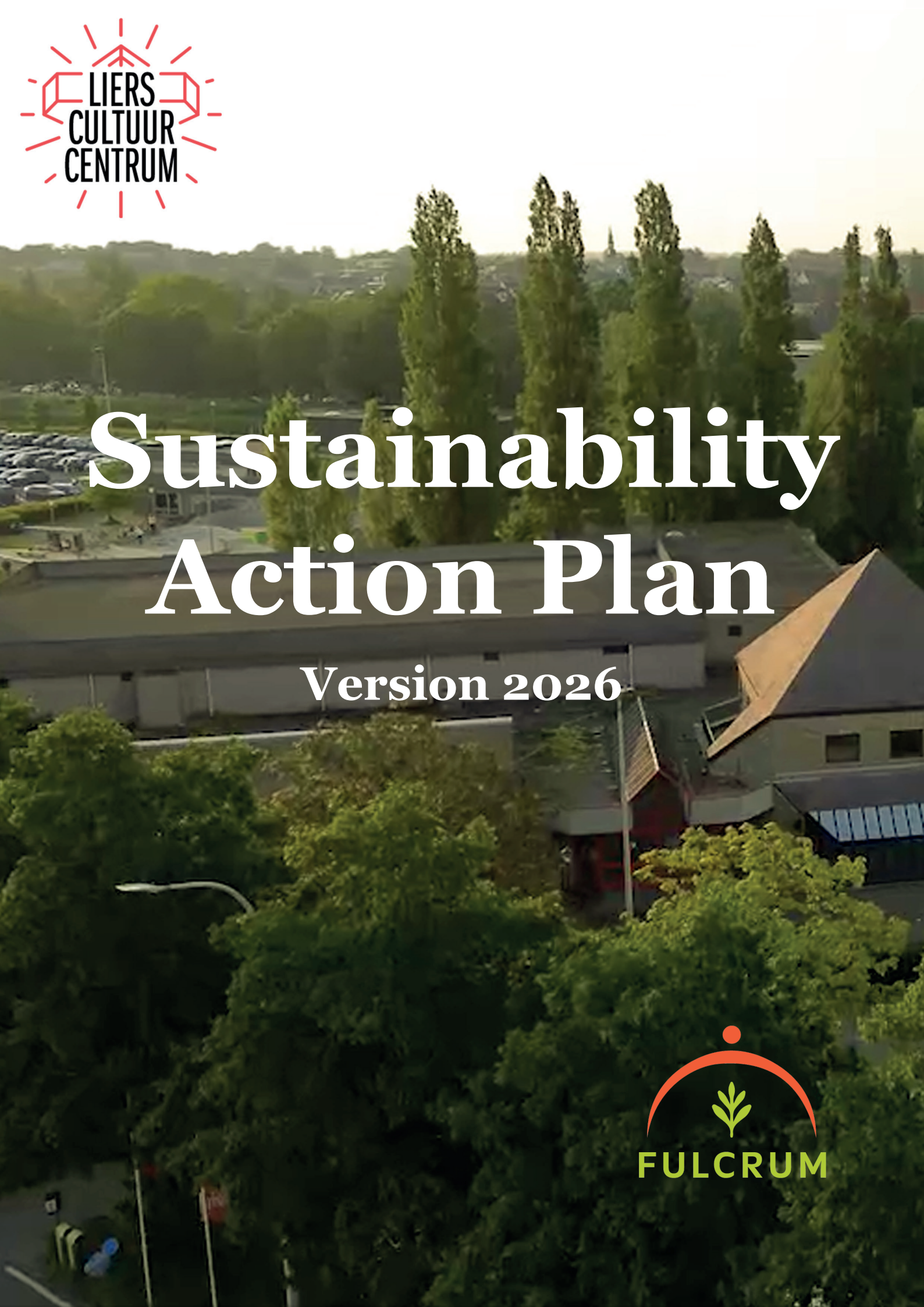
LIERS CULTUUR CENTRUM

Sustainability Action Plan

Version 2026



FULCRUM



Small actions can create real impact.

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01 Forword

This Sustainability Action Plan emerged from a growing awareness that sustainability within the Liers Cultuurcentrum is not an optional addition, but an essential and future-defining pillar of our organisation. This insight did not arise solely from internal reflection, but was significantly strengthened through our participation in the European FULCRUM programme, an Erasmus+ project aimed at supporting socio-cultural organisations in their sustainable transition.

Within the framework of the Sustainability at the Centre trajectory, we took part between 2024 and 2025 in an intensive learning and exchange programme alongside eight other cultural organisations from across Europe. This journey began in Turin and offered us the opportunity to gain deeper insight into the environmental impact of cultural organisations, and more importantly into the many ways that impact can be positively influenced. The guidance, inspiration and methodology provided throughout this programme formed a key driving force in the development of this action plan.

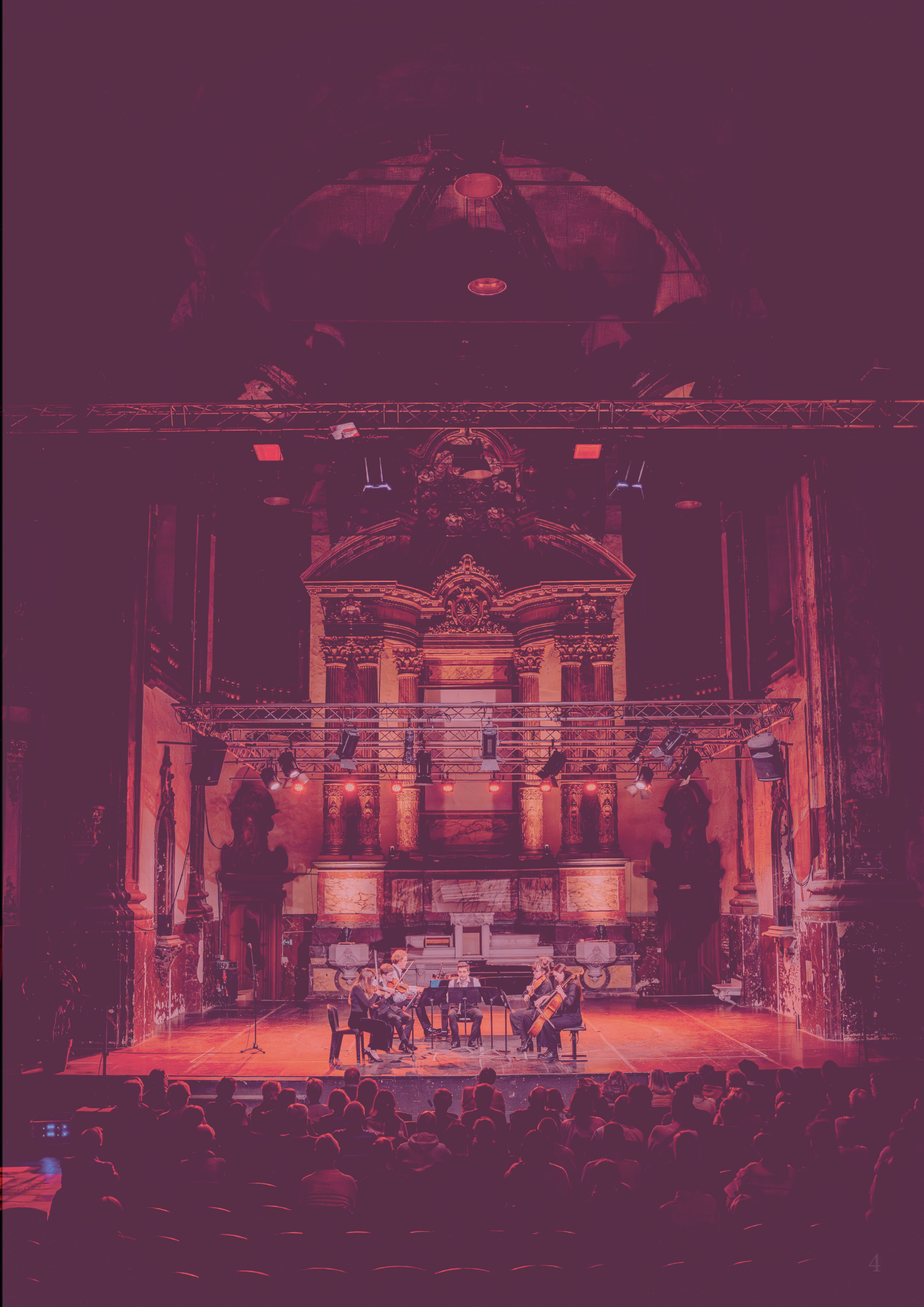
One observation remained central throughout the entire programme: a lack of knowledge, insight or tools related to sustainability does not only lead to negative environmental impacts, but also results in higher costs, wasted resources and missed opportunities. At the same time, the programme highlighted the significant potential of socio-cultural centres. As places of encounter and sources of inspiration, cultural organisations can play a crucial role in just transitions by making their own operations more sustainable, strengthening local communities and inspiring visitors and partners.

