

ROCK

Cultural Heritage
leading urban futures



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FACTSHEET N°4

GREEN OFFICE GUIDANCE

WASTE MANAGEMENT

WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF WASTE?

Throwing things away wastes resources in terms of the raw materials and the energy used to make them. In addition, disposing of waste has major environmental impacts.

All over the world the best design and creative minds are dedicating themselves to waste and how to get rid of it by transforming the way we design, use and dispose of stuff. The Circular Economy is a new way of looking at the resources we use in order to minimise waste, detoxify it and transform it into valuable and restorative resources for us all.

Disclaimer: The sole responsibility for the content of this publication lies with the ROCK project and in no way reflects the views of the European Union.

Introduction to ROCK

ROCK aims to support the transformation of historic city centres afflicted by physical decay, social conflicts and poor life quality into Creative and Sustainable Districts through shared generation of new sustainable environmental, social, economic processes. ROCK develops and apply an innovative circular systemic approach to connect different actors, places of cultural heritage value and systems, at a European level as well as at a local level, facilitating the innovation process and the adoption of environmentally and socially sound solutions to achieve sustainable growth.

Cultural heritage at risk

In 2014, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's IUCN World Heritage Outlook declared climate change to be the most serious potential threat to natural World Heritage sites worldwide. The effects of climate change – from sea-level rise and higher temperatures to increasingly frequent extreme weather events such as floods and droughts – all threaten to rapidly degrade the natural and cultural heritage of humankind.

There is an urgent need for environmental support and resources to encourage cultural heritage leaders and practitioners to take action on climate change and the environment in order to safeguard cultural heritage and protect wider society from the effects of environmental breakdown. The safe-guarding of cultural heritage not only aims to protect heritage (including crucial habitats and biodiversity) – but also heritage as a driver for new and greener products, services, skills, and finance that can enhance the economic, social and cultural value which cultural heritage brings.

Introduction to the ROCK 'Green Office' series

These guides will equip cultural heritage professionals to start their journey in taking environmental action – they are focused on developing good practice and include key steps for both organisational governance and operations.

The 'ROCK Green Office' series covers the following topics:

1. Environmental governance
2. Environmental policy
3. Green procurement
4. Waste Management

Who should read this guide?

This guide is for directors, managers and practitioners of cultural heritage organisations who are looking to integrate environmental governance and practice within their buildings and sites.

WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS BENEFITS OF GOOD WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING?

- The cost of goods and materials is rising, and so are the costs of disposal - so reducing what you throw away will save you money.
- Reducing, reusing and recycling waste helps reduce demand for resources and energy, which reduces your wider costs and associated environmental impacts.
- Demonstrating you are working to reduce your waste also improve the image and reputation of your business/organisation. Some of the people and organisations you work with may already be working to reduce their waste; some may even require you to in order to work with them.
- Understanding your waste can help you think of innovative business ideas and approaches, leading to new business opportunities.

WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF WASTE?

Throwing things away wastes resources in terms of the raw materials and the energy used to make them. In addition, disposing of waste has major environmental impacts:

- Landfill generates methane which contributes to climate change
- Waste left in the open air pollutes land and water
- Incinerating/burning waste causes air pollution (incineration can be used generate heat and electricity, although this is far from best practice)

WHERE SHOULD I BEGIN?

