



CULTURE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

This position paper, jointly developed by Culture Action Europe and its members proposes concrete recommendations on how the future generation of EU funded, and especially the Creative Europe programme contributes to tackle the climate challenge.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The cultural and creative Sectors wholeheartedly welcome the ambitions of the European Green Deal and European Institutions' collaborative efforts to achieve them. Nevertheless, this strategy should encompass not only climate sustainability but all aspects of sustainable development. The Cultural sector strongly believes that culture can contribute to combating climate change, environmental degradation and achieve sustainable development, as outlined in the [Agenda21 for Culture](#). Culture constitutes a powerful creative and innovative sector, able to engage people to create a new economically, environmentally and socially sustainable ecosystem, developing sector-specific sustainable practices and learning how to thrive in a low carbon-consuming way. This is why culture should be considered as the fourth pillar of Sustainable Development Goals and be transversally [integrated in the SDGs framework](#). Given the fundamental role of such a change-inspiring and yet underfinanced sector and the ambitious nature of the climate and environmental goals set by the European Green Deal, it is necessary that the mainstreaming of sustainable measures within the Creative Europe programme is directly supported by other funding instruments e.g. the Just Transition Fund included in the European Green Deal's Just Transition Mechanism. The mechanism, amounting to €100 billion will indeed include a new Just Transition Fund with financing coming from EU cohesion policy.

Key messages:

- The cultural and creative sectors have a central and an active role in changing how we can act sustainably.
- At EU and national level overall consistency is needed, across programmes and initiatives. This requires a comprehensive analysis and self-assessment of EU initiatives establishing greener infrastructures, evaluating tools enabling greener mobility and greening procurement standards.
- Mainstream sustainability across the Creative Europe programme instead of having a separate strand on "greening/ sustainability".
- It is crucial to consider the challenge of balancing between the promotion of sustainability guidelines and providing equal access to the Creative Europe programme. Becoming greener should not result in exclusion.
- Financing the "greening" of the Creative Europe programme should come from sources outside of the Creative Europe programme in order to avoid further erosion of the given the extremely small budget of the culture strand. Greener mobility should be encouraged through incentives or self-restraint rather than punishment.
- Given this substantial impact and the contribution the cultural and creative sector can make to the Green Deal, we would hereby like to reinforce the European Parliament's position that it is crucial to [double the budget for culture](#).
- Comprehensive research is urgently needed on how cultural practices should become greener.



CULTURE ACTION EUROPE AND ITS MEMBERS' POSITION ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF ARTS AND CULTURE IN THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

Culture and creative sectors can contribute to positive shifts of attitudes and practices towards a more economic, socially and environmentally sustainable future (see appendix for a compilation of good practices) both at individual and societal level. Given the importance and weight of the sector, responsible for over 12 million full-time jobs –the cultural and creative sectors accounts for 7.5% of the EU workforce and generates value added of approximately €509 billion– its impact is considerable both in its positive and negative effects. Artists, designers, writers, performers etc. have been exploring environmental issues, engaging the public to question the risks, responsibility, possible futures and solutions to climate change. Nevertheless, CCS mobility practices and use of materials can also have negative implications for the environment (e.g. production techniques and waste management in fashion and design industries, architecture, film set and props, transport for touring production and large-scale festivals). In order to enable more ambitious climate targets for 2030 and beyond, the sector urgently requires significant investments and public funding to meet these targets. In this respect it is fundamental that all sustainability and greening measures mainstreamed through the cultural strand of Creative Europe will not negatively impact an already oversubscribed and underfunded programme.

Key considerations:

1. Art and Culture have a key role in changing how we can act sustainably. Cultural and Creative Sectors have long been engaging in this endeavour –the appendix provides various examples of initiatives and best practices ongoing. Therefore, Cultural operators should not merely be seen as a recipient of legislation regarding the European Green Deal or as a mere tool for raising awareness. The question should be twofold: how culture can adapt to the Green Deal and what can culture contribute to the Green Deal.
2. In order to reach the ambitions of the European Green Deal, overall consistency on EU level –from establishing infrastructures, initiatives and evaluating tools enabling greener mobility to procurement standards, is needed.
3. Comprehensive research is needed on how cultural practices of communities, social groups and artists and creators should become greener as well as analysing and making recommendations for greener operations, products, venues and processes of cultural organisations. Cultural and creative sectors should consult extensively and collaborate with environmental sector specialists. Defining what “greener” means is not necessarily straightforward, e.g. digital energy consumption vs reused paper, streaming an album 27 times is more environmentally damaging than the production of a CD record etc. Therefore, research results and data need to be provided on what is green and made available to the sector. We propose to open a call for research grants through Horizon Europe on the topic of ‘how the cultural and creative sector addresses the climate change challenge’ analysing the whole cultural sector and the entire life cycle of cultural production.
4. The importance of face-to-face contact and human exchange should not be underestimated. Direct human and intercultural exchange, trust-building and good and effective project collaboration rely fundamentally on some amount of meeting in person for best results. A good balance between necessary meetings in person and digital meetings needs to be re-thought, taking into account the environmental aspect, however not underestimating the added value of meetings in person.



