



# ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2023-2025

## CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION
2. OUR COMMITMENTS
3. CREATIVE CARBON SCOTLAND DATA & FEEDBACK REPORT
4. CARBON MANAGEMENT AIMS 2023-2028
5. EMBEDDED VS OPERATIONAL CARBON
6. CARBON CAPTURE & GREENWASHING IN THE HIGHLANDS
7. MONITORING AND RESPONSIBILITIES
8. COMMUNITY ECONOMIES
9. CLIMATE JUSTICE
10. PROCUREMENT
11. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL POLICY
12. PROGRAMME LEARNING, ADAPTATION & MITIGATION
13. INTERNATIONAL WORK
14. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION PLAN

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

From its inception, ATLAS was set up as a flexible, low carbon organisation. We don't need to put a huge amount of resources (carbon and monetary) into a fixed venue or way of working. Our current carbon footprint is fairly small, at 3122 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e pa for a team of 4 and around 100 events (2022-23). Nonetheless, there is more we can do to reduce emissions, to recognise the climate emergency and to support climate justice through our work, as well as ways of continually addressing other ways we may be negatively impacting the environment.

Our approach to doing this with the greatest impact is collective as well as individual, looking at ways we can work as part of our community to reduce carbon emissions, share resources and imagine alternatives to existing models of consumption.

## 2. OUR COMMITMENTS

### **ATLAS will:**

1. Ensure our commitment to Net Zero includes embedded as well as operational carbon use, and all forms of environmental extraction
2. Reach Net Zero emissions well ahead of 2045, in line with the Scottish Government and Highland Council's commitment to reach Net Zero by 2045
3. Reduce ATLAS Arts' carbon usage by 40% on 2018 levels by 2028, then reassess with updated data to bring down to near Zero with a further 3 years
4. Work collectively with our community to reduce carbon use and environmental harm, and to create meaningful action climate change
5. Create space for critical dialogue, advocacy and solidarity on climate and social justice throughout our programme and operations
6. Commit to degrowth, doing less better, and a wellbeing economy to tackle climate change
7. Commit to locally led solutions, and action that acknowledges that climate crisis is related to other forms of crisis and extraction (housing crisis, cultural, capitalism, political, colonial)
8. Continually measure and report the environmental impact of our work
9. Reducing the harmful impacts of our activities
10. Provide training and support for the team, freelance workers and board members raising awareness of environmental issues and in improving the organisation's performance

# 3. CREATIVE CARBON SCOTLAND DATA & FEEDBACK REPORT

## Environmental reporting 2023 feedback report

### ATLAS Arts - Emissions summary

Monitoring your emissions is essential to managing them. Please use this page to learn about the largest parts of your footprint. It might be useful to compare your footprint to the whole cohort on the previous page for context. The graph below shows your core emissions broken down by source. We have removed home working, commuting and audience travel values from this graph. These values, where notable, are highlighted in the text to the right where we also offer suggestions for reducing your main source of emissions. In the top right, we have also listed your emissions for this year and the three previous years, also with home working, commuting and audience travel values removed.

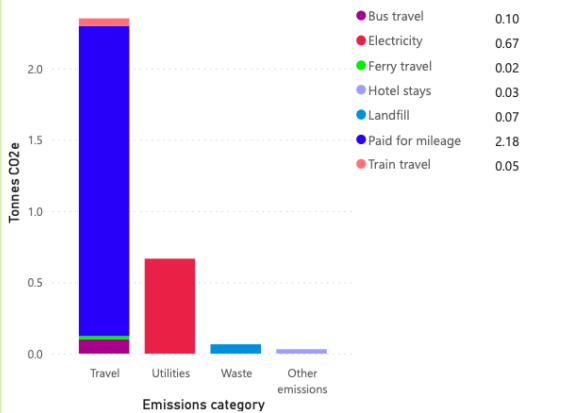
ATLAS Arts



2022/23 core emissions (tonnes CO2e)

3.12

Your total 2022/23 core emissions (tonnes CO2e)



2021/22 core emissions (tonnes CO2e)	2019/20 core emissions (tonnes CO2e)	2018/19 core emissions (tonnes CO2e)
5.40	4.17	Not reported

On top of these core emissions, you also have 0.2 tonnes of CO2e from home working. This is equivalent to 6% of your core emissions.

