

On the Move's Environmental Sustainability Policy

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Green Team as from April 2023

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Introduction

Necessary and urgent, the transition and transformative action to a post-carbon society and a sustainable cultural sector has been a focus for On the Move's work since 2010¹. Key milestones include the publication of *The Green Mobility Guide for the Performing Arts Sector (2011)* commissioned to Julie's Bicycle and the subsequent partnership for the European project, *Creative Climate Leadership (2017-2019)*, the implementation of the cooperation project *GALA Green Art Lab Alliance (2013-2015)*, and the latest version of a funding and resources guide on the issue of environmental sustainability – arts, culture and mobility, with the support of the French Ministry of Culture and the Institut français (2021).

In 2013, On the Move (OTM) wrote its first *Charter for a sustainable and responsible cultural mobility* for cultural operators and other professionals practising cultural mobility². Beyond the teams' prior commitment to environmental issues (both in exploring the cultural dimensions of climate change and supporting its members and other organisations to take action), OTM engaged in the Erasmus+ funded project Shift-Shared Initiatives for Training Project (2019-2021) to co-create online manuals and guidelines on Climate Change (in relation to the other themes Cultural Leadership, Inclusion, and Gender & Power-relations related to three of the UN Sustainable Development Goals). This collective reflection and production aimed to take into account the responsibility of European cultural networks on these subjects, the recognition of the prescriptive role of arts and culture, as well as the analysis of risks

¹ See the list of resources in the following link:

<https://on-the-move.org/network/working-groups/green-context-specific-mobility>

² <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/charter-sustainable-and-responsible-cultural-mobility>

connected to the future evolutions of international mobility (increased transport costs, possible eco-conditioning of funding, geo-political situation, etc.)

In 2023, OTM defines an environmental sustainability policy, which is part of the more general framework of the Shift eco-guidelines Certification³. With this environmental sustainability policy, OTM recognises and addresses the environmental impacts associated with operating an international cultural network. Its ambition is to commit to systematically reduce the environmental and climate impacts of its organisation and activities and to improve its resilience in the face of climate change, biodiversity loss and over-exploitation of resources, working on both mitigation and adaptation, as well as strengthening and accelerating the efforts of its members.

In line with the latest assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and scientific guidance, and within the framework of the European Green Deal and the SDGs, OTM engages in concrete commitments and pathway to 2030, in order to meet and contribute to climate targets and to respond to the environmental and climate crises in the sphere of its action and influence.

On the Move reaffirms its engagement to support its members and other organisations to explore the cultural dimensions of climate change and to take action with positive impact, creativity and resilience, including with tools for change to measure and reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and accelerate its low-carbon transition.

-This environmental policy builds on the learnings and the work conducted by OTM and its members since 2010, and especially on:

- The Charter for a Sustainable and Responsible Cultural Mobility (2013),
- The outcomes and legacy of the SHIFT ERASMUS+ project, and particularly the SHIFT eco-guidelines for networks⁴.
- Evidence from narrative experience and challenges shared by OTM members within the Green Context-based mobility working group⁵ and within the organisation, as well as the experiences collected through the Cultural Mobility Forum focused on cultural mobility and environmental sustainability (Tunis, 9-10 May 2023)⁶.

³ <https://on-the-move.org/about/our-news/shifting-towards-eco-practices-international-cultural-networks-take-lead>

⁴ <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/shift-eco-guidelines-networks>

⁵ <https://on-the-move.org/network/working-groups/green-context-specific-mobility>

⁶ <https://on-the-move.org/resources/library/resources-cultural-mobility-forum-2023>

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This document sets out for On the Move as a network-organisation:

- OTM's environmental sustainability policy
- SHIFT Template: Sustainable Action Plan (2023/2024) – Annex 1
- OTM Sustainable Travel Guidelines – Annex 2

These documents are an ongoing, iterative process and should be monitored and adjusted as needed.

Scope & Principles

On the Move's work aligns with local, national, European and global commitments and connects to organisations and networks working towards similar objectives, bearing in mind the complexity of the current challenges, the necessity to contextualise the reflections and proposed solutions and the intersectionality of challenges at a global level.

