

THIS IS HOW YOU MAKE YOUR EXHIBITION MORE SUSTAINABLE!

OH YES!

Yes, I want to be more sustainable!

As a cultural organization you want to be sustainable, in fact you are already working on it. Whereby I think that there is still a lot unknown knowledge during the making process of an exhibition. The duration of a temporary exhibition is often short, the materials are only used once and then thrown away. That isn't the world where I would like to work for as a creative maker. I would like to share my knowledge and provide a guideline to help your organization to be more sustainable. Because your sustainable choices for exhibition design can reduce or even minimize the carbon footprint of your location.

This document is a guideline to make sustainable choices for designing and realizing museum exhibitions. These tips and information can inspire you and your organization in every step into your project elements or new ones.

How do you use these tips?

On the next page you will see a division off three categories: reuse, share once new you'll start at the beginning. Are there materials, elements or display cases within your organization that you could reuse? Yes? Great! Use them, it will save you a lot of time and money. But maybe reuse isn't an option, then look after another organization, perhaps you can borrow or rent their equipment. Did you think about these options, but still not fulfilled in you exhibition design? Then look at what you can purchase new by making sustainable choices, I give you a number of examples!

With this tool you can continue down the entire path and make sustainable choices with your team. Maybe not all options are likely feasible or you might think of other possibilities. And that is okay. Every small step towards is one step nearer sustainability!

This is how to read the symbols

To give you more insight, a theme has been added to each tip. You can read the explanation of the symbols here:



PRICE - sustainable choices doesn't have to be expensive, they can sometimes even save you money.



TIME - sometimes you don't have the time to pay attention to everything. Thinking and deciding about sustainability can take a lot of time, but sometimes there are quick and easy solutions. Please let me show you my thoughts!



CHOICE - there are sustainable options for many 'standards'. For example, instead of an OSB panel, you can also choose a material that is produced with a lower carbon emission. I share possibilities that you might not have thought of.



TIP - sharing knowledge makes the world a better place, so I would like to share a quick, fun or surprising tip!



RECYCLING - one of the most important things to think about. Sustainability starts with a good recycle process. It makes it easy and clear when you start thinking of the consequences of your choices!

WHICH CHOICES DO YOU MAKE FOR A SUSTAINABLE EXHIBITION?

START

1/ REUSE

When starting a new exhibition design, start by thinking about all the material already exist and use that as a starting point.



USE YOUR ARCHIVE!

Do you know which material and furniture you have in your depot? Take an afternoon to investigate with an open mind what you could use for the new exhibition.



BUY A SECOND LIFE

Need construction wood? Take a look at Buurman, a workshop and hardware store for reusing materials. Good to know is that they take in material as well..

<http://>



DON'T THROW ANYTHING AWAY!

Once the exhibition is up, immediately start looking for opportunities to give your exhibition (or parts of it) a second life.



TRANSPORT

For the transport of collection items or materials, do not order the first available courier, but look for a sustainable option, such as a bicycle courier or a carrier with an electric car.



MUSEUM MARKETPLACE

TIP! First see if you can buy what you are looking for second hand. For museums there is a special marketplace for objects and furniture where you can buy furniture and exhibition elements.

There is also a marketplace for used interior construction projects and materials!

<http://>

<http://>
CLICK HERE!



BORROW IT!

Investigate what opportunities there are to borrow (or rent) display cases or AV equipment, for example. Start on time by sharing your needs with the market and fellow museums. Do this after your concept fase or even before the design process starts. In this way you can better coordinate supply and demand.

2/ SHARE

Before you have something new made, remember that sharing is sustainable! There are several options to prevent further depletion of the earth.



THINK ABOUT YOUR TRANSPORTATION!

- Make sure that your furniture is transported in modular peaces, you call this flatpack packaging. As well a modular element is easier to reuse.

- Exchange protective film or bubble wrap for a horse blanket, these are easy to reuse.

3/ NEW

Are you still not fulfilled your exhibition design? You need to add new materials, which isn't a problem if you make the right choices.



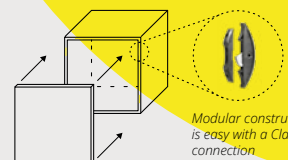
CHOOSE TREE-FREE

13% of forest clearing is used for the European paper industry. Paper can be recycled an average of five times, after which it is degraded to toilet paper. A sustainable choice is therefore tree-free paper.



BUILD MODULAR

Modular construction makes furniture easy to assemble and disassemble. In this way, circular materials can be recycled better.



