



SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

Introduction

Music for Galway is committed to fostering a sustainable and environmentally responsible future. We believe that the creative sector has a crucial role to play in promoting sustainable practices and inspiring positive and lasting change. This policy outlines our commitment to sustainability and sets out the actions we will take to reduce our environmental impact.

Our Impacts

We recognise the following as the most significant environmental impacts of our activities. Addressing these is a key focus of our Climate Action Implementation Plan and, most importantly, our capacity to influence positive change

1. **Travel Impact:** MfG continually strives to monitor and reduce carbon-heavy travel associated with staff, performers, and audiences by encouraging and raising awareness of cleaner, safer, and/or healthier alternative options such as walking, cycling, use of public transport, and slow travel when available and suitable.
2. **Digital Impact:** A large portion of MfG's communications takes place online, including website content, online meetings and training, social media, newsletters, and email correspondence. While digital communication is essential to our work, we acknowledge its environmental footprint and are committed to minimising its impact.
3. **Events Impact:** In-person events have a direct environmental impact through travel, accommodation, catering, promotional materials, waste generation, and building energy usage. We aim to address these areas by implementing sustainable practices and encouraging environmentally conscious choices among our partners and attendees.

Alignment with our core values

As outlined in our Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026, Music for Galway promotes sustainability as one of our Core Values. We have built this into our Strategic Objectives as below:

Strategic Objectives 6: SUSTAINABILITY

Our Songs of Travel project will lead us to work in a sustainable way and to influence our audiences to behave in a sustainable manner

By Year End 2026:

Metrics

- MfG carbon footprint and reduction in emissions – target based on benchmarking
- Increase number of concerts / audience members per artist journey
- Songs of Travel achieves its metrics re behavioural change and carbon footprint / environmental sustainability policies of partner festivals
- Annual review of MfG sustainability policy

Actions

- Benchmark MfG against other organisations for sustainability
- Deliver the Songs of Travel programme
- Establish and implement a baseline sustainability policy for MfG
- Support low carbon travel options for artists
- Consider how technology and innovation might support our sustainability agenda

Our Environmental Goals

We aim to:

1. Lead by Example: Demonstrate best practices in environmental responsibility by factoring environmental impact into all of MfG's decision making and take the most environmentally sustainable choices.
2. Measure and Evaluate: Assess our own carbon footprint and identify areas for reduction.
3. Achieve Nationwide Impact: Develop green guidelines for small bespoke music festivals, with clear messaging and positioning to foster a greener arts sector.
4. Foster Inclusion and Evolution: Involve all stakeholders in shaping attitudes toward sustainable creativity.
5. Provide Advocacy: Promote a unified green voice within the arts community.

Sustainability Policy for Music for Galway

- Reducing carbon emissions: We will strive to reduce our carbon footprint by implementing energy-efficient practices, minimising unnecessary travel, and promoting sustainable transportation options.
- Promoting resource efficiency: We will adopt resource-saving practices in our operations, such as recycling, waste reduction, green procurement, and responsible consumption of materials.
- Supporting environmental actions: We will incorporate environmental considerations into our programmes and initiatives, raising awareness among staff, performers, partners, and audience members by promoting sustainable behaviours in live music performance.

Action Plan

Music for Galway have developed Green Commitments as part of the Songs of Travel project, and this provides a detailed roadmap for reducing our environmental impact and becoming increasingly sustainable as we operationalise these commitments to implement our goals outlined above.

Travel/Transport:

1. No flights for artists, staff, and students included in the SOT programme.
2. Choose public transport over individual car travel.
3. We commit to renting at least one electric vehicle for the full festival period with the view to getting first-hand experience regarding the feasibility of such alternatives.
4. Use electric vans and trucks for material transportation when possible.
5. Encourage active travel (walking, cycling) when feasible.
6. Avoid using fossil fuelled cars when possible.
7. Always ask suppliers and partners to use electric transportation. If they can't comply, always offer your own electric transportation if available.
8. Drive slowly to conserve emissions/energy.
9. When organizing venues, consider the emissions from attendees and prioritize locations that are easily accessible by public transport or active travel.