5. It is crucial to avoid situations where “greener” becomes another constraint for those who have lower access to mobility. Lack of infrastructure in some countries / regions / settlements (including rural areas and islands), disability, family care responsibilities and other constraints impact the accessibility of sustainable travel to. Therefore, EU policymakers and the sector itself should focus on finding the solutions to strike a balance between sustainability and equal access.
6. Shaping the Creative Europe programme to be more sustainable should not come at the expense of its recipients, an already financially fragile sector: it should be done by encouragement, through incentives or self-restraint rather than punishment (see examples in appendix). The EU should not only regulate but facilitate the transition to become greener and offer adequate support.
7. On EU and national level, we would like to stress the need for multi-level collaboration for the infrastructure to be in place (e.g. train lines, greener digital infrastructures, etc..) and to achieve overall consistency. Careful consideration is needed also for consistency between the green and the digital agenda. Digital cultural consumption through the Internet and Artificial Intelligence using significant energy and storing data requires bigger and bigger server capacities: consumer behaviour in music and video streaming shall also be carefully guided with clear data. Not everything that is digital is greener.
8. The enormous potential of greener procurement within and outside of the EU programmes should be recognised and acted upon: greener catering of conferences through using local producers, less meat, reducing waste; introducing a circular economy logic in the use of materials, etc. National and EU programme-level catering and service industries should also head in this direction, in order to ensure sustainability of such services.

Recommendations on how Creative Europe can support the European Green Deal

1. Agenda for Culture and Creative Europe should strive to mainstream sustainability within the programme instead of having a separate strand on “greening/ sustainability” for the following reasons:
 - i. There is no margin in the already very small Creative Europe budget to achieve a real ‘green’ impact through a dedicated strand. Consequently, specific projects on sustainability would have little impact at European level, and would run the risk of appearing to “greenwash” the programme.
 - ii. Ensuring the quality, diversity and openness of the programme must remain a priority in the implementation of the Creative Europe programme. Projects on the subject of sustainability are already possible within the current framework of the programme, and those at the necessary quality level would already be chosen in this framework. Any segmentation of the budget risks distorting this in favour of lower quality projects on sustainability at the expense of higher quality projects on other topics (e.g. social inclusion).
 - iii. A segmentation of the budget for sustainability projects would also risk worsening a geographic imbalance already present in the programme by favouring organisations from countries more advanced on the green agenda. A mainstreaming of sustainable principles through all of the projects of the Creative Europe programme would avoid this and have a better reach to cultural organisations across all of Europe, spreading information through participation in projects, rather than concentrating it in particularly advanced areas.



2. Mainstreaming sustainability in the Creative Europe Culture strand could be addressed in the following way:
 - i. In the evaluation criteria questions could be introduced on how environmental concerns are taken into account in the implementation of the project
 - ii. Instead of creating a separate 'green' call, projects that particularly excelled in addressing the topic of sustainability or awareness raising in climate change could be identified in the E-form. Eventually, best practices could be granted a specific "eco label" to keep a record of success stories for the development of guidelines. Eligible actions for arts and cultural organisations could include knowledge and capacity development on greener and more sustainable organisational functioning; The European Commission could produce and provide relevant information, guides and toolkits for sustainably acting cultural organisations, as well as the most relevant calculators or measurements of the environmental impact.
 - iii. The European Commission should facilitate the organisations to choose the right metrics for the right purpose, in order to mainstream good sustainable patterns.
3. We should be careful how /if we introduce another layer of "consultancy" that would evaluate whether the CE projects and the project partners are acting sustainably or not. It would be similar to a fee that organisations pay for the auditor- and that takes away resources available from the cultural practice. Therefore, if such evaluation is needed it should be financed by budgets outside of the Creative Europe budget. Alternatively, we would propose the development of a self-evaluation tool.
4. In the European Capitals of Culture programme we propose to introduce the sustainability dimension as one of the evaluation criteria and requirements. Sadly, it was missing from the last list of criteria despite the recent change of the requirements. If legislation cannot be revisited, striving to be greener on the European Cultural Capitals should be done on a "self-restraint" basis.

Recommendations for further research

Research on how the Culture and Creative Sectors can actively support a more sustainable and greener future is needed and must address the following items:

- Analysing the entire cultural sector's cultural production life cycle: how could we maximise the impact of each sub-sector in the transition to become more sustainable.
- Research should be conducted on greener practices throughout the entire life cycle of cultural production, from exhibitions to festivals, from theatres, museums, recording studios to tech devices being used or media chosen for providing consumers cultural content.
- The research should include a social and participatory component such as the access of the audience to cultural consumption and production.
- On Member State-level a comparative research could incentivise Member States to act and establish greener structures. It is necessary to take a stock of the existing opportunities in different parts of the EU, in terms of infrastructure, alternative suppliers, prices, etc. Like this it would be easier to evaluate organisations' sustainability efforts against the possibilities they have been provided with and not on the basis of their geographical location where greening might be easier or cheaper to mainstream.
- The EU digital agenda should be consistent with the green agenda. The environmental impact of the current data consumption is immense. The number of users and network connections has increased at an incredible pace. As an indication, global energy demand related to internet-



connected devices is increasing 20% a year, and it is expected that by 2025 ICT will consume 20% of it, which would potentially hamper global attempts to meet climate change targets.

