



Green Team Guide



Why start a MEDA Green Team?

Environment and climate change are core components of how MEDA approaches its work around the world, ensuring the integration of environmental sustainability in all we do. MEDA's Environment and Climate Change Policy reflects this commitment across the organization. At MEDA, we can be environmentally conscious not only in our project work but also in the office, and that's where Green Teams help!

MEDA's Green Teams raise general awareness among our colleagues about environmental and climate change issues, and mobilize action at the office to ensure that we are working as sustainably as we can. MEDA's first Green Team started at headquarters (HQ) in Waterloo, ON and has actively distributed knowledge on environment and climate change issues and held events and challenges so that everyone can participate to be more environmentally conscious.

In this guide...

This guide will help you set up a Green Team at your own MEDA office. In **'How to get started'**, we provide answers to the most Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), but always remember that MEDA's HQ Green Team is available to help! Then in **'Ideas for promoting a greener office'**, we suggest a few actions you can take to help your office be more conscious of waste, conserving energy and water, becoming healthier, and connecting with others who are celebrating our natural environment around the world. Finally, in **'Resources'** you will find links to a few videos that you can share with your team and your office from time to time, to keep you motivated.



How to get started

Starting a MEDA Green Team is easy!
Here is a list of FAQs to help you begin.

1. Who do we include on the team?

Creating a greener office is not difficult, but it cannot be done by one person alone. With a team, we benefit from different people's experiences, ideas, and passion for our planet. Depending on the size of your office, we recommend your Green Team includes a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 10 people. Ask around to find colleagues who share an interest in sustainability, and aim for representation from different departments so that the Green Team is visible across the organization.

2. Who leads the Green Team?

Anyone can lead a Green Team! It doesn't need to be the Environment Specialist, although we recommend this person is at least a team member to provide technical advice and ideas. MEDA's HQ Green Team rotates its leadership among members every quarter so that all of us get a chance to lead together. The leader's responsibility is simply to create meeting agendas, send invites for meeting dates to all members, and then ensure someone is taking notes (minutes) during the meeting.

3. How often do we meet?

We recommend meeting every 1-2 months, or sometimes more often if there are Green Team activities or events that need to be planned and discussed. Secure a room that has enough space and access to a projector, such as a boardroom, in case you need to look at resources together.

4. How do we get support from management?

You already have it! MEDA's Environmental Policy describes our commitment to environmental sustainability in everything we do, and managers in all our global offices are encouraged to support local Green Teams. MEDA HQ's Green Team also provides support to local teams by sharing strategies, ideas, and other resources.

5. How much does it cost?

Most of MEDA's Green Teams do not have a budget, and simply create fun, no-cost ways for their office to learn more about the natural environment and how to become better stewards of it. If your team would like to engage in activities that require minimal funds, such as printing posters or purchasing energy-saving lightbulbs, speak with your manager to learn whether project funds can be used.

6. What do we talk about when we meet?

You should create an agenda for each meeting, which will help to guide the team on assessing how things are going and what can be done to continue to make your office more environmentally friendly. Minutes, or notes, should also be taken at each meeting and then shared with everyone on the team prior to the next meeting so they can remember what was discussed. Here is a sample agenda:

1. Review minutes from last Green Team meeting
2. Planning for any current or upcoming Green Team initiatives, including responsibilities
3. Brainstorming for future initiatives

Ideas for promoting a greener office



Here are some things Green Teams can do to help us and our colleagues foster a stronger appreciation for our natural environment, and together make a difference:

Reducing waste

- ☀️ Make sure your office has recycling bins in every room if recycling is supported in your area. If not, be creative on how you can re-use and minimize the glass, metal, plastic and paper that your office typically discards.
- ☀️ Declare a 'no-print' day. Encourage colleagues to use only electronic versions of documents for reviewing and sharing. Set 'double-sided' as the default setting on printers.
- ☀️ Save discarded papers that are printed on one side only and use them for scrap paper. Set-up places to keep GOOS (good on one side) paper.
- ☀️ Place a compost bin in the kitchen. Find out if any of your colleagues have a garden at home and if they would be willing to bring office compost home one or two days a week. Set up a rotation so staff can take turns.
- ☀️ In washrooms and kitchens: use cloth towels rather than paper.
- ☀️ Put up a small poster in the kitchen to encourage staff to bring in garbage-less lunches and snacks. Remind them to use thermoses or cups instead of plastic.

Saving energy

- ☀️ Replace light bulbs in the office with energy-saving bulbs if available, and promote the purchase of energy-saving appliances and equipment.
- ☀️ Encourage colleagues to take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- ☀️ Unplug cell phone chargers, laptops, TVs and anything else with an LED display – the so-called 'energy vampires' – until you need them.
- ☀️ Equip kitchens and bathrooms with lights that turn off automatically after some time. Or, put up signs to remind people to turn lights off when leaving these rooms.
- ☀️ Minimize use of heat and air conditioning. In warm weather, close blinds when the sun is shining brightly to keep rooms cooler.

Conserving water

- ☀️ Encourage your office to stop using plastic water bottles. Make sure your kitchen is stocked with plenty of glasses and mugs, and encourage colleagues to bring in their own non-disposable water bottles.
- ☀️ Repair leaky faucets and running toilets right away.
- ☀️ If your office has a dishwasher appliance, use the economy setting and only run when it is full.
- ☀️ Don't pour water down the drain that can be used for watering plants
- ☀️ Keep a jug of water in the refrigerator instead of letting the faucet run until the water is cold.



Improving health

- Encourage exercise – for example, when going out for lunch with colleagues, walk rather than drive.
- Plan green lunches, such as a monthly salad club where MEDA provides the greens and everyone else brings in a different topping to share.
- Green lunch and learn, about a topic in environment/climate change

Connecting to a global cause

- Earth Day is celebrated globally on **April 22nd**. Engage your office in observing it by showing a video, putting up a poster, or trying out some of the activities above.
- Earth Hour is a worldwide movement organized by the World Wide Fund for Nature every March, where people are encouraged to turn off their lights for one hour to recognize our global need to conserve energy.
- Celebrate International Day of Forests (March 21 annually).
- Others?

Resources

Here are some links to short videos you can show at meetings or events.



- [FAO – global food wastage footprint](#)
 - [Part 1](#) (3 minutes)
 - [Part 2](#) (3 minutes)
- [Waste Management](#) - recycling and tips for how to recycle properly (2 minutes)
- [AsapScience & Bill Nye](#) - understanding impact of rising temperatures (6 minutes)
- [National Geographic & Bill Nye](#) - understanding climate change and what we can do (4 minutes)
- [TED Talks](#) on environmental sustainability/climate change