

# **ROUGH**

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# **MAGIC**

Climate Action Policy

Rough Magic CLG 2024

## **Policy Statement**

Rough Magic is committed to developing a sustainable working practice and playing our part in positive climate action. This policy will focus on the impact of our organisation on the environment, set out our ambitions to reduce our carbon footprint and state the action plans we have put in place to achieve these goals.

This will be an ongoing process, and as we review our impact, changes may be made to the action plan to better reduce our carbon footprint and work towards the ultimate aim of net zero productions.

This Policy has been written using resources from the Theatre Green Book<sup>1</sup>, Julie's Bicycle<sup>2</sup> and the Arts Council Ireland's Climate Action Programme Resource Hub.

## **Understanding our Impact**

Rough Magic is a medium-sized organisation with a remit to make work of scale that is brought to a wide audience both nationally and internationally. We are also industry leaders in artist development with our pioneering SEEDS programme and COMPASS programmes - which support both emerging and established artists.

To do this, we produce work from our office in Dublin City Centre, which is then performed primarily in Dublin but also across Ireland and abroad.

Mapping out these activities helps us understand the related impacts of our work and the key areas where we could have a negative effect on our environment. Not all the impacts of our actions are within our control; however, while acknowledging these challenges, we can focus on the aspects that we can influence, where we can take positive actions towards sustainability, and then determine action plans.

Based on Rough Magic's core activities, we have identified 3 main areas of environmental impact:

- A. Touring productions & travelling to engage in workshop activity
- B. Consumption of production materials
- C. The Administrative work in our office

### **A. Touring and Travelling**

#### **Impacts and Challenges**

One of Rough Magic's key goals is to tour on a regular basis. Since 2021, we have worked closely with our COMPASS partners and other co-producing partners to present work outside Dublin, which then can travel to a further network of partners. This strategy both increases the value of our investment in productions and widens our audience outside Dublin; and creates a better platform for the artists we support. While we remain

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<sup>1</sup> <https://theatregreenbook.com>

<sup>2</sup> <https://juliesbicycle.com>

committed to this strategy, we acknowledge that this practice increases our carbon footprint, and we are putting in place action plans to limit the impact.

## **Positive Change**

The distance covered during our tours, and the method of travel of our employees, directly affect the environmental impact of this practice. When we travel, we offer train journeys for our employees/artists as a first option. For those who need to drive we incentivise car-pooling by offering the driver a subsistence equivalent of a train fare for any additional person they take with them. We keep a record of all work journeys undertaken, both the distance and method of travel, enabling us to measure our journey impact, and set feasible reduction goals relative to the scale of each touring production. While we have little direct control over how our audience choose to travel to see our work, we can incentivise the use of public transport by providing information on the available options to and from the venue in our marketing communications to audiences.

One of our key strategic goals is to bring our work to audiences outside Ireland. This practice will increase our carbon footprint when we are making international journeys. While we acknowledge the negative impact of air travel, we will work to book the most climate efficient routes, using train and boat options wherever possible. Having made the most efficient bookings for our travel, we will maximise our time on any international trip by working to programme as many performances in a location, or nearby venues, as possible.

To transport our sets in efficient ways, we encourage lightweight infrastructure in our design approach and modular sets which can be made with pre-existing elements in each location. We aim to move away from diesel or carbon-emitting vehicles and are researching transport companies with electric vehicles in their services. When working to establish targets for reduction, an average across various scales of production will be calculated.

While we are not be able to dictate the hosting venues' programming policy, we can encourage venues to help us use the most efficient routes of travel; to this end part of our positive action is to prioritise scheduling as early as possible. Similarly, we inform venue partners about our Climate Action Policy and are working to build audiences for multiple performances in each venue.

Regarding accommodation, we favour shared housing over hotels for longer stays to minimise consumption of energy. When the use of hotels is unavoidable, we will research and favour local hotels that are sustainably certified wherever possible.

## **B. Production Materials**

### **Impacts and Challenges**

Over the course of production, Rough Magic has acquired a collection of costumes, set pieces and props. While many are reused on multiple productions, costume designers will often need to create bespoke designs that must be manufactured for each new show, so it is not always practical to recycle costumes. Similarly, for set pieces, while modular items can be reused regularly, certain items degrade and would be unsafe to use more than once.

While acknowledging these challenges, there are ways in which Rough Magic can support our creative and production teams to use materials in more environmentally sustainable ways.

### **Positive Change**

As a Strategically Funded organisation, Rough Magic can keep a small storage facility to house our collected production materials. It is our practice to reuse these as much as possible within our own production, and also to offer, free of charge, the use of our costumes and props to other independent theatre companies and emerging artists.

