ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

LET'S CREATE

STRATEGY 2020-2030
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

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INTRODUCING OUR STRATEGY

Sir Nicholas Serota
Chair, Arts Council England

On 1 July 2016, in stations and shopping centres and high streets, men, women and children in every corner of the country came face-to-face with ghosts. To mark the centenary of the First World War, Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller and National Theatre director Rufus Norris joined forces to create we're here because we're here, a monumental public artwork that stretched the length and breadth of the land. Hundreds of volunteers, of all ages and from all backgrounds, trained in secret before taking to the streets in the uniforms of 100 years ago, each representing one of the soldiers who died on the first day of the Battle of the Somme. On benches in Barnsley, buses in Birmingham, and on the Blackpool seafront, long-dead soldiers came briefly back to life. Thousands of people came upon the work in person; millions more saw it shared across the news and on social media. Strangers struck up conversations, children turned to question grown-ups, passers-by were moved to tears. 'Most memorials, you have to go to,' said Deller, explaining his wish that the work would step out of buildings and into people's lives. 'This memorial will come to you.'

When I think of Arts Council England's new 10-year Strategy, it's this image that I have in my mind: crowds of volunteers in stations around the country, motionless amid the evening floods of commuters, bringing concourses to a halt as they burst into song. It seems to me to hold within it both the past and the future: standing as one of the tremendous achievements supported by the Arts Council's last 10-year Strategy, under which we were able to invest in two exceptional artists to create a work of scale and ambition, while at the same time pointing the way forward.

The boldness of the vision, and its trajectory from public spaces onto social media; the collective creativity of all the participants; the partnerships, local and national, that brought the piece to life; and perhaps most important of all, the dissolving of barriers between artists and the audiences with whom they interact: these are the elements that our new Strategy supports.

LET'S CREATE A COUNTRY TRANSFORMED BY CULTURE

It will value the creative potential in each of us, provide communities in every corner of the country with more opportunities to enjoy culture, and celebrate greatness of every kind. It marks a significant change, but an evolutionary one: honouring and building upon the successes of the last decade while confronting the challenges and embracing the exciting possibilities of the next. These challenges – inequality of wealth and of opportunity, social isolation and mental ill-health, and above all of these, the accelerating climate emergency – are many.

Creativity and culture have a particular role to play in responding to them: they allow us to reflect and comment on society, to better understand our own lives and those of others, and to occupy a shared space in which we can debate, present alternative views, and discover new ways of expressing our anxieties and ambitions. But in my time as chair of Arts Council England, it has become clearer than ever to me that while the challenges of the next 10 years are momentous, the possibilities are just as great.

Honouring and building upon the successes of the last decade while confronting the challenges and embracing the exciting possibilities of the next

Recognition of the part that creativity and culture can play in supporting local economies and talent, health and wellbeing, and children and young people, has flourished over recent years, strengthening our partnerships with local and national government, opening up new avenues for all who work in museums, libraries and arts organisations, and improving the lives of people everywhere.

Understanding of the role of culture in building and sustaining communities has come into clear focus and will sit at the heart of our work over the decade to come. Artists and cultural organisations continue to benefit from international exchange; at a point when this country is redefining its relationship with the wider world, our increasingly diverse culture is a national asset and gives us an international advantage, encouraging us to converse and collaborate freely across borders.

LET'S CREATE SHARED EXPERIENCES

Our new Strategy will support artists and organisations to go further in all of these areas: to strengthen and extend the work that is already underway in involving wider audiences; to ensure that this country's diversity is fully reflected in the culture it produces; and to inspire and collaborate on the international stage.

And of course, in realising the opportunities of the next decade, we must look to artists themselves. This Strategy deepens our commitment to supporting individual curators, librarians, producers and artists of every kind and from every corner of the country. We want them to learn, take risks, fail where necessary, and finally to flourish in pursuit of making new work. The support that we give to creative practitioners, particularly D/deaf and disabled people, those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, women, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, either at the beginning of their careers or at moments when they are seeking to test different paths, can provide essential time, space, and affirmation precisely when those things are needed most. For individuals, the significance of such support may not become clear until years later, but collectively, its impact across the cultural sphere is profound.

