

CIRCLE-T

TRAINING GUIDE

MODULE 2

HOW TO...

PROJECT TITLE: CIRCLE-T: Circular. Innovative. Responsible. Cooperation
Led. Engaging - Theatre

PROJECT ACRONYM: CIRCLE-T

PROJECT NUMBER: 2024-1-IE01- KA220-YOU- 000251167

WORK PACKAGE: WP4 - CIRCLE-T Training

LEAD: The Gaiety School of Acting, Dublin

We are building an international community of like-minded theatre-makers.
Gain access to resources and training for greener, more sustainable, and
responsible theatre production and design. Contribute to the future of
sustainable theatre: where art meets sustainability.

Will you join us on our journey in Creative Circular Theatre?

For more information visit our project website <https://circle-t.eu/>

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Project Code: 2024-1-IE01- KA220-YOU- 000251167

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This training is made of 3 Modules that are interrelated, as such they must be delivered in chronological order:

- MODULE 1: Awareness & Best Practices
- MODULE 2: How to implement Circular Theatre into your practice
- MODULE 3: Resources, Networking & Networthing

These have been designed based on the CIRCLE-T Methodology and the CIRCLE-T Productions, as well as a number of resources available in the Bibliography. You will find more description and material needed for each Module in its corresponding guide.

Each Module is composed of Exercises, Knowledge Base and Discussion/Feedback session. You can recognise each through the follow headings and colours:



EXERCISE



KNOWLEDGE BASE



DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK



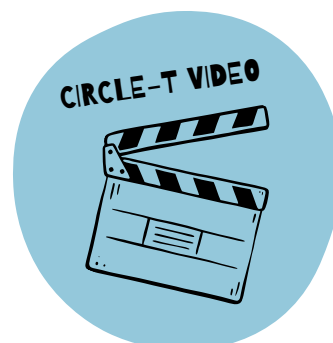
We are also using Powerpoint, printed sheets and videos.

Powerpoints are available for access on our website: <https://circle-t.eu/>

Printable sheets and other analog material will be available in the [Annex](#) at the end of the Guide.

Material needed is indicated as follows:

Videos will mostly accompany the Knowledge Base section and will be recognisable with:



MODULE 2

HOW TO IMPLEMENT CIRCULAR THEATRE INTO YOUR PRACTICE

MODULE DESCRIPTION	To empower theatre-makers to reduce waste and integrate circular economy principles into theatre designs and youth theatre practice, by showcasing simple and effective ways to apply them into productions. To highlight existing resources and give a basic introduction to materials used in sets, props and costumes.
LEARNING OUTCOMES	On successful completion of this module, Participants will: • Understand production audits • Understand basic materials and how to make sustainable choices • Understand the lifecycle of ECO designed circular production • Be introduced to local networks and resources
INDICATIVE CONTENT	The modules of this training will be delivered in three stages – over one day or in three consecutive thematic training workshops of 90 minutes each.
TEACHING & LEARNING ACTIVITIES	This is an interactive workshop with a mixture of gamified learning, drama exercises, PowerPoint, videos and encouragement of independent and collaborative study.
MATERIAL	PowerPoint, Exercise Sheet - see ANNEX Encourage participants to bring laptops - a min. of 3 laptop available in the room is required

MODULE OUTLINE



ECO-DESIGN

30-40 minutes

Pass the Energy, Building Momentum

5-10 min

Introduction to ECO Design Core Principles

5-10 min

Exercise: "To use or not to use, that is the question"

20 min



THE LIFE CYCLE OF AN ECO- DESIGNED PRODUCTION 15 minutes

Intro to ECO Designed Production Video - 5 minutes

5min

Reflection and sharing - 10 minutes

10 min



THE ETC THEATRE GREEN BOOK – IRISH EDITION

35 minutes

What is the ETC Theatre Green Book?

