

Climate Change Resource Guide for the Arts Sector



*Dalhousie Art Gallery, "Indigenous Butterfly and Pollinator Garden: Bench Commission" (2022)
Filmmaker Catherine Anne Martin leads children through pollinator garden.*

Purpose of this guide

The following Climate Change Resource Guide is intended to support artists, arts organizations and other stakeholders in the arts and culture sector who are committed to integrating climate-conscious practices into their work. In this guide, you'll find strategies, guidance, and resources for sustainable practices tailored to the arts and culture sector in Nova Scotia. This guide supports the Arts Nova Scotia Strategic Action concerning Climate Change and Sustainable practices contained in our 2023-2024 Annual Report. Supporting sector sustainability is also an ongoing priority at the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage (CCTH), as was outlined in our 2024-25 Business Plan, and continues to be a strategic priority through the departmental Climate Adaptation Strategy.

As the impacts of climate change intensify, the arts sector has a critical role to play in both reducing its environmental footprint and inspiring broader societal change. The arts not only have the potential to model sustainable practices, but also to raise awareness through storytelling, creativity, and expression. Adopting sustainable practices can lead to operational efficiencies, cost savings, and new opportunities for creativity and community building. We encourage readers to view this guide as a living resource that is subject to change based on evolving best practices and available services.

Note that this guide was completed in April of 2026. As of that time, all the links contained here are functional. However, that may change over time.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Caroline Mahoney, MPA Intern, who researched and compiled resources for the guide.

Thanks to Lori Stockley, Manager, Climate Action and the CCTH Climate Governance Team for their leadership to advance climate goals in the Department.

How to use this guide

This guide contains resources which touch on a number of topics. There are also resources that speak to specific disciplines. We have created symbols and an index to help you quickly navigate to the resources that fit your needs.

Legend

On the next page you will find a legend which outlines the symbols we've created. There are symbols for topic, discipline, and language. Click on any of the symbols in the Legend to jump to a page showing an Index of the resources for that topic or discipline.

Index

On the Index page for each topic or discipline, click on a resource to jump to a page with more details and links to the website.

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Click an icon below to find a list of resources which touch on that topic/discipline.

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Energy



Materials and Waste



Infrastructure



Planning and Logistics



Digital Footprint



Risk Assessment and Adaptation



Case Studies



Carbon Calculation



Community



Capacity Building

Discipline



Theatre



Film



Music



French Version Available



Deep Resource

Contains info on many topics and or disciplines



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Climate Insight



[Climate Insight](#) is a toolkit administered by Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada and offers solutions for resiliency projects for infrastructure. Hundreds of resources, tools, case studies and other materials related to climate change and infrastructure can be found through their [library](#). If users need help finding climate adaptation and mitigation strategies tailored to their project, the toolkit includes a [solutions finder](#) that involves a simple survey to match the best solutions to their specific needs.

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[Green Festivals](#) is a project from Ryerson University and funded by Ontario's Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change. The project's objective is to offer best practices to festival organizers to adapt to environmental impacts, as well as educate vendors and participants about contributing to environmental sustainability. The website offers [information about the importance of making festivals less harmful to the environment](#), a variety of [greening strategies](#) for various aspects of outdoor events (e.g. camping, communication, energy, transportation, etc.), [tips for attendees](#), [case studies](#), and [resources](#) (e.g. funding opportunities, potential climate messaging for organizers, etc.).

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City of Vancouver: Green Events Planning Guide



The City of Vancouver developed a comprehensive [Green Events Planning Guide](#) to support the Greenest City 2020 initiative. The guide offers information about organizing a sustainable event throughout the pre-event, during the event, and post-event stages. This includes involving stakeholders, training staff and volunteers, developing a zero-waste plan, monitoring waste stations, measuring performance, among other categories. Finally, the appendix provides practical checklists and information sheets for organizers to reference.

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Conseil Québécois des Événements Écoresponsables



The [Conseil québécois des événements écoresponsables](#) is an organization dedicated to supporting the sustainable transition of events in the arts and culture sector in Quebec. CQEER offers a number of [training courses](#) in French pertaining to designing a sustainable event. [Click here](#) to access their expansive directory of guides and tools.