A blossoming of creativity across the country

Consider the 2019 Mercury Prize: seven of its 12 shortlisted artists received early career investment from Arts Council-supported programmes. Without this support, their careers would have been more precarious; in some cases, they may not have continued at all. The great artists, performers, writers and curators of 2040 and 2050 need to be nurtured now: our investment in them is, at heart, an investment in a future that we believe can be brighter and better with culture and creativity at its core.

In 1951, the Secretary General of the then-Arts Council of Great Britain characterised the Council's mission as growing 'few, but roses'. We have come a long way since then. With this Strategy, we hope to prepare the ground for a blossoming of creativity across the country – and to acknowledge that the surest way to fill the future with every variety of flower is to recognise that we can all be gardeners.

LET'S CREATE A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITIES

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

We published our first 10-year Strategy in the autumn of 2010. *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* had a simple aim: to build for the first time, with the public and our partners, a shared vision and a set of priorities to support and develop arts and culture in this country.

The Strategy's launch coincided with an era of austerity, during which funding for arts and culture from local and national government fell. But the strong partnerships that it forged helped us to support creative practitioners and cultural organisations, even in challenging economic circumstances. And its clear vision allowed us to work purposefully with others towards the shared goal of a country in which great art and culture could be made, experienced and appreciated by as many people as possible.

The successes of that first Strategy were significant. England's artists, curators and librarians continued to flourish at home and around the world. They proved to be vital sources of talent and enterprise for our country's creative industries, which in turn emerged as major drivers of the national economy. In many places, the Arts Council and local authorities stood together and continued to invest in culture, for the benefit of local communities, and increasingly in consultation with them. Cultural organisations responded boldly to the decade's economic challenges, growing earned income and developing new ways of raising money to counter the impacts of reduced public funding, while at the same time becoming greener and moving to diversify their work and their workforces. As a result of all of this, we're beginning the new decade with a far clearer understanding of the role that culture can play in building the identity and prosperity of places, creating stronger communities, and inspiring change.

But there is more to do. As we prepared for this new Strategy, we set out to understand how we could build on the achievements of the last and do better in the areas where challenges remain.

We began with a conversation involving more than 5,000 people from around the country – including members of the public, children and young people, artists, curators and librarians, leaders of cultural organisations, and those working in local and national government and in education. We asked them how they experienced creativity and what their cultural lives looked like, what

arts, museums and libraries meant to them, and what they believed public money should and shouldn't fund. We reviewed more than 100 reports into the work of artists and arts organisations, libraries and museums, and the ways in which the public benefits from them. We commissioned a study of the future trends that are likely to affect the cultural sector. We looked at evidence about leadership in cultural organisations, about their economic and environmental sustainability, and about the roles culture and creativity play in the fields of health, wellbeing, and criminal justice.

From our analysis of this evidence we identified a set of key issues facing the cultural sector. Together, they made up our 'case for change'.

They were:

- That across the country, there are significant differences in how 'arts' and 'culture' are defined, understood and valued. Many people are uncomfortable with the label 'the arts' and associate it only with either the visual arts or 'high art', such as ballet or opera. At the same time most people in this country have active cultural lives and value opportunities to be creative
- That there are still widespread socio-economic and geographic variances in levels of engagement with publicly funded culture
- That the opportunities for children and young people to experience creativity and culture inside and outside school are not equal across the country
- That there remains a persistent and widespread lack of diversity across the creative industries and in publicly funded cultural organisations, although awareness of the issue is greater than it used to be
- That the business models of publicly funded cultural organisations are often fragile, and generally lack the flexibility to address emerging challenges and opportunities, especially around the decline of public funding and the growth of new technologies
- That many creative practitioners and leaders of cultural organisations report a retreat from innovation, risk-taking and sustained talent development

We then went back to the public and stakeholders to test whether they recognised the issues we had identified, and whether they agreed that our next Strategy should address them. Respondents were strongly positive about the direction of travel we were proposing, while asking us to keep in mind the considerable achievements of the past decade. They also offered many valuable ideas about how a Strategy that aimed to address these key issues could be framed and delivered.

