

# EDN Campaign “How Can We Move?”

## Campaign Document

(Working document / for information purposes only\*)



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# Sustainability Campaign

How are ecological concerns addressed by contemporary dance organisations? Which are the main challenges with “greening” the way we design, produce and present contemporary dance artworks? What do we need in order to achieve greater ecological sustainability? And what has to be taken into consideration in view of our diverse international realities?

These were some of the central questions raised during EDN’s workshops, meetings and exchanges in 2022, that gathered ideas, actions and good practices contributed by a diverse pool of participants; artists, thinkers, leaders and producers from the field of contemporary dance and beyond.

This campaign presents concrete actions and ideas to engage the contemporary dance sector in Europe, its advocates, funders and stakeholders, in a shared movement towards a sustainable future.

EDN Campaign “How Can We Move” will be announced on 7 October 2022 with seven social media actions (announcement and six themes), with later dissemination of both research publication and full campaign document.

Six themes of campaign “Ecological Perspectives on Contemporary Dance: “How Can We Move?” are:

1. We Can Dance. (narratives)
2. We Can Do Less and Do It Together. (production)
3. We Can Travel Slow and Stay Longer. (mobility)
4. We Can Be Sufficient. (organisations)
5. We Can Become Many. (community)
6. Towards a Sustainable Future... (policy)

Below you'll find the full draft of the campaign document so that you can familiarise yourself with its contents. We ask you to read the document and endorse it by sending your current logo to the Communication and Dissemination Officer Rok Avbar (rok@ednetwork.eu).

Join us online on the 14th of November 2022 from 10h to 13h CET for the final event of the year and the launch of the research publication.



# EDN Campaign Document 2022

## 1. We Can Dance.

“After all, dancing is one of the most sustainable activities imaginable.” (Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker)

There is a potential embodied knowledge in the genuine artistic interest of a dance piece and the nature of the process it involves, which can change our ways of being in the world. Bodies are the site of values, behaviour and lifestyles which, for better or worse, are closely connected to climate change and may contribute to fostering environmental sustainability.

### Goal:

Next to measuring the environmental impact, develop evaluation frameworks that address **qualitative contributions** made by dance and other artforms in adapting and transitioning to a more sustainable society.

### How:

- Support artists and companies that work on climate and environmental sustainability, through the provision of funding, working spaces, programming opportunities and other forms of support.
- Host artist residencies in natural landscapes, as part of a rewilding programme.
- Integrate environmental sustainability in regular programmes, festivals or other events.
- Present work in natural and outdoor spaces, fostering site-specific presentations.
- Develop specific formats to discuss sustainability, such as talks, workshops, seminars or outdoor walks.
- Foster collaborations between artists and professionals in other fields (e.g. biologists, gardeners, urban planners, environmental activists, etc.).
- Present work in repurposed venues (old factories, warehouses, TV studios, etc.)
- Integrate concepts from the natural world as an inspiration for the organisation of activities and the revision of organisational models.
- Develop educational programmes that connect dance and the performing arts with environmental sustainability.



## 2. We Can Do Less and Do It Together.

“We are so occupied with producing, that we forget to see what impact our work has. This is out of balance.” (René Alejandro Huari Mateus)

We need to start thinking outside the paradigm of production, embrace ‘de-growth’ and **find a new balance between the production of new works and the circulation and presentation of that which already exists**, as well as the impact of the works presented.

### Goal:

Reduce requirements for the number of new productions and the number of productions and presentations in general

### How:

- Develop cultural ecosystems based on collaboration and sharing rather than competition.
- Develop measurement methods that are less reliant on the amount of new works created.
- Support longer creation and production periods.
- Nurture sustainable relations with local communities.
- Bring more focus to activities that integrate education, community work, and participation.
- Diversify job profiles and employment opportunities.
- Rethink the length of a programming season.
- Raise awareness about an environmental footprint of a production.
- Next to the technical rider, create an **ecological rider** for implementing sustainable work.

## 3. We Can Travel Slow and Stay Longer.

“Many artists do not have a choice on whether or not to be mobile.” (Lázaro Gabino Rodríguez)

Adapting mobility to new circumstances should be a nuanced process. One that recognises diversity and **applies a principle of ‘climate justice’** – that is, framing the climate crisis not only as an environmental or physical process, but one that has ethical and political implications as well, and applying concepts of justice, equity and historical responsibilities when devising more sustainable solutions.

