

Cork International Film Festival - Sustainability Statement and Policy

CONTENTS:

1. Cork International Film Festival Sustainability Statement	2
1.1 Introduction - Why a Sustainability Statement?	2
1.2 Starting our sustainability journey - Where are we now?	2
1.3 Our Pillars of Sustainability - What are our areas of focus?	3
Community	3
Climate	3
Education & Influence	3
Fairness	3
2. CIFF Sustainability Policy & Procedures	4
2.1 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - What are we addressing?	4
2.2 Ambition - What do we want to achieve?	5
2.3 Goals - How will we achieve it?	5

1. Cork International Film Festival Sustainability Statement

Sustainability for CIFF means Community, Climate, Education & Influence and Fairness

1.1 Introduction - Why a Sustainability Statement?

Cork International Film Festival (CIFF) is the largest film festival in Ireland, reaching 44,000+ people every year.

We believe in championing film as a powerful platform to tell stories, raise awareness of issues, promote active discussion and debate, and deliver positive impact.

CIFF considers sustainability to be at the heart of our operations and artistic strategy, and we are committed to progressing the organisation's Sustainability journey both as an employer, and as an arts organisation with a strong platform from which to influence the wider cultural scene in Cork City, County and nationwide.

We aim to continuously improve our sustainability performance by focussing on four key pillars that reflect CIFF's overarching purpose - these are:

(1) Community; (2) Climate; (3) Education & Influence and (4) Fairness

We commit to these sustainability pillars as part of our business strategy and to monitor our impact by reference to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.2 Starting our sustainability journey - Where are we now?

The main scope of CIFF is that of showcasing film, rather than producing it. For this reason, we believe that our greatest potential impact is the opportunity to influence and educate cinema-goers; shining a light on the issues and solutions of climate and social issues, by carefully curating our film programme and outreach activities.

While we are very proud of the demonstrable value and positive impact CIFF brings as a cultural institution on a local and national level, we also acknowledge that Festival activities have an impact on the environment. For this reason, our Sustainability Policy identifies goals for our sustainability journey, and addresses how we can mitigate our operational impact while delivering positive community impact. One of our key goals is to achieve Net Zero across our day to day operations before 2030, in line with the Cork City Council plan to make Cork one of Europe's first climate neutral cities by 2030.

1.3 Our Pillars of Sustainability - What are our areas of focus?

In recent years, CIFF's artistic objectives have developed to align to these four pillars of sustainability, for example:

Community



- Presenting the '**Industry Days**' in Cork City has created the opportunity for local filmmakers to network and engage with other Irish and international professionals, and our '**First Take**' event in particular has been a great training development platform for **newly established film professionals**, emerging filmmakers, students, and the wider film industry.

Climate



- With the introduction of the '**Green Screen**' programming strand, with Festival and year-round events, we have been promoting discussion around **climate issues**, presenting important documentaries accompanied by panel discussions with professionals.

Education & Influence



- Our **Film & Mental Health Programmes 'Illuminate'** and '**Intinn**' have encouraged informed conversation around mental health for both adults and young people.
- Since 2020, CIFF has been collaborating with Docs Ireland Belfast on '**Ignite**', a **cross-border talent development programme** for emerging documentary filmmakers.

Fairness



- The CIFF curatorial team has been committed to selecting a **diverse and inclusive range of films** to be presented at each annual Festival by tracking and reporting the **countries of origin** of each film, and with CIFF being a signatory to the **Cannes 50/50x2020 Charter**, we have been tracking and selecting films to ensure that the **gender parity** of selection is at 50%.
- In 2022, we piloted the **free Outreach Filmmaking Project 'Look@Me'**, aimed at primary school **children from disadvantaged backgrounds**, with the commissioned short-film to be screened as part of CIFF2022.
- We assess the **accessibility** of CIFF venues annually, including access information on our platforms, and train **Access Volunteers** to support visitors with access challenges

While we are proud of our work so far, we acknowledge that a lot more can and needs to be done. Our Sustainability policy, sets out a work plan to support the advancement of our sustainability journey - both in *what* we do, and *how* we do it - and we commit to being a Net Zero festival by 2030.

