

# Sustainability Report 2022



# ICE HOT

Nordic Dance Helsinki 2022

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Environmental Policy of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022:  
Soft footprint, strong handprint.

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This sustainability report and the environmental evaluation of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 were carried out by:

**ICE HOT**  
Nordic Dance Helsinki 2022

 DANCE INFO FINLAND

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# Foreword

Ice Hot Nordic Dance aims to strengthen a sustainable ecosystem of Nordic dance and choreography by creating work opportunities and visibility for Nordic dance artists in an international context. We organize platform events that present Nordic dance and choreography for the international dance community. The platforms serve also to promote the development of Nordic dance and choreography, to facilitate networking opportunities and increase professional capacities of Nordic dance artists.

## WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SUSTAINABILITY?

We all co-exist in an ecosystem with different partners, structures and conditions. As members of the same ecosystem we need to make use of our resources in the most efficient way.

The Nordic countries share a lot of economical, social and cultural structures as well as values. We call upon ourselves to strengthen the Nordic level in our ecosystem, which for us means strengthening Nordic connections, networks and possibilities for touring and collaborating across the region.

We consider a sustainable ecosystem to consist of ecological, economic, cultural (including artistic) and social dimensions. In order to strengthen the ecosystem in a sustainable way it is necessary to take a holistic approach and pay attention to all these dimensions. In the field of dance and choreography a holistic approach means for example recognizing the life cycles and value chains of artistic work and careers, offering artists different kinds of work opportunities, locally and internationally. It means long-term perspectives and positive ripple-effects, giving artistic works a longer lifespan and maximizing the impact our platform has for the selected artists.

This sustainability report was created as part of the Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 platform. Our main sustainability aims for the platform event were the following:

- Making sustainable productional choices and thereby minimize the carbon footprint and waste of the platform.
- Offering the selected artists additional presenting opportunities by partner organisations or their collaborators in order to maximize their gain from the platform and to stimulate local and Nordic touring.
- Offering the selected artists both ecological travel options to Helsinki and the possibility to stay for the whole platform time, also economically, in order to maximize their gain from the platform and to minimize the carbon footprint.

- Offering the selected artists sufficient support in the form of tailored coaching services, compensation for fees according to Finnish trade union's collective agreement, and competence building in the seminar programme, in order to maximize their gain from the platform.
- Having a transparent, flexible and multi-voiced selection process that is aware of the variety of communities in the Nordic dance ecosystem and aims to get rid of geographical or cultural blind spots, ensuring that everyone gets seen in the selection process.
- Developing the digital communication and online accessibility of the platform event, in order to increase access to the programme without travelling and to minimize the material production.

In this report we present the outcome of our sustainability work and our learnings that we hope to share with the wider performing arts community and invite everyone to join us in developing them further.

**Katarina Lindholm**, October 2022, Helsinki

AUTIOSAARI & POSITIVE IMPACT IN COLLABORATION WITH  
THE PRODUCTION TEAM OF ICE HOT HELSINKI

# Environmental evaluation of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022

## INTRODUCTION

In 2020, Ice Hot Helsinki commissioned an environmental policy from two consulting organizations, Autiosaari and Positive Impact, to envision a more sustainable production model of an international dance platform event. The policy was given the title Soft footprint, strong handprint (see the attachment in this report, page 26).

A practical guide for environmentally friendly production was created for the production team. And to encourage everyone – the participants and target groups of the event – to take on more sustainable ways to think and act, three blog articles on the subject were composed and published on Ice Hot Helsinki 2022's website in 2021. These articles are also attached to this report as further readings (see page 13).

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the schedules of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 and the environmental actions planned – as it has affected the whole world and the operational environment of performing arts. In this document we point out and evaluate the production-related solutions that were executed and highlight some insights that stood out in the process.

## 1 ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

Here are listed the key actions and outcomes regarding environmentally conscious event production of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022.

### **Material**

- No merchandise, flyers or other excessive printed material. All essential information was available online and/or was shared with guests via email.
- A program leaflet was printed in a local ECO certified print house where printing is carbon neutral: carbon dioxide emissions are reduced at every possible stage of the process and finally compensated via Verified Carbon Standard certified climate project. The paper was PEFC certified (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes). Leaflet size and design helped to avoid excess paper from being generated during printing. Print amounts were calculated as precisely as possible.

- No furniture was purchased, all was recycled, rented or borrowed.
- Cutting down use of plastic for example in participant badges and asking the participants to return the badge straps for future use.
- Balloons made of natural rubber were used as visual elements together with lighting design.
- Using local service providers also added to social and economic sustainability.

### **Sustainable catering**

- Only the necessary amount of food and drinks was ordered to minimize food waste.
- Regarding venues and restaurants, Cable Factory and the Restaurant [t]raba (Restel) are part of the Finnish ECO certificate system Ekokompassi. Restaurant [t]raba created a vegetarian menu for Ice Hot Helsinki. Food waste was minimized by means of cutting down menu options.
- Using biodegradable cutlery whenever possible.

### **Traveling and accommodation**

- The nearly 300 guests travelled independently and were provided with tips for ecological traveling on the Ice Hot Helsinki website. Feedback results indicate that most guests travelled to Helsinki by flight, also from distances where ferry would be an option (Stockholm). As one respondent in the feedback survey put it, “with the pandemic and the ensuing event accumulation, I for one did not have enough time on my hands to travel in a more ecological manner.” All hotels that were recommended and accommodated Ice Hot Helsinki guests and artists are ECO certified.
- The artists performing at the platform were offered the possibility to travel ecologically and offered per diems also for any additional travel days due to slow travel. However, very few of the artists chose other means of travel than flights. Artists were also offered the possibility to stay for the whole event. This was to point out that when traveling, it is recommended to make the most of it, and it was indeed highly appreciated by most artists. However, staying longer in the location can also result in using less time for traveling itself and therefore preferring to fly instead of more eco friendly options such as taking the train.