Your largest source of emissions is paid for mileage. While it is important to keep monitoring these emissions and reducing them where possible, your largest impact will be through external influence and collaboration because your footprint is already quite low. Some possible actions to explore include:

1. Think about the emissions of your entire supply chain - How can you reduce the impact of your procurement? How can you reduce the impact of audience travel?
2. Explore how to create conversations about the climate crisis with and within your audiences.
3. Collaborate on climate projects with other organisations.

These are our suggestions, based on your reporting. You know your organisation much better than us, so you will be able to determine their relevance and potential usefulness.

## Environmental reporting 2023 feedback report

### ATLAS Arts - Feedback



#### Feedback on your emissions and mitigation

It is good to see a complete reporting of all the core emissions that are relevant to your operations. Despite your carbon footprint already being very low, we encourage you to continue to monitor these emissions. With your largest source of emissions being travel, it is good to see this being prominent in your carbon management plan. Through your participation in the carbon budgeting set this year, we hope you now have an extra tool to apply when thinking about how to reduce these travel emissions. That being said, with a footprint that is already very low, we encourage you to continue to focus on collaboration and influence. You have such a strong community focus with your work and encourage you to continue to explore this to both reduce your own footprint and help others reduce theirs.

#### Feedback on your influence actions

The local collaborative approach that you are championing here is great to see. Bringing your community with you as you develop climate conscious work is vital so that you continue to meet the needs of the community that you support. Additionally, your work on degrowth sounds extremely interesting. We encourage continued participation with the Creative Degrowth Network to share ideas with other organisations and individuals across the sector.

#### Feedback on your adaptation plan

You indicated that your organisation does not have an adaptation plan in place. The climate is already changing, so in order to be socially, environmentally and financially resilient to a warmer, wetter and wilder climate, culture must adapt. Before next year's reporting, please use the Adapting our Culture toolkit (linked below) to create an adaptation plan for your organisation and consider including climate risk in your organisations risk register (if it is not already included).

Thank you for spending time working on environmental reporting this year. This feedback is based on your reporting. Please read our advice and recommendations, but we also encourage you to do your own research; you know what works best for your organisation!

CCS is looking to build the sector's resilience by offering more support around adaptation. We have the Adapting our Culture toolkit available already which you can find [here](#). Additionally we will be running an Adaptation Learning Set. Please click [here](#) for more information and to sign up. You are also encouraged to join the [Green Arts Initiative](#) if you are not already a member which can help you connect and collaborate with other organisations. We continue to provide a range of [tools](#), [guidance](#) and [resources](#) and Creative Scotland have their Environmental Sustainability funding criteria published [here](#). We would also highlight their newly published [guidance](#) on carbon offsetting. If you have any questions about carbon management, adaptation, influence, or climate justice, head to our website or send me an email. You can contact me on [matthew.belsey@creativecarbonscotland.com](mailto:matthew.belsey@creativecarbonscotland.com).

If you have any feedback on the environmental reporting process, please feel free to let us know [here](#). We are always looking to improve the process to make it as useful and supportive for you as possible.

## 4. CARBON MANAGEMENT AIMS 2023-2028

### Travel

In 2022/23 ATLAS' total emissions were 3120 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e pa (team of 4 and 100 events). The vast majority (70%, 2355 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e) comes from staff and artist car mileage. Reducing car travel is a challenge in Skye, with very poor public transport, and a programme spanning 1045 square miles.

To address this, we advocate for improved rural public transport and shared transport through events, communications and informal networks, and aim to resource a new electric community minibus shared by multiple local groups by 2025. We will remove at least 1 in 3 car journeys from 2019 levels by 2027. A full travel policy is laid out further on.

We are also prepared to implement a slow travel policy, discussed below, as is a wider sustainable International working approach.

### Business premises

ATLAS does not rely on a single venue, we do not have a gallery space or make use of a large building. Instead we use existing venues around Skye, Raasay and Lochalsh, which supports a sustainable, flexible, low carbon programme. We do however have a small office space. 666 kgCO<sub>2</sub>e (20%) of our total emissions is associated with energy use in our office. We use a Green Energy (renewables only) provider, however, as noted above, we will reduce this by 40% by 2028, aiming to upgrade our heating system with our landlord and make other improvements to our office.

