



A successful food and wine festival champions sustainable development through partnership, education, diversity, culture and community engagement

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# Introduction to your topic

This case study explores how a wine and food festival (South Beach Wine and Food Festival, SOBEWFF.ORG) promotes **sustainability** through a partnership between a private wine and spirit company and a public university in the last 25 years. The festival has been successfully operated the festival grew from 7000 in 2002 to more than 60,000 participants in 2025.

[One More Round: Welcome to the 2024 SOBEWFF® Presented by Capital One](#)

# Brief overview of literature

**:According to UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030:**

Sustainable development promotes affordable and equal education to all, enables them to learn relevant skills for employment, reduce inequality, and help people with their needs such as decent jobs.

Women's empowerment and gender equality impact business operations and growth.

# Brief overview of literature

Sustainability is defined as identifying and managing business impacts on people. This includes how a business contributes to improving the lives of people, reducing inequality, and helping people with their needs.

A business should partner with other businesses and make strategic investments to create greater positive impact. A business organization partnering with an educational institution can contribute to sustainable development, fulfilling SDG 17 (Elzenberg & Jabareen, 2017; Nocenzi & Sannella, 2020).

# Brief overview of literature

## **Industry and University Partnership:**

Research scholars have contributed to the literature of university and industry partnerships (Prigge and Torraco, 2006; King and Persily, 2018; Pertuze et al., 2010). Frolund et al. (2018) discussed how universities and industries can establish and run partnership programs effectively.

Awasthy et al. (2020) aimed to create a framework to enhance the effectiveness of university and industry collaboration.

# Research Questions

- (a) How does the SOBE Festival promote sustainability?
- (b) How are UN Sustainable Development Goals fulfilled SDGs through the festival?

# Research Methodology

This research is a case study, The researcher used multiple sources: person-to-person interviews (CEO, director of operations, student participants), observations at the events, videos, social media, newspaper reports, and records of SOBEWFF activities, Thematic analysis is a method of analyzing qualitative data. The collected data was coded and analyzed through NVivo. The coded data and transcripts closely examined to identify common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns for the sustainable development activities of the festival.



# Research results

The South Beach Wine & Food Festival (SOBEWFF) has clearly fulfilled several of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set for 2030:

## **Quality Education for All**

### **1200 student volunteers participate each year**

They gain practical and technical skills in culinary arts and event planning experience that cannot be replicated in a traditional classroom setting,

FIU initiated The Alliance for Hospitality Equity and Diversity (AHED) with 10 universities and industry leaders to create pathways for Black, Hispanic, and female hospitality management students to become leaders in the industry.



# Research results

## **SDG 5: Gender Equality**

The festival creates opportunities for women chefs to showcase their culinary talents including Martha Stewart, Rachael Ray, and Shelly Flash

The festival invites black, Hispanic and minority chefs to show their skills. The festival commits to diversity and inclusion

# Research results

## **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**

The SOBEWFF supports the growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and promotes sustainable tourism, which creates jobs and showcases local culture and products.

The festival's total economic impact on Miami-Dade County exceeds \$34.2 million, highlighting its significant contribution to the local economy and community in 2018.

# Research Results

## **SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production**

SOBEWFF strives to manage food production plans and control food waste. Volunteers at the festival established a "Food Rescue" team to collect and donate uncooked or unused cooked food to the Miami Rescue Mission. This initiative provides between 15,000 and 20,000 meals annually, showcasing a commitment to responsible consumption and waste reduction.

# Research Results

## **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**

SOBEWFF exemplifies a robust partnership between Southern Glader's Wine & Spirits and The Chaplin School at FIU, promoting cultural events, quality education, and sustainable development in Miami. This partnership has raised \$40 million to enhance hospitality and tourism management education at FIU

# Research Results

During the COVID-19 pandemic, SOBEWFF and the Chaplin School of FIU created a relief fund that raised \$1.4 million to support 500 local small restaurants. The city of Miami later granted \$5 million to this relief fund, demonstrating resilience and community support.

# Discussion and implications

The SOBE Festival is a clear showcase of the partnership between a private wine and spirit company and a public university. This festival fulfills its mission of promoting food and cultural tourism and educating the next generation of hospitality and tourism leaders.

The festival provides equal opportunities for Black, Hispanic, and women chefs, winemakers, and distributors to showcase their talents and skills.

# Discussion and implications

The festival also strives for waste reduction and food rescue for the homeless, The festival contribute to sustainable development goals

The partnership and its SOBE Festival may serve as a model for many cities and communities to innovate and build partnerships among stakeholders, creating cultural and social events that promote sustainable tourism development.



# Two key takeaways

The partnership among university and industry and other stakeholders can play great role in promoting sustainable development.

A festival is an excellent venue to fulfil UN sustainable development goals.

# Selected References

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# SOBEWFF | February 19 - 22, 2026 in Miami, Florida

# THANK YOU!