



## 2022 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title of the Story: Royal Djurgården – connecting Swedish cultural heritage with modern sustainable thinking.

Destination Name: Royal Djurgården, Stockholm

Country: Sweden

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Submission category:

- Governance, Reset & Recovery
- Nature & Scenery
- Environment & Climate
- Culture & Tradition
- Thriving Communities
- Business & Marketing

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## DESCRIBE YOUR GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

### Issues faced

Over 15 million yearly visitors to one island in the center of Sweden's capital Stockholm, makes Royal Djurgården Scandinavia's number 1 attraction. The island is particularly important for its cultural and historical values and is part of the world's first National City Park. Covering 3 km<sup>2</sup> it hosts, besides large park areas a range of attractions such as 22 museums, 30 restaurants, several art galleries, theatres and one amusement park. With a 400-year tradition of welcoming visitors, sustainable thinking is not new to us at Royal Djurgården. In a changing world, we felt an urge to increase our efforts to face today's and tomorrow's challenges together in a responsible and more coordinated way.

Everything we do has to be driven by our passion for culture, history, and entertainment in a resilient society - the choices we make will define us.

This island, one of the 14 islands Stockholm is built upon, is governed by the Swedish Royal Court through the Royal Djurgården Administration (Kungliga Djurgårdens förvaltning, below KDF). Together we recognized that as a major player in Sweden's tourism industry, Royal Djurgården has both an obligation and opportunity to set a good example and inspire others on the way to more sustainable tourism, thus spearheading a more sustainable society.

The issue/project: We as DMO - Royal Djurgården Society (Kungliga Djurgårdens Intressenter, below KDI) and KDF needed to get 60 separate attractions at Djurgården to work together to protect historical values and traditions in balance with the need for the attractions to grow and develop, all sustainably. With no direct power and limited resources – could we convince the attractions to put competition aside, set common sustainability goals and strive to reach set goals together? At the same time - we might be an island, but we are not alone. Could we as a group create strategic partnerships with the city and the region of Stockholm, the County Administrative Board and important NGOs needed to achieve many of our goals, based on our passion for a more sustainable tourism?

### Methods, steps and tools applied

**WORKING TOGETHER.** In 2016 the attractions at Djurgården started working on a common identity. Agreeing on five shared values "working together" was naturally one, and it is central to the way we work. The agreement we have set up is never to work together for the sake of it, but always for the purpose of creating or solving something that we can do better together than individually. Sustainable development clearly fits into this category.

**CREATING A DEDICATED SUSTAINABILITY TEAM.** With this core value in mind, a dedicated sustainability team was created in 2018. It is led by KDI and supported by KDF, consisting of representatives from the attractions. This team is instrumental to our joint work. Taking time out of their ordinary work, to contribute to our common, gives





*the destination a unique and broad spectrum of knowledge, and the commitment from the destination's major players gives us the mandate needed to drive the work forward. The work includes initial visions and ideas, the development of strategies and concrete action plans as well as planning and implementing initiatives. This is all for the benefit of Djurgården as a whole, as well as of the individual attractions. The sustainability team has consciously shared the work with all colleges within the destination.*

*IDENTIFYING WHERE WE MAKE THE MOST IMPACT AND ACT UPON IT. Working on our common identity, we also needed facts. The first step was to map out and analyse our own impact. With that knowledge we could make informed, clear decisions about how we can reduce negative and increase positive impact.*

*Second, with that as a base, we 2018 identified four focus areas to work within, see below.*

*Third, work began to create and invite activities under each focus area with the objective to raise awareness, share knowledge and promote action among the 60 attractions. Through KDI, external lecturers primarily from different NGOs have trained attractions on inclusive hosting, sustainable procurement, the road to a fossil-free society, how to replace disposables with reusables, etc. through monthly meetings. Restaurants have gone through workshops and individual coaching to enhance sustainability efforts.*

*AIMING FOR COMMON SUSTAINABILITY GOALS. In parallel, the sustainability team has been working hard to develop common, short and long-term sustainability goals within the focus areas. The plan was to present the suggestion in 2020 but the pandemic made this impossible.*

