

Berlin, December 2023

Travel policy

Alliance of International Production Houses

The seven performing-arts institutions that make up the Alliance of International Production Houses are sites of wide-ranging international cooperation. Artists from all over the world gather at our venues to collaborate and present their work to diverse audiences. Our institutions are open to all people, regardless of origin, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, religion, culture, residence status, age, class, appearance or any other affiliation or attribute. In the spirit of our audiences and the entire visual- and performing-arts community, we see it as our fundamental social responsibility to develop and manage our institutions in a manner that is as environmentally sustainable as possible.

Regular travel is one of the key activities involved in fulfilling the objectives and responsibilities of our work. This is why, when it comes to travel, we are fully committed to fostering a culture of environmental conservation and the minimum possible use of valuable resources among all our employees, partners and artistic, technical and administrative production teams.

The following guidelines¹ represent our voluntary commitment to keeping our carbon footprint to a minimum; they apply to all travel organised by our staff. These guidelines are also meant to address each one of our partners – without exception. We hope our commitment will serve as a role model for how to integrate low-emission mobility into everyday operations. More specifically, our guidelines seek to ensure that travel is coordinated in a sustainable manner, which means organising, implementing and invoicing all trips in the most efficient and energy-conserving way.

Responsibility for making sure these guidelines are carried out at each individual venue lies in the hands of the production houses themselves.

Catalogue of travel-related guidelines

Basic principles

Before any travel takes place, we will determine whether the trip is even necessary and also clarify all goals relating to the trip. Our approach will be as follows:

- We will select the mode of transport based on expected CO₂ emission levels, whereby our first priority will be to **avoid emissions altogether**, our second will be to **reduce** emissions and our third will be to **compensate** for them.
- Wherever possible, we will engage in telephone and/or video conferences instead of travel; we will also continue to make full use of the ever-increasing opportunities offered by digital platforms.

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¹ The guidelines listed here outline our objectives as well as the current framework in which we carry out our activities. In those areas where our associated legal entities and donors do not permit the implementation of these guidelines for legal, funding-related or any other reasons, we will nevertheless advocate for their application and, at the same time, look for alternatives that allow us to fulfil these guidelines to the best of our ability.

- We will plan all travel well in advance, or at least as early as possible, and all travel itineraries will be optimised by combining multiple destinations, events and travellers with one another.
- We will cover only the costs of climate-friendly and environmentally-compatible travel and transport, both for in- and outbound trips as well as for any travel that takes place on-site at the destination. Factors such as time constraints, the quality of travel connections, safety/security and distance will be given consideration within reasonable parameters.
- We will take all factors relating to access, low-threshold accessibility and safety/security into account.

1. Means of transportation for travel to and from a destination

Travel by bus and train

Travel by train will always be the preferred mode of transport. Travel by bus or train to Germany from another country will also be acceptable, but only if the travel time does not exceed 8 hours.

Travel by plane

In general, flights within Germany will be avoided entirely and, for environmental reasons, the cost of such flights will not be reimbursed. The same applies to air travel to and from neighbouring European countries, especially those major cities that already have good existing connections. Exceptions will be made, however, for travellers with special needs relating to access and safety/security. It might also be possible to make an exception in the case of last-minute changes to the cast of a production, say, due to illness, to ensure that the production can go ahead. All exceptions must be authorised in advance by the relevant body; in this case, the body responsible for determining whether an exception is permitted, as well as for deciding how to proceed in the event of non-compliance, is whichever production house is responsible for the event.

In general, the following applies to all travel:

In the case of each trip, there must be a reasonable relationship between the length of stay, the overall travel time and the distance travelled. In keeping with this guideline, the following will apply:

- Flights covering a distance of less than 800 km will only be permitted if the time it takes to cover the same distance by bus or by train is over 8 hours.
- Flights covering 800 km to 3,800 km must involve a trip lasting at least 5 days.
- Flights covering over 3,800 km must involve a trip lasting at least 10 days.