According to the Eurostat's statistics on the use of ICT for cultural purposes- Culture statistics — 2019 edition, in 2018, 72% of internet users in the EU-28 watched internet streamed TV or videos, 56% of internet users in the EU-28 used the internet to listen to music (web radio or streaming services) and 22% of internet users in the EU-28 purchased books, magazines and newspapers online.

In view of these numbers, digital cultural content production and consumption and its sustainability regarding the environmental impact of digital infrastructures, is a crucial topic for the cultural and creative sector. There is a need to invest in research and innovation addressed to tackle the critical environmental toll of our current cultural data ecosystem.

- Research should be done on the supply chains for carbon neutral, responsibly produced and delivered materials and devices involved in cultural production. The research should also include circular economy logic in which cultural projects aim at eliminating waste and the continual use of resources.
- Metrics of success for cultural operators can also impact greener behaviour: The best way to support cultural organisations to focus on being greener and more sustainable is to encourage funders to drop visitor numbers as the main or only metric of success (e.g. for museums, performing arts venues). Organisations free from this “pressure” are the most socially innovative (see appendix for examples).
- We need a comprehensible impact assessment framework for sustainability at all levels and aspects of the cultural value chain.
- In view of the above specific research is needed, for instance, in the framework of Horizon Europe, to answer these key questions.

Recommendations on greener mobility

‘Mobility is a central component of the professional trajectory of artists and culture professionals. Involving a temporary cross-border movement, often for educational, capacity-building, networking, or working purposes, it may have tangible or intangible outputs in the short term, and/or be part of a long-term professional development process. Mobility is a conscious process, and those involved in it, whether by directly engaging in it or by supporting it, should take into consideration its cultural, social, political, environmental, ethical and economic implications’. (Definition of Cultural mobility: Operational Study, related to the Mobility Scheme for Artists and Culture Professionals in Creative Europe countries (page 33))

- On the National level we would like to stress the need for the infrastructure to be in place (e.g. train lines). The means that are put at our disposal for achieving the very ambitious Green Deal objectives are very limited. Airlines should be taxed appropriately with regard to their emissions while train lines and more sustainable ways of transportation should be built/established and it should be ensured that these tickets are affordable and accessible, with subsidies as necessary.
- Greener sustainable mobility should be an effort common to all sectors and levels of governance (at local, regional, national and supranational level). EU Green Deal should provide also solutions that would benefit arts, culture, education, as well as everyone, to operate in a greener and more sustainable way.
- It should be possible and necessary to differentiate applicants based on their geographic location, financial capacity, career level, size of the organisation they belong to. Criteria on which to ground differential definitions of “strong” and “vulnerable” applicants are to be carefully established. In general, different categories should be asked different levels of commitment in terms of taking environmentally friendly transport, presenting more meaningful and strategic mobility trajectories.



The Portunus report states that more than 50% of the mobility funding is concentrated in 5 to 8 countries of all 41 Creative Europe countries. Most of these countries (FR, DE, FI, SE, NL etc) are also among the best connected with train systems within Europe!: Greener mobility must be considered intrinsic to the international dimension of arts, culture and education, and not to be considered as a luxury or a privilege. Geographically remote countries among CE countries (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Ukraine or islands like Malta, Cyprus) should not be excluded by restrictive requirements.

- Given that smaller not-for-profit organisations can be excluded from participation should any stricter limitations to access EU funding start to apply, capacity development possibilities should be provided to organizations on how to develop and measure their environmental impact.
- Encourage programme beneficiaries to take greener forms of transport by offering higher flat rates to those who travel by bus or train rather than the car or plane, in order to encourage the use of more sustainable means of transport by compensating their additional time and subsistence costs. Clear guidelines about the distances (km), as well as the incentives and the alternative value of their choice should be provided;
- In the reporting phase, ask applicants why they chose the airplane, how long a journey by train would have taken and how much it would have cost. It could also be asked what would incline them to choose a 'slower travel' option.

ABOUT CULTURE ACTION EUROPE:

Culture Action Europe (CAE) is the major European network of cultural networks, organisations, artists, activists, academics and policymakers. CAE is the first port of call for informed opinion and debate about arts and cultural policy in the EU. As the only intersectoral network, it brings together all practices in culture, from the performing arts to literature, the visual arts, design and cross-arts initiatives, to community centres and activist groups.

CAE believes in the value and values of culture and its contribution to the development of sustainable and inclusive societies.

www.cultureactioneurope.org