



# ROAD TO COP26: EVENT SECTOR TRANSFORMATION

In collaboration with



**United Nations**  
Climate Change Secretariat



#eventscreatechange

[www.positiveimpactevents.com](http://www.positiveimpactevents.com)



Since 2017, Positive Impact has been engaging with the event sector on carbon reduction. They have memorandums of understanding with a number of UN Bodies including UNFCCC (UN Climate Change).

The 'Road to COP26 Event Sector Transformation' builds on a series of collaborations and enables event professionals to take action which will support the future creation of a Climate Action Framework for events.

## THE SERIES OF COLLABORATIONS SO FAR:

**On the 28th of January 2021**, Positive Impact and UNFCCC (UN Climate Change) engaged with over 39 strategic representatives of the UK event sector to gain support for a #BuildBackBetter approach including the launch of a Climate Action Framework for Events at COP26. Support for this approach was gathered from

- UNFCCC (UN Climate Change)
- COP26 United Nations Climate Change Conference
- Theresa Villiers Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Events
- The U.K. Cabinet Office
- Visit England Bringing the support of all UK convention bureaus
- British Standards Institute
- Institute of Event Management
- Event Industry Board (who represent all Associations with chapters in the U.K.)

**On the 7th of June**, UNFCCC and Positive Impact engaged with over 1500 global event professionals (via the Positive Impact Ambassador network) to gain support for a Climate Action Framework for Events. Support for this approach and willingness to be founding members of the Framework was gathered from:

- MCI Group UK (60 offices worldwide)
- T-Mobile U.S. (100 events annually)
- Interface
- GES (4000 live experiences annually across over 75 countries)
- PIE Factory
- Barbican (1.5 million visit people annually)
- Maritz Global Events
- Kenes Group (55,000 association members)
- Church House (1000 unique events a year)
- Messukeskus (1 million visitors annually)

These companies represent examples of significant clients and suppliers in the global event sector. Anyone in the event sector could be a founding member of the Climate Action Framework for Events.

**On the 27th of July**, Positive Impact held a series of educational and networking events as part of 'The Road to COP26 Event Sector Transformation', with the intention to support event sector SMEs on their #racetozero and increase the number of event sector organisations making a net zero carbon commitment.

The number of organisations stepping forward to be a founding member for a climate action framework grew from 34 to 47. For the first time ever, 35 event organisations made a net zero carbon commitment.

**On 2nd of September** Positive Impact held the 2nd of 6 event days as part of the 'Road to COP26 Event Sector Transformation'. Over 50 event sector organisations who made a net zero carbon commitment as part of the Race to Zero through the 'Road to COP26 Event Sector Transformation' and over 60 organisations who stepped forward to be a founding member for a climate sector framework and over 1,500 Positive Impact ambassadors were invited to attend. During the meeting, a website launched by one of the events sector umbrella associations as a new industry initiative to address climate change was reviewed and the following concerns and questions were shared based on the content of the initiatives website.

1. The website says we are inviting organisations to join this collaborative effort to drive the event sector towards net zero however, only some of the sector associations are included, in particular concern was raised about the absence of the Event Industry Councils' members.
2. The website says it aims to "Jointly communicate our industry's commitment to tackling climate change and driving towards net zero by 2050" however, net zero by 2050 is widely recognised as too little too late and there is an increasing number of event professionals who have made net zero carbon commitment by 2030 or 2040 as part of the Race to Zero through the campaign 'Road to COP26 Event Sector Transformation'.

### 3 additional concerns raised included

- The lack of geographical representation.
- The lack of supply chain diversity representation.
- The fact that most of the supporters were associations i.e. not the companies that will take the action.

## NEXT STEPS

It is normal for a sector to take many different approaches to get to an end goal. The end goal in this case being a net zero event sector.

Positive Impact's role can be described as a critical friend, in other words ensuring the sector will have a transparent, credible and inclusive approach. This can be achieved in a number of ways and these next steps outline a few of them

1. Positive Impact will continue to ask the UNFCCC Secretariat what the approach will be going forward to ensure transparent engagement across the sector.
2. Continuing to encourage the sector to make a net zero carbon commitment as part of the UN Race to Zero through the 'Road to COP26 Event Sector Transformation'.
3. Supporting the UN Race to Zero SME Climate Hub with materials on the event sector
4. Reminding any event sector organisation who have stepped forward as a founding member and have not yet registered their net zero carbon commitment, to do so.

**How to participate:**  
Register here <https://www.positiveimpactevents.com/> and receive steps to make and advance towards a net zero carbon commitment (schedule 2 hours to work on each step) and join our next live engagement session on **October 20th**.

5. Amplifying the reach of this initiative throughout event sector supply chain using this toolkit:  
<https://www.positiveimpactevents.com/road-to-cop26-toolkit>



JOIN US ON OCT 20TH AT 1PM GMT FOR THE NEXT MEETING RELEVANT FOR THOSE WHO HAVE STEPPED FORWARD TO BE FOUNDER MEMBERS FOR A CLIMATE ACTION FRAMEWORK



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