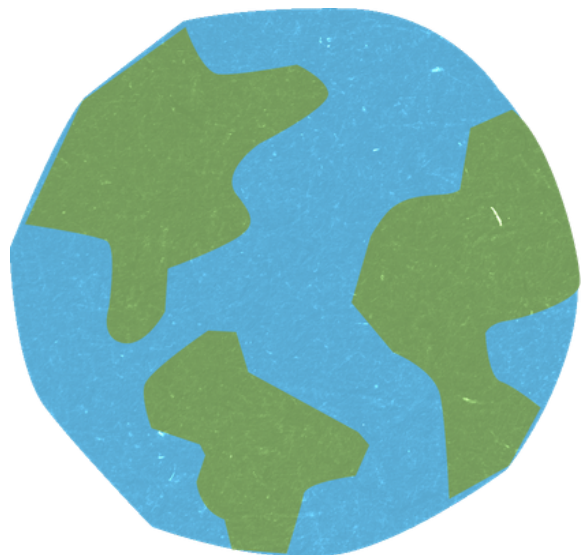
5 min

Exercise: THE GREAT GREEN BOOK CHALLENGE

25 min

Sum Up of Learning

5 min



ECO-DESIGN

Remind participants that to be truly circular, the aim should be to make sure all set, props and costumes are recycled after the show. This section of Module 2 will introduce participants to Eco-Design Principles, which will help them bring circularity into the design stage of their production.

Let participants know that in Module 3, we will look at Resources and Community links to help source and implement these sustainable choices in your theatre practice



PASS THE ENERGY, BUILDING MOMENTUM

Invite everyone to stand together in a close circle facing each other.

START THE ENERGY

The Facilitator creates an imaginary ball of energy with a loud sound and a large body movement passing it to on.

RECEIVE AND TRANSFORM

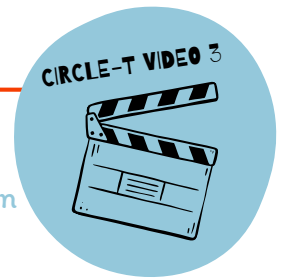
The next person "catches" the energy, repeats the exact sound and motion, and then invents a brand-new sound and big motion to pass along.

KEEP THE PACE

Pass the energy quickly around the circle without letting go of the momentum.



ECO-DESIGN PRINCIPLES



The below principles are available as a video in [CIRCLE-T VIDEO 3](#), to be shown to participant.

Eco-Design has three core principles:

BUILD FOR DISMANTLING

Sets are built to be easily disassembled and reused, avoiding permanent, non-recyclable joins.

MATERIAL SELECTION

Sets & Costumes are made of eco-friendly, sustainable, and non-toxic materials, such as bamboo, cork, mycelium, or reclaimed timber. Using FSC-certified wood is also standard practice. Props and structural elements are frequently sourced from thrift stores or shared through co-ops.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE: THE 3 R's

Sets are designed to be broken down, stored and repurposed for future productions.

→ Reduced Consumption: Designs are often minimalist, using fewer raw materials.

An eco-designed set is designed to **minimise environmental impact by focusing on sustainability throughout its lifecycle, reducing waste, energy, and material consumption.**

Key practices include using recycled, reclaimed, or biodegradable materials (bamboo, mycelium), employing modular designs for future reuse, using low-VOC paints, and adopting digital, rather than physical, scenic elements.

→ Low VOC" means the paint has a lower concentration of harmful chemical solvents that become vapours at room temperature. Usually Water based

→ Mycelium materials are sustainable, biodegradable, and renewable alternatives to plastic, foam, and wood, produced by cultivating the root-like structures of fungi on agricultural waste

THE METRICS TO ASSESS SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS

Does it have a high embodied energy (the energy required to make, transport, use and dispose of a material from cradle to grave)?

Is the material bio-degradable?

Is the material reusable and recyclable?

Does it contain harmful chemicals?

Where is it quarried and manufactured?

NO MATERIAL IS INHERENTLY SUSTAINABLE AS IT IS DEPENDANT ON HOW IT IS USED.





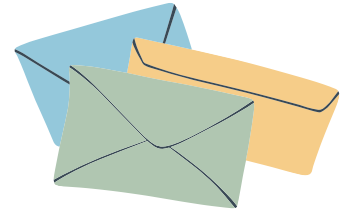
TO USE OR NOT TO USE, THAT IS THE QUESTION.

Prepare the exercise by cutting up each word and heading on the To Use or Not Use sheet in the Annex, mix them up and put them in 5 separate envelopes according to their material, e.g. 1 x METAL envelope, 1 x PLASTIC envelope, etc.

MATERIAL

- To Use or Not to Use sheet in Annex
- 5 x envelopes

Preset roughly 40% of the answers on the wall with bluetack to use as examples and start the exercise by talking the participants through these examples.



