European Commission

Greening of the Creative Europe Programme

Creative Europe Programme Greening Strategy

Creative Europe

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List of acronyms

CCS	Cultural and creative sectors
CO2	Carbon dioxide
DG CNECT	Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology
DG EAC	Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
EACEA	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
GHG	Greenhouse gas (emissions)
KPIs	Key performance indicators
MFF	Multiannual Financial Framework
OMC	Open Method of Coordination
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
WP	(Annual) Work Programme

List of definitions

'Greening' in the context of this study refers to 1) supported projects voluntarily pursuing green objectives of promoting sustainability and fight against climate change either as their primary focus or alongside other objectives such as cultural or artistic creation, innovation, social inclusion etc. and 2) projects supported by the Creative Europe Programme making decisions and implementing corresponding activities to reduce their environmental impact, including the impact of the supported project activities on climate change.

'**External greening'** in the context of this study refers to supported projects pursuing green objectives of promoting sustainability and fight against climate change either as their primary focus or alongside other objectives such as cultural or artistic creation, innovation, social inclusion etc.

'**Internal greening'** in the context of this study refers to projects supported by the Creative Europe Programme making decisions and implementing corresponding management and project activities[1] to reduce their environmental impact, including the impact of the supported project activities on climate change.

'**Green project'** in the context of this study is used to denote a project supported by Creative Europe that pursues or pursued 'green objectives' of promoting sustainability and fighting against climate change either as their primary objective or alongside other objectives.

'**Green requirements'** in the context of this study refers to requirements included in calls for proposals that applicants need to address at application stage or during project implementation, monitoring and reporting stages to progressively align supported projects with the European Green Deal objectives.

'**Green mobility'** in the context of this study is used to refer to modes of transport that seek to reduce their environmental impact and impact on climate change. Mobility can be considered green or greener when walking or using transportation modes including bicycles, electric bicycles or scooters[2], public transport[3], electric cars[4], hydrogen cars[5], carpooling or car-sharing of low-emissions cars, etc.

'**Sustainability'** in the context of this study refers to the sectors seeking to adopt more environmentally sustainable practices and, by this, to minimise their environmental and climate change impacts to meet the European Green Deal objectives and international commitments on tackling climate change[6] as well as concerns and needs of their audiences, seeking to prevent the depletion of natural or physical resources, and moving towards carbon neutral operations in the future.

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1 Activities include establishing effective green governance structures, reducing and minimising travel and transportation, reduce energy usage and use renewable sources, recycle and reuse materials etc.

2 It is also important how the electricity that is used to power electric bicycles or scooters is produced. The share of green energy achieved will depend on the Member State.

3 including buses, trains, tams, trolleybuses, etc.

4 The efficiency of electric cars differs considerably. It is also important how the electricity that is used to power electric cars is produced. The share of green energy achieved will depend on the Member State.

5 The way hydrogen is produced is important. 'Green hydrogen' produced through electrolysis (splitting water into hydrogen and oxygen) using renewable energy is currently the only sustainable hydrogen option.

6 Pursuing the Union's commitments to implement the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Mission statement: Towards a green Creative Europe Programme

Fighting against, mitigating and adapting to climate change and protecting the environment are some of our times' defining challenges. To achieve a liveable and sustainable future, societal actors have to work hand in hand across borders to address the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation.

The European Green Deal is the European Union's response to these challenges. It sets out a vision and strategy for a climate-neutral and sustainable future and has the ambition to transform Europe into the first climate-neutral continent. It aims to reduce CO_2 emissions in the European Union by 55% by 2030 and to become carbon neutral by 2050. To achieve the goals by 2030 and 2050, 30% of the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) needs to be spent to support climate action. The European Green Deal further calls for sustainable resource consumption, focusing investment in green skills and technologies. As a systemic strategy, the European Green Deal aims to mainstream environmental protection, sustainability and the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss across all EU programmes and policies[7].

Achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal requires actions across all sectors in the EU. This includes the cultural and creative sectors (CCS). A recent Market Analysis of the Cultural and Creative Sectors in Europe[8] estimates the CCS to contribute about EUR 413 billion (equivalent to about 5.5%) in terms of value-added and to employ roughly nine million people in the EU. Apart from contributing to the economies, the CCS enrich society by producing meaning and well-being and enhance our quality of life with their cultural, creative, and artistic offer. Notwithstanding the unique value the CCS bring to society, their activities also have an environmental impact. Where many actors actively strive to enhance the sustainability of the CCS, further significant efforts will be needed to achieve the ambitious goals of the European Green Deal.

With data on the greenhouse gas emissions attributable to the CCS mostly missing, only point estimates and anecdotal evidence of the impact of the sector on the environment are available. The cited market analysis identifies the audiovisual and multimedia sectors, visual and performing arts, architecture, heritage, archives, and libraries as particularly relevant in this regard. For example, a recent study estimates that the audiovisual sector of France creates about 3 million tons of CO_2 per year. Yet, other cultural and creative sectors also add to greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions through, e.g. production, energy consumption, and mobility. For example, a study performed for the Kulturstiftung des Bundes (Germany) estimated the yearly carbon emissions of 19 cultural institutions to amount to some 20,000 tonnes of CO_2, equivalent to the yearly emissions caused by 3,000 EU citizens.[9]

The Creative Europe Programme of the European Commission (further 'the Commission') can help the CCS to set a roadmap and lead by example to reduce

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7 To measure the reduction of environmental impacts, the European Commission put forward Recommendation on the use of Environmental Footprint methods and updated them in 2021: https://environment.ec.europa.eu/publications/recommendation-use-environmental-footprint-methods_en.

8 See https://keanet.eu/wp-content/uploads/ccs-market-analysis-europe-012021_EIF-KEA.pdf.

9 See https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Greenhouse_gas_emission_statistics_-_carbon_footprints#Carbon_dioxide_emissions_associated_with_EU_consumption for the average CO2 emissions per person in the EU.

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and improve the sectors' environmental practices. Despite the modest scale of EU funding in the sector[10], the Creative Europe Programme can act as a catalyst for change. In concrete terms, this means that the Creative Europe Programme can contribute towards achieving the budgetary target of 30 % of Union budget expenditure supporting climate objectives by 2030 and net-zero emissions and mainstreaming environmental awareness within and beyond the Creative Europe Programme by 2050. At the same time, the impact the CCS can have goes well beyond their sectors. Culture and media inspire millions of people and have the potential to raise awareness of the importance of fighting against, mitigating and adapting to climate change and biodiversity preservation and restoration.

Any actions to green the Creative Europe Programme must be aligned with the Programme's overall objectives: to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage; and to increase the competitiveness and economic potential of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular the audiovisual sector. Efforts to reduce the Programme's environmental impact will always need to be considered alongside these overall objectives[11], as Creative Europe inherently fosters cross-border cooperation and exchange to promote diversity, competitiveness, and collaboration.

