

**IRISH  
BAROQUE**  
ORCHESTRA

# SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

2023 - 2025



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# 01 | BACKGROUND

## MISSION & VISION

The Irish Baroque Orchestra is committed to artistic excellence for public benefit through an open and inclusive culture which places music first and finds strength in diversity.

The artistic ambitions of the organisation are underpinned by common values of respect, transparency, communication and a commitment to a shared vision for the orchestra.

## WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY MEAN FOR THE IBO?

The strategic plan 2021-2025 'Reimagining our Culture' is currently taking the orchestra through a transformational period which sees a considerable scaling-up of its ambitions, leading to increased artistic and educational output. The plan seeks to secure a central place for historically-informed performance (HIP) within the classical music scene in Ireland. Having established itself nationally, development of its international profile will see the IBO taking its core Irish heritage programming to new audiences through performances at established, well-known festivals, concert series and venues.

With this increased reach and expanded activity comes a consequent need to examine the imprint that this leaves on our planet. We live in a time when we are conscious of finite resources and the dangers of irreversible climate change. The challenges of international touring ambitions for an orchestra based on an island are clear, and we have a responsibility to consider reframing our approach, recognising that the kindest solutions for our planet may mean a change to the pace of touring. The solutions that we identify may come with a higher level of financial investment.

## **RESOURCES AND PROCESSES WHICH HAVE SHAPED OUR THINKING**

Resources:

Creative Carbon Scotland toolkit

Theatre Forum sustainability guide

Ensemble Correspondances sustainability policy

Fretwork sustainability policy

Dunedin Consort sustainability policy

National Concert Hall sustainability policy

Processes:

Member and Apprentice consultation sessions

Board member consultation

**The Sustainability Action Plan spans four key areas: ‘Organisation: Structures and Governance’, ‘Operations’, ‘Office’ and ‘Events’.**

## 02 | CURRENT CONTEXT

### **ORGANISATION: STRUCTURES AND GOVERNANCE**

The IBO currently has a Board comprising 9 Directors with experience in the fields of PR, record production, digital humanities, law, history audience development and sustainability. While a deliverable and measurable sustainability policy clearly has value in its own right, there is also growing awareness of sustainability issues for funders, who increasingly identify this as a key priority area.

### **OPERATIONS**

The pool of historically-informed musicians in Ireland is small, and one of the most exciting challenges for the orchestra is developing the scene nationally through a variety of initiatives. Players travel as a group for national touring, to lower costs and emissions, and players coming to the group from outside of Ireland are offered Sail and Rail as an alternative to flying. Flights with a lower carbon footprint are booked where air travel is necessary. Many musicians are increasingly conscious of the impact of a touring lifestyle on the planet, with most actively preferring travel and lifestyle choices that lower their carbon emissions.

One naturally sustainable feature of a period instrument orchestra is use of original instruments from the Baroque period, or modern hand-crafted replicas. In some cases these instruments have extremely long 'product life', spanning centuries in some cases, giving the IBO greater sustainability over other groups using mass-produced instruments made of plastic and/or requiring amplification.

## **OFFICE**

The IBO is a resident organisation at the National Concert Hall, Dublin. Consequently many elements of sustainability planning and measuring lie outside of the organisation's control. The National Concert Hall does have an Environmental Policy which has a bearing on the IBO's energy usage and emissions.

## **EVENTS**

Paper programmes are currently produced for all IBO promotions, and are often also produced for co-promotions. On national tours there are often 100-200 programmes left over which end up being recycled. Over-ordering is common as a preferred outcome to running out of programmes for audiences, given that these resources contextualise the work presented and make it accessible more broadly. Ticketing is handled via online event platforms, and audiences are increasingly opting to display tickets on mobile devices instead of printing.

# 03

# OUR COMMITMENTS AND ACTIONS

## ORGANISATION: STRUCTURES & GOVERNANCE

### We Will:

- **Install an appropriate framework to support development of the orchestra's work in a way that is as sustainable and environmentally-friendly as possible**

### Actions

- Appoint a Board member with relevant experience and expertise to oversee policy, process, action and evolution in this area.
- Report on the progress of the Sustainability Action Plan twice-yearly at Board level.