### **Venues and programming**

- Venues set the frame for the program planning. The production team first confirmed the venues and then launched the open call for the platform.
- Because of the change of dates from February to June caused by the pandemic, several venues became unavailable for the platform. A rapid change of plans meant that fast decisions on short notice were necessary and choices regarding venues had to be made primarily according to availability instead of ecological grounds.



- The tight program schedules were built according to the principle that all venues must be reachable via public transport rather than chartering buses and this proved to be a functioning solution.
- The seminars and pitch presentations were live streamed and recorded. Worldwide digital distribution of content is important due to the pandemic as well as on ecological and accessibility grounds.

**Some initiatives in perceiving and producing the technical infrastructure in a more sustainable way:**

- A more sustainable working method was practiced: the aim was to hire more staff for shift work, instead of fewer workers doing longer hours (the old way). This asked for sufficient proactive preplanning as well as good communication and exchange of information between shifts. In the big picture this tendency also aims to enhance the attractiveness of technical work, which is also suffering from post-covid shortage in the performing arts field and prevent labor shortage in the future. Still, due to the prevailing lack of skillful technicians and some last minute cancellations, the team ended up doing longer hours than planned. Unforeseen events are part of any event production.
- Regarding the equipment of performing Nordic groups, the original idea was to arrange pick up and return of all freight in one vehicle. The amount of freight, however, turned out less than estimated. As a result, the majority of equipment was transported as excess luggage by airplane and some via separate cargo. This is not only a more economical solution but also practical when freight travels together with performers. In the future, collective cargo deliveries by land should be planned well in advance and locally: where most performing groups travel from, there should be transportation arranged and vehicles rented. At the Helsinki platform some sets shared transportation due to existing connections between the companies.
- All possible stage lighting was executed with LED technology, artistic design and technical set up schedules considered. In the future it could be possible for the technical team to discuss with the performing groups about minimizing the use of traditional lighting technology. Transition to LED technology is part of a bigger change in stage technology that calls for good collaboration. Traditional technical equipment works more or less the same way around the world, whereas one specific LED light might act differently. When touring, this can cause problems and need more time for setting up a piece. Such obstacles will luckily go away when the technical infrastructure evolves.

**Some steps toward collaborative programming were taken:**

Venues and some educational institutions in the Helsinki capital region and elsewhere in Finland were asked about their interest in offering Nordic artists and companies selected to the platform program additional performances, workshops or other work opportunities in connection with their stay in Helsinki. This would have meant sharing costs but also testing more sustainable touring practices for international performances in Finland.

A pool of venues and cultural centers were interested, but due to late programming decisions from the side of the platform, only a few concrete results came out of the initiative. There would have been an extensive collaboration with Zodiak's SideStep Festival 2022, set to start on the last day of Ice Hot Helsinki. This local festival would have included additional performances for 4 works in the Ice Hot Helsinki program and a great deal of synergy from a productional point of view. Due to the pandemic, Ice Hot Helsinki was postponed, and SideStep Festival canceled, so this collaboration could not be realized.

## 2 CONCLUSIONS

### **Soft footprint**

Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 team managed to execute many actions that actually minimize the environmental impact and carbon footprint of arranging the event. We would like to think that these actions are just part of a bigger process and shift towards sustainable international touring. "Think global and act local" as they say!

### **Strong handprint**

With handprint we mean here the positive impact that can be generated in the context of international dance platform production and more generally in the dance field. The nature of the handprint is often qualitative, and it can be difficult to measure and point it out accurately. At Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 our most immediate handprint has come through evaluating, communicating and piloting more sustainable practices and openly sharing information. Other positive impacts, which are more easily perceived over a longer period of time, are the results and impact that the participation has had for individual artists and companies, in terms of presenting and working opportunities, but also in terms of stronger connections and networks. Being able to be present for the entire platform time supports this aim.

Platforms as an event format can be argued to maximize benefits for both artists and guests. Instead of travelling for one or two shows, programmers spend a few days more in one place, both being able to see a high number of performances as well as make new connections and exchange thoughts with colleagues.

*"I think sustainability comes with reducing travels in general and by visiting a great platform like ICE HOT it saves many travels I would otherwise need to do in order to get an overview of the recent developments of the Nordic dance scene. It's a privilege to travel green, because mostly it takes a lot of time. But it's also more sustainable if we can travel less. Therefore platforms are needed as gathering points."*

*–A feedback respondent–*

Also among Ice Hot partners, the title Soft footprint, strong handprint is considered a merciful guideline that can help managing long run sustainability work since "it's a marathon, not a sprint".



## **Learnings on venues and program planning**

When putting the program together, prioritizing public transportation in moving the audience from one venue to another takes more consideration and time. Recycling at venues is a good starting point for conversation between collaborating partners as well as raising awareness on responsible ways of acting among the public. When discussing sustainability guidelines with collaborating organizations, an encouraging manner of communication often is the most effective one.

The biggest challenge for local presenting organizations to offer additional performances and other work opportunities for the selected artists was the tight schedule: the selections were made only six months before the platform event. On the other hand, it was in the interest of Ice Hot partners for the platform program to be as fresh as possible in order to best serve the artists' needs and attract programmers. In this case there is a slight conflict of interest between artistic and sustainability aims.