### Goal:

EU bodies (in particular, the European Commission), as well as national, regional and local authorities and related bodies should adopt sustainable travel guidelines for the arts which balance environmental sustainability and cultural objectives, recognising the need for nuanced approaches and in line with the principles of climate justice.



**How:**

- Combine online and offline formats in cross-border collaboration programmes
- Commit to more sustainable forms of travel, whenever possible
- Travel less, travel slower, stay longer: combine several different coinciding events or activities in one trip
- Strengthen local and regional collaboration for more efficient touring
- Give priority to those who face more obstacles to travel or have more challenging contexts at home
- Consider the travel patterns of audiences and staff
- Develop sustainable hosting and accommodation facilities
- Consider performance formats that embody sustainable travel
- Raise awareness of imbalances that make mobility compulsory

## 4. We Can Be Sufficient.

**“Let artistic practices create structures that are capable of change.”** Maija Karhunen

In addition to the nature of organisations and structures, change may also be hindered by the lack of financial, human or technical resources to undertake transformative approaches, the daunting feeling that measures for change are necessary in many areas and it is difficult to know where to start, the fear that adapting to sustainability puts traditional activities and procedures at risk, or the perception that environmental sustainability is only a secondary issue for performing arts organisations.

**Goal:**

Support the adaptation of dance organisations to enhance their environmental sustainability through a provision of incentives rather than penalties

**How:**

- Foster a culture of positive and realistic change: identify needs and opportunities, and determine concrete measures which can effectively be applied in short, mid and long term.
- Identify the areas in which change is necessary.
- Analyse the needs to put change into action.
- Involve external experts or consultants to engage with internal expertise.
- Nominate a dedicated green team.
- Conduct internal training and awareness raising.
- Measure, monitor, plan and report.



## 5. We Can Become Many

**“Dance is for community, for personal growth, for everything because words are just symbols of our experience. So, how do we get to the experience? Because the word is just one symbol, but movement incorporates everything.” (Anna Halprin)**

A development of ‘slower’ forms of engagement involve stronger relations with local communities. The holistic, interconnected nature of sustainability, where environmental, social, economic and cultural aspects meet, implies new partnerships with a diverse range of profiles, including environmental, educational and social stakeholders, on the one hand, and other organisations in dance and the arts, on the other.

### **Goal:**

Foster the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and networking among other sectors in areas related to environmental sustainability

### **How:**

- Conduct joint activities and campaigns with other sectors and civil initiatives.
- Embed residency programs in local communities.
- Organise dance performances in natural spaces or other non-traditional venues.
- Involve audiences and stakeholders in rethinking how organisations should adapt in the light of sustainability.
- Explore how climate impacts will affect your local area.
- identify relevant partners locally, in adaptation to specific contexts.
- Form alliances with public authorities, including local and regional governments that may have sustainability and adaptation strategies and schemes in place.

## 6. Towards a Sustainable Future...

The existing policies and support for enabling environmental sustainability are very asymmetrical across Europe, where only a few countries have strongly connected cultural policies with environmental sustainability.

Making progress towards a model for creation, production and presentation which is consistent with sustainability, revising approaches to mobility, fostering organisations’ internal change and strengthening partnerships and community engagement also requires transforming the policy level, including funding.



## Goal

The EU (in particular, the European Commission and the European Parliament), national, regional and local authorities and related bodies should revise and set up funding incentives and mechanisms which enable the dance sector to transition into environmentally sustainable practices.

## How:

- set up consultations with arts and environmental organisations, to identify areas of concern, potential complementarities and priorities.
- include qualitative selection criteria in funding calls that help to appraise the contribution of the arts to environmental sustainability, going beyond purely quantitative indicators.
- set up funding mechanisms which enable arts organisations to adapt to environmental sustainability (e.g. adaptation of buildings or events, develop environmental action plans, provision of additional funds when using sustainable mobility, establishing dedicated teams and building capacity within the organisation, etc.).
- transition towards funding models that place less emphasis on production and more on regular research and development of activities.
- set up mechanisms allowing arts organisations to obtain tailored support to adapt their operations and activities in the light of sustainability.
- support the sharing and pooling of resources between organisations, which contribute to more efficient use of materials and capacities.
- foster networking and other collaborative activities between organisations in the arts and other sectors.
- establish green labels and other forms of certification which recognise organisations that have adopted commitments and developed good practice in environmental terms.
- provision mechanisms allowing arts organisations to measure their environmental impacts.
- promote partnerships and alliances between organisations in the arts and culture and other sectors.





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Logo

Organisation



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