The length of each trip includes all inbound and outbound travel. Direct flights will be preferred over flights that involve stopovers and/or transfers. All kilometres travelled by air will be recorded and offset. In those cases where our funding partners do not yet involve environmental offset payments in their budgets, we will work towards achieving that involvement whenever entering into contracts with those partners.

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Travel by car

In general, before travelling by car, we will determine whether the trip is even necessary in the first place and/or whether there might be a more ecological alternative. To the extent that travel by car is necessary for transport reasons or any of the abovementioned reasons, such as safety, security and/or accessibility, we will make every effort to take advantage of carpooling opportunities and electromobility. With regard to transporting items, we will endeavour to use alternatives such as cargo bikes and bicycle courier services, that is, when the size and weight of the items allows it. In each case, internal transport and delivery by means of low-emission vehicles will be preferred over any kind of external transport and/or delivery resulting in high CO₂ emissions. We will consider any ensuing additional costs in terms of time and labour as being acceptable when attempting to avoid unnecessary emissions.

The vehicles and technical infrastructure belonging to the production houses will be reduced and/or redesigned to comply with these guidelines. This might involve such things as replacing gasoline cars with electric vehicles and purchasing cargo bikes.

2. Local transport

When travelling within cities and urban areas, we will primarily use public transport and/or bicycles. Modes of transport such as eBikes and eScooters will be seen as secondary alternatives. We will also consider purchasing bikes that then could be used by guests, artists and staff.

In our capacity as hosts and organisers, each production house will be responsible for arranging any transfers from airports and train stations to hotels, as well as between hotels and rehearsal spaces or venues, if possible, in full compliance with the guidelines and principles mentioned in this travel policy. We will reimburse travel by car within the city during the length of stay only in cases when an exception has been explained and authorised in advance. This might be the case, for example, in the event of a trip at night, in the case of illness, disability, heavy luggage or for safety/security reasons. If it is necessary for a person to travel by car, preference will always be given to electric vehicles.

3. Accommodation

The choice of accommodation for guests, artists and staff is a determining factor in calculating the environmental impact of a business trip. For this reason, in the case of overnight stays, we will endeavour to choose hotels that operate in an environmentally friendly manner. We understand the term “environmentally friendly” here as involving, among other things, the conscious use of water and energy, the purchasing of resource-saving products and sustainable waste management.

We will select accommodations based on the following considerations:

- All of the hotels we book will be located in areas that make it possible for travellers to reach all relevant destinations by foot, by bike or by means of public transport.

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- When booking a hotel, we will determine in advance whether it has been officially certified as environmentally friendly. We will also look into the hotel's strategy with regard to sustainability, so that we can show that any environmental measures are actually being carried out. It is often the case that only large hotels have such certifications, whereas smaller hotels and those without any fancy extras (such as a swimming pool) often have a smaller CO₂ footprint per guest.
- If possible, we will consider the opportunity to arrange for overnight stays in the home of private individuals and the use of sharing services as climate-friendly alternatives.

4. Recommendation

When drafting all contracts in the future, we will take into account the additional effort required to fulfil the guidelines of this travel policy. In the same vein, each of the production houses in the alliance acknowledges and accepts the fact that this will likely involve additional expenditures in terms of time and money when it comes to travel.

5. Outlook

The Alliance of International Production Houses is an association of seven of the most prominent institutions active in the contemporary performing arts in Germany. This travel policy is designed to reflect the major step the Alliance is taking towards the climate-friendly production and presentation of the arts. The ecological transformation and the mitigation of man-made climate change are an important focus of the Alliance. By setting out this travel policy, the Alliance seeks to ensure that the subject of climate change is reflected in the structures and processes of its member institutions. This policy is also designed to lead to important, concrete and measurable changes. As such, the policy presents both an opportunity and a major challenge to all processes currently in place at the production houses. Questions will no doubt be raised as to how the catalogue of guidelines can be implemented as smoothly as possible. What kinds of incentives can we create for our employees that might help support and simplify changes to processes? This travel policy marks a concrete step, functioning as a starting point for further necessary changes to the work being done at the production houses beyond the areas of travel and touring.

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