

Rethinking Touring Exhibitions

A tool to help reduce the environmental impact of touring exhibitions

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Art Fund_



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In partnership with

the
DESIGN
MUSEUM



Introduction

The cultural sector has a responsibility to urgently respond to the planetary emergency. In museums and galleries we must do this through the way we plan, design and develop exhibitions, not just in the stories that we tell. The choices we make, the contractors we appoint, the decisions about materials, transport and travel all have a role to play in reducing the environmental impact of our projects.

But where to start? For many of us, especially when working in collaboration with other stakeholders on a complex touring exhibition, it can feel daunting.

Art Fund, in partnership with the Design Museum and The Exhibitions Group, have produced this touring tool to support museum professionals to ask the right questions at the right time. It also signposts a variety of resources to help teams gather data and access further research to make informed decisions. This tool was created for UK institutions developing or co-producing touring exhibitions, but can be adapted for other types of projects.

Underpinning this tool are the 5 Ps of Sustainable Development – People, Prosperity, Peace, Partnership and of course, Planet. We hope it will empower cultural professionals to work collaboratively with other organisations and their supply chains to develop a new best practice for the sector.

How to use

The tool is divided into six sections, each related to a different aspect of your project. You don't need to read everything in order, just find and click on the section most relevant to your current stage of planning.

Each page includes a question to consider, and suggestions to discuss with your project team. It also signposts useful resources and research from other organisations.

Links from contents pages and across the top of each page will allow you to quickly navigate between sections of the resource.

Don't forget to return to the tool later on as your project progresses!

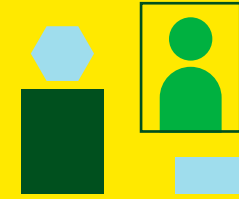
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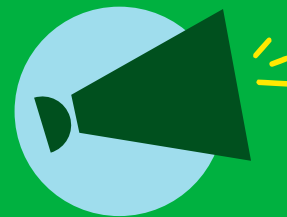
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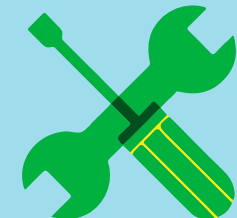
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Partnerships & Procurement

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Planning Stage

Questions

How aligned are your internal teams and stakeholders on the importance of reducing the environmental impact of exhibitions – and this project in particular?

Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Have these conversations early with your internal team and stakeholders
- Integrate environmental responsibility into your organisation's values and mission statement
- Have an organisation-wide, public-facing policy (such as an environmental responsibility statement) that is easy for potential partners to find on your website

Actions & Resources



Allow time for relationship development before committing to working with partners



Write your own policy and share it with your partners and stakeholders



[GCC environmental responsibility statement template](#)

Planning Stage

Questions

How will you select your partners who are aligned with your ambitions to reduce the environmental impact of exhibitions?

Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Share your environmental policy with potential partners at an early stage and ask for theirs
- Select partners who are aligned with your organisation's values, policies and response to the planetary emergency
- Adjust the project budget to support more environmentally responsible processes and production
- Share environmental guidelines with each other early to clarify shared terminology
- Consult with others in the sector about their experiences with a potential partner's responsiveness to the planetary emergency
- Emphasise environmental responsibility in your project goals and / or set up documents e.g. business plan, to bring attention to its importance

Actions & Resources



Time for relationship development before committing to work with partners



Share your own policy to share your position



[GCC environmental responsibility statement template](#)

Planning Stage

Questions

How can you maximise the exhibition duration at each partner venue to increase the return on investment?

Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Discuss with partners early on how long the exhibition can run at each venue
- Discuss the potential length of the exhibition run or tour when making initial informal contact with potential lenders
- Develop the exhibition in a way that encourages repeat visits

Actions & Resources

- Allow time to plan in advance when establishing the tour schedule and forward programme for each partner
- Allow time to research objects that are suitable for longer exhibition runs/tours
- Allow time to explore or experiment with new ways of making exhibitions



Agreement

Questions

How can you draft the agreement to show the importance of measuring and reducing environmental impact, and how you'll collaborate on this?



Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Include clauses or an appendix in the partnership agreement to set out the expected standards and actions
- Include the relevant policies of different organisations as appendices in the partnership agreement

Actions & Resources

Update your agreement templates

Here is an example statement that could be included in a contract or appendix:

Reducing the Environmental Impact of the Network Activities

Each Partner agrees to carry out their obligations, according to current best practice for sustainable production and touring, aiming to deliver the project with the minimum environmental impact.

Each partner agrees to explore new methods and practices to achieve this commitment where possible.

Each partner agrees to accurately capture and share data using an agreed carbon calculator tool.

Agreement

Questions

In your partnership agreement, how clear are the roles and responsibilities around CO2e emissions reporting?



Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Decide who will be responsible, agree reporting methods, set up templates at the start of the project and agree regular reporting deadlines
- Ensure clarity around the level of detail calculated and reported to ensure consistency (e.g. are you counting the digital footprint during the development phase?)
- Prioritise what to focus on (in year one, for example, focus on the area with the highest impact: travel)
- If you are not reporting on certain elements, be clear as to why not

Actions & Resources

Allow time for relationship development and training

Update the roles and responsibilities section of your partnership agreement

Shared document for all partners to report their carbon data – [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#) or the [GCC Carbon Calculator](#)

Agreement

Questions

How can you ensure the agreement covers sponsorship for your shared project so that all partners are aligned on what collaborations are considered ethical and appropriate?



Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Consult organisational, local authority and sector guidance on fundraising and ethics
- Agree early on with partners and include relevant clauses or an appendix in the partnership agreement to set out expectations and parameters
- Have an organisation-wide, public facing policy that supports your environmental responsibility statement.

Actions & Resources

- Allow time for relationship development with partners and training for staff
- Write your own policy and share it with your partners and stakeholders
- Update the fundraising and ethics section of your partnership agreement

[Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy - How to create your ethical fundraising policy](#)

[Museums Association - Code of Ethics for Museums: Individual & institutional integrity](#)

Agreement

Questions

How will you agree a waste management strategy for the end of the tour?

Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Agree the reuse plan right at the beginning of the partnership
- Check your organisation's policy on reuse to ensure it aligns with the reuse plan agreed with your partners
- Include relevant policies and the reuse plan in design briefs, and contractor and service agreements
- Adjust the project budget to support more environmentally responsible processes and production
- Explore returning recyclable materials to the exhibition maker as appropriate.

Actions & Resources



Allow time to discuss, agree and integrate this into the partnership agreement



Allow time to integrate plans into the partnership agreement, contractor agreements, design briefs, in-house builder's briefing etc.



Reference your organisational or local authority reuse plan (might be part of a larger policy)



Environmental Responsibility

Questions

How will you agree who will attend the opening event at each venue, and provide a clear rationale for why?



Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Invite organisational representatives who might be travelling anyway and assisting with the installation (e.g. couriers)
- Remember that flights have a larger carbon footprint than trains, and taxis have a larger carbon footprint than public transport
- Agree scope of who needs to attend, where from, how and why
- Consider having a carbon budget for travel at project level or individual partner level
- Use a carbon calculator to help illustrate the CO₂e emissions impact of flights versus trains to support internal advocacy

Actions & Resources



Allow time to discuss, agree and integrate this into the partnership agreement



The [GCC Carbon Calculator](#)

Environmental Responsibility

Questions

How will you agree your key principles regarding virtual versus in-person meetings for research, planning, production, installation, deinstallation?

Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Find a balance and consider opportunities for digital collaboration or combining in-person trips with other activities
- Include key principles in your partnership agreement and loan agreements

Actions & Resources



Allow time to discuss, agree and integrate this into the partnership agreement



Environmental Responsibility

Questions

How will you agree travel principles for the project?

Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Develop a policy specifically for your exhibition project and include it as an appendix in your partnership agreement
- Consider having a carbon budget for travel at project level or individual partner level
- Include travel principles in your partnership agreement and loan agreements

Actions & Resources

Share travel policies of all partners for reference

Allow time to discuss, agree and integrate this policy into the partnership agreement

[GCC Best Practice Guidance: Travel](#)



Environmental Responsibility

Questions

How will you calculate, share and report the carbon footprint for each stage of the exhibition tour, including the digital carbon footprint?



Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Start at the very beginning of the project
- Measure what you can control and influence
- Agree with partners to use the same tools and a consistent approach to what you measure
- Consider aligning calculations and reporting to follow the 'handover of responsibility' points of an exhibition tour (e.g. follow the pattern of insurance transfer points for the tour)
- Ensure clarity around what you will measure (e.g. [Scopes 1, 2, 3](#)) – some data might be hard to capture but it's worth trying
- Agree and include scopes in the partnership agreement

Actions & Resources



Allow time to discuss, agree and integrate carbon calculation into the partnership agreement



Carbon impact tools: e.g. the [GCC Carbon Calculator](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)



Join a peer support network such as [Museums 2030](#)

Closing

Questions

Have you measured the CO₂e emissions for each stage of the project?

Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Check for gaps on data collected across the project and agree how to report any omissions
- Make any retrospective calculations or estimates as necessary

Actions & Resources



Carbon impact tools: e.g. the [GCC Carbon Calculator](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)



Join a peer support network such as [Museums 2030](#)



Closing

Questions

How will you use the collected data to set benchmarks, analyse trends, reflect on decisions and ascertain where to prioritise future efforts?



Planning Stage

Agreement

Environmental Responsibility

Closing

Considerations

- Ensure that your project 'wash up' meeting addresses environmental responsibility
- Discuss and agree actions for future work based on learnings
- Share the learnings with other colleagues (e.g. through staff meetings, formal and informal networks etc.) to accelerate change

Actions & Resources



Carbon impact tools: e.g. the [GCC Carbon Calculator](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)



[Julie's Bicycle resources and reports](#)

People

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Making informed and pragmatic choices, comparing CO2e emissions

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Necessity, use and practicalities of virtual couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew 24

Internal Staff 25

Awareness, training, practice and policy



Research Phase

Questions

How will you encourage all partners to make informed and pragmatic choices about the necessity of travel?

Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Link required travel with other events, meetings and professional development opportunities for staff
- Allocate sufficient time for staff to travel by modes of public transport that may be slower than flying
- Allocate sufficient travel budget for staff to travel by modes of public transport that may be more expensive than flying
- Schedule meetings to help facilitate travel by public transport (rather than by air or car)
- Suggest later start and/or earlier finish times to fit train schedules

Actions & Resources

- Gain support from colleagues and senior management
- Use online collaboration and video call tools: Teams, Zoom, Google Workspace etc.

Research Phase

Questions

How will you support staff to calculate the CO₂e emissions of different travel options when making decisions about research trips?

Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Provide staff with information, tools and training before they start planning travel
- Ensure meeting start/finish times are compatible with public transport timetables to avoid unnecessary hotel stays

Actions & Resources



Carbon impact tools: e.g. the [GCC Quick Carbon Estimate](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)



Couriers

Questions

How will you manage conversations between lenders and borrowers to ascertain whether couriers (in-person and/or virtual) are necessary?



Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Assuming the risk is low, recommend a no-courier first approach where possible
- Remember that a virtual courier can be just as time and resource intensive as an in-person courier for many organisations
- Ask the lender to clearly state why a courier is required, and that all alternatives have been considered
- Explore the possibility of sharing couriers with other lenders or split couriers
- Ask the lender to provide an installation guide (written, visual, video) and brief the relevant staff at the venue in advance, in place of a courier (virtual or in-person)

Actions & Resources

Project risk register

Allow time for relationship development

Update terms and conditions of the lender's loan agreement

[Government Indemnity Scheme Guidelines](#)

[The Bizot Group Green Protocol, 2023](#)

Lender's loan policy

Couriers

Questions

If couriering is non-negotiable, how do you build trust so that virtual couriering is a comfortable option for all parties?

Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Discuss and agree on how virtual couriering will work and ensure both the lender and borrower have the necessary resources and equipment
- Seek advice from colleagues in other organisations who have experience of virtual couriering
- Remember to calculate the carbon footprint of any couriers
- Define the technical requirements

Actions & Resources

- Allow time for relationship development with partners and training for staff

- [UKRG Guidance: The Virtual Courier \(UK and Europe\)](#)

- [UKRG Courier Training Framework](#)

- [The Bizot Green Protocol, 2023](#)



Couriers

Questions

What processes and equipment do you need to have in place to make virtual couriering a success?

Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Allocate sufficient budget for staff time, hardware and software
- Borrow or hire hardware, rather than purchase new
- Where possible, use two devices for each object to allow multiple perspectives
- Check you have a strong Wi-Fi connection in all the spaces that the object will travel through (from the delivery/unloading area to the installation area), as well as in the condition-checking and/or installation space

Actions & Resources

Allocate project budget

[UKRG Guidance: The Virtual Courier \(UK and Europe\)](#)

[UKRG Courier Training Framework](#)



Install/Deinstall Crew

Questions

If you have appointed a build contractor, where will their staff be travelling from, and will they be required to stay overnight?



Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Include reporting requirements in briefs, procurement documents and contracts
- Ask contractors to use the same reporting tools as you and your partners to ensure consistency in measuring and collecting data
- If feasible, use transport staff who are also technicians to work on installation/deinstallation to reduce the number of people travelling
- Include relevant questions in briefs and tender documents to gather the information you need for decision-making and reporting

Actions & Resources

Update brief, procurement documents and contracts

Carbon impact tools: e.g. [The GCC Carbon Calculator](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)

[The Design Museum exhibition guide](#), p.21 questions for contractors

Internal Staff

Questions

How will you facilitate open discussions about the impact of travel to raise awareness and support a change in practice and policy?



Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Use a tool to measure the different options to help explain choices to colleagues and stakeholders
- Carbon Literacy Training for staff

Actions & Resources

Allow time to discuss and agree internally

Gain support from colleagues and senior management

Carbon impact tools: e.g. the [GCC Quick Carbon Estimate](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)

[GCC Best Practice Guidelines: Travel](#)

[Julie's Bicycle Practical Guide: Business Travel, Commuting and Delivery Services](#)

Sign up for a [Carbon Literacy Course](#)

Internal Staff

Questions

How will you understand the skills and experience levels of the project team, including how comfortable they are with carbon calculators and other tools?



Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Conduct a skills audit of all relevant colleagues working on the project
- Make sure the project team has access to the tools and knows how to use them
- Break down measuring and reporting tasks so the responsibility is shared and can be done as tasks are carried out
- Allocate a budget for training
- Consult with colleagues who have experience in this area
- Encourage staff to undertake Carbon Literacy Training

Actions & Resources

- ☑ Organise training so everyone knows how to use the agreed-upon tools
- ☑ Allow time to consult with colleagues who have experience in this area
- ⏴ Join a peer support network such as [Museums 2030](#)
- ⏴ Sign up for a [Carbon Literacy Course](#)
- ⏴ Sign up to be [Green Champion](#) within your organisation

Internal Staff

Questions

How will you develop a robust travel policy that seeks to reduce the carbon footprint of staff travel?

Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Ask colleagues in other organisations to share examples
- Check if your parent or umbrella organisation (e.g. university or local authority) already has a policy

Actions & Resources

Gain support from colleagues and senior management

[GCC Decarbonisation Action Plan](#)

[NEMO Climate Protection in Museums Guidelines](#)



Internal Staff

Questions

Have you agreed on who will attend the opening event at each venue, and why?

Research Phase

Couriers

Install/Deinstall Crew

Internal Staff

Considerations

- Invite organisational representatives who might be travelling anyway and assisting with the installation, e.g. couriers
- Remember that flights have a larger carbon footprint than trains and taxis have a larger carbon footprint than public transport
- Agree scope of who needs to attend, where from, how and why

Actions & Resources

- Allow time to discuss and agree internally and with partners
- Integrate principles into the partnership agreement
- Gain support from director and senior management



Objects

Object Selection 30

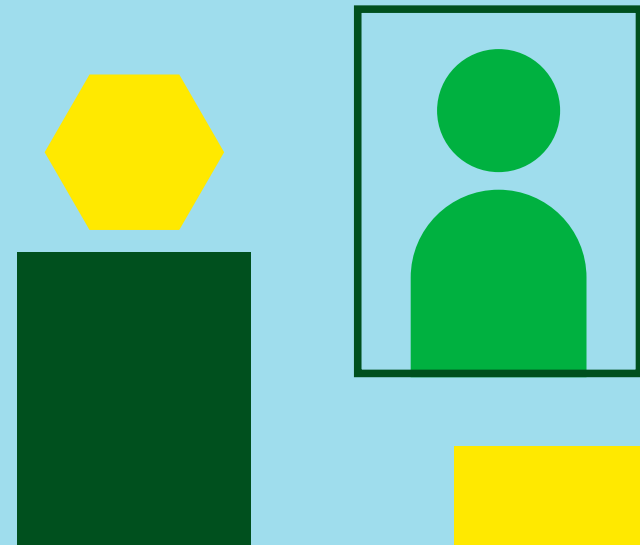
Location(s) and number of loans required

Object Care 32

Environmental requirements, microclimates, reproductions, display and barriers

Artistic Commissioning 36

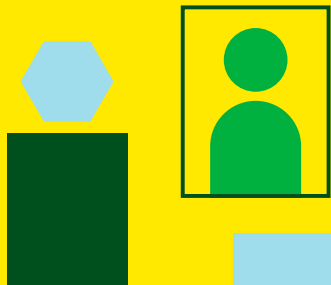
Alternative Touring Models 37



Object Selection

Questions

How can you minimise the number of locations your loans come from, to reduce environmental impact?

Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

- Be strategic with your object selection by focusing on loans from one collection, or several lenders in the same area of the country, or lenders more local to you
- Encourage each touring venues to adapt the exhibition to include local loans
- In your formal loan request for local objects, consider including 'reducing the environmental impact' as a reason for borrowing
- Share loads for transport if several loans will come from one area of the country
- Balance the need to tell a compelling story with the environmental impact of loans
- Consider the carbon cost as well as the monetary cost of loans

Actions & Resources

Allow time to take a more strategic approach to object research and loans

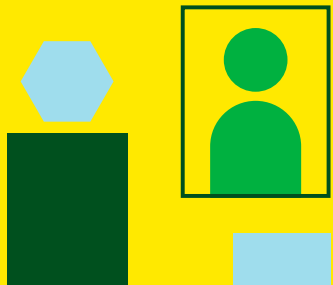
Set clear parameters for object selection with colleagues and partners during the research phase

[The Bizot Group Green Protocol, 2023](#) as a reference for developing a strong case for borrowing

Object Selection

Questions

What is the minimum number of objects/loans you need to tell the exhibition narrative?

Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

- Address this question at an early planning stage, the considerations will be different for every project
- Use interpretation methods to enhance storytelling and the visitor experience to reduce the number of physical loans required to achieve the same result
- Consider how you could use alternative objects or facsimiles at different tour venues to deliver the exhibition narrative
- Encourage the project team and curators to draw on the advice and experience of colleagues and stakeholders responsible for registrar processes, transport, conservation, design etc. when developing a draft object list

Actions & Resources

- Allow time for research
- Allow time to consult a broader group of colleagues and contractors
- Allow time to review and edit the object list

Object Care

Questions

Which objects need strict relative humidity and/or temperature conditions?

Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

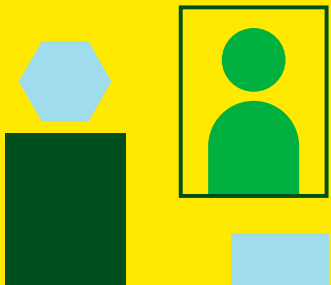
- Request the relative humidity and temperature requirements for loans as early as possible
- Consult latest sector advice and guidance on environmental conditions for objects on display
- Seek support from estates/facilities colleagues to understand HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) capabilities

Actions & Resources

Allow time to consult estates/facilities teams

[The Bizot Group Green Protocol, 2023](#)

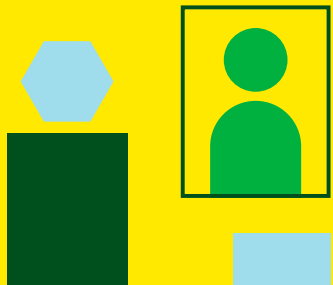
[Government Indemnity Scheme Guidelines](#)



Object Care

Questions

If only some objects require strict environmental conditions, is it more appropriate to have a micro-climate in a case or frame, or group these objects together for display?



Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

- Seek advice from a conservator
- Seek to find a compromise between object requirements and environmental impact
- Allocate budget for conservation advice if this is not available in-house

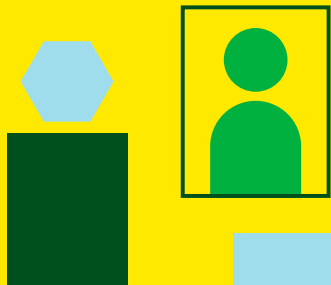
Actions & Resources

- Seek conservation advice for risk assessment

Object Care

Questions

Could you consider replacing any loan objects, or objects with strict relative humidity and/or temperature conditions, with locally produced reproductions?



Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

- Explore whether interpretation methods to enhance storytelling and the visitor experience can reduce the number of physical loans required to achieve the same result
- Compare the environmental impact of creating a new object and its life cycle versus borrowing an object with strict environmental requirements
- Develop a strategy for facsimiles and reproductions so as not to devalue the original objects (e.g. could a replica be displayed outside or be handled by visitors?)
- Maximise the life cycle and use of a reproduction to mitigate the carbon impact of its production (e.g. tour it to local schools following the display)

Actions & Resources

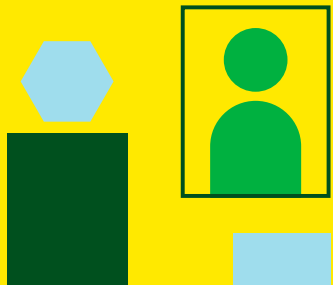
Allow time for research and discussions

The Design Museum [exhibition guide](#), p.23 Material decision tree

Object Care

Questions

What alternatives to Perspex such as distance, barriers, mesh etc. could be used to ensure visitors keep their distance from the object?



Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

- Look at object requirements individually rather than generically to inform decision making
- If working with a designer, explore design options for plastic-free solutions to protecting objects
- Explore alternatives such as marked distance, barriers or gauze fabric solutions

Actions & Resources

Allow time for research and discussions

The Design Museum [exhibition guide](#), p.23 Material decision tree

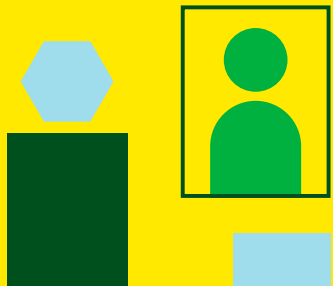
[Government Indemnity Scheme Guidelines](#)

Artistic Commissioning

Questions

How could the exhibition themes be realised by inviting local artists at each venue to respond?

How can you work with local artists to reduce the CO₂e emissions impact of the project?



Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

- Explore whether interpretation methods to enhance storytelling and the visitor experience can reduce the number of physical loans required to achieve the same result
- Discuss and agree on how you will calculate the carbon footprint of any artistic commissions (e.g. who is collecting what data, using the same tools for consistency etc.)
- Remember to include any travel and digital use, as well as materials and processes

Actions & Resources

- Allow time for research and discussions

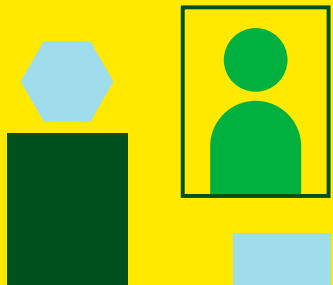
- The Design Museum [exhibition guide](#), p.23 Material decision tree

- Carbon impact tools: e.g. the [GCC Carbon Calculator](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)

Alternative Touring Models

Questions

Can an exhibition be delivered without touring a large number of objects around the UK?



Object Selection

Object Care

Artistic Commissioning

Alternative Touring Models

Considerations

- Explore alternative touring models, such as:
 - Touring of concepts, content, ideas, interpretation and/or digital assets
 - Touring a single spotlight loan that each partner creates their own exhibition around
 - Local co-development around a core concept and theme
 - Local artistic responses to a collection, object or theme etc.
- Explore whether interpretation methods to enhance storytelling and the visitor experience can reduce the number of physical loans required to achieve the same result

Actions & Resources



Allow time to research alternative touring models including blueprint models and spotlight loans



Research funding to facilitate new ways of working



Carbon impact tools: e.g the [GCC Carbon Calculator](#) and [Julie's Bicycle Creative Climate Tools](#)

Transport

Reducing the impact of transport,
tender considerations, shared loads,
handling and environmental requirements



Questions

How will you reduce the CO₂e emissions impact of transport for loans?



