



Sustainability toolkit for performing companies



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Introduction

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe is the world's greatest platform for freedom of expression. It's a unique festival with over 3,000 shows across 300 venues. With this scale in mind, it is imperative that we explore all options to find the most sustainable and environmentally-friendly ways of performing on the Fringe, avoiding unnecessary waste wherever possible. At the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, we are committed to excelling in environmental sustainability, and in supporting all Fringe participants in running greener shows.

Sustainability defined

Following the United Nations definition, we consider sustainability to be striving towards having a positive social, economic and environmental impact in everything we do. Much of this is focused on reducing the negative impact we have on our physical surroundings, and reducing carbon emissions, which contribute toward climate change. Scotland has some of the most ambitious climate change targets in the world and is aiming to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by the year 2050. Every sector of Scottish society is working to achieve this aim and the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society is playing its part in reducing the Fringe's carbon footprint by engaging and supporting the many thousands of organisations and individuals we work with and in standing by our own sustainability policy edfringe.com/learn/sustainability.



Why sustainability?

The first reason to work sustainably is because it's the right thing to do. Our climate is changing because of the actions of human beings and we are consuming natural resources and changing our world at an increasingly alarming rate. Your one company *can* make a difference. Here are some reasons to become more sustainable:

- **Save money.** Reducing your carbon footprint often comes with using, spending, wasting and buying less – ultimately costing you less.
- **A better reputation.** Sustainability is an increasing priority in society, and audiences are on the lookout for companies contributing to a better world.
- **Get ahead of regulation.** Becoming a sustainable company now will stand you in good stead and cause less stress in the future. Eventually, all organisations will be required to operate in a more sustainable way.
- **It matters.** Arts organisations are social organisations as well as artistic ones and should be at the heart of the big debates of our time. By engaging in sustainability debate and practice, you are staying socially relevant in a changing society.

Aims

This toolkit is designed to provide ideas and guidance for how performing companies can increase their social, economic and environmental sustainability at the Fringe and to promote wider sustainable practice by sharing examples of how it can be achieved in a festival environment. This toolkit is also designed to help you attain recognition as a greener company, allowing you to set the standard for sustainable practice.

Find out more

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe's sustainability work is supported by the Festivals Edinburgh Environment Officer and Creative Carbon Scotland, whose expertise is also available to Fringe participants. If you have any queries or ideas about running sustainable shows, please contact:

catriona.patterson@creativecarbonscotland.com.



Where does your company stand?

Each item you complete in the checklist below is worth one point. Simply add up all the items you can confidently check off using the table at the back of the toolkit. If you are doing them already that's great – simply mark them off as complete to see where you stand in the green scheme of things. This will give you a clear indication of how sustainable your production is and where you can improve.



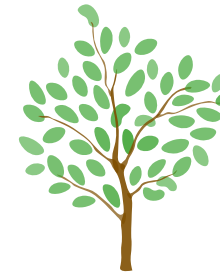
Seedling 10-15 points

You're making a wonderful difference and you're shooting ahead of others. Keep the momentum going in these early stages and you'll be well on your way to the next level of sustainable practice.



Sapling 16-30 points

You should be congratulated on contributing to a more sustainable Fringe. With only a few more points to go, you'll be well on your way to growing into a leader of sustainability.



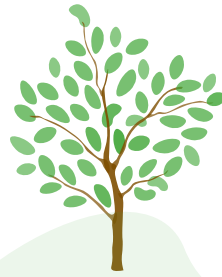
Tree 31-40 points

You are a leader in sustainability, congratulations! Spread your canopy wide, get out there, celebrate and inspire others to match your achievements.

Bonus 2 points



You'll also see this symbol indicating additional items in each section. If you can complete these as well, you'll earn an extra two points for each, raising your company above the ranks in sustainability.



Section A – company members and staff

Policy and action plan

Create a sustainability policy and action plan; it's a key way for your company to develop and demonstrate your commitment to sustainability. Whether you are completely new to sustainable practice or have been bicycle-powering shows for years, you should aim to follow the below.

