

Project Arts Centre Climate Action Policy and Action Plan (2025-2029)

Strategy Summary

Project Arts Centre is committed to reducing emissions by half by 2030 and working towards net zero, while continuing to support contemporary performance and visual art. Our Environmental Strategy and Action Plan (2025-2028) focuses on enhancing energy efficiency, promoting sustainable practices, and fostering environmental awareness.

Key initiatives over the next five years include: upgrading our building's heating, air-handling and boiler systems; integrating sustainability into our programming; and collaborating with partners to amplify our impact. Success will be measured through quantitative metrics such as reductions in our carbon footprint and energy consumption, as well as qualitative metrics like staff engagement and community/ sectoral impact. Regular monitoring, reporting, and reviews will ensure we stay on track to achieve our environmental goals and inspire positive change within the arts sector.

Introduction

Project Arts Centre is based in a 25-year-old building owned by Temple Bar Cultural Trust (TBCT) and leased on an annual basis. Between 2021 and 2023, we took steps to engage the staff in considering ways to be more environmentally sustainable. We also commissioned Catriona Fallon to: analyse energy and waste bills over a two-year period (2018 & 2019) to understand usage patterns and estimate our carbon footprint; conduct a visual survey of the building, engaging with core staff to gather additional insights; and present a comprehensive report on energy usage and waste management, highlighting opportunities for reduction and cost savings.

In 2025, we secured a long-awaited green light from the Dept of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Media and Sport to draw down a tranche of Capital funding, awarded in 2016. This enables us to move ahead in our plan to upgrade the building, improve energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

While a long-standing boundary dispute between our landlord and a neighbouring property, limits our ability to apply for further Capital Development funding, we remain committed to reducing our emissions by half by 2030 and working towards net zero and to achieve this while continuing to commission, produce, and present the best of contemporary performance and visual art for future generations.

Who is it for?

This policy and action plan applies to all those who work in and for Project Arts Centre and for all who visit our building. This includes staff, freelance artists and arts workers, visiting companies, audiences and other visitors.

People Involved:

We developed this Climate Action Policy and Action Plan with input from our Board, staff, freelancers, partners, and peer networks. We aim to continue this work throughout 2025 to further develop our action plan for the period 2026-2029. We will continue to work with

our partners and stakeholders in order to share our learnings, increase knowledge and track impact.

Responsibility

- The Board is responsible for monitoring progress towards reducing emissions and sustainability targets and reviewing this policy annually.
- The CEO and Executive Director ensure the Environmental Strategy Action Plan is set and followed, and targets are met.
- We will appoint key staff members to oversee the implementation of the strategy, review and set targets, and lead their teams on environmental activity.
- All managers, staff, and freelance practitioners are responsible for following the plan and making changes at various levels.

Overall Commitments

- Embed environmental sustainability at the heart of Project Arts Centre.
- Work to the standards of the Theatre Green Book.
- Complete a programme of Capital works (lighting, heating and air-handling) that will significantly improve our energy efficiency
- Set carbon reduction targets and use best practices to minimize carbon impacts.
- Report progress annually and share experiences within the sector.

Expected Outcomes

- **Reduced Carbon Footprint:** Halve emissions by 2030 and work towards net zero.
- **Enhanced Sustainability Practices:** Continuous improvement in environmental performance
- **Increased Awareness and Engagement:** Foster a culture of environmental responsibility in-house and among artists/ companies/ audiences etc.
- **Collaborative Partnerships:** Build strong partnerships to amplify impact.
- **Educational Impact:** Promote climate literacy and sustainability awareness.
- **Operational Efficiency:** Operate more efficiently and responsibly.
- **Community Leadership:** Inspire other organisations and contribute to a sustainable future.

