



D4.2 GREENCCIRCLE BUSINESS MODEL AND BUSINESS PLAN

GREENCCIRCLE



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Abstract:

This document presents the GreenCCircle Business Model and Business Plan, developed to complement the GreenCCircle Hub by providing a strategic framework that supports the adoption of sustainable business practices within the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs). Building upon the knowledge, methodologies and decision-support components integrated into the Hub, it proposes an adaptable business model that enables organisations to create environmental, social, governance, organisational and economic value simultaneously. Rather than promoting a single business solution, the document offers a flexible framework that organisations of different sizes and cultural contexts can adapt to their own realities and sustainability ambitions. It also translates this model into an actionable Business Plan, outlining implementation pathways, required resources, strategic priorities and future development scenarios. Together, the Business Model and Business Plan demonstrate how GreenCCircle can support organisations in embedding sustainability into their strategies, strengthening organisational resilience and fostering collaborative innovation across the cultural ecosystem.



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1. Executive summary

The Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) are increasingly recognised as key actors in the transition towards more sustainable societies. Through their capacity to shape narratives, influence behaviours, foster innovation and engage communities, cultural and creative organisations play a central role in addressing environmental, social and economic challenges. At the same time, the sector itself faces growing pressure to rethink production models, operational practices, governance structures and long-term resilience in response to the climate crisis and the broader sustainability transition.

Despite this growing awareness, many organisations within the CCIs still encounter significant barriers when attempting to integrate sustainability into their daily operations and strategic development. Existing sustainability tools are often fragmented, overly technical, expensive, or disconnected from the realities of cultural and creative work. Smaller organisations in particular frequently lack the internal expertise, resources and guidance necessary to transform sustainability ambitions into practical organisational action.

GreenCCircle was developed in response to these challenges. Rather than proposing a single environmental assessment tool or a standalone technical solution, the initiative evolved into a broader sustainability support ecosystem specifically adapted to the needs of the cultural and creative sectors. The GreenCCircle approach combines digital resources, methodological guidance, learning pathways, collaborative experimentation and stakeholder engagement in order to support informed decision-making and long-term organisational transformation.

At the centre of this ecosystem lies the GreenCCircle HUB, a digital environment providing access to sustainability tools, workflows, datasets, templates, communication resources and practical guidance. The HUB is reinforced by the GreenCCircle Academy, which supports competence development and sustainability training, as well as by the Living Labs methodologies that enable co-creation, experimentation and collaborative learning across different territorial and sectoral contexts.

Within this framework, the present document defines the strategic logic through which the GreenCCircle ecosystem can create, deliver and sustain value for Cultural and Creative Industries. The document therefore combines two complementary dimensions:

- the **Business Model**, which explains how the GreenCCircle ecosystem functions as a sustainability support infrastructure for the cultural sector
- the **Business Plan**, which explores how the methodology and ecosystem approach can support sustainable organisational development, capacity-building and long-term transformation processes within CCIs

The document does not propose a rigid commercial model or a one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, it presents GreenCCircle as a flexible and transferable framework capable of supporting different cultural and creative realities, organisational scales and sustainability pathways. Particular attention is given to the role of knowledge-sharing, collaboration, learning,

stakeholder engagement and practical experimentation in enabling sustainability transitions within the sector.

The following sections analyse the sustainability challenges currently affecting CCI, describe the operational logic of the GreenCCircle ecosystem and decision-support framework, define the initiative's value proposition and business model, and provide practical guidance for developing sustainability-oriented organisational strategies and business planning approaches.

Ultimately, GreenCCircle proposes a vision in which sustainability is not treated as a secondary obligation or isolated environmental exercise, but as a driver of creativity, resilience, innovation and long-term cultural transformation.

2. Context and rationale

The transition towards more sustainable societies is profoundly transforming the operational, economic and cultural landscape in which Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) operate. Across Europe and beyond, cultural organisations are increasingly expected to reduce environmental impacts, rethink production models, improve resource efficiency, strengthen social responsibility and contribute actively to broader sustainability agendas.

At the same time, the sector faces important structural challenges. Many organisations operate with limited resources, fragmented funding structures, project-based working cultures and uneven access to sustainability knowledge or technical expertise. While awareness of environmental issues has grown significantly in recent years, the practical integration of sustainability into everyday organisational processes remains uneven across the sector.

This context has generated an increasing need for sustainability-oriented support systems capable of helping CCIs move from awareness to action. However, existing sustainability resources are often difficult to navigate, disconnected from the operational realities of cultural organisations or insufficiently adapted to the diversity of creative sectors and organisational scales. Many cultural actors therefore struggle not only with measuring environmental impacts, but also with identifying relevant strategies, engaging stakeholders, developing internal competences and transforming sustainability information into practical organisational decisions.

GreenCCircle emerged as a response to these challenges. The initiative was conceived as an integrated ecosystem designed to support sustainability transition within the CCIs through a combination of digital resources, methodological guidance, learning pathways, collaborative experimentation and decision-support processes.

The following sections explore the sustainability challenges identified within the sector and explain how the GreenCCircle ecosystem was developed to address these needs through a practical, collaborative and transferable support framework adapted to the realities of Cultural and Creative Industries.

2.1 Sustainability challenges in the cultural and creative industries

The Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) are increasingly recognised as key actors in the European green transition due to their capacity to influence behaviours, shape narratives, foster social innovation, and strengthen community engagement. At the same time, the sector faces significant sustainability-related challenges linked not only to environmental impact, but also to governance, economic resilience, digital transformation, accessibility of knowledge, and skills development. These challenges formed the basis of the GreenCCircle project at its core and were further explored and validated throughout the implementation of the GreenCCircle Academy, the Hub conception, the Living Lab methodology developed and adopted across partner countries, and the collaborative research and co-creation activities carried out within the initiative.

One of the main challenges identified concerns the sustainability skills gap currently affecting the sector. Research and competence-mapping activities conducted within GreenCCircle highlighted that many cultural and creative professionals lack structured knowledge related to environmental regulation, sustainability metrics, circular economy principles, strategic sustainability planning, impact assessment methodologies, and organisational transition processes. The Sustainability Change Facilitator framework developed within the GreenCCircle Academy recognises sustainability as an interdisciplinary field requiring the combination of creative, entrepreneurial, strategic, digital, and environmental competences.

The project also identified the need for sustainability competences to be adapted to the diversity of profiles operating within the sector. Cultural organisations, festivals, museums, performing arts institutions, designers, architects, audiovisual professionals, and creative SMEs often face highly specific operational realities, production models, and environmental challenges. Focus groups and consultation activities carried out during GreenCCircle repeatedly stressed the necessity of sector-specific sustainability approaches capable of responding to these differences through practical and context-sensitive methodologies.

Another major challenge concerns the difficulty many organisations face in translating sustainability principles into operational and measurable practices. Stakeholders involved in the GreenCCircle activities highlighted the complexity of existing sustainability tools, the fragmentation of available resources, and the lack of practical guidance adapted to the realities of the CCI sector. Particular difficulties were identified regarding carbon footprint analysis, sustainability indicators, lifecycle assessment methodologies, data collection processes, environmental reporting, and green procurement strategies.

This challenge became particularly visible during the conception of the GreenCCircle Hub and Toolkit environment, where facilitators and users consistently expressed the need for simpler, more accessible, and user-centred support systems. Existing resources were often perceived as overly technical, fragmented, or disconnected from the daily operational realities of cultural

organisations. The GreenCCircle Toolkit¹ was therefore conceived as a lightweight, open-source and scalable support environment capable of simplifying stakeholder engagement, resource identification, sustainability assessment, and decision-making processes for organisations operating within the cultural and creative sectors.

Governance and collaboration challenges also emerged as central themes throughout the GreenCCircle research and experimentation activities. Sustainability transition within CCIs requires cooperation between highly diverse actors, including artists, creative professionals, policymakers, researchers, educators, local authorities, civil society organisations, and community stakeholders. The Living Lab methodology developed within GreenCCircle therefore place strong emphasis on participatory governance, interdisciplinary collaboration, stakeholder mapping, and ecosystem-building processes capable of creating shared ownership and long-term engagement.

The Living Labs implemented across partner countries further demonstrated that sustainability challenges in the cultural sector are rarely isolated issues. Instead, they are deeply interconnected with broader structural realities such as fragmented funding models, project-based organisational cultures, limited institutional capacities, and difficulties in maintaining long-term strategic planning. For this reason, the GreenCCircle methodologies promote ecosystem thinking, iterative learning, continuous feedback loops, and cross-sector cooperation as essential mechanisms for supporting resilient and scalable sustainability transitions.

Environmental impacts linked to mobility, touring, production materials, energy consumption, and event organisation also emerged as particularly significant concerns. Existing references and sectoral frameworks analysed during GreenCCircle, including the SHIFT Eco-Guidelines for Networks, highlight that travel and event-related activities continue to represent major sources of carbon emissions within cultural ecosystems. At the same time, cultural organisations are increasingly expected to integrate sustainability policies, environmental action plans, green procurement strategies, and monitoring mechanisms into their operational structures.

