



## MINISTRY OF STORIES

### Environmental Policy

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#### Climate change

By Amelie

It was different days  
The Earth is warming  
Bees used to be swarming  
Ice caps are melting  
While the sun is setting  
We have to do something  
Instead of nothing  
You should be listening  
Ignoring is sickening  
We can't wait no longer  
For the Earth is a goner  
Flooding  
Droughts.  
What are you doing?  
Seas are brimming  
And we'll all be swimming  
Why aren't you listening?  
Use your ears  
And open your eyes  
Like you are using a very sharp knife  
Forests are flaming  
And we are complaining  
Except you do nothing about it  
Just sit down and think:  
Climate change.

## **Who we are**

Our mission at Ministry of Stories is helping young people discover their confidence, imagination and potential through the power of writing. We run a range of supported writing projects for young people - in regular weekly Community Labs at our east London headquarters attended by local children in Hoxton, one-off schools workshops held at our site and travelled to by east London-based schools and in longer term writing programmes run on school campuses in Hackney, Tower Hamlets and Islington.

In 2024 Ministry of Stories employed 13 staff (8.6 full-time equivalent) and approximately 25 freelancers in various roles. We work with around 2,000 young people per year, and do so with the help of between 90 and 250 volunteer writing mentors, trained in-house. Across each year we publish our young people's work in a variety of formats - print, audio, video and performance; we run small-scale events in or around our Hoxton writing centre to showcase their efforts to the community and supporters. We also periodically run small-scale events where we celebrate and honour our volunteer team, young writers and/or funders. These are typically local events.

Ministry of Stories is a registered charity funded from a combination of sources including public funding, trusts and foundations, and corporate and individual donations.

## **Environmental sustainability matters**

Environmental themes emerge frequently and spontaneously in our young writers' work, especially in speeches written as part of our Speak Up programme. This underscores our participants' understanding and passion for environmental sustainability. This concern for the environment is shared by Ministry of Stories' staff and volunteers. The necessity of 'sustainability' is apparent within its own definition, and a thoughtful and practical approach to this matters; it also forms part of our grant conditions with Arts Council England.

## **Our environmental ambition**

Our embeddedness within our community means that where local environmental issues arise, we would take a public stance as part of our own care and community engagement. We aim to be a sustainable organisation and as such are proactive in taking action to minimise negative ecological impact.

We also aim to equip our young people with the skills and space to explore and engage with issues of environmental responsibility, but very much on their terms, being careful not to put the burden of responsibility on them.

## **Our main impact (low)**

As a small charity occupying 120 square metres across our shop and writing centre, our energy use is thoughtful and not significant; heating and hot water are on a schedule, lights and equipment are switched off when not in use.

All staff members and volunteers walk, cycle or take public transport to work; young writers almost entirely arrive by foot, or by mass transit when travelling with a class. On the rare occasion staff have needed to travel outside London for work, this has almost universally been on public transportation. On rare occasions we have needed to use a taxi service to transport large items for events. Only every few years has a member of staff flown internationally as part of work. When this has happened the purpose and objectives of the trip have been considered first.

Our public events are usually local with attendees walking or using public transport. We utilise local businesses by foot for food (lunch, snacks for workshops, catering) and operate a small microwave for heating meals. We provide re-usable, washable crockery and utensils for staff, volunteers and young writers. We have clearly signposted composting and recycling stations.

We are mindful of materials waste and minimise paper use; staff are encouraged to print only what is necessary and use up scrap paper. Our use of Google Drive enables us to work collaboratively on documents, without the need to print. Our key documents, forms and policies are made available via email and on our website for external audiences. The vast majority of our disposable waste consists of recyclables - our commercial waste contract with Hackney Council is for 2 recycling and 1 general waste bag per week, in addition to collection tape for collection of large cardboard boxes.

Our environmental impact is low.

### **Key environmental commitments in light of impact**

Our low environmental impact means our commitment is to improve what we already do, add a small number of new practices and make our ecological stance more explicit with staff and volunteers.

We will take all reasonable measures\* to:

- Minimise production of waste and maximise materials recycling, including of foods stuff
- Use sustainable resources, services, and products
- Minimise ecological impact of our writing labs, workshops and events
- Share creative output from our young writers that has environmental themes with the public

We will do this through our environmental action plan, revisited on a quarterly basis and renewed every two years.

\* In this way, reasonable will be defined as that which is affordable within the operational budget each year - either through budgeted expenditure or achieved through savings. Where increased investment is required, we will fundraise for this.

**Management commitment**

This policy is endorsed by our senior management team and signed off by our board of trustees. We have an Environmental Champion on our board of trustees, who supports and challenges our work around sustainability, monitors the Environmental Action Plan, and engages the wider board in discussion, debate and activity around environmental sustainability. Senior management will review our environmental policy and consider and develop opportunities for continual improvement on a two-year cycle.