

Sustainability integration across the exhibition industry value chain TIF-HELEXPO innovations and creativity

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Background

TIF-HELEXPO, Greece's premier exhibition and conference organizer is pioneering sustainability in an environment where such initiatives are not yet the norm (Greece ranks 24th out of 27 EU countries in terms of the Transitions Performance Index). Our dedication to embedding sustainability into our operations and business model is not just about internal transformation; it's about setting a new standard across the country and the exhibition industry at large.

Serving as a beacon in environmental and social responsibility, TIF-HELEXPO motivates and educates a diverse range of stakeholders – from businesses and trade visitors to society at large – through its pioneering initiatives. In a nation where sustainability practices are burgeoning, TIF-HELEXPO stands at the forefront, championing innovation and transformation through initiatives such as our fully electronic management system and the Zero Waste Expo initiative. These endeavors not only showcase our commitment to reducing our environmental footprint but also position us as pioneers in digital sustainability and waste management within Greece. Our achievements in carbon emissions reduction and the attainment of ISO 20121 certification for the Forward Green Expo set new standards for sustainable event management, encouraging other Greek organizations to follow suit. The Forward Green Expo and our sustainable event practices play pivotal roles in promoting sustainable business models, especially in a context where such awareness and adoption are nascent. Coupled with our efforts in stakeholder engagement through surveys and educational programs, we're not just advocating for a greener industry but also nurturing a broader cultural shift towards sustainability in Greece, reinforcing our position as a key player in the national and industry-wide move towards environmental and social responsibility.

We are committed for the coming years to operate and develop with sustainable development at the center of our strategy and activities, while maintaining the company's commitment to the values that characterize us and to the creation of economic value. We leverage our achievements so far as a solid foundation to continue contributing to efforts for a better and sustainable future for all.

Integration of Sustainability across the value chain

Our company consciously integrates the UN Sustainable Development Goals into its corporate strategy and daily operations, highlighting its innovative approach to promoting sustainability. Through the continuous integration of the principles of sustainability, social responsibility and economic efficiency, TIF-HELEXPO implements practices that support a sustainable direction of all stakeholders.

Stakeholders are defined as those who directly or indirectly influence the operation and activities of TIF-HELEXPO, as well as those who are affected by the company's business activities. Stakeholders are assessed at regular intervals and revised when necessary, always taking into account the company's values and strategy, as well as the overall business context. Interaction and dialogue with stakeholders is a dynamic process that significantly affects both the day-to-day operation and the decision-making process of the company, while strengthening the relationships of trust that have been formed between the cooperating entities. Below we list the stakeholders, ranked according to importance, which have been selected because of their significant association with the company.



Symbols / Criteria:

-  **Innovation & Creativity**
-  **Impact on Sustainable Development and Measurement**
-  **Promotion of Sustainable Product Offerings**
-  **Effective Stakeholder Engagement**

Innovation and digital infrastructure



We are constantly upgrading our digital systems for more efficient operation. Fully electronic management by the customer-exhibitor, without printing a single page of paper (Exhibitors' Registration, Visitors' Registration, B2B Meetings, Exhibitors' Area, Mobile App, Online Exhibitors Catalogue, Congress/Events Platform, Tickets On Line, Campus Access/Control). **Stakeholders involved:** Clients, Visitors, Society. **Results:** Paper free, Reduce Human Resources.



Waste management policy



We protect life on land by avoiding the production of harmful waste. Zero Waste Expo initiative: Exhibitors and visitors are recommended to take active action, placing their waste in the special sorting bins with distinct markings, thus ensuring the correct deposit of both recyclable materials and organic waste. With this process, waste streams are separated at source, collected and forwarded for recovery, with the aim of gaining a second life. After the end of the event, the total amount of waste collected is weighed, and the results are shared in order to be a comparable size for the next exhibition. The purpose is the gradual reduction of non-recyclable (unusable) waste, with the ultimate goal of zeroing it out. Active Participation in the European MINEV program with the Region of Central Macedonia regarding Waste minimization in large events. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees, Clients, Visitors, Society. **Results:** During the last trade fairs we managed to collect a large amount of recyclable materials.



Quality education



We pay attention to keeping our staff informed and well trained. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees. **Results:** Large number of training programs attended by employees.



Carbon emissions reduction



We're taking climate action by measuring our carbon footprint and implementing improvement practices: Electric vehicles, charging stations, Carbon footprint measurements. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees, Suppliers, Partners & Contractors, Society. **Results:** Continuous upgrading of facilities and application of innovative technologies. We also emphasize the information and training of our staff, as well as the integration of these practices into the daily operation of the company. All major supplier partners have ISO 14001 (Environmental Management).



Decent work and Economic Growth



We invest in the well-being of our employees by offering pension benefits, private insurance and education. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees. **Results:** Great Place to Work.



No Poverty



We contribute to the fight against poverty through enactment family admission ticket at a reduced cost to exhibitions and supporting charitable institutions. Free entry to all disabled visitors. Hosting the homeless during periods of extreme weather. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees, Clients, Visitors, State & Local Government, Society. **Results:** Greater attendance at exhibitions, meeting the needs of the Municipality of Thessaloniki for the homeless.



Zero Hunger



We participate in supporting the needy, granting to Municipality of Thessaloniki space for food distribution. **Stakeholders involved:** State & Local Government, Society. **Results:** Distribution of food to 5,200 beneficiaries.