Digitalisation presents both opportunities and challenges in this transition. While digital tools can support data management, sustainability assessment, collaboration, and knowledge-sharing, the sector still faces uneven levels of digital readiness and limited access to integrated

¹ Throughout the Grant Agreement and the original project proposal, this component was referred to as the GreenCCircle Toolkit (or GreenCCircle Tool), reflecting the initial concept envisaged at the proposal stage. During project implementation, following the mapping, analysis and consultation process, the consortium concluded that the planned objectives could be more effectively achieved through a broader digital platform integrating tools, methodologies, resources and guidance rather than through a standalone toolkit. This evolution, formally documented in the Revision Report for Deliverable 4.1, represents a change in terminology and format only, without modifying the deliverable's scope, objectives or expected outcomes. Consequently, throughout the remainder of this document, the revised name GreenCCircle Hub is used consistently.

digital sustainability infrastructures. The GreenCCircle ecosystem responds to this challenge by combining digital tools, training pathways, collaborative methodologies, and practical experimentation environments into a unified support framework adapted to the needs of CClIs.

Finally, GreenCCircle recognises that sustainability within the cultural and creative sectors also requires profound cultural and behavioural transformation. Beyond environmental compliance or technical adaptation, the transition towards sustainability involves rethinking values, production logics, collaboration models, and the role of culture itself within society. Through the Living Labs and collaborative experimentation activities, GreenCCircle approaches cultural and creative actors not only as adopters of sustainable practices, but as mediators capable of shaping social imagination, promoting new narratives, and fostering systemic change aligned with the European Green Deal, the New European Bauhaus, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

In this context, GreenCCircle approaches sustainability challenges within the CClIs as interconnected environmental, social, cultural, economic, and governance issues requiring systemic, participatory, and innovation-driven responses. The initiative therefore combines competence development, collaborative experimentation, digital support tools, and ecosystem-based methodologies to strengthen the capacity of CClIs to lead the green transition at local, national, and European levels.

2.2 Role of the GreenCCircle ecosystem

The GreenCCircle ecosystem was conceived as an integrated response to the sustainability challenges currently affecting the Cultural and Creative Industries (CClIs). Rather than developing a single standalone environmental calculator or isolated technical instrument, GreenCCircle evolved towards the creation of an interconnected environment combining knowledge resources, methodological guidance, learning pathways, stakeholder engagement, and practical experimentation. This approach emerged directly from the mapping, consultation, and analysis activities conducted throughout the initiative, which demonstrated that cultural organisations require flexible, contextualised, and sector-sensitive support systems rather than one-size-fits-all solutions.

At the centre of this ecosystem is the GreenCCircle HUB, a digital platform functioning as a central knowledge and resource environment for sustainability transition within CClIs. The HUB was designed to consolidate sustainability tools, guides, methodologies, training materials, and sector resources into a single accessible environment capable of supporting informed decision-making and organisational transformation. Unlike a traditional standalone toolkit, the HUB operates as a gateway and reference point connecting users with multiple sustainability resources adapted to different sectors, organisational scales, and operational realities.

The development of the HUB responded to a key finding identified during the project's mapping and consultation phases: CClIs often struggle not because of the absence of sustainability tools, but because of the fragmentation, complexity, and lack of contextual guidance associated with

existing resources. The GreenCCircle ecosystem therefore prioritises accessibility, usability, and practical orientation by enabling users to navigate, compare, and identify sustainability resources according to their own contexts and needs.

The HUB functions as a structured and searchable resource environment integrating both generic and sector-specific sustainability materials relevant to the wide diversity of disciplines operating within the CCIs. Its architecture enables users to filter resources according to sectors, locations, and formats, allowing more tailored and context-sensitive exploration pathways. At the time of revision, the HUB included 146 mapped resources originating from 22 geographical contexts and covering 14 cultural and creative sectors, illustrating both the breadth and international dimension of the ecosystem.

Beyond its role as a repository of resources, the GreenCCircle ecosystem also incorporates a strong methodological dimension. The project identified early on that sustainability transformation within CCIs requires more than technical measurement alone. Organisations need support in understanding which tools are appropriate for their contexts, how to interpret sustainability information, and how to translate environmental assessment into strategic and operational change. For this reason, the HUB integrates decision-support and comparative logic enabling users to identify which sustainability tools are viable for different operational realities rather than promoting a single universal methodology.

This methodological guidance is reinforced through the Workflow section of the ecosystem, which provides practical operational resources including stakeholder mapping tools, workflow templates, communication toolkits, and data collection guidance supporting organisations during sustainability planning and implementation processes. The ecosystem therefore supports organisations not only in identifying sustainability resources, but also in structuring collaborative processes, gathering information, engaging stakeholders, and operationalising sustainability strategies.

A further core component of the GreenCCircle ecosystem is its learning and capacity-building dimension, developed through the GreenCCircle Academy. The Academy complements the HUB by providing training pathways and competence development opportunities specifically adapted to Sustainability Change Facilitators and professionals working within the cultural and creative sectors. The ecosystem was intentionally designed so that users can combine practical resources available within the HUB with structured learning modules available through the Academy, creating an integrated pathway between knowledge acquisition, skills development, and organisational application.

The GreenCCircle ecosystem also incorporates a strong collaborative and participatory dimension. Through the Living Labs methodologies and stakeholder engagement activities developed across partner countries, the initiative promotes co-creation, experimentation, iterative learning, and ecosystem-building processes involving cultural organisations, facilitators, educators, policymakers, researchers, and local communities. The ecosystem therefore functions not only as a technical support structure, but also as a collaborative

environment encouraging dialogue, knowledge-sharing, and collective problem-solving around sustainability transition within the cultural sector.

This participatory logic is further reinforced through the HUB submission functionality, which allows external users and organisations to contribute additional resources and materials to the platform. This mechanism enables the ecosystem to evolve continuously beyond the initial project scope, strengthening its scalability, adaptability, and long-term relevance while encouraging broader sector ownership and engagement.

Importantly, the GreenCCircle ecosystem was also designed with long-term sustainability and operational feasibility in mind. The decision to develop a HUB-based environment rather than a proprietary carbon calculator reflected the need for a lightweight, modular, scalable, and financially sustainable structure capable of remaining operational beyond the project funding period. By leveraging existing validated tools and concentrating efforts on mapping, methodological coherence, user guidance, and ecosystem-building, GreenCCircle prioritises long-term usability, accessibility, and value for money while avoiding the risks associated with costly bespoke technical infrastructures.

Through the interaction between the HUB, the methodological guidance framework, the Academy, and the collaborative experimentation environments, the GreenCCircle ecosystem enables cultural organisations to move progressively from awareness of sustainability challenges towards practical organisational transformation. The ecosystem therefore supports CCIs not only in understanding sustainability, but in operationalising it through informed decision-making, competence development, stakeholder engagement, and strategic adaptation processes.

3. GreenCCircle decision support framework

The GreenCCircle Decision Support Framework was developed to support Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) in translating sustainability awareness into practical organisational action. Rather than approaching sustainability assessment as an isolated technical exercise, the framework was conceived as a structured decision-support environment connecting environmental understanding, stakeholder engagement, strategic planning, and organisational transformation.

The framework responds to one of the key challenges identified throughout the GreenCCircle research and experimentation activities: many cultural organisations struggle not only with measuring environmental impacts, but also with interpreting sustainability information and integrating it into operational and strategic decision-making processes. In this context, the GreenCCircle ecosystem aims to simplify and structure sustainability planning by providing accessible tools, guidance resources, collaborative methodologies, and practical workflows adapted to the realities of the cultural and creative sectors.

At the core of this framework lies the GreenCCircle HUB, which functions not simply as a repository of sustainability resources, but as an operational support environment guiding organisations through different stages of sustainability assessment and strategic development. The decision-support logic developed within the HUB enables organisations to move progressively from data collection and organisational diagnosis towards the identification of actionable sustainability strategies.

The framework is based on the principle that sustainability transformation within CCI requires the integration of multiple dimensions, including environmental analysis, stakeholder collaboration, organisational learning, communication processes, and long-term strategic adaptation. For this reason, the GreenCCircle workflow combines practical operational tools with methodological guidance supporting organisations throughout the different stages of sustainability planning.

The first key component of the framework is **stakeholder mapping**. Sustainability challenges within CCIs frequently involve highly interconnected organisational ecosystems including artists, technicians, curators, production teams, venue managers, suppliers, local authorities, audiences, community groups, and external partners. The Stakeholder Mapping tool available within the GreenCCircle workflow environment supports organisations in identifying relevant actors involved in their sustainability processes and understanding the relationships, responsibilities, and communication dynamics between them. This facilitates more coordinated and participatory approaches to sustainability planning while strengthening internal and external organisational engagement.