All in all, it might be good to accept from the very beginning that at some point when making choices in production and programming, ecological, economic, social and curatorial aims will conflict. So prepare and communicate a mindset that is flexible and strategic in prioritizing sustainability aims among the team.

## **Further recommendations**

A prompt change is needed in how the performing arts field thinks and operates in respect of smarter and greener touring. Many initiatives are already getting more established and one of them is a mindset of collaborative programming. This kind of thinking and working together often means more coordinating work but it can also bring lots of benefits.

*"I hope collaborative programming will become more common. Surely it asks for more time and coordination, flexibility, even consensus from the presenting partners, but sharing the productional responsibilities also brings a lot of benefits. It's not only about saving money and better for the environment but also about introducing artists and works to new audiences and contexts."*

*–Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland–*

In recent years, there has been more and more critical discussion in the international dance field on exclusive programming – that is, inviting a group from abroad to perform at one festival or city only. If artists and groups could stay longer in a certain area when touring, it could mean more work opportunities for them, more affordable programming options for presenters and more variety for the audiences. Ice Hot Nordic Dance Platform could encourage this more sustainable practice. Setting an example would benefit the ecological and economic circumstances and well-being of people on the field. We warmly recommend Nordic partners as well as any regional networks and platform events to join forces and map out new ways of collaborating between platforms, festivals and other local events together with actively touring performers in a more inspiring and productive way.

*"Some Nordic countries have national touring networks where regional dance venues act as partners. In Finland, for example, we don't yet have such a structure, but I believe that agents such as Ice Hot Nordic Dance can contribute to enforcing sustainable touring practices on a Nordic and international level and that this ripples down to strengthening local structures as well."*

*–Katarina Lindholm, Dance Info Finland–*

# Carbon footprint of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022

## ENERGY CONSUMPTION

**805** kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

## TRAVEL TO THE PLATFORM EVENT

**1 014 717** kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

\*461 guests and artists

## ACCOMMODATION IN HELSINKI

**24 978** kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

\*461 guests and artists

## CATERING

**101** kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

\*Snacks and beverages for 461 guests and artists

## WASTE FROM VENUES

**98** kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

## MATERIALS WE PRODUCED FOR THE EVENT

**109** kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

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## TOTAL

**1 040 808** kg CO<sub>2</sub>e

(without cargo)

## HOW WE CALCULATED

In this calculation we chose to include the main components of the carbon footprint of an international event: energy consumption, travel and accommodation, catering and waste produced. In addition to the artists, some props and equipment also travelled to Finland, but unfortunately the calculation of the freight share proved to be too complicated with the data we had available. All calculations are based on estimations.

Energy consumption is counted for the use of space (9 different venues).

We have information on how all 172 artists and about 26% of the guests travelled to the platform. We have included the rest of the guests in the calculation by making a rough estimation of how they travelled based on their countries of residence and the travel distances. Same applies for the accommodation, we have information about the accommodation of all the artists and about 40 guests, and the rest is based on a fixed calculation of 3 nights on an average in a hotel.

For the catering we have calculated the CO2 only for the snacks and beverages offered by the event. This number would be higher if all meals of each participant were included.

Waste consists of everything that was not recycled or reused after the platform was over. The amounts (kg) of waste produced at each venue are based on rough estimations. The amount of non-recycled materials we produced or purchased has been counted fairly accurately.

There are yet no sufficient means of measuring the digital footprint of our event.

The carbon footprints were calculated with a CO2 calculator provided by event agency Tapaus <https://www.tapaus.fi/en/co2-calculator>



# Learnings & take-aways from Ice Hot Helsinki 2022

## **1 In calculating the carbon footprint and assessing the impact of actions, focus on what is relevant and within your realm of possibilities**

Plan from the very beginning what you want to measure and how and with which tools you will measure it – e.g. material production, catering, cargo arrangements, public transport. It may require engaging participants and artists to document their travel actions and cargo amounts, etc.

Allocate resources for a team member to be in charge of and follow up on ecological aims and measures.

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## **2 In an international dance platform event, where many different agendas and resources come into play, ecological, economic, social and curatorial aims will conflict.**

The intensive scheduling and dependency on available venues and the local infrastructure creates many challenges for finding sustainable solutions.

When guests and artists choose between different means of travel, time is of the essence. Most prioritize spending as much time at the event as possible, rather than slow travel.

Be flexible, discuss and prioritize your aims from the very beginning!

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## **3 Collaborative programming, i.e. finding additional opportunities for platform artists with local partners**

Be open for many different kinds of possibilities (performances, workshops, classes, artist talks...) and realistic with constraints (scheduling, financial constraints).

Contact potential partners early on and if possible include them in the programming/selection process. The platform selections may come too late for most local venues and organizers.

Find resources for a coordinator of additional presenting or touring opportunities locally.

# Dancing in the LED spotlight - key markers for sustainable performance spaces

THIS PIECE FORMS PART OF THE ICE HOT NORDIC DANCE HELS/NKI 2022 ARTICLE SERIES EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISING AN INTERNATIONAL DANCE PLATFORM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, PRIMARILY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY AND IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FORTHCOMING HOST COUNTRY – FINLAND. IN LATE W/NTER 2021, ICE HOT HELS/NKI RELEASED ITS [ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY](#), WHICH WAS COMPILED WITH THE AUTHOR OF THIS ARTICLE, COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND ENTREPRENEUR HELMI SAKSALA.

