

## Culture Aberdeen Action Plan

The action plan that follows has been developed to demonstrate how the various members of Culture Aberdeen are contributing towards the implementation of the cultural strategy. By its very nature this action plan presents a high level view of the range of activity that around 30 different organisations are undertaking to support the cultural strategy. It should be noted that this action plan has been developed from a series of strategic and operational plans of a number of organisations. As such rich detail is not repeated in this plan but rather common themes and threads have been identified and presented. This approach has also had the advantage of identifying current gaps in current or planned activity by the sector to address several aspects of the strategy. A key priority of the coming year will be consideration by Culture Aberdeen of key actions that can be taken collectively to address these gaps.

This is the first time that a collective action plan across the cultural sector in Aberdeen has been developed. We acknowledge that over the coming few years the plan, as well as the process for developing it, will develop further. As such it is proposed that the action plan will be reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis to take account of progress undertaken and the development of new initiatives across the cultural sector in Aberdeen.

One aspect of the cultural strategy is the acknowledgement that both individually and collectively more work is required to develop an evidence base of impact. We therefore anticipate that future versions of the action plan will include more detail in measuring both the baseline performance of the sector and the distance travelled by subsequent actions, it should be noted that at this time some of the baselines laid out in the action plan are still to be confirmed. Should funding allow we would propose a wider evaluative exercise examining the impacts of the strategy and that this action plan is undertaken on a periodic basis.

Culture Aberdeen have agreed that each of the ambitions will be publicly led by a number of its members - facilitated by officers of Aberdeen City Council - who will be responsible for coordinating the most significant activities across the Culture Aberdeen membership. Additionally one meeting of Culture Aberdeen each year will be devoted to the consideration of an annual review of activity and the refresh of the action plan for the subsequent year.

Finally it is recognised that the full ambitions of the cultural strategy for the city can only be realised by the cultural sector working in partnership with a range of different organisations and agencies across the city. This is acknowledged by demonstrating the linkages between the cultural strategy and other significant strategies at Scottish and local levels at the front of the action plan. Culture Aberdeen will also play an integral role within Aberdeen Community Planning aspirations through contribution to the delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and active participation within the Aberdeen Prospers Group. As we commence our implementation of the strategy we welcome the future dialogue to further develop our plans for implementing the strategy.

## The Strategic Context.

### 1. ACC Strategic Business Plan Objective

Inclusive economic growth: 'Work with partners and the community to develop iconic tourism attractions to capitalise on non-business tourism and leisure markets and stimulate creative and cultural offerings.

### 2. E&CS Improvement Change Activity

Increase opportunities for creating and participating in high quality cultural experiences by further development of the infrastructure required to develop it.

Cultural Strategy Theme	Local Outcome Improvement Plan	Creative Scotland 'unlocking potential, embracing ambition'	National Policy & Strategy
1. Releasing our creativity	<u>Prosperous People</u> People in Aberdeen are happy and enjoy positive life outcomes.	<u>Ambition 2</u> Everyone can access and enjoy artistic & creative experiences.	<u>Going Further – the national strategy for Scotland’s museums &amp; galleries</u> Aim 2 – strengthen connections between museums, people and places.
2. Becoming Scotland's creative lab	<u>Prosperous Economy</u> Aberdeen has a flourishing, thriving and successful local economy.	<u>Ambition 1</u> Excellence and experimentation across the arts, screen and creative industries is recognised and valued.	<u>Going Further - the national strategy for Scotland's museums &amp; galleries</u> Aim 3 - empower a diverse workforce to increase their potential for the benefit of the sector and beyond.
3. Making all the city a stage	<u>Prosperous Place</u> People experience Aberdeen as the best place to invest, live and visit.	<u>Ambition 3</u> Places and quality of life are transformed through imagination, ambition and an understanding of the potential of creativity.	<u>Events Scotland - Scotland the perfect stage 2015-2025</u> 'To utilise and develop the assets that Scotland has which make it the perfect stage for events.'
4. Connecting us to the world	<u>Prosperous Place</u> People experience Aberdeen as the best place to invest, live and visit.	<u>Ambition 5</u> Scotland is a distinctive creative nation connected to the world.	<u>Events Scotland - Scotland the perfect stage 2015-2015</u> 'To deliver a portfolio of events which provide world leading authentic experiences for residents and visitors.
5. Shaping our future	<u>Prosperous economy</u> Aberdeen has a flourishing, thriving and successful local economy.	<u>Ambition 5</u> Ideas are brought to life by a diverse, skilled and connected leadership and workforce.	<u>Going further - the national strategy for Scotland's museums &amp; galleries</u> Aim 4 - forge a sustainable future.