A second component of the framework focuses on **data collection and organisational analysis**. One of the difficulties repeatedly identified during the GreenCCircle consultation and Living Labs activities concerns the fragmentation and inconsistency of environmental information within cultural organisations. The Data Templates integrated into the HUB therefore provide structured guidance helping organisations collect relevant sustainability-related information in a more systematic and operational manner. These templates support the identification of key environmental impact areas, operational practices, and organisational behaviours while simplifying data-gathering processes for users with different levels of technical expertise.

The framework also incorporates **workflow guidance supporting sustainability planning and implementation processes**. The Workflow Templates available within the HUB help organisations structure their sustainability actions through practical step-by-step guidance adapted to operational realities within the cultural sector. Rather than prescribing rigid methodologies, the templates provide flexible planning structures supporting organisations in coordinating actions, setting priorities, identifying responsibilities, and monitoring progress over time. This iterative and adaptable approach reflects the diversity of organisational scales and operational contexts present within the CCIs.

Communication and organisational engagement constitute another central dimension of the GreenCCircle Decision Support Framework. Sustainability transitions often require significant

behavioural and cultural changes within organisations, making communication processes essential for long-term implementation and stakeholder participation. The Communications Toolkit integrated within the workflow environment therefore supports organisations in developing clearer internal and external communication strategies around sustainability initiatives. These resources help organisations engage collaborators, facilitate participation, share sustainability objectives, and communicate environmental actions more effectively across different audiences.

Together, the stakeholder mapping tools, data collection templates, workflow guidance resources, and communication toolkits form a coherent operational process supporting informed decision-making within cultural organisations. Through this process, organisations are progressively supported in:

- understanding their environmental impacts and operational realities
- interpreting sustainability information in relation to their organisational activities
- identifying opportunities for improvement and strategic adaptation
- translating sustainability insights into practical organisational strategies and actions

Importantly, the GreenCCircle Decision Support Framework does not position sustainability as a static certification process or a purely technical compliance exercise. Instead, it promotes sustainability as an ongoing organisational learning process requiring experimentation, collaboration, adaptability, and continuous improvement. The framework therefore encourages CCIs to approach sustainability not only through measurement, but through strategic reflection, participatory governance, and long-term cultural transformation.

The combination of digital resources, methodological guidance, collaborative workflows, and capacity-building pathways within the GreenCCircle ecosystem contributes to strengthening the ability of cultural organisations to integrate sustainability into their operational structures, strategic planning processes, and long-term organisational development.

4. The strategic value of the GreenCCircle Ecosystem

The GreenCCircle ecosystem creates value by helping Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) move beyond isolated sustainability actions towards a more integrated and strategic approach to organisational development. Rather than introducing yet another environmental assessment tool, it connects existing knowledge, practical methodologies, decision-support processes and collaborative learning into a coherent framework specifically designed to address the realities of the cultural and creative sectors.

This approach responds to one of the main challenges identified throughout the development of GreenCCircle. While an increasing number of sustainability tools, standards and methodologies are available, many cultural organisations struggle to understand which approaches are most relevant to their own activities, how these can be combined effectively and how environmental considerations can be integrated into wider organisational strategies.

Sustainability therefore becomes not a question of lacking information, but of navigating complexity and translating knowledge into meaningful action.

The strategic value of the GreenCCircle ecosystem lies precisely in its ability to bridge this gap. Instead of treating sustainability as a series of disconnected technical exercises, it supports organisations in developing a structured decision-making process through which environmental objectives become progressively embedded within governance, operations, stakeholder engagement and long-term business development. In doing so, sustainability evolves from a compliance-oriented activity into a strategic capability that contributes to organisational resilience, innovation and value creation.

4.1 From information to informed decision-making

One of the principal contributions of the GreenCCircle ecosystem is its capacity to simplify an increasingly complex sustainability landscape. Cultural organisations are often confronted with multiple assessment methodologies, reporting frameworks, policy recommendations and environmental tools without clear guidance on how these elements relate to one another or which are most appropriate for their own context.

Rather than creating an alternative to these existing resources, GreenCCircle provides a structured pathway that helps organisations identify, understand and select the approaches that best correspond to their needs, capacities and sustainability objectives. Through its decision-support components, workflow guidance and stakeholder mapping methodologies, organisations are encouraged to move beyond isolated data collection towards a more coherent process of organisational reflection and strategic planning.

This shift from information to informed decision-making represents a significant source of value. Instead of increasing the volume of available information, the ecosystem reduces uncertainty, facilitates prioritisation and supports organisations in making evidence-based decisions that are both realistic and context-sensitive.

4.2 From isolated sustainability actions to organisational transformation

Many organisations approach sustainability through individual initiatives, such as reducing energy consumption, improving waste management or measuring specific environmental indicators. Although valuable, these actions often remain disconnected from wider organisational planning and therefore struggle to generate lasting change.

The GreenCCircle approach promotes a broader understanding of sustainability by encouraging organisations to integrate environmental considerations into their overall business logic. Sustainability becomes a cross-cutting dimension that informs governance, project design, partnerships, resource allocation, communication strategies and stakeholder relationships rather than a collection of independent environmental actions.

This integrated perspective enables organisations to understand the interconnections between environmental performance, social responsibility, organisational resilience and long-term economic viability. As a result, sustainability becomes embedded within everyday decision-making processes and contributes directly to the organisation's capacity to anticipate risks, identify opportunities and strengthen its overall strategic position.

Rather than prescribing a single model for change, GreenCCircle provides a flexible framework that organisations can adapt according to their size, mission, artistic discipline and operational context. This adaptability allows the ecosystem to remain relevant across the considerable diversity that characterises the Cultural and Creative Industries.

4.3 From individual learning to organisational capacity

Long-term sustainability depends not only on access to appropriate tools but also on the ability of organisations to understand, apply and continuously improve their own practices. For this reason, GreenCCircle places capacity building at the centre of its value proposition.

The ecosystem combines methodological guidance, learning opportunities, practical implementation resources and collaborative experimentation to strengthen sustainability competences at both individual and organisational levels. Rather than treating learning as a separate activity, knowledge acquisition is directly connected to practical decision-making and organisational improvement.

This approach enables professionals to progressively develop the confidence and capabilities required to interpret environmental information, engage stakeholders, evaluate strategic alternatives and implement sustainability measures adapted to their own organisational realities. Over time, these competences become embedded within organisational culture, reducing dependence on external expertise and strengthening the organisation's ability to manage future sustainability challenges autonomously.

Capacity building therefore extends beyond professional development. It becomes a mechanism through which organisations increase their resilience, improve their adaptive capacity and strengthen their ability to generate environmental, social and economic value simultaneously.

4.4 From individual organisations to a collaborative ecosystem

Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the GreenCCircle ecosystem is that its value does not remain static. Unlike conventional digital tools whose usefulness depends primarily on their technical functionality, the GreenCCircle ecosystem becomes more valuable as organisations actively participate in it.

The development of the ecosystem has been based on collaborative design, iterative validation and continuous dialogue with cultural organisations, sustainability experts, researchers and other stakeholders. This collaborative logic continues beyond the initial development process

by encouraging organisations to contribute experiences, practical examples, methodological improvements and new knowledge generated through implementation.

Knowledge is therefore understood as a shared resource rather than an individual asset. Organisations benefit not only from the resources already available but also from the collective experience generated across the wider community of users. This continuous exchange reduces duplication of effort, accelerates organisational learning and facilitates the identification of solutions that have already been tested under comparable conditions.

The ecosystem consequently operates as a living knowledge infrastructure in which individual experiences contribute to collective intelligence. Each organisation simultaneously becomes a beneficiary and a contributor, strengthening the overall quality, relevance and applicability of the ecosystem for all participants.

This collaborative approach also reinforces the transferability of the GreenCCircle methodology. Because knowledge is continuously validated and enriched through practical application in diverse organisational and territorial contexts, the ecosystem remains adaptable to different cultural realities while preserving a coherent strategic framework.

The strategic value of the GreenCCircle ecosystem does not lie in the creation of a single digital platform or a new environmental assessment methodology. Its principal contribution is the development of an integrated approach that connects knowledge, decision-support, organisational learning and collaboration into a coherent framework capable of supporting sustainability transitions across the Cultural and Creative Industries.

By enabling organisations to navigate complexity, strengthen internal capabilities, integrate sustainability into strategic decision-making and participate in collective knowledge creation, the ecosystem generates value that extends beyond the individual use of its resources. Sustainability is no longer approached as a sequence of isolated technical interventions but as a continuous organisational process that combines environmental responsibility, social value, sound governance and long-term resilience.

The following section builds upon these principles by presenting the GreenCCircle Business Model. It explains how this strategic value can be systematically created, delivered and reinforced through an organisational framework that Cultural and Creative organisations can adapt to their own contexts and sustainability ambitions.