Production preparations for the international professional dance event Ice Hot Nordic Dance Helsinki are well underway. In early spring, the event organiser published its very first sustainability report; the theme of this new environmental policy is soft footprint, strong handprint. The slogan conveys the message that the Nordic Ice Hot Helsinki event aims to both minimise its environmental load and maximise its positive impacts, such as the strong artistic, cultural, and networking contribution it makes, as well as increasing awareness and agency when it comes to environmental issues.

In this article, we consider how ecological sustainability relates to the physical spaces in which dance is performed. What kind of thinking and collaboration do sustainable operating models require? What kinds of challenges and opportunities are being identified in performance locations? Final-

ly, we present a number of concrete suggestions for those developing sustainable performance spaces and venues.

## AT THE REQUEST OF DANCE LOVERS

On the construction site, structural work is complete and the focus has shifted to the interior surfaces and technical installations. Dance House Helsinki – an event venue designed especially for dance – is taking shape at the city’s Cable Factory, and lovers of dance art are eagerly awaiting its completion. The opening ceremony is scheduled for early February 2022, on the eve of the Ice Hot Helsinki event. Dance House is the main cooperation partner of the Ice Hot Helsinki event.

Marketing and Development Manager **Raine Heikkinen** of Kiinteistö Oy Kaapelitalo, the property developer of Dance

## Further readings

House, has been monitoring the contracting work closely. He predicts that Dance House will bring all kinds of innovations to what is Finland's largest cultural centre operating concept.

Former industrial site Cable Factory's 56,000 m<sup>2</sup> premises currently house three museums, ten galleries, dance theatres, art schools and numerous musical groups and artists, companies, and creators from a whole range of sectors. Dance House will expand the old property with new construction.

"We aim to retain the layering created by the cultural and industrial history, whilst also producing a modern and functional solution that fosters creative endeavours. Without concretely building new elements alongside the old, Dance House would not be possible in the Cable Factory context."

### TAKING THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND BIRDS INTO CONSIDERATION

A broad urban environment perspective is also a key element of the construction.

"Dance House is located in part of a block zoned as parkland, and we have aimed to retain as much of the green area as possible. We engaged in dialogue with our neighbours. Dance House will have green roofs, and the relationship between the city and nature has been considered in the architecture. We carried out light and shadow studies and looked at how birds will react to the reflective surfaces on the building."

Cable Factory is committed to the EcoCompass system. According to Heikkinen, the certified environmental management system has made it possible to accelerate the implementation of sustainable development principles throughout the cultural centre site.

Head of Technical Department **Petteri Laukkanen** – in his own words a "theatre technology and cultural leadership person" – also swears by EcoCompass.

"Especially in small organisations such as Dance House, it's simply not feasible to have a full-time staff member focusing exclusively on sustainability issues. People's core competencies lie elsewhere," Laukkanen explains.

Prior his current role, Laukkanen was a distinguished figure heading up technical production at the likes of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, where he also contributed to sustainable development advances.

### SPOTLIGHT ON THE FUTURE

According to Petteri Laukkanen, the ecological sustainability of Dance House – Ice Hot's main stage – can be examined on two levels: firstly in the infrastructure and actual construction of the performance building, and secondly in the organisation's internal processes.

"To start off with, I have to mention the location of the venue. In all performing arts, big audiences are an objective but also a challenge from the sustainability perspective. In an ideal world, the venue would have sold out performances on both stages. When you have a thousand audience members arriving, as well as staff and performers – who could easily total 50 people – the main issue is how people are getting to the performance venue."

Dance House is located at a hub of public and non-motorised transport. Ice Hot's audiences will be able to easily reach the venue by rail – be it metro or tram – or by bus.



## Further readings

Another long-term impact comes from the technology used in the performance spaces.

“All of the performance lighting in Dance House is based on LED technology, which means that our electricity consumption will be just a fraction of what it would be with traditional lighting technology. I predict that it will be just a matter of time before all performance lighting follows suit.”

According to Laukkanen, statistics on the likes of the extent to which modern LED lighting is used in Finnish performance venues instead of traditional solutions are not available. Changes are constantly taking place in the sector, but new equipment can be assumed to be predominantly modern LED technology.

“When you have all the lights in the theatre on during a performance, it consumes a lot of electricity. Power levels are high and electricity generation must be scaled in accordance with consumption peaks. One solution comes in the form of LED lights, the efficiency of which is in a completely different class to that of traditional lights, where the majority of the electricity consumed is transformed into heat, rather than light. At times, very bright light is needed in the theatre, and a whole variety of light colours are often required, which decreases the efficiency even further. This means that with traditional solutions, a huge amount of electricity has been used to produce the necessary amount of light, in turn producing a vast amount of heat in the building, which then has to be mechanically cooled.”

Solid faith in the opportunities for sustainable event operations is a theme that echoes clearly when Laukkanen speaks. This could perhaps be because he is also used to also tackling challenges head-on.

“LED technology requires less in the way of maintenance and is an attractive option in many ways. At the same time, we must accept that a certain degree of tradition will live on in performance technology: there is a desire to renew, but there is also a hesitancy when it comes to making changes.”

“It would have felt ridiculous to opt for technologies that are already becoming outdated from a responsibility mindset, and perhaps some other perspectives too. What’s more, we’ve had lots of comments on our solutions, saying that even if we encounter challenges, we must look forwards, not backwards.”

## PREREQU/SITES FOR SUCCESS

Operators building sustainable performance infrastructure may find the range of variables in environmental impacts to be frustratingly varied. How do you get a team together whilst still keeping an eye on the ball? Petteri Laukkanen clearly understands the importance of a strong sense of team spirit. It appears that behind the scenes at Ice Hot’s main stage, responsibility is in everyone’s interests, regardless of job title.