To ensure this practice continues, and to make it more efficient, we are establishing an inventory of our stores; and are adding a clause to designers' contracts to request that before purchases are made, the item must first be sought out in our Stores. We make designers aware of this Policy and of our commitment to limit negative impacts in our productions.

When materials do need to be purchased, we favour suppliers whose practice is the most environmentally sustainable whenever possible and research suppliers shipping policies and also consolidate the delivery of items so there are fewer stages of transport. We aim to buy directly from the source and, where possible, to buy locally.

The first step to making to this positive change in our production purchases is to adopt the Theatre Greenbook<sup>3</sup>'s example of a Timeline for Sustainability which suggests adding the following stages of theatre production design to Rough Magic's schedule:

1. The Concept Meeting: Inviting conversations with designers and production managers as early as possible in pre-production, giving them time to think of creative solutions to sustainable design before any decisions have been made. Early conversations allow for more recycling of existing material and the possibility of sharing materials between the shows programmed throughout the year. This starts the design process with sustainable practice engrained from the outset.
2. The Green Card Meeting: Before a full design concept is presented, design team, production manager and Rough Magic regroup to look at the early ideas that have been formed since the Concept meeting. The group can troubleshoot materials needed and identify the components that can be borrowed/leased rather than purchased or made.

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<sup>3</sup> *The Theatre GreenBook: Sustainable Productions*  
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3. Technical Lockdown: Having worked closely with the Designers and Production Manager, a date will be decided upon which the production design is “locked down” to avoid last-minute decisions which often result in the purchasing of new materials, and/or less sustainable delivery options.

When production is complete, materials are returned to storage and itemised so they can be reused by Rough Magic and other associated artists and companies.

## **C. Office Administration**

### **Impacts and Challenges**

Rough Magic leases office space in a shared building, occupying two rooms on one floor. The office serves as the base for our administrative activity and is used by the core team and participants on our artistic development programmes.

The office is one floor of a period building (c. 1840), which means it has lower energy efficiency than more modern office spaces. Within a shared building, we can control our own usage of electricity and increase efficiency within the shared communal areas.

The impact of our administrative work is in our day-to-day activities: printing scripts, storing digital files, heating the office during the colder months, using computers and other electrical devices for work, and in our employees’ and colleagues’ commute to our offices.

### **Positive Change**

One of the first aims as part of our Climate Action Policy is to reduce office energy usage. We are requesting our landlord to have a Smart Meter installed in the building; and moving to a Greener Plan with our electricity provider which will allow to us to measure our usage and identify when consumption is at its highest.

To reduce the impact of our travel to the office, we encourage all visitors, including core employees, to be mindful of eco-friendly commute options such as public transport and cycling (Rough Magic offers the cycle-to-work scheme). We use online meetings wherever possible to reduce unnecessary travel to and from our office and are adding a clause to our employees’ contracts stating our commitment to climate action, requesting that employees make green choices when commuting.

In the years since COVID a lot of our administrative work has moved online. This has had positive effects such as reduction in printing and in-person meetings. To better understand the impact of the energy consumption of our digital services, we will begin to measure this, and research the most climate-conscious alternatives and, where practicable, favour those services.

When documents need to be printed, we opt for double-sided printing as a default, use layouts that optimise paper usage, do not print images such as email signatures and buy recycled or sustainably sourced paper from a manufacturer certified by organisations like the Forest Stewardship Council.

We are nominating a Green Officer, as a monitor and positive role model for day-to-day Climate Actions. This person will encourage routines such as:

- using reusable water bottles and keep-cups
- best practice for printing
- turning off electrical devices when not in use
- fully shutting down devices when the office is closed.

### **Communications**

**As part of our ongoing Climate Action practice, we will convey our commitment to environmental sustainability with our audiences, patrons and other stakeholders through our channels of communications. This includes posting this policy on our website, referring to it in all contracts of employment and making a statement about our commitment to green practice in our email signatures, and in our show programmes whenever possible.**

### **Climate Action Plan**

#### **Phase 1: Information Gathering**

Impact A	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Touring</b>	RM Executive Director and Producer availing of Carbon Literacy Training <sup>4</sup>	Executive Director and Producer	2025
<b>Touring</b>	To record work journey distance in 2024 and 2025. Calculate average mileage relative to production size and our CO2 emission for travel using tools from the Theatre Green Book	Producer	2025
<b>Touring</b>	To record method of travel in 2024 and 2025. Calculate percentage of car journeys vs public transport	Producer	2025

