ETHICAL AND SUSTAINABLE EVENTS MANAGEMENT

UNGCN ITALY INTERNAL POLICY

1. PREMISES AND MOTIVATIONS

A sustainable event is a concrete answer to the current global challenges. For an organization such as UNGCN Italy, whose mission is to spread a sustainable vision of development and markets at a national level, sustainable events are an opportunity to demonstrate awareness, consciousness and commitment in everyday activities. Moreover, they represent a concrete way to support a "just transition" towards a fairer, more inclusive and environment-friendly world.

Events also represent a sort of a "calling card" and offer a space and a time where the organization can meet its network, stakeholders and/or partners, thus conveying a message not only about its mission but also about its reputation. It is for this reason crucial that both aspects appear coherent.

UNGCN Italy has been operating for more than twenty years to promote at a national level the UN Global Compact Ten Principles in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption, but also as a driver for the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With the aim of supporting the private sector in the path towards sustainability, the Network follows a programme-oriented approach. This also explains the continuous and progressive growth in number and type of activities proposed to businesses, registered during the years and expected for the future.

The adoption of an internal policy, that aims to minimize the environmental impact of events and, at the same time, to maximize their social contribution, seems an appropriate, ideal and innovative choice.

The draft of this policy has started in July 2024, from an idea of the Communication and Events Department, and has actively involved the Programme and Engagement Departments, with a participatory approach. The policy takes into account the already existing two travel and subsistence policies and, to a lesser extent, the grievance policy.

2. EVENTS ORGANIZED BY UNGCN ITALY

The UNGC Italian Network gathers hundreds of businesses of all sizes, operating in different industry sectors, located in different regions of Italy and committed to sustainable development and the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda. Every year, the Network proposes an activity programme focused on promoting and facilitating an ever more ambitious commitment of the private sector to sustainability in the environmental, social and governance dimensions.

The programme includes institutional activities, accelerators and/or in-depth analysis paths, thematic working groups, peer-to-peer learning activities and engagement meetings to coordinate and implement the UN Global Compact project at a national level. The project includes the participation of Top and Business Managers, as “beneficiaries/participants”, engaged in the sustainability function or in other functions related to the organization’s sustainability strategies (for example: Procurement, Human Resources, D&I, Communication). Representatives of stakeholder organizations, such as public institutions and authorities, Universities, Foundations etc. can also participate to the project.

In some particular cases, and only for reasons strictly related to the activity purpose, it is possible to involve high-level business leaders, such as CEOs and Presidents.

The UNGCN Italy activity programme is mainly designed to Italian organisations already participating to the UN Global Compact. However – to a lesser extent and with a purpose of raising awareness on the issue of sustainable development – the programme can also be open, in some selected situations, to external business actors, potentially interested to the issuest (i.e. prospect).

The events promoted by the Network are almost completely held in Italy. For strictly institutional reasons, some events can be organized in the framework of international initiatives related to the UN (for example, the Conference of Parties) or the UN Global Compact. In the near future, UNGCN Italy is considering to organize events at an international level.

From 2020 to 2023, the total number of events promoted by the Network per year **rose from 17 to 49**. The number of people involved in the programme as “beneficiaries/participants” **rose from 900 to 2,033**. The three-year period considered has registered a considerable increase in

the proposal of events per year and, therefore, an increase in the related risk of environmental and social impact. An additional growth, on a continuous basis, is expected for the years to come, mostly in terms of involvement and participation.

3. DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABLE EVENT

An event can be considered sustainable if, during its planning, organization and management, attention has been focused not only on the main purpose of the initiative (for example, awareness-raising, analysis, training, peer-to-peer learning, networking etc.) but also on the **goals of reduction or "zeroing" of negative impacts** and of **support to positive externalities**. In other words, an event can be considered ethical and sustainable when environmental and social aspects are taken into account, apart from the economic ones.

Events are traditionally associated to high energetic consumption and waste production and should de redesigned, with an eye to their environmental impact. **The adoption of eco-friendly practices** represents a concrete way to contribute to a better management of natural resources and to a mitigation of pollution. The social dimension, on the other hand, focuses **attention on human well-being, inclusion, involvement and valorisation of local hosting communities**. A sustainable event should aim to include different segments of society, by ensuring accessibility, active participation and respect of cultural diversities and also to raise awareness on relevant environmental and social issues.