“The community’s own strategy is pivotal. If guidelines and principles are not written into the strategy, there’s the temptation to say let’s not bother prioritising this more responsible solution that is perhaps a little more expensive. At Dance House we have a shared responsibility principle, and right from the strategy formation process, accessibility, equality and other factors relating to sustainability have been taken into account. In my view, this is a prerequisite for success.”

“One advantage of establishing a new organisation that will start its operations in a

## Further readings

new building is that right from the start we can take sustainability issues into account. On the other hand, it is also more challenging, because there is no background of experiences that can provide a basis on which to make rectifications.”

The importance of continuity is also intrinsically linked to the development of the sustainability of Ice Hot event production. When drawing up guidelines for more sustainable operating models, our Nordic partner network helps ensure that a broad range of different dimensions are considered. Furthermore, the best lessons and ideas from the process may end up being included in further development of future events.

### A COMMON FORCE FOR CHANGE

Production solutions are always implemented locally, so the role of cooperation partners and subcontractors is significant from the perspective of responsibility in production chains.

“Ice Hot is a fantastic partner to Dance House, placing as it does a strong emphasis on sustainability and responsibility considerations in its operations,” states Petteri Laukkanen.

In its recently-published environmental policy, Ice Hot outlines how it intends to lighten its environmental load through means such as utilising the services of local operators as far as is possible, for example in terms of catering and printed products. Efforts will also be made to reduce amounts here.

“At Dance House we are seeking out partners who not only favour but also create their own sustainable and responsible operating practices. On the horizon we can

already see indications of, for instance, theatre production materials of the future being reusable and recyclable, instead of props and furniture being disposed of at the end of the performance cycle as there is no room for storage. These kinds of operating models and companies already exist in the UK and France, to give just a couple of examples, and soon they’ll be coming to Finland too.”

“Alongside strengthening of sustainability and reduction of our load, there are also other areas of added value: marketplaces could be created for service providers who could rent out twelve rococo chairs, for instance. Or they could host prop workshops where recycled materials are adapted to suit customers’ needs. Good things come together.”

Maximum positive impacts can also be achieved through means of communication. Ice Hot seeks to encourage everyone to think and act more sustainably and to engage in discussion on the topic. The power of inspiration and learning from others should not be underestimated, as ideas can resonate widely in international networks.

### THREE SUSTAINABILITY TIPS FOR PERFORMANCE VENUES

**Incorporate responsibility into the strategy.** When responsibility is a shared value and strategic objective, it serves as a leadership tool and encourages staff to make ecologically sustainable choices independently, too.

**Invest in planning.** What materials and props will be used in productions and how? Think about material cycles and reusability before starting to build. Bring in assistance from expert partners if necessary.

## Further readings

**Steer change** and highlight the positives of more sustainable choices. Make them a part of the cultural experience through communication, transport, catering, and merchandising. Provide audiences with public and non-motorised transport route planning assistance and remind attendees of the benefits of cultural experiences without having to worry about parking. At the very least, it might serve as encouragement to leave the car at home next time.

Text by Helmi Saksala. Translation Claire Ruaro.  
Author is Communications Specialist and Entrepreneur who contributed to the environmental policy Ice Hot Helsinki published early 2021.

TAKING ON THE WORLD, SUSTAINABLY

# Part 1: What can we learn from the music sector about sustainable touring in the Nordic region

The Covid-19 pandemic has, in practice, brought touring activities to a complete halt for creative professionals. The performing arts field has come to an involuntary standstill. For many artists and other operators, this has also proved to be a time to consider their relationship with international travel.

In the music industry, interesting trials of ecologically sustainable touring activities have been getting underway. In this article, Producer and Publicist **Raisa Siivola** talks about Jazz Finland's Nordic network project. We also hear from Drummer **Mikko Sirén** of world-renowned band Apocalyptica on his views when it comes to ways to make use of social influence. Finally, we summarise three tips for planning sustainable tours.

## FROM ENVIRONMENTAL IDEAS TO ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES

'The biggest impacts start as the smallest trickles and persistent choices. Even more important than responsible acts taken perhaps once a year, is what we do in our

everyday lives,' explains Ice Hot Helsinki 2022's environmental policy expert, **Elina Levula** of Positive Impact. Perhaps rather than environmental acts, we should be talking about environmental practices.

What kinds of sustainable touring practices could performing artists adopt? Answers to this question are currently taking shape in Jazz Finland's network project, which was launched in January 2020. The project involves identifying and trialling low-impact event production and accommodation solutions, transportation and mobility practices, and productive partnerships in the live music field.

Alongside her work, Raisa Siivola of Jazz Finland is studying environmental planning. She states that the network, besides establishing the environmental impact of its own basic operations as part of the project, is also implementing ecologically sustainable tours in the Nordic region in September 2021, which are being planned in collaboration with bands. This is, in turn, helping strengthen expertise amongst operators in the live sector.

'The objective is for all parties to gain more

## Further readings

information on what kinds of sustainability challenges we are facing, the kinds of solutions we could come up with, and whether, in addition to reducing our carbon footprint, we could also produce a positive carbon handprint.'

The starting points are, therefore, very similar to those for the Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 environmental policy and sustainability development work. Doing is learning, and ideas are shared and promoted between partners.

One concrete tool is the practical guide already compiled for the realisation of small and medium-sized event productions. A sustainable jazz tour production guide for agents, bands and promoters planning Nordic concert activities is due for completion in Spring 2022.

