

DANCE CORK FIRKIN CRANE

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND ACTION PLAN

MARCH 2026

Dance Cork Firkin Crane

DCFC specialises in supporting dance artists, presenting dance performances and encouraging people in Cork to engage with dance of all kinds.

Our aim is to promote and advance dance as a creative art form. We do this in three ways:

1. Supporting the development of dance;
2. Sustaining the holistic development of the dance artist;
3. Bringing dance to diverse communities through learning, audience development and participation.

DCFC offers residencies, workshops, performances, studio rentals, community programs, and events year-round. We support local and regional artists while fostering national and international connections through partnerships with Dance Ireland, Dance Limerick, Galway Dance, and Tipperary Dance. We host an annual dance artist in residence, provide dance classes for all ages, and, as home to Inclusive Dance Cork (IDC), promote accessible training for dancers of all abilities.

Governed by a diverse board of 10 individuals, DCFC team includes 6 full time and part time employees and 4 Community employment scheme employees. DCFC also employs each year about 44 freelance or contract staff and is supported by 20 volunteers. In 2025, the venue welcomed over 13,000 participants and nearly 12,000 audience members and event attendees.

In 2026, DCFC will continue to deliver a comprehensive program centred on performances, residencies, and professional development. Highlights include the Take Off Festival in February, which pairs international Aerowaves choreographers with Irish artists in a sustainable exchange format. The organisation will host over 20 performances, free informal showings, and offer professional classes led by visiting artists. With an open call introduced for residency slots due to rising demand, DCFC will also provide up to 30 weeks of dance classes, masterclasses, and engagement activities such as panels, post-show discussions, and exhibitions as part of Crane Visual programme.

Environmental Policy

Dance Cork Firkin Crane recognises that climate change poses an ever-growing threat not only to the performing arts industry but to life on this planet as a whole. Like all sectors, the artistic industry contributes to this issue; however, we are committed to being part of the solution rather than contributing to the problem.

The SEAI Energy Audit we received identified several ways to reduce our carbon footprint, inspiring us to develop a policy and implement an action plan to mitigate our environmental impact.

We have already made significant progress towards reducing our carbon footprint and increasing our awareness towards our environmental impact. We are examining every part of the way we operate to reduce this further, with the aim of becoming carbon-neutral.

Our main impacts

The Firkin Crane's heritage building is a challenging element on our journey to reduce our environmental impact. Because of the building's age and weather-related damage, it needs essential repairs. Some materials and structures have reached the end of their lifecycle, and issues with the roof and walls require work to improve insulation. Moreover, the original windows are single glazed, and require replacing. This emphasises the necessity of grants, which would enable us to make the building as environmentally friendly as possible.

Designed to support artists in delivering high-caliber professional performances, our venue includes multiple studios and theatres equipped with energy-intensive features, such as stage lighting and large heaters necessary to warm expansive spaces, etc. There could also be consequences related to our programmes, printed materials, and suppliers.

Our activities are centred around visitors and artists, who have an impact in terms of transportation, waste management, food and water, and our digital footprint. International artists come to perform and flourish in our building. We are located in the heart of a walkable city, therefore, transportation is not usually problematic. However, because of performances and festivals, we need to consider the impact connected to events that happen regularly.

Our commitments and targets

1. Building management

Our main achievement so far has been the full refit of our stage lighting for the Smurfit Theatre with LED lights, making DCFC one of the rare venues operating with a full complement of LED lighting in Ireland. We are continuing this path by changing all the domestic and emergency lighting in the building to LED. Our key areas are also equipped with sensor lighting.

In the current and upcoming years, we plan to tackle the heating, cooling and ventilation systems and the insulation of the building. Replacement of the roof was completed in November 2025, safeguarding the long-term stability and weatherproofing of the structure for the next 20 years.

2. Waste management

As with any organisation operating in a dedicated building, we generate waste. However, we are committed to implementing effective recycling practices. We will ensure that our staff and audience members are well-informed about our waste management guidelines.

3. Food and water

As DCFC hosts events, classes, and serves as a venue for performances, we are committed to minimising food waste and reducing unnecessary water consumption.

4. Programming

We aim to work together with touring artists and crews resident at DCFC to make their stay in Cork as sustainable as possible. We accomplish that goal by ensuring that performances in our venue, along with all related activities, are as environmentally friendly as possible. This includes providing filtered water, recycling bins, and compost.

