

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION IN PERFORMING ARTS



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WHY SUSTAINABILITY IN PERFORMING ARTS?

Absence of uniform sustainability strategies across organisations

Excessive use of raw materials for production

Little in the way of impacting the audience practices

To bring about change, **all relevant stakeholders in the organisation should be involved in the strategy** (including employees, external partners, suppliers, performers and visitors)

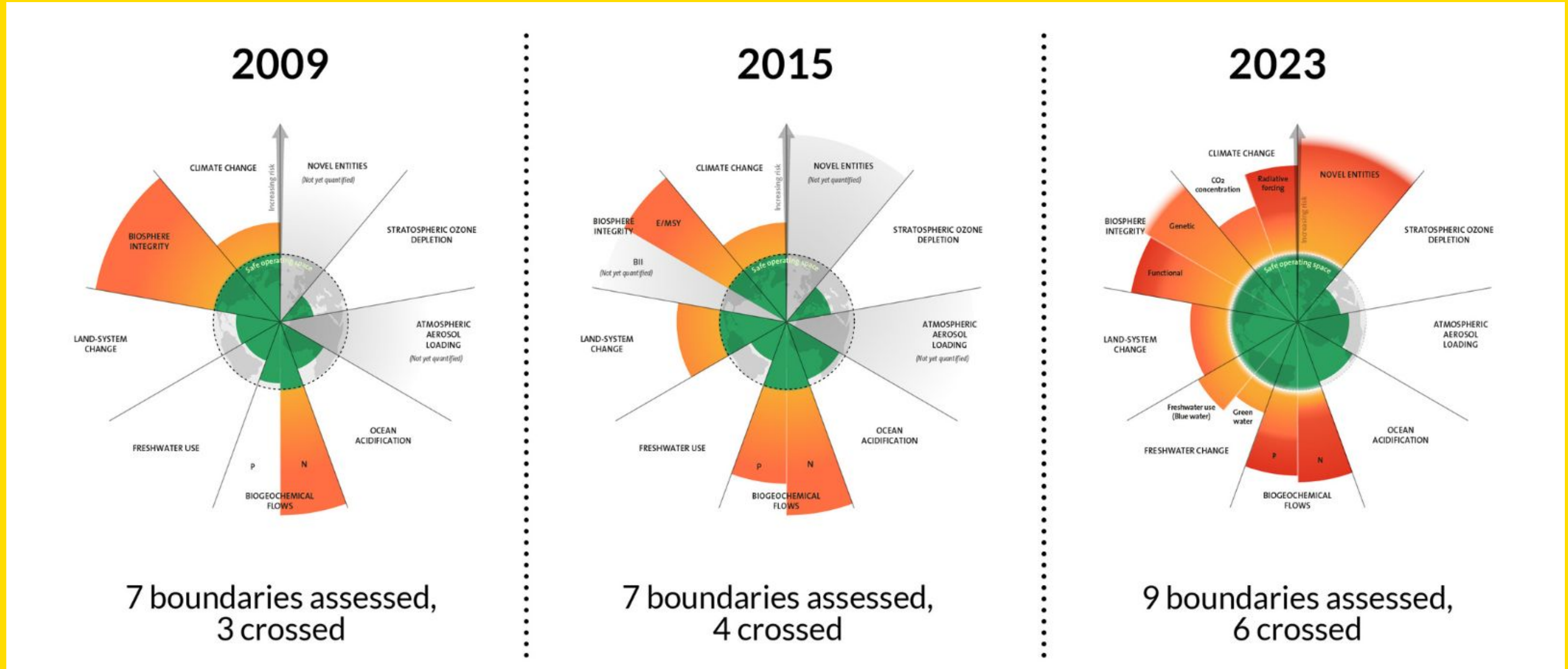
A cultural policy can (following Taxopolou, 2023, 39)

1. Safeguard and sustain **cultural practices and rights**
2. “Green” the **operations and impacts** of cultural institutions
3. Raise **awareness and catalyze action** re climate and societal change
4. Foster **sustainable and ecological citizenship**

Taxopolou, I. (2023). *Sustainable Theatre: Theory, Context, Practice*. Methuen Drama.