1. **Create a statement on your sustainability ambitions as a company, describing action points of how you will achieve these.**

1 point

This will be your policy and it doesn't have to be a huge piece of work. Think about what you want to achieve by being more sustainable in what you do, and why it is important to you as a performing company. You can find an example policy via [Creative Carbon Scotland](#).

2. **Demonstrate that you have an action plan in place.**

1 point

Host it publicly on your website and supply it to your venue, fellow company members and other suppliers. Make sure that it is updated regularly.

2 points

Appoint a green champion to be the leader in your group for ensuring sustainable practice is as much at the forefront of your company's operation as health and safety or accessibility are.



Sustainable practice and company involvement

3. **Ensure all company members have access to and understand your company's sustainability policy.**

1 point

4. **Empower company members with the tools to find their own sustainable solutions to issues which arise.**

Provide information about disposal of waste (how and where?), materials acquisition and power saving in their daily tasks.

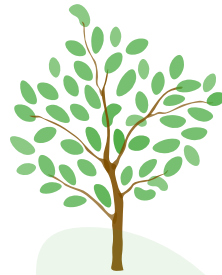
1 point

Also seek advice from local culture and sustainability organisations, like Creative Carbon Scotland.

5. **Attend sustainability events which take place as part of the Fringe Central Events Programme.**

1 point

Along with those events focused specifically on sustainability, there are over 100 events to attend on a myriad of subjects, all included with your show registration.



Section B – promotion, marketing and communications

It is essential to promote your show, but often publicity materials can be one of the more visible signs of unsustainable practices.

Greener print and advertising

1. Reduce the amount of print you produce.

1 point

It is better to print less and have more produced later if you need it, rather than overprint in the first place; this should save you money, too. In 2017, the Fringe Society recycled over 11 tonnes of print material through our recycling scheme, but this represented a relatively small sample of overall companies, demonstrating the improvements that can still be made to avoid overprinting on the Fringe.

2. Choose more environmentally sustainable options.

1 point

Double-sided printing, recycled and FSC-certified paper, soy or vegetable inks, and carbon-neutral printing options all increase the sustainability of your printed materials. The printing process has a huge impact on forests, on the climate and on our water sources. Ask your printer what options are available; many will offer price match services.

3. Use local printers.

1 point

Reduced emissions from shorter delivery distances support the local economy, and local printers can often adjust the size of your print run at short notice. Be sure to ask your printer about their supply chain and carbon footprint.

4. Be savvy with distribution.**1 point**

Less is always more. Ten meaningful conversations are far more effective than blanket leafleting. Flyers are supposed to act as a reminder of the enjoyable interaction the recipient had with the individual selling the show and remind them they want to see the show based on that experience. Encourage audiences to take a photo of your flyer, meaning it's easy for them to share on social media and make sure to get a digital e-flyer created.

5. Use recycled and recyclable marketing collateral.**1 point**

Outdoor advertising products like Correx are recyclable, waterproof and maintain durability over the festival period. Ask your supplier what options are available.

6. Use alternatives to printed materials.**1 point**

Diversify your promotion and reach a wider audience via digital channels, including social media and video using tools like [Biteable](#).

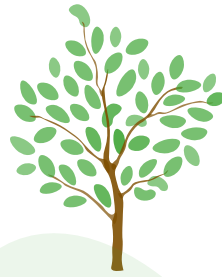
7. Avoid show programmes or production notes.**1 point**

Instead, provide reusable information sheets and collect them from audience members as they leave, or provide a link on your website or social media. Create a digital e-flyer to use for media, press, reviewers and arts industry engagement; these are also more user-friendly for this audience.

2 points

If you are taking steps to increase your environmental sustainability, let everyone know. Make it part of your show's marketing campaign by mentioning your efforts. Use pre- and post-show announcements, providing sustainable transport directions to your venue and highlighting where the recycling spaces in your venue are for any cups or flyers. Talk about your efforts in your press releases.





Section C – travel and freight

For almost every Fringe production, carbon emissions from travel will be the biggest part of their carbon footprint.

Travel to Edinburgh and get around town sustainably

Once in Edinburgh, the city centre is very easy to get around. As a very walkable city, getting about on foot is good for you and the planet, and is often the fastest way to get about during the festival period.