Of course, this Strategy will not exist in a vacuum. As we look towards 2030, the external challenges and developments facing both our sector and the wider world are significant. Technology continues to evolve at speed, presenting us with new opportunities while at the same time posing new questions. Rising health and social care costs will continue to place demands on public funding.

The global financial outlook remains uncertain, while the UK's relationship with Europe will continue to evolve in the wake of our departure from the European Union. This country will continue to grapple with historic cultural, social and economic divisions. And overshadowing all of this are the urgent crises of climate change and environmental degradation, which look certain to be the key forces shaping our social, political and economic landscape over the decade to come.

We're beginning the new decade with a far clearer understanding of the role culture can play

The cultural sector is already adapting in response to these wider changes. During the consultation, participants were quick to point to the many organisations and individuals across England who are already addressing the challenges that our research identified. They highlighted partnerships with the technology sector, the wider creative industries and higher education; projects around health and wellbeing; progress towards environmental sustainability; and the growing support for and celebration of everyday creativity. Such initiatives are exciting and inspiring. The aim now must be to adapt and expand them in order to accelerate and deepen the wider development and impact of our sector.

This Strategy sets out the change we want to achieve together over the next decade. It will help put in place conditions that enable creative practitioners, cultural organisations and their workforces to respond nimbly and effectively to what lies ahead, and to shape it for the better. And for Arts Council England, it will determine our role as a development agency, our approach to the investment of the funds we receive from the National Lottery and from tax payers, and our advocacy for creativity and culture, over the next 10 years.

We're not expecting to do everything at once. Change will take time and its pace will depend, in part, on the resources we have available; between now and 2030 we will publish a series of Delivery Plans that will set out our specific priorities for each period. But the strength and vitality of the cultural sector, together with a shared recognition of the challenges ahead and a shared commitment to this Strategy's vision, mean we can approach the next 10 years with confidence in our ability to achieve more, and reach further. It's time to take the next step.

Our definitions of Culture and Creativity

CULTURE

'Culture' means many things to many people and is often used to refer to food, religion and other forms of heritage. Here, though, we use it to mean all those areas of activity associated with the artforms and organisations in which Arts Council England invests: collections, combined arts, dance, libraries, literature, museums, music, theatre and the visual arts. By describing all of this work collectively as 'culture', rather than separately as 'the arts', 'museums' and 'libraries', we aim to be inclusive of the full breadth of activity that we support, as well as to reflect findings from the research we commissioned for this Strategy, which showed that members of the public tend to use the words 'the arts' and 'artists' to refer specifically to classical music, opera, ballet or the fine arts. Similarly, we have used 'creative practitioners' rather than 'artists' as an umbrella term for all those who work to create new, or reshape existing, cultural content.

We also recognise that the traditional boundaries between and around cultural activities are disappearing as new technologies and other societal changes alter the ways in which many artists, curators, librarians and other practitioners work, as well as how culture is made and shared. We're excited by these changes, which we expect to accelerate over the next decade – and in response, we will become more flexible about the range and type of cultural activities that we support over the years to come.

CREATIVITY

'Creativity' describes the process through which people apply their knowledge, skill and intuition to imagine, conceive, express or make something that wasn't there before. While creativity is present in all areas of life, in this Strategy, we use it specifically to refer to the process of making, producing or participating in 'culture'.

LET'S CREATE SPACE TO SHINE

Our vision

By 2030, we want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

By 2030, we envisage a country transformed by its culture and at the same time constantly transforming it: a truly creative nation in which every one of us can play a part.

