

ENERGY: NINE NEED-TO-KNOWS (in a Nutshell)

1. Reliable, affordable and consistent access to energy (energy security) is no longer a given in the Global North. A cold winter in 2021 across Europe, increasing demand as we emerge from the pandemic, and now the Russia-Ukraine conflict are all rapidly driving up the wholesale price of gas. Some countries are more affected than others, depending on energy sources and subsidies.



See: [Explainers on 'energy crisis'](#) ↗

2. Electricity prices are set by the final source of energy used to meet demand. This is usually from natural gas (currently 38% of our electricity generation) which has a relatively high running cost. Long term we need to reduce and remove reliance on fossil fuels to avoid this volatile market.



See: [Explainer on 'energy bills'](#) ↗

3. Fossil fuel generated energy production and consumption has many damaging impacts on people and places globally at all stages of production and consumption. Energy injustice needs to be addressed now, and throughout the transition to a clean-energy future.



See: [Setting the scene: our consumption of energy and its impacts](#) ↗

4. Consumption is complicated. We have many different dependencies on energy: nationally how energy is produced, stored and distributed, and internationally who we import energy from, how far its travelled and how its sourced. Our financial system continues to support fossil fuel exploitation, in ways that are sometimes obscured. Understanding the fossil fuel industry and how it is financed is critical to support fossil fuel divestment.



See: [How do we change this broken system? For further information, watch our webinar, Financing the Arts](#) ↗

5. There is a significant gap between our climate targets and the laws in place which make these targets reachable. Aside from energy supply, decades of inadequate policy, government investment or incentives in energy efficiency and renewables have exacerbated the energy crisis. The arts and culture, as a community, can push for action by speaking to local MPs, and partnering with others – including local, cultural, community and campaign networks, to put pressure on decision-makers and funders.



See: ['Cultural sector taking action'](#) and ['cutting the green crap'](#) ↗

6. All sectors need to concentrate efforts – and invest – in energy efficiency and reduce energy use as well as sourcing clean energy.



See: [Practical tips](#) ↗

7. Small changes can make a big difference, and can be affordable.



See: [‘Cultural sector taking action’](#), and [case study examples](#) ↗

8. Even without the innumerable benefits to people and the planet, renewable energy (i.e. solar and wind) is now cheaper than fossil fuel energy, and comes with many other benefits.



See: [‘Economic and social benefits of a clean transition’](#) and [‘So what are the solutions? What does this mean for the cultural sector’](#) ↗

9. The solutions exist, but the answer lies in protesting, in partnerships, building expertise and multi-sector solutions. These will benefit the wellbeing of communities, aid sustainable development and create an energy and climate resilient future for culture.



The energy crisis is just one more indication of a much greater challenge – climate change. Tackling this issue is also an invitation to confront and solve numerous other social and environmental injustices. To do this we can work together, at speed, with dedication, understanding, ingenuity, and care.

