

OUR NATIONAL PORTFOLIO, 2018-22

# Sector support organisations Narrative



The Sector Support Organisations are a new category within the National Portfolio, although some of the organisations have previously been funded as National Portfolio Organisations or through other Arts Council investment.

These organisations will play a vital role in supporting the cultural sector, but they won't themselves be directly producing or delivering art or culture.

The investment in this part of the portfolio is considerable – some £22 million per annum, with individual offers ranging from £40,000 to more than £1 million each year. Some organisations play a key role in their locality, working across a small geographical area; others provide a national function.

Collectively, we expect these organisations to underpin our cultural infrastructure, to drive progress and change, and to provide valuable support for the sector. They will offer economies of scale, access to expertise and innovation, sector leadership and artform and business development.

There are Sector Support Organisations that focus on particular Arts Council goals, and others whose work cuts across all five. Together the Sector Support Organisations will make a significant contribution to all of our goals. They will deliver on: talent development and artistic innovation; understanding and growth of audiences (including those currently less engaged); a more skilled and diverse workforce; a more resilient cultural sector; and better provision and access for children and young people. The Sector Support Organisations will support cultural organisations both inside and outside of the portfolio.

Examples include Vocaleyes and Stagertext, who will now be providing audio description and captioning for the museum sector as well as performing arts across the country. Attitude Is Everything will be delivering a new talent development programme for deaf and disabled artists, alongside existing work around improving deaf and disabled people's access to live music.

Brass Bands England was a new entrant to the portfolio last time around, and has an uplift to develop its range and reach of support for amateur brass bands across the country.

ISAN, the Independent Street Arts Network, supports outdoor arts, and their uplift will allow them to respond to sector demand to provide better support for this growing part of the cultural offer.

Among the Sector Support Organisations are 10 Bridge Organisations that will cover the whole of England and provide support for the cultural and education sectors to ensure the best opportunities for children and young people. Nine Museum Development Providers join the cohort, providing expertise and resources to assist thousands of local museums.

The Audience Agency will lead on supporting cultural organisations to gain a deeper understanding of current and potential audiences. Analytical tools will support audience development, artistic and business planning across the range of portfolio funded organisations and beyond. By adding insight on their audiences into Audience Finder, participating cultural organisations will be helping to develop the world's largest shared system for analysing audiences and visitors for arts and museum events.

The Society of Chief Librarians will be funded to ensure culture is at the heart of libraries' thinking and delivery. Other new joiners to the portfolio with a specialist

focus include One Dance UK, Regional Young Theatre Directors Scheme and Arts&Heritage.

Organisations focused on particular places include Create Gloucestershire and Plymouth Culture, which will both play a critical role in ensuring thriving local cultural environments.

Through the Sector Support Organisations we are funding a comprehensive range of services.

MORE INFORMATION:  
[artscouncil.org.uk/npo](https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/npo)

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