The project partners hail from Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland, with a total of 14 Nordic jazz clubs and festivals, five national jazz organisations, and five bands involved. The partner organisations have been working together for more than two decades on professional development of the sector and touring networks.

'On the topic of sustainability issues, progress depends not just on the individuals, but also the choices and attitudes of partner companies,' says Siivola. 'To be successful, everyone needs to put their mind to it and want to act and develop together.'

### SOCIAL INFLUENCE AND TANGIBLE TRIALS

Attention has been drawn to the environmental impacts of international touring activities in the wider world by the likes of Coldplay and Billie Eilish, as tours by such megastars bring with them a substantial environmental impact. On the other hand,

with such huge audiences, the potential social impact in promoting soft values is also vast.

The importance of communication in creating change is also emphasised by drummer Mikko Sirén of Finnish metal group Apocalyptica. Enjoying success across the world, Apocalyptica have played as many as a thousand concerts across 50 countries, and in their promotional work have also sought to highlight acute climate change issues.

'One tangible element we believe we can have an impact on is sharing of information, although it's easy to look like you're just greenwashing, taking a kind of "do as we say, not as we do" stance,' Sirén states. 'We've been working with the WWF and done Baltic Sea protection campaigns with Greenpeace. For us, these are solely a matter of goodwill; from the band's perspective, we don't feel that the visibility aspect changes much for us. On our part, it boils down to a genuine desire to make a difference.'

'When artists within the sector put pressure on organisers to start moving in a new direction and begin talking between themselves, it can lead to big forces for change. One great example is Flow Festival here in Finland, where the high level of sustainability requirements is the result of demands from both the performers and the consumers. The sustainable consumption basis upon which the festival is built is part of the festival's brand, and has also become a market asset.'

Sustainability trials on Apocalyptica's tours have so far encompassed aspects ranging from performance technology to travel practices. The band, playing 100 shows a year at their most active, encounter a range of challenges whilst on the move.

## Further readings

'We have chargeable batteries for all the electric sound boards and use them whenever we can, but there are tour situations where we're constantly flying from country to country and simply don't have time to charge them. Batteries dying is inevitable.'

### COOPERATION EXPANDS HORIZONS

Resource management is probably one of the key issues in live and touring activities, in the professional fields of both music and dance. The first tentative steps of change, before even considering adoption of new practices, require muscle.

Leverage for these change processes can be found through cooperation. According to Raisa Siivola from Jazz Finland, thinking is expanding in live programming policy practices in Europe, for example.

'The musicians and the wider sector want to be forerunners, experimenting, even if not always successfully, rather than lagging behind. Even 10–20 years ago, there was a mindset in jazz circles where, for example, big names would be brought in from the USA to perform in Finland on exclusive contracts, based on which artists could not be invited to perform at other venues in the area for a month after the festival. Thankfully, we've grown past that, and local networks are now used in smarter ways. Venues and concert organisers might inform competing colleagues that a band is coming to play a show, and ask whether they want to book the group for the next day at another local venue.'

'I would say that cooperation is the next major step for bands and artists. Doing joint tours from the same country or coming up with something different and new to produce added value.'

Apocalyptica's Mikko Sirén would also like to see performing artists make greater use of each others' expertise.

'There's no point us all making the same mistakes, particularly as financial savings often correlate with savings in natural resources. Aside from my belief that planes will become more cost-efficient and environmentally friendly in the near future, perhaps transportation solutions could be organised more intelligently in the years to come – concentrating and optimising logistics between several groups.'

The key here is developing environmental responsibility as a network. By pulling together, collective will can be formed, promoting the objective of working in a way that produces less of an environmental impact. In networked projects, a value chain of operators takes shape, with each network member having their own role and opportunities to influence.

It might feel like fighting windmills when going it alone, but working together allows for new practices to be implemented on a bigger scale and throughout the whole chain.

### THREE SUSTAINABILITY TIPS FOR PLANNING TOURING ACTIVITIES

1 When planning a tour, ask yourself or your group: What kind of tour are we aiming for and why? What are we going to get out of it, and what can we produce for others from it? Think about your own values and those of your community and keep these questions in mind throughout the process.

2 Use an online carbon footprint calculator (one can be found on the WWF website,



## Further readings

for example) and familiarise yourself with your operating models as an individual – the same thinking is directly reflected in your choices as a professional. The calculator's results might be surprising in either direction, and inspire you to consider how you could reduce your environmental impact or whether you could increase environmental awareness through your own organisational or artist image.

3 Direct consultation and sharing information and activities help us learn from each other and save resources. See what others are doing, discuss and be open in asking both performing groups and organising bodies: What helped you organise your tour sustainably and how? With your colleagues, consider what kinds of activities you could share, for example in terms of transporting equipment.

Text by Helmi Saksala. Translation Claire Ruaro.

Author is Communications Specialist and Entrepreneur who contributed to the environmental policy Ice Hot Helsinki published early 2021.

TAKING ON THE NORDIC REGION, SUSTAINABLY

## Part 2: Possibilities for sustainable touring in the eyes of Nordic dance presenters

International touring is a must for most performing artists, a tool for creating professional continuance and subsistence. Also, performing live is the essence of artistic self expression and development. Yet international touring as we commonly know it – artists and companies flying frequently from one country to another with groups of several people – is a serious threat to the environment. How should we address this dilemma?

All international traveling cannot, will not and should not stop. So instead, we must find more sustainable ways to tour. What kind of touring models, networks and environmentally friendly options that we can benefit from exist already, and what's bubbling under?