We believe that creativity and culture are deeply connected, but different. Creativity is the process by which, either individually or with others, we make something new: a work of art, or a reimagining of an existing work. Culture is the result of that creative process: we encounter it in the world, in museums and libraries, theatres and galleries, carnivals and concert halls, festivals and digital spaces. In this Strategy, we are drawing a distinction between the two because we want everyone to have more opportunities for both: to be creative, and to experience high-quality culture. Having the time and tools to develop personal creative potential can be profoundly fulfilling, while engaging in culture is often a route to inspiration and delight. Taken together, they can help us make sense of ourselves and of each other: they provoke and uplift us; they unite communities; and they bring us joy. If access to either creativity or culture is limited by where people come from or what they do, the whole of society loses out.

Many people already lead wide-ranging creative and cultural lives: they dance, draw and write; they read, visit museums, and listen to music; and they encourage their children to do the same. Much of this activity is not publicly funded, and has therefore traditionally fallen outside of the Arts Council's remit. But with this Strategy, we aim to recognise and champion the creative activities and cultural experiences of every person in every town, village and city in this country, and to ensure that, over the next 10 years, we support more people to express and develop their creativity and create more opportunities for them to enjoy the widest possible range of culture. We will do this because we believe that everyone, everywhere should benefit from public investment in creativity and culture, given their power to fulfil us, and to transform the communities in which we live and work. And we will do this because we want England to strengthen its reputation as one of the most creative countries in the world.

LET'S CREATE

ART THAT THRILLS US

LET'S CREATE

MUSIC TO MAKE HEARTS SING

HOW WE WILL WORK TO ACHIEVE IT

Arts Council England is the national development agency for creativity and culture.

We received our Royal Charter in 1946 and have spent more than 70 years funding the nation's cultural life. Our first 10-year Strategy, published in 2010, was an important milestone on our journey as a development agency. Through it, we were able to move beyond a focus on investment in great work and organisations, important though this is, and build an evidence base and use it to direct our investments and develop partnerships, with the aim of benefitting more people.

But the research for this Strategy tells us there is further to go. In order to achieve our ambitions for the next decade, we will need to realise fully our role as this country's national development agency for creativity and culture. We will need to invest strategically, both locally and nationally, and link our investment to outcomes that the public have said they want. We will need to grow the skills, knowledge and networks of our local and national teams, so we can build new partnerships and help establish the conditions in which creativity and culture can flourish across the country. We will need to identify the key challenges and opportunities facing the cultural sector and take the lead in bringing together people with bold ideas for addressing them. We will need to explain the value that creativity and culture bring to individuals, communities and the country in ways that move hearts and convince minds. In short, our job will be to work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, the local authorities, and others, to support positive change and innovation in the cultural landscape, and to move everyone towards that vision of a country in which everyone can explore their own creativity and enjoy outstanding culture.

This Strategy is based on the need to recognise and celebrate the creative lives of everyone in this country, and its success will depend on our ability to understand and champion a wider range of culture than we have before, including in the amateur, voluntary and commercial sectors. Much of

this work will not necessitate our financial investment, but over the coming decade, in our development role, we will help to make connections between the culture and creativity that people enjoy in