Vision

The vision of this Creative Europe – Programme Greening Strategy is, without limiting the creative, artistic and editorial freedoms of operators in the cultural and creative sectors, to mainstream environmentally friendly practices and to achieve net zero emissions across the Programme and supported projects, initiatives, and actions, gradually enhancing efforts, stepping up ambitions and reducing environmental impacts of the Programme over time. In doing so, the Programme and the funded projects will serve as Green Deal advocates and lighthouses for the CCS. The Programme will actively raise awareness of the environmental impact of cultural and creative activities, while themselves progressively transitioning to ever greener practices. The actions taken to green the Creative Europe Programme need to accompany and support the main objectives of the programme to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage; and to increase the competitiveness and economic potential of the CCS.

Objectives of this strategy

The objective of this strategy is to identify areas where actions are needed and to identify recommendations on what could be practically done to 'green' the Creative Europe Programme in the foreseeable future.[12] As such, this strategy aims to mainstream greening in the Programme itself by defining a problem statement, describing main greening challenges and opportunities, identifying the roles of the main

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10 According to the previous mid-team evaluation of the programme all three predecessor programmes combined only accounted for around 0,2% of all investment in CCS. A recent study by EY on the CCS estimated the turnover of the sectors at EUR 643 billion in 2019, just before the begin of the COVID-19 crisis, see here: https://www.rebuilding-europe.eu/_files/ugd/4b2ba2_1ca8a0803d8b4ced9d2b 683db60c18ae.pdf.

11 There is an inherent narrative that climate objectives compete or need to be balanced with creative and artistic objectives. Further research is needed to demonstrate the extent greening CCS actually 'conflicts' or 'competes' rather than helps to promote creative and artistic aspirations. In the absence of this cost and benefits evidence for the CCS, it may be more helpful to see programme greening imperative simply alongside i.e., as a parallel dimension of its overall objectives.

12 This study and its recommendations are not the opinion of the Commission; therefore, study recommendations are not binding. This study only aimed to support with the ongoing efforts of Creative Europe Programme to contribute to the Green Deal objectives.

programme stakeholders in programme greening, and providing a roadmap for this greening. This roadmap encompasses recommendations to strengthen and monitor the Programme's contribution toward the European Green Deal objectives and budget targets for EU spending on climate objectives. The strategy suggests how the Programme can support beneficiaries in their efforts to reflect on these paradigmatic shifts and to green their activities in relation to nature and wildlife in general. The strategy also sets out opportunities to disseminate the information and raise awareness for the green transition in the CCS and beyond.

Scope of the strategy

The scope of this strategy covers the greening of the Creative Europe Programme. Therefore, it covers the CCS only as far as the projects, initiatives, and actions funded by the Programme may have a wider impact on their respective sectors as well as their European and global audiences. While this is not a strategy for greening the CCS overall, it will likely contribute to the greening of the CCS to the extent the Creative Europe Programme influences developments in these sectors, including through exchange of good greening practices and leading the way in structuring the EU support for greening the CCS (again not was a programme objective, but as a modality of programme implementation). While this was not the focus of this strategy, it may also include actions that can be used beyond the Programme e.g. by offering insights for greening other EU programmes, funds and instruments as well as other sectors.

Target groups of the strategy

This strategy and its recommendations aim to steer the discussion among those interested in, responsible for, and affected by the greening of the Creative Europe Programme. Notably, the strategy differentiates roles and responsibilities for:

- **The Commission**, namely DG EAC, DG CNECT, and EACEA, which are overall responsible for the Programme design, its implementation and greening as well as monitoring and evaluation. The Commission will need to define progressively ambitious greening requirements for the Programme and propel the implementation and monitoring of greening supported projects in line with its climate priorities and environmental commitments[13].

- **Programme beneficiaries** that receive funding from the Creative Europe Programme are responsible for greening their respective organisations' practices and procurement as well as their projects supported by the Programme while pursuing the artistic, creative and editorial freedoms within the confines defined by Creative Europe calls, procurement specifications and policy coordination activities.

- **Creative Europe Desks** play a double role as Programme beneficiaries and intermediaries that support Creative Europe applicants as well as promote the programme and its results in their respective countries. The Desks are encouraged to reflect on how to green their own organisations and ways of

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13 There is also a considerable potential for Commission services to learn from each other in greening their respective policy funding programmes.

working as beneficiaries of the Programme and also to steer Creative Europe applicants in development of projects that deliver their activities, products and services in an increasingly sustainable way.

Structure of the strategy

This strategy is structured as follows: The starting point for this strategy is to acknowledge what has been done already and the efforts undertaken currently by programme managers to green the programme requirements and by beneficiaries to green their own activities, raise awareness for the green transition among their audiences and monitoring their progress with this internal and external greening. Based on this inventory[14], the main current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the greening of the Creative Europe Programme are assessed to derive the problem statement and identify main areas for action. Based on the SWOT analysis and the main areas for action identified, this strategy then outlines the proposed next steps in greening of the Creative Europe Programme structured around four distinct stages of increasing ambition. The strategy then presents a number of steps that programme stakeholders can take towards greening of the Programme during these four distinctive stages[15].

Progress to date: Current efforts and initiatives

Programme greening can draw on achievements of the predecessor Creative Europe Programme (2014-2020). The results of the study on Greening the Creative Europe Programme (further the Greening study) indicate that the predecessor programme supported some 160 projects that promoted sustainability, climate change and environmental objectives. These awareness-raising activities spanned the MEDIA, Culture, and Cross-sectoral strands. Four out of five predecessor programme beneficiaries surveyed for the Greening study indicated that they tried to green their own activities, most notably by selecting more sustainable means of transportation, reducing the environmental impact of meetings and workshops, and opting for more sustainable materials and catering options. As the predecessor Creative Europe Programme did not have formal greening requirements, these findings attest to the willingness and readiness of CCS actors supported by the Programme to green their activities, reduce their environmental footprint, and share their greening experiences with their respective sectors.

Greening efforts are further stepped up under the current programme (2021-2027). While no common, programme-wide greening requirements currently exist, greening has been established as a cross-cutting priority in the 2021 and 2022 annual work programmes, and greening requirements have been introduced for a number of actions supported by the current programme. In addition, the current MEDIA schemes include an award criterion for addressing this horizontal greening priority.

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14 Provided by the Ecorys study on Greening the Creative Europe Programme, 2022.

15 Each stage is characterised by specific goals in the proves of Programme greening, that need to be reflected in programme design, call objectives and activities supported. It is not anticipated that all programme stakeholders will go through the programme greening stages at the same time (due to sector, participating country and beneficiary differences). However, the steps will still be useful in guiding the process of greening, even if it is not expected to be uniform.

Green award criteria[16] were introduced as part of the selection process for applications when answering a call under the MEDIA strand. Yet, findings from the study suggest that greening requirements are not consistently applied under the Programme, which causes challenges to monitoring this Programme area. The issue of specific indicators and reporting requirements on greening for projects selected under the current programme has been addressed by a Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening developed in the context of the Greening study.

The current programme also supports green projects, for example i the mobility scheme for artists and culture professionals (Culture Moves Europe)[17], supporting sustainability actions that contribute to recovery of the European Music Ecosystem (Musicaire), and 'Perform Europe', which aims to test new forms of more sustainable international touring. It is further integral part of the Commission's Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation for the European Media and Audiovisual sectors.