The FULCRUM toolkit, developed as part of the programme, provided us with a concrete and practical framework to analyse our ecological footprint and to define targeted actions tailored to our organisational context. Using this toolkit, we addressed themes such as energy, mobility, materials, waste, events and policy, always with attention to feasibility and relevance.

The closing FULCRUM-conference in March 2025 did not mark the end of a project, but rather a turning point. Ideas, insights and shared ambitions came together and formed the starting point of a broader movement. As the Liers Cultuurcentrum, we aim to carry this momentum forward in our daily operations and take on the role of a sustainability ambassador within our cultural house and the wider cultural ecosystem of Lier.

This Sustainability Action Plan is therefore not an endpoint, but a starting point: a guide to working more consciously step by step, to experimenting, adjusting and learning together. Much work still lies ahead, but with the insights gained through the FULCRUM programme, European collaboration and a clear ambition, we are already taking focused steps towards a more sustainable, resilient and future-oriented cultural practice. (source: fulcum-culture.eu/)

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02 General Introduction: Why sustainability Matters for Our Cultural Centre

In recent years, sustainability has become one of the defining challenges of our time.

Climate change, social inequality, and economic instability demand collective, creative responses. Cultural centres, as places where people meet, create, and reflect, have a unique capacity to bridge the environmental and the social dimensions of sustainability.

For our centre, developing a clear and shared sustainability vision is not merely an operational necessity; it is an ethical and cultural commitment. By aligning our practices and programmes with sustainable principles, we ensure that our work remains relevant, responsible, and resilient. This vision connects our artistic and community missions with the urgent need to care for people and our planet.

Below are key reasons why it is important for our cultural centre to have a sustainability vision and work proactively toward sustainability.

2.1 Reducing negative environmental impacts while optimizing resources

Cultural activities (events, exhibitions, performances) can generate significant environmental footprints: energy consumption, waste, carbon emissions (from travel, materials, heating/cooling), etc. Without sufficient knowledge, centres may unintentionally cause harm, incur higher resource costs, and miss opportunities for savings. Having a clear sustainability vision allows you to (source: encc.eu):

- Assess and track environmental impacts (energy, materials, waste)
- Adopt best practices that reduce waste, pollution, and costs
- Access funding, support, and partnerships that are increasingly tied to environmental credentials

2.2 Fostering social justice, inclusion, and community engagement

Sustainability is not just about the environment but also about creating fair, inclusive societies. Cultural centres serve as hubs for communities: for dialogue, identity, belonging, expression. By integrating a vision of just sustainability you (source: encc.eu):

- Ensure that marginalised voices are included in decision-making and benefit from your programmes.
- Build resilience in the community (social ties, shared resources, awareness) in the face of climate or economic instability.
- Use culture to shift values and practices: inspire new behavior toward sustainability, not only among audiences, but among staff, artists, partners.

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2.3 Role modelling and transformative potential

Cultural centres are more than event venues; they are agents of change. They can lead by example. According to ENCC research, socio-cultural centres have a transformative power in just sustainability transitions.

This means:

- You can pilot innovations (circular economy, sustainable mobility, ethical digitalisation) that others in your city or region can adopt.
- You can influence policy or local practices by showing what is possible when culture and environment meet.
- You strengthen your legitimacy and relevance: audiences and stakeholders increasingly expect institutions to act responsibly toward climate and social issues. Having a vision helps meet those expectations and safeguards your centre's future.

2.4 Ensuring long-term resilience

A sustainability vision helps your centre to anticipate future risks and adapt accordingly. Whether it's energy price volatility, regulatory changes (e.g. environmental regulations), or changing audience expectations: having a plan and vision builds resilience.

Additionally, sustainability efforts often lead to cost savings (energy, waste, operational efficiencies) which can free resources to invest in artistic programming, community engagement, or adaptation.

2.5 Conclusion General Introduction

In sum: having a sustainability vision connects environmental responsibility, social justice, community engagement, financial sustainability, resilience, and reputational standing. For our centre, a coherent, committed vision will provide direction, help set priorities, measure progress, engage stakeholders (staff, artists, audiences, funders), and ultimately ensure that your work continues to be meaningful, impactful, and sustainable in both senses of the word.



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03 About Our Cultural Centre and Why We Act

We are the Cultural Centre of Lier, located in the heart of a beautiful historic city in Belgium.

Our main building serves as a vibrant home for many cultural and community activities, but our work reaches far beyond its walls. Across the city, in the different cultural places and theatres, community halls, public spaces, and even outdoors, we bring culture to where people live, meet, and connect. In many ways, the entire municipality is our playground.

We offer a wide and inclusive range of cultural experiences: theatre, music, dance, film, comedy, classical concerts, literature, and more. Everyone is welcome: children, youth, families, individuals, senior citizens, institutions, organisations and many more. Together with partners, we develop special projects that strengthen our community role, like world kitchens, collaborations with art-house cinemas, and intergenerational activities with the community centres,,...

As a cultural hub, we recognise that sustainability is an essential part of cultural work. Cultural centres consume considerable energy and resources, but they also hold an important social responsibility. We want to lead by example and to offer a platform where urgent topics such as climate change, social justice, and environmental awareness can be explored, discussed, and expressed in accessible, creative ways.

Our main infrastructure is an old building. One that was never designed for the range of activities we host today. It no longer meets contemporary standards, especially regarding energy efficiency and sustainability. That is why we are working towards the development of a new building that will align with modern climate and comfort requirements.

Yet sustainability does not begin only with a new facility. In the meantime, we are taking many smaller, meaningful steps to reduce our ecological footprint and raise awareness among our visitors, staff, and partners. We believe that even small actions can create real impact and that consistent, collective effort will make our centre more resilient, responsible, and ready for the future.

This is why we are developing a Sustainability Action Plan: a roadmap that guides our journey towards a more environmentally conscious and socially just cultural practice.

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04 Who We Are: The Team Behind Culture and Events

4.1 Team Culture and Events

Behind every performance, festival, and community event in the city of Lier stands a dedicated and creative team for Culture and Events. We form part of the local municipality in the department 'Uit in Lier', which unites several teams working together to make our city vibrant, connected, and inspiring. Together, we build the social and cultural fabric that gives Lier its warm, lively character.

Our mission is clear: to strengthen participation in culture and to use cultural experiences as a foundation for connection, dialogue, and community life. Through a diverse programme of events, we aim to reach every inhabitant and visitor. From long-time residents to newcomers, from the youngest to the oldest, from professionals to volunteers.

At the core of this mission stands a team of 15 staff members, representing about 12 full-time equivalents (VTEs). Each person contributes specific expertise (from programming and technical production to communication, local cultural policy, and event coordination in the city). Together, we ensure that every project, from a small local event to a major city festival, runs smoothly. Next to the events everywhere in the city we have one main building that serves as cultural house. This house offers a wide range of performances: theatre, music, dance, film, comedy, classical concerts, literature, and more.

Besides a team of staff members, our volunteers are indispensable. In the 2024–2025 season, 27 active volunteers supported us regularly, while a small database of occasional helpers stands ready to assist during large projects or events. They welcome visitors, manage the coatroom, assist with ticket checks, prepare bars and materials, and offer a friendly face at every event.

Behind the scenes, three technical volunteers from De Moeve, the youth centre located next door, regularly join our technical crew. They help build and dismantle stages and, along the way, develop new technical skills. This collaboration strengthen our both houses: the youth centre and the cultural centre. Sharing knowledge, helping each other and creating opportunities.
We also work hand in hand with many partners: the Podiumacademie, local associations, schools, Visit Lier, Jeugddienst, Sportdienst, and countless artists and cultural organisations.

4.2 What We Do

Our activities cover three main domains:

- **The Liers Cultuurcentrum:** Programming professional and local performances in theatre, music, dance, film, comedy, and literature. We combine artistic excellence with community warmth and offer a platform for both established and emerging talent such as local talent as young and new upcoming talent.
- **Events:** Organising citywide happenings such as Zomer in het Park, Supervlieg, Lier Feest, and Kerst in Lier, while also supporting external organisers and associations.
- **Local Cultural Policy:** Through the Cultuurforum, we facilitate citizen participation in cultural
- decision-making and support more than 120 recognised local associations with advice, recognition, and project grants.

Together, these three pillars ensure that culture in Lier is not confined to a building, but lives and breathes across the entire city in its streets, squares, schools, and neighbourhoods.