# Action Plan

AMBITION 1 - RELEASING OUR CREATIVITY						
<i>Our vision for Aberdeen is a city opening doors, where everyone can be transformed and inspired through engagement in the arts and culture; a place releasing our creativity.</i>						
10 Year Outcome	3-5 Year Priority	Action	Baseline	19/20	23/24	Contributors
<b>Our citizens are fully informed and recognise the range and diversity of opportunities available to engage and appreciate Aberdeen’s cultural offer.</b>	Improve the accessibility of information available on the range of cultural activities across Aberdeen.	Raise awareness cultural opportunities through targeted non-cultural networks (events and virtual).				
		Improve the quality of experience and access of online channels, sites and resources.				
		Support and implement recommendations set out in Aberdeen’s Youth Arts Strategy Action Plan, increasing cultural engagement with young people both within and out with the formal education sector.				
		Support residents across the city to play a meaningful role in decisions about cultural programmes that impact on their communities.				
		Encourage and implement career path and employability opportunities within the culture sector, alongside a comprehensive shared CPD programme.				
		Investigate and implement a Volunteer Development strategy for the sector.				
<b>Inclusive cultural opportunities are supported, which bring us together to reflect upon, embrace and celebrate our diversity and shared values.</b>	Improve accessibility and engagement with individuals from all protected characteristics and ensure that our cultural activities reflect more clearly the increasingly cultural diversity of Aberdeen.	Undertake a review of Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) strategies within Aberdeen’s cultural organisations and encourage embedding best practice across the sector through policies, employment and programming.				
		Commission research into current barriers to access and engagement for protected characteristic groups.				

		Strengthening links with organisations that represent protected characteristic groups to ensure cultural offer reflects Aberdeen's diversity.				
		Ensure diversity is recognised in the Culture Aberdeen Network and those voices are realised within the development and delivery of the action plan.				
<b>Our citizen's lives have been transformed by cultural and artistic activity which is celebrated as being central to their quality of life.</b>	Increase the opportunities to use cultural engagement as a means of promoting well-being, social cohesion and a tool to support individuals through challenging life transitions and positive destinations.	Undertake an audit of existing provision in this field and identify and roll-out best practice where it exists.				
		Work in partnership across the cultural sector in order to support organisations to develop programmes in this field.				
		Celebrate the impact of these programmes across the sector through an annual awards ceremony.				
<b>All our citizens have the rights and opportunities to be a cultural confident and creative society through engagement and empowerment, discernible through a strong and robust evidence base of cultural impacts and lasting social legacy.</b>	Develop and implement approaches to working within the Community Planning Partnership so cultural activities can contribute to other city-wide strategies.	Recognising, evidencing and profiling Culture as a means to reducing isolation and improving well-being.				
		Culture Aberdeen to explore 'Cultural Access' models to increase engagement and empowerment.				

<b>AMBITION 2 - BECOMING SCOTLAND'S CREATIVE LAB</b>						
<i>Our vision for Aberdeen is a city to experiment in, a home, a place, a destination and testing ground for artists, creative enterprises and new ideas; a place which has become Scotland's creative lab.</i>						
<b>10 Year Outcome</b>	<b>3-5 Year Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>19/20</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>Contributors</b>
<b>Aberdeen is recognised as a destination and testing ground for artists and creative producers to create world quality work.</b>	Foster a producing culture through a balanced approach to support and funding, for the development of local artists to produce and tour work while attracting high quality artists and work from elsewhere to enrich the city.	Local organisations create more commissions and production opportunities through a balanced approach to prioritising funding.				
		Emerging talent is supported collectively through talent development programmes.				
<b>Aberdeen has a strong track record for support, development and retention of creative talent.</b>	Ensure funding opportunities empower artists to undertake and organisations to promote bold, experimental, high-quality, risk-taking work.	Aberdeen City Council invests in high quality and risk-taking artistic work and practice.				
		Culture Aberdeen engages more effectively with the private sector and other non-public funders to develop funding opportunities and partnerships.				
		Raise awareness of apprenticeships within Creative Industries.				
<b>Aberdeen has a more creative and diverse economic workforce through a strong and resourceful independent creative sector.</b>	Grow the number of individuals whose main occupation is a creative one by supporting the development, retention and celebration of our city's creative talent.	Celebrate and profile where talent has been retained through the collective range of development and training programmes.				
		Raise awareness of creative opportunities available in the region through networking and exchange events.				
		Embrace a range of collective programming, resources and assets, where opportunities can be embedded to support retention. I.E. procure and employ local.				
	Increase the volume of supported spaces available for creative practitioners to use and grow the numbers of makers in incubation spaces.	Advocacy and lobbying for empty space to be made available for creative use– supported by the appropriate legislation and incentives.				
		Identifying under-used spaces within current venues and explore how they can be made available for temporary or longer term use as incubators.				
		Pilot an 'Air B&B for Creative's' broker model,				