Greening progress has been driven by bottom-up initiatives supported by the Commission. The Open Method of Coordination working group on strengthening the resilience of cultural heritage for climate change developed recommendations to strengthen the resilience of cultural heritage for climate change, notably reflecting upon greening considerations for cultural heritage. In September 2021, Creative Europe MEDIA organised an event during the European Film Forum, 'The Transformation of the European Audiovisual Ecosystem: Towards a more Sustainable and Digital Industry'. A technical working group on carbon emissions measurement in the audiovisual sector launched its work in 2021. In February 2022, the working group members participated in an online workshop, 'Towards a climate-neutral audiovisual sector,' co-organised with the European Film Market. The New European Bauhaus initiative connects the European Green Deal to our daily lives and living spaces and aims to inspire a movement to facilitate and steer the transformation of our societies guided by considerations of sustainability, climate goals, circularity, zero pollution, and biodiversity. The initiative's principles create synergies with the bottom-up efforts to green CCS supported by the Creative Europe Programme. The annual sector-specific priorities set for 2022 notably foresee integrating the New European Bauhaus principles in the practices of the fashion, design, and architecture sectors through the European Cooperation projects and the European Networks of Cultural and Creative organisations. In addition, a Commission report on the cultural dimension of sustainable development in EU actions has been published on 9 December 2022[18], identifying the most important programmes, policies and initiatives across all sectors where culture is at the heart of sustainability. The report gives an overview of ongoing and upcoming projects and actions focusing on environmental sustainability and climate, civil protection, space and industry, research and innovation policies that leverage the potential of CCS to contribute to sustainable development. This work was complemented by the OMC report and recommendations on the role of culture as a driver for sustainability published in September 2022[19].

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16 I.e., five points for addressing the horizontal greening priority.

17 The Culture Moves Europe mobility scheme, launched in 2022 following the i-Portunus pilot project. It considered learnings from i-Portunus pilot project regarding green travel, and it encourages participants to use specific types of travel modes depending on the distance between their place of departure and arrival.

18 https://culture.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-publishes-new-report-on-culture-for-sustainable-development-in-eu-actions

19 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_22_5726

Peer learning on greening facilitates the exchange among the sectors and collective learning. As highlighted by the Good Environmental Practice Guide produced in the context of the Greening study, a plethora of initiatives, working groups, workshops, conferences, and other ongoing actions aim to improve the environmental impact of virtually all CCS. Creative Europe Desks and European networks and Cooperation projects offer mutual learning activities and capacity building. The exchange of good practices is fairly widespread among beneficiaries and supported by the Desks and the Commission. Culture and MEDIA Desks already actively cooperate to create opportunities to green the Programme. However, the solutions available to date mostly focus on individual sectors or subsectors, promoting particular perspectives or approaches to raising awareness about climate change and environment as well as sector or subsector specific tools and guides, with no approach (including a combination of elements) that would meet the main needs of the various Creative Europe Programme stakeholders.

Problem statement: Challenges and opportunities in greening

The research that underpins this strategy has helped to identify a number of strengths and opportunities, shaping a solid basis on which efforts to green the Creative Europe Programme can be further built. Yet, several challenges and threats remain. Identifying these beneficial and adverse aspects is essential for shaping actions and recommendations for greening the Creative Europe Programme.

Strengths

There is a strong willingness and readiness among policymakers and practitioners alike to green their programme and its supported activities. With the European Green Deal, the European Union set a wide array of policy and legislative initiatives in motion. Many of these affect the CCS directly, such as the Circular Economy Action Plan or the EU Strategy for Textiles. These initiatives reflect the societal demand for greater sustainability, which the CCS take up. The results of the Greening study show that the sectors supported by the Programme already actively engage in bottom-up initiatives and projects that aim to reduce their environmental footprint and promote more sustainable practices.

Attention placed on sustainability has led to the creation of a large number of greening initiatives and actions. Numerous resources and greening guidelines have been developed over the past years, encompassing (almost) all sectors of the CCS. These can serve as an essential input to the greening of the Programme. Please see the Good Environmental Practice Guide developed as one of the final outputs of the Greening study that makes sense of how these numerous initiatives, resources and guides can be practically useful for programme beneficiaries and applicants.

As an interface between the Commission and the Creative Europe beneficiaries the Desks have a unique role to play in the green transition of the Programme. They represent a network of intermediaries, supporting applicants and beneficiaries of the Programme alike. They are highly familiar with both the needs of the CCS actors in their countries and the EU policies supporting the Culture and Audiovisual sectors, and hence can play a central role in translating Programme greening requirements to applicants and their support needs to the Commission. They are embedded in their national discourses and contexts, and thus ideally placed to assess national greening needs and challenges.

Weaknesses

The choice of sustainability can still be costly. Reducing CO_2 emissions by selecting alternative means of transport, procuring more sustainable materials, or acquiring and training staff to enhance their knowledge and skills can create additional financial burdens or (costly) delays for beneficiaries. During consultations delivered in the context of the Greening study, Desks and programme beneficiaries alike pointed out that less sustainable options are often chosen to reduce project costs. They flagged that further

reflection is needed on eligible greening costs under the Creative Europe Programme to facilitate transition towards a greener Programme[20].

Uncertainties and a lack of technical knowledge limit further progress. There is a common concern among Programme stakeholders consulted that they lack knowledge, training and capacity to identify the most sustainable options or how to implement them. Beneficiaries report that they struggle to develop sustainability strategies, and Desks are not trained to advise applicants and beneficiaries sufficiently. Similarly, the managing authorities report that they struggle to critically assess the sustainability strategies of applicants or provide guidance to beneficiaries on actions they can take to reduce their environmental impact.

A lack of overarching coordination weakens greening efforts. There is a multitude of ongoing initiatives within the Programme and beyond. Many actors are involved in several of them, and there is a risk of duplication of work and a lack of systematic exchange that could enhance the efficiency of efforts to green the Programme. The recommendations of the Greening study, provided in three annexes to the Final report, including this Programme Greening Strategy, Good Environmental Practice Guide and Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening constitute a comprehensive framework for delivering Creative Europe Programme greening.

A lack of data undermines the capacity of the Programme to monitor progress in the medium to long term. Currently, beneficiaries are not required to report on their greening efforts systematically. Consequently, the managing authorities of the Programme have to rely on indirect, imperfect and anecdotal information about the state of play in the greening of the Programme. While the Greening study underlying this strategy provides more precise information, it can only offer a snapshot in time. The Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening developed in the context of the Greening study offers a list of feasible indicators and data collection methods for closing this data gap.

Lack of consistent steering for greening across the programme has so far weakened the coherence and effectiveness of the Programme's greening approach. While programme applicants are required to illustrate what their project will do to address the horizontal greening priority[21], there are no harmonised requirements for supported projects to monitor and report on how they greened their supported project. This situation leads to a lack of steering of the Programme overall towards greater sustainability. According to the evidence collected by the Greening study there is a need to require and assess whether project applications address the horizontal greening priority and include efforts to green supported projects more explicitly and systematically.

Opportunities

Policy currently favours and supports the green transition. The strategies put in place at the EU level through the European Green Deal and related policies provide a robust framework, including European Climate Law[22], for the transition. These policies

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20 Please see the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening for recommendations of the Greening study related to eligible greening costs.