<sup>4</sup> <https://juliesbicycle.com/resource/creative-climate-literacy-101/>

<b>Touring</b>	To record number of hotel stays in 2024 and 2025, compared to shared accommodation options	Producer	2025
<b>Touring</b>	Begin more meaningful conversations with venue programmers about our bookings to better maximise performances, and plan more efficient touring routes	Executive Director and Producer	2025

Impact B	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Materials</b>	Fully itemise the contents of our Costume & Props Store and create an inventory catalogue	Executive Director and Producer	2025
<b>Materials</b>	Favour suppliers offering most sustainable options for costume rental and set build wherever practical	Executive Director	2025
<b>Materials</b>	Research most responsible forms of disposal for end-of-life production materials	Executive Director	2025
<b>Materials</b>	Using the sustainable production timeline, begin conversations with Designers and Production Managers early in the programme to build sustainable practice into the	Producer and Artistic Director	2025

	design process from the outset		
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Impact C	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
Office	Get Smart Meters installed and move to greener electricity plan	Executive Director	2025
Office	Measure Electricity usage using past bills to understand baseline consumption	Executive Director	2025
Office	Nominate Green officer	Executive Director	2025
Office	Research Digital Services providers to better understand impact of our online activity and favour services which offer more sustainable services whenever possible	Executive Director	2025
Office	Learn more about consumption of our digital storage, measure current level to set a reduction target	Executive Director	2025
Office	Use <a href="https://www.websitecarbon.com">websitecarbon.com</a> to rate Rough Magic's website efficiency and review regularly as changes are made to improve our rating	Executive Director	2024

**Phase 2: Taking Action**

Impact A	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
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<b>Touring</b>	Using information gathered in Phase 1: Set cap on average mileage relative to production size. Review annually to ensure staying below the cap	Producer	2025 + 2026
<b>Touring</b>	Using information gathered in Phase 1: Set reduction target relative to production size of car journeys in favour of public transport. Review annually to ensure staying below target.	Producer	2025 + 2026
<b>Touring</b>	Reduce employees travelling in single cars by offering incentives to car-pool, while observing Revenue reporting	Producer	2025 + 2026
<b>Touring</b>	Using information gathered in Phase 1: Set target relative to production size to reduce hotel rooms in favour of shared accommodation wherever possible	Producer	2025 + 2026
<b>Touring</b>	Following discussions in Phase 1: Tour bookings that maximise performances in one place and efficient touring routes	Producer	2026
<b>Touring</b>	Discuss most tour-efficient infrastructure with	Producer and Artistic Director	2025 + 2026

	set designers early in process		
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Impact B	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Materials</b>	Add clause to designers' contracts to check catalogue of costumes/props before making purchases	Producer	2025 + 2026
<b>Materials</b>	Using itemisation from Phase 1: Offer catalogue of our props and costumes to designers working on Rough Magic shows that they must check before procuring any materials. Make catalogue available for other independent companies so they require less new materials	Executive Director and Producer	2026
<b>Materials</b>	Use research from Phase 1 to favour suppliers who have a sustainable practice wherever possible	Producer	2025 + 2026

Impact C	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
<b>Office</b>	Once moved to Smart Meter and greener electricity monitor office energy consumption monthly.	Executive Director	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Using information gathered in Phase 1: Set target for office	Executive Director	2025 + 2026

	energy usage reduction relative to period/scale of activity. Review annually to ensure staying on target.		
<b>Office</b>	Green Officer in place and monitoring office green practice	Green Officer	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Make employees aware of Cycle to Work Scheme	Green Officer	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Set default settings on printer for economy settings	Green Officer	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Purchase recycled paper only and from environmentally sustainably sourced manufacturer	Green Officer	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Turn off devices when not in use. Remind employees of unnecessary energy usage	Green Officer	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Encourage sustainable data management practice including deleting large emails, not unnecessarily duplicating digitally stored files, and removing footer from internal emails	Green Officer	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Add clause to employees' contracts stating commitment to Climate Action	Executive Director	2025 + 2026
<b>Office</b>	Using information gathered in Phase 1:	Executive Director	2026

	Set target of energy consumption for our digital storage – begin clearing and maximising space of our online files		
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**Long Term Goals**

In 2027 this Policy will be reviewed, and a new action plan will be devised. This new action plan will be informed by a review of the achievements from Phase 1 and Phase 2 and will set out Phase 3 actions with a long-term goal being to make Rough Magic operations as Green as possible and getting closer to net zero productions.

**Review of Policy**

The Rough Magic Board will review this policy at 3-year intervals or as appropriate. The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented effectively.

**History & Review**

Ratified	2024
Next Review	2027

