Environmental policy

Our commitment

Art Explora UK recognises the climate and ecological emergency as one of the most significant challenges facing society. As a charity committed to sharing arts and culture with everyone, we believe our work should not come at the expense of the communities and environment we serve.

We are committed to understanding, reducing and openly reporting the environmental impact of our activities. We integrate environmental considerations into our decisions, from programme design and partnerships to everyday operations, and we use our programmes to inspire conversations about climate and the environment with audiences of all ages.

Scope

This policy applies to all Art Explora UK activities, including our office at Somerset House, touring and outreach programmes, events and partnerships. It applies to staff, trustees, freelancers and volunteers, and we expect artists, suppliers and partners to support its aims when working with us. It sits alongside the wider commitments of the Art Explora foundation.

Our areas of focus

- Carbon footprint: we measure the emissions of our activities using recognised sector tools, including the Gallery Climate Coalition carbon calculator, to understand our impact and inform decisions.
- Travel and transport: we favour lower-carbon travel for staff, artists and freelancers, and use remote meetings where they work well.
- Audience travel: we choose accessible locations close to the communities we serve and gather information on how audiences travel to us.
- Energy: we seek to reduce energy use across our office and programmes, and to use cleaner energy sources as they become available.
- Materials and resources: we reduce, reuse and recycle wherever possible, minimise printed and single-use materials, and consider environmental and ethical impacts when buying goods and services.
- Production models: we design programmes to be resource-efficient, working with local partners, artists and venues to limit unnecessary transport.
- Training and development: we support staff and trustees to build climate literacy and share knowledge with our partners and the wider sector.

The Mobile Museum

The Art Explora Mobile Museum (AEMM) is our most carbon-intensive programme, and most of its footprint comes from moving the vehicle between locations. We have monitored its emissions with the Gallery Climate Coalition carbon calculator, covering staff journeys, truck mileage and generator diesel. The next tour will give us our first true baseline for the project's footprint.

We plan routes to keep distances between locations short. The AEMM also has a compact footprint compared with a permanent building. We choose sites near schools and in places with

natural footfall and good public transport, so fewer visitors need to drive. In our pilot tours, 87% of visitors were able to walk to the AEMM, and we will continue to survey how visitors travel.

The UK does not yet have the infrastructure to support electric trucks or widespread HVO refuelling. We budget for HVO in the vehicle where it is available, but do not use it in the generator because of the risk of fuel contamination. We will adopt more sustainable options as they become viable.

On every tour, AEMM learning materials link artworks to environmental themes in line with the Key Stage 2 curriculum.

Engaging audiences, partners and staff

We make the environment a theme across our artistic and learning programmes, helping children, young people, teachers and communities explore climate and environmental issues through art. We encourage artists, suppliers and partners to consider their own environmental impact, and we share what we learn with peers through sector networks such as the Gallery Climate Coalition.

Responsibility, monitoring and review

The Director is responsible for this policy, supported by all staff, and the Board of Trustees oversees it. We will monitor our environmental performance, report on our progress to the Board, and review this policy every year, or sooner if legislation, best practice or our programmes change.

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