The organisation of a sustainable event requires a **strong and coordinated commitment of all the parties involved**. The event governance – that can include organisations, partners, patronage and sponsoring parties – plays a key role in this process, since it guides the implementation of sustainable principles in every aspect of the planning, organization and execution of the event. This implies considering the various sustainable aspects since the very beginning, in the choice of the location and suppliers, planification of transportation and much more. The governance of the event coordinates efforts to ensure that every decision and action is guided by a real commitment towards sustainability. It is also responsible for the transparency and communication of the progresses of the event in terms of sustainability. This can include the production of detailed sheets/reports on the efforts made to reach sustainable goals, by sharing the challenges and the lessons learned, in order to improve in the future. This transparency promotes responsibility, both internally and externally, and can inspire other organizations to do the same.

An event is sustainable when

"*it is designed, planned and implemented in a way that minimises negative impacts on the environment and leaves a positive legacy for the host community*".

UNEP 2009 (United Nations Environment Programme)

4. **FIELDS OF MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES**

For every aspect of the event management (from planning to execution), this policy identifies some selection criteria for the choice of suppliers and services, but also for modes of action that UNGCN Italy is required to consider, in order to be coherent with an ethical and sustainable approach in the realization of its activity programme.

ORGANIZATIONAL OFFICE

1. Smart-working during the days allowed by the existing organizational policy
2. Reduce movements and trips to the minimum necessary for the purpose of planning and organizing the event. In the case of business trips, apply the Travel and subsistence policy adopted at the organizational level
3. Avoid, or at least minimize, the printing of paper materials, and prefer the digital format
4. For stationery products and materials, prefer the use of ecological papers with the EU Ecolabel certification or the use of FSC or PEFC certified papers, guaranteeing their provenance from responsibly managed forests and the transparency of the entire production chain
5. Minimize, or even "zeroing", plastic waste and scrap
6. Ensure proper waste management (differentiated waste collection of all types of waste and scrap)
7. Ensure proper energy efficiency of electronic office equipment, e.g., by activating energy-saving settings on operating equipment or stand-by mode at times of inactivity; or, turning off lights and electronic appliances at the end of the day
8. Maintain a constant temperature inside the office, throughout seasons, without deviating too much from outside temperatures

WORKING MODE (SUSTAINABILITY FOR PEOPLE)

1. Ensuring the presence of an adequate number of Staff members throughout the different phases of an event (planning, organizing, managing, reporting). This can help to support the Project Manager(s) in a qualitative event management and also to foster a collaborative approach within the organization and the sharing of know-how across areas and functions. Moreover, this can help to be ready to deal with any and all sudden changes in the availability of Staff dedicated to the event, without any negative impact.

EVENT LOCATION

1. In the case of equal suitability to the purposes of the event, prefer online or hybrid mode instead of in-person only mode (economic and environmental efficiency)
2. In the case of in-person events or initiatives, prefer a single venue whenever possible. In the case of multiple locations, minimize the number of locations and choose facilities located within walking distance of each other, if possible

3. Choose facilities located at equal distance from the place of departure (in terms of region and/or city) of "beneficiaries/participants"
4. Prefer facilities well served by rail and/or local public transportation service (metro and bus)
5. Choose inclusive and fully accessible facilities, also for people with disabilities, reduced mobility or sensory capacity and special needs
6. Throughout the event location research and selection process, consider the environmental performance of the facility (thermal efficiency, electrical efficiency, green supplies, good waste management practices) and the certifications related to the sustainability profile (e.g., ISO 14001 or Ecolabel)
7. If provided as an option, prefer facilities with active social projects, both in-house and for the community

MOBILITY

1. Promote and facilitate, among "beneficiaries/participants," the use of collective public, private or completely green means of transportation (e.g., subway, bus, shuttle, car sharing, bicycles, etc.)
2. In the case of venues difficult to reach, arrange transfers for "beneficiaries/participants" by shared and collective means of transportation (to and from the airport, between event venues, to and from accommodation facilities)

SUPPLIERS AND COLLABORATORS

1. During the selection process of suppliers and collaborators, check their Integrity profiles (in terms of human rights, labour rights, anti-corruption, health and safety)
2. Do not apply a mere logic of cost efficiency to the selection process of suppliers and collaborators and avoid downward agreements in any case
3. Prefer the continuity and stability of supply and collaboration relationships
4. Prefer local suppliers and collaborators (based on the location of the event)
5. Prefer, for equal service and location, suppliers and collaborators with active sustainability profiles and/or holding certifications traceable to sustainable business management (e.g., ISO 14001, ISO 20400, SA 8000, etc.)
6. With equal service and location, prefer suppliers and collaborators with active social or environmental projects