CHOICE OF MATERIAL

Look critically at your choice of materials. Because you can make it more sustainable without changing the type of material as well your budget. This are a few suggestions:

MDF	→	Chipboard e.g. Pfleiderer / Unilin
OSB	→	ESB e.g. Elka strong
Acrylic	→	GreenCast Acrylic e.g. Pyrasied
Dibond	→	Cardboard
Acrylic paint	→	Biobased paint e.g. Fairf



MAKE A CONSCIOUS CHOICE OF WOOD

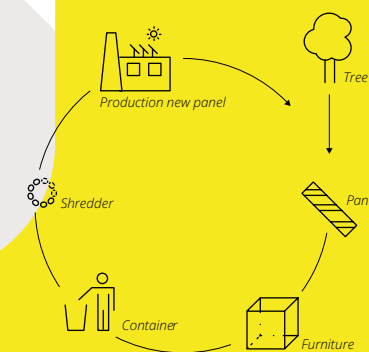
By choosing wood with an FSC and/or PEFC certification, you actively contribute to the conservation of forests worldwide. In addition, all opportunities for a climate-friendly, circular economy are being utilized.

FSC certification is also an instrument against deforestation.



CHOOSE CIRCULAR MATERIALS

When a material is circular, this means that it can go back into the chain. In this way, no new raw materials are tapped from the earth. So, can you choose a circular material instead? Wood is a good example of this:



EXPERIMENT WITH BIOBASED MATERIALS

A good alternative, both for aesthetics and construction, is a biobased material. Click on the link for biobased inspiration from the Netherlands.

<http://>

These tools are just the beginning. I'm curious: what inspiration will you take with you for your next choice?* Click here to look at an example, I will show you how to apply a few of these tools!

- PRICE
- TIME
- CHOICE
- TIP
- RECYCLING

CASE

As example, I would like to show you which sustainable choices I did and didn't make for this project. In the exhibition "Nazipropaganda voor de Jeugd 1933-1945" we told the story about how the German government's propaganda was to feel everywhere – at home, on the streets and in the classroom.

With this knowledge in my mind, I made the best sustainable choices for this exhibition as possible. But now, I look very differently at some choices I ever made. That's why I would like to take you through my choices and show you what I would do in a different way.

The yellow circles indicate which sustainable materials were used and what considerations were made in this project. In the white circles you can read which elements were not so sustainable. But now there are good alternatives!

For example, for this design we printed the information and images directly on wood, so that no second material was needed. But we didn't use FSC/PEFC wood. This means that the wood did not have the quality mark for sustainable forest management. Now I always choose wood with an FSC/PEFC certificate.

Look at all choices attentively and see which ones you can incorporate in your exhibition. Would you like to know more about the concept behind this exhibition? Have a look on my website!

We minimized the use of attributes.

We reused glass.

The foil texts aren't PVC free.

We used decors from their own archive.

The complete construction is built modular.

We didn't use FSC/PEFC wood.

No biobased has been used.

CLICK HERE!

Projectors are in a lease construction.

Wallpaper with regular glue instead of click-off glue.

The total height of the panels was too high for the technical installation.

These steel pins are reused from Museum's archive.

Prints directly on wood.

We used the standard wood size.



CASE

In 2024 I created the exhibition *Jetses*, where visitors discover the drawings of Cornelis Jetses, the artist who made generations of children look, dream, and learn with, for example, Aap, Noot, Mies.

With more knowledge and experience in the field of sustainability, I developed this exhibition with a conscious approach to material choices and reuse.

You can see that this exhibition contains far fewer white circles. This is because better, more sustainable alternatives were found for materials that were less environmentally friendly in earlier projects.

Whenever new material was required, recycled acrylic and wood-free FSC-certified paper were chosen. In addition, the design of this exhibition focused on recycling and reusing instead of using new materials. Many elements and pieces of furniture were reused from previous exhibitions.

In this project, transport accounts for a relatively large share of the CO₂ emissions, not because more travel was required, but because we were able to significantly reduce the environmental impact in other areas. As a result, the emissions were taken into account within the total impact.

Look at all choices attentively and see which ones you can incorporate in your exhibition. Would you like to know more about the concept behind this exhibition? Have a look on my website!

The wood comes from the exhibition *Nazi Propaganda for Youth, 1933–1945*.

Audiovisual elements are fundamental components of the museum.

1935-1941 AAN HET HOF VAN KAREL DE GROTE

De schoolplaat van de paleiszaal van Karel de Grote was de schoolplaat die Cornelis Jetses maakte. Zoals altijd bereidde het onderwerp grondig voor. Voor deze plaat ondernam Jetses een bijzondere reis langs de historische locaties Aken, Mainz, Lorsch en Worms.

De architectuur op de plaat is geïnspireerd op de beroemde Paltskapel in Aken, waar Karel de Grote resideerde. Voor de weergave van de objecten maakte Jetses gedetailleerde tekeningen van de vroegmiddeleeuwse Tassilo-kelk, afkomstig uit het Kremsmünster in Oostenrijk. Ook de figuren op de plaat zijn historisch kloppend: Jetses baseerde zijn werk onder andere op een standbeeld van een Frankische krijger dat hij zag in Römisch-Germanisches Museum in Mainz.

