

Green Teams: Guidelines & Actions

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Introduction

Taking individual action on climate issues can be hard, but a Green Team offers an empowering way to make a difference. Having a dedicated internal group working towards targets will make the process more efficient. Starting a Green Team is the first step in the GCC Decarbonisation Action Plan.

These are groups of employees engaged in advancing sustainability within an organisation. In the case of smaller organisations, a single Green Ambassador can take on the role.

Establishing a Green Team or appointing a Green Ambassador will increase employee engagement with environmental challenges and create a strong culture of sustainability in the workplace.

This is a key step in standardising and normalising environmental considerations at all stages of decision making. Successes might not always happen straight away, but by carving out a specialist team, organisations will be building a culture of climate impact awareness.

Your organisation's Green Team leader or Green Ambassador should be the registered contact for your GCC membership account.

General Art-Sector Sustainability Principles:

- Measure, report and analyse emissions.
- Use sea and land transport and freight options over air routes at every available opportunity.
- Make sure you are using a certified renewable energy provider.
- Keep products and materials in circulation for as long as possible.
- Prioritise reusable materials and products over single use equivalents.
- Follow the 5 R's of the waste hierarchy.
- Plan exhibition and project schedules in advance and around these principles.

Starting a Green Team

Start recruiting a Green Team with an open call for volunteers. It is beneficial to have team members that have proactively put themselves forward so that the team is composed of individuals with a passion for the subject and a positive attitude.

It would be sensible to include individuals responsible for specific areas, ie. shipping / logistics, operations, finance, HR, as well as those able to approve changes and make key decisions. Most importantly, a Green Team should include those who have the time and willingness to commit to bringing about real change.

Green Teams should have input from throughout the organisation. Depending on the type and size of an organisation this may include a: Registrar, Technician, Gallery / Studio / Facilities Manager, Financial Director, HR.

Once recruited, allocate roles and responsibilities. Appoint a team member responsible for scheduling and leading meetings. GCC recommends making the Green Team leader the GCC point contact to share and disseminate information.

It's important that the Green Team is recognised and supported by the management team. Ensure that clear lines of communication are implemented and fit into existing decision-making processes. In a smaller organisation this may be informal, but in a larger one this could involve including a Green Team report and set of recommendations at Board meetings, or similar.

Green Team's responsibilities:

1. Carbon reporting
2. Developing a tailored Decarbonisation Action Plan
3. Implementing sustainability best practices
4. Train & Explain
5. 'Greening' the supply chain
6. Supporting Strategic Climate Funds (SCFs)

Green Team Responsibilities

1. Carbon Reporting

Calculate emissions using GCC's free carbon calculator or hire a freelance consultant or advisory agency to conduct a full carbon audit. It is important to retrospectively calculate emissions for a typical pre-Covid year to use as a baseline for 50% CO₂e reductions for 2030. We recommend starting with 2019.

A User Guide is available to provide step by step guidance on how to calculate emissions through GCC's carbon calculator.

Once completed, share the carbon report results amongst colleagues and together discuss the impact of different activities and agree on the appropriate steps to reach your target.

GCC encourages members to share their results via the GCC website. Publishing carbon reports promotes transparency and collegiality across the sector. Making results available helps GCC to establish best practice, track progress, and build up a bank of data, which in turn allows for the refinement and improvement of the tools and research. It cannot be emphasised enough just how important and useful this is to the collective effort.

Carbon Report Badges are available for members that have completed an annual report. These can be displayed on the individual or organisation's website and social media channels, and are a way of recognising and celebrating the positive actions taken. Any gallery, artist studio, art sector business or individual that has submitted a carbon report either by using the free GCC Carbon Calculator or via a carbon audit with an external consultant are eligible to receive the badge.

Green Team Responsibilities

2. Develop a Decarbonisation Action Plan Tailored For Your Organisation

GCC's Decarbonisation Action Plan is a step by step carbon reduction strategy for the art sector. The report offers examples and pathways of how a 50% and a 70% reduction might be reached for different kinds of arts organisations, as well as guidance on target setting and implementation projections.

Read through the guide and build a Decarbonisation Strategy appropriate for your organisation.

3. Implementing and Sharing Sustainability Best Practices

Read through GCC's resource pages and share relevant information with colleagues in different departments. Share a link to the GCC website as well as the Effective Actions pdf so everyone in the organisation is aware of the initiative and working towards the same end.

Arrange a meeting with the entire organisation to inform all of the changes that will be happening and how they can help.

4. Train & Explain

Environmental jargon can be confusing and a lack of clarity on the issues could lead to inaction. Don't let this be an obstacle to change. Educate yourself and colleagues about the climate issues and the common terminology used to talk about it. Look into options for workplace sustainability training in your area so employees are equipped with the knowledge...

Green Team Responsibilities

...Train & Explain, continued...

understanding and motivation to make a positive difference. See what state / council resources are available or organise a climate advisor to speak with your organisation.

For example, [Ki Culture](#) offers training on a variety of issues relating to sustainability in the visual art sector via their Ki Training programme.