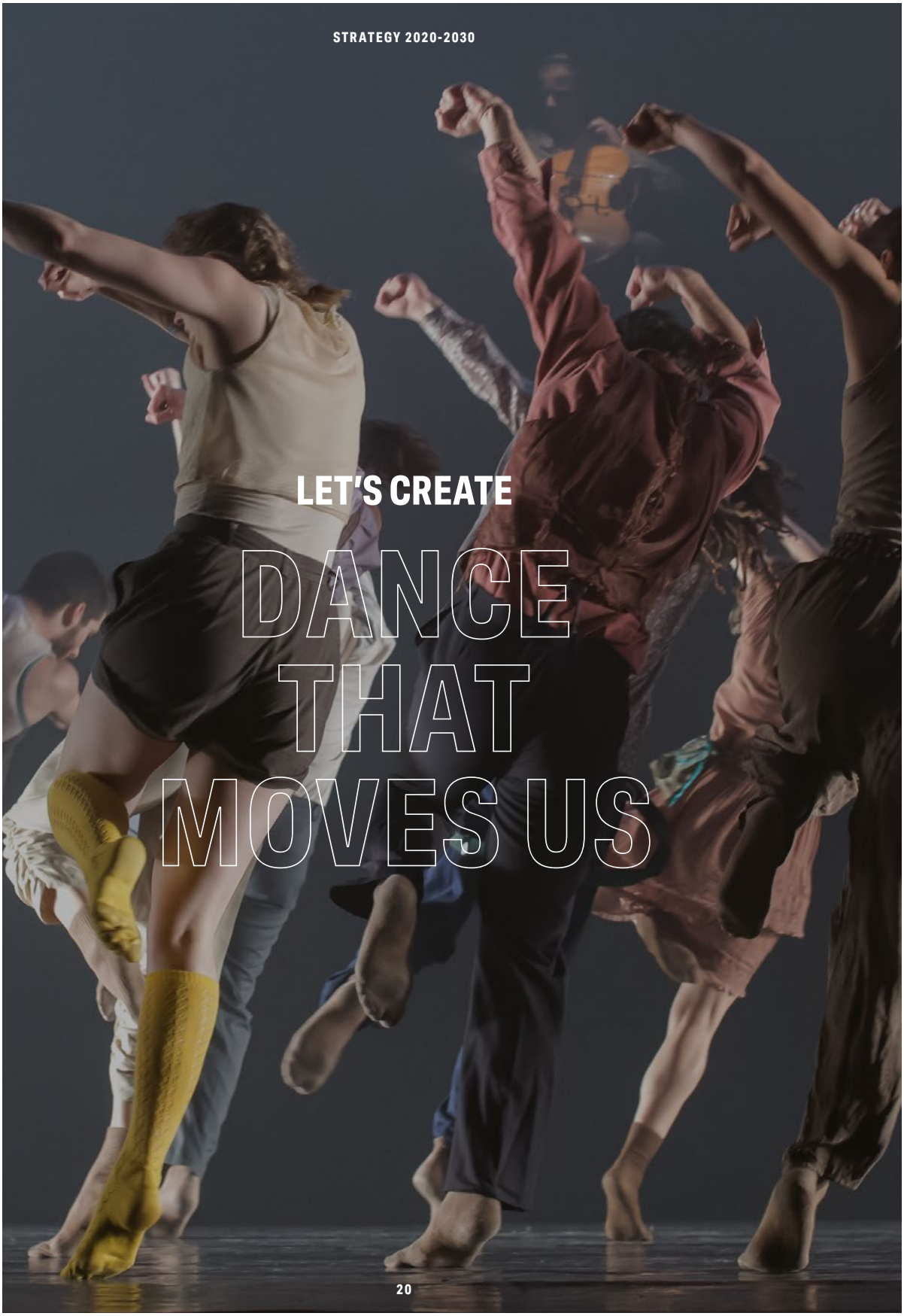
Creating opportunities for children and young people to reach their creative potential and to access the highest quality cultural experiences

their daily lives, the organisations that we fund, and the commercial creative industries.

We will work in partnership with cultural organisations, media companies, healthcare providers, charities and the voluntary sector, local and national government, and other National Lottery distributors, to speak directly to the public, in order to raise awareness of the creative and cultural activities on offer and the benefits that taking part in them can deliver.

Children and young people were at the heart of our first Strategy and it was clear from our consultation that the public places tremendous value on our support for them. So over the next 10 years, we will focus a large part of our development role on ensuring that children and young people are able to fulfil their creative potential, and access the highest-quality cultural experiences where they live, where they go to school and where they spend their free time. Our partnership with the Department for Education will remain central to our work in this area. We will continue to advocate – to the Department for Education, and to the public and teachers – for the value of creativity in education as well as the importance of a rich curriculum that includes art and design, dance, drama and music. Securing the creative and cultural lives of all our children and young people is critical to realising this Strategy's vision for 2030.