AQUAREL

Aquarel, ook wel waterverf, wordt gemaakt door verf te mengen met water. Het wordt op een dunne, doorzichtige ondergrond aangebracht. Omdat aquarel makkelijk te mengen is, kan het gebruikt worden voor het schilderen van licht en donker. Het is een populaire techniek voor het schilderen van landschappen, portretten en abstracte werken.

Cornelis Jetses gebruikte aquarel al zijn hele leven lang. Hij maakte er prachtige werken van, zoals de bekende schoolplaat *Aan het Hof van Karel de Grote*. Hij heeft er ook veel boeken over geschreven.

Wood-free FSC-certified paper.

The foil lettering is not PVC-free.

[CLICK HERE!](#)

De iconische schoolplaat *Ter Walvischvaart* neemt ons mee naar een ijzoude wereld vol spannende tafereels. In 1910 schilderde Cornelis Jettea deze schoolplaat als onderdeel van de serie *Schoolplaten voor de Vaderlandse Geschiedenis*, bedacht door J.W. de Jongh en H. Wagenvoort.

Om een aangrijpend tafereel te maken, deed Jettes grondig onderzoek. Hij liet zich adviseren door de familie Honingsh uit Zaandam, een familie met een rijke geschiedenis in poolreizen.

Met hun verhalen, expertise en originele gereedschappen, zoals harpooten en weerhaken, bracht Jettse details uit het bestaan van de wachvaarders tot leven. Daarnaast haalde Jettse inspiratie uit 17de-eeuwse schilderingen. Zo beslootde hij het schilderij 'De tranenkuur' van Cornelis de Man, waarvan hij naar het Rijksmuseum afsteek. Deze historische bronnen hielpen Jettse om de dramatiek en sfeer van de wachvaarders op treffende wijze vast te leggen.

Careless James was de slinger 218. Wetters die opgevoeld aan zijn secretary wach te trawleren. Bakkende wetters zoals Hingemans' Lasteren, die bijgehouden vertaalschijnt en Oit en leen werden. In overtuiging gauen en ruwten worden uitgedrukt aan de tijd. Het werk wordt Jansen achter loopen. Hij (vermoedde het) verbaasden 'men zij' (vermoedde). Zijn wetters bij de het maken van gringelen werk. James was achter een natuie brenken en loyad. Hij sprak leen niet (vermoedde) zijn brenken en loyad.

In 1734 kwam de samenstelling tussen James en zijn gewijs Wiltens onder druk te staan. De spanningen tussen hen als hoogste punt van Wiltens' aanwezigheid aan trouwe afscheid vriendschap, volgens het James al het gevoel van een met de historische afscheid van Aan het IJ van Karl de Grote. Het besluit reikte James diep:

Skontaktуйте нас за будь-яких умов: ми безкоштовно допоможемо вам розібратися, чому так відбувається і як це виправити. Ми також можемо допомогти вам з вибором оптимального рішення.

[illegible]

used acrylic.

'De firma steunde me daarbij op de meest loyale wijze. Met boeken en foto's, ja zelfs met levende modellen.'

This wood comes from the exhibition Nazi Propaganda for Youth, 1933–1945.

Steel stands come from the Agenda exhibition.

90% of the walls were reused.

Print work printed
on recycled paper.

This table was originally a podium.

CASE

In 2026, I designed the travelling exhibition Woman, Life, Freedom, about the ongoing resistance of Iranian women.

The exhibition design focused on reuse, material selection and disassembly. The exhibition was deliberately designed as a modular system, allowing its components to be easily dismantled, transported and reused. After its initial installation in Amsterdam, the exhibition was moved to Groesbeek. Thanks to the demountable construction, many of the components could be used again.

An important starting point was that at least 80% of the materials could be reused for a future exhibition. Materials such as birch plywood and Cyclin Puur were selected. Cyclin Puur is a strong acoustic building material made from recycled newspapers and also comes with a take-back guarantee. For the text in Groesbeek, textile foil was used, allowing it to potentially be reused in the future.

Not all materials could be reused at both locations. In Groesbeek, for example, 11 additional walls were needed. Two replicas also had to be produced. After weighing quality against sustainability, Dibond was chosen for these. In addition, the acrylic used for the first installation proved not to be strong enough and was replaced with a thicker variant.

The photographs show the exhibition in Amsterdam, as well as the various design and material choices. Would you like to learn more about the concept behind this exhibition? Click here!

The entire structure is demountable.

woman
life
freedom

The foil lettering is not PVC-free.

The venue already had all the required walls.

CLICK HERE!

Reusing the paper proved more challenging than expected.

The structure is largely made from birch plywood and Cyclin Puur.

2022 For the next location, the acrylic had to be replaced.

"Together we felt an unprecedented power and gained hope that we could change things."

"Samen voelden we een ongekende kracht en kregen we hoop dat we de situatie konden veranderen."

Shirin Azar

Audiovisual elements are fundamental components of the museum.