

Climate Policy & Action Plan

We acknowledge that the world is facing a climate crisis, and that it is the responsibility of both individuals and organisations to make informed, positive choices that help reduce its impact. Urgent action is needed—not only to mitigate the worst effects of climate change but also to adapt to the environmental changes already taking place.

We believe that creative thinking can ignite ideas for change. Creativity is a powerful tool for generating innovative responses to the climate and biodiversity emergency. Artistic and cultural engagement can play a vital role in shaping new narratives, inspiring action, and fostering sustainable practices.

As part of our commitment, we have developed a number of projects that directly address issues related to climate change and biodiversity awareness, these include:

- **Global Garden** 2026 with Aoife Barrett and Amal Hope, was a creative exploration of community led organic food-growing with Togher Community Garden, Green Spaces for Cork and South Lee Educate Together. The process of working with this vibrant inter-cultural community garden highlighted the importance of seed-sovereignty – to preserve open-pollinated, heirloom and locally adapted seed varieties critical for climate resilience. The gardeners shared their knowledge of collecting and setting seeds, foraged and forgotten foods, hot composting, special interest planting as well as introducing FIT count and Merlin. Their mobile Seed Library was showcased as part of Cork on Fork. A Creative Parks project supported by Cork City Council and Creative Ireland.
- **Fruiting Futures** 2025 with Sarah Lou Kinneen – an mycelium installation grown from waste, care and connection, inviting audiences to step inside a space shaped by renewal and possibility.

Projects Reuse & Waste Reduction:

- **Dignity, Ode to Joy, Possession, Caught in the Furze** with Amanda Coogan where sets as well as most costumes, props have been created from pre-loved, reused clothes/objects, or with sustainable natural materials. With consciously minimal purchasing of new materials, thereby significantly reducing production waste.
- **Midsummer Parade** with Cork Community Art Link, where floats and props are made and remade primarily using upcycled materials, thereby reducing single-use cardboard, plastic, toxic paint and ensuring most materials were recycled and recyclable.

Sustainability Learning through Cultureways 2027-2029

Cork Midsummer Festival is a delivery partner in *Cultureways*, a three-year creative climate programme led by Cork City Council and funded through the Creative Ireland Climate Action Fund, working with Glucksman Gallery, Sapience and UCC Sustainability Institute. Through 12 participatory arts commissions, the initiative seeks to affect behavioural change toward more

sustainable travel choices for everyday journeys of up to 2km, while developing dedicated 'Cultureways' in three suburban Cork communities.

- **Training by Julie's Bicycle** will build our team's capacity to apply evidence-based behavioural science approaches to climate focused creative programming.
- **Creative community consultation** will seek 1800+ responses from residents in the three participating communities, informing the focus of each *Cultureway* and its artistic commissions.
- **Evaluation** led by Sapience will test and measure the effect of the commission approaches, with technical guidance from UCC's Sustainability Institute ensuring behavioural science best practice.
- **Anticipated learning for CMF** as findings emerge through the three year project on what actually shifts short-journey habits, we will be able to bring practical, right-sized techniques back to our own travel and audience engagement practice.

We actively participated in Climate Action training offered by the Arts Council of Ireland, delivered in partnership with Native Events and the Green Arts Initiative. This training has played a key role in shaping both our Climate Action Policy and our Climate Action Plan.

We are committed to continuing this journey, embedding sustainability into all aspects of our work, and using our platform to advocate for a just and climate-resilient future. Cork Midsummer Festival strives to make sustainable choices in its development, management, and delivery of its annual Festival. This policy reflects how the Festival currently works and will continue to reduce its carbon imprint.

Climate Action Commitments:

Operations

- Continue a flexible hybrid work-from-home and office model. The CMF office is a coworking space which results in sharing electricity, water, internet, technology, and meeting rooms with other businesses and remote workers. This co-working space is in Cork city centre which is centrally located for staff, artists, and partners.
- Meetings normally take place in the city centre which is accessible by public transportation, or on Zoom, eliminating travel for all parties.
- Use of laptops has cut down on the need to print documents.
- We have moved our yearly financial audit completely online, significantly reducing printed invoices and receipts.
- Encourage staff, artists, and audiences to recycle, use a reusable water bottle, and use reusable items such as lunchboxes and tote bags when at work or attending meetings.

Travel

- The staff travels by train, bus, or car share when travelling domestically, and encourages artists and companies to do the same.
- Encourage artists to travel by slow travel or direct flights where possible.
- Work with Bus Eireann, Irish Rail, and CityLink to incentivize public transport where possible for all par.cipa.ng artists, performers and companies via discounts and credit towards transport.

- Promote a regular partnership with Bus Eireann for local transport, encouraging those attending the festival to use these options.
- Festival vehicles are now almost all electric.
- Our accommodation partners provide kitchen facilities which allow artists to cook at home. Reusable dishes and cutlery are supplied.

Programme and Production

- Work that is toured to Cork will have at least two days of shows.
- While travel is necessary for some programme research, CMF also researches shows and companies by viewing recordings.
- CMF works with all venue partners and producing partners towards reducing overall energy use and using renewable energy sources where possible.
- We heavily schedule our local van operations to combine any load-in / get-outs so that trips are reduced to the minimum required.
- We first use local vendors and businesses before querying outside of Cork.

Marketing and Materials

- Moved to e-tickets which has resulted in less paper production and transport for ticket drop-offs to venues.
- All communications are done digitally, reducing any printed production.
- Printed promotional materials have been reduced.
- We have switched to using non-date specific signage and branding where possible, to re-use these materials in future years.
- The Festival brochure is printed when possible on recycled paper stock, and we have reduced the amount of brochures printed per year.
- We endeavour to switch from single-use materials such as popup banners to more sustainable bamboo-sourced stock with material covers. This would ensure for longer durability and usage over a number of years.

Prepared in 2024, reviewed August 2026.

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, as we continue to learn and bring climate forward actions and environmental awareness to our staff, board members, artists, and audiences.