FOOD CATERING & BANQUETING

1. Minimize the risk of leftover food and beverages by paying special attention to quantitative needs when booking the service
2. Ensure plastic-free and, if possible, paper-free services
3. Agree, for all requested services, to offer vegetarian menus with a vegan option as a sustainable and cruelty-free choice
4. Select caterers that manage waste according to a differentiated and recycling-oriented approach (e.g., caterers that use glass)

5. If provided as an option, prefer caterers that offer organic and zero-mile products
6. If provided as an option, prefer caterers with active social projects (e.g., projects for the inclusion of categories at risk of marginalization/with vulnerabilities) or ethical management/re-distribution mechanisms of leftovers (associations or charities)
7. At the planning stage, consider any specific dietary needs expressed by guests and related to health reasons (intolerances, allergies, etc.) or cultural aspects, always according to an inclusive approach

GADGETS AND MATERIALS

1. Manage the event in a plastic-free mode and minimize paper consumption
2. Equip the Organization with technologies and tools to support paper-free event management (e.g.: tablets)
3. Minimize, or even zero out, the production of *ad hoc* materials for the event (e.g., through reminders to QRCodes)
4. When producing informational material to be distributed to "beneficiaries/participants" of the initiative, select vendors close to the event venue to minimize emissions, and prefer the use of environment-friendly materials
5. Provide useful, functional and reusable gadgets that are not perceived as "disposable," and thus thrown away at the end of the event
6. Select gadgets that are: environment-friendly made from recovered materials; recycled and/or recyclable; compostable and/or biodegradable; certified as sustainable products
7. Collect leftover materials at the end of the event and, if possible, reuse them

COMMUNICATION AND AWARENESS-RAISING ACTIVITIES

1. Inform about this policy – through an informational flyer – all external parties involved in the planning, organizing, and executing processes of the event for the purpose of raising awareness and inspiring new best practices (e.g., partners and sponsors, suppliers, patronage parties, etc.).
2. Include, and periodically update, in the website (www.globalcompactnetwork.org) a page dedicated to this policy
3. Disseminate this policy via the organization's social channels (e.g., by producing carousels or video mini-clips)
4. Add a brief and effective disclaimer to the promotional materials, in order to inform users about the ethical and sustainable approach to event planning and management
5. Place on all promotional and/or informational materials of the event (e.g., social network banners, newsletter banners, digital agenda, slides, etc.) the *ad hoc* created banner/logo, as a distinctive element of the sustainable approach to event planning and management

SPONSORSHIP

The attendance to the events promoted by UNGCN Italy, in the framework of its activity programme, is normally free and no *ad hoc* fee is requested. The economic sustainability of those initiatives is guaranteed by the Foundation budget or thanks to the sponsorship of Italian businesses or stakeholder organizations, participating to UN Global Compact. The final approval of sponsorship requests also follows Integrity criteria and UNGC guidelines on the subject.

Throughout the sponsorship negotiation process, it is possible to propose the implementation of an additional item of expenditure – besides the ones already established to cover the event expenses –aimed at measuring the event carbon footprint. This is intended as an off-setting measure to compensate emissions produced by the event. Measurement and compensation of emissions can be entrusted to a third party (e.g., consultancy firms).

Il the above-mentioned sponsorship proposal, it is assumed that there is no "zero-impact" activity, even if organized after an accurate analysis of all the most sustainable alternatives. The *ex-post* approach, if embracing a sustainable management, can be a useful tool to compensate those activities that had an impact in terms of air pollution.

POLICY APPLICATION PROCEDURE

This policy will come into effect from the date of approval by resolution of the UNGCN Italy Board of Directors, with gradual application with regard to events now being organized. The Board of Directors must also deliberate on any subsequent revisions to the policy.

Responsibility for compliance with the policy at the organizational level lies with the Communications and Events Area, and enforcement of the policy affects the entire organizational areas. Any initiative carried out within the annual UNGN Italy activity program falls within the scope of this policy.

The Executive Director and the Programme and Engagement Areas are required to work closely in coordination with the Communication and Events Area, in the planning, organization and execution phases of the event, in order to ensure full compliance with the guidelines and indications shared with this policy. The application of this policy must be ensured also in the case of sponsorship and/or hosting agreements with third parties. In the case where the event is part of bigger events,, not characterized by a direct leadership of UNGCN Italy, the implementation of the policy will be ensured, as far as possible, being understood that all collaborations activated by the Network with other national and international actors are oriented to the dissemination of the culture of sustainable development.

The Communication and Events Area will fill out, in collaboration with the other organizational functions – on the occasion of each event promoted by UNGCN Italy – a brief summary sheet

on the actual compliance with the guidelines and indications of this policy, in order to ensure qualitative monitoring over time.

Date and place_____ July 25 2024 Signature of the President