

Flow Festival releases new information on its environmental impacts

Helsinki's Flow Festival releases its Flow Impacts research report today. In the project, [D-mat](#) - an expert company for a sustainable future - calculated Flow Festival 2022's material and extended carbon footprints. The report provides brand-new information on the widespread environmental impacts of a music festival. The research continues with designing a budgeting tool for ecological consumption that helps event organisers in planning, monitoring and reducing their overall environmental burden.

Flow Festival is known for its long-standing sustainability work reaching over a decade. "Responsibility is an essential element of the Flow experience, and we get a lot of positive feedback on it from our visitors, artists and partners. We want to continue developing the event towards an even more sustainable one, for we believe that a responsible festival is a better and more enjoyable festival", Flow Festival's Artistic Director **Tuomas Kallio** states. "In the process, we want to influence the future of the entire event industry by providing tools to plan and execute the event's use of natural resources and emissions in a more informed manner. We want to challenge the entire field to more comprehensive environmental work and develop better and more environmentally conscious events."

Flow and D-mat launched the *Flow Impacts* research project in 2021. In the now completed first part of the research, an extended calculation of Flow Festival's carbon and material footprints was executed to determine the festival's overall environmental impact and identify the specific areas of event production resulting in the most significant consumption of natural resources and emissions. The research is supported by Finland's sustainable growth program, funded by the European Union's NextGenerationEU financing.

Great potential to reduce the environmental burden

The calculations revealed that visitors' travel and accommodation cause the most significant environmental burden. The large number of visitors, along with travelling modes, distances, and accommodation options, affect both the material and the carbon footprints. Therefore, an environmentally friendly event is organised in a central location with easy access.

The second largest aspect increasing the festival's environmental burden was caused by food and drinks. Already released last year, the first results of the calculations proved that cutting off red meat and poultry from the menus almost halved the festival food's carbon emissions. Hence, the festival's harmful environmental effects can still be reduced by increasing the amount of vegetarian and vegan meals.

The festival area's soil cultivation was revealed as the third most environmentally harmful aspect of the production. Flow brings rock ash, gravel, soil and grass, among other things, to the area and paves the ground to make the festival area safe, accessible and pleasant. An area not designed for a large public event as such is an unsustainable festival area. Thus, cities should persistently strive to repair and maintain sustainable event sites.

Towards a more sustainable event industry

Even though the calculations involve only one event, they provide a clearer picture of the aspects of event production all organisers should focus on in their environmental work. In the next phase of the research, Flow and D-mat are constructing a budgeting tool for using natural resources and ecological footprint tailored for the event industry, helping organisers plan, track and reduce their emissions and environmental burden. By identifying the aspects of each event specifically detrimental to the environment, event organisers can take action to minimise the harm caused.

Flow Festival aims to make festivals and events more sustainable, but work remains to be done. Accordingly, in addition to the new solutions, Flow has reduced its environmental debt by donating to the [Finnish Natural Heritage Foundation](#). The total donation sum is based on the calculations made at Flow Festival 2022. With the donation, four hectares of Finnish forest are permanently protected.

The international scientific community has also recognised the Flow Impacts research. It will be presented this week at the [Sustainable Innovation 2023](#) conference hosted by the University of Creative Arts in Epsom, UK.

You can read the full *Flow Impacts* report [here](#).

The main partner for the year 2023 is Hartwall. Other partners are Polestar, Vaasan, Valio Oddlygood®, Lanson, and Helsinki. Media partners are Helsingin Sanomat, Clear Channel, Radio Helsinki, and Resident Advisor, and production partners are Creative Technology and Stopteltat.

www.flowfestival.com

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Press photos: <https://www.flowfestival.com/en/media>

Additional information:

Flow Festival

Press Officer Eeva Palmén

eeva@flowfestival.com / +358 40 613 9933

PR in the UK

The Zeitgeist Agency

Jamie Muir / jamie.muir@zeitgeist.co.uk

PR in Europe

Dawn Creative Agency

Chanel Kadir / chanel@dawncreative.agency