5. Printing

Although recycling is crucial, we believe that preventing and reducing waste is even more effective. For that reason, we have established regulations on paper usage to minimise unnecessary printing and have implemented rules for when printing is required.

6. House rental

Renting the Jack Lynch House to touring artists is also among our activities. Therefore, it is imperative to monitor the property's potential environmental impact and take measures to mitigate it as much as possible. This includes recycling bins and compost.

7. Digital footprint

We use online platforms for communication and data storage. However, we recognise the environmental impact associated with digital data. We are planning to establish guidelines to ensure our practices are as environmentally sustainable as possible.

8. Suppliers and purchases

To reduce the impact of our activities, we always try to find sustainable solutions when purchasing equipment or acquiring supplies, while following the principles of the circular economy.

Monitoring and reporting

Our Environmental Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, continuously evaluated and updated as necessary. The first step will be to put in place action plans and environmental monitoring and measurement.

Our areas of focus and aims for the coming years include:

- Setting measurement and review criteria for Dance Cork Firkin Crane to monitor our performance regularly and communicate the results (e.g. comparing reports year by year).
- Setting yearly objectives and targets for continuous improvement.
- Promoting environmental and energy awareness in our employees, board members and collaborators through participation and training (surveys, green “handbook”, etc.).
- Maintaining efficient heating, cooling, lighting, and ventilation systems throughout the year (everyday checks).

Evaluating whether we have successfully achieved all our goals is crucial. The document will be discussed during team meetings. The General Manager and Technical Manager will oversee the policy and action plan, collaborating to review progress and collect data.

Environmental Action Plan

As stated before, we will focus on eight targets, all of which are directly related to our environmental impact:

1. Building management
2. Waste management
3. Food and water
4. Programming
5. Printing
6. House rental
7. Digital footprint
8. Suppliers and purchases

Successfully prioritising these targets will permit us to reduce our carbon footprint. In the following years, we will go further in our goals and try to tackle advanced issues connected to our target.

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
Building management	Change all the domestic and emergency lighting in the building to LED	Technical Manager	Already in process	€500	Number of bulbs left to be changed
Building management	Renovate and insulate the roof	Board / Executive / General Manager / Technical Manager	Done - Autumn 2025	€228,334.29	Absence of leaks and improvement of the ambient heat
Building management	Elaborate a Conservation Management Plan	Board / Executive / General Manager / Technical Manager	Done - 2025	€16,400	Display of the Management plan
Building management	Install new heating and ventilation systems	Board / Executive / General Manager / Technical Manager	2027	€223,000	Compare energy bills year by year (see improvement)
Building management	Add solar panels to the roof with battery	Board / Executive / General Manager / Technical Manager	2028	€35,071	Electrical consumption
Building management	Change the windows for better insulation	Board / Executive / General Manager / Technical Manager	2028	€106,400	Compare energy bills year by year (see improvement)
Building management	Insulate the walls of the first floor and the mezzanine	Board / Executive / General Manager / Technical Manager	2029	€177,400	Compare energy bills year by year (see improvement)
Building management	Insulate the ground floor	Board / Executive / General Manager / Technical Manager	2030	€185,100	Compare energy bills year by year (see improvement)

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
Waste management	Waste recycling is organised and implemented	Cleaning service, housekeeper & refuse collection company company	Ongoing	€2,400/year	
Waste management	Provide clearly labelled recycling facilities backstage	Technical Manager	2025 / Ongoing	/	/
Waste management	Put posters in the kitchen area to help people to recycle	Intern, housekeeper	2025 / Ongoing	/	/
Waste management	Stop using the blue paper in the kitchen and bathrooms and find a more sustainable alternative	Cleaning service, housekeeper & Technical Manager	2026-2027	€1,200	
Waste management	Get battery recycling bins in several areas	Staff members at reception	2025 / Ongoing	/	
Waste management	Organise management of food waste and compost solution.	Technical Manager / FOH / GM	2025 / Ongoing	Bins and bags, time for housekeeping staff and FOH	Installation of a food waste system
Waste management	ReTurn Scheme	Cleaning service, housekeeper, Staff members & audience	2025 / Ongoing	/	

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
Food and water	Provide re-usable/washable service-ware for the bar and all receptions	Front of House Manager	Ongoing	€200/year	
Food and water	Give kitchen facilities in DCFC re-usable/washable service-ware at disposal	Front of House Manager	Ongoing		
Food and water	Provide filtered drinkable tap water to refill water bottles and for reception	Front of House Manager/Shop-Reception team	2025/Ongoing		Amount of unused plastic bottles
Food and water	Make sure that vegetarian and vegan options are available when we provide lunch/dinner or a reception	Front of House Manager	Ongoing	€1,200/year	Reports of suppliers we have used before
Food and water	Purchase the correct amount of food for events, or consume/give it away in case of surplus	Front of House Manager	Ongoing	€1,200/year	