### We Will:

- **Not accept sponsorship from companies associated with the extraction of fossil fuels**

### Actions

- Review all potential corporate partners at Board level to ensure that this commitment is upheld.

### 2025 Outcome:

**A sustainable approach to the IBO's work is embedded into future planning and policy, paving the way for it to lie at the core of the IBO's next strategic plan, from 2026-2030.**

## OPERATIONS

### **We Will:**

- **reduce the carbon footprint associated with international travel by choosing more environmentally-friendly options**

### Actions:

- Encourage musicians travelling to Ireland from the UK to use Sail and Rail where possible.
- Avoid flying for only one concert, where possible.
- Reduce carbon emissions from hotel stays by staying in eco-friendly hotels or offering hosted stays as alternatives.
- Increasing resourcing of musicians from Ireland, while protecting the positions of IBO members.
- Use surface travel where possible around multiple dates on international tours.
- Invest in sustainability consultancy to measure the IBO's baseline carbon emissions in 2023, and to establish a structure for measuring and reviewing on a regular basis.

### **We Will:**

- **Put in place more sustainable practices around the rehearsal process**

### Actions:

- Minimise single-use plastics in rehearsal breaks by offering recycled paper cups and encouraging use of keep cups.
- Evaluate the carbon footprint of switching to iPad use in rehearsals, compared to using paper parts from the IBO Library, printing extra parts where required and charging stand lights to use where required.
- Use paper parts where they already exist in the orchestra library, instead of printing new sets.



## **2025 Outcome:**

Increased resourcing from inside of Ireland is possible thanks to an effective talent pipeline, and this minimises the amount of international travel for Irish projects. Touring outside of Ireland is planned as efficiently as possible from an emissions perspective, with surface travel linking up as many tour dates as possible and IBO personnel staying in eco-friendly hotels. A new hosting programme in Dublin sees stronger links forged between musicians and long-standing supporters, with hotel stays reduced.

## **OFFICE**

### **We Will:**

- **Reduce use of paper in the IBO office**

#### Actions:

- Use recycled paper
- Reduce printing
- Request digital statements from banking services
- Cancel all paper newsletter subscriptions

## **2025 Outcome:**

Amount of paper used by the IBO office is lower. with less paper going out to the recycling bins on site, and less energy involved in the production of printed materials.

## EVENTS

### We Will:

- **Seek alternatives to printed materials at concerts**

### Actions:

- Offer digital programmes to all audience members, as part of the ticket price.
- Use Eventbrite for all IBO productions, and encourage patrons to display tickets on phones or tablets at entry, instead of printing.
- Consider digital programmes as an opportunity to create peripheral digital content to enhance the programmes on offer.
- Continue to offer digital ticketing for IBO promotions, and encourage attendees to display these on mobile phones or other portable electronic devices.

### **2025 Outcome:**

Amount of paper used by the process of event production is lower. with less paper going out to the recycling bins on site, and less energy involved in the production of printed materials. Digital programmes offer new resources for audiences, and make swifter connections with the orchestra's social media/digital platforms as well as offering easy access to donation platforms for those wishing to support the orchestra.

## 04 | MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The progress of the Sustainability Action Plan will be monitored twice-yearly at Board level.

# 05 | COMPANY INFO

## **PATRON**

Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland

## **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Peter Whelan

## **EXECUTIVE TEAM**

Chief Executive Officer Aliye Cornish Moore | Orchestra Manager Doireann Kelly | Development Officer Alison Byrne

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Peter Finnegan (Chair) | Ellen Cranitch | Peter Crooks | Isabella de Sabata | Tim Fiennes | Ciara Higgins | Emer McAneny | Oonah McCrann | Simon O'Connor | Stuart Kinsella (Company Secretary)

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**[www.irishbaroqueorchestra.com](http://www.irishbaroqueorchestra.com) | [www.dublinhandelfest.com](http://www.dublinhandelfest.com)**  
**National Concert Hall, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin D02 N527**