5. GreenCCircle Business Model

The GreenCCircle Business Model presents a sustainability-oriented approach to business modelling that Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) can adapt to their own organisations, projects and value creation processes. Drawing upon the methodologies, resources and decision-support framework developed through the GreenCCircle Hub, the model provides a

practical structure to help cultural organisations integrate environmental sustainability into strategic planning while strengthening their social, cultural and economic contribution.

Traditional business models have primarily focused on financial performance and market competitiveness. Today, however, cultural organisations are increasingly expected to respond to complex environmental, social and governance challenges while continuing to fulfil their creative and cultural missions. This requires a broader understanding of value creation, recognising that long-term resilience depends not only on economic viability but also on responsible resource management, stakeholder engagement, positive community impact and the ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions.

The GreenCCircle Business Model is built upon this broader perspective. Rather than treating sustainability as a separate organisational objective, it positions sustainability as a guiding principle that informs strategic decisions across all areas of an organisation. Environmental responsibility, social inclusion, cultural value, economic resilience and good governance are understood as interconnected dimensions that should be considered simultaneously when designing, delivering and evaluating cultural activities.

The GreenCCircle Hub supports this process by providing access to curated resources, practical methodologies, decision-support tools, learning materials and collaborative approaches that help organisations navigate the transition towards more sustainable practices. Instead of promoting a single methodology or prescriptive solution, the GreenCCircle approach encourages organisations to select, adapt and combine the most appropriate tools according to their own context, scale and level of sustainability maturity.

Inspired by sustainable business modelling approaches such as the Sustainable Creative Project Canvas, this model begins by asking a fundamental question:

“What value should a cultural organisation create, for whom, and at what environmental, social and economic cost?”

From this perspective, business modelling becomes more than the design of organisational structures or revenue streams. It becomes a process of aligning mission, stakeholders, resources and activities with long-term sustainability objectives.

The sections that follow present the main components of this Business Model. Together, they provide a practical framework that organisations can use to reflect on their own practices, identify opportunities for improvement and design more resilient, responsible and future-oriented business models. Rather than offering a fixed template, the GreenCCircle Business Model should be understood as an adaptable framework that supports continuous learning, collaboration and innovation across the Cultural and Creative Industries.

5.1 Collaborative partnerships

Sustainable value creation within the Cultural and Creative Industries depends on collaboration. Unlike traditional business models, where partnerships are often established primarily to improve operational efficiency or market reach, the GreenCCircle Business Model recognises partners as active contributors to knowledge creation, innovation and long-term sustainability. The diversity of environmental and organisational challenges faced by CCIs requires expertise that no single organisation can provide independently.

The GreenCCircle approach therefore encourages organisations to build partnerships that combine complementary perspectives and capabilities. Cultural practitioners contribute first-hand knowledge of creative processes and operational realities, while sustainability experts help organisations understand environmental impacts, circular economy principles and emerging sustainability frameworks. Educational institutions and training providers strengthen organisational competences by facilitating learning processes, whereas intermediary organisations, cultural networks and public authorities support collaboration, policy alignment and the wider dissemination of good practices.

Beyond technical expertise, effective partnerships also create opportunities for collective learning and shared innovation. Organisations working together can exchange experiences, validate new approaches and adapt successful practices to different cultural, geographical and organisational contexts. This collaborative process increases both the quality of sustainability decisions and the resilience of the organisations involved.

The GreenCCircle approach also highlights the importance of facilitators, mentors and sustainability champions. These actors play a key role in translating methodologies into practical action, supporting organisational reflection, encouraging stakeholder participation and fostering confidence throughout the transition process. Their contribution is not limited to providing technical advice; they help organisations develop the internal culture and organisational mindset required to embed sustainability into everyday decision-making.

Communities of practice represent another essential component of this collaborative model. By connecting organisations facing similar challenges, they create environments where knowledge, experiences and practical solutions circulate continuously. Such exchanges strengthen the collective capacity of the sector to innovate and accelerate the adoption of more sustainable business practices.

Within this model, partnerships should therefore be understood as strategic relationships that generate value rather than simply support organisational activities. They create knowledge, validate methodologies, strengthen legitimacy and contribute to the continuous improvement of sustainability practices across the Cultural and Creative Industries.

5.2 Core activities

The GreenCCircle Business Model proposes a set of interconnected activities that enable Cultural and Creative organisations to integrate sustainability into their strategic and operational practices. These activities are not intended as a prescriptive sequence of actions, but as complementary processes that help organisations build the capabilities required to create long-term environmental, social, cultural and economic value.

A central activity is **knowledge stewardship**. Cultural organisations increasingly operate within a rapidly evolving sustainability landscape characterised by new regulations, methodologies, standards and technological developments. Rather than attempting to develop entirely new solutions, organisations should continuously identify, evaluate, curate and apply the knowledge most relevant to their own context. The GreenCCircle Hub supports this process by providing access to curated resources, decision-support tools and practical guidance, enabling organisations to transform fragmented information into informed strategic decisions.

A second core activity is **capacity building**. Sustainable transformation ultimately depends on people, their competences and their ability to apply knowledge in practice. Organisations should therefore invest in developing environmental awareness, strategic thinking, systems thinking and collaborative problem-solving across different organisational levels. Training, peer learning, mentoring and practical experimentation become essential mechanisms for embedding sustainability within organisational culture rather than treating it as an isolated technical exercise.

The model also places strong emphasis on **continuous learning**. Sustainability should not be viewed as a fixed objective but as an ongoing process of reflection, adaptation and improvement. Organisations are encouraged to monitor the outcomes of their actions, gather feedback from stakeholders and use this evidence to refine strategies and business practices over time. This iterative approach strengthens organisational resilience while enabling continuous innovation.

Another key activity involves integrating sustainability into organisational decision-making. Stakeholder mapping, environmental assessment, strategic planning, communication and evaluation should not be treated as separate exercises but as interconnected processes that support coherent and evidence-based management. The methodologies and workflows available through the GreenCCircle Hub provide practical support for structuring these processes while allowing sufficient flexibility to adapt them to different organisational realities.

Finally, organisations are encouraged to actively contribute to collaborative knowledge exchange. Sharing experiences, documenting successful practices and participating in professional networks allows sustainability knowledge to circulate across the sector, creating positive feedback loops that benefit not only individual organisations but also the wider Cultural and Creative Industries. In this sense, organisations are not only users of knowledge but also contributors to its continuous development.

Together, these activities position sustainability as an integral component of organisational development rather than as a standalone environmental initiative. By combining knowledge stewardship, capacity building, continuous learning, strategic decision-making and collaborative exchange, the GreenCCircle Business Model provides Cultural and Creative organisations with a practical framework for developing more resilient, responsible and future-oriented business practices.

5.3 Strategic resources

The GreenCCircle Business Model recognises that sustainable value creation depends on a combination of tangible and intangible resources working together. While digital tools and technical infrastructures facilitate access to information, the resources that generate lasting impact are those that enable organisations to learn, adapt, innovate and make informed decisions over time.

One of the most valuable resources within this model is **knowledge**. Organisations require access not only to reliable information but also to contextualised guidance that helps them understand which sustainability approaches, methodologies and tools are most appropriate for their specific activities. The GreenCCircle Hub contributes to this process by bringing together curated resources, practical methodologies and decision-support components within a structured and accessible environment. Rather than replacing existing knowledge, it enables organisations to navigate it more effectively and apply it in ways that respond to their own organisational realities.

A second essential resource is **organisational capability**. Sustainable business models rely on the ability of people to understand complex challenges, interpret information, collaborate across disciplines and translate strategic ambitions into operational practice. Skills, experience, creativity and leadership therefore become strategic assets that enable organisations to integrate sustainability into everyday decision-making. The learning pathways and educational resources developed through the GreenCCircle approach are intended to strengthen these capabilities and support continuous professional development.

The model also recognises the importance of **methodological resources**. Structured workflows, stakeholder mapping, decision-support processes and practical planning tools help organisations move systematically from reflection to implementation. These resources provide a common framework for analysing organisational challenges, identifying priorities and designing sustainability strategies while remaining sufficiently flexible to accommodate different organisational sizes, creative disciplines and levels of sustainability maturity.

Equally important are **collaborative resources**. Partnerships, professional networks, communities of practice and stakeholder relationships represent valuable assets because they facilitate knowledge exchange, peer learning and collective problem-solving. Through collaboration, organisations gain access to complementary expertise, practical experience and innovative perspectives that would be difficult to develop independently. These relationships also

strengthen trust, legitimacy and the wider adoption of sustainable practices throughout the cultural and creative sector.

Finally, the GreenCCircle Business Model considers **evidence and continuous learning** as strategic resources in their own right. Data generated through sustainability assessments, organisational reflection, stakeholder engagement and practical implementation provide the evidence needed to evaluate progress, refine strategies and support better decision-making. As organisations accumulate experience and share lessons learned, this evidence contributes to a continuously evolving knowledge base that benefits both individual organisations and the wider Cultural and Creative Industries community.

