

The Artists' Association of Finland 2024-2027 Sustainability Plan

Approved by the representatives of the Artists' Association of Finland on 15.12.2023

Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
Carbon footprint	3
Travel policy	4
Events and meetings	4
Premises	5
Digital carbon footprint	6
Investments	6

Introduction

The Artists' Association of Finland has identified the need to better consider the ecological impacts of its activities. As the climate crisis and biodiversity loss accelerate, the Artists' Association wants to reduce its own carbon and ecological footprints, improve the ecological sustainability of its operations and promote sustainability across the visual arts sector.

The sustainability plan complements the Association's strategy for 2022–2026 and the annual action plan.

In this plan, sustainability is assessed with regard to climate change and ecological sustainability in particular. Measures related to the ethical basis of operations and good administrative practices are set out in the Association's other documents (the equality and non-discrimination plan, principles of safe meeting spaces, rules, regulations). This plan focuses on reducing the direct carbon and environmental footprints of the Association's activities.

The sustainability plan has been devised by assessing which aspects of the operations are already sustainable and which need to be improved. The plan is divided by theme, each containing concrete measures for the four-year period covered by the plan.

The Kuvataiteen kestävä tulevaisuus network and the Nykytaiteen digitaalinen ekolaskuri project have provided significant help and support in the preparation of this plan. We would also like to thank our neighbour Kuvasto for assessing the environmental issues of our shared premises.

The Association has not currently made a decision to apply for separate certification of environmental management. In terms of its greatest source of emissions, its offices, the Association already applies assessments and development measures provided by Kuvasto, which has attained the EcoCompass environmental management system. It also relies on the Kuvataiteen kestävä tulevaisuus network and the Nykytaiteen digitaalinen ekolaskuri project for other operations. Applying for certification would entail significant cost considering the resources currently available to the Association.

Visual arts as an industry generates emissions, like almost all human activities. It is worth noting, however, that enjoying visual arts is a relatively sustainable way for people to spend time compared to activities such as shopping. Many visual artists also work on themes related to sustainability, the climate crisis and loss of biodiversity and draw viewers' attention to these problems or use their works to showcase the uniqueness of the world. In this way the field of visual arts actually contributes to increasing awareness of the climate crisis and biodiversity loss.

The Association believes it is important to promote the practices of sustainable transformation across the field of visual arts. In 2023–2024, the Association is taking part in the Nykytaiteen digitaalinen ekolaskuri joint project with several other visual arts organisations. The project will develop a footprint calculator adapted for the visual arts sector and a digital platform for sharing customised instructions for visual arts professionals. The project is being coordinated by Frame Finland. In our communications on public art, we actively share information about the carbon footprint calculator developed by Turku University of Applied Sciences for artwork.

We have appointed a coordinator for environmental affairs for our offices, who assesses the implementation of the sustainability plan every year. The plan will be updated as knowledge and expertise, and the Association's resources improved, and the update will be published no later than 2027.

Carbon footprint

The largest sources of emissions for the Artists' Association of Finland's activities are travel, heating, catering and purchasing goods and services. The most significant sources of emissions are related to travel (flying) and its offices.

The sources of emissions are similar to those for households. In 2020, the Finnish Climate Change Panel estimated that the carbon footprint of Finnish households should be reduced by 70 per cent to meet current climate targets.

Measures to be taken:

- The first measure in the sustainability plan to be implemented will be to accurately assess the carbon footprint of the Association's activities in 2024 using the Hiilifixsu järjestö carbon footprint calculator for organisations. The results will be published on the Association's website.

Travel policy

“Aviation accounts for approximately 2-3% of anthropogenic CO2 emissions. In terms of cumulative effects when factors other than CO2 are taken into account, aviation emissions explain approximately 4% of the atmospheric heating.” (Finnish Environment Institute SYKE, press release, 2019)

In the Association, air travel is required to maintain international relations. The responsibilities associated with Finland chairing the IAA Europe require some travel to annual meetings and other events across Europe. All journeys in Finland are already made by land.

Measures to be taken:

- Travel by land will be preferred for business trips. Travel guidelines will be updated to allow travel time to be used for working.
- Trips to locations in Finland and nearby countries will be taken by land or sea.
- When flying is necessary, flight emissions will be compensated as part of the travel budget.

Events and meetings

“Overall, emissions from the food system are dominated by primary production (i.e. growing crops and raising animals). The production of food of animal origin is particularly damaging to the environment. The basic principle of environmentally friendly eating is simple: choose as many plant-based products as possible on your plate, such as pulses, wholegrains, vegetables, berries and fruits, as well as fish that is sustainably caught locally.” (WWF Ruokaopas)

There is a carbon footprint associated with events and meetings held in the office, for example, from catering and travel.

Measures to be taken:

- For meetings and events organised by the Association alone, only vegetarian food will be served, with vegan options preferred. A vegetarian or vegan option will be proposed for the catering of events organised in collaboration with other parties.

- In order to avoid food waste, pre-registration will be required for events so that food can be ordered for the correct number of attendees.
- Events will be held in venues that are easy to reach by public transport, on foot or by bike.

Premises

Heating of offices is a significant source of emissions. In the contract for the premises that the Association shares with Kuvasto, the origin of electricity used is based on electricity production in Finland. In 2021, the electricity used in the premises came from the following sources: 49% nuclear power, 41% fossil production and 10% renewable energy. The contract is valid indefinitely. Wind power is currently the most ecological source of power.

The cleaning company that services the offices is eco-certified.

Recycling is an important aspect of circular economy, and it is important that people consume less and that less waste ends up in mixed waste in the offices. The offices already have a comprehensive sorting system for plastic, cardboard, biowaste, paper, metal, glass and mixed waste. Hazardous waste is collected separately and electrical devices are recycled in an appropriate manner.

Measures to be taken:

- Wind power will be used as the source of power for the premises during the term of the sustainability plan.
- Energy consumption will be reduced by keeping the indoor temperature moderate. We will make it a habit that the last person to leave the offices ensures that the monitors and printers are switched off and that no electrical appliances have been left on unnecessarily.
- Recycling will be encouraged and new employees will be instructed in recycling practices.
- Any purchases of office supplies will be carefully considered. Recycled paper will be used whenever possible. Recycled options will be sought when purchasing office furniture and other supplies.

Digital carbon footprint

“Greater use of ICT increases data consumption and the number of new digital services. The growth is visible in the volumes of data transferred across data networks and data stored and processed in data centres. - - Currently, only 17% of the waste electronic equipment produced in the world is appropriately recycled.” (Sitra blog: Five important questions about the environmental impacts of increased digital use, published in 2020)

Measures to be taken:

- The Association utilises numerous digital materials, websites and a cloud service. The number of large files stored, such as videos, will be limited.
- Digital devices will be kept in use until the end of their life cycle. The coordinator for environmental affairs will ensure that devices are recycled when they are no longer needed. This ensures that valuable raw materials are recycled.

Investments

According to the report by the portfolio manager, the overall environmental, social and governance (ESG) score of the Association’s investments is good and the risks are low. The portfolio’s carbon intensity is lower than the benchmark. Data on the ecological sustainability of investments is still an area for development, and data directly related to this is not yet available.

Measures to be taken:

- The sustainability of the investment portfolio will be monitored. Overviews of the implementation of sustainability criteria and ecological sustainability will be requested once better instruments are available.