We believe in the inherent value of creativity and culture: in their power to delight and move us, and in their capacity to help us make sense of the world. But we also know that investment in creativity and culture can deliver broad social benefits, through the skills they offer to young people and workers, the economic growth they generate, and the part they play in building healthy, close-knit communities. Over the next 10 years, we will work to improve the way we make the case for the social and economic value of investing public money in culture. To strengthen the country's creative industries, which make up one of



LET'S CREATE

DANCE THAT MOVES US

LET'S CREATE MUSEUMS OF THE FUTURE

the fastest growing sectors of the economy, we will promote research and development, and support the adoption of new technologies. Given the persistent lack of diversity across the creative industries, we will push to ensure that the cultural workforce is representative of contemporary England. We will take steps to support the cultural sector to set the pace in coming up with imaginative new approaches to promoting environmental responsibility. At a local level, we will work with partners to support inclusive economic growth through investment in libraries, museums and arts venues to ensure that they are fit-for-purpose and able to meet the needs of their communities and the people who work and create within them. We will also make the case for investing in appropriate new cultural buildings to drive local economic regeneration. In all of this work, Arts Council England will use data to build and share a more sophisticated picture of local investment, and to operate effectively as an expert national development agency that is able to invest at scale in order to seize opportunities and deal with big challenges.

In 2011, Arts Council England took on national responsibility for the development of libraries and museums, with core funding of public libraries remaining the statutory responsibility of local library authorities. We believe that England's network of public libraries provides a vital resource for the development of creativity and the promotion of culture across this country. They are the country's most widespread and well-used cultural spaces, sitting at the heart of communities and often providing the first point of access to cultural activity. They help to build stronger, happier communities, support social prescribing, develop readers and promote digital literacy. They will be central to our delivery of this Strategy, and over the next 10 years we will increase our investment in them.

We will support our cultural organisations to present the best of world culture, to excite and inspire audiences

Museums play an essential role in helping us understand and shape culture. They connect us to the past and encourage us to think about the future. Museums themselves have evolved into cross-disciplinary institutions, connecting science, history and art, developing knowledge through research, making space for education, debate, creative and artistic activity and sustaining a spirit of place in communities. Alongside our role in supporting and developing museums, we also have a series of statutory UK-wide roles for the development of the country's collections and cultural property. We deliver the Government Indemnity Scheme, which offers a crucial alternative to commercial insurance, meaning that museums can afford to put important cultural objects on display, and the Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Schemes, which bring objects into public ownership, allowing us all to enjoy them. We work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport to deliver export controls which enable cultural objects to move across borders, and provide opportunities to retain national treasures for this country.