Divide the group into 5 smaller groups if possible. Distribute one Material Envelope per group. Instruct each group to put the materials under the heading they think best: USE / USE WHERE NECESSARY / NOT TO USE.

Throughout the exercise, invite participants to discuss each material to decipher under which heading they should go under, feel free to help groups as needed.

NOTE: Sustainability starts in the training! If possible reuse the material for other training. As such, invite the participants to be careful with damaging exercise material.

The correct answers are available in the Annex.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Invite the groups to come together as one and share their findings - correct as necessary according with the answers in the Annex. Once all answers have been shared/corrected, facilitate a discussion on the learnings from the exercise.

At this point, participants may be a bit discourage as they realise how many items are in the 'not-use-category' but remind them that whilst indeed there are many 'not-to-use' items, they can still be used if they have been sourced sustainably and will be re-used, creating a **circular economy closed loop**. Otherwise, when purchasing new materials, choose the 'use' or 'use where necessary' materials.

Reassure participants that material in the USE and USE WHEN NECESSARY are both useable.

Also, reassure the participants that the information is out there and research is crucial to making sustainable choices. You can reference the Society of British Theatre Designers – A guide to Sustainable Materials for Theatre Design and resources they will be given in Module 3.

THE LIFE CYCLE OF AN ECO-DESIGNED PRODUCTION



LIFE CYCLE IN A NUTSHELL

CIRCLE-T VIDEO 4

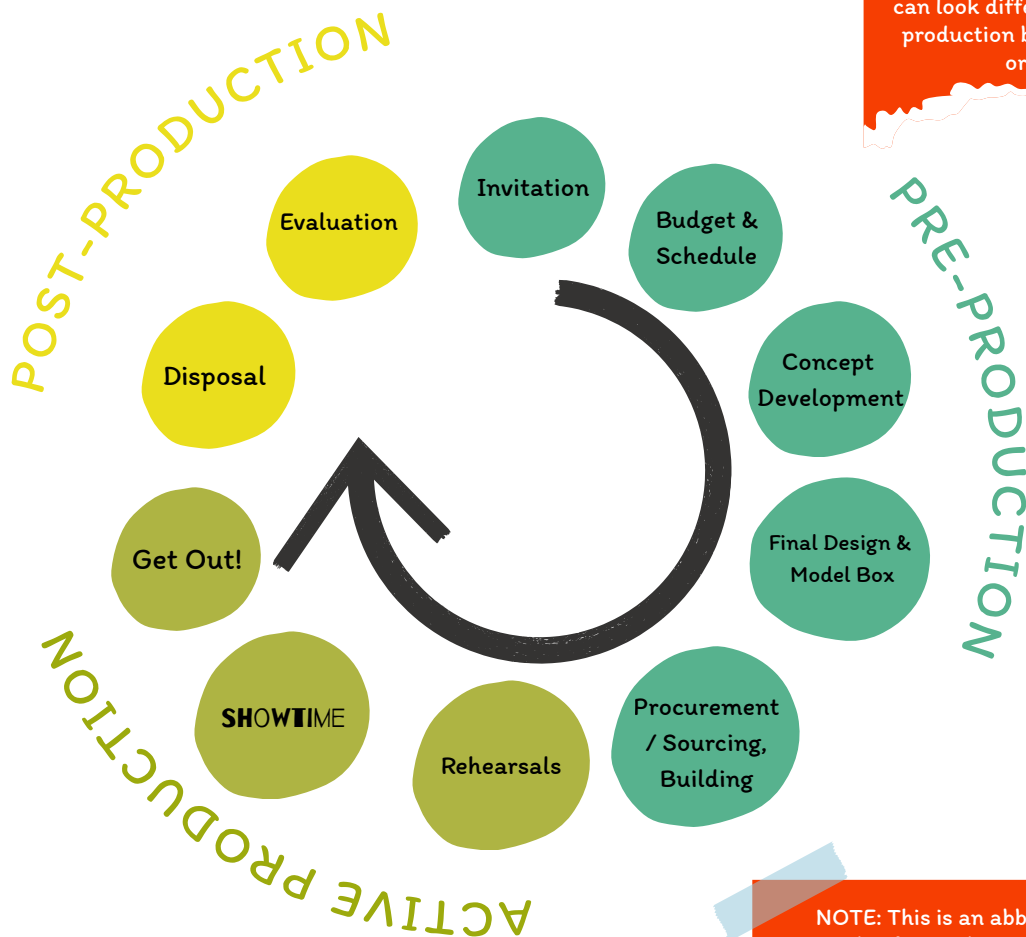


Play CIRCLE-T VIDEO 4 on the Life Cycle of the Eco-Design.