		to provide affordable accommodation for visiting artists and professionals.				
		Negotiate with property owners and landlords to establish more affordable rents, creating conditions for higher graduate retention.				
		Culture Aberdeen to explore the development options and models for a work/live space.				
<b>Aberdeen has a diversified and prosperous economy through its growing number and variety of innovative artists and creative businesses.</b>	Grow the number of creative start-ups and businesses in Aberdeen by co-ordinating and enhancing entrepreneurial and business development support across a range of agencies.	Engage with partners such as Aberdeen Prospers group to develop entrepreneurial and business support programmes to increase numbers of creative start-ups.				
		Work with Aberdeen and Shire Regional Skills Strategy partners to increase the number of Creative Industry employment and start-ups through prioritised investment in skills development.				

### AMBITION 3 – MAKING ALL THE CITY A STAGE

*Our vision for Aberdeen is a city which inspires, where exciting cultural experiences are around each and every corner and where there are no creative boundaries; a place where all the city is stage.*

10 Year Outcome	3-5 Year Priority	Action	Baseline	19/20	23/24	Contributors
<b>Aberdeen continues to develop its cultural infrastructure, ensuring world class visitor experiences, increasing tourism, supporting the local economy and enriching lives of both residents and visitors.</b>	Investment in Aberdeen’s Cultural infrastructure to support the realisations of the strategy ambitions.	Complete the major refurbishments of the Music Hall and the Art Gallery and support the development of other feasible infrastructure projects.				
		Culture Aberdeen to build upon the Culture Mapping report, towards a 10 year infrastructure plan, with priorities and costings for sustainability and development.				
		Cultural organisations make a significant contribution to the 365 Events strategy and the City Centre Masterplan.				
		Culture Aberdeen to advocate for the establishment of a ‘bed-night levy’ to support investment in Cultural events to attract visitors.				

<b>City Centre venues which are thriving and attracting a growing number of residents and visitors alike to high-quality artistic activity.</b>	Animate and promote the heart of Aberdeen as a vibrant cultural centre.	Cultural organisations make a significant contribution to the 365 Events strategy and the City Centre Masterplan.				
		Culture Aberdeen to advocate for the establishment of a 'bed-night levy' to support investment in cultural events to attract visitors.				
<b>Cultural activity engages and empowers a wide variety of individuals across the whole city.</b>	Extend the range of locations used for cultural programming across the full range of Aberdeen's neighbourhoods and encourage greater ownership by those communities.	Identify where residency and pop up presentation opportunities can be embedded in communities as well as exploring partnership opportunities for community curated activity.				
		Develop community legacy partnerships to ensure sustainability of outreach activity and best practice learning is embedded within the communities.				
	Deliver activities and new commissions which enable the city and its people to explore and reflect on Aberdeen's distinctive character and its rich and evolving heritage and culture.	Profile and celebrate home-grown work being created which is 'distinctively Aberdeen' that is also bold, contemporary and risk taking.				
		Identify opportunities that our tangible and intangible heritage presents for collaboration, new partnerships and new audiences.				
		Explore options for Scotland's Biennale within the city, drawing upon the experiences and strengths of our existing festivals and events.				

#### AMBITION 4 – CONNECTING US TO THE WORLD

*Our vision for Aberdeen is a city like no other, where we celebrate and promote our culture and heritage, the things we make and create, a place where culture connects us to the world.*

<b>10 Year Outcome</b>	<b>3-5 Year Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>19/20</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>Contributors</b>
<b>Aberdeen uses cultural activity to confidently tell its story to the world and is recognised internationally as a creative city, producing unique and high</b>	Increase the amount of individual and organisational work created in Aberdeen shown nationally and internationally.	Organisations are encouraged to develop home-grown productions which are intended to be toured, showcasing both contemporary works and those exploring our North East identity.				