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05 Objectives on Sustainability for the Cultural House

5.1 Sustainable Energy Management

Current situation

Our current energy and gas consumption is:

- Electricity consumption (2015–2025): roughly fluctuates between ~100,000–115,000 kWh per year, with a noticeable spike in 2021 (≈160,000 kWh) and a strong drop in 2025 (≈67,000 kWh). Likely due to changed use, efficiency measures, or temporary closures. On average, we use approximately 110,000 kWh of electricity each year.
- Gas consumption (2015–2025): starts very high (≈370,000 kWh in 2013) and shows a gradual downward trend over time, reaching ≈127,000 kWh in 2025. Indicating clear progress in heating efficiency and/or reduced heating demand. On average, we use approximately 230,000 kWh of gas each year.

Annual Electricity and Gas Consumption (2012–2025) at the Liers Cultuurcentrum:

Year	Electricity (kWh)	Gas (kWh)	Impact
2012	3,050	24,150	Low due to startup team culture and events
2013	106,934	373,243	High gas usage
2014	101,406	308,618	
2015	99,456	302,016	
2016	101,965	337,197	
2017	109,644	303,579	
2018	113,024	306,205	
2019	106,558	269,873	
2020	104,227	286,621	
2021	160,414	329,598	Noticeable spike
2022	109,507	239,119	
2023	104,570	196,440	
2024	106,726	222,978	
2025	66,993	127,450	Strong drop because during covid we changed our ventilation system that heats the air, so our ventilation works less on gass heating and more on electricity.

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Strategic Objectives

Our current cultural house aims to steadily reduce energy consumption through low-cost, behaviour-driven and efficiency-focused measures. By prioritising awareness, good habits, and simple technical improvements (such as LED lighting, better use of heating, and switching devices off), we will achieve a 20% reduction in electricity and gas use by 2030 compared to our recent average consumption (2023–2025).

AI usage

At the Liers Cultuurcentrum, we sometimes make use of AI. However, this does consume water and energy. When using AI, we do take the following rules into account, namely:

- Formulating only commands that are truly necessary and avoiding unnecessary data processing.
- We deliberately keep files small.
- Reducing unnecessary data usage and energy consumption.

We do this because five prompts consume approximately one glass of water. Individually, this is not much, but it does differ on a larger scale.

Operational Objectives

By 2030, we will:

- Replace all remaining conventional light bulbs with LED alternatives. (except for theater light which specific characteristics and demanings by artists).
- Introduce clear “switch-off” routines for staff and visitors, aiming to cut electricity from devices and lighting by at least 5 to 10%. To increase engagement and encourage consistent switchoff behaviour, the Liers Cultuurcentrum will develop playful and visually appealing reminder designs to place near light switches and doors. These small nudges make energysaving habits more intuitive and help staff, volunteers and visitors remember to switch off lights and devices when leaving a room.
- Optimise heating use by setting standard room temperatures, adjusting heating based on occupancy, and reducing heating waste (e.g., by sealing draughts).

Together, these measures should lower annual electricity consumption to under 85,000 kWh and gas use to under 115,000 kWh by 2026, without requiring major financial investments.



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In the coming years, the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to:

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Expected Impact
Replace all remaining conventional light bulbs with LEDs.	Facility manager	End of 2030	5–8% reduction in electricity for lighting.
Install motion sensors/timers in hallways, toilets, and storage areas.	Facility manager	End of 2030	Cuts unnecessary lighting use, ~5% saving.
Create a "last one out turns everything off" checklist (lights, devices, amplifiers, kitchen appliances).	Staff + volunteers	Immediate (2025)	5–10% reduction in standby and lighting consumption.
Group devices on switchable power strips for easy shutdown.	Facility manager	End of 2030	Avoids standby losses (phantom power).
Optimise heating schedule: reduce setpoint by 1–2°C, adjust by roo.m occupancy.	Facility manager	Heating season 2025/26	~6% energy saved per °C lowered.
Seal draughts with simple draught stoppers / curtains.	Facility manager	End of 2030	Improves comfort and lowers heat loss.
Close off unused rooms and reduce heating in low-use areas.	Staff	Continuous	Direct heating energy savings.
Display energy use (kWh electricity & gas) on noticeboard, communication tools to the team.	Sustainability coordinator	Start early 2026	Builds awareness, supports behavioural change.
Place reminder stickers near switches and thermostats.	In team	2026-2027	Nudges users to save energy.
Run "switch-off campaign" for staff, volunteers, and visitors (who rent the place).	Communication team	2026-2027	Reduces wasted electricity.
Defrost freezers/fridges regularly, check seals.	Facility manager or staff	Twice a year	Prevents 10–20% excess appliance energy use.
Enable energy-saving modes on computers, printers, and projectors.	IT / staff	2026	Lower electricity consumption.
Replace old appliances with energy-efficient ones upon end-of-life	Facility manager	Ongoing (2025–2030)	Gradual reduction in base load electricity.

CO2 compensation Plan for our Cultural House: Liers Cultuurcentrum:

A carbon footprint represents the total amount of greenhouse gases, primarily CO2 released as a result of an organisation's activities. It includes emissions from energy use, heating, mobility, purchased goods, catering, waste and all other processes that contribute to climate impact. Understanding our carbon footprint allows us to identify where emissions occur, which actions are most effective in reducing them, and how we can take responsibility for the environmental impact of our cultural operations. It also enables us to set realistic reduction targets and monitor our progress over time.

Although the Liers Cultuurcentrum prioritises reducing emissions at the source through energy efficiency, sustainable mobility, responsible material use and proper waste management, some emissions will always remain unavoidable. CO2 compensation therefore serves as a complementary measure within our climate strategy. It does not replace emission reduction, but provides an additional step for addressing the residual emissions that cannot be eliminated in the short term. Compensation will always remain a small but meaningful component of our broader sustainability approach.

The purpose of CO2 compensation is to offset unavoidable emissions by supporting projects that remove CO2 from the atmosphere or prevent additional emissions elsewhere. By incorporating compensation into our climate policy, we acknowledge our ecological footprint while contributing to wider environmental and community benefits beyond the cultural centre itself.

To ensure that compensation is credible and impactful, the Liers Cultuurcentrum applies the following principles:

- Reduction first: compensation is only applied to emissions that cannot be further reduced through operational or behavioural improvements.
- Local focus: preference is given to projects with a clear link to Lier or the surrounding region, strengthening engagement and visibility.
- Transparency: the type of project and the quantity of compensated emissions will be clearly documented and communicated.
- Quality and reliability: supported projects must be realistic, verifiable and aligned with recognised standards.

The Liers Cultuurcentrum is exploring several compensation options that align with our cultural and community-oriented mission. Potential avenues include:

- Treeplanting and urban greening initiatives in collaboration with the City of Lier and local nature organisations such as Natuurpunt and Bos+. These projects strengthen local ecosystems, support biodiversity and offer meaningful opportunities to compensate for unavoidable emissions.
- Regional biodiversity projects, such as riverbank restoration, planting native species or supporting ecological green maintenance.
- Collaborations with schools, youth organisations and associations to implement climatepositive activities such as tree planting or maintaining small green areas.
- Certified CO2 removal projects, when suitable local options are not available.

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In the coming years, the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to:

Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Expected Impact
Identify which remaining emissions should be compensated.	Facility manager	2026-2027	Clear overview of all non-replaceable emissions (residual emissions).
Select compensation projects that fit our scale, resources and organisational context.	Facility manager	2027	Clear criteria for project selection (local, reliable, verifiable).
Integrate CO2 compensation into future sustainability reporting.	Sustainability coordinator	2028	Transparency regarding the amount of emissions offset and through which projects.

Through these steps, CO2 compensation becomes a meaningful extension of our reduction efforts. It enables us to take responsibility for the remaining climate impact of our organisation while contributing to local climate initiatives and fostering a more resilient environment for the community of Lier.

5.2 Sustainable Water Management

Current situation

Currently, our cultural house does not have direct visibility of its water consumption. Meter readings are aggregated at the city level, and no sub-meters exist to track usage within the building. As a result, precise monitoring of daily or monthly water consumption is not feasible at this time.

Despite the lack of quantitative data, we can still take meaningful action to reduce water waste, improve efficiency, and manage rainwater sustainably. Our focus will therefore be on behavioural change, low-cost efficiency measures, prevention of pollution, and the implementation of additional rainwater capture and infiltration solutions, in line with city climate objectives and sustainable water management best practices.*

Strategic Objectives

By 2030, our cultural house will actively contribute to the city's climate neutrality goals by reducing avoidable water waste and promoting sustainable water use. Through awareness, behavioural change, and practical improvements, we will set an example for the community in responsible water management and encourage re-use, buffering, and infiltration of rainwater where possible.

