



## Environmental Policy

### **About Upswing:**

Upswing is an award-winning UK-based, contemporary circus company which uses the human body as an expressive tool to entertain, inspire curiosity and ignite a desire to build connection. Upswing tells new stories in extraordinary ways – amplifying and celebrating the skills, creative talents and stories of diverse artists and communities. Difference and diversity are at the heart of our practice. Our creation process brings people together in movement, with ideas developing from the collision of different life experiences. In addition to theatres and festivals, Upswing brings extraordinary experiences to places where people who might not go to the theatre may go instead – a digital trail through a local park, a circus takeover in a care home, a large-scale spectacle on a rooftop, or a bedtime story for families in libraries. We create memorable, unexpected experiences for audiences.

We exist to drive change, to create restless performance that asks more of the circus art form, of its artists and its audiences. We are a registered charity based in London and receive core funding from Arts Council England.

### **Our motivation for taking environmental action:**

We believe that operating within the cultural sector offers an empowering potential to engage with environmental sustainability beyond our own footprint. We believe that the implementation of our environmental policy begins with our staff and associates: implementing our policy towards a sustainable existence has become an integral part of our daily operations, on tour and at home.

We are also very aware that environmental sustainability goes hand in hand with financial sustainability and therefore believe that it is necessary to maintain and re-use our assets wisely for the future of our company.

To achieve our wider ambitions of a green sector we must begin with understanding our own impact and consumption. We do this through the systematic gathering of data using the Creative Industry Green Tools provided by Julie's Bicycle. This is a preliminary step to understanding and reviewing our impact on the environment. We then aim to benchmark our findings with peers, organisations that are like us in structure and location. Monitoring and evaluating our findings will improve our measures to become a sustainable organisation and widen the scope of our environmental policy.

As a National Portfolio Organisation we believe that we must inspire others and that sharing our findings will help embed environmental sustainability within our direct network and strengthen attitudes in the wider performing arts sector.

### **Our environmental ambition:**

The aims of our Environmental Policy are to continue to improve Upswing's environmental

sustainability by reducing our carbon emissions and to research, develop and implement cost effective ways of operating, whilst using ecological materials and energy sources that have a minimal impact on the environment. The policy also aims to educate and increase awareness amongst our staff team, our artists and our audiences During 2022 we will particularly focus on developing a system for recording and reporting on travel relating to our touring programme, and embedding the Theatre Green Book across all our activity.

**Upswing’s main environmental impacts:**

Our company’s main environmental impacts are around our touring travel, the creation of our production sets, the printing and distribution of our marketing materials, and our energy consumption, water consumption, waste and recycling. Since 2016 Upswing’s office has been located at Rich Mix; an NPO also registered with Creative Industry Green Tools. Previously we worked with the building manager to gather data on energy consumption, water consumption and waste and recycling which was reported via Rich Mix’s own data submissions. In autumn 2022 Upswing will move to full-time remote working with employees predominantly working from their own homes. Upswing can provide limited information on the home energy and water consumption of employees, but we have reviewed our Action Plan to take account for remote working, whilst respecting important ethical principles such as transparency, privacy, and autonomy.

**Our key commitments for 2022-23:**

- By 31 December 2022 Upswing will have designed a system for gathering data to monitor travel associated with our annual touring programme. Touring includes outdoor shows and in-venue productions that take place in more than two locations over the year. We will monitor travel by collecting data from our freelance performers and crew so that we can estimate their travel to performances and workshops. Our General Manager will work with the producing team to gather this travel data for Upswing’s touring activity.
- Upswing will continue to use suppliers with strong environmental credentials and to use FSC paper and non-toxic ink and finishes
- An annual meeting with core staff will be held following the data collection in December 2022. This internal evaluation will enable us to examine the data and recognise where improvements can be made
- We will liaise with similar sized companies within the same geographic location that are registered with the Creative Industry Green Tools, to compare and benchmark where Upswing stands
- During 2022 we will explore how we can embed the Theatre Green Book across all our activity
- We will work with our Board to increase the focus on focus on environmental sustainability across all our programmes, including holding a Board Away Day with a focus on Environmental Responsibility and appointing a new Trustee with a focus on Environmental Sustainability
- Our Environmental Policy and Action Plan will be reviewed and updated annually and circulated to all staff members
- Our Environmental Policy and Action Plan will be promoted to our artists and associates who will be encouraged to make use of public transport /car-pooling.

### **Monitoring and Reviewing our Environmental Policy and Action Plan**

We have appointed our General Manager as Environmental Champion for the Upswing team and she will lead on monitoring and reviewing our progress. In addition, the whole staff team will continue to take initiatives to champion our Environmental Action Plan and will meet annually to monitor and review.

During 2022-23 we will appoint a Board representative as Environmental Champion by recruiting/identifying a trustee with expertise in this area.