#### Individual:

- Reducing overall travel emissions by no longer permitting internal UK flights as staff travel (now)
- Remove at least 1 in 3 car journeys from 2019 levels by 2027
- Joining a carbon budgeting cohort, examining 2023/24 data, implementing new carbon budget (2024/25)
- Improving data collection (especially on digital emissions, commuting data)
- Streamlining waste capturing for the office, introducing comparison for external ATLAS events at other venues (2024)
- Reduce office energy use by 40% by 2028, aiming to upgrade our heating system with our landlord and make other improvements to our office
- Implementing degrowth across the organisation - a focus on doing less, better
- A continued focus on climate and ecologically focused arts practices, and projects that explore what climate action looks like locally
- The School of Plural Futures (a programme exploring climate justice with young people in Skye and Lochalsh) will be the spine of our programme (2023-2028)
- Regular green meetings to discuss innovative practice

#### Collective:

- Advocate for improved rural public transport and shared transport through events, communications and informal networks
- Resource a new electric community minibus shared by multiple local groups by 2025
- Composting and reusing our event food waste, opening this to other local groups
- Creating and implementing a new sustainable procurement policy and sharing this with other local organisations (2024/25)

- Collective alternative economies/climate learning work as part of our local community (2023-2026)
- A new local partnership aiming to collectively reduce carbon, as part of our strategic plan commitments, from 2024 with Portree and Braes Trust and other local cultural organisations

These efforts will reduce our Carbon footprint to 1384.70kgCO<sub>2</sub> by 2028, 0.015% of the current footprint of the 119 Regularly Funded Arts organisations in Scotland. To reduce our operational carbon footprint to net zero after 2028, we will assess the availability and viability of carbon neutral forms of transport, ensuring we are reducing both embedded and operational carbon in doing so.

## 5. EMBEDDED VS OPERATIONAL CARBON

In making decisions about environmental policy, we want to ensure we are reducing not just the operational carbon of the organisation, but all the emissions that result from the production of the things we use. One way of reducing our carbon output drastically, on paper, would be to secure an electrical vehicle for our staff and artists to use for events and production.

However, Electric vehicles take huge amounts of carbon to produce, it may produce less carbon to run existing vehicles to the end of their life span. Some estimates say that 1 electric vehicle uses up to 20 tonnes of carbon in its production process alone. Currently, electricity from the grid would also still account for about 40gCO<sub>2</sub>/km – about 1/3rd of the amount used by an equivalent fossil fuel car ([reference](#)). Therefore, continuing to use our own cars would currently emit less carbon.

Therefore our approach for 2025-2028 is to continue using current cars, but reducing journeys by 1/3rd. And in tandem, we will look to secure an electric vehicle to be used by more than just our own organisation - in collaboration with local community trusts.

## 6. CARBON CAPTURE & GREENWASHING IN THE HIGHLANDS

We have some concern about the push from government and agencies to focus on monitoring of carbon only, and with some carbon offsetting activities.

In the drive towards meeting net zero targets, we are increasingly seeing organisations and businesses, both locally and nationally, using carbon offsetting activities as a way to continue to pollute. Carbon offsetting, for many, often means planting of more trees in Scotland, or purchasing of land for carbon sequestration. Tree planting requires land which is already at a premium, and it takes a generation for trees to absorb the carbon that is being released today. It may create a mind set that people can continue with the status quo as long as they are offsetting elsewhere.

In Skye, those with land are able to get subsidies and grants to plant trees or 'rewild', and then make further profit by selling carbon credits to organisations wishing to meet net zero targets and improve their 'green' credentials. In reality, in many cases, that land may have just been cleared of existing trees (and people) and sold as a carbon sequestration commodity. This has no real environmental benefit, and additionally closes local communities who have valuable ecological knowledge off from decisions about land use.

Therefore, with these complex realities in mind, our approach is to develop a sector wide discussion on how to do reduce carbon emissions in the most meaningful ways - doing less, sharing resources, working locally, discussing extraction and carbon use involved in purchase of EVs, using companies who are genuinely 'green', pushing against the financialisation of nature and the dangerous narrative that carbon offsetting will have a positive impact in the short or medium term.

## 7. MONITORING AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ATLAS Arts is a Green Arts Member, meaning we monitor our carbon output for travel, waste and electricity. We take shared responsibility for recording and monitoring our carbon outputs, and reporting annually to Creative Carbon Scotland.

Our Community Economies Manager is our Green Champion, monitoring our consumption, supported by all staff members. We hold Green meetings twice a year to discuss learning and actions and report to the board quarterly on environmental targets and improvements.