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Operational Objectives

By 2030, we will:

- Promote behavioural change: place water-saving reminders near taps and toilets, and organise at least one awareness campaign per year for staff, volunteers, and visitors on the importance of water conservation.
- Reduce unnecessary freshwater use: install water-saving devices (e.g., tap aerators, dual-flush toilets, timed taps) where financially feasible.
- Minimise pollution of wastewater: phase out harmful cleaning products and switch to eco-labelled, biodegradable alternatives by 2027.
- Implement rainwater measures where possible: explore small-scale rainwater collection (e.g., barrels for garden/green maintenance) and infiltration solutions beyond the mandatory legal requirements.
- Encourage sustainable procurement: prioritize products and services with a lower water footprint (e.g., reusable instead of single-use items, less water-intensive catering options).
- Explore roofbased rainwater harvesting: assess the technical feasibility of collecting rainwater from the roof for nonpotable purposes (e.g., flushing toilets, cleaning tasks or garden/green maintenance), in line with safety regulations and infrastructure capacity.



Water Reduction Action Plan for Liers Culuurcentrum:

Action	Responsible	Deadline	Expected Impact
Place water-saving reminder stickers near all taps and toilets (in classrooms and bathrooms used during school visits).	Staff	Early 2026	Increased awareness; fewer taps left running.
Assign a staff member or volunteer to check that taps are turned off after events (especially with events for primary and high school).	Staff + volunteers	Start immediately	Reduction in avoidable water waste during high-use events
Install low-cost water-saving devices where feasible (tap aerators, dual-flush toilets, timed taps).	Facility manager	?	Reduction in water flow per use; measurable if sub-meters installed in future.
Explore small-scale rainwater collection (barrels for garden/ plant maintenance).	Facility manager / sustainability coordinator	?	Captures rainwater for non-potable use; reduces demand on municipal water.
Promote infiltration solutions beyond legal requirements (e.g., small rain gardens, permeable surfaces).	Facility manager / sustainability coordinator	?	Reduces stormwater runoff and contributes to local water cycle.
Phase out harmful cleaning products and switch to eco-labelled, biodegradable alternatives.	Cleaning staff / procurement	2026	Reduced grey water pollution; staff trained on safe use.
Create an internal “water footprint alert list” for procurement: products and materials with high water consumption (e.g., bottled water, certain catering items, paper products).	Procurement / sustainability coordinator	2026	Increased awareness in purchasing decisions; indirect water savings.
Conduct periodic staff awareness sessions on water conservation.	Sustainability coordinator / staff	Annual	Behavioural change; fewer leaks or waste incidents.
Encourage visitor awareness through signage and campaigns.	Communication team	Ongoing	Visitors adopt water-saving behaviours; complements staff actions.
Investigate options for partial water sub-metering to monitor usage in high-traffic areas (future investment if budget allows).	Facility manager / city liaison	?	Enables quantitative tracking of water use; informs future measures.
Monitor and log any observed leaks or overflows, and repair immediately.	Staff / volunteers	Continuous	Prevents avoidable water waste; KPI = number of leaks fixed per year.

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5·3 Sustainable Mobility Management

Global mobility

Mobility represents a substantial portion of our overall environmental impact. Mobility is responsible for approximately 24% of CO2 emissions globally, with an even higher share in developed regions such as the United States and the European Union. In addition to CO2, the transport sector emits other powerful greenhouse gases, including nitrous oxide.

However, climate change is only one dimension of mobility's environmental footprint. Vehicles also release harmful air pollutants such as nitrogen oxides (NOx), particulate matter (PM), carbon monoxide (CO) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These pollutants pose significant risks to human health, particularly in urban areas where traffic congestion results in high concentrations. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), approximately 4.2 million deaths per year are attributable to ambient air pollution, with transportation being a major contributing factor.

Mobility in Liers Cultuurcentrum: Analysing current situation

A user survey conducted in 2022 shows that a significant share of visitors lives relatively close to the Liers Cultuurcentrum. Approximately 10.40% of visitors live less than 1 kilometre from the venue, indicating strong potential for active travel modes such as walking or cycling. In addition, 38.06% of visitors live within a radius of 1 to 5 kilometres, a distance well suited for cycling or a combination of walking and public transport. A further 31.44% lives between 6 and 10 kilometres, which still falls within a range where sustainable alternatives remain feasible, such as using an electric bicycle or public transport.

This distance distribution suggests that, in theory, a large portion of the audience could travel sustainably to the cultural centre. However, the modal split shows that car use remains dominant. This indicates the presence of barriers such as comfort, safety concerns, habit, or limited availability of public transport that prevent visitors from choosing sustainable mobility options despite the relatively short distances.

The distance data therefore provides an important indicator of the potential for behavioural change. It clearly shows that there is considerable room to further encourage sustainable alternatives, especially among the group living within 5 kilometres, but also among visitors within 10 kilometres, who with suitable infrastructure and communication could be more inclined to choose cycling, ebiking, or public transport.

How visitors travel to the Liers Cultuurcentrum:

Transport to Liers CC	Liers CC	Cluster A	Belguim	Europe
By private car	69,58%	50,14%	62,46%	59,62%
By bicycle / scooter	35,74%	39,21%	36,64%	35,86%
Walking	15,40%	23,16%	23,88%	22,75%
Carpooling	9,32%	8,30%	9,87%	9,48%
By public transport	3,99%	12,50%	7,01%	7,93%
Dropped off and picked up	2,09%	3,26%	1,96%	2,64%
Carsharing (e.g., Cambio, Poppy)	0,19%	0,19%	0,25%	0,21%
Other	0,19%	0,72%	0,53%	0,59%
By electric scooter	0,00%	0,11%	0,12%	0,09%

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Distance visitors live from the Liers Cultuurcentrum:

Transport distance to Liers CC	Liers CC	Cluster B	Flanders
Less than 1 km	10,40%	13,49%	15,12%
Between 1 to 5 km	38,06%	38,79%	44,16%
Between 6 to 10 km	31,44%	25,06%	20,53%
Between 10 to 50 km	18,91%	21,33%	17,71%
More than 50 km	0,47%	1,11%	2,19%
No idea	0,71%	0,22%	0,30%

Analysing surroundings of Liers Cultuurcentrum

The mobility choices of visitors, artists, staff and suppliers are influenced by the characteristics of the immediate surroundings of Liers Cultuurcentrum. The centre is located in an urban environment where residential neighbourhoods, commercial zones and public services intersect. This central position offers significant opportunities for sustainable travel, yet it also presents several challenges that shape current mobility behaviour.

The walkability of the area around Liers Cultuurcentrum is generally favourable, with many visitors living within short distances that make walking or cycling feasible. However, the quality and continuity of pedestrian routes vary, particularly in areas with higher traffic volumes. Intersections, lighting conditions and perceived safety influence whether visitors are willing to choose active modes of transport, especially during evening events. Visitors sometimes experience a sense of fear due to the remote parking lot they have to pass to return to the center of Lier. This is an important point of attention for renovations or the potential new cultural center. In this regard, we should take into account making entrances and routes to home, the center, and public transport more pleasant.

Cycling infrastructure is essential for the centre's mobility potential. Several cycling routes connect Lier with neighbouring districts, offering a strong basis for bike use. But easy access still depends on safe routes, clear signage and adequate, secure bicycle parking. Cycling can be a practical choice for many visitors, but only when the infrastructure supports comfortable and safe travel.

Public transport connections face limitations, particularly during evenings and weekends when a lot cultural programming are taking place. While bus services are available, their frequency and alignment with event schedules are often insufficient to compete with the convenience of private car use. The distance to nearby train stations, combined with limited late-night connections, further reduces the attractiveness of public transport for audiences travelling from neighbouring municipalities. But the city of Lier is investigating turning the site of the Lier Cultuurcentrum into a mobility hub where it is easy to switch from one mode of transport to another.

Car accessibility remains high, and this is reflected in the dominance of private car use among visitors. The surrounding streets offer parking opportunities, yet these are not always sufficient during peak times, leading to increased pressure on local residential areas. The availability of parking near the cultural centre reinforces habitual car use, even for visitors who live at walking or cycling distance.

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The surroundings of Liers Cultuurcentrum offer both opportunities and constraints for sustainable mobility. While the compact urban setting supports active travel, barriers related to infrastructure, safety, evening accessibility and public transport availability continue to shape current travel behaviour. Understanding these contextual factors is essential for identifying targeted interventions that can encourage visitors, staff and artists to choose more sustainable ways of travelling to and from the cultural centre.

Mobility of staff, artists & partners

The daily mobility patterns of staff, artists and partners form an important part of the cultural centre's overall mobility profile. Staff members often work during regular office hours but also frequently cover evening and weekend shifts, which makes public transport less feasible and increases dependence on private cars. This contributes to structural emissions and influences the daily ecological impact of the cultural centre.

