

4.0 What you can do

Environmental action is an ongoing process that can be understood in four parts:

- commitment to environmental issues
- understanding your environmental impacts
- improving your environmental impacts
- communicating your impacts and improvements

This chapter shows in practical detail how you can take environmental action in your professional life. The tips are addressed to those responsible for organising a tour and putting on a production, and to those managing and running venues. They also address membership organisations and funding bodies.

4.1 Touring Companies

4.1.1 *For Artistic Directors, Directors and Producers*

Commitment

- ☐ Develop an environmental policy to cover at least energy, water and waste environmental impacts. (www.juliesbicycle.com/resources)
- ☐ Give a team member responsibility for co-ordinating environmental initiatives.
- ☐ Ensure contractual discussions include environmental impacts.

Understanding

- ☐ Use the free web-based IG (Industry Green) tour tool at the tour planning stages and on completion of the tour to compare results. (www.juliesbicycle.com/resources)

Routing

- ☐ Optimise the tour itinerary so the total distance travelled is minimised by scheduling performance dates and venues within a reasonable proximity.
- ☐ Avoid doing one-off performance tours.
- ☐ If presenting work at a festival identify other opportunities in the same geographic region to present work. Ask for support from the festival promoter.

Venue

- ☐ Use a green rider or include sustainability clauses in contracts with venues. (www.juliesbicycle.com/resources)
- ☐ Try and book venues with environmental credentials.
- ☐ Ask venues about their food and drinks procurement policy and about the actions they are taking to reduce their environmental impacts. This could be part of the green rider.

Planning

- ☐ Use digital communications (skype/video-conferencing) as much as possible as an alternative to international travel when planning the tour.
- ☐ Encourage staff and performers to travel by public transport or in car shares to get to performance locations.
- ☐ If staff and performers require hotel accommodation whilst on tour ask hotels what efforts they are making to reduce environmental impact.
- ☐ Hire caterers with environmental policies and credentials.

Logistics

- ☐ Within Europe use ground transportation for production equipment rather than airfreighting as much as possible. When doing inter-continental tours plan enough time to use sea freight rather than airfreight to transport production equipment.
- ☐ Use logistics companies with fuel-efficient vehicles and drivers with eco-driving training.
- ☐ If using biofuels make sure they are sustainably sourced i.e. waste vegetable oil.

Communicating

- ☐ Share the environmental impacts of the tour and the efforts being taken to reduce those impacts with board, staff, suppliers, and audiences.
- ☐ Prepare a case study of your tour's 'greening' experience (positive and negative) to share learning with colleagues.

4.1.2 For Production Managers, Lighting Designers and Technicians

Lighting

- ☐ Work with Artistic Directors to develop a performance aesthetic that has a low environmental impact.
- ☐ Calculate the set power demand by summing the wattage of all lights being used to create the aesthetic effect.
- ☐ Minimise show power demand where possible by using technologies with low wattage and design the show to require less lighting.
- ☐ Ask your suppliers for information about products with good environmental credentials.
- ☐ Establish a routine to ensure lights are switched off.

Production

- ☐ Work with Artistic Directors to develop a set aesthetic that has a low environmental impact.
- ☐ Use the ICE database developed by the University of Bath to calculate the impact (embodied energy and carbon) of production materials when developing a specification for a set. Identify ways to reduce the embodied energy and carbon by using less and different materials where possible. See the 'Here to help' section of this guide for more information.
- ☐ Use recycled materials for building sets where possible.

- ☐ Contact the venue(s) to find out what equipment they have in-house or can source locally to avoid the need to transport equipment.
- ☐ Use services where available to store and/or recycle set materials.
- ☐ Join or establish partnerships and mechanisms with other organisations for sharing production resources.
- ☐ Develop a sustainable procurement policy for equipment and material use.

Drom (artist management)

Based in Barcelona, Spain, Drom specialises in the management and promotion of street-arts, circus and world music, in Spain and around the world. Drom's aim is the cultural development of individuals of all ages and backgrounds, enabling everyone to have access to 'culture' via the creation of networks and circuits facilitating the mobility of artists.

During 2010 Drom organised a 'green mobility' tour as part of the Comic Festival in Baskeland in collaboration with the French street theatre company Dynamogene, and Porpol Teatro, the theatre group that has organised the Comic Festival since 1994. During the tour one performer and two members of staff travelled in a van to five villages in the Alava Province that were just 30-50 kms apart, to showcase the production over five performances.

Creating a well-organised mini "village circuit" reduced petrol consumption, as well as associated costs and emissions, but also reduced the even more impactful audience travel emissions, as the rural population didn't have to travel to the city to attend the show. All this was possible with the support of the Alava Delegation that provided them with 50% of the budget (the Alava Delegation is in turn funded by the central government in Madrid).

For more information visit:

www.dromcultura.com
www.porpolteatro.com
www.dynamogene.net

4.2 Venues

4.2.1 For Managers, Facility Managers, Green Champions,

Commitment

- ☐ Develop an environmental policy to cover at least energy, water and waste impacts. (www.juliesbicycle.com/resources)
- ☐ Give a team member responsibility for co-ordinating environmental efforts.
- ☐ Ensure contractual discussions encompass environmental impacts.
- ☐ If you use an exclusion policy ensure this is rational and not preventing a touring production from presenting work outside your audience catchment.
- ☐ Make information about in-house production specifications and local suppliers available to incoming productions (ideally online).