On the Move, while covering the various contexts and specificities of its members, made of heterogeneous structures (types, size,...) and contexts (geographical, financial, infrastructural...), proposes to promote the logic of cooperation within the network and beyond and to seek the path to ambitious and realistic environmental commitments capable of preserving the essence of our professions for a network whose core is mobility, the international circulation of artists and culture professionals and turned towards balanced and reciprocal international exchange.

Therefore, the scope of this environmental policy covers all major areas of the organisation's environmental impact, and by extension the one of its over 75 members, from national funders, to other networks and info points, to centres for creation, joined by a small number of dedicated individual members.

It refers specifically to the European Parliament's recommendations in September 2020 to encourage to choose the least polluting means of transport, but ***at the same time not to stigmatise, discriminate against or exclude participants from remoted or infrastructurally weaker contexts***⁷. The international circulation of artists, culture professionals and ideas cannot be a simple variable of local and international climate policies. In this regard, this OTM environmental sustainability policy is first launched the same year as the Cultural Mobility Forum is organised in Tunis on 9-10 May 2023⁸ as a way to (re)contextualise the conversation on cross-border **artistic mobility and environmental sustainability**, unfolding the interdependencies between privileged (Western) Europe and other territories, investigating local practical sustainable

⁷ The European Parliament released a text in September 2020 with effective measures to 'green' the Erasmus+, Creative Europe, and European Solidarity Corps programmes: Article 13: The European Parliament 'Urges the Commission to encourage and enable participants to choose the least polluting means of transport, such as the train, but at the same time not to stigmatise, discriminate against or exclude participants for whom air travel is the only viable option; calls for special attention to be paid to the outermost regions and to rural and remote areas in this regard'. https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2020-0211_EN.pdf

⁸ <https://on-the-move.org/work/events/cultural-mobility-forum-2023>

solutions (e.g. on time, resources, well-being, local networks management) and listening to a variety of voices from the Global South.

OTM organises one yearly meeting (entitled Cultural Mobility Forum) for its members, but collaborates on projects and activities all year round. It participates, through the attendance of the staff, board members and or/ members to around 70 events per year (on-site, hybrid or online). Therefore, as for most of the network-platform organisations, emissions resulting from travel (particularly flying) are the main contributors to the size of the network carbon footprint and its environmental impact.

OTM does not own or rent a building. Its employees work remotely. Therefore, certain categories of impacts like energy efficiency of buildings, water savings and sustainable actions for office space are not taken into consideration in OTM's reduction measures and commitments.

Contributing to offsetting one's carbon footprint means financing carbon reduction or sequestration projects up to one's own residual carbon footprint. The terms "compensation", "off-setting" and "neutrality" assume that a certain and immediate emission is compensated by a presumed, and often future, absorption. Moreover, they suggest that the climate problem can be solved by a simple accounting entry, and therefore do not encourage long-term commitment. Even if the contribution is very important for the climate, the priority is to reduce one's own emissions.

On the Move believes that in order to respond to the urgency of environmental sustainability and climate change, we need to look beyond carbon offsetting and at more urgent reduction and adaptation actions while adopting a contextualised approach.

OTM recognises that environmental sustainability action overlaps with equity and diversity issues. If this environmental sustainability policy conflicts with our Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism (EDIA) approach, the related policies will override it.

Definitions and Values

OTM refers to:

- **Climate change** as defined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, Glossary in Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5° C):

“A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use.”

- **Cultural Mobility and Green Mobility** as defined by the OTM network⁹:

“Mobility is a central component of the professional trajectory of artists and culture professionals. Involving a temporary cross-border movement, often for educational, capacity-building, networking, or working purposes, it may have tangible or intangible outputs in the short term, and/or be part of a long-term professional development process. Mobility is a conscious process, and those involved in it, whether by directly engaging in it or by supporting it, should take into consideration its cultural, social, political, environmental, ethical and economic implications.”