Visiting artists and production teams typically travel to Lier by car or van, as they often bring and transport technical equipment, instruments or scenographic materials. These journeys are essential for delivering the cultural programme but simultaneously increase the centre's transport-related impact. Partners, suppliers and external organisations also generate regular traffic movements for deliveries, catering, technical support or event logistics.

For artists travelling to Lier, we encourage the use of the Green Tickets European Travel Planner, which compares routes by train, car and plane and highlights the most sustainable choice. For example, a group of four artists travelling from Berlin to Lier will often see that the highspeed train via Cologne and Brussels/Antwerp is the most climatefriendly and practical option. If timing or heavy equipment makes this difficult, carpooling is usually the nextbest choice. Shorthaul flights remain the least sustainable option and should only be considered when no realistic train or car alternative exists.

In the coming years, we aim to monitor mobility patterns more systematically and explore targeted measures such as promoting bicycle use, improving bicycle parking and related facilities, and reducing unnecessary travel where possible.

Mobility of visitors

Visitor mobility represents the largest share of all travel movements connected to the cultural centre and therefore plays a crucial role in our overall environmental impact. Thanks to detailed survey data, we have a clear understanding of how visitors travel to the Liers cultuurcentrum and the distances they typically cover to reach it.

Mobility figures show that 69.58% of visitors arrive by private car. This percentage is significantly higher than the national and European averages and indicates that many visitors rely heavily on their own vehicle. This suggests that sustainable alternatives are still underused by the cultural centre's audience.

A considerable share of visitors does use more sustainable modes of transport. 35.74% come by bicycle or scooter, a proportion comparable to regional and European averages, reflecting a strong cycling culture in and around Lier. Additionally, 15.40% of visitors come on foot, showing that the cultural centre is well integrated into the urban environment and accessible to those living nearby. Both figures, however, remain below regional averages, indicating room for improvement.

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Public transport use remains limited at 3.99%. This low figure is closely linked to the limited availability of bus and train services during the evening hours, when the majority of cultural activities take place. The distance to the nearest station and the lack of latenight connections make public transport less attractive for visitors from surrounding municipalities. Carpooling accounts for 9.32%, showing that shared travel does occur within a segment of the audience. Other sustainable options, such as carpooling or electric scooters, are used only by a very small group.

Travel distance plays an important role in these modal choices. Survey results show that 10.40% of visitors live less than 1 km from the centre, 38.06% live within 1–5 km, and 31.44% within 6 to 10 km. These distances are well suited for walking, cycling, or public transport. Yet the survey also reveals that many visitors still choose the car even for short trips. This points to behavioural and infrastructural barriers such as comfort, safety, lighting conditions and traffic levels that influence the choice of transport mode.

The combination of short travel distances and relatively low scores for sustainable modes presents a clear potential for behavioural change. Encouraging more visitors to come on foot, by bicycle, or by public transport could have a significant impact. Targeted communication on accessibility, improved bicycle parking, mobility campaigns and collaboration with transport providers can help achieve a meaningful shift in travel behaviour in the coming years. We could work with a green ticket or bicycle ticket for visitors coming to a performance and make these factors slightly cheaper. However, this is difficult, as it is hard to verify whether they actually arrived by bicycle and are entitled to the green ticket discount.



Sustainable mobility measures and future plan

Based on the analysis of the current mobility situation and the characteristics of the surrounding area, it is clear that there is significant potential to further improve the sustainability of travel behaviour among visitors, staff, artists and partners. The following measures and future plans outline how the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to reduce its mobilityrelated environmental impact. The focus is on feasible shortterm actions, complemented by structural measures for the coming years.

- Improving Sustainable Transport Alternatives
- Promoting bicycle use
- Making walking more attractive
- Supporting public transport
- Reducing private car use
- Encouraging carpooling

Supporting electric mobility by informing visitors about available charging points in the area

Operational Objectives

By 2030, we will achieve:

- A 5% reduction in private car use among visitors.
- An increase in public transport use to a minimum total share of 8%. This would depend on the mobility hub that would possibility come at the Liers Cultuurcentrum or not. If the mobility hub were to come there it is possible to come to the total share, but it it doesn't come there it would be harder.
- An increase in bicycle use by at least 10%.

5·4 Sustainable Material Flows

Material flows include all materials, objects and equipment that organisations purchase, use and eventually discard. They form a major part of an organisation's ecological footprint, as every item whether packaging, technical equipment, office supplies or catering materials has environmental impacts throughout its life cycle.

In many sectors, including culture, large amounts of shortlived or resourceintensive materials are used daily. Sustainable material management therefore focuses on reducing consumption, reusing materials wherever possible and choosing lowimpact alternatives. By handling materials more consciously and applying circular principles, organisations can significantly lower their environmental footprint while also improving efficiency and reducing costs.



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Material flows in the Liers Cultuurcentrum

Waste management is an important part of the daily operations of the Liers Cultuurcentrum and has a direct impact on our ecological footprint. Within the Liers Cultuurcentrum, waste is generated from various sources, including audience related activities such as performances, hospitality and catering, technical productions, office operations, cleaning, administrative processes, and both indoor and outdoor events. Each of these activities produces specific waste streams, such as residual waste, PMD, paper and cardboard, glass, organic waste, technical waste, and occasional large streams such as packaging material from deliveries.

The waste management consists of a combination of separated collection and conventional waste processing. Although basic sorting is in place, observations show that there is still significant room for improvement. For example, reusable alternatives are not yet applied consistently across all areas. In addition, evening events and large-scale public activities create peak moments of waste production, particularly within hospitality and catering.

Technical productions also generate regular waste flows from set construction, packaging materials, items that are no longer usable, or leftover materials from building and installation work. These streams are often substantial and require specific attention to maximise reuse and minimise residual waste.

Among organisations that rent our spaces, waste management practices vary. In some cases, waste is sorted correctly, but in others, residual waste is left behind after activities or recycling options are not sufficiently utilised.

Key People

Within the Liers Cultuurcentrum, the responsibilities for procurement, material use and waste management are distributed across several staff members and teams. The procurement process is partially decentralised: management approves larger investments and oversees the budgets. For printed materials, all employees use an individual print card, which creates personal responsibility for print behaviour. Although no formal procurement policy is in place, the organisation increasingly aims to make sustainable choices, using eco-labels and longlasting materials as guiding principles. Management monitors these choices and encourages the use of environmentally friendly alternatives, ensuring that the procurement process gradually becomes more sustainable.

Materials are used or consumed by many different teams. The technical crew handles set pieces and technical equipment; administrative staff use office supplies and printed materials; the programming and production teams use materials for public events and productions; and volunteers work with logistical items, bar materials and publicfacing materials during events. It is therefore essential that everyone handles materials carefully, avoids unnecessary waste and sorts correctly. Through clear communication, signage, agreements and support, we aim to involve all staff, volunteers and external users in sustainable material use.

Waste processing is carried out collectively by several actors. The cleaning team handles daily collection and basic separation of waste and reports when sorting points are missing or incorrectly used. The technical team manages larger or specialised waste streams, worn cables, old equipment and other technical materials. Volunteers help keep sorting points tidy during events and guide visitors towards the correct bins. External organisers and associations are supported with simple, clear sorting instructions to ensure that their activities also follow sustainable waste practices.

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Strategy and actions

The Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to make its material flows and waste management more sustainable step by step by making conscious choices in procurement, use, and disposal. A key principle is that sustainable decision-making does not only apply to major investments, but should be embedded in all everyday actions within the organisation. This requires clear agreements, shared responsibility, and a culture in which materials are used thoughtfully and efficiently.

In our procurement practices, we prioritise quality, long lifespan and environmentally friendly alternatives. Management oversees larger investments and ensures that decisions increasingly rely on eco-labels, sustainability certifications and repairability. Staff order only what is necessary and bundle orders whenever possible. By reducing the consumption of materials such as paper, office supplies, cleaning products and technical consumables, we lower the overall material flow and make sustainability an integral part of the procurement process.

Because materials are used by many different teams, it is essential that everyone handles resources and waste responsibly. In technical productions and events, we aim to minimise material use, repair items where possible and maximise the reuse of logistical materials.

Our waste management is further strengthened by clear sorting zones, visible and recognisable waste points and simple instructions for all users. Wherever possible, we prevent waste at the source by choosing reusable alternatives, such as reusable catering materials, tap water served in carafes and the avoidance of single-use packaging.

At present, our inhouse catering partner operates a barbecuefocused, meatoriented kitchen. This makes it more complex to implement fully sustainable food practices, particularly regarding lowerimpact menu choices. However, even within the current framework, small but meaningful steps can already be taken such as encouraging reusable catering materials, reducing singleuse packaging, and offering simple wastereducing alternatives during events.