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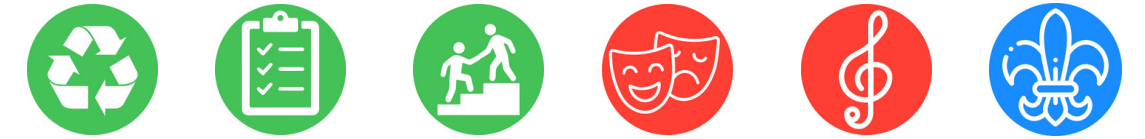
McGill Sustainable Events Certification



The [McGill University Sustainable Events certification program](#) is an initiative that provides consultations, training, and resources to encourage and support more responsible events at McGill. While the resources offered through the program are designed for McGill-affiliated events, the [Sustainable Events Checklist](#) provides detailed checklists with general best practices tailored to small and medium, large, and virtual events. The checklists include information pertaining to planning stages, travel and commuting, buildings and utilities, procurement, food systems, waste management, research and education, community building, and communications and engagement.

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[Festival TransAmérique](#) and [Écoscénéo](#) created a [Ecodesign Guide for the Performing Arts](#) (2025) ([French version here](#)) with support from Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ) and Conseil des arts de Montréal (CAM). It offers strategies and tools for integrating sustainable design into all phases of production, including design, sourcing, crafting, and touring, with the goal of reducing environmental impact.

Although the guide is tailored to the performing arts industry, its reference sheets and planning tools provide adaptable solutions for various creative industries. Regarding touring, the guide includes sustainable practices for all aspects of the touring process, including waste reduction, sustainable food, transportation and audience travel, carbon offsets, materials and products, mental health and sustainable accommodation.

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Green Key Global



[Green Key Global](#) is an environmental label that certifies tourist accommodations and restaurants which meet stringent social and environmental management criteria. [Click here to view their map of certified businesses.](#)

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Screen Nova Scotia: Green Production Resources



[Screen Nova Scotia](#) is a signatory member for [Creative Industries Pact for Sustainable Action](#) and provides a number of sustainable production resources on their website, such as [green toolkits](#), [free training courses](#) ([Ontario Creates](#) and [Reel Green](#) at Creative BC), and [case studies](#) (This Hour Has 22 Minutes Sustainable Film Production Case Study).

Screen Nova Scotia also recently launched a new [“Green” identifier \(Green Members and Green Vendors\)](#) on their [Production Guide](#) so that members can identify if they have green training or if their business employs environmentally friendly practices.

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Producing for the Planet: Climate Action Guide



[Producing for the Planet](#) created a [Climate Action Guide for Canadian Producers](#) ([click here for the French version](#)) which is designed to be applicable across genres, company sizes, and budget levels. The guide offers actionable best practices, resources, tools, and templates (i.e., [Sustainability Plan Template](#)) for plans and policies that can be used on productions. The guide also offers useful background information pertaining to the environmental impact of production in Canada, including the greatest sources of emissions on set (pg. 4-7).

Producing for the Planet also [offers advice around the importance of leveraging the power of storytelling to mobilize climate action](#). [Click here](#) to view their chapter on climate risks for the production industry. Producing for the Planet also provides succinct overviews of best practices on their website, including [creating a green production plan](#), [action on screen](#), [action on emissions](#), and [action on waste](#). [Click here](#) to view a Sample Sustainability Plan from CBC. You can also find several links to other resources within the guide that provide additional information to readers about sustainable production best practices (i.e. [click here to access best practices for animation production](#)).

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Rolling Green: A Guide to Sustainable Audiovisual Productions in Québec



[CQEER](#) and the [Quebec Film and Television Council](#) (QFTC) developed a [sustainable audiovisual production guide](#) ([click here for the French version](#)) for Quebec's production industry. While the guide is specific to Quebec, it provides user-friendly checklists and an overview of basic concepts that may be useful for small organizations to reference.

