

Melbourne Fringe Sustainability Guide

What is Sustainability?

Sustainability is about the impacts that our activities have financially, economically, socially and environmentally. Events (at every scale) can make a significant impact, using resources and taking a toll on society and the environment. They can generate waste, put strain on local infrastructure and resources like transport, water and energy. But, by making some small changes we can increase our positive impact and reduce our negative impacts.

Why Think About Sustainability?

It can save you money

Being sustainable is not always about giving things up or spending more. Often it's about being smart in the way that you use resources. Your environmental impact is linked to energy use, travel, what you buy and the waste you produce. Reducing these things can both save you money and save the environment.

Audiences like companies that are green

Customers are more and more concerned with the sustainability credentials of the products and services that they consume. Being sustainable can make you stand out from the crowd! And promoting accessibility and diversity may open up a wider audience for your work.

Being sustainable can make you think inventively

Thinking cleverly about how you use resources, how you can save on energy and reduce waste and how you can make your work accessible can be a great way to force yourself to think creatively and come up with the most inventive and innovative ideas.

Because it's the right thing to do

Ideas for Being More Sustainable

Here are some simple ideas for how you can make your event more sustainable

Design

Minimise Waste when designing your set, props and costumes. Make them re-usable not just for the life of this show, but think about how they can have a future after your season. If reuse isn't possible think about how you can recycle and be low impact. Use second hand (rather than buying new) or use materials like sustainably sourced timber or card rather than polystyrenes. Use environmentally friendly paint (minimal Volatile Organic Compounds – VOCs content).

Efficient Lighting Design can significantly reduce your energy use (and carbon footprint). Think about if you can get the same effect with fewer lights or by using more energy efficient solutions.

Reuse and Recycle. Try to source as much as you can second-hand. To reduce waste, make sure you recycle as much as you can. You can find links to recycling drop off points at <http://recyclingnearyou.com.au/>.

Printing and Promotion

Use environmentally-friendly materials for your printing and advertising. Choose a printer that adopts best practice in environmental printing. Print and advertise on 100% recycled paper, request that your printers use ink made from soybeans or vegetable oil.

Order realistic print runs. Think carefully about how many posters and flyers you will actually use. It's bad for both your budget and the environment to over order. Unless you hire a distribution company there are limited places around Melbourne that will allow you to legally put up flyers and posters, so you probably need less than you think.

Try to provide your audience the option of receiving their **Tickets** online and encourage them to bring them on their phone or tablet, rather than printing their tickets.

Think about online, social media and other new ideas for publicity. There are lots of way to promote your event using digital channels such as social media or online newsletters. Or maybe you've got something even more out of the box!

Transport

Think about your own transport and travel. Travel can be one of the biggest uses of energy associated with your production. Have a think about whether you can use more sustainable forms of travel or transport (e.g. public transport, bikes, walking) and consider sharing transport with other shows when sending sets and equipment. Also, have a think about the transport associated with the things you buy, e.g. do you need to ship that \$10 shirt from the US or can you buy the same thing in Australia?

Promote public transport to your audience and encourage them to come to your show using sustainable forms of transport.

Venues

When choosing a venue, look at the **access to transport**. Is the venue close to accessible public transport (check <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/> for more details), bike paths (and bike parking), or is it easy (and safe) to walk to.

What to look for when choosing a venue? When picking a venue ask about their environmental credentials. Does your venue have a sustainability policy / plan? Things to look for include: Do they have recycling facilities (including for flyers etc)? Do they use recyclable or reusable cups in their bars? Do they have a plan to save energy (e.g. by using energy saving bulbs, motion sensors, efficient heating and cooling etc). How do they save

water (e.g. dual flush toilets, recycled toilets, being proactive about fixing any leaking taps etc)? Do they use green energy?

Is your venue accessible and does it promote accessibility and diversity?

Social Responsibility

Think about how you can have a positive impact on the **local community**. Consider engaging disadvantaged or target groups (schools, refugee communities etc.) with discounted or free ticket deals. At the end of your run consider donating any unwanted equipment or sets to local drama or community groups.

Education / Communication

Appoint a Green Ambassador in your company. This is someone who can advocate for sustainability issues throughout your production and can help to educate your team. To be sustainable you'll need your whole team to be involved, but your Green Ambassador can help to drive engagement and spark interest from others.

Tell everyone about your achievements! We want to know. Make sure all the artists, staff and volunteers on your project are aware of the practices and initiatives you've put in place. Consider including your environmental achievements in your communications and publicity.

Resources

If you want some more detailed information take a look at the resources below:

- [Julie's Bicycle – Resource Production Guide](#)
- [LPA – Greener Live Performances](#)
- [Edinburgh Fringe Guide to Sustainable Practice](#)
- [Melbourne City Council – Environmental Sustainable Practices – Ideas for Artists](#)
- [The Centre for Sustainable Practice in the Arts](#)