Looking ahead, the reopening of the cultural café in 2030 provides an opportunity to make a more structural shift. When selecting a new operator, we will consider sustainability criteria more explicitly, including the potential for more plantforward menus, the use of local and seasonal ingredients, and the integration of lowwaste and lowimpact catering models.

Our approach therefore includes both immediate and longterm actions:

- Promoting reusable catering materials wherever possible.
- Serving tap water in carafes instead of bottled water.
- Reducing disposable items, such as singleuse cups, stirrers, plates and straws.
- Limiting food waste
- Exploring more futureoriented catering models in the context of selecting a new café operator by 2030 or taking small steps with the current café operator.

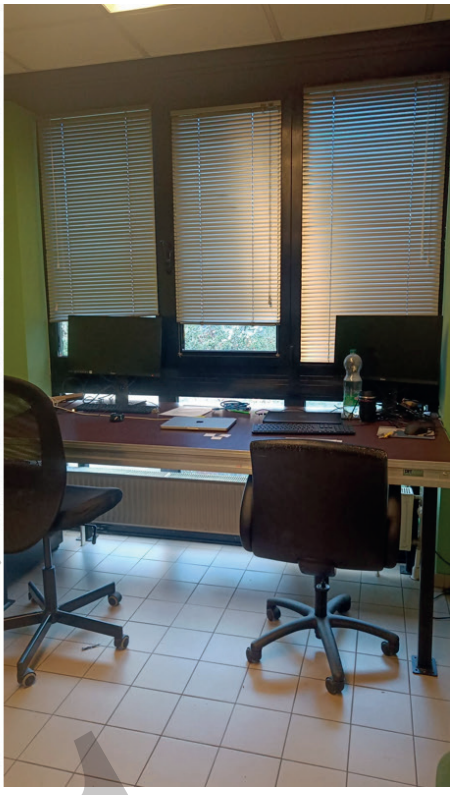
By taking these steps now and aligning future choices with our sustainability goals, we gradually move towards a more environmentally conscious catering approach one that balances feasibility today with deeper sustainability ambitions for tomorrow.

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Reuse & Circular Material Practices

By focusing on reuse, the centre not only reduces the volume of waste but also lowers procurement costs and supports more circular working methods. An example of our circular approach is the construction of a storage cabinet made entirely from old stage elements. Instead of purchasing new furniture, existing podium components were repurposed and transformed into functional storage infrastructure. This not only reduced waste and avoided new material purchases, but also illustrates how technical materials can be given a second life within the organisation.









In the coming years, the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to:

Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Expected impact
Prioritise eco-labelled, durable and repairable products in procurement.	Facility manager	2026-2027	Reduced environmental impact of purchases; longer lifespan of materials.
Bundle staff orders to reduce packaging and transport.	Staff	Ongoing (2026-)	Lower material flow, less waste and fewer deliveries.
Reduce consumption of paper / Paperfree office.	Staff	Ongoing (2026-)	Lower material use and operational waste.
Monitor print consumption.	Facility manager	2026-2027	Lower material use and operational waste.
Completely shut down monitors at the office after the workday instead of sleep mode.	Staff	2027-2028	Reduction of energy.
Purchase only what is necessary (“needbased procurement”).	Facility manager / Staff	Immediate (2026)	Reduction of surplus materials and waste.
Repair materials and equipment whenever possible.	Facility manager	Ongoing (2026-)	Increased lifespan of materials; reduced cost and waste.
Reuse logistical materials (signage, boxes, accessories).	Staff	Ongoing (2026-)	Reduced need for new purchases; lower waste.
Improve correct waste sorting through clear sorting zones and signage on events.	Facility manager / cleaning team	Ongoing (2026-)	Higher sorting quality and lower residual waste.



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06 Objectives on Sustainability for City Events

City events are an essential part of Lier's cultural identity. Major events organised by the City of Lier bring together thousands of residents and visitors.

In addition, the Liers Cultuurcentrum organises and supports events such as Zomer in 't Park, and many other public activities. We also collaborate with local associations, schools, youth organisations and partners who organise their own events in our venues or public spaces.

While these events offer strong social and cultural value, they also generate significant environmental impact, including increased waste, higher energy use, heavy mobility flows and intensive material consumption. Sustainability in city events is therefore not optional but a core responsibility within our broader climate and environmental strategy.

By integrating sustainability from the earliest planning stages, we can reduce the ecological footprint of events without compromising quality, accessibility or visitor experience. Our goal is to create events that remain festive and connecting, while consciously addressing circularity, mobility, waste and responsible material use contributing to a climateaware and futureoriented city.

6.1 Government rules that we must follow

Public events in Flanders are increasingly regulated to reduce waste and limit the environmental impact of singleuse products. The European Single Use Plastics (SUP) Directive, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Regulation (PPWR) and recent Belgian royal decrees restrict the use of disposable drinkware and food packaging and promote reuse systems.

In Flanders, this policy is embedded in the VLAREMA regulation, which focuses on waste prevention, circular use of materials and reducing overall material throughput. The regulation applies to all events, both those organised by public authorities and by private organisations. (source: ovam.vlaanderen.be/groen-event)

Key Legal Obligations:

- Ban on singleuse drink containers at events: Since 15 June 2023, serving drinks in singleuse containers is prohibited, except PET bottles and cans but only if the organiser guarantees 95% separate collection for recycling.
- From 1 January 2030, all singleuse drink containers are prohibited at events.
- Rules for public authorities: Since 2020, Flemish public authorities (including local governments) may no longer serve drinks in singleuse containers at their own events. Since 2022, this also applies to prepared foods offered in singleuse catering materials.
- Reuse systems required: When using reusable cups or catering materials (except glass and porcelain), organisers must ensure that at least 90% is collected for reuse.
- Possible exemptions: The minister may grant exceptions if the ban does not result in environmental benefits for specific materials or contexts.

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Who must comply?

- Event organisers (public and private).
- Local authorities for their own operations and events.
- Catering partners, suppliers and food vendors

Definitions

- Event: Any publicly accessible temporary activity (culture, sports, festivals, fairs, markets, etc.).
- Catering materials: All items used for serving or consuming food (excluding prepackaged food).
- Drink container: Any item used to serve or consume drinks.
- Serving: Offering or presenting food or drinks to endusers (not including vending machines).

6.2 Sustainability in Event Planning

A sustainable approach begins long before the event takes place. By making conscious decisions during the preparation phase, we can avoid a significant amount of environmental impact before it even occurs. For this reason, the Liers Cultuurcentrum integrates sustainability structurally throughout the entire event planning proces, from concept development to execution and followup.

At the start of each city event, we evaluate which choices contribute most effectively to reducing our ecological footprint. This includes selecting suitable locations, planning materials and logistics, deploying staff and volunteers, establishing agreements with external partners and suppliers, and making decisions regarding mobility, catering and energy use. By addressing sustainability early on, we can implement targeted measures without compromising the quality, accessibility or overall experience of the event.

Event planning also involves close coordination with the City of Lier, local services, neighbourhood partners and organisers. This collaboration makes it possible to better align logistical flows, avoid the unnecessary duplication of materials and identify potential challenges at an early stage. In this way, sustainability is not treated as a separate element, but as an integrated component of the entire event operation.

Another essential part of sustainable event planning is establishing clear agreements with suppliers, hospitality partners and external organisers. This includes guidelines on waste management, the use of reusable materials, sustainable transport and energyefficient technical setups. By defining expectations in advance, event execution becomes simpler, more efficient and more sustainable. Communication plays a crucial role: visitors, artists, volunteers and partners must understand which choices have been made and how they can contribute. By providing clear and accessible information in announcements, signage and briefings, we strengthen support for a sustainable approach and enable shared, conscious decision-making. With this integrated method, sustainability becomes not something addressed only during the event, but a guiding principle that shapes the entire planning process.

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Waste Reduction & Resource Efficiency

Waste reduction is one of the most impactful elements of sustainability within city events. Large public activities generate considerable amounts of waste in a short period of time, particularly through logistics, decoration, material use and visitor flows. By focusing on waste prevention, reuse and improved sorting quality, the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to significantly reduce the ecological footprint of city events while contributing to a clean and pleasant public environment.

A central element of our waste strategy is the use of reusable catering materials. During city events, we employ an extensive assortment of reusable cups for beer, cava, wine, gin and hot drinks, as well as reusable bowls, plates and snack trays. This system greatly reduces the amount of singleuse materials and fits within a circular event model. However, reusable materials are not infinitely durable. Data from 2024 show the following annual loss rates: 1.01% for beer cups, 11.54% for cava cups, 8.30% for wine cups, 4.46% for gin cups, 6.35% for hot cups, 9.80% for bowls, 3.40% for plates and 2.08% for snack trays. These figures highlight the importance of clear collection points, better guidance and increased visitor awareness in order to reduce loss and extend the lifespan of the materials.

