

**JULIE'S
BICYCLE**

COMMUNICATING YOUR CLIMATE ACTION

A Short Guide for Cultural Organisations and Creatives



A KEY THING YOU CAN DO IN RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE IS TO TALK ABOUT IT.

Artists and the cultural community are uniquely placed to take action on climate. They help us to understand climate change through storytelling and shared experiences, speaking to hearts, minds, and imaginations. By sharing your commitments and climate action journey, you can inspire your audiences, your peers, and - everyone!

A 2024 [global research report](#) from Nature Climate Change found that from a survey of 130,000 individuals across 125 countries, there was almost universal support for climate action: 86% of respondents endorsed pro-climate social norms, and 89% demanded intensified political action.

Despite this, people underestimated how willing they felt others were to act on the climate crisis. This is a critical communication gap, which reinforces the importance of talking about your climate action. Sharing what you are doing helps to normalise the changes that we need to make as a society, and demonstrates that there are people and organisations out there who care deeply about a future for the planet that centres justice for the environment, land, and people.

Findings from Indigo's latest [Act Green](#) report (2024) highlight a gap between organisations' actions and their communication, and demonstrate the importance of actively sharing your sustainability story with your audiences.

86% of cultural audiences are worried about the impacts of climate change¹

72% expect the cultural organisations they visit to be acting on it

Only **16%** of audiences think cultural orgs place great importance on playing an active role in tackling climate change

¹These figures are from Indigo's 2024 Act Green Report'

WHILE 73% OF NATIONAL PORTFOLIO ORGANISATIONS HAVE SHOWN WORK EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTAL THEMES, ONLY 46% HAVE PUBLISHED ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES OR COMMITMENTS PUBLICLY.

² Published in the Arts Council's annual Culture, Climate and Environment Responsibility Report



WHERE CAN YOU TALK ABOUT CLIMATE?

Explore more
with resources and
real life examples

Everywhere! Here are some suggestions to get you started...

SIGNAGE

Ask people to take practical actions at your venue or event, and or highlight practical actions you have taken.

Image: Water Portals, Level Centre. Photo: Henry Driver, David John King Photography.



[EXPLORE MORE](#)

PROGRAMMING

Signpost where audiences can find out more, or get involved in relevant campaigns when your programme explores issues related to climate change.

E.g. Snail on me by Anne Duk Hee Jordan, Haigh Hall. Curated and Produced by UP Projects. Image by Mark McNulty.



[EXPLORE MORE](#)

WITHIN YOUR NETWORKS

Can you build a community around your action? Convene with others in your neighbourhood, or with other cultural organisations, to invite discussion and share ideas and learning.

E.g. G-MAST



[EXPLORE MORE](#)

WEBSITE AND BLOGS

Publish your environmental policies, provide clear information about how audiences can travel to you sustainably, and share stories about your environmental action on your blog and news pages.

E.g. Watershed. Photo: Marcus Bernard



[EXPLORE MORE](#)

PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

Have an inspiring story to share? Reach out to your audiences through local publications, or connect to peers via industry publications and at events. Invite reporters to visit your climate themed programming.

E.g. Birmingham Museums Trust



[EXPLORE MORE](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Use your social channels to bring your environmental action to life with imagery, stories, requests for feedback, or partner takeovers.

E.g. Manchester Day 2019, Walk the Plank, Photo: Mark Waugh



[EXPLORE MORE](#)



A few suggestions on how to navigate talking to audiences about your climate action

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY

Many don't share their climate actions out of fear of criticism or because they want to wait until they're 'perfect'.

The result is that nobody says anything at all, and opportunities to connect with the thousands of people who experience your work and efforts are lost. Be honest, admit you don't have all the answers, share your journey, and be transparent about what you are doing and what you are still working towards. Share facts and data to support your story when relevant.



ROYAL
OPERA HOUSE

TAKE THE RIGHT TONE

Be approachable, factual and straight forward. Avoid jargon and technical terms. Lightening up and using humour can make the climate movement feel more relatable and approachable. Stick to your values! The majority of people are concerned about climate change and want cultural organisations to act.



SHAMBALA
FESTIVAL

BE KIND

Don't shame or make people feel guilty. If you're keen to talk about an environmental issue, start by listening to your audiences' views and build from there. Engage in discussions and plan together.



IMITATING
THE DOG

TAKE THE GREENWASHING TEST

Greenwashing occurs when an organisation gives the impression of being environmentally friendly, when in fact they aren't. Make sure to check up on products and suppliers.



WWF
GREENWASHING
GUIDE

BE HOPEFUL

Highlight the positive outcomes or benefits of an action you want audiences to take, especially at a local or personal level, to increase their engagement with your message. As well as focusing on successes, make sure you also reveal truths and stories of resistance, but avoid treating people as victims.



POLKA
THEATRE



TIPS

CLARIFY YOUR COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

Use the objective map tool with your team to identify the most impactful sustainability objectives before you start.

COMMUNICATIONS
OBJECTIVE
MAP TOOL

THINK OF YOUR AUDIENCES

Communicate information that is relevant and useful. Celebrate and thank them for their involvement! Is there an action you want them to take, is there an opportunity for them to contribute, where can they find out more? How can you make your environmental action relevant to your communities and their lives?

NEW
ADVENTURES
CASE STUDY

JOIN SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

Consider kitemarks and credentials to work towards, that signpost your ethical action with recognised certifications and badges.

GREENBELT
AND
BANK BETTER

PLATFORM A WIDE RANGE OF VOICES

Minority audiences don't often see themselves represented in the climate movement. Make sure you include a wide range of voices from across your team and audiences.

JB'S
CREATIVE
CLIMATE JUSTICE
HUB

GET YOUR COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING TEAMS INVOLVED

This will help ensure you have a joined up approach to sharing the different actions you are taking. They can support you to make use of all the opportunities available to tell your audiences about what you are doing, and encourage them to engage.

WOLVERHAMPTON
ART GALLERY

TELL A GOOD STORY

Find engaging ways to tell your story that your audiences can relate to and appeal to their emotions. While you can use supporting data to reinforce a message, stay accessible - not all climate/environmental communication needs to be written in a scholarly way!

HEARD'S
FRAMING
GUIDE



FURTHER READING

There are plenty of brilliant resources out there if you want to delve deeper into ways to shape your climate messaging - here are a selection:

[Communicating Sustainability Guide](#), Julie's Bicycle (JB). An in depth guide (2015 - but still relevant today)

[Act Green Report](#), Indigo. Understanding audience attitudes towards the role of cultural organisations in tackling the climate emergency (2024)

[Climate Communications Whitepaper](#), New Zero World. An in depth look at climate communications, includes a section on [the power of storytelling](#) (2024)

[10 Ways To Supercharge Climate Communications](#), ACT Climate Labs. (2023)

[Guide to Conquering Climate Comms](#), Media Trust. (2023)

[Climate Stories That Work](#), Heard.

[Climate Justice Messaging Guide](#), Public Interest Research Centre. (2021)

[Framing Climate Justice](#), Public Interest Research Centre, 350, NEON. (2020)

[Frameworks Institute](#), Useful guidance and research (ongoing)

If you have an environmental initiative, event, or opportunity to share, please get in touch with Julie's Bicycle (JB) and we'd be happy to share relevant information through our network: info@juliesbicycle.com

**THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PRODUCED BY JB,
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ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME.**



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