All of the explanations are in the video, but in brief:

A production's life-cycle goes from **PRE-PRODUCTION**, to **ACTIVE PRODUCTION**, to **POST-PRODUCTION** and each period of production is set in time but feeds into each other.

A Sustainable Production reinforces the need for each step to feed into each other and to be thought through conceptualisation of the project.



NOTE: The Pre-Production Section as describe is quite detailed but this can look different depending on the production both in timeline and in order of tasks

NOTE: This is an abridged version of the Life Cycle of a Production from the ETC Theatre Green Book. In the next part, you will introduce it as a key resource for sustainable theatre and exercises will practically take participants through the Life Cycle of a Production in details.



THE IRISH THEATRE GREEN BOOK

The Irish version of the ETC Theatre Green Book, adapted by Catriona Fallon from Green Arts Initiative in Ireland, supported by Sinéad Wallace and Mike O'Halloran, provides a roadmap for creating more sustainable productions in Ireland at every level, from Basic to Net Zero.

MATERIAL:

- PowerPoint

Developed in collaboration with sustainability experts and theatre professionals, this guidebook is designed to help you reduce your environmental impact while maintaining creative excellence.

The ETC Theatre Green Book provides theatres with four levels of certification, but we will focus on the 2 first:

PRELIMINARY

is your **commitment to become climate neutral**, which includes commitment to reducing environmental impact, establishing a Green Committee, create Action Plan, Data Plan & Communication Plan

BASIC

is your commitment to:

- 50% of all materials used in the production have a previous life
- 65% of materials used in the show are stored or used again afterwards



By the end of the CIRCLE-T Training, participants should be able to self-declare themselves as certified at the Preliminary level and should feel empowered and have the necessary tool to continue on the Basic level of certification.



These are based on hitting pre-defined goals across:

PRODUCTIONS

BUILDINGS

OPERATIONS

The approach is designed to be both **realistic and effective**: theatres will be able to use the resulting labels on their websites and promotional material to demonstrate the extent of their sustainable progress to audiences and policymakers.

The CIRCLE-T Training will focus mostly on the goal of PRODUCTION, as it is the most relevant to emerging theatre-makers, youth theatres and smaller companies. For further training and information on BUILDINGS and OPERATIONS, please refer to the Irish Theatre Green Book.

<https://www.performingartsforum.ie/green-arts/the-theatre-green-book-irish-edition/>





THE GREAT GREEN BOOK CHALLENGE

To get started, ask the whole group to physically form a CIRCLE, then the letter T, and finally 3 TRIANGLES.

MATERIAL:

- Laptops
- Links in Annex
- PowerPoint

Congratulate them on their success and co-operation. Now ask them to remain in these 3 groups as we have a mission for them to accomplish...

INTRODUCTION TO THE GREAT GREEN BOOK CHALLENGE

Welcome to The Great Green Book Challenge, an interactive exercise where you will take on the role of CIRCLE-T Theatre Company's Production Department Heads for a gritty, contemporary staging of Romeo and Juliet.

Your collective mission is simple: meet the **Theatre Green Book Basic Standard Audit** across the entire show by achieving **at least 50% Sustainable Sourcing and 65% Next Life Destination** for all physical production elements. You pass or fail together as a single creative unit.

WORKSHOP STRUCTURE & KEY STEPS

1. Split into 3 Department Teams:

- Team Scenery
- Team Costume
- Team Props.

2. Give them access to their department QR Codes or Envelop (if printed) - see Links in Annex & QR Codes on PowerPoint.

3. STAGE 1 - THE BASELINE ESTIMATE: Log your initial design items into the Theatre Green Book Calculator spreadsheet. Watch the master dashboard aggregate the data—you will hit an initial red alert (FAIL) due to standard fast-fashion, single-use materials, and waste destined for the dumpster.

4. STAGE 2 - THE SUSTAINABLE PIVOT (dealing with active production changes): Return to your departmental tabs and problem-solve. Swap out problematic materials by hiring, borrowing, reusing, or securing post-show donation pathways until your collective dashboard turns green.

