

Environmental Policy

Created December 2021; Updated November 2023

Background

Scenic City Clay Arts (SCCA) is a community non-profit that provides a ceramic studio space to the Chattanooga area. SCCA's mission is to facilitate access to all things clay through collaborative education in a community studio. The studio's services include classes and workshops open to all ages and skill levels. SCCA offers a studio membership option to those who want to continue learning and working in clay. The studio also provides arts education community outreach programs and scholarships to bring clay to the hands of anyone who wants to experience it, regardless of socioeconomic background.

SCCA Spaces

STUDIO: 4,000 square feet in the basement of a 3-story building. Access by two stairwells or the elevator.

Electric HVAC and furnace

SCCA's studio includes: 16 pottery wheels, multiple tables for handbuilding, a wedging table, slab roller, extruder, 20 dip glazes (mixed in-studio), four electric kilns (Skutt: three 1227 three-phase, one 1027 single), and a variety of other ceramics tools and materials. Studio has an inventory of clays and raw glaze chemicals. The studio has two work sinks and two bathrooms (one with two stalls and one sink, the other with one stall, one urinal, and one sink).

CLASSROOM: 1,800 square feet at street level. Single door entry or pull-up garage door.

Electric HVAC and Furnace

SCCA's classroom includes: 9 wheels, 2 electric kilns (Skutt: one 1227 three-phase, one 1027 three-phase), slab roller, tables for handbuilding, 7 dip glazes. Classroom has two work sinks, and one bathroom with one stall and sink.

Our classroom and studio are located .3 miles walking/driving distance from each other.

Motivation, Mission & Vision

The big why

As part of the studio's strategic plan to fulfill SCCA's mission of sharing access to all things clay, the studio must ensure that future generations continue having access to this craft. Thus SCCA is fully committed to facilitating an environmentally conscious environment within the studio as well as promoting these practices with the communities we serve. SCCA will uphold this standard of environmental consciousness by implementing and standardizing recycling and energy efficient policies and practices in the studio regarding power usage, water conservation, consumable materials purchasing, and proper disposal and salvage of clay, glazes, and studio tools/materials. To ensure the studio supports this strategic plan, SCCA is in the process of undergoing a shift in its studio culture to cultivate an environment and community culture where every single one of its stakeholders plays a key role in success. SCCA's environmentally conscious culture and practices will be practiced and promoted

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internally by studio staff, instructors, members and program participants as well as externally to partner organizations and social media followers.

Level of ambition

This Environmental Policy is the first step in SCCA's overall commitment to creating a green ceramics studio. In addition to the applications and communications listed above, environmental practices will include managing studio costs (energy, water, and procurement of localized resources that reduce shipping costs) to ensure business resilience and reduction of carbon footprint. Our vision is to have a known reputation as a green non-profit studio in the Chattanooga area. Using our internal and external audience reach, we hope to increase the community's knowledge base about these topics and bring about positive and sustainable environmental impact by facilitating small, everyday low impact behaviours that can be scaled up for programs, partnerships, events, and marketing campaigns that work towards more environmentally conscious practices. These efforts will positively influence the local and larger pottery community by providing a case study and template for other studios to emulate. We believe others have a desire to create studio cultures and behaviors that ensure ceramics' place in a global, environmentally conscious future. SCCA's low impact practices, strategic partnerships and educational efforts will encourage others to take their first steps towards a green studio.

Stakeholders

SCCA's stakeholders, in this case, are the users (staff, instructors, members and program participants) of the studio space and programs which feed into the larger ceramics community as well as partner organizations, who will be directly affected by the standards set in place from this policy document. The primary goal is to be the first green community ceramics studio in the Chattanooga region and positively influence the local pottery community to adapt and implement sustainability into their own practices. To engage and communicate this goal to the studio's stakeholders, various internal and external approaches will be implemented to communicate and facilitate sustainable practices. Internal approaches include updates to studio use procedures and adding sustainable practice methodology into class/program curriculums. This will include the use of signage around the studio to encourage promoting the proper use of tools and materials, including water, in a manner that upholds the studio's environmental standards. SCCA plans on strategically placing other signages and PSA's sharing tidbits of knowledge about where our materials come from and quick habit builders that will support SCCA's environmental initiatives. All of these initiatives, plus others, will compose the internal campaigns of the studio and will be supported in a top-down fashion by SCCA staff, members, and class/program participants.

External campaigns will take place in collaboration with community partnerships where SCCA, under the leadership of the Executive Director, Education and Operations Directors, ensures to continuously update program curriculums to facilitate environmentally conscious practices through SCCA's educational outreach programs and events. All of these campaigns will be strategically marketed via SCCA's social media accounts (Facebook and Instagram) as well as the studio's monthly e-newsletter. Social media posts and other external messaging will reflect the goals of SCCA's environmental policy.

Key Environmental Commitments

SCCA commits to the following areas of focus as we begin our environmental sustainability journey as a green ceramics studio. For details about how we plan to support these commitments, please refer to our Environmental Policy Action Plan.

- Studio Culture

Working with a material that is taken from the earth seems as natural as it can get, but there are many ways in which the studio can ensure it operates sustainably and produces less waste. SCCA commits to shifting its studio culture to create a more environmentally conscious space that will facilitate positive behaviors to encourage recycling practices that are low impact to the environment.

- Clay and Glaze Sourcing and Recycling

SCCA is mindful of its materials sourcing, specifically for the clay that is sold and used at the studio. Currently, the studio supplies its clay from a clay production company based out of Asheville, NC, about 226 miles from SCCA's location in downtown Chattanooga.

The studio follows standard clay waste procedures and protocols requiring all members and students to recycle scrap wet clay into appropriate receptacles depending on clay type. Leftover glaze is currently held in containers where they are kept until completely dried and then properly disposed.

Recycled clay bricks process has been tested in the studio. Plans are to batch make bricks using all of the available clay waste material at that time.

Other recycling efforts that have been successful in the past and can be implemented in future events is the use of donated pottery pieces that can be crushed and used for mosaics. The studio is also committed to researching and partnership of grant-funded programs to involve community organizations which upholds SCCA's mission of bringing this artform to all communities and ensures the sustainability of clay for future generations if these artistic opportunities are delivered to such youth programs.

Policy Review

SCCA Board of Directors and leadership are committed to planning for and implementing sustainable practices within our studio and education programs. The BoD may at any time create a task force or committee that will review the studio's environmental policies, develop new policies, or update existing ones to comply with Clean Green Ceramics (CGC) certification guidelines.

The studio will complete CGC's certification questionnaire, to be completed by January 2022. This questionnaire requires the organization to supply current studio specifications and the creation of this policy document. After completing the questionnaire and submitting required documentation, SCCA will meet with CGC assessor for further recommendations and final certification award. Upon receiving the certification, SCCA staff and leadership will revisit the plans and reports quarterly to review the success of

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the studio's internal and external activities and how they upheld expectations stated in this policy using metrics provided by CGC.