## 8. COMMUNITY ECONOMIES

All roles feed into this wider strategic commitment, but to amplify our work, ATLAS' CEM is responsible for exploring how ATLAS can share resources, do less better, work collectively, and generate meaningful sustainable practice. The CEM has the time to develop a collaborative, community-driven conversation around tackling the climate emergency and Skye's net-zero future, ensuring continued partnership with local groups such as Skye Climate Action (engaging in and supporting the debate on local food economies) the Highland Community Waste Partnership (sharing resources to support ongoing conversations around waste, climate justice and circular economies in the region), Raasay Carbon Neutral Island (supporting events such as the Raasay Climate Festival), Portree and Braes Community Trust (collaborating on projects such as the Portree Community Allotments) and CoDeL: Community Development Lens (partnering in community-based research projects linking young people across the highlands and islands). The role also feeds into sector learning as part of her work.

## 9. CLIMATE JUSTICE

ATLAS is committed to building criticality and awareness of climate justice in our work - not just our programme but across our operations. We are acutely aware of the need for a just transition towards net zero, many of these issues impact Highland Communities (who can sometimes be

forgotten or undervalued by policy makers) greatly. We are attentive to the fact that climate action is often dominated by voices of the privileged.

We believe that for climate change to be meaningfully tackled, solutions must be led by local communities who are connected through forms of global solidarity.

Our approach to addressing climate justice is to forge meaningful partnerships and discussions through our programme that build knowledge of global climate crisis and the different stakes of climate change, to connect learning across the globe, to fight for land justice and community ownership as the only meaningful way of addressing ecological decline, and to ensure that the necessary complexity of discussions are retained.

We do this through projects like the School of Plural Futures - a curriculum also drives a huge depth and complexity of learning related to climate justice, which has a strong focus on nature capital, the connection between culture and ecology, and on navigating difficult and necessary community conversations.

## 10. PROCUREMENT

Our aim for 2024/25 is to creating and implementing a new sustainable procurement policy for the organisation, and to share this will other local organisations and organisations in the sector.

## 11. SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL POLICY

The following applies to all staff, board, and freelancers working with ATLAS. It should be accepted as mandatory, but the team can discuss together to review any cases where there might be negative impacts or mitigating factors in relation to an individual's safety, opportunity, health or wellbeing. Excessive cost can be considered as part of this, but weighted strongly against the necessity or timing of the proposed travel.

The aim of this policy is to encourage all staff to think about reducing their own carbon emissions through travel by around 1/3rd, to explore slower forms of travel, and ways of testing and supporting low carbon travel in the future.

### **Local travel**

Where possible, staff members should car share or use public transport when travelling for work, walk or cycle if living locally, and if travelling longer distances, visit more than one person/have more than one meeting to get value for money/carbon.

### **Scotland/UK travel**

Public transport is the preferred mode of transport for travel around Scotland and the UK. Staff and artists should always consider which mode of travel is the lowest carbon, which may also be the cheapest for the organisation. We know there will be many things to weigh up, particularly in relation to weather, safety, time and reliability, and staff are trusted to make the best value judgements and to support artists to do the same. Internals flights are not permitted for internal UK travel unless in case of emergency.

### **International travel**

ATLAS may consider prohibiting the use of international flights in future (for staff and artists) if

we can not find any other meaningful way of offsetting carbon use from flights. For the coming years we will test new approaches for maintaining innovative and meaningful international exchanges.

The necessity of international travel should be discussed collectively. International travelling for one meeting is not permitted - staff should ensure value for money and carbon by meeting/connecting with lots of people / organisations and take time to think about other benefits of the visit for ATLAS's work during any international visits, as well as ways of sharing carbon budgets with other organisations (ie when artists are visiting Skye for ATLAS work, encouraging them to visit and meet with other organisations too). Partnership work will be key to this in the programme, and planning as far ahead as possible.

ATLAS is open to testing slow forms of travel (ie not using flights) especially if learning from this will be beneficial to the organisation, it is planned well in advance, and the staff member can continue to support the programme and operations back home, whilst travelling.

### **Monitoring responsibilities**

Staff should log all forms of travel charged to the organisation via claim expenses to ensure carbon data is being captured.

## **12. PROGRAMME LEARNING, ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION**

ATLAS Arts' Programme delivery is naturally low in carbon: collective, outdoors, flexible, in existing spaces, and only when needed. Our focus on slower work, doing less better, and on sharing resources such as the cinema kit, also reduces collective environmental impact.

Our programme content has focused on ecology and climate since our inception, aiming to drive, rekindle and celebrate the connection between land, language, community and culture as the only way to respond to the climate crisis.