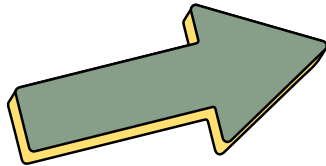
5. **STAGE 3 - POST-PRODUCTION FINAL AUDIT:** Re-evaluate your choices post-strike. Account for real-world production changes (e.g. ruined costumes or successful material donations) and submit your final audit for official certification.

Open your designated department tab in the production calculator, review your initial brief, and let's make CIRCLE-T Theatre measurably sustainable!



GROUP DISCUSSION

Bring the group back together to discuss their achievement. At this point, start introducing a conversation on how they can advertise their sustainable practices and achievements.



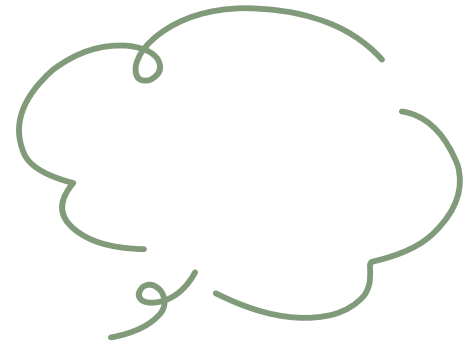
CONSIDERATION AT A GLANCE

Talk the group to the 'QUICK WINS' slide of the powerpoint.

Take a moment as a team to review what this exercise teaches us about sustainable theatre production:

1. GREEN TRACKING IS A ROADMAP, NOT AN AFTERTHOUGHT

If we had waited until the show closed to look at our footprint, our materials would already be sitting in a dumpster and our targets would be permanently missed. *The Estimated Audit is where the actual green work happens* — it forces creative problem-solving when changes are still completely free.



2. HABITS OVER HYPER-EXPENSIVE MATERIALS

Notice that meeting the Basic standard did not require buying specialised, high-tech eco-certified materials. We passed by simply *shifting our habits*: hiring scaffolding instead of buying it, borrowing street wear instead of purchasing fast-fashion, and coordinating community donations instead of throwing items away.

3. CROSS-DEPARTMENT INTERDEPENDENCE

When Team Costume had to sacrifice garments to stage blood and distressing, the production took a mathematical hit. But because Team Scenery stepped up by hiring structural metals and donating plywood, the show stayed on track. *A circular production model only succeeds when all departments communicate and view the shared dashboard as a single team.*

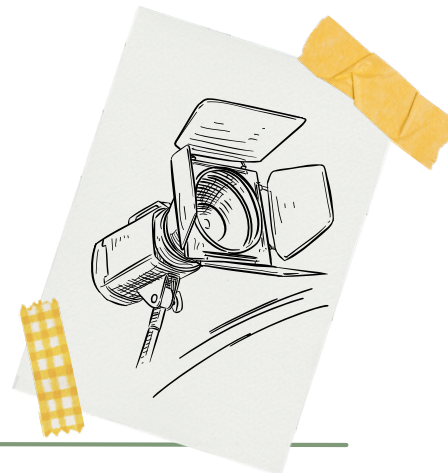
4. IMPACT ON PRODUCTION

Cost-Effective: Using existing materials and reducing waste often saves money.

Innovative Aesthetics: The constraints of sustainable design often drive creative, minimalist and unique aesthetic choices, such as using digital projections instead of large, physical sets.

Future-Focused: This approach encourages a "circular economy" in theatre, reducing the amount of waste sent to landfills.

At the end of the discussion, tell participants that the Theatre Green Book offers way more resources well-worth looking into, including Audits on Building and Operation. These might not be relevant to all participants, but if they are interested in those, you can find more information in the [MODULE ANNEX](#).



GROUP DISCUSSION

Give the participants a final chance to share reflections and learning and take the time to compile all of the major reflection points of the day.