[Click here](#) to read about [Albert](#), a carbon calculator designed specifically for the production industry. For a Canadian alternative, [click here](#) to access an environmental impact tracker designed by Écoscéno (involves tracking an overview of production factors such as costumes, props, sets, light, sound, and video); for more information, refer to the [Ecodesign Guide for the Performing Arts](#) ([French version here](#)).

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Theatre Green Book



[Theatre Green Book](#), a UK-based organization supported by [Arts Council England](#), offers resources for environmentally sustainable theatre production. The [Theatre Green Book](#) guide provides an overview for planning and best practices for sustainability in the performing arts industry, including sustainable theatre production. Their [Production Calculator](#) and [Guidance Video](#) allow performing arts professionals to keep track of the environmental impact associated with their theatre productions. [Click here](#) to find a more detailed version of the Theatre Green Book guide for more information pertaining to sustainable theatre production. Finally, the Theatre Green Book also offers a [preliminary checklist](#) to get performing arts organizations engaged in designing their own sustainability policy.

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Booknet Canada: Sustainable Publishing Tools



[ECW Press](#) and [New Society Publishers](#) launched a series of two Sustainable Publishing Tools to calculate the carbon output associated with book production. The development of the tools was made possible with funding from Canada Council for the Arts. Publishing industry professions can [access the Book Carbon Footprint Calculator or the Publisher's Carbon Footprint Calculator for free](#). [Click here](#) to learn how to use the tools. [Click here](#) to read more about how the Tools were developed.

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Julie's Bicycle and L'Institut de l'Ecodició: Guide to Sustainable Book Fairs



In 2025, [Julie's Bicycle](#) and the [Institut de l'Ecodició](#) published a [Guide to Sustainable Book Fairs](#) to support eco-publishing initiatives. The guide provides information to book fair organizers, including design and materials, waste, digital impacts, energy, travel and transport, food and drink, monitoring and ecological footprint, and communication best practices.

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Re-Nourish



[Re-nourish](#) is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides online tools advocating awareness & action for sustainable systems thinking in the communication design community ([CSPA](#), n.d.).

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Canadian Live Music Association: Sustainability Hub



[The Canadian Live Music Association](#) offers an online sustainability hub to connect musicians with resources pertaining to sustainable practices in the music industry.

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Music Declares Emergency



Music Declares Emergency is an advocacy movement led by artists, music industry professionals and organizations who declare a climate and ecological emergency and call for an immediate response to protect environmental wellbeing. [Click here](#) to view their Canadian chapter website.

Julie's Bicycle developed a [Music Industry Climate Pack](#) (2022), an accessible guide to greening the music industry for businesses, artists and fans as part of [Music Declares Emergency's Turn Up The Volume campaign](#). This guide provides information such as important background on the climate crisis, an overview of Music Declares Emergency and their main objectives, guidance for artists, sustainable practices when touring, information for record labels, information for venues, sustainable merchandise practices, information for managers, and information for music fans.

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Bye Bye Plastic Foundation



The [Bye Bye Plastic Foundation](#) is an international non-profit organization with the goal of removing single-use plastics in the music industry.

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Visual Artists Ireland: Sustainable Art Practices



[Visual Artists Ireland](#) (VAI) is a national membership organization that advocates for the needs of painters, sculptors, photographers, curators, educators, and all other visual art forms. They offer a concise description of sustainable art, key strategies for sustainable art practices, and action points for artists (e.g., adopting green studio practices, using sustainable materials, engaging with community, etc.). [Click here](#) to access their page pertaining to sustainability in the visual arts.

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FOFA Gallery: Sustainable Curating Toolkit



The [FOFA Gallery](#) is located on Concordia University campus and is dedicated to showcasing the artistic and research practices of the Faculty of Fine Arts. FOFA created a [toolkit for sustainable curating](#) in response to the environmentally deleterious effects of common exhibition materials used in art galleries, such as PVC lettering (a highly toxic plastic that is non-biodegradable) ([click here to access the toolkit in French](#)). This guide is user friendly and covers information such as the basics of sustainable signage, sustainable materials (i.e. adhesives, paints, poster pasting, etc.), as well as step-by-step guidance around techniques for more sustainable signage practices for art galleries, like projecting and tracings and utilizing stencils and painting. [Click here](#) to access more information about sustainable curating from the [Centre for Sustainable Curating](#) (a research group based out of Western University).