We work with an inspirational existing community of local and global land agitators, poets and agricultural workers, and believe in the vital role of art and culture in connecting people inspired to carry change forward - sharing practical skills and learning from ecological practices of the past, and connecting young activists across the world.

Previous projects doing this include Keg de Souza's Temporary Places, Edible Places (2014) exploring sustainable food production, CLIMAVORE (2017-22) exploring "how to eat as humans change the climate", and Dàn Fianais (2020-ongoing) exploring solutions through the lens of Gàidhlig and crofting culture. Samhla (2022-24) involves collaborations with researchers and crofters on local soil quality, ethical rewilding practices, agricultural policy, and sculptures that support local biodiversity and ecosystems (ie as part of animal feed licks).

Many of our local programme partners are strongly invested in climate resiliency. Our commissions, gatherings, seed and film events have been part of events like Raasay Climate Festival and Skye Climate Action's programme. We'll continue to foster this through collaborations with Tuath, Jumping the Fence and Fèis na Tìre - all invested in local/global ecology and land rights.

Learning from CLIMAVORE continues to inform our hospitality approach, with strong networks with local suppliers/produce, and use of local recipes, ingredients and sustainable food alternatives.



50% of our aquaculture cradle editions sales support South Skye Seas Initiative, and a new sustainable procurement policy planned for 2024/25 will bring together ways of sourcing materials, transport, foodstuffs, printed materials to support ethical programme delivery (also acting as a production resource for artists).

If funding is secured, we'll be using a new shared community electrical vehicle from 2025 for production visits and events. We already use the Ardvasar community electrical vehicle in South Skye. Transport offers are key to programme inclusion as well as environmental aims.

### 13. INTERNATIONAL WORK

ATLAS will work to test and innovate in the years ahead to prepare for drastic social, climatic and political shifts, ensuring international practice creates real value for artists and audiences, and builds innovation and collectivity into future work.

We know realistically ATLAS may need to completely ban international air travel to get to a genuine net zero position.

Across the programme, we will focus on doing less, better. We'll introduce support for slow travel for staff and artists, working with sector to support collective practice and commissioning models. Our new travel policy has banned UK flights, and we will use programme contingencies to slow projects down if necessary to raise further funds for more ethical environmental practices.

We work hard to make the most out of visits and to give the best support to artists coming from different contexts. Our international partnerships have been developed to ensure there are already strong research frameworks and common understandings in place, not only for climate reasons, but to support sensitive art making. Place-specific advisors will support embedded research pre-visit, and developing conversations with artists (such as Shiraz Bayjoo, Mairi Gillies and Keg de Souza) over many years. International gatherings and research will be supported by online networks.

We have learned a great deal about sustainability and international relationship building from COVID, times of tight budgets, and our alternative economies work. We will be using this learning to drive new perspectives on internationalism and solidarity.

We have recently experimented with other ways of producing meaningful international exchange and artworks without travel. Feeling Wor(l)ds in 2022 brought Camille Auer (Turku), Ashanti Harris (Glasgow), Katharine Mcfarlane (Kilmaluag, Scotland) and Astrida Neimanis (unceded syilx territory, Kelowna, BC) together in a correspondence and performance project, creating reciprocal opportunities to develop artworks in conversation with other places and perspectives, funnelling resources to artist time and a rich cross-cultural dialogue. We'll learn from this in developing future residencies-at-home, the publication project, and other remote cultural exchanges.

Future projects will continue this work, including experimenting with forms and modes of publishing to create impactful international exchange, and by focusing on impact derived from *how* the artworks are made and shared, rather than the artist's presence in Scotland. Our unique position as an organisation already focused on place-based practice gives us a strong footing to do this well.

## 14. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION PLAN

The preparation of this plan was supported by Cultural Adaptation's [Adapting our Culture](#) toolkit, as recommended by Creative Carbon Scotland. This also forms one section of our wider organisational Risk Register:

Key Business Risk	Inherent Risk Assessment			Mitigation	Residual Risk Assessment			Risk Owner
	Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score		Impact	Likelihood	Risk Score	
Weather creating dangers in travelling to/around the island - health and safety risk to staff, artists, audience, board, programme delivery. Programming outdoors increasingly difficult and hazardous.	3	3	9	<p>Travel risk assessment (including safe limits for travel/being outdoors, postponement decision process, and emergency preparation) reviewed with team and board annually.</p> <p>Ensuring rigorous risk assessments and twice yearly H&amp;S review meetings</p> <p>Culture of caution promoted.</p> <p>Lone working policy reviewed annually.</p> <p>All staff first aid trained.</p> <p>Contingency mitigating cost impact on delayed events/travel.</p> <p>Ensuring indoor alternatives for outdoor programme and retaining flexible approach (no fixed ATLAS venue/building).</p> <p>Mobile programme, with digital strands reducing miles</p>	3	1	3	Director

