

Vestnorsk Jazzsenter
West Norway Jazz Center

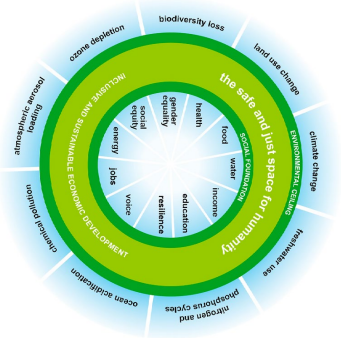


2022 – 2030

The UN report *Our Common Future* (1987): A sustainable society meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The concept of sustainability includes social, economic and environmental factors, and all three dimensions need to be considered in order to achieve sustainability.

The Glasgow Climate Pact (COP 26), adopted at the climate summit in Glasgow in 2021, may give grounds for cautious optimism on behalf of the future climate. The agreement outlines global measures that highlight the collective responsibility of the global community, and places special, overarching responsibility with the wealthy industrialised countries, not least financially. In this large-scale perspective, it is perhaps difficult to envisage how the sustainability thinking and actions of a small jazz organisation in Western Norway could impact the grand scheme of things, but the fact is that absolutely everyone – individuals, associations, organisations, small and large enterprises and global corporations alike – must make an effort if we are to stand a chance of achieving the objectives of COP 26. Norway's Climate Action Plan for 2021-2030 – Report No 13 to the Storting (Norwegian Parliament) also outlines ambitious goals that can only be achieved through agreement and concerted efforts: to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50-55% by 2030, and by 90-95% by 2050.

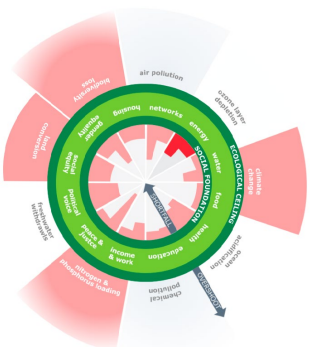
The **Doughnut Economics**: Kate Raworth is a frequently used visual framework for sustainable development that combines the concept of planetary boundaries with the complementary concept of social boundaries. As the figure on the right shows, these boundaries are already way overshoot.



The effort we all put in must therefore focus on how we, in a sustainability perspective, can enhance the contributions we make and reduce or completely eliminate the negative impacts.

The sustainability strategy for Vestnorsk Jazzsenter (VNJS) is based on the centre's object laid down in its statutes, on its strategic action plan and on other governing documents, such as the ethical guidelines for the Norwegian Jazz Forum and the regional jazz centres. A sustainability strategy is not about changing the centre's object, but about how we can make each part of our activities as sustainable as possible, with as small a carbon footprint as possible. It is also intended to establish an awareness of our own impact on the environment and society, and thereby strengthen our ability to adapt, change and come up with new ways of thinking. A forward-looking attitude will better enable us to meet more stringent regulations and official requirements in future, and to serve as an important guide and influential force in relation to our partners. The sustainability strategy, specified as four goals, has been prepared by VNJS's management and board, under the inspiration and guidance of Sara Fossum, sustainability consultant at Lærdal Medical. The results and goal attainment will be assessed on an annual basis by the board and the artistic committee.

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF VNJS ON 28.03 2022



The UN Sustainable Development Goals



The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of interlinked global goals to eliminate poverty, reduce inequality and combat climate change by 2030. The SDGs form the basis for VNJS's sustainability strategy, which is linked to the following goals in particular:

GOAL 3: Good Health and Well-being
Experiencing music, and being involved in creating concerts, may contribute to a better quality of life for musicians, organisers and audiences alike.

GOAL 5: Gender Equality
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Help to give everyone an opportunity to participate.

GOAL 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Help to give everyone an opportunity to participate.

GOAL 12: Responsible Consumption and Production
Avoid overconsumption and practise a sustainable way of life. Reduce the use of resources, environmental harm and greenhouse gas emissions – food, paper, textiles, technical equipment etc. Circular economy, repair instead of buying new.

At an overarching level, we would of course like to contribute to **Climate Action (Goal 13)**, and we need to cooperate to succeed (**Goal 17 – Partnership for the Goals**)

VNJS's activities in a sustainability perspective

A sustainability strategy will help us to find greener solutions for reducing the carbon footprint of our operations (office life) and our activities/projects (concerts, tours etc.). How can we, through our activities, help to create added social value (music, art, culture, jobs, local communities, welfare etc.) and minimise our environmental impact? With regard to the environment, we need to look at procedures and our potential for improvement relating to energy, transport and waste. In terms of the social dimension, factors such as health, working conditions, diversity and equality come into play.