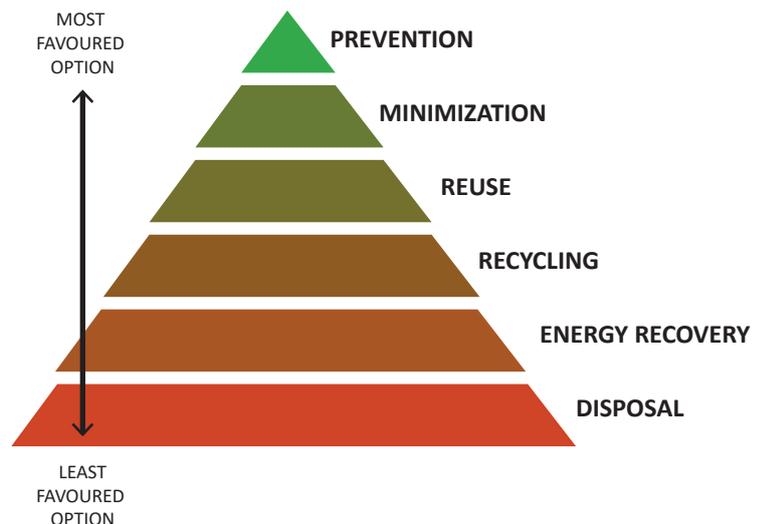
Consider what you use in your organisation/business/office/venue from day to day:

- What types and quantities of products/materials do you use?

- What types and volumes of waste do you produce?
- How do you dispose of your waste? where does it go?
- How much does this waste disposal cost you?

The waste management hierarchy is a useful way to prioritise the actions you should take to manage your waste:

- REDUCE your use of materials
- REUSE everything you can
- RECYCLE the rest



HOW WILL I KNOW I AM IMPROVING?

Monitoring your progress over time is really important and helps you understand if your actions are having an impact. If you are a small business it will be enough to simply review your waste production every 3 months; this process will help identify and define actions you can take.

If you are a larger organisation, you could consider using the free Creative Green Tools online environmental calculator to record and understand the impacts of your business, office, venue, attraction or event. <https://ig-tools.com/>

Read more about the circular economy:

<https://juliesbicycle.com/resource-circular-economy-2018/>

TEMPLATE: A simple waste management action plan

<i>Understanding resource use, waste and recycling</i>	<i>Doing?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify the main types and volumes of products and materials you purchase 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Carry out a waste review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What waste types do you have, how much, and how do you currently dispose of it (e.g. reuse, recycling, incineration, landfill)? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review how much your business pays to dispose its waste. 	
<i>Avoiding and reducing waste</i>	<i>Doing?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Base purchasing decisions on accurate information about stock and actual usage. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a digital communications strategy i.e. social media, web content etc. so as to reduce printed marketing collateral. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investigate options for hiring or sharing materials, equipment or products. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask your suppliers if they can reduce packaging, or if they can use recyclable or reusable packaging on their products. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use products and materials which have a longer product life or can be reused or recycled, e.g. removing dates from promotional banners, switching to rechargeable batteries, and fitting LED lights which have longer lifespans. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Before disposing of broken electrical and electronic appliances and furniture, check with your local supplier if it can be repaired instead. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set photocopiers and printers to double-sided copying and printing as default. Use tap water in jugs instead of bottled water. 	
<i>Reuse and recycling</i>	<i>Doing?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recycle paper, cardboard, plastic bottles and cans as a minimum. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Label all recycling bins clearly. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remove personal bins from office desks: having only central waste and recycling points will encourage reuse and recycling. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Remove dates for general marketing materials/flyers/posters etc., or any unnecessary information that gives document a timescale. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Used lighting equipment and bulbs may contain hazardous substances like mercury – so if possible, choose a separate lighting/bulbs/electronic waste recycling and recovery waste service to ensure it is disposed of properly and safely. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use or share scrap materials and re-use 1 side printed paper as scrap. Reuse envelopes and other packaging whenever possible. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use toners and cartridges which have been refilled or remanufactured (check that your machines can accept refilled/remanufactured products.). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Find out how you can recycle empty printer toners and cartridges – ask your supplier. Use durable cups, mugs, glasses and cutlery that can be washed and reused rather than disposable items. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recycle any non-rechargeable batteries. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you have access to a garden or green space, consider composting tea bags, coffee grounds and fruit and vegetable peelings (this will also help reduce the weight of your non-recyclable waste). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tell your audience/visitors that you are recycling: it will further improve your reputation and also encourage them to take action. 	