanttia
- Vastuullisten sponsorien ja sidosryhmien kanssa toimiminen
 - Traconin arvojen mukaisuus
- Traconin kestävyysarvojen viestintä ulospäin
 - Sosiaalinen media, nettisivut



Hallinnollinen kestävyys Traconissa

- Conitean ja hallituksen sitouttaminen kestävyysuunnitelman toteuttamiseen
 - Jatkuvuus vaihtuvuudesta huolimatta
- Kestävyystoimien toteuttaminen jokaisessa conin järjestämisen osa-alueessa
 - Jokaisen tehtävä miettiä oman vastuualueen kohdalla, ei erillistä kestävyysconiittia



Kulttuurinen kestävyys Traconissa

- Monikulttuurisen ja interkulttuurisen työn tekeminen
 - Esim. kunniavieraita eri maantieteellisiltä alueilta
- Positiivisen maakuvan ylläpitäminen
 - Hyvin tehty tapahtuma -> hyvää PR:ää myös Suomelle
 - Voi houkutella potentiaalisia kunniavieraita



Miten näitä toteutetaan käytännössä?

PDCA-mallin esittely



PDCA-mallin esittely

Plan – Suunnittele

Tunnista toiminto, jossa on parantamisen varaa ja aseta selkeä mitattavissa oleva parannustavoite. Suunnittele, kuinka saavutat nämä asetetut tavoitteet.

Check – Tarkista

Vertaa tuloksiasi asettamiisi mittareihin ja arvioi, olivatko suunnitelmasi ja toteutuksesi tehokkaita. Laatu ei voida kehittää ilman arviointia. Toistuvat arvioinnit mahdollistavat vertailun ja seurannan.



Do – Toteuta

Toteuta suunnitelmasi kuten olit sen suunnitellut.

Act – Korjaa

Jos suunnitelmasi oli arvioidi mukaan tehoton, tarkista se ja toista prosessi. Jos suunnitelmasi oli tehokas, tee siitä osa jokapäiväistä tekemistä.

Lähde: Arter.fi



PDCA-mallin hyödyt

- **Tehokkuuden ja tuottavuuden parantaminen:** Jatkuva parantaminen keskittyy prosessien optimointiin ja resurssien parempaan hyödyntämiseen. Tämä johtaa sujuvampaan työnkulkuun, vähentää hukkaa ja lisää organisaation kykyä tuottaa enemmän arvoa samoilla resursseilla.
- **Monta pientä parannusta vuoden aikana on yleensä parempi vaihtoehto kuin yksi iso muutos vuodessa,** sillä usein isot muutokset saattavat tuottaa systeemiin aluksi enemmän haittaa kuin hyötyä.
- **Jatkuva parantaminen PDCA-mallin mukaan ei edellytä jatkuvaa toiminnan muuttamista, se huomioi myös toiminnan vakioinnin,** mikä on laadunhallinnan kannalta olennaista, sillä ilman toiminnan vakiointia, hyväksi koetut toimintatavat eivät ehdi toteutua käytännössä, jos toimintaa muutetaan ihan koko ajan.



PDCA-malli käytännössä

1. Määrittele kestävyystavoite omalle osa-alueelle ja suunnittele miten se toteutetaan ja millä aikataululla
2. Toteuta tavoitteen mukainen toimintamuutos
3. Kirjaa ylös tulokset ja arvioi miten tavoite saavutettiin
4. Ota toimintamuutos pysyvään käyttöön, jos se on onnistunut tai palaa takaisin suunnitteluvaiheeseen

Lopputuloksena jatkuva toiminnan parantaminen



Summa summarum

- Kestävyytyö on jatkuvaa ja muuttuvaa. Muista päivittää kestävyysuunnitelmaa joka vuosi, lisäämällä ja muuttamalla tavoitteita.
- Mieti, miten juuri omalla osa-alueellasi voisi huomioida paremmin kestävyysasioita (ympäristö, hallinto, sosiaalinen, kulttuuri)
- Kirjoita selkeät tavoitteet ylös ja hyödynnä esim. PDCA-mallia tavoitteiden toteuttamiseen
- Kestävyysasiat kuuluvat koko conitealle!



TRACON