‘Green mobility is understood in a holistic way. It not only considers the means of transportation used by artists and culture professionals but also the contexts in which artists and culture professionals are evolving, the reasons behind their mobility, and the impacts of what is done at their destination and upon return to their local context. Green mobility is a collective responsibility, involving both those who benefit from mobility and those who financially support it, and must take into account the social, political, economic, infrastructural, environmental and ethical dimensions that frame it’.

⁹ <https://on-the-move.org/about/cultural-mobility>. The definition of ‘green mobility’ was specifically devised part of OTM environmental sustainability.

- **Mobility justice** as a concept defined by Mimi Sheller¹⁰:

‘Mobility justice is an overarching concept for thinking about how power and inequality inform the governance and control of movement, shaping the patterns of unequal mobility and immobility in the circulation of people, resources, and information. We can think about mobility justice occurring at different scales, from micro-level embodied interpersonal relations, to meso-level issues of urban transportation justice and the “right to the city”, to macro-level transnational relations of travel and borders, and ultimately global resources flows and energy circulation’.

Finally, OTM refers to the definitions stated in the SHIFT eco-guidelines for networks¹¹.

Commitments

OTM’s detailed Sustainability Action Plan, including key categories and actions, indicators and timeline is provided as the Annexes to this policy, with some of the commitments highlighted below:

Considering the urgent need for a systemic and intersectional approach to environmental issues and climate change, taking into account the complexity of challenges and diverse specificities and contexts of its members, OTM commits to working collectively towards common goals by:

- Adhering to the SHIFT eco-guidelines and recognising the environmental impacts and ecological footprint associated with operating a European cultural network with an international dimension;
- Thinking of the global structure and to understand the repercussions of a decision on all stakeholders, regularly consulting and engaging in conversation and debates with its members and facilitating a dedicated green context-based mobility working group;
- Advocating at various levels of competencies to act on the issue while taking into consideration the diversity of contexts involved into international mobility.

¹⁰ <https://rebalancemobility.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/theorising-mobility-justice.pdf>

¹¹ <https://shift-culture.eu/achieve-environmental-sustainability-in-your-work/shift-eco-guidelines-for-networks/>

Considering that European networks are a driving force to initiate, influence and inspire sustainable environmental change, OTM commits to communicate, engage and federate and act as an exemplary reference to its members, other networks and the sector at large by:

- Conducting a carbon calculation,
- Continuous monitoring in terms of guidance, training, support and earmarked resources and awareness raising at all levels of the network,
- Sharing results, experiences,
- Continuing to produce guides / toolkits on this question. Mobility funding guides shall also emphasise green forms of support, incentives and related funding.

Considering leadership and governance are key to successfully implement the policy and related action plan, OTM commits to carry out the policy with the support and involvement of its higher leadership and management level and all its entities:

- Implementing a Green Team,
- Including environmental monitoring in OTM annual report,
- Allocating dedicated resources.

Considering the impact of communication, including digital technology which is a major player in greenhouse gas emissions, resource depletion and biodiversity loss, OTM commits to a sustainable communication & IT approach by:

- A paperless approach for the guides and resources produced by OTM,
- A systematic but adapted mention not to print in the produced guides,
- Extending the life of electronic devices,
- Promoting low-impact and sustainable digital practices.

Considering the fast-moving evolution on environmental sustainability relating to culture, OTM commits to continued improvement by:

- Training its staff and board members, including through the implementation of the Green Team and dedicated OTM members' discussions on green mobility related issues,
- Reflecting on an adaptation and risk management plan.

Considering current and future geopolitical developments, sanitary crises and regulatory changes that could weaken international mobility, OTM commits to a proactive approach, anticipating these developments and risks to build its resilience.

Signed by On the Move's President, Bojana Panevska on 9 December 2024

Annexes (only internal at this stage)

- Annex 1: SHIFT Template: Sustainable Action Plan for On the Move (2023/2024) - fully inspired by the SHIFT eco-guidelines for networks that are available online¹²
- Annex 2: On the Move's Sustainable Travel Guidelines

¹² <https://shift-culture.eu/achieve-environmental-sustainability-in-your-work/shift-eco-guidelines-for-networks/>