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Canadian Green Alliance: Sustainable Theatre Guidebook



[Canadian Green Alliance](#) is a non-profit organization devoted to bridging the gap between sustainability and theatre. Their website offers a [learning annex](#) where they offer resources, such as recordings of seminars, workshops and panels, as well as inspiring and educational reading materials for theatre practitioners. They also developed a Canadian [Sustainable Theatre Guidebook](#) with best practices for making ecologically responsible theatre in Canada, which is free to access for members of the alliance (memberships are free of charge, [click here](#) to learn more).

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CATR: Environmental Theatre

Resources



The [Canadian Association for Theatre Research](#) (CATR) is a non-profit organization founded in 1976 to support and encourage research in theatre and performance studies in Canada, with a special interest in Canadian work. Their membership includes scholars, students, and theatre professionals from around the world who are leading developments in the field.

The CATR formed an Environmental Stewardship in Theatre and Performance Education Working Group. Its purpose is to “discuss how we teach, document and prepare students for sustainable practices in theatre and performance.”

The working group created a digital archive of their resource gathering process, meetings, and events which can be accessed [here](#).

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Sustainable Entertainment Alliance



The [Sustainable Entertainment Alliance](#) is a consortium of prominent film, television, and streaming stakeholders (i.e., Netflix, Warner Bros. Discovery, Sony Pictures, etc.) dedicated to advancing sustainability initiatives in the film and television industry. They offer resources and tools to help industry professionals plan, communicate, implement, and track sustainable practices on set. Such resources include the [PEAR \(Production Environmental Accounting Report\): Carbon Calculator](#), the [PLUM \(Production Lumber Material\): Plywood Tracking tool](#), and the [PEACH \(Production Environmental Actions Checklist\): Best Practices Checklist](#). Notably, the Sustainable Entertainment Alliance provides significant [industry resources](#); providing advice regarding climate storytelling, research and reporting, and links to initiatives in different countries (i.e., [Reel Green at Creative BC](#) (a nation-wide partnership managed by the film commission to improve sustainable production practices across Canada)).

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Government of NS: Coastal Hazard Map



[Click here](#) to access the Government of Nova Scotia's Coastal Hazard Map to view if a building or event is in a flood risk area.

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Nova Scotia Nature Trust: *Backlands*

Case Study



The Craig Gallery at Alderney Landing hosted *Backlands* in the City from August 11 to September 28, 2025, showcasing works by nine visual artists inspired by the Purcells Cove Backlands, a biodiverse wilderness near Halifax. Through paintings, photographs, sculptures, and weavings, the artists expressed deep emotional and ecological connections to the land, highlighting its unique flora, fauna, and geological features. The exhibition aimed to raise public awareness about the ecological value of the Backlands and encourage conservation efforts against urban development. It featured storytelling, scientific observation, and artistic interpretation, creating a powerful narrative about the importance of protecting wild spaces for future generations. This initiative was supported by the Nova Scotia Nature Trust, which actively works to conserve ecologically significant areas across the province. [Click here](#) to read more about the exhibition. Case studies such as this can be used to communicate how artists can support biodiversity and conservation through their unique skillset.

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SAGE



[SAGE](#) (Sustainable Arts & Green Ecosystems) is a Canadian toolkit that helps museums, galleries, and theatres explore and implement strategies and tactics to reduce waste and the environmental impact of exhibitions and theatre sets using circular design. Visit their [Resources and Inspiration](#) page to learn more about circular design and waste reduction in the arts.

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UNICEF



[Click here](#) to access five tips for reducing your digital footprint (Unicef, 2023). For more information, Word Economic Forum offers more [background information surrounding the carbon footprint of digital activities](#).

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Synthetic Collective



The [Synthetic Collective](#) is an interdisciplinary collaboration between Canadian and American scholars in fields from the Fine Arts to Environmental Sciences who developed a [field guide for reducing the environmental impact of art exhibitions](#). Some of the contents include art making, shipping, display, technology, plastics in collections and museums, etc.