21Applicants can received 5 award points for this part of the MEDIA application Process.

22 https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/european-green-deal/european-climate-law_en and https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32021R1119

incentivise, favour and demand efforts to green EU programmes. Also at national level, governments take action to strengthen the green transition. The geopolitical circumstances that the EU is facing today further underline our dependency on burning fossil fuels and the need for sustainable solutions. The Programme can serve as a lighthouse, promoting good practices beyond its scope and across the CCS.

There is a strong societal drive towards greater sustainability.[23] This implies that, over time, it will become easier and cheaper to choose from sustainable options. As societies and technologies will become greener, the environmental impact of the Creative Europe Programme will likely decrease over time, while the audiences of programme beneficiaries will demand and favour greener ideas, creative services, and products.

CCS operators want to achieve the transition towards sustainability. Great efforts are already made by CCS actors to offer more sustainable cultural and creative services, performances, and products. These efforts stem from the intrinsic motivation of CCS operators that realise that societal action is needed to reduce our environmental footprint, as well as a growing demand among the audiences who are also increasingly aware of the impact human activity can have on the environment.

Besides its harm, the COVID crisis initiated development. Restrictions and lockdowns accelerated the development, uptake, and acceptance of digital tools and remote formats of delivery and performance. Not all of these new ways of working are ideal, especially for the CCS, and they create environmental externalities as well. Yet, their disruptive power opens up opportunities for CCS operators to test and establish new practices and ideas.

Threats

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the CCS severely. As recognised in the Updated 2020 New Industrial Strategy, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected European industries deeply. The CCS suffered in particular, as the creative and cultural sectors were highly affected by social distancing restrictions and the weakened economic situation of citizens. The pandemic's lasting impacts have shifted actors' prioritisation towards recovery, which risks undermining their efforts and interest in investing in more sustainable solutions (which may be aiding the economic recovery).

Economies remain on the brink of recession with energy prices skyrocketing. Supply chains are under pressure, weakening the economies in times of high inflation, driven partially by rising energy costs, increasing uncertainties even further. These developments risk leading to an economic downturn that reduces the momentum for the green transition as societies focus on safeguarding their standard of living.

Heightened geopolitical tensions shift the attention of society. With the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine in early 2022, public debate and policy efforts focus on security policy, strengthening the defensive capacities of the EU, and support to Ukraine. While these debates are needed to ensure the safety and well-being of

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[23] Open Method of Coordination expert group on the cultural dimension of sustainable development started developing its conclusions in early 2022. Available at: https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/0380f31c-37c9-11ed-9c68-01aa75ed71a1

European citizens, geopolitical tensions and uncertainties deviate attention from the challenges that climate change and environmental destruction poses to societies across the world.

Figure 1- Strength and weaknesses of as well as opportunities and threats for the greening of Creative Europe

Strengths

- Many existing initiatives, actions, and resources the Programme can build on – across sectors
- Strong wiling- and readiness within EC and sectors to go ahead and green their sectors
- Desks provide a network of decentralized bodies that can act as intermediaries between the Commission and programme applicants in translating greening requirements and applicants unique national and sector circumstances that need to be considered in the selection process

Weaknesses

- Lack of knowledge/ capacity (applicants lack knowledge on how to design greener projects, Commission, EACEA and Desks need to build capacity to provide greening support)
- Budgetary constraints, lack of resources (financial and staff with greening expertise)
- Lack of coordination and exchange (leading to information loss and duplication of work)
- Lack of green monitoring/ data
- Lack of consistent steering via inclusive criteria, requirements and support measures

Opportunities

- Societal drive towards greater sustainability means that it will become easier to choose sustainable options
- Policy currently favours and supports drive towards greater sustainability and offer links and opportunities for cooperation
- CCS operators want to act sustainably and their audiences to consume sustainable ideas, creative products and services
- The disruptive power of the COVID crisis triggered innovation, accelerates change, and incentivised new ways of working

Threats

- COVID recovery still ongoing, CCS hit particularly hard
- Economies at the brink of recession as supply chains still under pressure and inflation high – might reduce momentum for green transition as focus will be more on safeguarding standard of living

- Heightened geopolitical tensions lead to a shift of attention towards security considerations

What next: Towards a green Creative Europe Programme

The assessment of the strengths illustrates a lot of potential, while the weaknesses point to some of the main areas of further action for all stakeholders involved. Opportunities and threats hint at the wider context the greening efforts will take place in in the following years. Building on these considerations, this section sets out the overall strategy for the greening of the Creative Europe Programme. It develops several recommended actions to operationalise and implement this strategy.

Several key principles guide the development of this strategy:

- The underlying concept for this strategy is to make gradual progress that is feasible and realistic. It should be driven by all programme stakeholders, considering their national, sectorial, and competitive contexts, and the resources available to them.

- Recognising beneficiaries' past and current internal and external greening efforts is the starting point. This includes the initiatives, good practice examples and achievements within the CCS that link to the Creative Europe Programme.

- In addition, any strategy to green the Creative Europe Programme needs to be consistent with the current objectives of the Programme. It needs to complement and support these Programme objectives.

More specifically the greening of the Creative Europe Programme should follow:

- **A gradual progression.** The green transition of the Creative Europe Programme needs to be gradual, following a step-by-step approach with ambitions increasing over time to ensure that milestones are achievable and no actors, sectors or participating countries are left behind.

- **A progression of different speeds.** Some stakeholders have already advanced further in their greening efforts, and some activities will be easier for the CCS to green than others. National and sectoral specificities similarly set the context in which the efforts of the stakeholders will take place, leading to a progression where the stakeholders will advance at different paces. Efforts to green the Creative Europe Programme need to acknowledge these differences.

- **An inclusive approach.** The green transition of the Create Europe Programme cannot be achieved without the buy-in, expertise and voices of the CCS operators, and more specifically the Creative Europe Programme beneficiaries and applicants. Continuous monitoring and research into progress with Creative Europe Programme greening will be important to ensure that the programme greening takes place at a pace that is feasible and driven by the needs of CCS.

- **A holistic approach.** The Creative Europe Programme supports a range of culture and media sub-sectors. Many of the challenges are similar across the sectors and Programme strands. While acknowledging differences that are

sector- or strand-specific, this strategy builds on the common challenges of the CCS.

- **A combined bottom-up and top-down approach.** Green transition of the programme needs to be driven by all its main stakeholders, bottom-up by Creative Europe beneficiaries with top-down by Programme managers. Therefore, this strategy builds on a bottom-up initiative incentivised, strengthened, and coordinated by the Programme management.

- **Achieving an organic transition.** There is no need to reinvent the wheel. There are already many initiatives across the Strands to green activities, and the CCS are actively engaging in discussions and actions to become more sustainable. This strategy acknowledges that and builds on these efforts to draw on existing initiatives, tools and good practices.

The strategy to achieve the greening of the Creative Europe Programme revolves over four incremental stages. Each stage leads to gradually increasing ambitions for the Commission, Desks, applicants and beneficiaries of the Programme. The figure below visualises the main aspects of each stage. Implementing these stages requires active participation and cooperation among all stakeholders involved. Considering the size of the programme[24] bringing about this change will also require time.