To further reduce waste, we strongly encourage avoiding disposable materials wherever possible. Suppliers, food vendors and partners are actively encouraged to work with reusable or environmentally friendly alternatives and to avoid excessive packaging. Through preestablished agreements, sustainable material choices are embedded into our collaboration with hospitality partners and external organisers.

Correct sorting is also a crucial component of efficient material management. During largescale events, we place clearly marked sorting stations at strategic locations, supported by accessible and recognisable signage. Volunteers and staff actively assist visitors in correctly separating waste, which significantly improves recycling quality and prevents contamination of recyclable streams.

By combining these measures: reusable systems, improved sorting, circular material use and strong collaboration with suppliers we work towards city events that maintain their festive character while significantly lowering their ecological footprint.



CONCEPT

Sustainable Catering & Food

Catering and food provision are an important part of many city events and often have a significant environmental impact. Packaging waste, food leftovers, the transport of catering materials and the use of disposable products can quickly accumulate during large events. This is why sustainable catering is a priority within our event strategy. By making conscious choices related to food, reuse and waste prevention, we can reduce the ecological footprint without compromising quality or visitor experience.

A key element of our approach is the use of reusable catering materials. During events, the Liers Cultuurcentrum deploys a complete range of reusable cups for beer, cava, wine, gin and hot drinks, as well as reusable bowls, plates and snack trays. This system prevents thousands of disposable products from being used each year and supports a circular event model. However, reusable materials are not infinitely durable. As the 2024 figures show, small portions are lost annually, ranging from 1.01% for beer cups to 9.80% for bowls. By monitoring these loss rates, we can improve collection points, optimise logistics and better inform visitors about returning materials correctly.

Beyond material use, sustainable catering is also about what is offered and how it is prepared and served. We encourage our catering partners and food vendors to:

- Use local and seasonal ingredients to reduce food miles and support the regional economy.
- Offer vegetarian options, which generally have a lower environmental impact.
- Limit packaging and, where necessary, choose recyclable or reusable alternatives.

To reduce the use of plastic bottles, we promote the use of tap water through refill stations or carafes. This not only reduces waste but also supports a more sustainable drinking culture. Food vendors and hospitality partners are encouraged to avoid singleuse plastics such as straws, stirrers, disposable plates or plastic cutlery, and instead choose reusable alternatives provided by the cultural centre or the city.

Clear communication with suppliers and food vendors is essential. For each event, agreements are made regarding the use of reusable materials, waste sorting and packaging choices. By clearly defining expectations in advance, we ensure an efficient, highquality and sustainable collaboration.

Visitors also play an important role. Through signage, we encourage them to return reusable materials correctly and to reduce waste. In this way, sustainable catering becomes a shared responsibility of organisers, suppliers, volunteers and the public.

With this approach, catering at city events not only contributes to a pleasant visitor experience, but also to circularity, waste reduction and climatefriendly event practices.

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Future Objectives

In the future, the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to work together with the city and local partners to develop concrete and measurable sustainability objectives for cultural associations and organisers. Possible indicators may relate to:

- Reduction of waste and material consumption
- Increased reuse and adoption of sustainable materials
- More sustainable mobility behaviour of participants and audiences
- Reduced use of printed materials (and only when necessary)
- Increased awareness and participation in sustainability initiatives

Loss cost of reuasable catering material:

2023		2024	
Loss cost			
Beer cup	12,80%	Beer cup	1,01%
Cava cup	13,75%	Cava cup	11,54%
Wine cup	23,33%	Wine cup	8,30%
Gin cup	5,32%	Gin cup	4,46%
Hotcup	0,29%	Hotcup	6,35%
Bowl	4,58%	Bowl	9,80%
Plate	5,33%	Plate	3,40%
Snack tray	5%	Snack tray	2,08%



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Sustainable Mobility for City Events

Mobility plays a major role in the overall environmental impact of city events. During large activities, the number of individual journeys increases significantly from visitors as well as from artists, suppliers and staff. These movements not only produce CO2 emissions but also affect air quality, traffic pressure and safety. For this reason, sustainable mobility is an important area of focus within the organisation of city events.

At first principle is to avoid unnecessary car journeys. By situating events thoughtfully, preferably at locations that are easily accessible on foot, by bicycle or by public transport we increase the likelihood that visitors will choose a more sustainable travel option. The Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to include clear information about sustainable transport alternatives in the communication for every event, such as details on bicycle parking, walking routes and nearby bus stops. By sharing this information visibly, accessibly and in good time, we lower the threshold for visitors to opt for environmentally friendly travel choices.

During large events, we place extra emphasis on bicycle friendliness. Public transport also remains an important part of our mobility strategy. For major events, we explicitly provide information about the most suitable routes and stops, helping to encourage publict ransport use. Although late evening services can be limited, we still aim to support visitors in finding alternatives or combining multiple modes of transport.

We also want to stimulate carpooling for visitors. By mentioning carpool opportunities in communication materials, on social media or in ticket information, visitors can more easily travel together. This reduces traffic pressure as well as the demand for parking spaces around the event site.

Finally, clear communication plays a crucial role. By actively informing visitors, partners, artists and volunteers about sustainable transport options, we can positively influence mobility behaviour.

With this integrated approach, we aim to ensure that city events remain easily accessible while significantly reducing their mobility related environmental impact. In doing so, we help create a safer, healthier and more climate conscious city celebration for all residents and visitors of Lier.

Energy Use at Events

Energy use during city events forms an important part of the overall environmental impact. Temporary infrastructures such as lighting installations, sound equipment, food trucks, kiosks and logistical facilities often require significant amounts of electricity. When no fixed power connections are available, mobile generators are sometimes used, which typically produce higher emissions. For this reason, reducing energy consumption during events is an essential part of our sustainability approach.

Our first priority is to choose energyefficient solutions, both for technical production and for general logistics. Wherever possible, LED lighting is used or will be installed, as it consumes significantly less energy than traditional fixtures. Sound systems are also deployed as efficiently as possible, avoiding the use of oversized equipment.

In addition, we aim to minimise the use of generators. Whenever alternative connections are available, these are used to their full potential. We make every effort to ensure that unnecessary lighting, screens or equipment are switched off in time.

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An important role is reserved for awareness among staff, artists and external organisers. By providing clear instructions on energy-saving practices such as using checklists and reducing standby consumption, we lower the overall impact without compromising quality or safety.

Communication also plays a supportive role. By sharing information about the sustainable choices being made and offering tips on energy-efficient behaviour, the Liers Cultuurcentrum increases awareness among all involved. This not only strengthens support for our approach but also encourages sustainable ideas to be applied to other events or activities in the city.

Circular Material Use

Circular material use is a crucial part of sustainable city events. Events often rely on temporary infrastructure, décor, signage, technical materials and logistical elements which, when not used that often, result in high material pressure and unnecessary waste streams. For this reason, the Liers Cultuurcentrum is committed to a system in which materials are reused, shared, repaired, and kept in circulation for as long as possible.

An important step in our circular approach is the systematic reuse of logistical materials. These include signage, banners, storage boxes, technical accessories and other supporting event materials. Wherever possible, these items are reused so that they can easily be deployed again across different events. This significantly reduces the environmental impact of production and transport.

Décor elements are often provided by the productions that come to the Liers Cultuurcentrum, but we also hosted a performance that created their entire set using secondhand materials. This fits perfectly within the creative reuse mindset of the cultural sector in Lier and shows how sustainability and artistic expression can reinforce one another.

Repair and maintenance also play an important role within circular event operations. Technical materials, furniture and logistical items are repaired whenever possible instead of being replaced, extending their lifespan and avoiding unnecessary purchases. This requires careful coordination and collaboration between the technical team and the Culture & Events team.

Collaboration with the City of Lier and external partners is equally essential. By using materials sourced from local organisations and businesses, particularly for items that are only required for a few days or weeks each year, we avoid unnecessary purchases and streamline material flows within the city. This shareduse model benefits both the environment and local networks.

A concrete example within the Liers Cultuurcentrum is the reuse of old stage elements, which were transformed into a new storage cabinet. By repurposing existing materials, we avoid new purchases, reduce waste and demonstrate that circular working methods can be concrete, creative and entirely achievable.

Awarenessraising is an essential component of circular material use. By informing staff, volunteers and partners about the importance of reuse, we extend the lifespan of materials and reduce the risk of damage or premature replacement. With this circular approach, we build city events that are not only strong in content but also serve as a sustainable example of efficiency, creativity and responsible material use.

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Communication & Awareness

Communication and awareness raising are essential components of sustainable city events. Even the best measures related to waste, mobility, energy and material use achieve only partial impact if visitors, suppliers, artists and volunteers are not aware of the sustainable choices being made or how they can contribute themselves. For this reason, the Liers Cultuurcentrum strongly prioritizes clear, accessible and positive communication that makes sustainability visible and encourages shared, responsible behavior.