Planetary boundaries

Nine processes regulating ecological stability and resilience
 Crossing boundaries increases the risk of generating large-scale abrupt or irreversible environmental changes



The evolution of the planetary boundaries framework. Licenced under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 (based on Richardson et al., 2023; Steffen et al., 2015, and Rockström et al., 2009)

Earth overshoot day

When humanity's / a nation's material demand exceeds nature's biocapacity

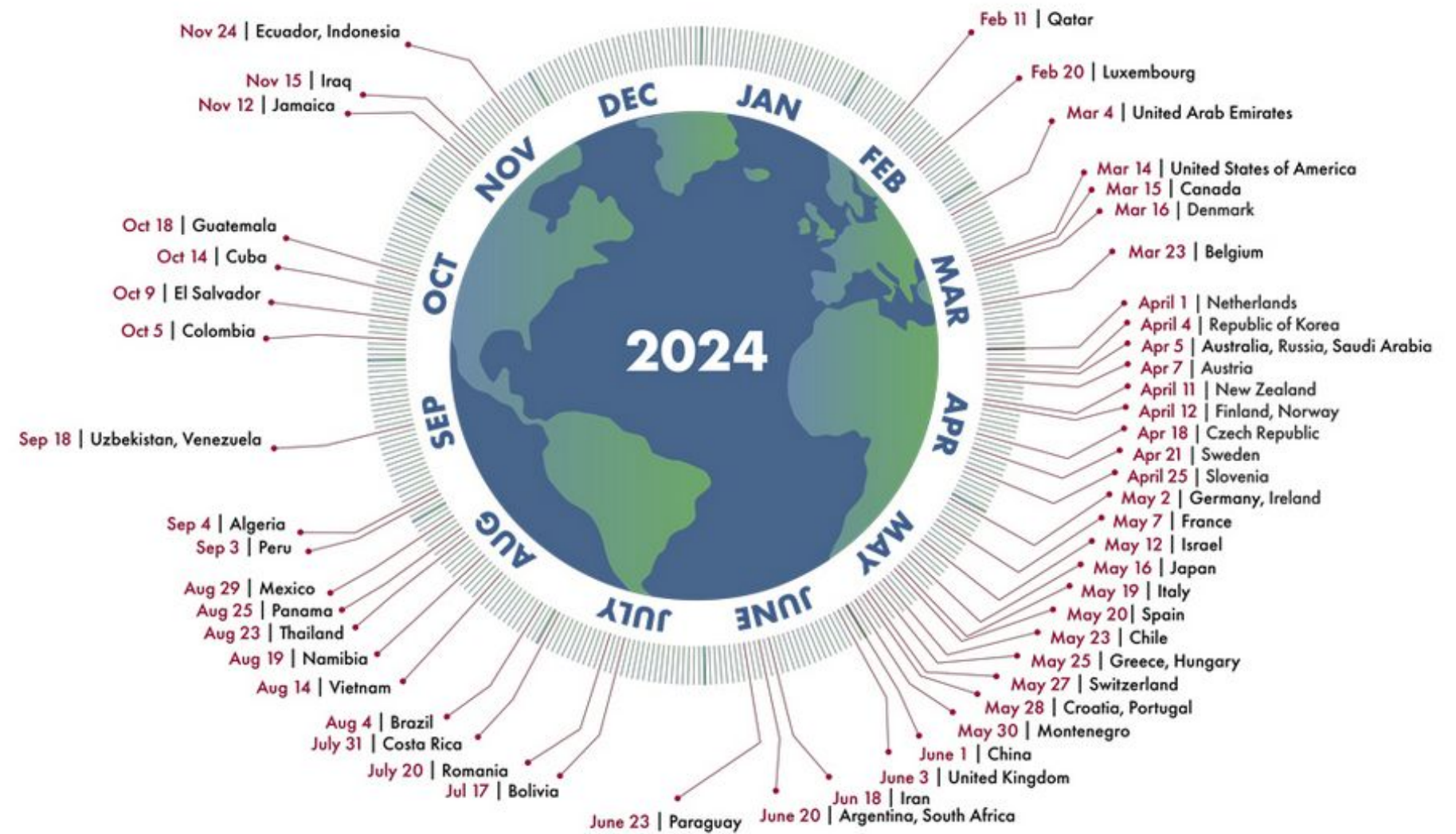
Discriminatory effect; developed North vs. developing world – global south