Strategic communication also plays a fundamental role in sustainable business development. Organisations should communicate sustainability objectives, progress and outcomes in a transparent and accessible manner, engaging stakeholders throughout the process and fostering trust, accountability and participation. The communication guidance provided through the GreenCCircle approach supports organisations in embedding sustainability communication within their wider organisational strategies rather than treating it as an isolated dissemination activity.

Taken together, these resources demonstrate that sustainable business models are not built solely upon financial or physical assets. They depend equally on knowledge, competences, methodologies, collaboration and evidence, all of which enable organisations to create environmental, social, cultural and economic value while continuously adapting to an evolving sustainability landscape.

5.4 Value proposition

The GreenCCircle Business Model is founded on the principle that sustainability should not be regarded as an additional organisational responsibility, but as a new way of creating, delivering and sustaining value. Rather than separating environmental objectives from artistic, social or economic priorities, the GreenCCircle approach encourages Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) to integrate these dimensions into a single strategic vision. In doing so, organisations are better equipped to respond to contemporary sustainability challenges while strengthening their long-term resilience, relevance and capacity for innovation.

The GreenCCircle Hub supports this process by providing organisations with access to practical resources, decision-support methodologies, learning opportunities and collaborative tools that help them understand how sustainability can be embedded within their business models. Rather than prescribing a single pathway, the GreenCCircle approach enables organisations to reflect on their own context, identify priorities and develop solutions that are proportionate to their size, activities and sustainability maturity.

From this perspective, value is created simultaneously across multiple and interconnected dimensions.

Environmental value is generated by helping organisations better understand the environmental implications of their activities and encouraging more responsible use of resources throughout planning, production and delivery processes. By facilitating access to sustainability methodologies, environmental assessment tools and examples of good practice, the GreenCCircle approach supports organisations in reducing environmental impacts, embracing circular economy principles and making more informed decisions regarding materials, mobility, energy use, procurement and resource management.

Social value emerges through stronger engagement with people and communities. Sustainable cultural organisations create value not only through the cultural experiences they offer, but also through the relationships they build with audiences, employees, artists, local communities and other stakeholders. The GreenCCircle approach promotes collaboration, participation, knowledge sharing and inclusive decision-making, recognising that sustainability depends on collective action and long-term stakeholder engagement.

Governance value is achieved by supporting more transparent, evidence-based and participatory organisational management. Sustainability requires organisations to integrate environmental and social considerations into strategic planning rather than addressing them through isolated initiatives. The GreenCCircle decision-support framework encourages organisations to adopt structured planning processes, involve relevant stakeholders in decision-making, monitor progress and continuously review their sustainability objectives as organisational priorities evolve.

Organisational value is created through the development of internal capabilities. By strengthening knowledge, skills and strategic thinking, organisations become better equipped to manage complexity, anticipate emerging challenges and adapt to changing operating environments. The combination of learning resources, practical methodologies and collaborative reflection enables organisations to embed sustainability within everyday decision-making, reinforcing organisational resilience, innovation capacity and long-term strategic development.

Finally, **economic value** should not be understood solely in terms of financial performance. Sustainable organisations are better positioned to improve operational efficiency, optimise the use of available resources, reduce unnecessary costs and identify new opportunities for innovation, partnerships and market development. By integrating sustainability into business planning, organisations can strengthen their competitiveness while responding to the increasing expectations of funders, public authorities, audiences and society as a whole.

The strength of the GreenCCircle Business Model lies in the integration of these five dimensions. Environmental improvements reinforce organisational resilience; stronger governance supports better strategic decisions; collaboration generates social value; and organisational learning creates conditions for sustainable economic development. Rather than pursuing these objectives independently, the GreenCCircle approach demonstrates how they can reinforce one another through a coherent and adaptable business model.

Ultimately, the value proposition of GreenCCircle is not the provision of a digital platform or a collection of sustainability resources. Its principal contribution is to provide Cultural and Creative Industries with a practical framework that enables sustainability to become an integral component of organisational strategy, value creation and long-term development. By combining knowledge, decision-support, learning and collaboration, the GreenCCircle Business Model helps organisations transform sustainability from a compliance challenge into a strategic opportunity for innovation, resilience and positive environmental, social, cultural and economic impact.

5.5 Value beneficiaries and stakeholders (customer segments)

The GreenCCircle Business Model is intended to support a broad and diverse range of organisations operating within, alongside or in support of the Cultural and Creative Industries. Rather than defining fixed customer segments, the model recognises that sustainable value is created through a network of actors who both benefit from and contribute to the sustainability transition.

The primary beneficiaries are cultural and creative organisations seeking to integrate sustainability into their strategies, operations and business models. These include museums, heritage organisations, performing arts companies, festivals, cultural venues, creative SMEs, design studios, audiovisual producers, independent artists and other organisations whose activities combine cultural, social and economic objectives. Although these organisations differ significantly in terms of size, governance structures and available resources, they share the need for practical guidance that helps them translate sustainability ambitions into achievable organisational practices.

The model also supports organisations that accompany or facilitate sustainability transitions across the sector. Cultural networks, intermediary organisations, consultants, trainers, educational institutions and business support organisations can apply the GreenCCircle approach to strengthen advisory services, develop learning programmes and facilitate collaborative innovation among the organisations they support. By acting as multipliers, these actors contribute to expanding the reach and impact of sustainable business practices across the cultural ecosystem.

Public authorities and policymakers represent another important stakeholder group. The GreenCCircle Business Model encourages organisations to align their sustainability strategies with wider environmental, cultural and social priorities while supporting evidence-based dialogue between the cultural sector and public institutions. This creates opportunities to strengthen policy development, improve support mechanisms and encourage more coherent sustainability practices across different territorial contexts.

Communities, audiences and local stakeholders should also be regarded as active participants in value creation rather than passive recipients of cultural activities. Sustainable business models depend upon understanding the expectations, needs and knowledge of those who

engage with cultural organisations. Through participatory approaches, stakeholder dialogue and collaborative initiatives, organisations are able to strengthen social relevance, improve accountability and generate wider environmental and community benefits.

An important characteristic of the GreenCCircle Business Model is that the boundaries between beneficiaries and contributors are intentionally flexible. Organisations applying the model are encouraged not only to benefit from existing knowledge, methodologies and practical resources, but also to contribute their own experiences, lessons learned and innovative practices. This continuous exchange enriches the collective knowledge available to the sector and reinforces the collaborative nature of the GreenCCircle approach.

Consequently, the GreenCCircle Business Model should not be understood as serving a predefined customer base. Instead, it provides a flexible framework capable of supporting organisations operating in different cultural contexts, at different stages of their sustainability journey and with different organisational capacities. Its value lies precisely in its adaptability, enabling each organisation to interpret and apply the model according to its own mission, stakeholders and long-term sustainability ambitions.

5.6 Implementation pathways

Designing a sustainable business model is only the first step towards organisational transformation. Lasting change depends on an organisation's ability to translate strategic ambitions into practical actions that can be implemented, monitored and continuously improved. The GreenCCircle Business Model therefore recognises implementation as an iterative process rather than a linear sequence of activities, encouraging organisations to progress at a pace that reflects their own context, priorities and organisational maturity.

The GreenCCircle approach provides a structured yet flexible pathway that supports organisations throughout this transition. Rather than prescribing a single methodology, it is articulated through the GreenCCircle Hub and its wider ecosystem, which bring together a set of interconnected tools, resources and collaborative environments. These elements are designed to guide organisations step by step, while allowing them to combine and adapt different components according to their specific needs and sectoral realities.

A fundamental starting point is understanding the organisation itself and the wider ecosystem in which it operates. Within the Hub, stakeholder mapping tools and guidance materials support organisations in identifying the individuals, communities and institutions that influence or are influenced by their activities. This process is further enriched through participatory formats such as Living Labs and collaborative workshops, where stakeholders can actively contribute to defining priorities and identifying opportunities for partnership. By combining analytical tools with participatory environments, organisations are better equipped to develop inclusive and context-sensitive sustainability strategies.

Building upon this understanding, organisations are encouraged to collect and interpret relevant information regarding their environmental impacts, organisational practices and sustainability priorities. The GreenCCircle Hub provides structured assessment tools, templates and indicators that facilitate data collection and reflection. These resources help organisations generate evidence that can inform decision-making, establish realistic objectives and monitor progress over time. In this way, assessment becomes an integrated component of the implementation pathway rather than a standalone exercise.

The transition from analysis to action is supported through practical workflows and planning methodologies embedded within the Hub. These include step-by-step guidance, project planning templates and examples of good practices that help organisations translate strategic objectives into concrete initiatives. The ecosystem also connects organisations with case studies, peer experiences and sector-specific insights, enabling them to learn from existing practices and adapt them to their own context. By linking strategic reflection with practical tools and shared knowledge, organisations can more effectively integrate sustainability into planning, project management, communication and governance.

