

PRO ARTE FOUNDATION FINLAND, IHME HELSINKI

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ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY AND IHME HELSINKI

In this age of climate change and the sustainability crisis, it is necessary to consider how art and events are produced: what kind of carbon footprint do we leave behind? How do we account for factors in productions that influence climate change mitigation, biodiversity, pollution and land use changes, be they connected with the living and eating arrangements of staff and guests, transportation, or aspects related to the art works such as the choice of materials, the technology used to produce them, their energy consumption and subcontracted elements?

One of our future goals regarding projects that combine art and science is to support the values that nourish a thriving society, and that respect and maintain wellbeing and the resilience and diversity of the planet. IHME Helsinki will most likely add to the understanding of themes that are linked to the works we produce that explore, among other things, the promotion of wellbeing, democracy, health, the climate crisis, sufficient water and resources and the preservation of animal species, because these are questions that many artists are working with.

Our foundation has been focused from the outset on sustainable development and ecological solutions. The most important factors in our choices are our carbon footprint with regards to housing, exercise and diet. Our festival office used a web tool produced by the UK's Julie's Bicycle organization to work out that we had a carbon footprint for August 2018 of 220.7 kilos, which was considered a very good result. The tool has been designed especially to help cultural organizations calculate their carbon footprint based on the amount of energy and water used, waste generated, and travel and transportation.

Here are some examples of IHME's small-scale actions to curb environmental impacts:

- * If you have to fly, compensate for the negative environmental consequences. IHME chose Kone Foundation and The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation's (FANC) Hiilipörssi (carbon exchange) scheme, which uses donations to restore Finnish wetlands. If possible, travel by train.
- * Explore opportunities to make and experience art through digital connections.
- * Reduce volumes of printed matter, such as leaflets, and consider readers' needs: what information is essential for your target group? Also favour environmentally-certified printing houses and ask about the environmental effects of inks. The goal is to minimize the digital environmental footprint of all operations.
- * Serve vegan options and think about ways of reducing packaging waste.
- * Ask old and new collaborative partners what they are doing for the environment. Learn from others and favour organizations that act ecologically. Environmental protection is a common goal, and promoting it makes us all winners.

The contemporary art field is international: artists deal with universal issues all over the world, and art institutions and actors face similar challenges when they search for solutions to similar issues with regards to making collaborative projects more operationally sustainable. Travel is an essential part of working in the contemporary art field, but air travel is a particular burden on our carbon footprint: this means that travel should be carefully considered and as many things as

possible should be combined into a single trip. Technology also offers digital platforms that can take the place of physical travel (conference calls, Skype, etc.)

The most difficult thing is to change people's behaviour and ingrained ways of thinking. Art is an opportunity that, at its best, enables people to experiment with new ideas and do things differently. Contemporary art is often a laboratory that provides inspiration for listening, thinking, understanding and being understood. In order to reduce our environmental footprint, we strive to find opportunities to make and experience art with the help of digital connections and practices, such as virtual meetings and encounters.