



Starting Your Climate Journey

A Two Pager for Arts Organisations and Artists.

The most commonly asked question for individuals and organisations trying to tackle climate change is, “Where do we start?” This is a very simple guide to starting your climate action journey in three steps:

Step One: Don't Do It Alone!

Begin by bringing people together. Addressing climate change collaboratively is both more rewarding and more productive. This will allow you to get a sense of where others are on their Climate Journey. Meetings could involve:

- The staff of an organisation who are based in a building
- A gathering of artists living near you or those who have a similar practice
- A network or membership organisation you're involved in
- A community you're based in, tapping into others involved in the arts in your locality.

Discuss climate change, how it impacts you and others you work with. Talk about actions you've taken and actions you'd like to take address climate change- both mitigation and adaptation. Identify obstacles to action and discuss how these could be removed/reduced.

Further information is available here on [How To Create A Green Team](#)

Step Two: Identify your key impacts and measure these

For a building-based organisation, the key impacts will be heating and electricity. But you could also measure waste, water, and staff travel.

For a production or touring company, the key impacts will be accommodation, travel, and transport. You could also look at the embedded carbon in both sets and costumes (more difficult to measure).

For a festival, your key impacts will be travel and transport (for those performing), energy provision on site, and waste.

As an artist or designer, your key impacts will be travel, and the embedded energy in materials. You will also have an energy footprint for heat and electricity depending on where you work.

For all of the above, there are secondary impacts – audience travel being one of the biggest. But in principle, you are responsible for the emissions you pay for, and you should begin there.

Where possible, store all of the data noted below in a spreadsheet with tabs for Heating, Electricity, Waste, Water, Business Travel/Transport, Business Accommodation.

- Calculate **your electricity and heating** usage from your bills. If you need help doing this, [check out our webinar](#) on how to read your electricity bills.
- Calculate your **waste from your invoices** – your supplier should be able to provide you with a detailed breakdown on request. Note separately general waste (landfill or incineration), recyclable waste (paper and plastic), and brown waste (organic matter such as waste food). **Water** will be itemised in cubic meters on your invoices from Irish Water.
- Keep a record of all **work journeys** undertaken – distance and method of travel. Do this for tours and for all other business-related travel. Once in the habit of recording journeys, you will think more carefully about when and if you need to travel.
- Keep a record of all **accommodation** booked by you or your organisation.

Step Three: Commit to reducing your environmental impacts.

Where can you make reductions? Remember, this is an emergency, don't be too gentle with yourself! Set yourself a reduction target (7-10% for example) and a deadline by which this will be achieved.

Energy is the key one, and electricity will be easier than heating. Check out [our guide to Energy reduction](#) as well as other resources that are available. **Waste** is often the easiest to tackle but remember that it has much lower associated greenhouse gas emissions (although it has a high ecological impact).

Formalise your commitment. Can it be part of an environmental policy? Part of your organisation's strategic goals? Be clear and unequivocal in your commitment.

Include Climate Action/Environmental Sustainability on **the agenda of every meeting**. That way, you will prioritise it in the longer term.

Finally, don't forget to **celebrate and share your success!** Greening your organisation is not just good news for the planet, it gives us all hope. Let people know you're committed to playing your part and keep them updated on your achievements.

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