#movethedate

<https://www.overshootday.org>

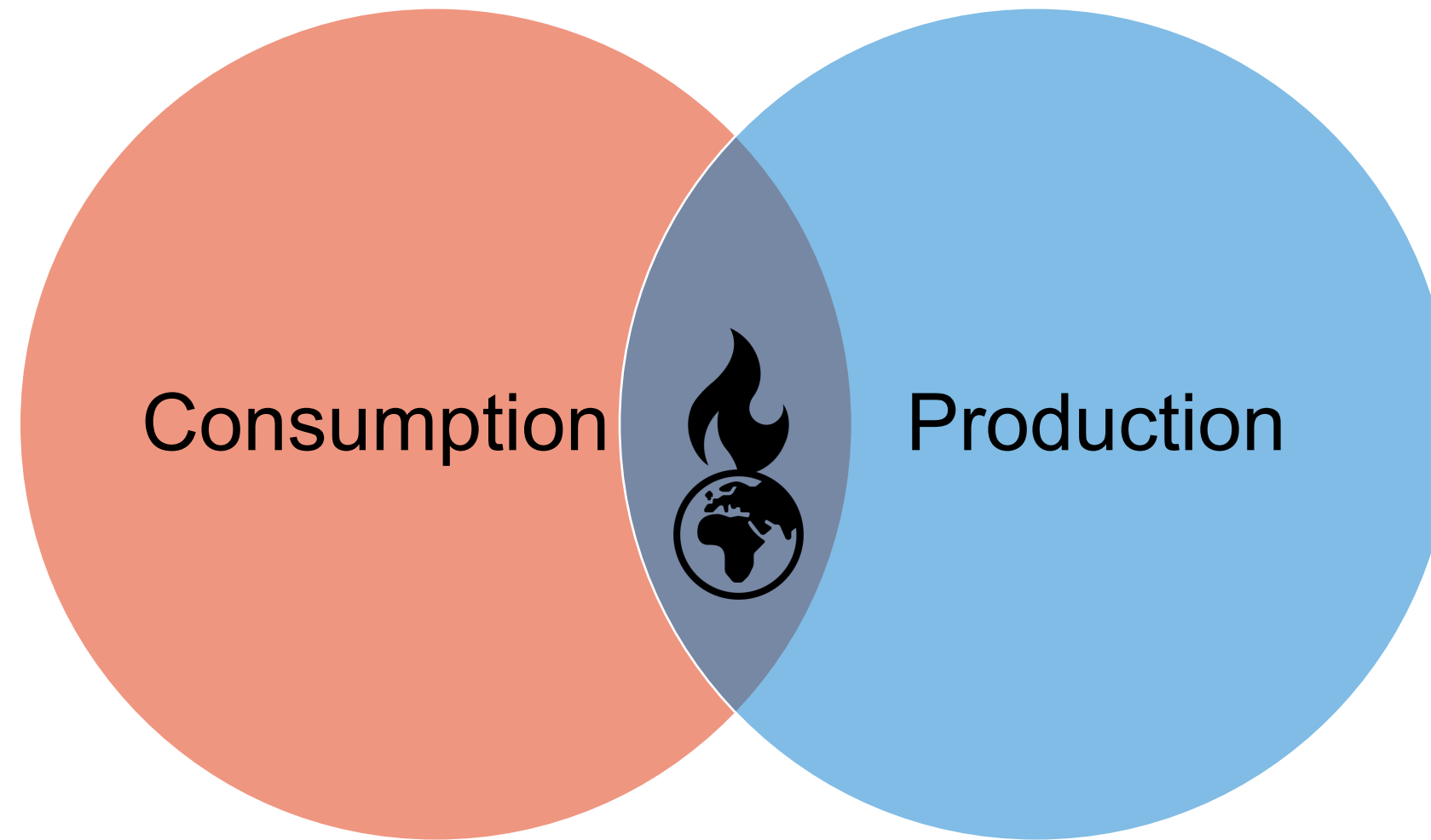
Country Overshoot Days 2024

When would Earth Overshoot Day land if the world's population lived like...