<p><b>quality work.</b></p>		<p>Encourage and support local organisations and artists to participate in opportunities to showcase their production in Scotland, the UK and beyond, through opportunities like Creative Scotland's Made in Scotland programme.</p>				
<p><b>Aberdeen and its arts organisations develop strategic partnerships and shared best practice values with international organisations and leading global cultural institutions.</b></p>	<p>Create and implement a plan which priorities the cultural sector's international links and sustains existing European partnerships.</p>	<p>Map existing international networks across the city's cultural organisations and develop more strategic sector led partnerships and exchanges.</p>				
		<p>Establish and embed international partnerships with key cultural organisations to help inform programming and organisational development.</p>				
		<p>Use existing resources and established programmes as platforms to develop new exchange and collaborations with international institutions and organisations.</p>				
		<p>Develop events and cultural activity which celebrates Aberdeen unique International links and relationships.</p>				
		<p>Culture Aberdeen to explore with partners the designation options for Aberdeen to apply for UNESCO Creative City recognition in 2019.</p>				
<p><b>Aberdeen is a home for international dialogue between artists and organisations, routed in a spirit of cultural exchange widening practise and cultural understanding.</b></p>	<p>Increase the number of organisations with international partnerships and events which have an explicit international element in their programming.</p>	<p>Develop International programming with benefits for the North East and opportunities for exchange for artists and organisations.</p>				
		<p>Develop approaches to co-commissioning work and attracting international cultural events through, amongst other mechanisms, the Creative Europe funding opportunities.</p>				
	<p>Build stronger and deeper Aberdeen-wide national and international exchange programmes benefitting artists and organisations.</p>	<p>Explore international exchange or learning programmes available to artists and organisations, and facilitate the participation of Aberdeen organisations and artists to take part.</p>				



<b>AMBITION 5 – SHAPING OUR FUTURE</b>						
<i>Our vision for Aberdeen is a city whose cultural sector is growing in ambition and confidence with a strong collective of cultural leaders collaborating to realise the city's potential; a place where the arts shape our future.</i>						
<b>10 Year Outcome</b>	<b>3-5 Year Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>19/20</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>Contributors</b>
<b>Cultural organisations that have creative, collaborative and entrepreneurial approaches with quality and depth of leadership talent.</b>	Diversify the income of cultural organisations within Aberdeen to attract more external investment to the region.	Build stronger relationships with key funders and targeted funding bodies.				
		Ensure collective strategy to increase successful funding applications to Creative Scotland and other key funders leading to more funding received by cultural organisations in the region.				
		Develop new Sponsorship and income generation models.				
<b>A cultural sector that plays a pivotal role in the development and implementation of major city developments and regional strategies.</b>	Develop and deliver a leadership programme to develop entrepreneurial cultural leadership and succession planning.	Utilise the Creative Scotland place partnership to develop and deliver a managed programme of sector development.				
		Develop support and mentoring network for cultural group leaders which can be shared and disseminated throughout the community.				
		Culture Aberdeen to explore Agenda 21 Charter and to advocate for ACC to adopt in order to build towards principles of sustainable development.				
<b>The sector develops its infrastructure to better support the realisation of the Cultural Strategy ambitions.</b>	Establish Culture Aberdeen as the city's independent Cultural Sector development body.	Culture Aberdeen to establish as a legal entity with appropriate governance and structure model to led, support and realise the Cultural Strategy.				

		Development of a 'Culture Aberdeen' marketing and communication strategy. An overarching plan, with a collective brand and messaging for all 5 ambitions.				
		Engage with Calgary, Houston and Stavanger to establish a global cultural 'Energy' Cities network, collectively learning and developing the city's creative industry to support economic diversification and resilience.				
<b>Cultural organisations across the city develop their individual and collective capacity for developing robust evaluation.</b>	Develop and implement a system of peer evaluation of Aberdeen's cultural organisations.	Staff visits to other organisations to support better practice supported through Place Partnership.				
		Implement agreed annual peer evaluation through the Culture Aberdeen Ambition leads.				
<b>A rich and in-depth range of information on cultural activity within Aberdeen is readily accessible to plan and allocate resources more effectively.</b>	Improve mechanisms for collecting, sharing and analysing information amongst different organisations.	Work collectively to develop and exploit simple and effective feedback mechanisms, comprising unique organisational data as well as common data to input jointly and analyse both locally and globally.				
		Development of measurements and research which supports culture sector development and articulates impacts to wider audiences.				