

Interpreting & Sustainability

BUSINESS CASE



ESG



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Reduce the environmental
impact.



SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Effective tool in the fight
against linguistic isolation.



GOVERNANCE SUSTAINABILITY

Fair and ethical business
practices in the industry.

Environmental Sustainability

AIIC and its members are taking steps to reduce the environmental impact of interpreting activities. Some of the ways AIIC helps promote sustainability:

Encouraging event organisers to prioritise sustainability when planning conferences and other events.

AIIC provides guidance on how to reduce the environmental impact of events, such as by using sustainable materials, reducing waste, and choosing sustainable venues.

AIIC Conference Interpreters are encouraged to be environmentally friendly and to do their utmost to minimise their carbon footprint when planning their travel, consumption, use of digital tools and in all their activities.

Providing resources and training to its members on sustainability, such as how to reduce the environmental impact of interpreting activities and how to work with organisations that have sustainability goals.

Supporting sustainable transportation: AIIC provides guidance on how to minimise the environmental impact of travel, such as by offsetting carbon emissions from air travel.

Social Sustainability

Interpreting is a key tool in the fight against linguistic isolation. It effectively increases accessibility and inclusivity.

Interpreting plays a critical role in facilitating communication and understanding across different languages and cultures, which is essential for achieving Sustainable Development Goals 4, 5, 16.

By providing interpretation services, events can become more accessible and inclusive, enabling individuals and communities from diverse backgrounds to participate and engage in important discussions and decision-making processes.

Interpreting builds trust and promotes collaboration between different stakeholders by facilitating effective communication and understanding.

Governance Sustainability

As the International
Association of
Conference
Interpreters, AIIC:

Encourages its members to comply with relevant standards and regulations, including ISO standards related to quality management, such as ISO 23155:2022 on conference interpreting services.

Has a system for monitoring the professional conduct of its members, which includes a process for investigating complaints and taking disciplinary action if necessary.

Advocates for fair and ethical business practices in the language service industry. This includes promoting transparency, ethical working conditions, and respect for the rights of interpreters and other language professionals.

Conference interpreting and the SDGs



Conference interpreting facilitates communication and understanding in educational conferences and events across different languages and cultures.



Globally, women are less likely to speak a second language that would allow them to participate meaningfully in international meetings. Interpreting services effectively contribute to their voices and perspectives being heard. Also, interpreting is a highly feminised profession where gender equality is within reach.



Conference interpreting reduces misunderstandings and fosters greater understanding and cooperation between people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Case study 1

Individual AIIC member

"As a free-lance interpreter who tries to live in a sustainable way, I have a guilty conscience about flying – Swedish has a word for that: Flygskam. I always take the train for short trips between cities; but last year, when I got a long contract with the International Court of Justice, The Hague, I decided to test the train: leaving Madrid at 13h25. It took me 23 hours—including connection time and a night train between Toulouse and Paris—to reach The Hague.

It was a pleasant travelling experience compared with the stress and discomfort we often experience in airports. I was able to read, prepare for my assignment, and enjoy the landscape. I hope modern night trains covering all European countries will soon become a reality, opening up new possibilities."

— AIIC Member

Case study 2

AIIC member,
consultant interpreter

"Besides upholding and promoting high professional and ethical standards in our country, we believe that socially responsible practices must be at the heart of our operations. Among others, we have adopted the following practices:

- non-refundable education and professional development grants for all staff members,
- school subsidies for our staff's children,
- transparent commercial practices and rates available to all stakeholders,
- professional development courses for translators and interpreters,
- feedback channels open to all translators and interpreters for constant improvement,
- annual celebration for stakeholders on International Translation Day.

Through socially responsible entrepreneurship, we are building a healthy community that contributes to the well-being and development of all its stakeholders, which is especially relevant in a developing country like ours."

— AIIC member, consultant interpreter

Case study 3

AIIC Regions - AIIC in the Americas

"All five AIIC regions in the Americas (South America, Brazil, Mexico, Central America and Caribbean, USA, and Canada) are joining forces around the issue of sustainability, in particular the fight against linguistic isolation, which is extremely relevant for SDGs 4 and 16.

In our region, there is a common misconception about how Portuguese speakers do not need interpretation for Spanish speakers or viceversa, depending on the location. This mistaken belief constitutes a hindrance to communication and effectively excludes a significant number of participants. From AIIC Americas, we are determined to take action in favour of linguistic inclusion, so no one is left behind."

— AIIC in the Americas