Environmental Policy for The Source Arts Centre

Purpose

The Source Arts Centre is committed to environmental sustainability, minimizing our environmental impact, and using art and performance to raise climate awareness. This policy provides actionable goals and steps for sustainable practices across all areas, including the gallery, theatre, and bar.

Goals

1. **Reduce Carbon Footprint**
    - Cut overall carbon emissions with the ultimate goal of achieving carbon neutrality. Work with TEA to assess timeline, needs and costings for this.
    - Enhance energy efficiency through building upgrades, renewable energy use, and optimized heating, cooling, and lighting.
2. **Sustainable Operations Across All Spaces**
    - Assess options to transition all facilities, including the theatre and bar, to 100% renewable energy. Work with Tipperary Energy Agency to assess timeline, needs and costings for this.
    - Achieve zero-waste operations by 2030, focusing on reduction, reuse, and recycling across the gallery, theatre, and bar.
    - Use only eco-friendly, recyclable, or compostable materials for exhibitions, events, theatre productions where possible, and bar services.
3. **Theatre Sustainability**
    - Implement sustainable set design by reusing materials and sourcing from eco-friendly suppliers, aiming to reuse a % of materials where possible in each production.
    - Upgrade and/or replace lighting and sound systems to energy-efficient LED and digital technology. Assess timeline, needs and costings for this.
    - Reduce printed materials (like programmes) by 50%, offering digital options and using recycled paper where necessary.
4. **Eco-Friendly Bar Practices**
    - Transition to locally sourced, organic, and sustainably produced beverages and foods, where available, by 2028.
    - Eliminate single-use plastics by 2026, replacing them with compostable or reusable options.
    - Install waste sorting stations and educate bar staff on waste reduction to improve recycling rates. Review procedures and waste management system in 2025.

- Reduce food waste through improved ordering systems and by donating unsold items to local charities or composting.
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5. **Green Supply Chain**
    - Prioritize environmentally responsible suppliers across gallery, theatre, and bar operations.
    - Source materials and food items locally and sustainably by 2027, where possible, to reduce transportation emissions.
6. **Education and Community Engagement**
    - Host exhibitions, theatre productions, and workshops centred around environmental themes, fostering climate awareness.
    - Offer educational programs to local schools and communities, using art and performance as mediums for climate action.
    - Regularly communicate climate initiatives and progress, inviting the community to participate in sustainability efforts.
7. **Sustainable Mobility**
    - Encourage sustainable transportation options for staff, artists, and visitors, including incentives for public transport or carpooling.
    - Reduce travel-related emissions by adopting virtual meetings and events where possible.
8. **Biodiversity and Nature**
    - Expand green spaces around the centre and implement plant installations indoors to improve air quality.
    - Partner with local conservation organizations to support biodiversity projects in the surrounding community.

Implementation and Reporting

- Form a sustainability committee amongst staff to monitor, guide, and report on progress in each department, including the gallery, theatre, and bar.
- Review this policy annually to evaluate and adjust our goals, ensuring transparency and accountability.

Commitment to Climate Action

By integrating sustainable practices into our gallery, theatre, and bar operations, we aim to inspire change through the arts, contributing to a resilient and climate-conscious community.

This policy establishes a comprehensive approach, ensuring each area of The Source Arts Centre is engaged in climate action and sustainability practices. ***To be reviewed: Jan 2026***

Actionable areas 2025-27

(Items in red are current)

1. Energy Audit & LED Upgrades (Year 1-2)

- Conduct an energy audit (with TEA or similar) to identify key areas of energy waste.
- Replace at least 50% of theatre and gallery lighting with LED fixtures by the end of Year 2.

2. Zero Single-Use Plastics in the Bar (Year 1-3)

- Transition from plastic straws, cutlery, and cups to compostable or reusable alternatives by Year 2.
- Fully eliminate single-use plastics by Year 3.

3. Sustainable Set & Exhibition Materials Policy (Year 1)

- Create an internal materials reuse inventory for theatre sets and gallery exhibitions.
- Aim for 30–40% of set materials to be reused or repurposed within the first year.

4. Digital First for Print Materials (Year 1-2)

- Cut printed theatre programs by 50% by introducing QR-code-based digital programs.
- Print remaining programs on recycled paper with eco-friendly inks.

5. Waste Sorting Stations (Year 1)

- Install clearly marked recycling, composting, and general waste stations in the bar and public areas.
- Train staff on proper waste segregation to improve recycling rates.

6. Local & Sustainable Suppliers (Year 1-3)

- Partner with at least two local food/drink suppliers who meet sustainability standards (e.g., organic or low-carbon).
- Shift 30% of bar produce to local suppliers by the end of Year 3.

7. Community Eco-Theatre & Art Events (Year 2)

- Host at least 1 annual exhibition or theatre production with a sustainability theme.
- Pair events with public workshops on creative reuse, recycling, or climate awareness.

8. Green Travel Incentives (Year 1)

- Provide discounts or incentives (e.g., free coffee voucher) for visitors who show they used public transport or cycled.

- Encourage carpooling for staff and visiting artists.

9. Green Space & Plant Installations (Year 2-3)

- Add indoor greenery in the foyer and bar for improved air quality.
- Collaborate with a local biodiversity group to plant a pollinator-friendly garden or outdoor seating area.

10. Annual Sustainability Report & Public Engagement (Year 1-3)

- Publish a brief annual progress report on the website and social media, highlighting achievements (e.g., % waste diverted from landfill, energy saved).
- Host an annual 'Green Arts Day' to showcase progress and engage the community.