I interviewed four of the Ice Hot partners, who are also Nordic dance presenters in Oslo, Stockholm, Reykjavik and Denmark, about their thoughts on possibilities for sustainable touring in and outside the Nordic countries. It appears that many things are in common in the Nordic region; there are shared ideas, interests and initiatives on top of a functional infrastructure to build on. Yet there is diversity in perspectives and differences in geographical conditions too.

### FROM ANXIETY TO HOPE

What do we talk about when we talk about international traveling today?

“I see two things at the same time”, says **Danjel Andersson**, Director of Dansehallerne in Denmark. “First, there is a feeling of panic. Total anxiety. Driven by a fear for the state of the planet, and connected to our precarious business model. Basically: what is my place as a work traveller in a world hurt by traveling?”

“And second: there's a feeling of hope. We are trained in rethinking and we are all collectively and from a trillion different angles rethinking how we operate. It's a very creative time,” Andersson continues.

**Ólöf Ingólfssdóttir** from Ice Hot Reykjavik also sees that a change of mindset is on its way.

“Constant travelling from one residency to another and tours where you only see the insides of theatres and your hotel rooms that all look more or less the same, may have lost their allure. Less frequent travels with longer stay in each place now sounds like a better alternative. In Covid-times we

## Further readings

have also seen “residencies abroad” where the artists didn’t travel at all, but rehearsed in a studio in their home town while receiving feedback and artistic support online. I think we might see more development of international support models along those lines.”

### PICTURING A HERE AND NOW

Is it actually possible to tour sustainably in the Nordic countries and beyond? Where do we start? What kind of facts should we take into account?

**Samme Raeymaekers**, Artistic Director of Dansens Hus in Oslo sounds realistic and optimistic at the same time: “There are much more tools and more possibilities to sustainable traveling nowadays.”

“But I come from Belgium where it is much easier to travel sustainably. Now in Norway it is completely different, when the route to the next biggest city might take seven hours by train.”

“So the challenges are very different, and to describe it I always use this as an example: the distance from Oslo to Hammerfest is the same as from Oslo to Rome. It’s almost half of the length of Europe.”

Since we cannot change geographical facts, “we just need to find as sustainable ways to travel as possible”.

### FROM NATIONAL TO INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

Dance presenters collaborate in many ways from artistic to institutional levels. Artistic Director **Johannes Öhman** from Dansens Hus Stockholm sees progress in conversation between organizers.

“There is interest in investigating how to share costs in relation to environmental sustainability. Especially when bringing overseas companies to Europe, we can make a group stay a longer period in a certain region.”

Samme Raeymaekers from Oslo agrees.

“If we invite international companies we work as kind of an unofficial network, a collaboration between Nordic presenting places and organizations, for instance with Dansens Hus in Stockholm, Dansearena in Umeå and in the future with Dance House Helsinki too. Also, especially when talking about non-European companies, we can collaborate not only in a Nordic network but on a European level too.”

Johannes Öhman continues: “I think that as soon as the pandemic slows down this topic will have a very high priority.”

First things first, to make international touring more sustainable for dance and choreography, one key factor would be a strong national touring system which is still lacking in some of the Nordic countries.

“National touring of dance and theatre lacks a supportive infrastructure in Iceland, although the interest is there on the artists’ behalf at least,” says Ólöf Ingólfssdóttir. The situation is more or less the same in Denmark – and Finland – too.

### PERFORMING ARTS MEET DIGITALIZATION

The word of the day is digitalization. Because of COVID-19 the possibilities and challenges of the phenomenon are now debated perhaps more than ever. When do digital accessibility and distri-

## Further readings

bution of content actually enhance dance professionals' career and touring opportunities? And when are actual encounters, experiences and performances still needed and why?

These are perhaps the questions the four interviewees agree upon the most: live energy, performances and encounters cannot be replaced by technology.

Ólöf Ingólfssdóttir: "The restrictions and isolation of Covid times reminded us all of some core values of the performing arts; sharing the experience of participating in an art event by being physically present. When performances could take place it was clear that this had huge value for both performers and audiences. Nothing can really replace physical presence."

"However, streaming live events opened other possibilities, such as allowing audiences all over the world to witness the event as it was happening. It is not the same as being physically present, but it is another way to give a wider public some kind of access to the art work. I don't think this changes the possibilities for touring."

Johannes Öhman: "Digital distribution is of course the key when introducing choreographers and makers to organizers, festivals and companies. However I believe that the core of performing arts is live encounters: the actual performance or showing. As of today the technology does not match any live experience. Perhaps it is a bit of a financial problem too since more investments might mean better digital experiences."

Danjel Andersson: "It's a live art form. It needs to be experienced live. And it's a social art form. Digital representations are great but an art form in itself."  
"When talking about live performing arts, it

needs to be performed live!", Samme Raeymaekers laughs and continues:

"They are two different kind of art forms, and there are two different kinds of logics and apparatus around these two. Still, one shouldn't exclude the other one."

There certainly is a future for digital projects "but such a performance needs to be made from the start as a digital project", says Raeymaekers.

## AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE INTO ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

How do presenters take ecological sustainability in consideration when making artistic choices? Sustainable aspects can be considered in many levels of the process. Many organizations have created their own sustainability program. Communication is another powerful tool for change, as is stated in the Ice Hot Helsinki's sustainability policy, too.

Danjel Andersson: "We need to be sustainable in so many ways: economically, socially and environmentally. How do we create working conditions that are functional for the field? How do we work in a more sustainable way – in tune with nature?"