The dynamics of the transition towards a green Creative Europe Programme will partly rely on the development of the threats and opportunities described above and partly determined by the seven-year programming cycle of the Programme itself.

The proposed four stages of programme greening do not necessarily need to correspond to the four multi-annual planning periods leading up to 2050. Projects and sub-sectors supported by Creative Europe, its schemes, actions, and programme strands could undergo the four stages of greening at different and overlapping paces. As the new programming cycle commenced in 2021, there is time for gradual and voluntary greening over this and the following programming periods.

As the starting points for greening will vary depending on the national and regional context, sector, and subsector, as well as the type of CCS operator, also the various actions and operators supported by the Programme are likely to go through the greening stages at various paces and speeds. Generally, larger CCS operators will find it easier to adjust to the green transition due to specialisation as well as the availability of skills and other resources, while the transition for micro, small and medium sized operators will take more time.
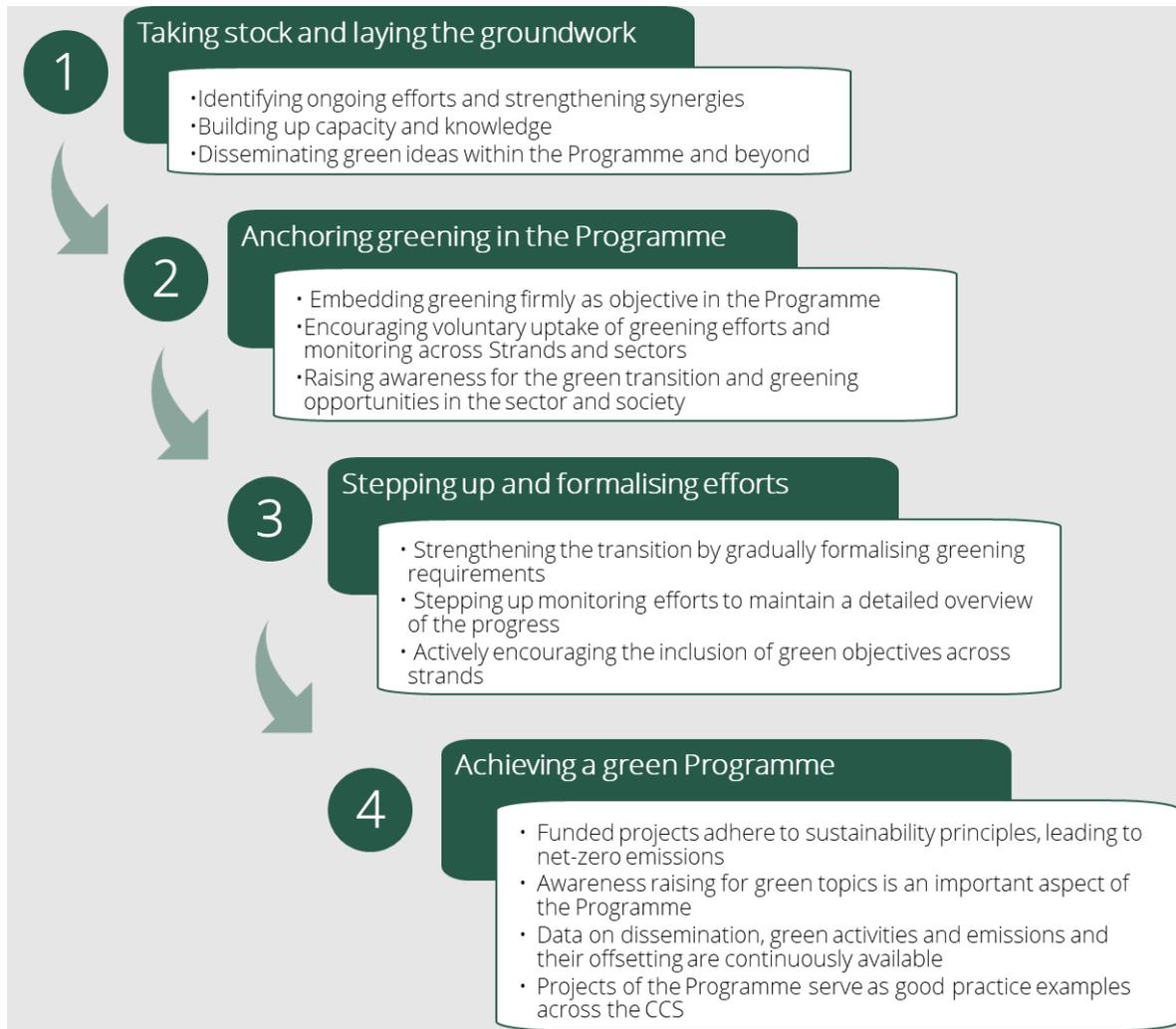
While CCS operators supported by the Programme will have various points of departure, lengths and complexities of their green journeys, it is imperative that the green transition of Creative Europe is inclusive to all (with policy measures considering the lowest common denominator) with the same objective of achieving climate neutrality by 2050. The greening of the Creative Europe Programme is embedded in the wider societal and technological green transition. Through efforts across economic sectors to

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24 Creative Europe supported around 1,000 projects in 2019 and 2020.

reduce the environmental impact of their actions, over time, it will be easier for projects to ensure that their activities are sustainable and climate neutral[25].

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25 As for example energy will increasingly stem from renewable sources and transport reduces their carbon emissions, projects will become greener compared to today, even without further action.

Figure 2 - Incremental stages towards a green Creative Europe Programme

1 Taking stock and laying the groundwork

- Identifying ongoing efforts and strengthening synergies
- Building up capacity and knowledge
- Disseminating green ideas within the Programme and beyond

2 Anchoring greening in the Programme

- Embedding greening firmly as objective in the Programme
- Encouraging voluntary uptake of greening efforts and monitoring across Strands and sectors
- Raising awareness for the green transition and greening opportunities in the sector and society

3 Stepping up and formalising efforts

- Strengthening the transition by gradually formalising greening requirements
- Stepping up monitoring efforts to maintain a detailed overview of the progress
- Actively encouraging the inclusion of green objectives across strands

4 Achieving a green Programme

- Funded projects adhere to sustainability principles, leading to net-zero emissions
- Awareness raising for green topics is an important aspect of the Programme
- Data on dissemination, green activities and emissions and their offsetting are continuously available
- Projects of the Programme serve as good practice examples across the CCS

The following section sketches this transition out in a stylised and idealised form, showcasing how the different stages feed into and build on one another.

Taking stock and laying the groundwork

Timeframe: Past and current programming period

The first stage of the strategy focuses on an in-depth understanding of the extent of current greening of the Creative Europe Programme, identifying ongoing activities and initiatives that can be built on and used as starting point for future efforts. According to the findings of the Greening study, Four out of five predecessor programme beneficiaries green their activities already or pursue green objectives within and beyond the CCS. To a lesser extent, they also already monitor their environmental impact and calculate their CO_2 emissions. The study has also identified many ongoing efforts on the side of the Commission, the Desks, and across CCS, driving and coordinating efforts to achieve greater sector sustainability.