Capacity building is reinforced through the GreenCCircle Academy, which complements the Hub by offering training modules, learning materials and skill development opportunities. These resources support organisations in strengthening internal competences while implementing sustainability initiatives, ensuring that learning evolves alongside practice. The integration of the Hub and the Academy creates a continuous learning environment where organisations can access knowledge, test ideas and refine their approaches over time.

Importantly, implementation is understood as a cyclical rather than a linear process. The GreenCCircle ecosystem supports this iterative approach by enabling continuous feedback, peer exchange and reflection. Through community features, collaborative spaces and shared learning environments, organisations can discuss challenges, exchange experiences and identify new solutions. Each implementation cycle generates new knowledge that feeds back into the Hub, contributing to a growing collective intelligence that benefits the wider cultural and creative sector.

The GreenCCircle Business Model therefore provides organisations not simply with a collection of sustainability resources, but with an integrated ecosystem that actively supports implementation. By combining analytical tools, participatory formats, practical workflows, capacity-building opportunities and collaborative learning environments, the model enables Cultural and Creative organisations to transform sustainability from an aspirational objective into an operational reality that continuously evolves alongside their mission, activities and communities.

5.7 Community engagement and co-creation

Sustainable business models are not static organisational structures but dynamic systems that evolve through continuous interaction with the people and communities they serve. The

GreenCCircle Business Model therefore recognises community engagement and co-creation as fundamental principles for ensuring that sustainability remains relevant, responsive and embedded within organisational practice.

Rather than treating stakeholders as passive recipients of cultural activities or occasional consultees, organisations are encouraged to involve them as active participants throughout strategic planning, implementation and evaluation processes. Artists, employees, audiences, suppliers, local communities, public authorities, educational institutions and partner organisations all bring valuable perspectives that help organisations better understand emerging challenges, identify opportunities for innovation and develop more inclusive sustainability strategies.

Co-creation plays a central role in this collaborative approach. Sustainable solutions are rarely generated by individual organisations working independently; they emerge through dialogue, experimentation and the integration of diverse forms of knowledge and experience. By creating opportunities for collaborative reflection, participatory design and shared problem-solving, organisations strengthen both the quality of their decisions and the collective ownership of sustainability initiatives. This participatory culture also encourages greater transparency, accountability and trust among stakeholders.

The GreenCCircle Business Model further promotes the development of communities of practice that enable organisations to learn from one another beyond individual projects or partnerships. Exchanging experiences, discussing challenges and sharing successful practices allow organisations to accelerate learning, avoid duplication of effort and collectively develop innovative responses to common sustainability issues. These collaborative networks contribute to building a stronger and more resilient cultural ecosystem where knowledge is continuously generated and shared.

An equally important principle is the establishment of continuous feedback mechanisms. Sustainability should be approached as an iterative learning process rather than a fixed destination. Organisations are encouraged to regularly seek feedback from stakeholders, evaluate the outcomes of their decisions and reflect on the effectiveness of their sustainability strategies. This process supports evidence-informed adaptation and helps ensure that business models remain responsive to changing environmental, social, cultural and economic conditions.

Community engagement also reinforces organisational legitimacy. By involving stakeholders in meaningful ways and demonstrating how their contributions influence organisational decisions, cultural organisations strengthen their relationships with the communities they serve while fostering greater confidence in their sustainability commitments. In this way, engagement becomes an essential component of responsible governance rather than simply a communication activity.

Ultimately, the GreenCCircle Business Model views community engagement and co-creation as strategic capabilities that enable organisations to sustain long-term value creation.

Organisations that cultivate collaborative relationships, encourage shared learning and embrace continuous improvement are better equipped to innovate, adapt and respond to complex sustainability challenges. Through these processes, sustainability becomes an evolving organisational culture supported by participation, trust and collective responsibility rather than a collection of isolated environmental initiatives.

5.8 Economic sustainability

Economic sustainability is an essential component of any business model seeking to generate long-term environmental, social and cultural value. For Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs), sustainability cannot rely exclusively on external funding or isolated environmental initiatives. Instead, it should become an integral part of organisational strategy, supporting financial resilience while reinforcing the organisation's mission and contribution to society.

The GreenCCircle Business Model encourages organisations to view sustainability as an investment rather than an additional cost. Integrating environmental and social considerations into strategic planning can improve operational efficiency, strengthen organisational resilience and create new opportunities for innovation, collaboration and value creation. Sustainable practices such as more efficient resource management, circular procurement, waste reduction or responsible mobility can generate long-term benefits that extend beyond environmental performance, contributing to more effective use of financial and human resources.

Economic sustainability also depends on the ability of organisations to diversify their sources of value creation. Alongside traditional revenue streams, Cultural and Creative organisations are increasingly able to develop new opportunities through partnerships, collaborative projects, educational activities, advisory services, community engagement initiatives and innovative cultural products or services that respond to growing societal interest in sustainability. Rather than representing separate business opportunities, these activities reinforce the organisation's broader sustainability strategy while contributing to its economic resilience.

The GreenCCircle approach also supports organisations in responding to the evolving expectations of funders, public authorities, audiences and private partners. Sustainability is becoming an increasingly important consideration in funding programmes, procurement procedures and partnership development. Organisations that are able to demonstrate structured sustainability strategies, evidence-based decision-making and measurable environmental and social impact are better positioned to access new funding opportunities, establish strategic collaborations and strengthen their long-term competitiveness.

Economic sustainability should not be assessed solely through financial indicators. The GreenCCircle Business Model promotes a broader understanding of organisational performance in which environmental, social, governance and economic outcomes are considered together. Investments in staff development, stakeholder engagement, responsible governance and environmental improvement contribute to organisational resilience by

reducing operational risks, strengthening reputation, increasing stakeholder trust and improving the organisation's capacity to respond to future challenges.

Innovation represents another important driver of economic sustainability. By adopting a culture of continuous learning, experimentation and collaboration, organisations are better equipped to identify emerging opportunities, develop new services, reach wider audiences and adapt their business models to changing social, environmental and market conditions. Sustainability therefore becomes a catalyst for innovation rather than a constraint on organisational development.

The GreenCCircle Business Model proposes that economic sustainability should be understood as the capacity of an organisation to generate and maintain value over time while remaining consistent with its environmental, social and cultural commitments. Financial resilience is therefore not treated as an isolated objective but as one outcome of a business model that integrates responsible governance, efficient resource management, collaborative innovation and long-term strategic thinking. Through this integrated approach, Cultural and Creative organisations are better positioned to achieve both organisational stability and meaningful societal impact.

5.9 Resource and investment requirements

Implementing a sustainable business model requires organisations to make deliberate investments that extend beyond financial resources alone. While adequate funding remains important, the successful integration of sustainability depends equally on the availability of knowledge, skills, organisational commitment, collaborative networks and appropriate governance structures. The GreenCCircle Business Model therefore encourages organisations to view investment as a strategic process that strengthens long-term resilience, adaptability and value creation.

One of the most significant investments concerns **people and organisational capabilities**. Developing sustainability competences across the organisation requires time, continuous learning and opportunities for professional development. Staff members, managers and decision-makers need to acquire not only technical knowledge but also systems thinking, collaborative skills and the ability to integrate sustainability considerations into everyday organisational decisions. Investment in people therefore represents one of the strongest foundations for long-term organisational transformation.

Organisations must also invest in **evidence-informed decision-making**. Collecting reliable information, assessing environmental performance, monitoring progress and evaluating outcomes require appropriate methodologies, digital tools and internal processes. These investments enable organisations to establish realistic priorities, measure the effectiveness of sustainability actions and continuously improve their business models on the basis of evidence rather than assumptions.