Consumption as the means of sustaining lives and livelihoods

...but market mechanisms increase unnecessary consumption



Production responds to market needs

Overproduction will lead to overconsumption

Overproduction is driven by a growth mindset



SDG 12 aims ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, which is key to sustain the livelihoods of current and future generations

Doing more and better with less

Decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation

Increasing **resource efficiency**

Supporting **sustainable lifestyles**



SDG 12 Targets



Implement the 10-year sustainable consumption and production framework

Sustainable management and use of **natural resources** (2030)

Halve global per capita **food waste** (2030)

Responsible management of **chemicals and waste** (2020)

Substantially **reduce waste** generation with recycling and reuse (2030)

Encourage (large / MNC) companies to adopt **sustainable practices and reporting**

Promote sustainable public **procurement** practices

Promote universal understanding of **sustainable lifestyles** (2030)

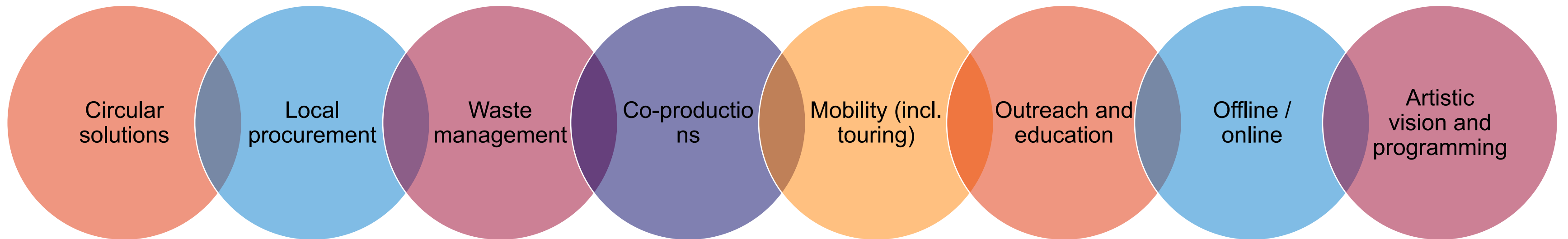
Support developing countries' scientific and technological capacity for sustainable consumption and production

Develop and implement tools to monitor **sustainable tourism**

Remove market distortions that encourage **wasteful consumption**

SDG 12 in performing arts

Environmental transition & community development



Technical solutions & cultural impact

Policy-Practice tools: the Theatre Green Book (TGB)

Theatre Green Book is a formalised set of guidelines for sustainable theatre operation

- three-part guide and model, where instructions are given for making productions in a more sustainable way and for the sustainability of theatre buildings and other theatre functions

Guidance moves from smaller actions to larger changes □ situational analysis is followed by selection of solutions and their implementation

The Theatre Green Book outlines

- Sustainable productions, Sustainable buildings and Sustainable operations

Full versions, updated toolkits and special guidance (e.g. for touring productions) can be found on the Theatre Green Book website

- All material is available free of charge

Audience expectations

86% of audiences are **concerned** about the **climate emergency**

21% are highly likely to have made **changes** to their **own behaviours**

74% **expect action**

Stakeholders assign **responsibility to arts organisations**

- younger more than older, 86% to 77%
- donors more than regulars, 80% to 77%

<https://theatregreenbook.com>



Actions to address audience concerns (TGB)

Use focus groups or surveys to explore how your audience perceives sustainability, and how they view change in productions, or in the venue

Invite audience members into your sustainability conversation through green workshops or focus groups

Use your website, promotional emails and ticketing to share information about your sustainability aspirations, for example by referencing the Theatre Green Book standards you're working to (use the same routes to share success stories and sustainability news)

Share practical information about sustainable visiting, for example making audiences aware of sustainable travel options, car-sharing schemes, and transport timetables; and promoting sustainable choices in your catering offer

Incentivise sustainable choices where possible

Switch to e-Ticketing with reminder emails / SMS

Reduce print-runs for programmes, programme inserts and cast lists, monitor wastage and offer digital alternatives

Use creative learning opportunities with communities (schools, care facilities) and digitise any learning material