Therefore, the first stage of the strategy is already well underway and can be further strengthened during the current programming period. The Commission can encourage beneficiaries to continue and increase their greening efforts. The Commission can coordinate and – to the extent possible – provide resources to Desks and beneficiaries to enhance their capacity and knowledge base for greening all types of projects and actions supported by the Programme. Building on voluntary greening initiatives and mainstreaming activities already delivered by Programme beneficiaries, the Commission can facilitate peer learning and good practice exchange that can further step up the already existing greening efforts.

Using the Programme funding as additional incentive for the greening that is already delivered bottom-up by programme beneficiaries, during this first stage the Commission can recognise, valorise and promote sustainable practices, green creative ideas and mainstreaming of sustainable practices that are already delivered and proposed by supported projects. It can also start applying and testing green indicators and monitoring methodologies proposed in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening delivered with the Final report of the Greening study.

Finally, the Commission could also pilot new schemes (as suggested by the recommendations presented below), most notably to build up capacity among Desks to support Programme applicants and beneficiaries in greening the methodologies of their projects as well as to foster exchange and peer-learning among supported projects that would help them to further green their activities. As suggested in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening these new actions, monitoring and reporting requirements could be already piloted during the current programming period.

Anchoring greening in the programme

Timeframe: current and upcoming programming period

The second stage builds on the stock-taking, testing and validation efforts of the first phase and seeks to anchor successful greening practices in the programme design. During this phase, post 2027, Greening could be introduced as a Programme wide horizonal priority under the Regulation for a potential Creative Europe successor programme, with minimum requirements for supported projects to address this priority. Embedding greening firmly as a transversal objective will signal its importance to

applicants, beneficiaries, Desks, as well as programme managers. By the beginning of this phase the green key performance indicators (KPIs), monitoring practices and approach to eligible greening costs, put forward in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening, should be thoroughly tested in time for solid monitoring data on programme greening and contribution to climate objectives to be available by 2030.

During this phase the programme managing authorities will continue to promote mutual learning and exchange of experience on good greening practices within and beyond the programme, detailing these in the annual monitoring reports and mainstreaming these via Programme Desks and dedicated schemes for development of green skills and competences among programme beneficiaries, supporting them in greening their supported projects. Dedicated greening schemes (recommended below) will help programme beneficiaries to green their activities and to continuously build on each other's achievements in promoting sustainability objectives, mainstreaming greening within programme design and delivery.

Stepping up and formalising efforts

Timeframe: future programmes starting 2035 and 2043

During the third greening stage, efforts of the Programme beneficiaries, Desks, and programme managers to promote sustainability of Creative Europe supported actions will be formalised and gradually stepped up to align with the 2050 climate neutrality target. During this stage the green transition of the programme sustainability concerns will become a natural part of projects benefitting from Creative Europe support. Projects will not only be asked to report on their efforts to green their Programme-supported activities, but also provide concrete and solid evidence of the results and impacts of their project greening as well as their climate and environmental mainstreaming activities (in terms of number of people reached and engaged, learning outcomes and behavioural changes achieved).

During this phase programme beneficiaries will also be required to start to systematically monitor and report on their CO_2 emissions. The green monitoring data collected via these increasingly widespread programme practices will allow programme managers to come up with initial estimates of the environmental impact of successor Creative Europe Programme overall as well as to assess where further action and support are needed to improve the sustainability of the possible successor programme. Competition (for programme funds) will drive Programme beneficiaries to select the most effective CO_2 calculators for monitoring and reporting purposes[26].

It is anticipated that by the end of this phase actions supporting programme greening and sustainability mainstreaming among beneficiaries' audiences have become an integrated part of the programme. Desks are regularly trained in green developments in their respective programme sectors and feel comfortable guiding applicants and project beneficiaries in enhancing the sustainability of their projects and can signpost these to relevant green consultancy, advisory and technical services. It is also

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26 Including calculators that may be developed and provided by the Commission with integrated and standardised pan-European methodologies.

anticipated that by the end of this phase programme managers, beneficiaries and Desks have acquired the necessary technical know-how and experience in conceiving projects that aspire to be climate neutral.

Achieving a fully green Creative Europe Programme

Timeframe: towards 2050, earlier where possible

With the fourth and last stage, the transition towards a fully green Creative Europe Programme will be completed. In their applications, projects clearly describe their strategy to ensure a sustainable and climate-neutral implementation. As a norm, applicants will choose environmentally friendly activities for their projects, minimising the potential environmental impact of their Programme supported projects. With their activities, many will promote more sustainable practices among European audiences or mitigate with activities foreseen in their greening strategies.

It is anticipated that during this stage programme beneficiaries have become proficient in addressing the programme requirements for green reporting. Where they are in doubt, they can turn to the Creative Europe Desks for advice and support in developing an application for a project that is climate neural. During this phase beneficiaries have come to use the most effective CO_2 calculators (or services / tools that produce the calculations for them) for their specific sector or subsector. Programme contributions to the Green Deal objectives and EU spending on climate objectives are calculated via a centralised system for all EU grant programmes.

As the green transition encompasses society at large, it is foreseen that green alternatives to products, services, and production processes will have become cheaper and more widely available. Where this is not the case, the Creative Europe Programme will provide financial support in line with its objectives. Reports on emissions of CO_2 for potential successor Creative Europe Programme are produced annually, providing a breakdown by strand and action. The Programme is seen as a role model for greening CCS and other EU grant programmes.

Recommended actions

Several actions are recommended to enable and accompany the green transition of the Creative Europe Programme, building on strengths and opportunities and considering the weaknesses and threats to the current greening efforts identified above. In general, this strategy differentiates the following type of recommended actions:

- Voluntary and bottom-up actions that are mostly driven by the beneficiaries of the Programme;

- Formalisation of current greening efforts that aim at acknowledging and perpetuating efforts;

- Mainstreaming systematic assessment against the greening priority in project evaluation;

- New green budget lines that provide resources and incentives for applicants and beneficiaries;

- Adjusting actions to promote greening and to enhance greening knowledge, skills and competencies; and,

- Adjustment of reporting requirements that improve the monitoring of greening efforts.

Voluntary and bottom-up actions

The actions captured under this heading can help draw on and expand the many bottom-up and beneficiary-driven initiatives identified by the Greening study. Acknowledging their role and giving beneficiaries sufficient space to drive the process will be key to a successful green transition. The recommended actions include:

- Continue to coordinate beneficiaries' efforts: Building on their strong relations with Desks and the beneficiaries, provide further coordination support to link different greening initiatives and foster exchange on them within and across strands to realise synergies and avoid overlaps. The Commission is in an ideal position to foster these types of exchanges that are aligned with Programme's objective to strengthen cross-border cooperation.

- Foster peer learning and good practice exchange: The best way for programme beneficiaries to develop and enhance their capabilities is to learn from example. The Greening study has identified peer-learning initiatives that can be promoted further. In addition, the Good environmental practice guide provides a compilation of sector-specific guidelines and good practice examples that can help applicants and beneficiaries alike.

