

COPENHAGEN SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE

Case description #2

Reduce Waste

Disposable products are easy for the individual because it requires less planning, consideration, or work. During events and festivals, large quantities of disposable products are often used in relation to service, hygiene products, and printed communication materials. Some products may be completely dispensed with, while others can be replaced with more sustainable alternatives.

A lot of camping equipment and other materials on the camping area at the festival, is seen by the individual festival participant as something that must be bought cheap, so that it can be left behind after the festival ends. That way you do not need to make any effort like packing, transportation, cleaning and storing. Unfortunately, many festival participants believe that camping equipment left at the camping area is collected and donated to charity. This is not the case. All camping equipment that is left at the camping area will become waste. So how can we work to ensure that camping equipment is not bought and thrown away after the festival, but is increasingly used again and again?

Most of the festival site's waste consists of equipment left behind such as tents, air mattresses, pavilions, and camping chairs. When Roskilde Festival surveys their guests why they do not take it home, they most often answer that it is broken and useless.

Many people experience Roskilde Festival as a free space where every day norms can be paused to engage in a new and temporary environment and community. It can have an impact on the participants' sustainable behavior, where even those who act sustainably on a daily basis and would normally sort their waste, choose not to do so at the festival.

Although the amount of waste at Roskilde Festival has increased significantly since 1997, Roskilde Festival experiences a total waste reduction of 282 tons of waste from 2018-2019. This is seen as a sign of new clean-up habits and an unprecedented climate awareness among a solidary youth who take climate challenges seriously and want to break with the inherited consumption habits.

With a focus on consumption before and during Roskilde Festival, we must work on how we can reduce the amount of waste at the festival by thinking consumption differently. We need to use the products in a different and smarter way - or work with which products we use.

Over the past 20 years, the volume of waste produced at the festival has increased by approximately 76 tons per year. We have to change that.

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Your challenge

How can we reduce both the use of disposable products and the amount of new materials and products that are discarded immediately after or during Roskilde Festival?

The key to this challenge is practical solutions as well as change of behavior. With a focus on reducing the festival's, partners,' and participants' consumption, the focus can be everything from multiple use of materials, reduction of disposable materials, or the use of more sustainable alternatives. Think repairing, rental, recycling, refund systems... How can we use the same products in different contexts and make it easy for participants to use materials again? It can be anything from utensils, food, and beverages to camping gear.

Other things to consider

There may be several elements worth considering as part of your final idea:

Consider how the following factors may affect your solution:

- The weather. It can be very rainy or very hot. 2017 was the year with most waste due to heavy rain though out the festival. When your things get muddy and wet, you do not want to bring it back home.
- Consider if there is certain items or areas you want to focus on? What gives the greatest possible environmental impact and what is achievable?
- Roskilde Festival has approx. 130,000 participants including volunteers. Your solution can initially be tested for the few, but the good solution must eventually be scaled to many participants.
- Logistics: An idea can be great, but does it also work in real life? – how many people does it take to carry out at the festival? And is it possible?
- Can the solution be implemented at other festivals or mega-events?

Remember – it is not about finding the perfect idea that can include all parameters but showing that you have considered just some of the factors in your final presentation, will make your idea even better.

The largest amount of waste is at the camping area, but there is also plenty of waste left at the inner festival surroundings where there are music stages, food trucks and bars. Your team is free to choose whether you want to focus on the camping area, the festival site, or make a solution that cover both.

- The case description is based on Roskilde Festival's Resource and waste plan 2020-2024.