Energy:

1. Minimize electricity usage.
2. Choose venues with solar panels or other renewable energy sources when possible.
3. Choose more energy-efficient venues when possible.
4. Choose a renewable energy subscription when possible. Discuss with the venues to change their energy plan!

Food:

1. Only serve (or pay for) vegan or vegetarian dishes to artists, staff and students.
2. Try to reduce cheese, fish, poultry, meat and especially red meat served at the festival locations.
3. Ensure suitable portion sizes to minimize food waste.

Waste:

1. Limit opportunities for waste generation.
2. provision of one-off plastics or biodegradable materials.
3. Ensure that food and drink materials are recyclable e.g. paper rather than plastics etc.
4. Separate waste properly, considering both venue and food-related waste.
5. Recycle as much as local waste collection services allow. Select/encourage food suppliers to minimize packaging.

Accommodation:

1. Demand reduced cleaning services, twice per week is a maximum.
2. Choose accommodation within walking distance from the main venues.
3. Be cautious with high-end hotels, as they usually have higher emissions; however, assess individual hotels for efficiency.
4. Avoid hotels with energy-intensive features like swimming pools and 24/7 saunas.

Festival Materials and communications:

1. Minimize the printing of materials like posters, banners, and program books.
2. We will not send out physical promotion letters/leaflets to audiences.
3. Seek alternative methods for program communication to replace program leaflets, for example wall projections in the hall.
4. Make sure banners and other reusables are printed without specific dates or names. Alternatively buy materials where you can reuse frames, stands etc and switch the fabric/poster.
5. Reduce the use of high data emails.
6. Only record performances when necessary and minimize online and offline long-term storage of videos.
7. Be mindful of the emissions associated with digital communications. Turn off your camera in digital meetings when possible.
8. Consider the environmental impact of materials used for festival items such as pens, mugs, t-shirts etc. We don't need to hand out merch automatically to all artists/ students/audiences.

Further sustainability actions:

Printing

Season Brochures

After extensive research, we have teamed up with [iSupply](#), as they are committed to providing eco-friendly printing solutions that meet the highest standards of sustainability. After months of hard work and investment in equipment and processes, iSupply have just become the first certified environmentally sustainable printer in Galway City!

Concert Programmes

You will notice that our concert programmes are now printed on lighter paper than previously done. We have consciously decided not to opt for digital programmes delivered to your phones as we believe this dilutes your experience, we therefore will be giving you printed versions on a more sustainable medium by using lighter paper.

Banners

All our banners are 80% plastic free, and we deliberately design them to be reusable.

Newsletters

We have reduced the number of printed newsletters, opting instead to spread our news via an electronic newsletter delivered by email.

Posters

We have carefully evaluated our poster runs and have reduced the number of posters to fewer but more strategic locations. Furthermore, we use uncoated 80gr paper, which is more sustainable to produce.

Office Equipment

Reuse! As we are in the fortunate position of collaborating with fantastic graphic designers and sound and video editors, we recognise that there is no need for us to have the most powerful machines at our fingertips. We have taken the decision to make it our policy to opt for refurbished laptops and phones when it comes to renewing our IT hardware.

Songs of Travel – Creative Europe project 2022 to 2025

Through the Creative Europe project [Songs of Travel](#) (SOT), we are on a huge learning curve in terms of sustainability and look forward to sharing our findings with you in late 2025.

As part of the project and the Cellissimo Festival in May 2024, we have developed the following guidelines, which will be reviewed and updated on a bi-annual basis.

[Slow travel to Galway](#)

[Green Commitments](#)

Resources:

<https://artscouncil.ie/developing-the-arts/resources-and-toolkits/climate-action/>

https://www.creativeireland.gov.ie/en/publications/?_sft_category=creativity-and-climate-change

<https://www.creativeskillnet.ie/2024/10/07/sustainability-toolkit-for-irelands-creative-arts-media-sectors/>

<https://sustainabilitytoolkit.ie/>

<https://performingartsforum.ie/green-arts/>

Government initiatives:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-culture-communications-and-sport/press-releases/new-initiatives-to-drive-climate-action-in-the-cultural-sector/>