Performing arts organisation

Financing
Broad audience base
Audience “hold”
Outreach / education
Entertainment

Responsible production and
consumption

Participatory
art

Belonging (identity)
Regionality
Values (rules and norms)
Practices (rituals and objects)
Language (and sign systems)
Resources

Community

Engagement
Enrichment
Responsibility

Audience price elasticity

- Dynamic pricing models (especially in the more expensive price categories), compensation / donations included in admission tickets (e.g. for charity)

Digitality & digitisation

- Does going paperless (entrance tickets, programs) transfer responsibility to the consumer? Do electronic systems increase energy consumption in the supply network?

Collaborations and sponsors

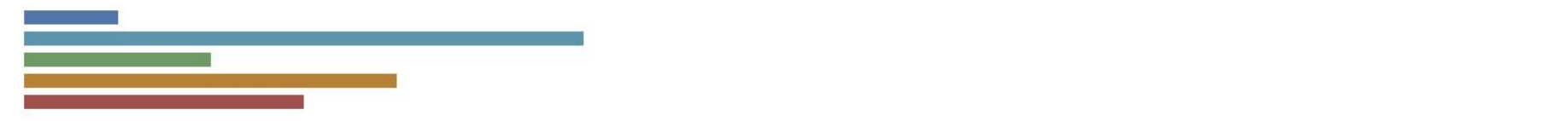
- How to evaluate partners (especially donors and sponsors)? Responsibility certificates and labels.

INSIGHTS FROM THE SURVEY

In my work there is a direct sustainability impact



In my work there are more sustainability activities than in other departments of the same organisation



In my work more sustainability activities are carried out than in similar departments in other arts organisations