We have committed to start this journey and to disclose our progress as we go, with a firm belief in transparency and accountability. We are also aware that our plan will

continue to evolve and change in response to best practice in the Industry, and as we learn more about ways in which we can improve our operations along the way.

2. CIFF Sustainability Policy & Procedures

2.1 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - What are we addressing?

How do we align with the Sustainable Development Goals?

To help set relevant, achievable and measurable goals for our organisation, we have consulted the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and identified the following key-areas of focus. These align with CIFF's four Pillars as shown below:

(1) Community:



Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

(2) Climate



Goal 13: Climate Action

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact.



Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production partners

(3) Education & Influence



Goal 4: Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, promote lifelong learning.



Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

(4) Fairness



Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all ages.



Goal 5: Gender Equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Ambition - What do we want to achieve?

Over the coming months and year, we will continue to build on the progress made so far, taking steps to improve our environmental and social footprint by strengthening our commitment to our four pillars of sustainability. We will continue to develop and implement our action plan which will guide and support the delivery of our sustainability Goals, illustrated by some priorities and actions noted below:

2.3 Goals - How will we achieve it?

(1) Community: To add value in the communities we work in.

How are we already working on this:

- a) **Film Festival:** For the past 67 years, Cork International Film Festival has contributed to shaping the cultural landscape of Cork City and County by curating and presenting a programme of exceptional international and Irish films. CIFF creates a unique opportunity for Irish audiences and filmmakers to access and experience world cinema, meeting and networking with filmmakers and industry professionals from all over the world. Our aim is to support diversity in every aspect, and to promote both Irish cinema and the Irish film sector on an international level through a year-round calendar of engaging activity. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 11\]](#)
- b) **Industry Days:** we welcome Irish and international filmmakers to offer context to the cinematic experience, sharing their insights with audiences and simultaneously enriching Cork's cultural life. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 11, 17\]](#)
- c) **CIFF Digital Archive Project:** developed in collaboration with the Department of Digital Humanities at University College Cork, the material exhibited offer a glimpse into Cork's rich cultural heritage and the history of CIFF, one of the oldest Film Festivals in the world. [\[SDGs 4, 11, 17\]](#)

How we will continue to achieve this:

- d) Further our engagement with audiences, presenting cultural events aimed at promoting informed conversation and action towards climate crisis and social issues. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11, 13\]](#)
- e) Advocating for an Arts and Culture hub in Cork that can be fully independently managed with sustainability at the core of its development. [\[SDGs 4, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17\]](#)

(2) Educate & Influence: To use our platform to inspire others

How are we already working on this:

- a) **YPCE Activities:** We present a rich Young People, Children & Education Outreach Programme year-round and during our Festival, the aim of this programme is to create opportunities for the filmmakers and audiences of

tomorrow to discover, experience and direct the future of film. Our YPCE outreach activities include: Filmmaking Workshops for teens, free 'Look@Me' Community Filmmaking Project for children 10-11 y.o. from local DEIS schools, free 'Intinn' Youth Film & Mental Health Awareness programme, First Take! Industry Day training and development platform for emerging filmmakers and media students, internship opportunities for film, media and arts students from local universities, a new CineConcert Score Commission Project where Transition Year music students from a local school will collaborate with professional composers to create and perform an original score to accompany a short-film at the Festival, a Youth Jury (18-24 y.o.) to select and present the Youth Jury Award Winner, and much more. [\[SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17\]](#)

- b) **IGNITE Documentary Talent Development Programme:** developed in collaboration with Docs Ireland, IGNITE is an innovative cross-border project directed towards emerging Irish and Northern Irish documentary filmmakers embarking on their first or second non-fiction feature film. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11, 17\]](#)
- c) **'Illuminate' Film & Mental Health Programme:** focuses on creating a space for the public to learn and discuss mental health issues, by screening carefully selected feature films and inviting mental health specialists and filmmakers to engage in a panel discussion. [\[SDGs 3, 4, 10, 11, 17\]](#)