- Showcase green projects: Consider defining green programme labels that motivate projects to green their objectives and activities further or help them promote their efforts more widely. Examples of possible labels could include: 'considerable progress in greening project activities', 'project of relevance to the European Green Deal objectives', or 'project includes green innovation'. With the labels assigned during project evaluation recognise and reward projects with

good and innovative green ideas while respecting applicants' creative, artistic and editorial freedoms. The labels assigned during project evaluation can then be further used in monitoring Programme greening as detailed in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening.

- Establish and promote frontrunners. Acknowledge the different starting points and paces of CCS actors and projects that benefit from Creative Europe support by identifying and promoting those that are particularly advanced or interested in greening their activities. Develop a format (e.g. through peer learning) via which frontrunners can act as ambassadors, promoting their ideas and successes to other actors in their sector or beyond. Consider also fostering connections between networks and initiatives to realise spill-over effects and showcase similarities in the challenges and possible solutions across sectors and strands. The efforts of frontrunners can be particularly important in the first two stages of the transition.

- Consider setting up an online platform as a one stop shop for projects, desks, and the wider CCS: Building on the material collected for this study and especially the Good Environmental Practice Guide, the managing authorities could consider creating an online platform to facilitate the exchange and capacity building across the CCS. The platform could feature examples from across the Strands and schemes and feature cases as well as general good practice examples and guidelines to inspire projects further. Providing continuous updates and an opportunity for projects, desks, and other stakeholders to contribute and share their good practices will ensure that the content of the page remains topical and develops dynamically in parallel to the greening efforts of the Programme. The managing authorities could consider if this online platform should be created as stand-alone website or integrated into the existing infrastructure, for example under https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe, to maximise the visibility of this platform. The platform will also be an ideal format to report on the ongoing efforts of the Programme to green its activities and could feature dynamic charts and visuals that report the data collected as specified in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening.

Formalising current greening efforts

This type of actions aims at providing the right basis on which the green transition of the Creative Europe Programme is based. The actions should aim at acknowledging and formalising current efforts, providing the Commission, Desks, and projects with sufficient certainty on the greening aims and a shared understanding of what greening actions from all key programme stakeholders. The recommended actions include:

- Introduce greening as formal horizontal priority for the programme: In the legislation for the next programming period, include an explicit mention of a programme-wide i.e., transversal and horizontal greening priority[27]. It would need to be explicitly mentioned as a horizontal priority in the body of the

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[27] Currently, greening is only mentioned in the preamble of the Programme Regulation. Please see point 36 of the preamble of the Regulation (EU) 2021/818 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027), available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R0818

Programme Regulation. This would allow Programme managers to introduce and justify minimum requirements for supported projects to address this priority. Including greening as a horizontal priority for the whole programme will also create necessary visibility for the greening imperative, allow stepping up its ambition and help to harmonise approach to programme greening across its strands.

- Create green programme monitoring and evaluation categories: Building on the mapping of the internal and external dimensions of green projects provided by the Greening study, a categorisation of supported projects could be developed by the type of greening objectives and the area of project greening. For the greening objectives, the study identified 'green awareness raising', 'green capacity building', 'development of green tools or instruments', and 'greener vision for Europe' as the main categories. For internal project greening, these monitoring and evaluation categories as well as their corresponding indicators have been established by the Greening study[28]. In following programming periods, these categories could be used by evaluators during the application stage to assess the extent of internal project greening. The green labels and monitoring indicators, detailed in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening, can also help to increase the visibility of different greening efforts through green reporting and promotion of greening progress achieved. They will also be instrumental in monitoring the pace of green transition, in calculating Programme spending on climate objectives, recognising and showcasing projects making a swift progress with greening their activities, promoting environmental preservation, climate neutrality as well as green innovation and experimentation in CCS.

Mainstreaming greening in the project evaluation

The below recommendations will help to anchor and streamline greening requirements firmly in the project evaluation. As the artistic, creative and editorial freedoms prohibit evaluation of projects' applications in terms of mainstreaming climate actions (i.e., the external dimension of greening), the evaluation needs to focus on the internal dimension i.e., assessing if and how projects that have applied to receive programme support intend to limit the environmental impacts of their activities. This entails the following actions:

- Provide systematic assessment of applications against the horizontal greening priority. The results of the Greening study show that under relevance criterion the extent project applicants address the horizonal greening priority is assessed in combination and often interchangeably with other horizontal priorities e.g. digitalisation, inclusion and diversity. The extent project applications address the horizontal greening priority under the relevance assessment needs to be evaluated separately from the other horizontal priorities.

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28 These range from travel and catering to communication, accommodation, and events (please see the study for a complete list).

- Introduce greening as a stand-alone and universal quality criterion in programme calls[29]: To reflect the ambition of greening the Programme in the project evaluation adequately, consider treating greening as a stand-alone element of the evaluation under quality evaluation criterion. The findings of the Greening study suggest that many schemes across the three strands already award points if applicants can provide a greening (sustainability) strategy for their project to be supported or for their organisation as a whole. This requirement needs to be included consistently across all strands and schemes.

- Harmonise the approach to green quality criterion across all strands and schemes: The interpretation and application of existing greening criteria differ across strands and sometimes even within schemes. Further efforts are needed to harmonise sustainability assessment criteria. All applicants should be required to demonstrate how they intend to reduce the climate and environmental impact of their project's activities during the application stage. However, the applicants that have a comprehensive greening / sustainability strategy for their project to be supported or for their organisation as a whole (and where relevant for their partners' organisations) could simply tick a box and upload these strategies for evaluators to review (and forego the need to describe how they intend to address the horizontal greening priority during their proposed project).

- Apply greater evaluation scrutiny and increasing demands for sustainability over time. In line with the four-phase approach proposed in this strategy, and the respective focus during each of these stages, it is anticipated that requirements for internal greening of supported project activities will increase in line with growing opportunities and abilities of project applicants to deliver more climate neutral projects. Hence, scrutiny and demands for applicants to address sustainability of their projects as one of the criteria against which their project applications will be assessed will also need to be increased. Call documents could specify minimum requirements applicants need to comply with to gain points on this award criterion. Increasing overall consistency and clarity on what the award requirements entail will enhance the objectivity of the assessment and make it easier for Desks to provide advice. The starting point in this process of increasing demands for quality of project greening could be the guiding principles for the 'Do no significant harm' principle developed under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF).[30]

- Train the evaluators of project applications in the new sustainability assessment, in what constitutes more sustainable project practices and greening good practices. The findings of the Greening study suggest that currently, experts EACEA engages for the assessment of project applications lack guidance and training as well as clear instructions for assessing sustainability of projects to be potentially supported by Creative Europe a in a harmonised manner. In addition to the recommendations above, training could be provided to application

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29 If greening is introduced as a stand-alone and universal quality criterion in programme calls, the experience and knowledge gained through the MEDIA Strand which already introduced specific points for greening in 2021 should be considered.

30 https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/2021_02_18_epc_do_not_significant_harm_-technical_guidance_by_the_commission.pdf and https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/c2021_1054_en.pdf

evaluators on how to assess the relevance and quality of project greening proposals, including instructions on how to review projects' methodologies or strategies for reducing their climate and environmental impacts as well as guidelines identifying more or less sustainable modes of travel, procurement, energy sources, etc. The RRF guidelines mentioned above and the Good environmental practices guide for Creative Europe Programme developed in the context of the Greening study could serve as starting point for this guidance.

