



Sustainability Ambassador Program:

Buy-in Guide: How to Get Your Institution on Board

Thank you for your interest in the **Sustainability Ambassador Program**. We look forward to welcoming you to our community! Let's get started...

If you have your institution's support, then you are all set! Go ahead and register **here** and then we will get in contact to set up an introductory meeting and send you the contract.

If you need some help getting your institution on board, then this is the place to begin! In this guide, you will find some tips about how to approach your boss, how to identify who you need to talk to, and how to get your institution's approval. We have also created some additional resources to help you with the discussion:

- Sustainability Ambassador Program **Mission and Strategic Aims**
- **Buy-in Slide Deck**
- **SiC Student Ambassador Program Results**

If you would like to practice your pitch or get additional moral support before talking to your boss, you can always contact us and set up a meeting to chat more about the Program, ask questions, and get advice on how to get started. Simply send us an email at info@kiculture.com.

Ready to get your institution's buy-in? Here we go..!

STEP 1: WHO DO I TALK TO?

Good question! If you don't know who needs to sign off on this type of initiative, it is a great idea to start either by asking your direct supervisor or the facilities manager. Most facilities managers are really excited about sustainability and are working with upper management to reduce energy and waste already. So they are great allies to get on board and help you to find out whose approval you need. If you don't know who your facilities manager is, then a great point of entry would be your direct supervisor. Let them know about the Program and ask who you should talk to. They may end up being a powerful ally in getting the Program in front of the right person.

Still not having any luck? Then call on us and we can guide you!

STEP 2: WHAT DO I SAY?

Once you have identified who to talk to, how do you broach the subject? Whilst we have provided resources and an **overview** explaining the Program, words are always more effective than sending a ton of PDFs or asking them to look online - so we would like to help you begin the conversation.

Start with questions

One of the easiest ways to get your institution on board with the Ambassador Program is if they are already interested in sustainability. Once you have identified who to speak with, a good way to start the conversation is to ask what, if any, the institution's policies are on sustainability and if there are any measures or interest.

Talking about Sustainability

When talking about sustainability, don't make it sound accusatory or patronizing, but make sure to pose the question in a positive light. For example, you can start by identifying one aspect that is sustainable already about the organization and build on that: "I noticed that we have recycling bins next to all of the copy machines. That's terrific! Do you know if we have a sustainability policy here? Or is this something that our organization is engaging with?" Not only will this spark the conversation, but it will frame the institution as being champions of sustainability already.

You can also discuss your own personal interest. Describe what made you excited about applying more sustainable practices to your work - maybe your kids motivate you, or you have always been passionate about the environment. Whatever it may be, you have a story about why you want to do this - share it! That personal touch will absolutely help your cause.

A next step could be to bring up why the institution should be considering engaging with sustainability - maybe the museum is in an area where government mandates are requiring lower energy consumption, maybe your donors or visitors are interested in the topic (we all have a

vested interest - sustainability is also about people after all!), maybe there are social issues in the local community that need addressing, maybe your institution needs a bit of a revamp to become more relevant - whatever it may be - sustainability is the key!

The Business Approach - CSR and the Quadruple Bottom Line

In reality, most cultural heritage institutions are also businesses, with upper management teams that are responsible for executing the organization's business plan. So how might sustainability be relevant in this context? The real bottom line is that sustainability is good for business.¹ As consumers are becoming more ecologically aware and demanding sustainable products and services, businesses are learning that there are also many economic advantages to be gained from operating sustainably. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a business approach that contributes to sustainable development by delivering economic, social, and environmental benefits for all stakeholders.² Whereas the old bottom line was simple: how much money an organization can make, today, frameworks for measuring the success of an institution often come down to the triple bottom line: People, Planet, and Profit.³



Sarah Sutton of Sustainable Museums has added a fourth pillar for cultural organizations: Program.⁴

When approaching any sort of change at an organization, this is how management views decisions. So let's break down how the Ambassador Program fits this "quadruple bottom line":

¹ Larger shares of executives say sustainability programs make a positive contribution to their companies' short- and long-term value.
<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/sustainability/our-insights/the-business-of-sustainability-mckinsey-global-survey-results#>

² <https://enablon.com/blog/4-ways-companies-can-improve-their-sustainability-initiatives/>

³ "The triple bottom line is a sustainability-based accounting method that focuses on people, profit and planet."
<https://www.business.com/articles/triple-bottom-line-defined/>