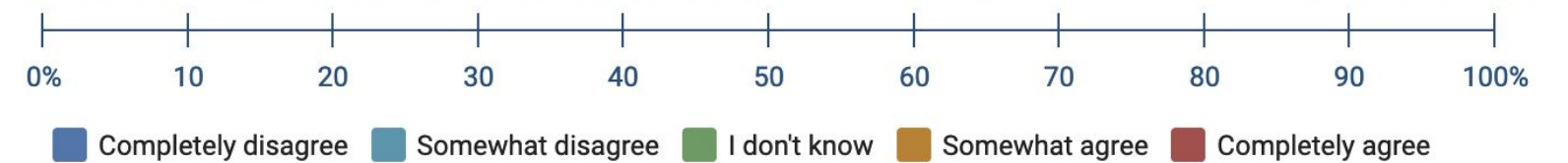
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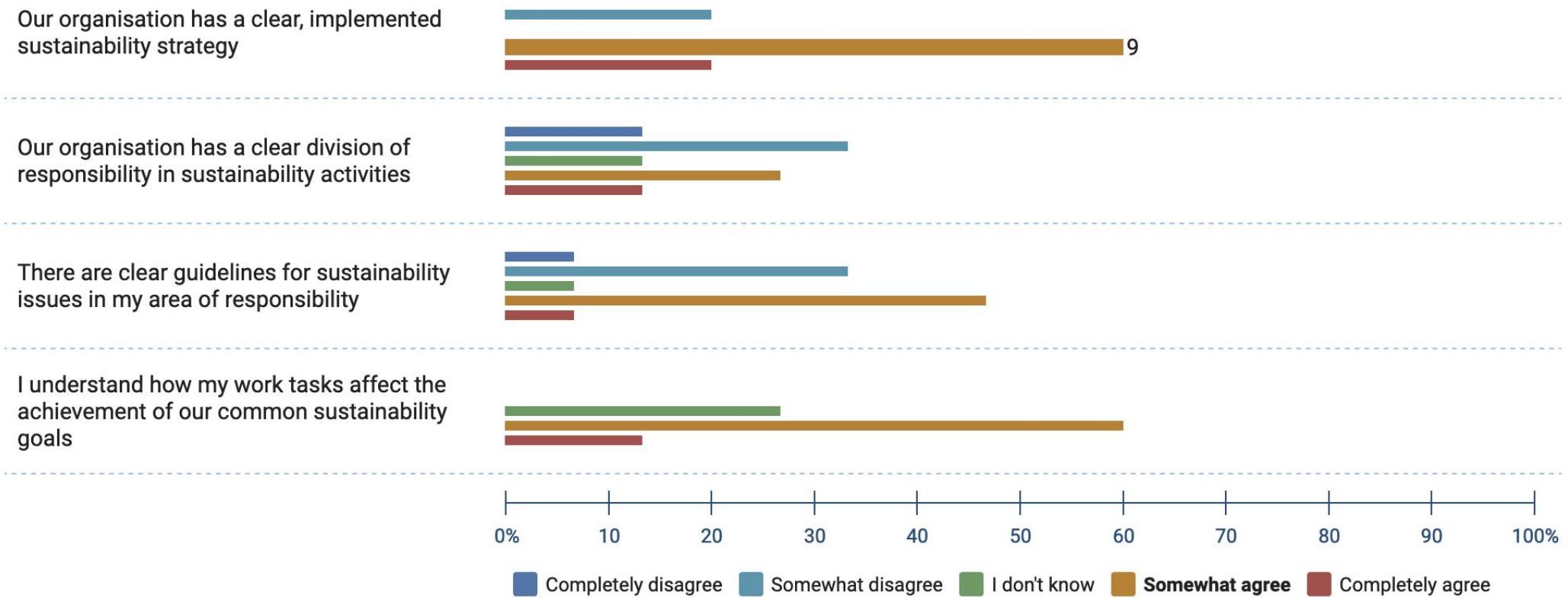
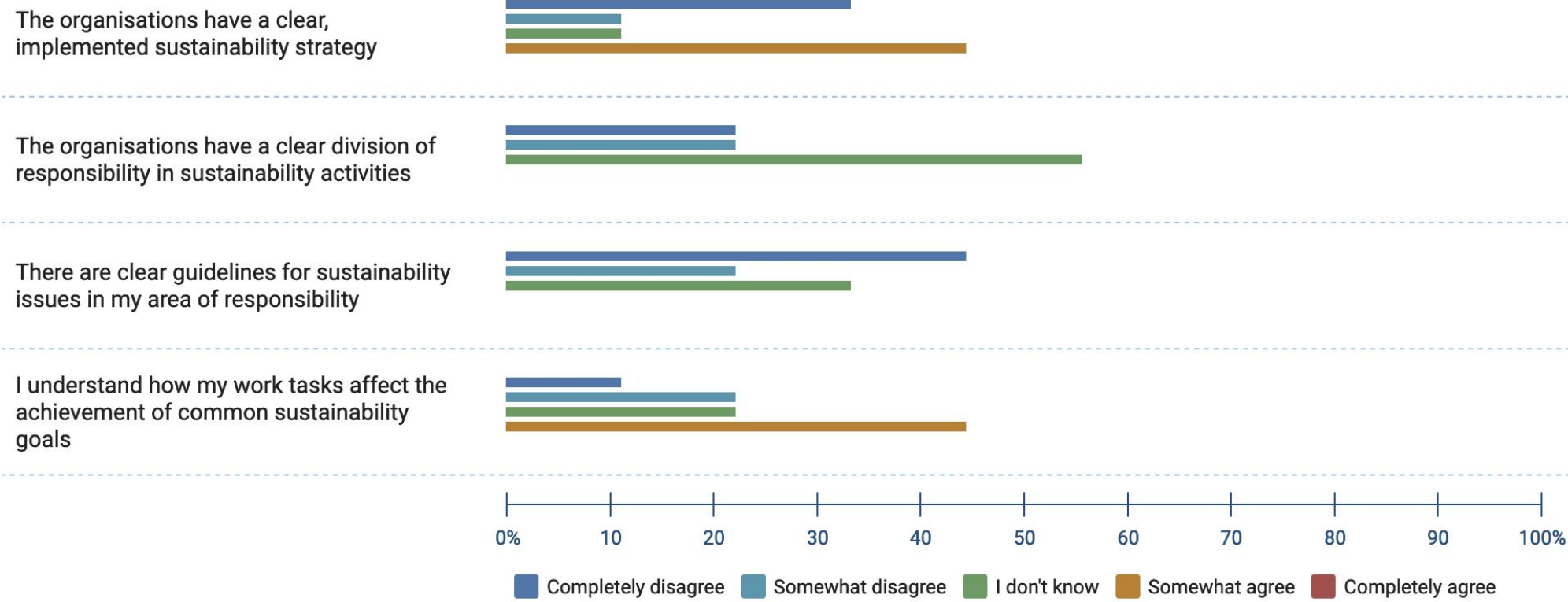


My work is more focussed on sustainability activities than other freelancers working in similar settings



My work is as focussed on sustainability activities as I would like it to be





In your opinion, what are the key strengths of performing arts for addressing sustainability overall?