Good Health & Well-Being



We ensure the health and safety of our employees by implementing a health and safety management system, including a safety technician and an occupational physician. Furthermore, social support is expressed through a series of initiatives and actions aimed at contributing to the well-being and health of society as a whole. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees, Suppliers, Partners & Contractors, State & Local Government, Society. **Results:** During the covid-19 pandemic, a vaccination center operated at our company's premises, while we also host blood donation units, at regular intervals. We provide tents and modern air disinfection machines in hospital units of the city. We host Hellenic National Public Health Organization (35 cars) and a vehicle station of National Emergency Centre to more directly serve the needs of citizens. All major supplier partners have ISO 45001 (Health and Safety).



Gender Equality



We promote gender equality, by a significant percentage of women in our human resources. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees. **Results:** 45.3% of employees are women, while 54.5% of positions of responsibility are occupied by women.



Clean Water & Sanitation



We manage water resources responsibly, with automatic watering systems and periodic monitoring for leaks. The new exhibition center will have reduced water consumption. **Stakeholders involved:** Society. **Results:** water saving, anti-flooding projects.



Stakeholder satisfaction surveys



We carry out satisfaction surveys of exhibitors, visitors and others involved in exhibition activity. **Stakeholders involved:** Clients, Visitors, Society **Results:** These surveys are tools for feedback and improvement of the organization.



Reduced Inequalities



We reduce social inequalities through donations to schools, churches, charitable organizations and other charitable actions. Also, the facilities are accessible. **Stakeholders involved:** Clients, Visitors, Society **Results:** Accessibility study, rehabilitation of ramps, and supply of new modern lifts.



Sustainable Cities & Communities



We create sustainable cities and communities through the renovation of our exhibition center with bioclimatic solutions. We also cooperate with the Municipality of Thessaloniki on green issues. We are following an updated parking policy. **Stakeholders involved:** State & Local Government, Society. **Results:** Tree planting. Free parking for exhibitors and visitors at almost all exhibitions. Free parking outside the city and transport with our own buses to the Agrotica exhibition. Free parking for citizens in special circumstances of the city.



Responsible Consumption & Production



We practice responsible consumption and responsible services through our Quality Policy. **Stakeholders involved:** Society. **Results:** We monitor and, where necessary, correct the course of the company through the establishment and systematic monitoring of measurable goals/indicators.



Life below Water



We collaborate with Thessaloniki Water Supply & Sewerage Co S.A. (EYATH S.A.) for sustainable management of water resources. **Stakeholders involved:** Society. **Results:** The company does not produce waste that may pose a risk to the aquatic environment.



Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions



We promote peace, justice and strong institutions by avoiding child and forced labor and implementing a Code of Ethics. Regulatory compliance. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees, Clients, Visitors, Suppliers, Partners & Contractors, Society **Results:** Regulatory Compliance System Framework, Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct, Anti-Corruption & Bribery Policy, Gifts & Hospitality Policy, Third Party Due Diligence Policy, Reporting Policy, Donations Policy, Anti-Violence & Harassment Policy



Partnerships for the Goals



We contribute to the cooperation to achieve the goals, working with government agencies and regional associations. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees, State & Local Government, Unions, Associations & Chambers, Society. **Results:** We develop lasting partnerships and participations with various agencies, helping to create enhanced and mutually beneficial collaborative relationships.



Forward Green Expo



The 'Forward Green' (FG Expo) is a HELEXPO endeavor designed to foster a fresh entrepreneurial mindset in Greece. It centers on promoting a circular economy, sustainable development, and the evolution of business models, all with the goal of preserving our natural resources and advancing toward a sustainable future. **Stakeholders involved:** Employees, Media, Clients, Visitors, State & Local Government, Unions, Associations & Chambers, Society.



Results: This particular exhibition is an important gathering point for industry experts, a point for concluding business agreements, but also for informing society about sustainability issues. Remaining faithful to sustainability principles and driven by the achievement of ESG goals, TIF - HELEXPO has pursued and obtained ISO 20121 certification for the exhibitions Forward Green & Renewable EnergyTech from the certification company Bureau Veritas.



Lessons learnt

At TIF-HELEXPO we aim for the purpose and development of our business action to align with the pillars of sustainable development, thus contributing to a world where innovation meets responsibility. We seek to be pioneers in developing solutions that respect the environment, strengthen society and promote economic prosperity. Our experience has shown that the exhibition industry can contribute in this direction, as long as there are appropriate partnerships. Our collaboration with all stakeholders has ongoing challenges, but also significant opportunities. We are constantly learning from our partnerships, seeking to continuously facilitate the sustainability of all stakeholders in the exhibition industry chain.



Next steps – Thessaloniki ConfEx Park

The vision of TIF-HELEXPO to ensure resources and healthy conditions for the next generations is coming to fruition through a grand plan to renovate our facilities.

TIF-HELEXPO, with its decision to proceed to a major redevelopment of the whole property by designing and constructing of a sustainable, environmentally friendly and state-of-the-art ConfEx Centre, together with a new urban Park, is envisioning a project that will dominate the downtown area of the city of Thessaloniki. The ConfEx

Park is expected to play a significant role in the economy of the city, by contributing to its transformation to an important international business and tourist destination.

The project goal is the cost-effective design of a ConfEx Centre to the highest-standards that will optimize the connection between buildings layout and associated activities within the site. The project also aims to further enhance the local, regional and international role of TIF-HELEXPO and create a new iconic landmark for the

city that will also act as a milestone for the business history of the broader region, respecting the environment and the principles of sustainable development.

The ConfEx Park should reach an exemplary level of environmental design. An environmentally friendly approach is the main concept of the entire project and focuses on specific key points, which mainly comprise sustainability of construction works and materials, low emissions, circular economy and efficient thermal comfort.