VNJS is a small organisation with just two permanent employees. We share offices with the Natl jazz festival and Bergen Jazzforum (jazz club), comprising a total of eight employees. The scope of our office activity is currently limited, and our carbon footprint is in principle small. We have joint meeting/seminar rooms, storage facilities, technical aids and other equipment. We have joint operating agreements (rent/ electricity, carsharing, insurance etc.), and have just acquired a new photocopier (EPSON) with a strong environmental profile (named the most sustainable company in Japan across all industries; ranked among the 1% most sustainable companies in the world by Ecovadis). We keep printing to a minimum and generally produce little waste. Waste is sorted at source (paper/cardboard and residual waste). We use electronic equipment until it no longer works, repair it if possible, or send it for recycling. Small items of plastic packaging are sorted at source, while larger quantities are disposed of in a container. We do not use environmentally harmful or toxic products, and we buy cleaning services from ISS, a company that is certified to ISO 14001:2015. The staff at the shared office walk, cycle or use public transport to work. A shared car or private car is used in exceptional cases. When a car is required for work purposes (concert/tour), we use a shared car or hire car, hybrid/electric if possible

VNJS is an operative, productive competence centre for jazz in Western Norway. Concerts and tours are a vital part of the centre's activities, in addition to projects involving artists/performers, children and young people. The centre has a regional focus, but also a national and international mandate. Local performers, as well as performers from elsewhere in Norway and abroad, are invited to Bergen (Hovedscenen), Stavanger (Regionscenen) and other regional venues to play concerts and take part in projects. Our regional tour programme Den Musikalske Stamvegen brings concerts to both rural and urban audiences, probably in the greenest way currently possible: using a hire car and covering relatively short distances per day, on continuous tours with no days off. **Travel** stands out as a key focus area for both the board and administration. Activities and projects, but also the **consumption of products and resources, reuse, repair and waste management** are areas of importance.



Improvement goals

Through strategic priorities and measures for the period 2022–2030, VNUS shall contribute to

- promoting inclusion and diversity
- reducing the carbon footprint by ensuring that our own operations are sustainable and by acting as a driving force for green/sustainable thinking and action in the Western Norway jazz sector

Goal 1: Promote inclusion and diversity in all parts of the organisation

- The centre shall offer initiatives and services that are available to people of all genders, ages and from all backgrounds.
 - At least 50% of all bands participating in the Hovedscenen, Stamveggen and Nutshell concert programmes shall include female musicians, and otherwise reflect the population.
 - Overall, all projects/measures shall include an average of at least 25% female participants and otherwise reflect society and the population.
 - A target has been set for a 50/50 ratio of men and women on the board, artistic committee and in the administration.
- VNUS's portfolio includes services and initiatives for all age groups (children, young people and adults) that are open to everyone and based on universal design. However, we see that our users (participants, audiences and musicians) do not reflect society in terms of e.g. ethnicity. We seek to reach a wider range of user groups through more targeted information and marketing.

In 2021, VNUS booked an average of 17% female musicians (44 of 262). Our target is a minimum of 25%, and that the goal is achieved well before 2030. It is a challenge in the music industry that the number of male performers far exceeds that of women. There has been a slight improvement in recent years, also in relation to female band leaders, but the gender balance is still skewed. The reasons are complex, but keywords include recruitment and access to musical instruction at an adequate level to sufficiently many, all the way from primary school and culture schools through upper secondary school to higher education. In other words, several parties need to take joint responsibility to improve the situation. Our contribution is to ensure a better gender balance through talent development and recruitment initiatives, such as the Jazz i Slike Programme for young musicians, and the summer jazz course. We will also enter into dialogue with culture schools and educational institutions in the region to consider joint initiatives. A simple way of achieving change quickly is for event organisers to increasingly book the female musicians that are available, and thereby help to create female role models.

VNUS's activities are aligned with the object laid down in our statutes, and we would like to specify that our efforts to promote inclusion and diversity will not be at the expense of artistic quality. The ratio of women to men on the board, artistic committee and in the administration is currently 60/40.



Participants and instructors at VNUS' Summer jazz camp in 2021. 50% female participants.

Goal 2: Carbon-neutral activities

The centre's carbon footprint shall be reduced by 50% on today, through reduced travel, more use of digital solutions and financial incentives:

- Encourage travellers (musicians/board/administration) to choose rail over air travel, and public transport over private. At least 50% of all journeys shall be made by public transport or other environmentally friendly means of transport.
- Use electric/hybrid cars and public transport in all contexts where possible (including hire cars and taxis).
- Facilitate increased collaboration between event organisers in the region on concerts that include visiting performers, and facilitate 'stay & play' solutions where possible/desirable. Achieve an increase of at least 50% in the number of concerts played in the same venue/place, to ensure a larger and more diverse audience.
- Use regional musicians/project participants at the local/regional level where possible. Maintain the current ratio of 50%/regional musicians.
- Choose digital meeting solutions rather than physical, if possible/expedient.