Promoting green costs, capacity and procurement

The recommendations listed below aim to enhance the support available to programme beneficiaries in greening their supported projects. Results of the Greening study suggest that currently green alternatives to activities, products, services, etc. chosen are available yet are perceived to be too expensive or might lead to cost-intense delays or changes to what was initially planned by supported projects. Therefore, to set the right incentives for beneficiaries to enhance their greening efforts and to minimise potential barriers for smaller and less affluent applicants and project initiators, the Creative Europe Programme could explore opportunities to supporting Programme greening under the current actions and administrative provisions. Based on the findings and conclusions of the Greening study actions providing support for the greening of supported projects could take the following forms:

- Invite supported projects to use more sustainable travel, subsistence and green procurement: Many beneficiaries express concerns that currently, not all costs for more sustainable options are eligible and thus reimbursed under the Creative Europe Programme. However, managing authorities stress that more sustainable options are already eligible. To overcome this lack of common understanding, projects could receive more and more targeted information that provides them with a better understanding of the eligible greening costs (e.g. for travel arrangements or the procurement of greener resources, materials or utilities). The Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening also includes a list of recommended eligible greening costs that could be covered under future programmes.[31]

- Support the development of green expertise and green capacity building within the programme: As proposed in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening, consider funding efforts of projects to enhance their knowledge and skills on sustainability and the sustainable implementation of projects via eligible greening costs. For projects that can demonstrate how training (also on how to obtain green certification) or other green capacity building measures will help them to green their supported project, the costs related to the use of these green services could be covered by eligible greening costs. This type of capacity building and training could be particularly relevant for Desks that often are the first contact point for projects seeking information on how to green their activities.

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31 Where beneficiaries need to invest in their infrastructure and technologies, explore complementarities between the Creative Europe Programme and other EU funds that support the CCS, which can be identified via the CulturEU Funding Guide: https://culture.ec.europa.eu/funding/cultureu-funding-guide.

- Incentivise procurement of greener goods and services than supported project would typically use: Programme applicants and beneficiaries may struggle to develop sustainability strategies or to green their project activities without professional advice or support. They may require input from greening consultants or other advisory services. As proposed in the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening partners of supported projects should consider procuring goods and services of providers that can also demonstrate their environmental commitments or provide evidence that attest that their services are (or aim to be) climate neutral. The procurement of these more sustainable goods and services could be covered as eligible greening costs under the Creative Europe Programme to enhance the robustness of the supported projects greening strategies and to promote more sustainable support services solutions. Due to the nature of the Programme, only costs acquired during project implementation should be eligible for reimbursement. This includes, for example, costs to measure the ecological footprint of supported projects (see adjustment of reporting requirements below), as well as costs of green consultants, evaluation or auditing services that are climate neutral.

Developing actions to promote and integrate greening

The recommendations outlined below aim to anchor Programme greening within its strands and actions. Actions to promote greening can be integrated into existing Creative Europe schemes or take the form of public procurement:

- Support for knowledge exchange and peer learning among beneficiaries: As the Greening study highlights, lack of knowledge and capacity is often a key barrier to further greening of supported projects. At the same time, the study also suggests that many efforts are already made to build capacity, share knowledge, and disseminate good greening practices. Knowledge exchange and peer learning among programme beneficiaries could take place within the existing schemes (e.g. networks, platforms, festivals, cooperation and co-production projects) as well as via dedicated green procurement calls focused on promoting knowledge exchange and peer learning under the Cross-sectoral strand.

- Consider further strengthening the capacity building among Desks: As the study suggests, Creative Europe Desks receive many enquiries from applicants and beneficiaries interested in greening their applications or supported project activities. Currently, many Desks do not have the required knowledge and capacity to advise these projects. Therefore, consider using the Cross-sectoral strand to address Desks training needs for providing guidance on Creative Europe application and project greening. Building up the green capacity among Desks can potentially have a significant multiplier effect. Green capacity building for Creative Europe Desks could entail training activities, peer learning, and other modes of capacity building (e.g. guides, factsheets[32,] good practices).

- Consider providing supported projects with green consultancy services aimed at greening their project practices: Explore a possibility to provide green

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32 E.g.on more sustainable practices or less carbon intensive energy sources.

consultancy services to supported projects via other supported projects (e.g. networks or platforms) or via a dedicated technical assistance project selected via a competitive procedure to build on beneficiaries' on-going efforts to green their project, support their greening efforts and direct them towards effective green strategies and solutions. The availability of these services may have a strong signalling effect across the Programme, even for beneficiaries that do not chose to take part in them (suggesting that their peers are receiving greening support and guidance that may also benefit their project).

- Set up new green prizes for excellence in programme greening. Consider launching an annual award of prize that acknowledges the efforts made by programme beneficiaries in greening their supported project activities, mainstreaming climate actions among their audiences and driving the greening across the programme e.g. with creative ideas, effective practices, or prominent greening activities. Following the two dimensions identified by the Greening study, there could be a prize for a project that shows excellence in internal greening of any of its supported project activities (from methodologies to implementation, monitoring and reporting), as well as a prize for a project that shows outstanding achievements in raising awareness for sustainability and environmental issues. In addition, to recognise the efforts of programme managers and Desks, there could also be a prize for the initiative that had most impact on greening the programme as a whole that particular year. Projects, programme managers and Desks would be invited to apply for the prizes. The process would help to identify frontrunners across the programme, and incentivise winning projects and individuals with recognition, but also others to step up and promote their work on programme greening.

Adjusting of reporting requirements on greening

The recommendations presented below aim to enhance the knowledge base on the state of the green transition and to increase the accountability of all actors involved in the Creative Europe Programme greening. Currently, neither beneficiaries nor the Commission is required to report on the greening efforts under the Creative Europe Programme, which makes it difficult to assess the current state of play and to measure any greening progress made over time. The following actions can help to improve this situation (please note that the Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening contains a more comprehensive overview of recommendations in this area):

- Cover supported projects greening efforts in their reporting: The reporting requirements for beneficiaries provide the ideal channel through which information on greening efforts can be looped back to the Commission. The evidence collected during the Greening study suggests that currently, only a few projects explicitly report on their greening efforts, and the way beneficiaries report on their efforts differs substantially. To start with, the Commission could require beneficiaries across all strands and schemes to report if they have put in place a genuine greening strategy for their supported project or organisation or alternatively systematically ask them to describe the actions they will take to address the horizonal greening priority of the Programme. In addition,

programme beneficiaries would need to provide information to substantiate the reimbursement of their eligible greening costs.

- Report on the share and value of supported projects pursuing green objectives: The Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening proposes four indicators for assessing the nature and volume of Creative Europe supported projects that promote fight against climate change, environmental and sustainability objectives. With the information collected by external researchers against these indicators the Commission can report the extent Programme contributes to mainstreaming climate actions to the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union as well as the interested public at large at interim and ex-post evaluation stages of the programme implementation. The Monitoring Guide for Programme Greening also includes five indicators for assessing the Programme contribution towards the European Green Deal objectives for this this institutional accountability.

European Commission

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