5. Greening Your Supply Chain

Make suppliers, clients, artists, contractors and contributors aware of the commitments. Share information with them about the work your organisation is doing and the targets that have been set. Ask them to help but also to make changes of their own.

Start by asking framers, art handlers, storage companies, and shippers to remove single use and Banned Materials from circulation.

Ask shippers and travel agents to prioritise low-emission alternatives as standard. Ask local couriers to use zero carbon delivery methods. If they do not offer carbon-free services, change couriers. There are many that do.

Changing energy suppliers is a simple but effective way to vote with your wallet. When changing suppliers, be aware that some tariffs that are sold as “green” may not actually be doing much to support renewable energy. More information about this – including tips on what to look for in a green supplier – can be found in the [GCC energy report](#)...

Green Team Responsibilities

...Greening Your Supply Chain, continued...

If possible, investigate low-carbon energy options for your buildings, starting with energy efficiency audits, and also looking into technologies like solar panels, heat pumps and solar water heating. This will prove cost effective in the long term.

6. Supporting Strategic Climate Funds

Compensation schemes should be a last resort after reducing as much of the CO₂e emitted by your organisation as possible. However GCC strongly encourages members to take responsibility for emissions that cannot be avoided by donating to approved environmental charities and sustainability schemes covering areas where urgent climate action is needed, including keeping fossil fuels in the ground and defending and expanding forests and wetlands and their inhabitants.

These strategic donations will not make the impact of emissions disappear but they are an effective way to support organisations that have a positive impact within our 2030 timeline.

In order to donate, first calculate a CO₂e price per tonne. There is considerable debate over exactly how to do this and guidelines vary. GCC advises: £50-100 / \$70-140 / €60-115 per tonne of CO₂e.

Choose a figure within this range based on what is affordable, while also being high enough to act as a useful spur to reduce emissions.

[See here](#) for more information about Strategic Climate Funds (SCFs) vs conventional 'offsetting' as well as GCC approved schemes.

The information provided here has been generalised to apply to a variety of organisations. Tailor instructions for specific needs as appropriate.

General tasks for any organisation:

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- Arrange an initial meeting with colleagues interested in joining a Green Team. Discuss sustainability targets and proposed changes. Appoint roles and delegate tasks.

 - Schedule future meetings at regular intervals. Once a month is advised.
 - Review GCC's Report on Green Energy Tariffs.

 - Contact your energy supplier and find out if they are responsibly producing renewable energy. If not, change suppliers to one that does.

 - Adjust HVAC temperature controls to reasonable levels.
 - Introduce energy saving systems. Appliances on standby are wasting energy.

 - Upgrade lighting systems to 100% LED.
 - Introduce sensor lights wherever possible.
 - Make sure all lights are switched off at night.
 - Introduce water saving systems in bathrooms and kitchens.

 - If renting, speak to the landlord about these changes. Start the conversation today.

 - If you are based in a shared building, meet with the other tenants and include them in your plans.

 - Ensure recycling is done according to local state/council facilities and instructions.

 - Consult with a waste management company to get advice on how to improve waste systems appropriate for your region.
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General tasks continued...

- Share the correct recycling procedure with colleagues and make the information available via signage.

- Join or start a Circularity Network so materials and equipment are shared and kept in use for as long as possible.

- Arrange dedicated waste collections for non-kerbside recycling.

- Avoid as much waste as possible going to landfill. If something is not Reused, Recycled or Repurposed it may end up in a natural environment.

- Exclusively use FSC sustainable paper stock for printing.

- Encourage colleagues to think before they print and reduce as much as possible.

- Introduce ban on single use plastics: cups, cutlery, pens, bags etc.

- Review stationary ordering to eliminate potential waste.

- Manage digital storage and make necessary changes to improve efficiency.

- Switch to refillable containers for kitchen consumables to eliminate plastic waste.

- Introduce or promote a cycle-to-work scheme.

- Review local and international courier services and make sure they are using green tariffs and services.

Art sector-specific Actions:

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- Review packaging material orders to eliminate potential waste.
 - Meet with shippers and logistics companies to discuss ways of reducing environmental impact.

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- Communicate any changes within the team and wider associates, and share all information with them. If working with artists, explain why deadlines may be tighter in order to ship their work via sea. If working with collectors, explain why the packaging they receive will be reused rather than brand new. The vast majority of people will be grateful for these changes.

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- If working with framers, ask them what steps they are taking to operate sustainably. Ask them not to use any unnecessary packing materials.

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- Speak to fabricators about targets and the need to minimise waste.
 - Ask for information on the environmental impacts of the materials and processes they use.

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- Speak to install technicians and fit-out builders to discuss ways of reducing waste.

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- Consider upcoming events in an organisation's calendar. Plan travel and shipping well ahead to allow for sustainable alternatives. Prioritise train travel and sea freight. Any reduction in airplane use is a positive step.

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- Use the GCC [Data Collection Template](#) spreadsheet to gather info for the annual carbon report. Make sure this is available on a shared server for all Green Team members. around these principles.
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