Reaching wider audiences through public performances

Creating work that is not related on overproducing and overbudgeting especially in opera and theatre houses

With regards to the power of performing arts to foster complicated topics for the audiences

Performing arts have the optimal languages to spread the values of sustainability within the community. A theatre that becomes a gathering place for the community embodies and brings to life the principles of social sustainability.

I haven't considered that

The funding models that support this are a major problem.

Storytelling

In your experience, what are the biggest obstacles to sustainability in your work?

The impact of production setups and the touring of performances; the inclusion of marginalized communities; the search for financial support that is not tied to individual projects but to the continuous action of the cultural organization.

The difficulty in saying no to stage directors, in giving them limits.

Lack of organizational directives.

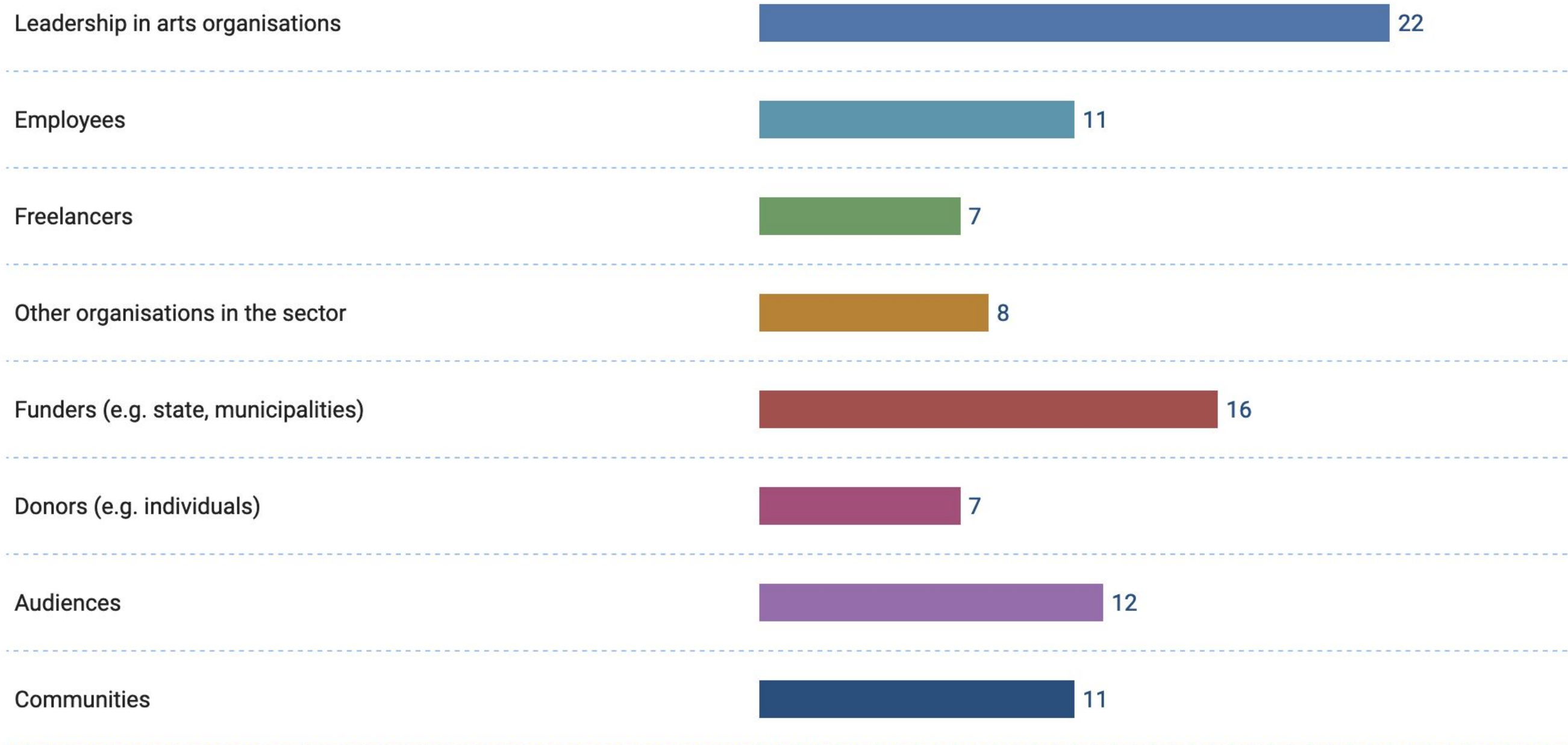
Funding

Travelling is important and cannot always be done avoiding flights/cars

Strengths, weaknesses, important future focus

Working on sustainability issues together	11	4	9	2
Energy efficiency	12	4	6	4
Economical use of water	9	3	6	8
Efficient use / sharing of space	12	1	6	5
Thoughtful purchase of new material	16	1	11	0
Material recycling and circular systems	15	2	10	0
Waste treatment and recycling	17	1	4	4
Measuring the carbon footprint	10	3	8	5
Sustainable travel options (staff)	6	6	9	4
Sustainable travel options (audience)	5	6	9	7
Sustainable touring	5	4	10	9
Choosing responsible partners and funders	10	2	12	2
Prioritising digital options	12	4	7	4
Communication about sustainability issues	16	4	6	2
Responding to audience demands on sustainability	6	2	11	6
Sustainability in programming (content and works)	9	3	10	4
Productions in accordance with sustainable development goals	6	2	13	4

To improve the current state of sustainability in performing arts who are the change makers?



This was a very difficult survey to complete because as a freelancer working with other organisations and running my own projects, there is no consistency in my work or in approaches to sustainability .. So often sustainability and what's affordable are in conflict. I also believe we should be moving beyond sustainability towards a regenerative model, which means redesigning many of our current systems, including how we manage our entire arts ecosystem.

This survey was an important moment of reflection for me to better understand how I approach sustainability, both in my daily work and in my personal life.