⁴ <https://sustainablemuseums.blogspot.com/2010/05/quadruple-bottom-line-people-planet.html>

People

- Serves employees
- Serves communities
- Reconnects the institution to the local community
- Connects the institution with a global network
- Addresses social issues: internally, locally, and globally

Planet

- Reduces energy consumption
- Mitigates waste
- Provides sustainable alternatives and solutions for material use
- Supports sustainable water management
- Supports biodiversity

Profit

- Cost effective - cheaper than hiring a sustainability consultant
- Designed to pay for itself
- Includes actions that save money
- Focuses on a low/no investment, high impact solutions

Program

- Helps shape the institution in a positive way (positive PR)
- Helps make the institution relevant
- Facilitates partnerships and cooperation
- Educational programming for staff and visitors
- Addresses decolonization and repatriation
- Sustainable exhibitions and programming

Experts recognise that the most effective way to create truly sustainable businesses is by fostering a “culture of sustainability” - starting with employees.⁵ This might mean seeking out the people in the organization who are already passionate about the topic (people like you), or forming “green teams” that are responsible for implementing sustainability strategies.

We have built on success stories from other sectors and around the globe to create a Sustainability Ambassador Program tailored to help embed sustainability in cultural organizations and throughout the cultural sector itself.

⁵ “Though sustainability efforts begin with your CSR, getting employees involved is imperative to successful initiatives, because they’re the ones who make the biggest impact executing them. Start a “green team” for employees to meet and discuss ways to make changes that will have an everyday impact. These can be simple things such as starting a recycling program in the office, or huge initiatives like Xerox’s Community Involvement Program, which directly involves employees in community-focused sustainability initiatives. Not only does this garner community recognition, but also teaches employees how they play a part in sustainability. Further than just playing a part at work, these everyday initiatives engage employees to take those initiatives home with them, thus creating an even greater impact.” <https://enablon.com/blog/4-ways-companies-can-improve-their-sustainability-initiatives/>

STEP 2: HOW DO I APPROACH?

Now that we know what to say, let's work on your approach...

One thing to keep in mind when talking with upper management about sustainability is that it needs to be framed in a way that it will benefit their interests. So it's a great idea to prepare yourself a bit to see what will speak to them and how sustainability can align with the interests of your specific institution.

Here are some tips for approaching your bosses about sustainability:

- ***What is their focus? How can sustainability fit into their priorities? Is sustainability a priority for the institution already? Does your organization have a sustainability policy or strategy? Is it something that is being discussed?***

The goal here is to align the Sustainability Ambassador Program with the priorities and agenda of the institution that they have already set. If the museum has a sustainability policy in place, the Program can help them achieve their goals. If they don't, the Program can be their strategy and provide the roadmap.

- ***Is it something that is of personal interest or a priority to anyone in the institution besides you?***

This question will help you identify your allies and find out if there is anyone in the upper management or with direct influence who can join your cause.

- ***Highlight successes at other institutions as examples***

If the museum doesn't have a sustainability policy or an interest, sometimes a little peer pressure can help. By discussing what other, prominent institutions are doing and what kind of impact it is having you can make upper management feel like they also need to engage. You can also highlight what the governing bodies of the sector (ICOM, ICOMOS, IIC, UNESCO, ICCROM, etc.) are doing - demonstrating that if sustainability is not yet a part of the conversation, it should be - as everyone else is already getting involved.

- ***Demonstrate impact through facts and figures***

Sustainable initiatives need to be useful and make a tangible, measurable impact. No manager wants to invest in something if it won't do much. We have provided you with some figures on the impact from the **SiC Student Ambassador Program** as examples of what kind of impact can be expected.

- ***Money talks***

The Sustainability Ambassador Program does require a subscription fee to cover running costs. However, the Program is designed to save money and pay for itself! Some of the actions that it includes will result in immediate savings, allowing for longer term

investments on larger actions. Sustainability is a journey and the Program is an investment in that journey - which will pay off in many ways.

The Ambassador Program may also help your institution to gain or maintain financial support. Many funding bodies now include sustainability in their strategies, therefore the Program could help your institution adhere to the requirements of existing or potential subsidies.⁶

Read on for further tips on talking about money...

