Greener Touring Project
Possible Solutions:

International touring occupies a unique role in the Irish arts sector. For many Irish performing arts companies, the only touring they do is national. For a small group, occasional touring, particularly to festivals abroad, is a niche but important part of what they do. For an even smaller group of companies, international touring is an essential part of their activities, almost their raison d'être. However, even for companies that rarely tour, bringing artists and performers **from** other parts of the world to Ireland to work in their productions, is quite common.

Showcasing Ireland's culture and engaging in cultural exchange is valued highly by both those working in the arts sector and the Irish state (as evidenced by state sponsored initiatives such as Culture Ireland). Those working in the sector will point out the challenges associated with international travel. Ireland is a small island, so flying is seen as the only realistic option for most travel to other countries, even to the UK. Tackling the emissions associated with international touring in the arts sector can therefore be an emotive issue for many. The urgency of acting on climate change is recognised, but there are not many solutions to reduce the associated impacts of touring – most available solutions would need additional time and additional funding. The notion of reducing our international touring or touring to different locations is not seen as a viable option by many. As with every challenge we face in addressing climate change, the desire to act is there, the urgency is recognised, but moving away from a business-as-usual approach is not easy.

The solutions noted below are compiled with the above context in mind.

TRAVEL & TRANSPORT:

- Identify opportunities for increased use of public transport. An improved public transport infrastructure would be needed to facilitate this

- Companies should work to identify the most efficient tour route (this is already being done by many for the sake of efficiency).

- Consider rail freight

- Support slow travel. This could be introduced as an option in a piloted way (ie. nothing mandatory) and would need to be supported by additional funding.

TECHNICAL/TECHNOLOGICAL:

- Electrical vehicle use (touring buses/vans)

- Greener tech riders for circulation with venue contracts.

- Software platforms for more efficient tour planning

- Carbon budget for lighting design

COLLABORATION:

- Collaborate with venues to reduce environmental impacts of touring, particularly energy and waste (green tech riders will assist with this)

- Collaborate with venues to identify greener solutions for accommodation

- Collaborate with designers (set, costume and lighting) on how to reduce impacts

- Look at alternatives to the 8pm performance (matinees, 7pm) to allow for better access to public transport

- Collaborate with venues to maximise the impact of each tour (performances, engagement)

SET & COSTUMES:

- Adopt the Theatre Green Book approach, working up from the Basic model.

- Establish a centralised storage for sets and costumes, with digital online cataloguing

- Green design briefs for designers

- Longer lead-in times for design process to facilitate more sustainable approach

- Establish carbon budget for sets and costumes – circular economy principles to be embedded into all design (refuse, reuse, repurpose – recycling as last resort), renting

FINANCE & FUNDING:

- Recognise the increased costs in some instances of being more environmentally sustainable

- Advocate for funding which would support collaboration with creative team earlier in the planning process

- Advocate for funding to assist with slow travel where appropriate

INFLUENCING AUDIENCES:

- Explore the potential for communicating to a wider audience on the need for climate action
- Communicate and celebrate green successes
- Encourage audiences to travel sustainably to productions