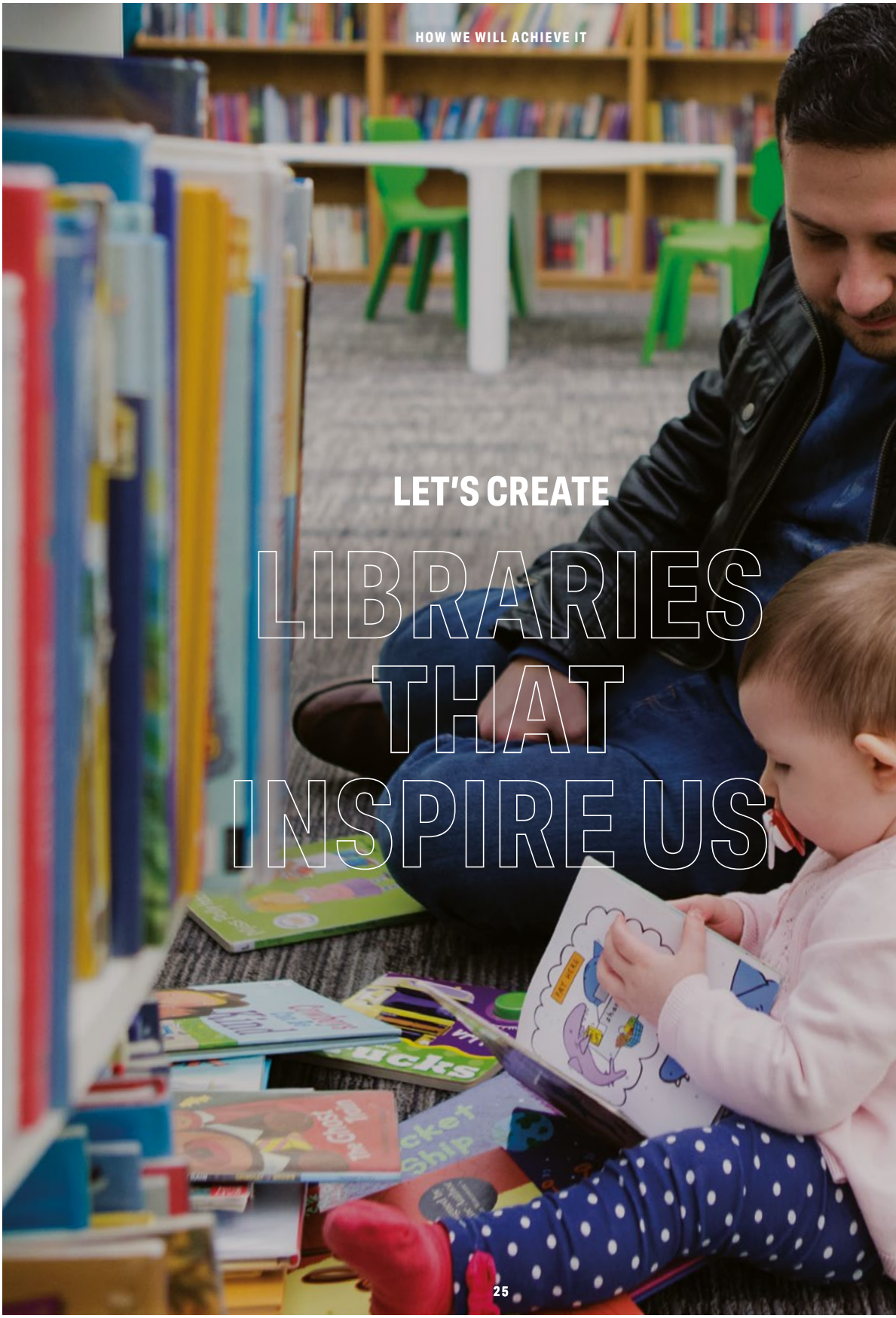
All of this work plays a key role in ensuring that England's collections and objects are developed, protected and enjoyed, both now and in the future. A dynamic museums sector will be at the heart of this Strategy: over the next 10 years, alongside our statutory functions, we will go on expanding public access to their collections, to ensure that they continue to delight and inspire as many people as possible.

Looking into the future, as this country's relationship with Europe changes, our role in helping artists and organisations to work internationally will become even more important. International activity brings major cultural and financial benefits to the country: it promotes understanding and knowledge exchange, develops the skills of the cultural workforce, and provides a vital stream of income to many cultural organisations. Over the next 10 years, we will extend the international profile of the cultural sector, helping those organisations already working internationally to strengthen their activity, and developing new opportunities for individuals and organisations to build global partnerships.

We will support cultural organisations to present the best of world culture, to excite and inspire audiences in this country. We will maintain our support for international showcasing opportunities and touring, and work to evolve new international exchange programmes and networks. We will continue to work with the British Council, the GREAT campaign, and the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies, and we will seek out new partners, in order to maximise the benefits of this activity.

The Outcomes that this Strategy sets out are ambitious. We cannot achieve them alone – and nor would we want to. Partnership working is essential to the development of a creative and cultural country: it allows all of us to work together, learn from each other and, ultimately, reach further. Our current partnerships with local authorities and higher education institutes are among our most significant and valuable assets.