Understanding

- ☐ Use the free web-based IG (Industry Green) venue tool or equivalent to audit your company's environmental impacts (energy, water, waste, travel). (www.juliesbicycle.com/resources)
- ☐ Use a tool to monitor energy use, ideally once a week.

Improvement

- ☐ Create an environmental improvement plan with targets and timelines for reducing environmental impacts.
- ☐ Use at least a proportion of money generated from venue energy savings for funding further environmental improvements.

Communication

- ☐ Communicate to board, staff, suppliers, incoming productions and audiences the environmental impacts of the venue and the efforts being taken to reduce those impacts.
- ☐ Apply for an environmental performance certification that is relevant to your venue.
- ☐ Prepare a case study of your venue's 'greening' experience (positive and negative) to share learning with colleagues.

Food and Drink

- ☐ Develop a sustainable procurement policy for food and drinks.
- ☐ Learn about the environmental impacts of food and drink sold at the venue: minimise animal products and maximise organic, local and seasonal choices.
- ☐ Monitor catering energy and identify opportunities for energy savings.
- ☐ Monitor food waste and reduce over-ordering. Consider a composting service for food waste and compostable packaging.
- ☐ Work with contracted food and drink concessions to offer consumables (including packaging, cutlery and serving receptacles) with low environmental impacts.

Publicity materials and merchandise

- ☐ Use electronic-based publicity material as much as possible over printed.
- ☐ Ensure all printed materials have recycled content and/or use FSC paper and are printed using non-toxic and biodegradable inks.
- ☐ Select the correct size of material to maximise content.
- ☐ Use merchandisers that have environmental credentials, for example, t-shirts that have a product carbon label with the emissions per t-shirt displayed.

Audience Travel

- ☐ Provide public transport information to your audiences on your website, including a travel carbon calculator so that they can investigate the mode and route with the lowest emissions.
- ☐ Offer a combined performance and public transport ticket.

- ❑ Offer only a limited number of car spaces to encourage car sharing and use of public transport.
- ❑ Provide bike racks at the venue and let audiences know via the website and tickets that racks are available.
- ❑ Make information available on car-share services from the venue website.
- ❑ Discuss putting on extra public transport services, and synchronising services with the start and end of performances, with local travel operators.

4.3 Membership Organisations

- ❑ Make environmental sustainability a standing agenda item.
- ❑ Keep up to date on environmentally related legislation, financial and economic trends as well as audience concern.
- ❑ Signpost members to resources for reducing the environmental impacts of touring.
- ❑ Develop a charter for members, which sets out environmental principles, and includes a commitment to monitor and reduce environmental impacts.
- ❑ Recognise and award members that are environmental leaders, and publicise models of good practice.
- ❑ Use your lobbying power to push for further development of environmentally sustainable technologies.
- ❑ Collect, collate and report statistics relevant for monitoring environmental efforts of the sector.

Alcantara (performing arts development association)

Alcantara, a performing arts organisation based in Lisbon Portugal, used local building products such as cork for building reconstructions. It has also been working closely with artists to help them reduce the impact of their work– e.g. leading contemporary dancers have opted to travel with fewer number of trailers, putting on less elaborate performances with smaller energy requirements and the need for fewer lights, while at the same time improving on the quality of their performances.

For more information visit: www.alkantara.pt

4.4 Funding Organisations

- ❑ Ensure environmental sustainability is a core issue on the agenda for strategy development.
- ❑ Signpost to information on emerging practice for low environmental impact touring within the performing arts sector.
- ❑ Support organisations providing resources and training to help arts organisations embed environmental decision-making in all areas of their activity.
- ❑ Set environmental guidelines and reporting requirements to funded organisations.

- ❑ Assess the funding support given to organisations on environmental criteria in addition to artistic and financial criteria.
- ❑ Publicise models of good practice, including outstanding creative achievement using green technology.

IETM/Australia Council for the Arts Collaboration Project “Climate Commission”

Australia Council for the Arts and IETM – the international network for contemporary performing arts – have developed a program of activities led by Project Director, David Pledger, to begin building a sustainable matrix of relationships between Australia and Europe. One of the underlying themes driving the program is the acknowledgment of climate change in artistic practice. The program included a “Climate Commission” for a new artwork conceived in the context of climate change. Other than the quality of the idea and the experience of the team, the Commission had the criteria that the project seek to achieve carbon reduction compared to “business as usual”.

Made by a collection of Australian and European artists and scientists who work under the moniker Time’s Up, Control of the Commons will undertake a series of watercourse journeys in Australia and Europe, investigating water usage, attitudes to water and kinship/friendship networks along the watercourses. The vessels used will be recycled or sustainably-grown small boats, powered by their crews and the wind. The project will be governed by the Three Rs: Reduce our need for expendables; Reuse technologies to avoid waste and Recycle the vessels at journey’s end. The presentation at Burning Ice in June 2012 produced by Brussels’ Kaaithheater will include direct documentation, kinship and friendship analysis, interviews, photography and video mapping.

For more information visit:

www.ietm.org/index.lasso?p=information&q=newsdetail&id=491

David Leddy, Fire Exit Ltd, Scotland

“Many artists feel their creative vision shouldn't be compromised. I’m happy to try to take on the challenge of being creative and exciting but at the same time lowering carbon.”