Money Money Money Money

We know that money is always an issue when it comes to the cultural sector - especially right now, when COVID-related budget cuts mean that institutions are looking for savings anywhere they can. If money is the driving factor for your institution, then make sure to highlight the financial benefits of the Program. Show how much bang they can get for their buck – or conversely how much they will save! While there are some great examples of savings on large scale projects, sustainability is still relatively new to our sector. One of the aims of the Sustainability Ambassador Program is to measure our progress together.

For an idea of the types of actions and savings you will gain, check out some of the examples below to see how much money and carbon has been saved by sustainability programs that have directly inspired and apply to us:

- Harvard University conducted a study that reported an annual savings of over \$240,000 (and a reduction of over 300 metric tonnes of GHGs) by simply keeping fume hoods shut in their chemistry labs.⁷
- McGill University in Canada reported a savings of \$75,800 a year (and reduced their energy consumption by 80%) by doing the same thing.⁸
- Lighting As A Service (LAAS) from Signify requires zero upfront costs for organizations to switch to LED lights. The circular LAAS program means that participants only pay for the use of the lights - while Signify remains responsible for the equipment, installation, and maintenance costs. Switching to LED lights can save 80% on energy and upwards of 50% on energy costs immediately. Schiphol Airport and the Rijksmuseum both use Signify LAAS.⁹

Sometimes we just wish we knew these simple energy-saving steps that cost NO MONEY! Well...that's what we provide through our Program. And much much more!

⁶ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/our-strategy-2020-2030>

⁷ <https://green.harvard.edu/programs/green-labs/shut-sash-program>

⁸ <https://www.environmentalleader.com/2013/07/universities-sustainability-initiatives-save-money-resources/>

⁹ <https://www.lighting.philips.com/main/cases/cases/museums/rijksmuseum-amsterdam>

UNIQUE SELLING POINTS

The Sustainability Ambassador Program was designed by cultural heritage professionals in collaboration with experts from the sustainability sector to find win-win solutions tailored to our needs as cultural institutions and practitioners.

In addition to fulfilling the sustainability aspirations of your institution, the Ambassador Program is designed for both immediate and long-term impacts. The Ki Books make sustainability accessible and the Regional Mentor program provides the support and connections needed to make your sustainability journey a success. All tools and resources are specifically for cultural heritage professionals to take action today.

Money savings

The Program is designed to save you money- from lowering your energy costs to streamlining effective use of materials and mitigating waste - the savings seen means the Program pays for itself. In addition to the financial savings you will see from participation in the Program, the Ambassador Program offers a low-cost way to find and implement those initiatives. Hiring an independent consultant to complete a sustainability audit and write a sustainability strategy could cost your institution as much as \$50,000. The Sustainability Ambassador Program has both of these built in. Our Regional Mentors are a team of highly experienced consultants who are on-call to answer Ambassador questions and offer ongoing support - all included in the price of the Program.

Fosters a “culture of sustainability” within the organization

The Sustainability Ambassador Program supports a transition to a sustainable culture within the organization. Rather than hiring an external consultant to “fix” the problem, the Ambassador Program aims to embed sustainability throughout the organization, from the conservation studios to the canteen, volunteers to VPs.

International network and local connections

The Program is designed not only to promote sustainability within the organization, but to help cultural organizations demonstrate sustainability at both a local and global level. Participation in the Program will connect your organization with local community partners and regional institutions as well as with other participants around the world. Your institution will be seen as leaders in the transition to a sustainable future and role models within our sector. The stage is set, now the actors are ready to shine.

STILL NEED HELP?

If you have any questions, would like to discuss any of the ideas presented here, or if you want to practice your pitch, please do not hesitate to get in touch! We are here to be your support system, to help guide you through this process, and strategize together.

Contact us as info@kiculture.com.

REFERENCES

- Forbes on how sustainability can increase business profitability:
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2017/10/31/how-to-leverage-sustainability-to-increase-business-profitability/#54422d2f3440>
- Finding money in recycling:
<https://phys.org/news/2012-10-companies-money-recycling.html>
<https://www.aaapolymer.com/commercial-recycling-save-money/>
- Economists recommend initiatives that could save businesses money:
<https://www.theneweconomy.com/business/top-six-environmental-initiatives-that-could-save-your-business-money>
- Learning from other sectors:
<https://www.healthcarefinancenews.com/news/hospitals-save-millions-sustainability-programs-cut-back-waste>

Register online at: www.kiculture.com/ki-programs

Or contact us for more information at: info@kiculture.com