

Universal Music Group

"I would definitely recommend introducing Meat Free Monday to other companies. It's a very easy and simple first step to changing behaviour. And it's a talking point – it brings the issues to the top of the agenda."

Tom Peronnet, Director of Property Services

MEAT
Monday
FREE
Case study

Organisation background

Universal Music Group (UMG) is the world's leading music-based entertainment company. Its British divisions – Universal Music UK, Universal Music Publishing UK and Universal Music International – share a best-in-class green building in Kings Cross, London, complete with its own biodiverse roof garden. The staff based at the site oversee the operations of UMG's labels and businesses within the UK and are instrumental in promoting both domestic and international artists.

Sustainability

UMG is committed to environmental sustainability in its business and across the industry, collaborating to improve its environmental impacts and leverage its cultural platform to motivate others to take action. The company's purpose is to shape culture through the power of artistry, and that purpose extends to the opportunity to help influence culture's response to climate change. UMG is committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions and achieving its validated Science Based Targets.

UMG's ambition is to create opportunities for its artists, employees and fans who want to engage in environmental improvement. Employee-focused operational sustainability efforts in London include diverting much of the organisation's waste, from coffee grounds to electronic equipment; using energy-smart systems including LED lighting with motion sensors; promoting a Cycle to Work scheme with subsidised servicing, secure bike storage on site and other incentives; and providing company pension plans with an Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) focus.



"I love when you can pick up a dish that you grew up eating and have a meat free option. When we grew up we sometimes ate and enjoyed meat, but later we stopped. It's great to have another option that tastes just as good but is healthier and meat free."

Vanessa Vital, Switchboard, Admin & Events Coordinator



Catering

UMG's restaurant, open for breakfast and lunch, offers a variety of options including an extensive hot meal selection, a 'weigh and pay' Mediterranean salad buffet, soups, sandwiches, fresh herb fridge, juice bar, coffee bar and snacks and cakes. Around 140 hot meals are served each day, with the menu for the following week shared each Friday.

Working hard to source sustainable food and cut down on packaging, the restaurant provides reusable lunch boxes alongside china plates, removing all disposable server ware. Food waste is reduced with the use of innovative technology and imaginative menus, with ingredients being repurposed for different dishes, such as leftover vegetables utilised in the juice bar.

"I like that Meat Free Monday gives me an opportunity to bring more variety and vegetables into my diet, offering something that I wouldn't usually make myself at home or for lunch. I am a meat eater but I'm very conscious of the fact that I should be eating less meat."

Amy Pateman, Health And Safety Manager



Meat Free Monday

Meat Free Monday was launched at UMG in 2017, then at the organisation's two offices in Kensington, west London. Spearheading the drive towards more environmentally-friendly and inclusive working, UMG's 'Team Green' wrote to staff explaining that joining the campaign was the perfect means of meeting commitments it had set out in its environmental policy to become a cleaner and greener organisation.

Over eight years on, and now based in King's Cross, Meat Free Monday is part of the weekly routine. While staff have the option of going off site to get whatever food they choose, all dishes served in UMG's restaurant are completely meat free. The catering team puts tremendous effort into crafting exciting, multicultural menus that showcase diversity and innovation including options such as bao buns, pakoras, veggie sausages with mash, flatbreads, Mexican-style tempeh, spiced tofu, beetroot falafel, couscous salads, frittatas, quiches, pies and more. By incorporating fresh, creative ingredients, they ensure there's something for everyone, leading to positive feedback and increased footfall at the restaurant on Mondays.

"What I like about Meat Free Monday is the creativity, the innovation, the chance to use products I've never used before and the chance to showcase my skills and the skills of my team. We all put ideas and in and try to make it fun and show how good plant-based food can be. It's our job as a catering team to get that message across to people. Going forward I can see this growing continuously."

James O'Leary, Head Chef

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