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CLIMAtlantic



[CLIMAtlantic](#) serves as a knowledge sharing hub for climate change information pertaining to the Atlantic provinces. It offers regionally relevant climate data and adaptation strategies to support planning and decision-making. CLIMAtlantic presents locally and geographically specific information on their website, but also through ongoing engagements, including webinars and events within communities. They consider anyone who is contributing to climate resiliency in Atlantic Canada to be a potential collaborator and partner. The government of Nova Scotia, along with the other Atlantic provincial governments, and the Canadian Centre for Climate Services were all foundational partners in establishing CLIMAtlantic. The organization also received foundational support from organizations like Ecology Action Centre, New Brunswick Environmental Network, and Aster Group.

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Clean Foundation



[Clean Foundation](#) is an environmental organization that advocates for a healthier environment and recognizes the intersections between environmental wellbeing and a more equitable society. Some of their organizational goals include reducing energy poverty, promoting social equity, supporting historically marginalized communities, and developing a clean economy workforce. Some of the services they offer include offering subject-matter expertise surrounding environmental issues, partnering with government organizations to create resources (i.e. climate hazard mapping tool), contributing to several adaptation and mitigation projects in the region, and offering a multitude of online resources for planning and decision-making.

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Ecology Action Centre



[Ecology Action Centre](#) is a leading environmental advocacy group in Nova Scotia that works on a wide range of environmental issues, including marine issues, energy, built environment, politics and policy, food, transportation, coastal issues, and more. They offer a wealth of online resources, including their current programming, reports, and research projects. They also offer in-person engagements and host webinars tailored to community needs. The Climate Commitment Badge program, in partnership with Halifax Regional Municipality, offers a good starting point for communities to learn the basics of climate change and how it impacts our daily lives.

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Julie's Bicycle: Resource Hub



[Julie's Bicycle](#) is a UK-based non-profit organization that unites culture, creativity and climate action to drive change. Their website contains a [Resource Hub](#) which contains a wealth of materials on many different topics and for various artistic disciplines.

Below are some specific pages of interest from the Julie's Bicycle Resource Hub. However, there are many more resources than this on the website.

Julie's Bicycle published a [Waste Management Guide for Outdoor Events](#) in 2014 which covers actions that organizers can take at the pre-event, during event, and post-event stages to manage waste on site. This involves advice on waste types, waste management plans, and liaising with a waste supplier. Note that some contents pertain to the UK only, particularly the Regulations and Legislation section.

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Julie's Bicycle: Resource Hub (cont'd)

Julie's Bicycle created a [Green Visual Arts guide](#) for the visual arts sector in London. While the guide is highly tailored to the context of the visual arts sector in the UK (specifically London), it still provides useful information that can be generalized to other regions (pg. 20-37). For instance, the guide covers universal topics such as reducing the environmental impact of building operations (such as galleries and museums, studios, office space, working from home), reducing emissions associated with exhibitions (i.e., transportation of art and display), reducing the environmental impact of art fairs, and reducing travel emissions. This resource would not be able to be sent to sectors directly, due to the amount of information that is specific to London, however, it still provides a useful checklist in communicating the actions that visual artists can take to reduce their environmental impact.

[Click here](#) to view a guide for water management in buildings. This guide involves case studies and best practices for building managers.

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Julie's Bicycle: Resource Hub (cont'd)

[Click here](#) to view a guide for water management at outdoor events. This guide involves water management best practices for the pre-event, during the event, and post-event stages.

[Click here](#) to access a briefing about the importance of contributing to sustainable food systems to reduce environmental degradation, which is especially relevant information for events.

Julie's Bicycle (2022) developed a guide for arts organizations to contribute to the circular economy through waste reduction and sustainable procurement practices. [Click here](#) to access the brief, user-friendly guide.

Julie's Bicycle offers a [comprehensive guide for producing an environmental policy and action plan](#), including how-to guides, tips, templates, examples, and resources. While there are some pieces of information that are UK-Specific (i.e., the examples and resources sections), the guide still provides plenty of generalizable information that can be adapted to a Nova Scotian context.

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