Again, we would like to stress that our efforts to reduce the centre's carbon footprint shall not be at the expense of artistic quality. We shall choose green/sustainable transport in all contexts where possible, even though it will entail increased costs – the solution is not to stop presenting or inviting international and national performers and guests.

It may be an option to reward/pay musicians who choose green travel (rail over air travel). In fact, we see increasingly that especially young musicians ask to travel by train rather than plane, even though it takes longer.

We currently use public transport and hire cars/cars/sharing and electric/hybrid cars as far as possible. The taxi industry also increasingly offers electric/hybrid solutions. We will actively encourage suppliers of carsharing services and hire cars to improve their electric/hybrid solutions, also for larger passenger cars/vans, and to influence decision-makers when it comes to developing the changing network throughout the region.

There is also room for improvement as regards increased cooperation, including by facilitating collaboration between organisers of concerts involving visiting performers. We will also encourage concert organisers to use musicians who perform in the local area in several contexts (workshops, playing for children/old people etc.), and thereby encourage more performances in the same place over a period of several days ('stay & play'). We will consider the possibility of conducting a pilot project with selected organisers to promote this.

All our creative initiatives, except Hovedscenen and Nutshell, use/prioritise local/regional resources (musicians, composers, soloists etc.) insofar as this is possible. We endeavour to maintain an overview of available resources in the region at all times. As mentioned, our regional tour programme is already conducted with sustainability in mind, focusing on regional performers and environmentally friendly transport. We will again reach out to other potential partners, such as Førde Traditional and World Music Festival, to consider the possibility of a regional tour collaboration.

A simple way of reducing our carbon footprint is to reduce travel. The pandemic has opened our eyes to digital meeting solutions, including for larger events, seminars, general meetings etc. We will continue this practice to the extent it is possible/expedient, for both operational and project purposes. Travelling far (by plane) to attend short meetings is a thing of the past.

Goal 3: Reduce consumption. Circular solutions and waste management

By practising reuse, recycling and repair, and if possible buying second-hand rather than new, we will reduce all types of purchasing and procurement by at least 50%. This goal can be achieved by:

- Limiting purchases even further, focusing on eco-friendly/eco-labelled products (choosing sustainable suppliers), and increasingly consider repairs.
- Using computer equipment, mobile phones etc. as long as possible, insofar as they are functional.
- Sharing equipment in the shared office space, also with partners (instruments, technical equipment).
- Avoiding single-use products; plastic products and other non-reusable products. Reducing waste and sorting all waste at source: plastic, electronic equipment, glass/metal, paper, residual waste. Returning all deposit bottles/cans. Asking the landlord to get a plastic waste container.
- Reducing printing to a minimum.
- Saving as much documentation as possible in cloud-based solutions, and deliver services on digital platforms to the extent possible.
- Cutting/reducing the use of print newspapers and start using digital solutions.
- Installing energy efficient light sources (LED) in all offices and raising awareness of energy efficiency. Asking the landlord for an energy report (Energinetking.no).
- When serving food: using local produce, less red meat, more vegetarian options, more organic options.

Goal 4: Internal and external social responsibility. Working environment

- VNUS (the board, artistic committee, administration and other affiliated parties) shall be a 'green player' and role model for sustainable thinking and action, and shall actively encourage its partners, suppliers and other stakeholders to plan and implement green/sustainable practices.
- VNUS shall ensure a safe, positive working environment for its employees and engaged co-workers, with clear employment contracts, job instructions, health and safety policies and established whistleblowing procedures. We use the rates recommended by Creos as remuneration for artistic work.

As a 'green player', we endeavour to be a role model and to exert positive green influence on our partners and require them to think and act in the same way. Several useful guides have been developed for the culture scene, such as Brak's green festival guide (www.grofestival.no) and the Climate Partners initiative (www.klimapartnernr.no), which also addresses the supplier aspect, including catering and waste management.

Green practices/environmental certification will probably soon become a standard criterion for being granted funding from the authorities, which means that everyone who receives public funds will have to document sustainable operations in their own as well their partners' organisations.

VNUS undertakes to comply with the Working Environment Act, facilitate a safe working environment and demonstrate decent conduct as an employer and purchaser of creative services. We also abide by the ethical guidelines adopted for the Norwegian Jazz Forum and the regional jazz centres.

Measurement and reporting

VNUS is currently (2022) in the process of becoming a certified Eco-Lighthouse (www.miljøforum.no), together with Natjazz and Bergen Jazzforum. The certification includes a requirement for environmental mapping and subsequent annual reporting. In the years ahead, this will help us to determine the status of our environmental impact, with an overview of and targets set for various impact factors.

The results are reported to the Eco-Lighthouse Foundation, and to the board and artistic committee. Positive measurable changes entail that we have raised/improved the quality of our activities as a whole, which in turn may influence (and be a source of inspiration for) others.



2022 – 2030