*We resumed work in November 2021 when all attractions met for 1/2-day to discuss proposed objectives presented by their peers in the sustainability team. After feedback, final adjustments were made, and at the annual meeting in April 2022, the ambitious, common, short, and long-term sustainability goals aiming for 2027 were adopted.*

*For the sake of transparency KDI informs the local community about the project on a regular basis. This is done via full page ads in local and national newspapers and our own website. At the same time, we ask for input or feedback through established channels.*

*1) A fossil-free and traffic smart Djurgården: Promoting fossil-free operations, public transportation and better infrastructure for walking and bicycling, will make Djurgården accessible for all and facilitate locals and visitors' possibilities to exercise. Reduced private car traffic and turning parking spaces into areas of recreation, enjoyment and experience will contribute to local environmental, social, and economic benefits where some examples are:*

- *Reduced air and noise pollution in an environmentally and culturally sensitive area as well as easier access and a better living environment for residents as well as visitors.*
- *Increased local fossil-free traffic and operations are necessary for the city of Stockholm to reach set emission targets.*
- *With a reduced number of private cars, visitors can spend more time and money at local restaurants, shops, museums, and other attractions instead of in traffic queues or searching for parking spaces.*
- *Reduced use of plastics and disposables within operations benefits society, nature, and wild animals in many ways, one is reduced littering.*





2) A sustainable food culture: With some 30 restaurants at Djurgården, we want to be a driving force for a sustainable restaurant industry. The way our food is produced and consumed has a major impact on the environment, social society, and economy. The Project address all three areas as:

- Promoting the fight against food waste in our local restaurants will not only result in reduced GHG emissions, but it can also contribute to significant cost reductions to the restaurants by reduced need for procurement, and to the society e.g., by reduced need for waste management.
- An increased share of own grown and organic produce will together with guidance from WWF: s recommendations regarding procurement of meat, fish and vegetables benefit local suppliers, the environment and biodiversity.
- Supporting and promoting local restaurants in their work to always offer vegetarian/vegan options, present sustainable sources of protein in an attractive way will, together with presentation of the carbon footprint caused per dish, help to nudge guests to both healthier and more sustainable choices.

3) Open, accessible, and welcoming Djurgården: Djurgården is for everyone, therefore we continue to educate ourselves, build key partnerships and put accessibility at the heart of everything we do. Below are some examples of how actions related to this focus area addresses both environmental, economic, and social aspects:

- By supporting the work to extend the tourism season and make Djurgården known as a year-round destination, opportunities for better economic sustainability for local operators, and more secure working conditions for locals are created. More evenly balanced visits will result in reduced congestions during normal high season and a more vibrant destination during normal low season.
- Through our joint lighting project, lighting is based on the unique conditions of each location within the destination. This is important work when balancing safety for residents, visitors, and employees against respect for the environment and wildlife.
- By carrying out a review of the overall litter and waste situation at Djurgården and forming a structure for recycling, waste management will be more efficient, resulting in e.g., fewer transports and better working conditions.

4) A world exhibition on sustainability: Through our attractions, activities, and the exhibitions we offer, we inspire and educate millions of visitors every year. This tradition has been carried on since 1897 when Djurgården hosted the Stockholm World Fair, and the work also aims to make Djurgården the arena for testing sustainable innovation. Again, all three aspects of sustainability are addressed under this fourth focus area as:

- It aims to increase the attractiveness of Djurgården and the local attractions, creating an advantage for good partnerships and attracting important meeting organisers to the destination.
- Involving our different stakeholders, e.g., supply chains via Code of Conducts and policies for sustainable procurement, will benefit sustainable development of our local community.
- An important part of this focus area is for all of us at Djurgården to share information about our work to preserve, use and develop our cultural heritage in a way that inspires our stakeholders such as visitors, local community, suppliers, and employees.





