



The following article outlines how the UK event Sector could build back better and has been included in Conference News November which was delivered to the homes of every UK MP.

***What is the solution to the economic, environmental, equality and health crises being faced: The UK Event Sector***

*There is an opportunity for the UK event sector to be a world leading example of #buildbackbetter.*

*At COP26 the UK Prime Minister could announce*

***“In the UK we are proud to be able to demonstrate how a sector destroyed by COVID 19 has been rebuilt and how the UK event sector will continue to be a world leader not only in the delivery of events but in the world’s progress towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.’***

*As this article is starting with a made up quote from a time in the future it makes sense to address the question of how realistic this future is and based on ongoing conversations, existing trials and innovative collaborations it is clear that with 4 steps to action a new reality could be created for the UK event sector and the UK governments deliver of world leadership.*

***Step 1: Demonstrate Leadership***

*In the lead up to COP 26 business sectors around the world are announcing carbon reduction targets. In collaboration with UNFCCC (the UN Climate Change Secretariat) and in line with action being taken by fashion and sport sectors the UK event sector could create a framework and trial UNFCCC measurement systems.*

*By COP 26 the UK government could invite other countries to bring their event sectors into this framework.*

*The opportunity for leadership is clear as stated by Miguel Naranjo, Programme Officer at the UNFCCC secretariat,*

***“We are witnessing many industry sectors mobilizing to transform their narrative and actions.. Public pressure for action is growing though. Those that do not start implementing serious action right now will be left behind. We encourage the events industry to use all opportunities to look at sustainability, skills and jobs under the same strategy for positive change, and to act with utmost urgency.”***

***Step 2; Create a new narrative for the sector***

*United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 has a target and indicator for enabling inclusive and participatory decision making. In collaboration with UN SDG Action and in line with existing UN Acceleration Action frameworks the UK event sector could communicate their value as being the enablers for SDG 16 and create new business opportunities with the world’s business and governments who have committed to the Sustainable Development Goals.*

*For example Unicef UK are due to launch guidelines on the consideration of human and child rights when planning an event and the UK event sector could lead the world in sharing this best practice approach.*

***Step 3: Build Capacity***

*In March 2020, UK based not for profit Positive Impact Events began an ‘upskilling programme’ which reached over 1,200 global event professionals and was recognised by UN SDG Action Campaign. As part of this initiative the British Embassy in Helsinki made it possible for toolkits to be shared and over 60 British Embassy’s to receive capacity building on how to use ISO 20121, the ISO management system standard for event sustainability inspired by the London Olympic and Paralympic Games.*



*Capacity building in this area would create exportable skills for the UK event sector and associated bodies, for example British Standards Institute who use standards to build capacity within industries around the world.*

***“Human connection and collaboration are at the heart of the work of British Embassies around the world, including in Helsinki. Sustainability is our priority and it is critical that we build back better from the Covid-19 pandemic. This sustainable event management workstream provides a means by which event professionals can connect, collaborate and communicate, while meeting some of the urgent environmental challenges we face.”***

*Mr. Tom Dodd, British Ambassador to Finland.*

#### **Step 4: Enable Innovation**

*The market for new technologies to enable human connection, participation and inclusion is significant. The potential advantage the UK sector could have is to develop these technologies within a #buildbackbatter framework, in line with ISO 20121, a UNFCCC framework for events, Unicef UK guideline for the consideration of human and child rights when planning an event and more.*

*This approach would benefit sector's beyond the event sector, for example the standard sector of which the UK is world leading.*

***Sustainability is part of BSI's purpose. We are the world's first national standards body, and proud to support the events industry through best practice standards. Inspired by the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, BSI developed the first sustainable event management system standard (ISO 20121) which is part of a suite of standards that can build capacity and drive more sustainable performance. BSI remains ready to help the industry 'build back better' from the pandemic through greater application of standards.***

*David Fatscher, Head of Sector British Standards Institute*

*These four steps are already being actioned under the leadership of UK based not for profit Positive Impact Events which has provided education, engagement and collaboration to create a sustainable event industry since 2005. There are already existing frameworks (for example ISO 20121 and the Unicef UK Guidelines for human and child rights) developed in the UK either already in use globally or with significant potential. The immediate and straightforward opportunity is to boost the amount of action. its impact and profile the UK's leadership to the world.*

*These four steps have the potential to impact beyond the development of business for a world leading UK event sector. For example enhancing the expertise of UK education institutions so the worlds students would choose to study in the UK. For example highlighting the expertise of the UK in standard making and certification so the world's business choose British certification. For example supporting the UK tech sector to innovate based on a proven human need to enable inclusion and participation in decision making.*

*With the insight of these four steps it is easy to understand how the made up quote this article started with is an unmissable opportunity for the UK Government to support the event sector to enhance existing activity and reclaim global leadership as a sector #builtbackbetter.*