Finally, thank them for their time and let them know what comes next: Module 3: Resources, Networking & Networthing



MODULE 3

We will be learning:

- how to communicate your sustainable commitment with collaborators, audiences and funding buddies
- how to use current networks to collaborate towards sustainable solutions
- how to become part and create new networks

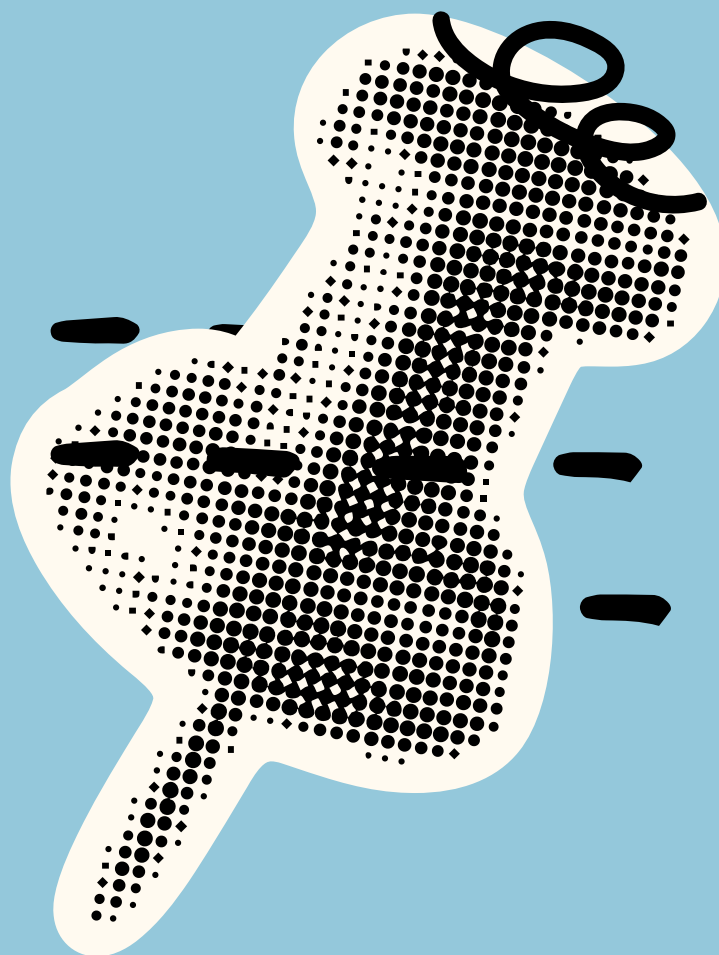


In Module 3, you will use and refer the Production Audits from Module 2, make sure to **DOWNLOAD THEIR AUDITS** and keep them on file. You can send them to all participants once the Module is finished as a reference document.



The Production Audit being a shared online document, it will need to be reset for the next delivery of Module 2.

MODULE 2



ANNEX



THEATRE GREEN BOOK – IRISH EDITION

<https://www.performingartsforum.ie/green-arts/the-theatre-green-book-irish-edition/>

PRODUCTION AUDIT SPREADSHEET

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1963ZNsPDmC7usBbec7-sEKsV57siMvbz/edit?gid=1582663651#gid=1582663651>

SET & SCENERY

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iYi2-oOs18eG-hz64dK98Jf4eap7m6sP/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111346423478128296634&rtpof=true&sd=true>

COSTUME

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vpHnSKY8IyQgG6UtspcgvMxc3YF2deFb/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111346423478128296634&rtpof=true&sd=true>

PROPS

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Es4qb340etpsORLm9nIUPpxDLycd8oWW/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111346423478128296634&rtpof=true&sd=true>



**TO USE OR NOT TO USE,
THAT IS THE QUESTION.**

TO CUT

Print and cut the below. Each envelope should contain one of each heading:



USE	USE WHEN NECESSARY	DO NOT USE
USE	USE WHEN NECESSARY	DO NOT USE
USE	USE WHEN NECESSARY	DO NOT USE
USE	USE WHEN NECESSARY	DO NOT USE
USE	USE WHEN NECESSARY	DO NOT USE

Print and cut the below. The following should go under the CERAMIC, GLASS, EARTHEN MATERIAL envelope:



Reclaimed or recycled materials	Fibreglass (with non-formaldehyde resin)	Concrete
Materials with a recycled content over 75%	Granite	Glass & epoxy-resin laminates
Unfired clay products	Drywall (Gypsum)	Leaded glass

Print and cut the below. The following should go under the METAL envelope:



Scrap, reclaimed or recycled metal	Metals certified by GECA or Sustainable Construction Steels Certification scheme	Virgin Steel	Lead	Aluminium
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Print and cut the below. The following should go under the WOOD PRODUCTS envelope:



Reclaimed or recycled timber	Imported or Tropical hardwood	Non-certified wood products
Chipboard	MDF	Bamboo
Certified wood products	MDO	Melamine laminate
Cork	Plywood	Strawboard
FSC or PEFC/Responsible Wood		