A first important step is to communicate sustainable choices clearly and in a timely manner across all channels used for events. Practical information, websites, social media and program booklets refer to sustainable mobility options, the use of reusable catering materials, the availability of sorting stations and any ecofriendly catering choices. By sharing this information early, visitors can already adjust their behavior before arriving at the event.

In addition, visual signage at the event itself plays a central role. Clear pictograms, colour codes and information boards make it easy for visitors to sort waste correctly, return reusable materials or recognize sustainable options. By using consistent symbols, no one is excluded, including those less familiar with sustainability principles.

Volunteers and staff also act as important ambassadors. Before each event, they receive a brief sustainability briefing, ensuring they can guide visitors in a friendly manner, answer questions and encourage desired behavior. Their visible presence near sorting points or information stands increases the likelihood that visitors actively engage with sustainability and sort their waste correctly.

Communication toward suppliers, catering partners and external organisers is equally crucial. Through clear event guidelines, agreements and preparatory meetings, expectations regarding the use of reusable materials, waste reduction and energy efficient behavior are firmly established. By linking these guidelines to concrete examples, we create a positive and constructive collaboration.

We want sustainability to be communicated not only functionally, but also in an inspiring and connecting way. By making sustainable choices and results visible for example, the use of reusable cups we show what is possible and encourage others to contribute. Through targeted communication and accessible awareness raising, we ensure that sustainability does not happen only behind the scenes, but becomes a visible, understandable and widely supported element of every city event.

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Future Goals for City Events

In the coming years, the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to further deepen and anchor its sustainable approach to city events. The measures and actions implemented today form a strong foundation, but we want to go further: we want to evolve towards events that not only meet sustainability criteria, but that also serve as an example for other organisations and visitors.

A first important step is the systematic monitoring of the sustainable actions applied during city events. By collecting data on the loss of reusable materials, mobility behaviour, energy use and circular materials, we can better understand our impact and adjust our approach where needed. We also aim to strengthen our collaboration with the City of Lier and external partners. By sharing materials, infrastructure and expertise, we can work more efficiently, avoid unnecessary duplication, and make the city as a whole more sustainable. Local businesses, associations and youth organisations will be encouraged to actively participate in sustainable initiatives within city events, making sustainability a shared responsibility.

We will also continue to focus on behavioural change among visitors. Through consistent communication, nudging and highlighting sustainable choices in a positive way, we aim to encourage more people to come on foot, by bicycle or by public transport, to return reusable materials correctly, and to handle food and waste responsibly. Small behavioural changes among large groups of visitors can, over time, have a significant impact.

Finally, the Liers Cultuurcentrum intends to continue investing in innovation within sustainable event organisation. This may include experimenting with circular stand materials, green energy solutions or new collaborations with artists, technicians and sustainable entrepreneurs. By viewing sustainability as a creative starting point, we can develop new forms of events that are both ecologically responsible and artistically forwardthinking.



In the coming years, the Liers Cultuurcentrum aims to:

Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Expected impact
Systematically monitor sustainable actions at city events (loss of reusable materials, mobility behaviour, energy use, circular materials).	Facility manager	Ongoing (2026-)	Better insight into environmental impact; datadriven improvements; clearer baseline for future targets.
Strengthen collaboration with the City of Lier and external partners on materials, infrastructure and sustainability practices.	Facility manager	2027	More efficient use of resources, reduced duplication, stronger city-wide sustainability approach.
Encourage participation of local businesses, associations and youth organisations in sustainable initiatives at events.	Facility manager	Ongoing (2026-)	Shared responsibility for sustainability; broader community engagement; behavioural change across stakeholders.
Promote behavioural change among visitors through clear communication, nudging and positive reinforcement.	Staff	Ongoing (2027-)	More visitors using sustainable transport; better waste sorting; fewer reusable losses; lower event footprint.
Develop and promote sustainable travel alternatives for artists, staff and partners (e.g., Green Tickets planner).	Staff	Ongoing (2026-)	Reduced material waste; increased innovation; more circular event operations.
Experiment with circular stand materials and green energy solutions at city events.	Facility manager	2027	Reduction in transportrelated emissions; smarter travel choices.
Explore new collaborations with artists, technicians and sustainable entrepreneurs for ecofriendly event concepts.	Facility manager	2028	Creative, forwardthinking events that combine artistic value with sustainability.
Integrate innovative sustainable practices into longterm event formats.	Facility manager	2030	Events become strong examples of climateaware cultural practice; lasting impact on city events.

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07 Sustainability Objectives for Cultural Policy and Associations

Sustainability within cultural policy reaches beyond the internal operations of the Liers cultuurcentrum. As a social and cultural point, the centre plays a leading example for the wider cultural field in Lier.

The Podiumacademie, local associations, schools, Visit Lier, the Youth Service, the Sports Service, artists and numerous cultural organisations all form part of the city's cultural ecosystem and therefore also contribute to its overall ecological footprint. By integrating sustainability as a guiding principle in cultural policy, we create a shared foundation for ecological, social and organisational responsibility across the entire cultural sector.

Strengthening Sustainability within Cultural Policy

The city's cultural policy provides an important lever to embed sustainable principles into the practices of cultural associations and organisers. The Liers Cultuurcentrum encourages awareness and sustainable decision-making through collaboration, leading by example and sharing knowledge. This includes promoting efficient material use, proper waste sorting, sustainable mobility, energy-conscious organisational practices and circular approaches during events and activities.

Supporting Associations and Organisers

Many associations and local organisations operate with limited resources and rely heavily on volunteers. For this reason, the Liers Cultuurcentrum plays a supportive role by making information and tools easily accessible. This includes:

- Guidelines for sustainable venue and event use.
- Practical checklists for sustainable event organisation.
- Tips on material reuse and waste prevention.
- Information on proper waste sorting.
- Inspiration on sustainable decoration, logistics and mobility.

In this way, sustainable choices become simpler, feasible and realistic for all types of associations.

Knowledge Sharing and Capacity Building

To strengthen sustainability in the local cultural landscape, the Liers cultuurcentrum invests in knowledge sharing through:

- Accessible information through communication channels.
- Exchange of experiences through the Cultuurforum.
- Sharing best practices from Lier and other cities.

This strengthens support and enables associations to integrate sustainability principles step by step into their own operations.

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Role of the Cultuurforum

The Cultuurforum is an important link within Lier's cultural ecosystem and can play an active role in promoting and reinforcing sustainability. As a participatory platform, it brings together associations, organising partners, policymakers and the cultural centre. This makes it an ideal space to formulate shared ambitions, discuss challenges and exchange sustainable practices.

Within the sustainability objectives, the Cultuurforum can:

- Place sustainability topics on the agenda (waste reduction, mobility, energy, circular materials).
- Share experiences and good practices among associations and organisers.
- Provide advice in developing or refining guidelines and support tools.
- Motivate associations to participate in sustainable initiatives.
- Offer a space for exchange, inspiration and collective learning.
- Contribute to defining measurable sustainability objectives for the cultural field.

Through this role, the Cultuurforum supports a broadly supported sustainability policy that grows not only from the cultural centre, but from the strength and engagement of the cultural network itself.

Numbers to the environmental field

To gain a clearer understanding of the environmental impact within the cultural field of Lier in the future, we aim to systematically monitor a number of indicators. These data will help us identify where the greatest environmental pressures occur and which categories require additional attention or support. They form an essential component of a shared, forwardlooking sustainability approach within Lier's cultural sector.

The indicators below will serve as the basis for future monitoring:

- Total waste generation.
- Use of reusable versus disposable materials: At the Liers cultuurcentrum reusable catering materials such as reusable cups for beer, cava, wine, gin, and hot drinks, as well as bowls, plates and snack trays are used. However, these items are not endlessly reusable and a small number is lost each year. Data from 2024 show the following loss rates: 1.01% for beer cups, 11.54% for cava cups, 8.30% for wine cups, 4.46% for gin cups, 6.35% for hot cups, 9.80% for bowls, 3.40% for plates and 2.08% for snack trays.
- Use of printed communication and print materials: Not printing unnecessary.
- Mobility of participants and audiences: A 2022 audience survey shows how visitors travel to the cultural centre. A large majority still comes by private car: 69.58% arrive by car, 35.74% by bicycle or moped, 15.40% on foot, 9.32% by carpooling, 3.99% by public transport, 2.09% are dropped off and picked up, 0.19% use a shared car and 0.19% use another form of transport.
- Material use by associations
- Engagement in sustainability initiatives.
- Energy use linked to room or space usage.
- Quality of waste sorting: waste is correctly separated and deposited in the appropriate streams.

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