1. Take trains, coaches and car-pool as much as possible.

1 point

As the world's largest arts festival, some air travel is unavoidable, but it is the most carbon-intensive form of travel.

*If your situation means you don't need to travel by air, give yourself an extra point.

2. If flying to Edinburgh, book direct flights.

1 point

Most of the environmental damage is done during take-off and landing, so fewer flights are better. If no direct flight is available, seek to travel to a nearby airport and transfer by train. Avoid flying from within the UK.

*If your situation means you don't need to travel by air, give yourself an extra point.

3. Identify walking and cycling routes for your company members' use to and from their accommodation.

1 point

Use [walkit.com](https://www.walkit.com) to plan walking routes, or edinburgh.cyclestreets.net for city cycling routes. There are many Edinburgh-based cycling groups providing rentals, and temporary buy and resell options.

4. Encourage company members to use public transport.

1 point

If travel on public transport is unavoidable, take advantage of the excellent bus and tram provision in Edinburgh (including an efficient night bus service). Provide company members with day tickets if multiple journeys in one day are necessary; this also saves money.

Freight on the Fringe

Fringe venues are made up of many altered spaces with little to no storage available. Many shows end up stripping back their sets, props and costumes when touring their work. Only do so if it doesn't impact negatively on the artistic integrity of the show.

5. Bring everything with you via your own mode of transport.

1 point

If you can carry it with you, or spread the haul across your group, you'll save on freight costs and emissions at the same time.

6. Share the shipment.

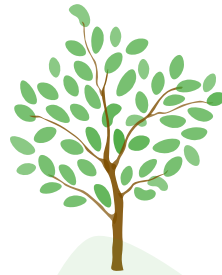
1 point

Many companies combine resources, lowering their carbon emissions while also saving money. Research the many social media groups dedicated to sharing resources or ask using #edfringe if there are companies near you also coming to Edinburgh.



2 points

Calculate the carbon emissions of your travel through a variety of online calculators and consider carbon offsetting to reduce your impact by contributing to global sustainability efforts. A quick search online will allow you to choose the right one for you.



Section D – production design

A company's sustainability begins with how they design their show. Many create a production that has a social, economic and environmental benefit and the biggest impact a show can make is often through its content, engaging with current issues which have implications for sustainability. These include social issues of gender equality, economic issues of poverty, or environmental issues of climate change.

Find it locally

When sourcing materials from Edinburgh and its surrounds, your production can also have a positive social and economic benefit for the local area.

1. Source all the equipment you need from Edinburgh.

1 point

This is more cost efficient and reduces the carbon emissions and logistics of having to bring it with you. Check your contract; what you need may already be provided by your venue so leave it at home and save the hassle, too.

2. Recreate your set and props instead of bringing them with you.

1 point

If your set contains common items like a table and chairs, consider recreating these in situ by sourcing them from local charity shops or scrapyards.

Resource efficiency by design

Resource efficiency is minimising what your company consumes in terms of energy, water or natural materials, to reduce your impact on the planet.

3. Use fewer lights and less energy.

1 point

Your show's atmospheric effect might benefit from minimal lighting or even by using existing daylight inventively. LED lights and innovative lighting design will reduce the amount of energy you need. An extra bonus: fewer lights often means a cooler stage in a hot venue. Ask your venue if they use energy efficient lighting in other areas like front of house.

4. Use energy efficient electrical equipment.

1 point

Make sure it is as energy efficient as possible (eg A-rated), and do not leave anything on, or plugged in, when not in use.

5. Choose renewable or sustainable resources.

1 point

Design materials should be sustainably-sourced wood rather than non-recyclable plastic.



Post-show planning

6. Design to tour.

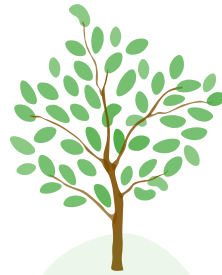
1 point

Use wood and card over polystyrenes and plastics. Sets and props should be made from formerly recycled material and be reusable. Save time and money on procurement for every performance, especially if you intend to tour. Remember to make things packable and lightweight for easy transport.