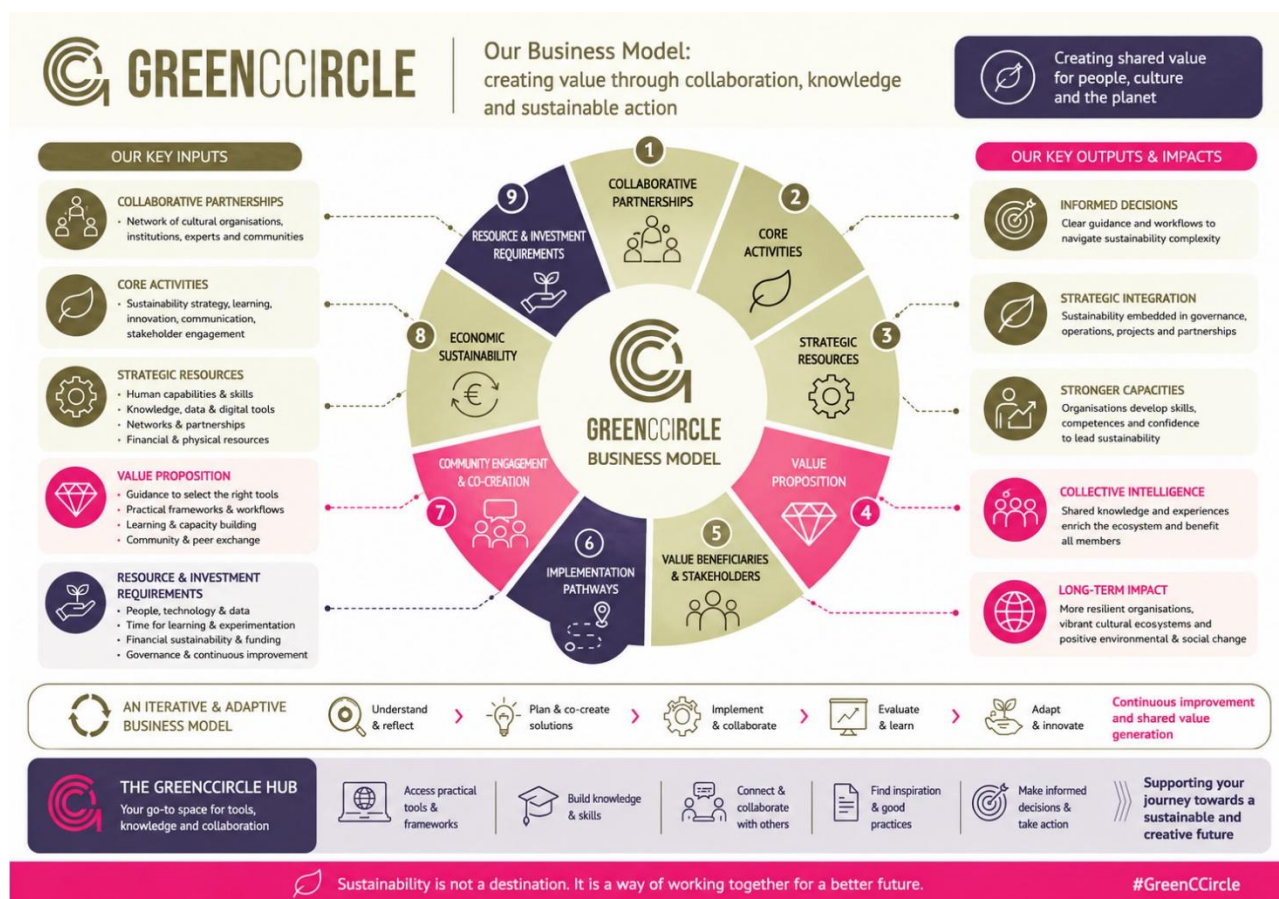
A further area of investment concerns **governance and organisational culture**. Embedding sustainability within an organisation often requires reviewing decision-making processes, clarifying responsibilities, strengthening stakeholder participation and creating opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration. These organisational investments foster greater transparency, accountability and strategic coherence, enabling sustainability to become an integral part of organisational development rather than an isolated initiative.

Collaborative capacity should also be regarded as a strategic investment. Building and maintaining relationships with partners, communities, public authorities, educational institutions and other Cultural and Creative organisations requires dedicated time and resources. Although these activities may not generate immediate financial returns, they create opportunities for knowledge exchange, innovation, resource sharing and collective problem-solving that strengthen both organisational performance and sector-wide resilience.

Digital and methodological resources represent another important area of investment. The GreenCCircle Hub provides organisations with access to practical tools, implementation pathways, learning resources and decision-support methodologies that facilitate the integration of sustainability into everyday practice. However, the value of these resources depends on an organisation's willingness to allocate time for reflection, experimentation and adaptation, ensuring that the available guidance is translated into meaningful organisational change.

Finally, organisations should recognise that sustainable business models require investment in **continuous improvement**. Sustainability is not achieved through one-off projects or isolated interventions, but through an ongoing cycle of planning, implementation, evaluation and adaptation. Allocating resources to monitoring, organisational learning and regular review enables organisations to respond proactively to changing environmental, social and economic conditions while maintaining alignment with their long-term mission and strategic objectives.

The GreenCCircle Business Model therefore proposes a broader understanding of organisational investment. Rather than focusing exclusively on financial expenditure, it emphasises the strategic mobilisation of human, organisational, relational, methodological and digital resources. By investing in these interconnected dimensions, Cultural and Creative organisations strengthen their capacity to create lasting environmental, social, cultural and economic value while building more resilient, innovative and future-oriented business models.



The GreenCCircle Business Model is not intended to replace existing business models or provide a universal solution for every Cultural and Creative organisation. Instead, it offers an adaptable framework that organisations can interpret and apply according to their own mission, scale, governance structure, creative discipline and sustainability ambitions. Its purpose is to encourage organisations to reconsider how they create, deliver and sustain value by integrating environmental responsibility, social impact, good governance and economic resilience into their strategic thinking.

Rather than prescribing a fixed methodology, the model promotes a flexible and iterative approach to organisational development. Each organisation can identify the elements that are most relevant to its own context, combine them with existing practices and progressively strengthen its sustainability performance through continuous learning, collaboration and evidence-informed decision-making. In this sense, the GreenCCircle Business Model should be understood as a practical reference framework that supports reflection, adaptation and innovation rather than compliance with a predefined structure.

The GreenCCircle Hub plays a central enabling role within this process. By bringing together decision-support tools, methodologies, learning resources, implementation pathways and collaborative environments, it provides organisations with practical guidance to facilitate the application of the Business Model. The Hub does not determine how organisations should operate; instead, it empowers them to make informed choices, adapt sustainability strategies to their own realities and continuously improve their organisational practices.

Importantly, the GreenCCircle Business Model is designed to be applicable across the diversity of the Cultural and Creative Industries. Whether implemented by small creative enterprises, museums, performing arts organisations, festivals, heritage institutions or larger cultural networks, its principles remain sufficiently flexible to support organisations with different levels of experience, organisational capacity and sustainability maturity.

Having established the strategic foundations of sustainable value creation, the following section translates these principles into a practical Business Plan. Building upon the GreenCCircle Business Model, it demonstrates how organisations can convert strategic intentions into concrete actions, identify opportunities for sustainable growth, allocate resources effectively and develop implementation pathways that are both operationally feasible and economically resilient.

6. GreenCCircle Business Plan

6.1 Sustainability-driven organisational development

The GreenCCircle Business Plan is conceived as a practical framework to help Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) integrate sustainability into their organisational development, creative processes and long-term strategic choices. Its purpose is not to define a single commercial model for all cultural organisations, but to provide a flexible planning logic that enables different types of CCIs to transform sustainability awareness into viable operational and business decisions.

GreenCCircle recognises that cultural and creative organisations often operate in complex and fragile conditions: limited resources, project-based funding, small teams, fragmented infrastructures and increasing pressure to respond to environmental, social and economic challenges. For this reason, sustainability cannot be treated as an isolated environmental action or as a secondary communication message. It needs to become part of how organisations design their activities, manage resources, engage audiences, build partnerships and define their future position in the sector.

The GreenCCircle approach supports this transition by combining three complementary dimensions: knowledge, capacity-building and practical decision support. The HUB provides access to curated sustainability resources and tools; the Academy supports the development of green, entrepreneurial and strategic competences; and the Living Labs create spaces for experimentation, peer learning and stakeholder engagement. Together, these elements help CCIs move from fragmented awareness to more structured sustainability planning.

This business planning logic is also connected to the Sustainability Change Facilitator profile developed within GreenCCircle, which identifies the need for professionals able to assess environmental impacts, develop sustainable business models, lead change processes and support organisations in applying sustainability principles in real cultural and creative contexts.

6.2 Green business opportunities for CCI

For CCIs, sustainability can generate new forms of value. It can reduce operational risks, improve access to funding, strengthen reputation, increase audience engagement, open new partnership opportunities and support innovation in products, services and experiences. However, these opportunities only become tangible when sustainability is translated into clear organisational choices.

A sustainability-driven business plan for a cultural or creative organisation should therefore address several core questions:

- What environmental and social challenges are most relevant to the organisation?
- Which activities, services or products generate the highest sustainability impact?
- What resources, materials, suppliers, venues or mobility patterns need to be reconsidered?
- What competences are needed internally?
- Which stakeholders should be involved?
- How can sustainability become part of the organisation's value proposition?
- What costs, savings, funding opportunities or new income streams may emerge?

GreenCCircle encourages CCIs to understand sustainability not only as impact reduction, but also as a source of creative and entrepreneurial innovation. This includes the development of greener cultural products, more responsible production models, circular approaches to materials and resources, sustainable event management, ethical communication, new forms of audience participation and cross-sector collaboration.

