TEDx Thaltej Youth

x = independently organized TED event

ISO 20121:2024 Audit Report
(For April 2025)

ISO 20121:2024 – Monthly Internal Audit Report
Month: April 2025
Standard: ISO 20121:2024 – Event Sustainability Management System
Submitted by: Fenil Shah, Organizer

1. Introduction & Objective

This report documents the sustainability-related activities, decisions, and observations made by TEDxThaltej Youth in April 2025 in alignment with ISO 20121:2024 standards. This being the first full month of our sustainability implementation, the team focused on minimizing environmental impact through practical changes, material decisions, internal education, and the elimination of non-essential physical items from event planning.

The objective for April was to transition from traditional event material practices toward more responsible, eco-conscious alternatives without compromising functionality, attendee experience, or team coordination.

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2. Digital-First Shift in Planning and Attendee Materials

One of the most critical sustainability decisions made in April was the **complete removal of physical printed documents** from our planning, communication, and distribution strategy. This includes the discontinuation of printed brochures, speaker booklets, attendee handouts, forms, and even pens in delegate kits.

In their place, we introduced a **fully digital information system**, wherein all attendee resources, talk information, event schedules, and guidelines will be shared through QR codes and live Google Docs. No physical materials are planned for the audience. This approach significantly reduces paper waste and ink consumption while aligning with our paperless documentation policy.

All teams have adopted this digital-first approach, and documentation is handled entirely via cloud-based tools and secure hard drives.

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3. Sustainable Event Kits: Jute Bags & Recycled Materials

As part of our effort to move toward sustainable event production, TEDxThaltej Youth has decided to include **jute bags** in the final attendee kits instead of plastic or synthetic tote bags. Jute is a biodegradable, reusable, and locally available material that aligns with our eco-conscious sourcing strategy.

Additionally, the **entry bands for attendees** will be produced using **100% recycled paper** with non-toxic ink printing. These bands were chosen specifically to avoid plastic-based wristbands which are common in most events and typically discarded after use.

Both of these decisions were reviewed and finalized by the Operations team, with confirmation from the Quality Compliance and Sustainability Monitoring teams.

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4. Elimination of Non-Essential Items

The team made a collective decision to eliminate items that do not serve a long-term purpose or carry sustainability value. This includes branded pens, notebooks, and keychains — all of which were present in previous event editions but offer little to no use after the event.

Instead, the focus is now on creating a **minimal, high-impact kit** that delivers value without waste. This helps lower production volume, reduce shipping material, and support our zero-waste packaging goal.

5. Sustainable Vendor Discussion and Filtering

Vendors who supply materials to TEDxThaltej Youth were contacted with a brief that clearly communicates our sustainability expectations. As of April, we began tracking vendor alignment on criteria such as:

- Use of recyclable, compostable, or reusable materials
- Local sourcing (within Gujarat)
- Packaging style and waste handling

Vendors unable to meet these expectations were respectfully declined and replaced. A shortlist of sustainable suppliers is being created and will be locked in by the end of May.

6. Team Education and Awareness Building

The entire team was briefed on ISO 20121 principles and sustainability expectations at the internal level. Every department was tasked with identifying at least two ways to reduce environmental impact in their work process — this included limiting unnecessary energy use, reusing props, avoiding unnecessary printing at home, and reducing physical commuting where possible.

Directors are required to document their department's sustainability decisions weekly and share them with the Organizer or Co-Organizer.

7. Observations and Sustainability Challenges

- The digital shift was well accepted, though a few departments initially struggled with real-time coordination without printed papers.

- Some suppliers were not familiar with sustainability terminology and required extra explanation.
- A few volunteers requested physical notebooks for planning, which were declined in favor of shared Google Docs and collaborative tools.

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8. Corrective Measures and Initiatives

- Volunteers were trained to use shared digital task lists instead of personal printouts.
- A sustainability "decision matrix" was created to help teams compare eco-options against standard event practices.
- All material orders going forward must be pre-approved with sustainability notes added.
- Each department now tracks a simple monthly sustainability log which will feed into future ISO reports.

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9. Supporting Evidence and Attachments Available (Upon Request)

- Screenshot of jute bag design with vendor quote
- Sample QR-based brochure format
- Recycled paper entry band design
- Photos from team training session
- Sustainability checklist (April version)
- Vendor communication samples (email threads)
- Screenshot of sustainability folder in team drive

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10. Conclusion and Way Forward

April 2025 marked a fundamental shift for TEDxThaltej Youth from a traditional student-led event toward a deeply sustainable, systems-based platform. These changes reflect a long-term commitment, not just a certification phase. In May, the team aims to complete vendor selection, finalize digital-only audience interaction flow, and track estimated savings in material, packaging, and carbon load.

TEDxThaltej Youth remains fully committed to the values of ISO 20121:2024 and will continue to report progress, improvements, and honest challenges in each monthly audit.

[END OF AUDIT REPORT]