2 points

Incorporate sustainable transport options on your flyers and throughout your marketing campaign, pointing out cycling routes, walking and public transport options for audiences to get to your venue.





Section E – waste and recycling

A show will often produce waste, but preventing good quality, working-condition materials from being thrown away is a good way to improve the sustainability of your show.

Waste

1. Give back to the community.

1 point

If you have materials that you no longer require at the end of your production, you can donate them. Think of local schools, cultural or community groups who may get some good use out of them, or even a favourite charity shop whose aim is in line with your charitable ambitions.

2. Use the Fringe Swap Shop.

1 point

The Fringe Society organises a swap shop where companies are invited to donate their no-longer-required props and costumes, and other companies are encouraged to collect these items for free, preventing these materials from being sent to landfill. The Fringe Swap Shop takes place on the last few days of the festival at Fringe Central.

Recycling

3. Do the right thing and recycle it.

1 point

It is your responsibility to recycle what you can within the trade waste guidelines set out by the City of Edinburgh Council. The Fringe Society supports limited paper recycling of leftover print media for those companies who would otherwise struggle to dispose of it sustainably.

4. Ask your venue for support.

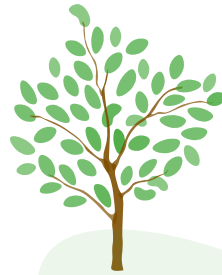
1 point

If there is something that cannot be donated, reused or recycled through these channels, you may want to speak to your venue about what they would recommend, or contact a local waste contractor about picking up selected items.

2 points

Get involved with other shows in your venue. Combine your efforts by sharing resources to enable greater waste reduction and recycling.





Section F – venue collaboration

The Green Arts Initiative is a year-round Scottish community of cultural organisations (including venues) who are trying to reduce their environmental impact, and your venue might be a member, indicating their commitment to sustainability. Search for them on edfringe.com to see if they are listed as a member.



1. Choose a venue signed up to the Green Arts Initiative.

1 point

This may not always be possible and the best venue for your show may not have the capacity to sign up to the initiative. If they aren't, your venue might have its own sustainability policy, with particular goals around energy, water and waste reduction. Ask your venue manager to see how you can contribute to a more sustainable festival.

2. Comply with the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Scotland regulations.

1 point

Your venue is legally required to separate paper, glass, metals, plastic and card for recycling, as well as food waste. You should be able to find recycling bins in your venue so use them and make it easier for your venue to comply.



Score summary

A: Company and staff	Points
1. Sustainability policy	1
2. Publicise your action plan	1
3. Policy understanding	1
4. Empower company members	1
5. Attend sustainability events at Fringe Central	1
Bonus points: appoint a green champion	2
B: Promotion and marketing	Points
1. Reduce your print	1
2. Choose sustainable print options	1
3. Use local printers	1
4. Be savvy with distribution	1
5. Use recycled and recyclable marketing collateral	1
6. Use alternatives to printed materials	1
7. Avoid show programmes or production notes	1
Bonus points: talk about your efforts to everyone	2

C: Travel and freight	Points
1. Take trains, coaches and car-pool	1
2. Book direct flights	1
3. Identify walking and cycling routes	1
4. Encourage use of public transport	1
5. Bring everything with you	1
6. Share the shipment	1
Bonus points: calculate and monitor your carbon footprint	2
D: Production design	Points
1. Source all equipment in Edinburgh	1
2. Recreate your set and props	1
3. Use fewer lights	1
4. Use energy efficient equipment	1
5. Choose sustainable resources	1
6. Design to tour	1
Bonus points: incorporate sustainable transport options	2

E: Waste and recycling	Points
1. Give back to the community	1
2. Use the Fringe Swap Shop	1
3. Recycle everything you can	1
4. Ask your venue for support	1
Bonus points: combine your efforts with other shows in your venue	2
F: Venue collaboration	Points
1. Choose a venue signed up to the Green Arts Initiative	1
2. Comply with the Scottish Government's Zero Waste Scotland regulations	1

Total check marks