Print and cut the below. The following should go under the PLASTICS envelope:



Reclaimed or recycled plastics	Polyethylene (if recyclable)	Polyester/PET (if recyclable)	Polystyrene
Single-use plastics	Latex	Silicone	Polyurethane
Polycarbonate	Acrylic	PVC	Melamine
Polypropylene (if not sent to landfill)			

Print and cut the below. The following should go under the TEXTILES envelope:



Sustainably & ethically sourced wool	Certified organic fibres (excluding cotton & wool)	Certified organic bio-polymers
Textiles with a recycled content over 75%	Textiles that are Oeko-Tex, and Cradle-to-Cradle certified	Sustainably & ethically sourced cotton
Hemp	Linen	Jute
Reused or recycled textiles	Cotton	PVC textile
Acetate	Nylon	Rayon



TO USE OR NOT TO USE,
THAT IS THE QUESTION.

CORRECT ANSWERS

	USE	USE WHEN NECESSARY	DO NOT USE
CERAMIC, GLASS, EARTHEN MATERIAL	Reclaimed or recycled materials Materials with a recycled content over 75% Unfired clay products	Fibreglass (with non-formaldehyde resin) Granite Drywall (Gypsum)	Concrete Glass & epoxy-resin laminates Leaded glass
WOOD PRODUCT S	Reclaimed or recycled timber FSC or PEFC/Responsible Wood Certified wood products Cork Strawboard	Bamboo MDF MDO Plywood Chipboard	Melamine laminate Imported or Tropical hardwood Non- Certified wood products
METAL	Scrap, reclaimed or recycled metal	Most virgin metals should be avoided due to environmentally intensive mining/processing If necessary, look for metals certified by GECA or Sustainable Constructional Steels Certification scheme	Virgin Steel Lead Aluminium

	USE	USE WHEN NECESSARY	DO NOT USE
PLASTICS	Reclaimed or recycled plastics	Polyethylene (if recyclable) Polyester/PET (if recyclable) Polypropylene (if not sent to landfill)	Latex Silicone Polycarbonate Acrylic PVC Polystyrene Polyurethane Melamine Single-use plastics
TEXTILES	Reused or recycled textiles Textiles with a recycled content over 75% Certified organic fibres (excluding cotton & wool) Certified organic bio-polymers Textiles that are Oeko-Tex, and Cradle-to-Cradle certified See GigNation Australia's guide	Hemp Linen Jute Sustainably & ethically sourced cotton Sustainably & ethically sourced wool	PVC textile Cotton Acetate Nylon Rayon



ON BUILDING & OPERATION AUDITS

While this training is not focuses on Operations and Building audits, you can let participants know that the Theatre Green Book also offers audit for Operations and Buildings. Similarly to the Production Audits, those aim to be practical and help theatres implement changes with real impact. This may not be relevant to participants that are self-employed or part of small organisations with less employees and/or don't have a building dedicated to their activity.

However, we recommend looking into **EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIERS** as this would be relevant for both in-house use for a theatre or for a touring company that rents their equipment.

One of the key recommendations for Building and Operations Audits is **to calculate the carbon footprint**. It is useful to understand how the energy use fits in to your carbon footprint and to communicate this to colleagues and even audiences. There are a number of tools and web resources calculate this:

- Sign up for an account on Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools. The CC Tools are a free set of unique carbon calculators developed by Julie's Bicycle specifically for the creative industries. Carbon calculators tend to use country based emissions factors, so bear this in mind as electricity and public transport factors can vary depending on the generation mix.
- Ireland's EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) suggests using <http://www.carbonfootprint.com> where you can register as a SME or an individual and calculate your carbon footprint.
- Simplest of all is to just calculate your energy emissions yourself by multiplying usage in kWh by the appropriate emissions factor for the fuel you used. Once you have measured your energy usage and the associated emissions, this will act as an incentive to reduce your overall usage. One of the quickest ways to reduce the energy you use is simply by avoiding wasting it. This is a great opportunity to involve all of your staff team in identifying quick wins in saving energy.

Remind the participants that:



Implementing low-carbon measures in cultural venues can reduce emissions by 30-50%, particularly through energy-efficient lighting and sustainable transport options (Creative Carbon Scotland, 2023).



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