				<p>travelled.</p> <p>Reducing weather-related delay (and carbon) impact by planning for less travel, longer visits and exploring innovative practice in international work.</p>				
<p>Landslip, flooding, rising tides, intense storms, increased rainfall, and drought are already closing roads/schools/childcare, creating water shortage, damaging telecommunication masts and venues, and impacting access to fuel/ water/ post/ emergency services.</p> <p>Business risk is loss of staff and organisational vision, mitigated and loss of resiliency to deliver charitable aims.</p>	4	3	12	<p>Already have a good base of resiliency, learning from recent storms, COVID, a climate-focused programme, local forums (working for Skye Community Response during COVID).</p> <p>Staff team all joining and connecting with local organisations on work time to learn about infrastructure pressures and contribute to responses.</p> <p>We can access different wired, satellite &amp; 4G signals in case of network/mast loss.</p> <p>Plan for particular flexibility October-April.</p> <p>Local board members giving additional local knowledge and support.</p> <p>Flexible working / fair work policy supporting parents/carers.</p> <p>Ensuring good communication during these periods and flexible working.</p> <p>Ensuring ATLAS doesn't tie itself to fixed building.</p>	4	2	8	Staff/ director
<p>Long term damage to infrastructure eg road, power, bridge, water supply:</p>	3	2	3	<p>Joining food security and climate resiliency forums (eg Skye Climate Action).</p> <p>Ensuring good communication during these periods and flexible working.</p> <p>Ongoing collaborative work</p>	3	1	3	Staff/ director

				<p>aids emergency planning.</p> <p>Using learning from COVID to support staff/programme in case of major disconnection.</p> <p>Review emergency protocol at annual H&amp;S meeting.</p>				
Deterioration of office building and community venues, heating unfit to cope with temperature fluctuations, limited budget to climate proof office. Increasing costs of energy.	3	2	6	<p>Programme not reliant on a single venue.</p> <p>Landlord responsible for repairs so low financial risk.</p> <p>We'll retain a flexible lease and good relationship with landlord.</p> <p>Explore collective fundraising to upgrade heating system in office as well as potential new office spaces for 2025 onwards as back up.</p> <p>Retain good core contingency and forecasting for energy increases.</p>	3	1	3	Staff/ director
Insurance cost rise	2	3	6	<p>Annual discussion with local broker on trends and mitigation.</p> <p>Plan for 17% increase in 2025.</p>	2	2	4	Director / CEM
Deteriorating access to production materials:	2	2	4	<p>A sustainable procurement strategy to address this.</p> <p>Continuing to centre ethical presentation/production of artworks and exploring innovative practice.</p>	2	2	4	Director / Staff
Political and financial support for necessary change not forthcoming	4	3	12	<p>CEM role affording us extra resources and energy to develop arts funding advocacy, additional fundraising and locally led change.</p> <p>Ensuring ongoing advocacy with MPs/MSPs/council.</p> <p>Exploring alternative/community driven</p>	4	2	8	Director / Staff

				income streams in 2027. Exploring collective and locally led responses to climate change.				
Exacerbation of housing/recruitment crisis, NHS, schools and childcare staff shortages = risk of retaining suitable staff. Driven by climate-caused deterioration in infrastructure and community, carbon credit land speculation, climate change migration.	4	3	12	Focus on locally-led solutions, community ownership, advocacy and climate literacy through programme and CEM role. Training of local workforce. Growing list of accommodation providers supporting artists (ie WASPs, Radio Skye). Staff joining local forums (eg SOS NHS, Skye Windfarm Information Group, and Childcare Crisis groups). Extra financial support for new starts to help with accommodation costs. Ongoing advocacy and campaigning for housing rights.	4	2	8	Director / CEM
Climate Grief - impact on moral, wellbeing, and organisational purpose, retaining of staff.	3	3	9	Taking wellbeing seriously, slowing down and reflecting across projects. Ensuring climate action is fun and convivial. A focus on collective work. SoPF examining climate justice in nuanced ways.	3	2	6	Director/ staff