The GreenCCircle training structure already reflects this perspective by including modules on sustainable creative business models, green entrepreneurship, funding, communication, digital skills, policy, leadership and facilitation. These learning areas are directly linked to the practical capacities needed to design and implement sustainability-oriented business plans in the cultural sector.

6.3 Practical pathway for developing a sustainability-oriented business plan

Based on the GreenCCircle methodology, CCIs can follow a progressive pathway to develop their own sustainability-oriented business plan.

Step 1 – Understand the organisational context

The first step is to analyse the organisation's current situation. This includes its mission, activities, audiences, resources, partnerships, production processes and main sustainability challenges. Organisations should identify where sustainability is already present and where major gaps remain.

Step 2 – Map stakeholders and responsibilities

Sustainability planning requires collaboration. Organisations should identify internal and external stakeholders who influence or are affected by their sustainability choices: staff, artists, suppliers, venues, funders, audiences, public authorities, communities, educators, researchers and sector networks. The GreenCCircle stakeholder mapping approach helps organisations clarify roles, relationships and possible areas for cooperation.

Step 3 – Identify environmental and operational impact areas

The organisation should then identify the main areas where its activities generate environmental impact. These may include energy use, travel, touring, production materials, waste, digital practices, procurement, food and catering, venues, communication materials or audience mobility.

Step 4 – Define sustainability priorities

Not all changes can be addressed at once. CCIIs should prioritise actions according to urgency, feasibility, available resources and potential impact. A small organisation may begin with practical changes in procurement, travel or materials, while a larger institution may develop a broader sustainability strategy involving governance, reporting, suppliers and audience engagement.

Step 5 – Rework the value proposition

A green business plan should explain how sustainability strengthens the organisation's value. This may involve offering more responsible cultural experiences, reducing environmental impact, supporting community resilience, developing ethical products, engaging audiences in sustainability narratives or positioning the organisation as a driver of cultural change.

Step 6 – Plan resources, costs and funding

Sustainability requires realistic resource planning. Organisations should identify the human, financial, technical and knowledge resources needed to implement their actions. They should also explore potential funding opportunities, partnerships, sponsorships, grants, public programmes or collaborative initiatives connected to the green transition.

Step 7 – Define actions, indicators and responsibilities

A business plan must move from intention to implementation. Organisations should define concrete actions, assign responsibilities, establish timelines and select indicators to monitor progress. These indicators may include reduced waste, lower energy consumption, increased use of sustainable materials, new partnerships, staff training, audience engagement or improved sustainability communication.

Step 8 – Communicate and review progress

Sustainability should be communicated transparently and responsibly. Organisations should avoid vague green claims and instead explain concrete actions, lessons learned and future commitments. The plan should be reviewed regularly, allowing the organisation to adapt its strategy as new needs, tools and opportunities emerge.

6.4 Possible development scenarios

The GreenCCircle approach can support different development scenarios depending on the needs, capacity and ambition of each organisation.

Scenario 1 – Internal transformation model

In this scenario, a cultural organisation uses the GreenCCircle resources to improve its own internal practices. The focus is on reducing environmental impact, improving staff competences, reviewing suppliers, adapting production methods and embedding sustainability into daily operations.

Scenario 2 – Training and capacity-building model

Here, organisations, networks or educational providers use GreenCCircle resources to train cultural professionals, artists, managers, educators or facilitators. This scenario is particularly relevant for organisations wishing to build internal sustainability leadership or support others in the sector.

Scenario 3 – Consultancy and advisory model

In this scenario, Sustainability Change Facilitators, consultants or intermediary organisations use the GreenCCircle methodology to support other CCIs in diagnosing sustainability challenges, developing action plans and implementing greener practices.

Scenario 4 – Network and ecosystem model

This scenario focuses on collective transformation. Cultural networks, regional alliances, public authorities or creative clusters use the GreenCCircle approach to support groups of organisations, promote peer learning, share resources and coordinate sustainability strategies at local, regional or sectoral level.

These scenarios are not mutually exclusive. A cultural organisation may begin with internal transformation, later participate in training activities, and eventually become part of a wider sustainability network.

6.5 Scalability and transferability

GreenCCircle has been designed as a transferable framework rather than a fixed product. This is essential because CCIs differ widely in size, structure, discipline, location, maturity level and available resources. A methodology that works for a major festival may not be directly

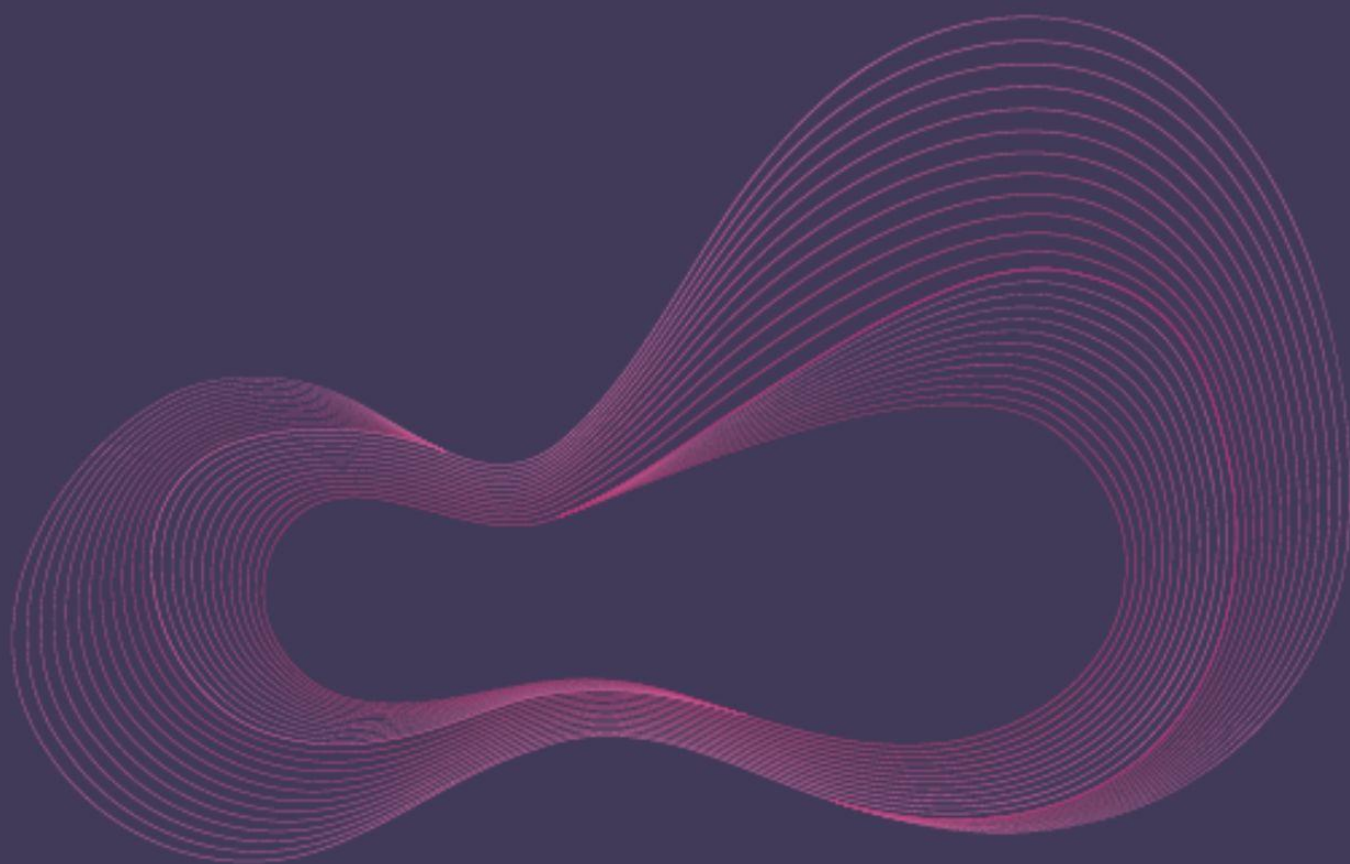
applicable to a small theatre company, an independent designer, a museum, a craft organisation or an audiovisual studio.

The transferability of the GreenCCircle approach is supported by several factors:

- the modular structure of the HUB
- the adaptability of the learning resources
- the practical nature of the workflow tools
- the role of Sustainability Change Facilitators
- the possibility of localising actions to different countries and sectors
- the collaborative logic of the Living Labs
- the use of stakeholder mapping and participatory methods

The GreenCCircle focus groups confirmed the importance of adapting sustainability support to different cultural, regional and sectoral realities. Participants highlighted the need for practical tools, sector-specific examples, clear progression pathways, stronger digital and entrepreneurial competences, and training that reflects real professional contexts.

For this reason, scalability should not be understood only as reaching more users or replicating the same model everywhere. In the GreenCCircle context, scalability means enabling different organisations and ecosystems to adapt the methodology to their own needs while preserving its core principles: sustainability, creativity, collaboration, learning and strategic action.



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