THE FLOOD

You are developing a new commission - a new chamber opera entitled 'The Flood' which will be performed by a mixed group of professionals, community performers and school children. The piece will be developed over the next two years and will culminate in performances at a cultural venue and at a number of outdoor locations.

Consider how you would approach this project in the most sustainable, holistic way possible. How will you use the project to make active change, within your organisation and with the communities you work with? What partners would you involve? What are the opportunities and challenges of this work? How do you ensure the project has a real impact and leaves a legacy?

Themes and focus questions

Programming

How does this commission connect to other pieces in your season?
How do you place it within your sustainability commitments?
How does the project give voice to/ ensure inclusion freelancers ?

Partnerships

What should partnerships look like creatively and financially? Think of your sustainability commitments.
How will your communities benefit from these partnerships? How do you measure that benefit ?

Audiences

How can this project reach new audiences?
How will this project connect audiences to your sustainability commitments ?
How will audience behaviour be changed by the project? How do you measure that behavioural change?

Touring

How does the selection of venues speak to the themes of the piece and your sustainability commitments?
How can you re-think mobility of artists, materials and audiences when touring this project?

Peer-learning in action



15 min

Partner-sharing and comparison

How would you approach the production?

What are the key issues to address?



60 min

Summary in groups

Discuss and write down your findings



40 min

Presentation

Short and concise presentation on your findings and ideas

Q&A

The importance of collaboration

Global goals can only be reached through collaboration

Meta-organisations can (and must) help their membership:

- Distribute knowledge (e.g. environmental regulation, certificates)
- Supporting knowledge exchange
- Providing education and peer-learning

It is important to make collaboration part of everyday practices of sustainability

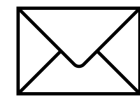


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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
PARTICIPATION!
PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH.**



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<https://www.oslomet.no/en/about/employee/mikkolaa>