### Key success factors

- *Gather around a strong identity as a destination, stating that long term sustainable thinking as a part of our history and identity.*
- *Leadership, with limited resources and no official power KDI and KDF gets its mandate through consistency, clear and attractive common goals*
- *Structure and transparency, strict agendas, and scheduled meetings. Monthly meetings are held for members with sustainability as a standing item on the agenda.*
- *Building a sustainability team with Champions of the sustainable destination among the attractions.*
- *Building trust and creating a positive culture of generous knowledge sharing within the destination and having the courage to act.*
- *Engagement, recognizing everyone's views as important and understanding that conditions are different for attractions.*
- *Strong collaboration with organisations outside the destination, for inspiration and practical tools.*
- *Flexibility to change focus in troubled times to keep the work going.*
- *Good cooperation with representatives and decision makers from the City and Region of Stockholm and the County Administrative Board as well as Visit Stockholm and Visit Sweden.*

### Lessons learned

*HOLD ON IN DIFFICULT TIMES The pandemic challenged the work plan. When the attractions were fighting for survival, extra pressure was put on KDI, KDF and the sustainability team to ensure that the work continued, and no work was lost. The solution was to get back to the core and prepare for when opening again. For inspiration in tough times a sustainability site was built with Djurgården's attractions and other actors in the industry as targets.*

*It reports on the sustainability work that has been done and is planned, both jointly and by individual attraction. Good examples are shared to build pride and offer inspiration. It also contains a toolbox with suggestions on how members can create their CoC and sustainability policy, the joint commitment to reduce plastic and disposables, sustainable events policy, and more.*

*The site was launched in May 2021 and the content is constantly renewed. Stakeholders also participate by guest blogging. Being able to change focus and see new opportunities in a difficult situation has been very important. The sustainability site is now a valuable resource in the ongoing work. At the same time, the shared vision was revised, and the target date moved forward to 2027 with sub-targets set for 2025 and 2022.*





## Results, achievements and recognitions

*The work towards a sustainable destination is ever ongoing. Now, working on action plans on how to reach our goals we can already see positive results such as:*

- *Four focus areas with short, and long-term goals for a sustainable development at Djurgården, adopted by all 60 attractions.*
- *Through a structured way of working together with sustainability issues in the destination, both knowledge and engagement from attractions has risen.*
- *We can follow the work through a common platform ([sustainable.royaldjurgarden.se](https://sustainable.royaldjurgarden.se)) for inspiration and transparency, benefiting attractions and the sector.*
- *The CEO of KDI is regularly invited to universities to lecture to tourism students about the work.*

*Goals need to be accompanied with strategies on how to reach them. As an example, deeming accessibility and mobility as a major challenge KDI and KDF commissioned an external traffic study. The results have been used to influence decision-makers in the city to investigate solutions for a more traffic-smart Djurgården. The study was presented in April 2022, and some of the results from the study were tried out IRL in June 2022. In the height of high season, a car free destination was tested, giving important information on how to proceed towards a more accessible traffic smart destination.*

*Another example is how KDI promotes a sustainable food culture at Djurgården. To raise awareness and knowledge around the topic among the local restaurants KDI:s membership of the network- Sustainable Restaurants, offers free initial training within an established program which consists of 4 workshops covering themes such as food, environment, climate, accessibility, economy, communication, and social sustainability. In addition to this, every participating restaurant has received an analysis of their current work, with a plan on how to move forward and to kick start the process they have had access to a designated sustainability coach. So far, 19 out of 30 restaurants have participated in the program. Some restaurants have after their initial training become individual members of the network themselves. Meanwhile, the program is ongoing with the aim that all local restaurants will participate.*





#### Additional references

<https://sustainable.royaldjurgarden.se/en/home-en/> Royal Djurgården Sustainability Site, with lots of stories on how we work

[https://sustainable.royaldjurgarden.se/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Sustainability-Goals\\_RoyalDjurgarden-Society\\_20220420.pdf](https://sustainable.royaldjurgarden.se/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Sustainability-Goals_RoyalDjurgarden-Society_20220420.pdf) Royal Djurgarden Sustainability Goals

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lijhdbNSs9Bo> Royal Djurgården Sustainability film

<https://www.youtube.com/royaldjurgarden> Royal Djurgården- Youtube Channel

<https://royaldjurgarden.se/pressrum/#/> Royal Djurgården Press Room Link to press release re traffic smart week.

<https://royaldjurgarden.se/djurgardsnytt-sa-berattar-vi-om-utvecklingen/> Link to newspaper ads with information and request for feedback