How we will continue to achieve this:

- d) Provide and extend access to educational opportunities for all, continuing to develop our Young People, Children & Education Programme. [\[SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 17\]](#)
- e) Provide professional development opportunities, and educational programme strands for the general public. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11, 13\]](#)
- f) Engaging with our stakeholders (via sustainability focused surveys and meetings). [\[SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17\]](#)

(3) Climate: To promote Climate Action as part of the Festival, in a move towards achieving a Net Zero across the organisation

How are we already working on this:

- a) **Green Screen:** With the introduction of the 'Green Screen' programming strand, with Festival and year-round events, we have been promoting discussion around **climate issues**, presenting important documentaries accompanied by panel discussions with professionals and activists. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13\]](#)

How we will continue to achieve this:

- b) Continue working to improve and advance the environmental sustainability of our operations. [\[SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17\]](#)
- c) Measuring our operations' carbon footprint, understanding our current impact, with the goal of reducing our emissions and achieving Net Zero Festival by 2030. [\[SDGs 11, 12, 13\]](#)

- d) Investigate and implement more sustainable approaches to staff and guest travel. [\[SDGs 12, 13, 17\]](#)
- e) Promote sustainable consumption through reducing and reusing single-use items (i.e. events signage, brochure, leaflets, merchandise...) [\[SDGs 12, 13, 17\]](#)
- f) We will provide our staff with Sustainability training, focusing on how day-to-day operations and Festival event organisation can be improved to meet our Sustainability targets. [\[SDGs 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17\]](#)

(4) Fairness: To foster a fair, inclusive and accessible environment for artists, audiences and our staff.

How we are already working on this:

- a) As a Cannes 50/50x2020 Charter signatory, we have been tracking and selecting films to ensure that the gender parity of selection is at 50% (+/-15%). We have shared the results of our reporting publicly, and with Women In Film & Television Ireland to contribute to reporting and monitoring gender equality in media across the country. [\[SDGs 5, 10, 11, 17\]](#)
- b) As recipients of Arts Council funding, we are committed to paying artists fairly and engage with them appropriately. We offer paid opportunities for filmmakers through our presenting, screening, professional development activities; we follow best-practice in fair & equitable pay, recognising their time & expertise. We adhere to sector standards for screening fees to filmmakers via producers, sales agents etc, comprising fee/box office split against no. of screenings/capacity/territory (internationally recognised commercial supplier basis). Contributors to panels are paid according to an established rate card. Our primary artists' pay relates to festival curation & programmers who work full/part time/contract to research & curate content. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 10, 11, 17\]](#)
- c) We assess the accessibility of CIFF venues annually, including access information on our platforms, and train Access Volunteers to support visitors with access challenges. [\[SDGs 10, 11\]](#)
- d) We are working on introducing in our programme autism and sensory friendly screening for young people. [\[SDGs 10, 11\]](#)
- e) We are a fair opportunities employer, and we are currently working on finalising and publishing our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy. [\[SDGs 3, 5, 10, 11\]](#)

How we will continue to achieve this:

- f) Development of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy integrated with the organisation's operational plan. [\[SDGs 3, 5, 10, 11, 17\]](#)
- g) Improve the Festival's accessibility, developing our offer of existing events and creating new opportunities, establish partnerships with other organisations who share a focus on film accessibility. [\[SDGs 3, 4, 10, 11, 17\]](#)
- h) We will provide our staff with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training to ensure that the principles of EDI are ingrained in our organisation at every level. [\[SDGs 4, 5, 10\]](#)

Going forward we will continue to focus on these issues that are a priority for us as we aim to be Ireland's most sustainable Film festival, in terms of the content we deliver to our audiences, the impact we have in our community, and in how we conduct our own operations at the festival.

Building on the findings of the next 12 months, we intend to continue to develop a strategy that will allow our operations to reach a Net Zero Festival before 2030.