Means of Delivery:

Delivery will be through the four key themes of our Climate Action Policy and Action Plan:

1. Operations
2. Building
3. Artistic Programming
4. Production

ACTION PLAN 2025 - 2029

1. Operations

1. a. Key actions in relation to Operations that will take place in 2025:

We will:

- continue to develop our strategic plan for reducing our carbon footprint and environmental impacts, with support from The Arts Council, Performing Arts Forum/ The Theatre Green Book and others (ongoing)
- hold ourselves accountable through monitoring and auditing our progress by regularly reviewing and evaluating our strategy at Executive and Board level including:
 - o an update on sustainability on the agenda at every Board Meeting (ongoing)
 - o a monthly staff discussion of progress (from March '25)
- engage staff with the Theatre Green Book and with various environmental topics and facilitate them to explore specific environmental topics and participate in training (April '25 onwards)
- establish a staff Green Team with representation from all departments (May 2025)
- communicate our plan and the progress we make during the year to artists, audiences, collaborators, partner organisations and the wider community (Oct '25)
- include a commitment to our Environmental Strategy and Action Plan in employee and freelancer contracts (March '25)
- Finalise, in greater detail, our Environmental Action Plan for the period 2026-2029 (October 2025)

1.b. Key actions in relation to Operations that will take place in 2026 – 2029:

We will:

- develop an energy emissions reduction target in line with Science Based Target initiatives (SBTi's)
- commit to becoming a single-use plastic-free building and source alternatives for production products containing plastics.
- Increase use of Fairtrade tea and coffee
- continue to stay updated with sector guidance and initiatives like the Theatre Green Book
- continue to learn by participating in networking groups and encouraging staff to attend relevant conferences and training events
- seek partnerships with organisations that support our sustainability goals and share our commitment to a sustainable future.
- develop effective mechanisms to share our learning both with organisations at an early stage of their sustainability journey and with a wide range of organisations, stakeholders, individuals, and government bodies.

2. Building

2.a. Key actions in relation to the building in 2025:

We will:

- install more energy efficient lighting and dimmer systems (January to April '25)
- upgrade our heating, air-handling and boiler systems (June to August '2025)
- use data we have already collected on Project's energy use from 2018 and 2019 as a benchmark, and monitor reductions in energy use (from May onwards)
- continue to pursue a resolution of the boundary issue between our landlords and a neighbouring property, so we can apply for further Capital funding in the future (ongoing)

2.b. Key actions that will take place in relation to the building 2026 - 2029:

We will:

- apply for Capital funding (as it comes available and subject to our boundary issue resolution) to further progress our lighting upgrade in performance and gallery spaces and to introduce SMART lighting across office and other backstage areas

3. Production

3.a. Key actions in relation to Production that will take place in 2025 :

We will:

- continue to recycle printer cartridges, batteries, paper, glass, plastic, and tins in our offices and improve our mechanisms for this in public spaces and backstage areas (ongoing)
- introduce composting facilities in all areas including backstage (April '25)
- work with incoming theatre companies to set achievable sustainability targets and encourage them to examine every step of the production process to reduce environmental impact (ongoing)
- identify opportunities to share our learnings with the theatre sector, fostering a culture of sustainability and innovation. (Dec '25)

3.b. Key actions in relation to Production in 2026 - 2029:

We will:

- develop protocols to ensure all products and materials used are sourced sustainably or are reused, repurposed, or recycled as far as possible
- develop and publish a procurement policy
- Identify opportunities to serve as a hub for the exchange of skills, ideas, and knowledge to promote climate literacy

4. Artistic Programme

4.a. Key actions in relation to Artistic Programming in 2025:

We will:

- integrate environmental sustainability into our artistic programme by supporting at least two projects this year that explore the climate crisis and climate justice (ongoing)

4.b. Key actions in relation to Artistic Programming in 2026 – 2029 include

We will:

- continue to support at least two climate-focused projects per year
- host at least one climate-focused ideas event/ gathering for artists
- prioritise a focus on climate in open calls for artistic residencies and other artist development and engagement programmes.

Definitions

- **Net zero** – Completely negating the amount of greenhouse gases produced by our activity, to be achieved by reducing as many emissions as possible and offsetting those that cannot be reduced.
- **Irish Theatre Green Book** – Initiative originating in the UK theatre industry to work more sustainably and now available in Ireland through the work of Performing Arts Forum. In three volumes, it sets standards for making productions sustainably, for making theatre buildings sustainable, and for improving operations like catering and front of house.
- **Carbon Reduction Target** – Percentage annual target to reduce carbon impacts, measured in CO2 kg from a baseline year.
- **Carbon Footprint** – Amount of carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere as a result of the activities of a particular area, department, or service provided.
- **Science Based Target initiatives (SBTi's)** – The SBTi is a partnership between the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), World Resources Institute (WRI), and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and provides companies with target setting methods.