Johannes Öhman: "In our organization, we're discussing the procedures of making the artistic selections more sustainable. Part of our policy is sustainable traveling, and we are currently discussing how to improve and optimize it, and reduce all unnecessary traveling."

Samme Raeymaekers: "In Dansens Hus Oslo's sustainability strategy, our aim is to lower as much as possible the travel pressure. It is something you assess in making decisions. We aim to convince the artists to

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travel in a sustainable way, not influencing them directly, but it is something that you take in mind.”

“This doesn’t exclude that sometimes you make a decision to invite a company that is not on an international tour, because you think that it is important for the audience, for the house, the field, the national dance ecosystem to present that piece. So it’s constantly making balance.”

Text by Helmi Saksala. Translation Claire Ruaro.

Author is Communications Specialist and Entrepreneur who contributed to the environmental policy Ice Hot Helsinki published early 2021.

## Environmental Policy of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022

# Soft footprint, strong handprint

### INTRODUCTION

Our world is facing two important forces: global climate change and Covid pandemic. In order for us to thrive in the future the dance sector must adjust to the changing world. We need to identify what is relevant to us and promote positive change in mindset and action models. Us, organizers of Ice Hot 2022, are committed to a 1,5 C degree pathway set by the Paris Climate Agreement 2015. Therefore we aim to be climate friendly, increase accessibility and create new working possibilities.

The environmental policy for Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 is called “Soft footprint, strong handprint”. For us, one way to soften the carbon footprint of an international platform event is to improve digital accessibility and distribution of content. Strong handprint expresses our aim to maximise the positive impacts we can generate. We hope to inspire and encourage everyone to take on sustainable ways to think and act and to learn from the process ourselves.

### AIMS OF OUR ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

- Minimizing our carbon footprint whenever possible
- Maximizing our handprint and communicating our climate action
- Smarter and greener travel, increasing digital accessibility
- Via communication aiming to create positive change within the dance sector and wider society



Attachment

We will minimize the carbon footprint of the event by following themes and actions:

# Soft Footprint

## **Less material, more digital**

The recipe for overconsumption is simple: No consumption – no effects. To get out of the spiral of overconsumption it is important to boldly question familiar habits and patterns. What if we looked with bright eyes at what we really need and what we don't? How can we enhance the event experience intangibly?

We recognise that also digital devices and streaming of data has environmental impacts. Digitality also consumes natural resources and energy. We aim to find a balance where we achieve more visibility and communication with less material use. More for less.

- We commit to avoiding all unnecessary material use and consumption
- We aim to use reusable and recyclable material e.g. whenever possible

## **Sustainable foods and drinks**

- We aim to serve only vegetarian food and to promote Finnish plant-based food innovations for our local and international audience
- We will minimize food waste
- We aim to serve only fair trade coffee and tea
- We will use reusable cutlery whenever possible

## **Sustainable venues**

We will discuss sustainability with all event venues and find out the following:

- How has the venue reduced its environmental impact?
- Does the venue have an environmental system, certificate or other tool for environmental management?
- Does the venue use renewable or non-renewable energy?
- Is the venue conveniently accessible by public transport and bikes?
- Are all waste recycled?

Attachment

### **Sustainable collaborations**

We bring our sustainability policy into our collaborations. We will ask all our collaborators:

- How does a company or other organization operate responsibly?
- Does the service provider have a specific responsibility solution that could be utilized for the event or promoted by the event?

### **Recommendation for sustainable travel**

We recommend our attendees to reduce the environmental impact of travel by following choices:

- Arrive in Helsinki ecologically by train or bus
- If you travel by cruise ship, consider offsetting the emissions
- If you fly, consider offsetting the emissions
- When moving around in Helsinki, prefer public transport and walking.

We offer our artists the possibility to travel ecologically by covering for their travel expenses accordingly.

### **Recommendations for sustainable stay**

We recommend our attendees to reduce the environmental impact of accommodation by following choices:

- Choose a hotel that has an environmental certificate or label as proof of environmental management
- Choose a reasonably sized room and consider sharing a hotel room if possible
- Avoid unnecessary energy consumption (lights and TV), water consumption and laundry
- With breakfast and other meals, avoid food waste and favor a plant-based diet

We aim to accommodate our guests in eco-certified hotels only.

Attachment

We aim to maximize our handprint  
= positive impacts by following themes and actions:

# Strong Handprint

## **We aim to generate positive results:**

- 1) By our own example. Sustainable production practices and choices ensure that the event operates responsibly.
- 2) By influencing the dance sector and more broadly society and the environment.
- 3) By sharing our learning process, our successes as well as our failures.

## **Our actions for greater handprint are:**

- We will evaluate and consider compensating for the carbon footprint of the event
- We will purchase and cooperate locally and sustainably whenever possible regarding productional preparations
- We will use communication as a powerful tool to discuss and better understand the change for a more sustainable future

The Ice Hot Nordic Dance network is an agent of change in passing forward and continually improving its best sustainable practices.

# Evaluation

We will evaluate the carbon footprint of Ice Hot Helsinki 2022 by an open Co2-calculator aimed for events: [www.tapaus.fi/en/](http://www.tapaus.fi/en/) With this calculator we will be able to evaluate the GHG emissions of the:

- Travel
- Energy consumption of use of space
- Data use of streaming (coming)
- Accommodation
- Catering
- Waste

Results of this evaluation can be used as a baseline for future events.

Based on the results we will consider compensating the GHG emissions of the event or alternatively participate in developing more sustainable practices of international touring by means of Nordic collaboration.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY PARTNERS

This policy was made with Helmi Saksala from Autiosaari and Elina Levula from Positive Impact.