Considerations

- Maximise the impact of loans in different ways (e.g. increase audience impact, number of visitors, geographic spread etc.)
- Balance the carbon impact of the number and type of loans with curatorial importance and audience impact
- Secure groups of loans from one location or region
- Negotiate agreement for part-loads with lenders
- Seek advice from transport agents on options for part-loads from the same lenders and/or close geographic locations
- Prioritise researching and securing local loans
- Explore touring models in which not all loans go to all tour venues
- Avoid the need for couriers, or support virtual couriering
- Consider options for consolidating loans on first inbound and final outbound transport with lenders

Actions & Resources

See [Partnerships](#) section for agreement on how carbon impact will be calculated and shared for the tour

See [Objects](#) section for options related to object selection that might impact transport decisions

Allow time to take advantage of part-loads and agree this with lenders

The [GCC Carbon Calculator](#)

The [Bizot Group Green Protocol, 2023](#)

The [Bizot Green Protocol, 2023, Handbook #2 Mobility - Towards Greener Transport](#)

Questions

How will you reduce the carbon impact of transporting the whole exhibition to each partner venue?



Considerations

- Organise the exhibition tour in an order that reduces the overall transport distance (e.g. a tour schedule of Edinburgh > Manchester > London is likely to have a lower carbon impact than Edinburgh > London > Manchester)
- Consolidate transport as much as possible (e.g. can you avoid the need for two trucks if the second one is only partially full by revisiting your object selection and requirements?)
- Remember that there will be circumstances where it is not possible to consolidate the whole exhibition for transport on one vehicle (e.g. because of a large number of objects by the same artist and/or lender, the high total value of the objects, insurance/GIS requirements)
- At an early enough stage to inform key partnership and touring decisions, understand the impact of touring the exhibition build and setworks versus local options for each venue

Actions & Resources

See [Partnerships](#) section for agreement on how carbon impact will be calculated and shared for the tour

See [Objects](#) section for options related to object selection that might impact transport decisions

See [Design, Build & Display](#) section

Allow time to discuss and negotiate order of venues on the exhibition tour

Allow time to estimate the carbon impact of transport before the object list and loans are finalised

Allow time at an early stage to estimate the impact of touring the exhibition build versus setworks

Update project risk register

Update lender loan agreements

The [GCC Carbon Calculator](#)

[Government Indemnity Scheme Guidelines](#)

Questions

What do you need to consider when tendering for transport?



Considerations

- Have one contractor for all transport to simplify emissions reporting
- Include CO2e emissions reporting in contracts and be clear what data you require for the overall carbon accounting
- Include tender questions such as:
 - Do they use renewable energy in their own operations?
 - Is their vehicle fleet electric?
 - What options do they offer for reusable crates or packing materials, and what is their approach to dispersal?
- Align payment milestones in contracts with reporting deliverables
- Include reporting requirements in procurement documents and contracts
- Give reporting requirements sufficient weighting in contractor appointment decisions
- Ensure the transport agent you are working with has a focus on environmental responsibility and reducing their carbon impact
- Ask your transport agent if they are able to share loads (include other objects traveling in a similar direction on the same truck)
- Ensure your transport agent can offer both fine art and non-fine art shipping options

Actions & Resources

- Tender documents and contract templates updated to include reporting requirements
- Include questions on environmental responsibility in invitation to tender
- [GCC Guidelines – Packaging](#)
- The Design Museum [exhibition guide](#), p.21 questions for contractors

Questions

What options do you have for consolidating loans for inbound transport to the first venue and dispersal from the last venue?



Considerations

- Consider consolidation options when sourcing objects, to maximise loans in the same region
- Ask your transport agent whether they are equipped to consolidate loans
- Consider whether any lenders or tour venues can support the consolidation of loans in their area (if transport agent is not able)
- If a significant consolidation opportunity arises, consider adjusting your project schedule to accommodate it (e.g. transporting or accepting loans earlier or later than planned), or, if early enough, rethink the order of exhibition tour venues to minimise object travel

Actions & Resources



Allow time to consult lenders and partners and discuss consolidation and/or shared transport options with appointed transport agent

Questions

What different transport options can be considered based on the handling, relative humidity and temperature requirements of the loans?



Considerations

- Identify which loans require specific environmental conditions or fine art handling to understand the need for specialist transport arrangements versus non-fine art shipping
- Clarify your environmental impact policy when negotiating loans, to discourage unnecessary requests for couriers and environmental conditions
- Support virtual couriering to minimise the need for couriers to travel with loans

Actions & Resources



Ensure transport tender scoring includes a requirement to maximise opportunities to reduce carbon impact



Update loan request templates to highlight your environmental impact policy



[The Bizot Green Protocol, 2023, Handbook #2 Mobility - Towards Greener Transport](#)

Content & Advocacy

Planning 45

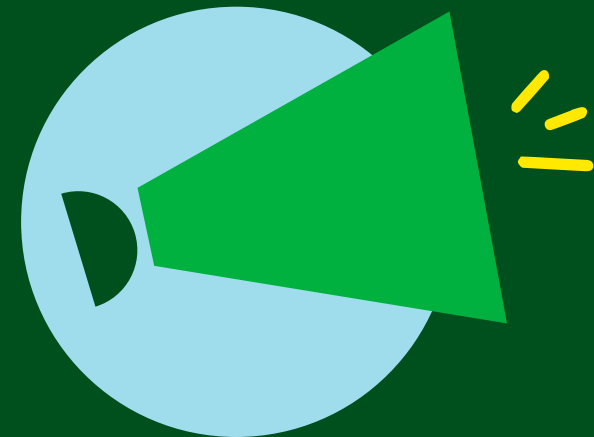
Tour and travel information, measuring visitor travel, incentivising green travel options

Communication 48

Briefings, building confidence, spokespeople

Interpretation & Learning 50

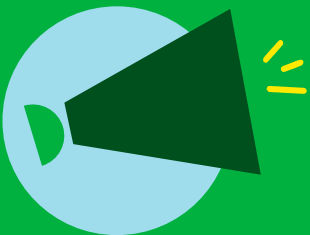
Avoiding jargon and criticism, being solutions-focused, keeping data up to date, complementary outreach activities



Planning

Questions

How will you ensure visitors don't travel unnecessarily to the first venue if the exhibition is coming to a venue nearer to them later in the tour schedule?

Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Ensure clear communication between venues when announcing the exhibition and tour
- Announce plans for the tour even if not completely finalised, so visitors can plan ahead
- Ensure you have clear and accurate public-facing communications on your website, social media channels etc.
- Include clear information in press releases so that listings accurately pick up the detail of the tour

Actions & Resources



Gain support from communications colleagues

Planning

Questions

What travel information will you provide online to visitors to encourage travel by public transport, walking or cycling, rather than by car?

Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Ensure environmentally friendly options are listed first on the website and at ticket purchase points
- Ensure travel information is easy for visitors to find on your website, with public transport, walking and cycling options actively encouraged
- Encourage visitors to check the carbon impact of their transport options
- Consider a shuttle bus service (e.g. to be run over weekends in the summer for rural locations)
- Link up with a local transport company to offer services or discounts
- Provide bike racks and safe storage for those arriving on foot (e.g. lockers and secure buggy park)
- Communicate with other local organisations to better share resources and transport options within the local community

Actions & Resources

Gain support from communications colleagues

Gain support from estates colleagues for provision of additional infrastructure

The [GCC Carbon Calculator](#)

[How Bad Are Bananas?](#)
[The Carbon Footprint of Everything,](#)
[Mike Berners-Lee, 2010](#)

Planning

Questions

How are you going to measure the emissions impact of visitor travel?

How could you incentivise the use of public transport, walking and cycling to the exhibition?

Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Edit exit and member surveys to capture this data
- Consider surveying visitors specifically about the planetary emergency and including this in the questions
- Offer discount on entrance tickets and/or in the café or shop for people arriving by public transport, walking or cycling when they present proof of travel (e.g. valid ticket)

Actions & Resources

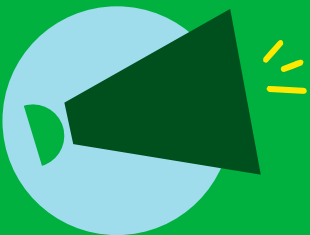
- Update exit survey
- Gain support from commercial/ticketing colleagues
- Gain support from finance colleagues
- Gain support from external delivery partners (e.g. café owners) if required

- [Act Green Indigo visitor survey](#)
- Research other reward options such as [Better Points](#)

Communication

Questions

How will you brief front-of-house staff to inform them about the project's environmental goals and give them the confidence to answer questions from visitors?



Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- During exhibition development, share the ambitions with front-of-house colleagues
- Support front-of-house colleagues to confidently communicate to the public
- Provide front-of-house colleagues with a 'one-pager', similar to an operations manual, that explains the project's environmental approach
- Be sure to share the steps taken in regular briefings

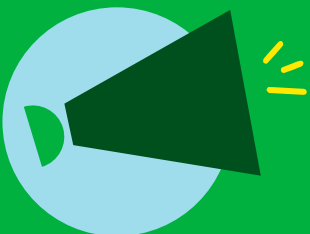
Actions & Resources

↓ Sign up for a [Carbon Literacy Course](#)

Communication

Questions

How can you ensure that the exhibition's spokespeople talk confidently about the environmental responsibility goals of the project?



Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Ensure key messages are agreed across the project team and wider organisation
- Choose the right spokespeople for the project

Actions & Resources

Media training

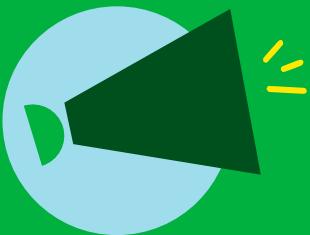
Sign up for a [Carbon Literacy Course](#)

Specialist publications such as Nick Merriman et al, [Museums and the Climate Crisis](#) (Routledge, 2023)

Interpretation & Learning

Questions

How will you avoid jargon, misleading terms and direct criticism of visitor behaviours in exhibition interpretation relating to planetary emergency?



Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Communicate uncertainty where facts are not known – you don't need to have all the answers
- Translate data into digestible facts and audience-friendly language (e.g. compare CO₂e emissions reduction to number of cups of tea boiled or average annual gas for x homes) or display data visually

Actions & Resources

↓ Sign up for a [Carbon Literacy Course](#)

↓ Websites such as [TakeTheJump.org](#) for advice on steps people can take to tackle the climate emergency with clarity, humour and humility

↓ [How Bad Are Bananas?](#)
[The Carbon Footprint of Everything.](#)
Mike Berners-Lee, 2010

Interpretation & Learning

Questions

How will you keep the exhibition interpretation positive and solutions-focused where possible, so visitors know how to be proactive in tackling the planetary emergency?



Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Use your credits panel to:
 - Communicate what your organisation is doing to reduce its environmental impact
 - Flag resources, tools and case studies that you've put online to share with peers
 - Display the exhibition's carbon footprint for visitors to see and understand
 - Talk about specific environmental wins in interpretation (this holds us accountable to visitors and each other)
- Offer Carbon Literacy Training and carbon calculator training to enable staff to back up claims with confidence and explain the nuances of the approach (e.g. what was not captured and why)
- Provide practical and relatable ideas for visitors to make small changes at home within your interpretation

Actions & Resources

↓ Sign up for a [Carbon Literacy Course](#)

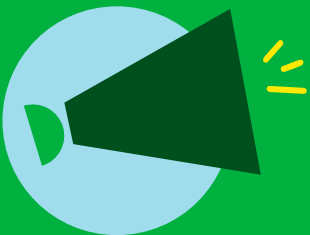
↓ The [GCC Carbon Calculator](#)

↓ Join a peer support network such as [Museums 2030](#)

Interpretation & Learning

Questions

How will you revise your interpretation, style and terminology guides to reflect the most relevant data at each stage of the tour?



Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Attend conferences and report back to colleagues to communicate the most up-to-date research
- Schedule regular review sessions with colleagues to assess and update your guides
- Ensure there is alignment on interpretation and style for text writing with in-house staff and/or external contractors
- Consult an interpretation editor to review or advise on best language

Actions & Resources



Conferences organised by ICOM UK, Museums Association, M+H Show, Exhibitions Connect etc. often have environmental speakers sharing the latest research in the sector



[GCC website, resources and news](#)

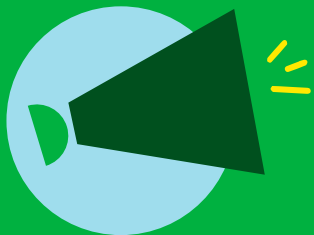


[Museum Development North](#) frequently host events on the topic

Interpretation & Learning

Questions

If the content of the exhibition aligns, can you organise displays, events, workshops and learning projects that promote low-carbon initiatives and address the planetary emergency?



Planning

Communication

Interpretation & Learning

Considerations

- Workshops, talks and conferences hosted by specialists can help engage wider audiences

Actions & Resources



Discuss with learning, public programming and other relevant colleagues

Design, Build & Display

Briefing Designers 55

Selecting and sourcing materials, reuse, adaptations, transportation vs. local production of setworks

Tendering & Briefing 60

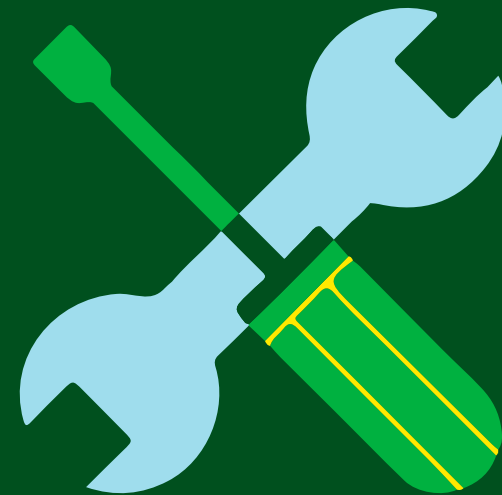
Considerations, impact monitoring and reporting, construction and assembly methods

Storage 64

Crates, packing materials

End of Exhibition 65

Planning for leftover materials, reusability and waste management



Briefing Designers

Questions

How will you agree the best type of build materials to use for your project?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Reuse your own and existing equipment and exhibition furniture
- Design for reuse: consider the actual construction of plinths and showcases (e.g. by avoiding unnecessary joints or glue)
- Update design briefs to include expectations, environmental impact goals, policies and guidelines
- Use the Design Museum's decision tree to select materials with the lowest environmental impact

Actions & Resources



Allow time for designers to research materials that are robust, cost-effective, recyclable and have the lowest environmental impact



The Design Museum [exhibition guide](#), p.23 Material decision tree



The [GCC Carbon Calculator](#)



Briefing Designers

Questions

If you, partners and/or venues have a stock of exhibition equipment resources (display cases, plinths, exhibition furniture etc.) available for reuse, how will you include these in the exhibition design?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Audit what you and your exhibition partners have
- Share the list of existing display cases, plinths, exhibition furniture etc. with exhibition partners and designers (if you have appointed any) at the beginning of the project

Actions & Resources



Create a list of exhibition equipment resources with dimensions and photos



Briefing Designers

Questions

How could you commission a suite of adaptable/reusable showcases and plinths for the exhibition and/or tour?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Design and build with reusability and transport in mind
- Commission and/or use modular plinths
- If possible, invest in reusable and movable walls

Actions & Resources



Allow time to discuss solutions internally and with designers and contractors



Gain support from colleagues and senior management to invest in reusable walls and exhibition furniture



Briefing Designers

Questions

How could you work with local contractors and/or source materials locally?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Research hire of materials/sets from other local organisations such as events and theatre companies

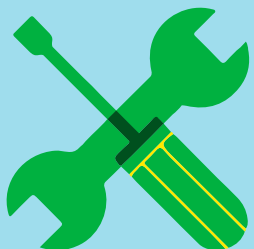
Actions & Resources



Issue design brief with sufficient time to research unconventional materials



Explore circular-economy platforms such as [Event Cycle](#), [Reset Scenery](#), [Community Wood Recycling](#), [Museum Freecycle](#), [Museocycle](#) etc.



Briefing Designers

Questions

Is the environmental impact reduced if the setworks and exhibition build travel to each partner/venue, and is it more effective for each partner/venue to reuse these for future projects?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Consult a conservator to understand the requirements of specific objects
- Design and build with reusability and transport in mind
- Share lists of existing display cases, plinths and exhibition furniture available at different venues with exhibition partners and designers at the beginning of the project
- Use light materials which are easier to move (e.g. fabric instead of walls) wherever possible

Actions & Resources

↓ [The GCC Carbon Calculator](#)



Tendering & Briefing

Questions

What do you need to consider when tendering for contractors?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Include CO2e emissions reporting in contracts and be clear what data you require for the overall carbon accounting
- Include tender questions such as:
 - Do they use renewable energy in their own operations?
 - Is their vehicle fleet electric?
 - How will they reduce unnecessary packing materials when transporting materials to site?
- Align payment milestones in contracts with reporting deliverables
- Include reporting requirements in procurement documents and contracts

Actions & Resources

Update contract templates to include reporting requirements

[The Design Museum exhibition guide, p.21 questions for contractors](#)

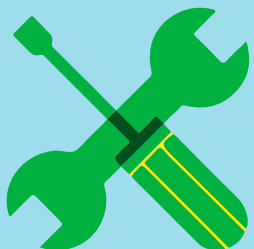


Tendering & Briefing

Questions

How can contractors or in-house builders reduce the impact of the packing and delivery of materials?

How might you support contractors or in-house builders who are not familiar with the reporting requirements and tools?



Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Before the build period commences, ask if they can reduce the number of deliveries and save packing materials for reuse
- Suggest/offer training on how to use the agreed-upon resources and tools

Actions & Resources

↓ [GCC Best Practice Guidelines](#)

↓ [NEMO Climate Protection in Museums Guidelines](#)

↓ [The Bizot Green Protocol, 2023](#)

↓ [Julie's Bicycle resources](#)

Tendering & Briefing

Questions

How can you ensure the construction and assembly methods allow for reuse, efficient storage and transport to minimise footprint (e.g. flatpack)?



Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Keep checking at every stage before approving construction drawings
- Ensure designers and contractors discuss options and avoid making assumptions about reuse
- If budgets allow, work with a build specialist to advise on suitability of design before appointing a contractor.

Actions & Resources

↓ [The Design Museum exhibition guide](#)

Tendering & Briefing

Questions

How will you check any designer assumptions with the build contractor or in-house builder before construction?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Facilitate communication between designers and contractors
- Use a carbon calculator to compare options

Actions & Resources

↓ [The GCC Carbon Calculator](#)



Storage

Questions

How will you assess the carbon impact of storing the crates and packing materials during the exhibition in preparation for the deinstallation and onward transport?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Utilise opportunities to store on site ahead of, or after, transfer whenever possible
- Limit transport and storage as much as possible between tour dates
- Only use climate-controlled storage if absolutely necessary and consider whether this is required for all or only for some of the crates

Actions & Resources



[GCC Best Practice Guidelines](#)



End of Exhibition

Questions

How could you develop a plan early on to avoid making rushed, environmentally destructive decisions when the exhibition closes at each venue, and at the end of the tour?

What is the end-of-life plan for setworks and exhibition build after the tour ends?

How could leftover materials be reused or donated?



Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Include deliverables in documents such as contracts, loan agreements and partnership agreements
- Include expectations, policies and guidelines in design briefs
- Reuse showcases, plinths and exhibition furniture for other exhibitions (check what storage is available on site)
- Reuse materials, could other departments such as learning and outreach make use of materials?
- Donate materials and items to other local organisations including those outside of the sector, such as schools and charities
- Offer lenders the opportunity to keep any bespoke crates
- Work with circular economy networks

Actions & Resources

Allow time to discuss, agree and integrate this into the exhibition plan

Research local schools, groups, projects etc. that accept donations

[Event Cycle](#), [Reset Scenery](#), [Community Wood Recycling](#), [Museum Freecycle](#), [Museocycle](#)

[GCC Best Practice Guidelines](#)

End of Exhibition

Questions

How can you encourage your contractors or in-house builders to provide a reusability and waste management report (reuse, combustion, composting, landfill, anaerobic digestion)?

Briefing Designers

Tendering & Briefing

Storage

End of Exhibition

Considerations

- Encourage contractors and in-house builders to reuse materials that you were not able to donate or reuse yourself
- Update relevant clauses of the agreement with contractors to request a reusability and waste management report at the end of the exhibition

Actions & Resources

Allow time to update contracts with new clauses

[GCC Best Practice Guidelines](#)



Resources

Responding to the climate crisis is a collective responsibility not only of cultural institutions, but also companies, communities, and governments around the globe.

If you'd like to find out more about the UN Sustainable Development Goals, visit sdgs.un.org/goals.

Resources mentioned in this guide:

Books

- [Mike Berners-Lee, How Bad Are Bananas? The Carbon Footprint of Everything](#) (Profile Books Ltd, 2021)
- [Nick Merriman et al, Museums and the Climate Crisis](#) (Routledge, 2023)

Caring for Objects: Transport and Environmental Conditions

- [The Bizot Green Protocol, 2023](#)
- [Government Indemnity Scheme](#)
- [NEMO Climate protection in museums guidelines](#)

Circular economy hubs

- [Community Wood Recycling](#)
- [Event Cycle](#)
- [Museocycle](#)
- [Museum Freecycle UK](#)
- [Re-Set Scenery](#)

Climate resources bank

- [Museums Association Climate resources bank](#)

Designing and building exhibitions

- The Design Museum [exhibition design guide](#) (object decision tree p. 17, material decision tree, pp. 23 – 25)
- [The Exhibitions Group Environmental Responsibility Hub](#)

Gallery Climate Coalition (GCC) resources

- [Best practice guidance – Travel and Green Teams](#)
- [Carbon Calculator](#)
- [Carbon Calculator Video Tutorial](#)
- [Decarbonisation Action Plan](#)
- [Environmental sustainability statement template](#)
- [Guidelines – Packaging](#)

Resources

Julie's Bicycle resources:

- [Creative climate tools](#)
- [Practical Guide: Business Travel, Commuting and Delivery Services](#)
- [Reports](#)

Networks and events:

- [Exhibitions Connect](#)
- [ICOM UK](#)
- [Museum Development North](#)
- [Museums Association](#)
- [Museums 2030, a peer support network for greener exhibitions](#)
- [Museums + Heritage Show](#)

Sponsorship

- [Arts Fundraising & Philanthropy - How to create your ethical fundraising policy](#)
- [Museums Association - Code of Ethics for Museums](#)

UKRG Resources

- [Courier Training Framework](#)
- [Virtual Courier Guidance](#)

Other:

- [Take The Jump](#)

Thank you

Many thanks to the Going Places Development Phase partners

Aberdeenshire Museums Service
Arlington Court and the National Trust Carriage Museum, Exmoor
Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council (FE McWilliam Gallery; Armagh County Museum; The Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre)
Blackwell – The Arts & Crafts house (Lakeland Arts), Windermere
The Bowes Museum, County Durham
Carmarthenshire Museums
Dales Countryside Museum, Yorkshire
Dovecot Studios, Edinburgh
Hartlepool Art Gallery
Inverness Museum & Art Gallery
Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum
Museums Worcestershire
The National Memorial Arboretum, Staffordshire
OnFife
Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool
Penlee House Gallery & Museum, Penzance
Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth
The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery (University of Leeds)
Sunderland Culture – Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens
Tŷ Pawb, Wrexham
Watts Gallery – Artists' Village, Guildford
William Morris Gallery, London

Going Places

Gracie Divall and Emma Dunmore

The Exhibitions Group

Dana Andrew and Reyahn King

The Design Museum

Hannah Burgess, Elise Foster Vander Elst and Gabria Lupone

We would also like to thank colleagues around the UK who contributed to the development of this tool through workshops and consultation sessions: the Plus Tate network and The Exhibitions Group Trustees

We invite feedback from colleagues in the sector – if you have ideas or recommendations, contact exhibitions@designmuseum.org.

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