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
Programming	Offer at least 2 performances in a row	Executive Artistic Director	Ongoing	/	Number of shows/day reports every year
Programming	Make accessible on our website and on demand all specs and equipment available at DCFC and policies that apply to artists	Dance Administrator / Box Office Manager	Ongoing	/	
Programming	Ask companies about their own green policies and support them with their requests	Executive Artistic Director / Dance Administrator	Ongoing	/	

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
Printing	Keep printing to a minimum, double-sided and multiple page printing are used as much as possible to minimise paper usage	All staff members	Ongoing	/	/
Printing	Use paperless ticketing with ticket scanners reading the tickets directly from phones	Box Office Manager	Ongoing	/	/
Printing	Consider the number of copies required for every document	All staff members	Ongoing	/	
Printing	Find sustainable paper suppliers with good green policies	Staff at reception	2025	TBD	
Printing	Consider using QR code instead of printed documents when appropriate	Marketing team/ All staff members	Ongoing	/	Number of documents printed

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
House rental/JLH	Continue to recycle & compost	Jack Lynch House Liaison	Ongoing	/	
House rental/JLH	Check if all bulbs are sustainable and change them if not	Jack Lynch House Liaison / Technical Manager	2025	/	
House rental/JLH	Kitchen facilities with re-usable/washable service-ware at disposal	Jack Lynch House Liaison / Technical Manager	Ongoing	/	
House rental/JLH	Share good practices by sending a policies document to every guest who books the House	Jack Lynch House Liaison	2025	/	

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
Digital footprint	Create a process for document/app/email management on the shared computers (deleting documents, etc.)	All staff members	2025	/	
Digital footprint	Send links (Google Drive) instead of attaching documents	All staff members	2025	/	
Digital footprint	Delete old emails and empty the Junk Email folder regularly	All staff members	2025	/	
Digital footprint	Unsubscribe from newsletters that are no longer needed	All staff members	2025	/	
Digital footprint	Use the "Reply to all" option only if necessary	All staff members	2025	/	
Digital footprint	Share the document explaining rules to staff	General Manager	2025	/	

Targets	Actions	Responsibilities	Timeframe/ Deadline	Budget/Resource	Indicator
Suppliers and purchases	Local suppliers are always preferred, when price and production is reasonable and feasible	All	Ongoing	/	
Suppliers and purchases	Find sustainable suppliers	Person responsible for a specific purchase	2025	Current budget or reasonable increase	
Suppliers and purchases	Follow the principles of circular economy: buy refurbished electronics, sell/donate furniture that we do not use anymore, repair if possible	All	2025	Current budget or reasonable increase	
Suppliers and purchases	Use cleaning products that are more eco-friendly	Housekeeper	2025	Current budget or reasonable increase	

Other targets

The targets and corresponding actions outlined above constitute our primary focus; however, additional areas of interest warrant our attention. These pertain to impacts that we have already been addressing. DCFC is committed to curbing and reducing the impacts associated with the following:

1. Energy

- Maintain efficient heating, cooling and ventilation systems: everyday procedure (done by the staff).
- Switch off all lights, monitors, and other electronic equipment when not in use by following a written procedure that is also regularly reviewed (carried out by staff opening and closing the building).

2. Travel

- For journeys within Cork, walking, cycling, or public transport, whenever time allows, is always preferred.
- For journeys within the island of Ireland, train, bus, and car sharing is always chosen.
- For international flights, non-stop flights when possible are preferred to multiple short-haul stops. We inform partners about it when they handle the bookings.

Future actions and goals

As outlined in a previous section, the targets we have decided to prioritise represent our starting point. Upon completing these actions and implementing new procedures in the upcoming years, we will be better positioned to explore more deeply the issues related to our environmental impacts. Our primary objective remains to achieve carbon neutrality to the greatest extent possible.

While certain actions are currently beyond our reach, we have already established the next steps that will bring us closer to our objective. Below are some of these future actions and the corresponding targets they are connected to:

1. Waste management

- Organise food waste procedure and compost bins and/or other food waste solutions to bring our recycling to the next level.

2. Digital footprint

- Green web designing: improve/redo our website.