Over the next decade, we will use our national perspective to strengthen these existing partnerships and build new ones: identifying others who share our vision and want to work with us to grow creative and cultural opportunities in towns, cities and villages across England. By 2030, our network of partners will be drawn from inside and outside the cultural sector: from local and central government; from further and higher education and schools; from the commercial, public and not-for-profit sectors; and from patrons, private donors and trusts and foundations. Our ambition is that public, private and commercial investment in culture and creativity will all have increased by 2030.



LET'S CREATE LIBRARIES THAT INSPIRE US

The Strategy

Arts Council England's Strategy for 2020–30 is built around three Outcomes and four Investment Principles. They are designed to work together to achieve our vision of a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.

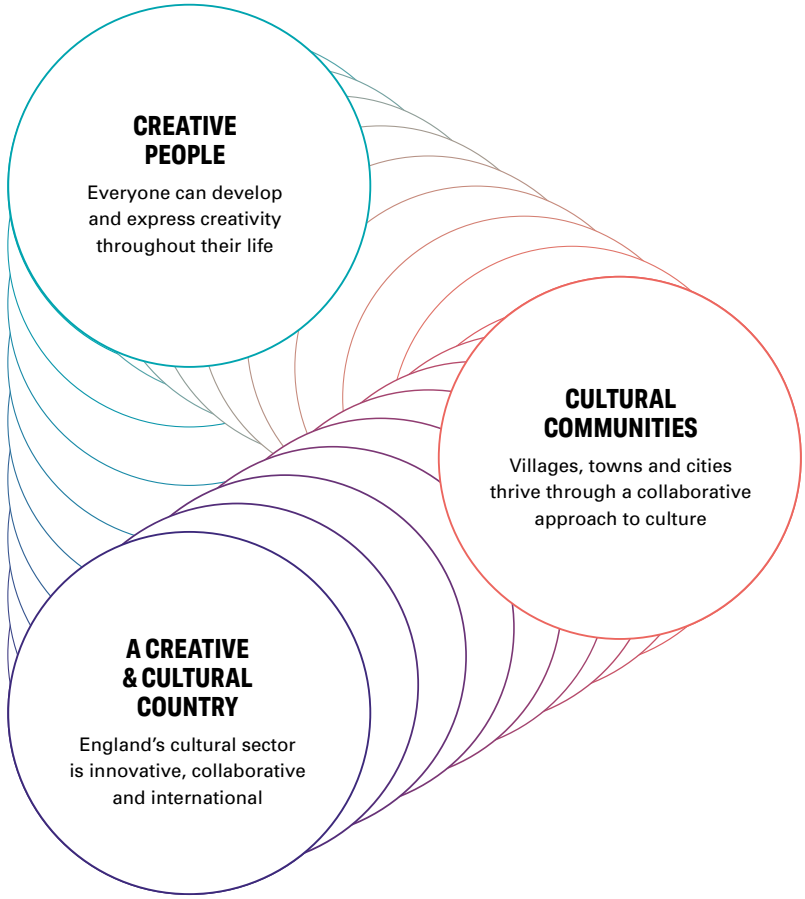
The three Outcomes focus in turn on how people can develop personal creativity at every stage of their lives; how culture is created by and with people in their communities, and how it shapes the places in which they live, work, learn and visit; and the development of the innovative, collaborative and internationally-facing professional cultural sector that we believe will be needed over the next decade. The first Outcome focuses on amateur and voluntary creative activity, including by children and young people. The third Outcome looks at the professional cultural sector, including those seeking to develop a career in the creative industries after they leave full-time education. The second Outcome brings the first and third Outcomes together by considering how the professional and voluntary sectors can work with each other to help shape stronger cultural provision in villages, towns and cities.

These Outcomes are ambitious and are intended to touch everyone in this country. However, we recognise that within this country, there are places and people who have been disadvantaged by historic patterns of public funding, including within culture. Therefore, the Delivery Plans that we will publish over the next decade in which we set out the detail of how we will deliver this Strategy will pay particular attention to addressing those historic imbalances. Specifically, we will ensure that our programmes meet the needs of those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, D/deaf or disabled people, and those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, who have traditionally had least access to our resources.

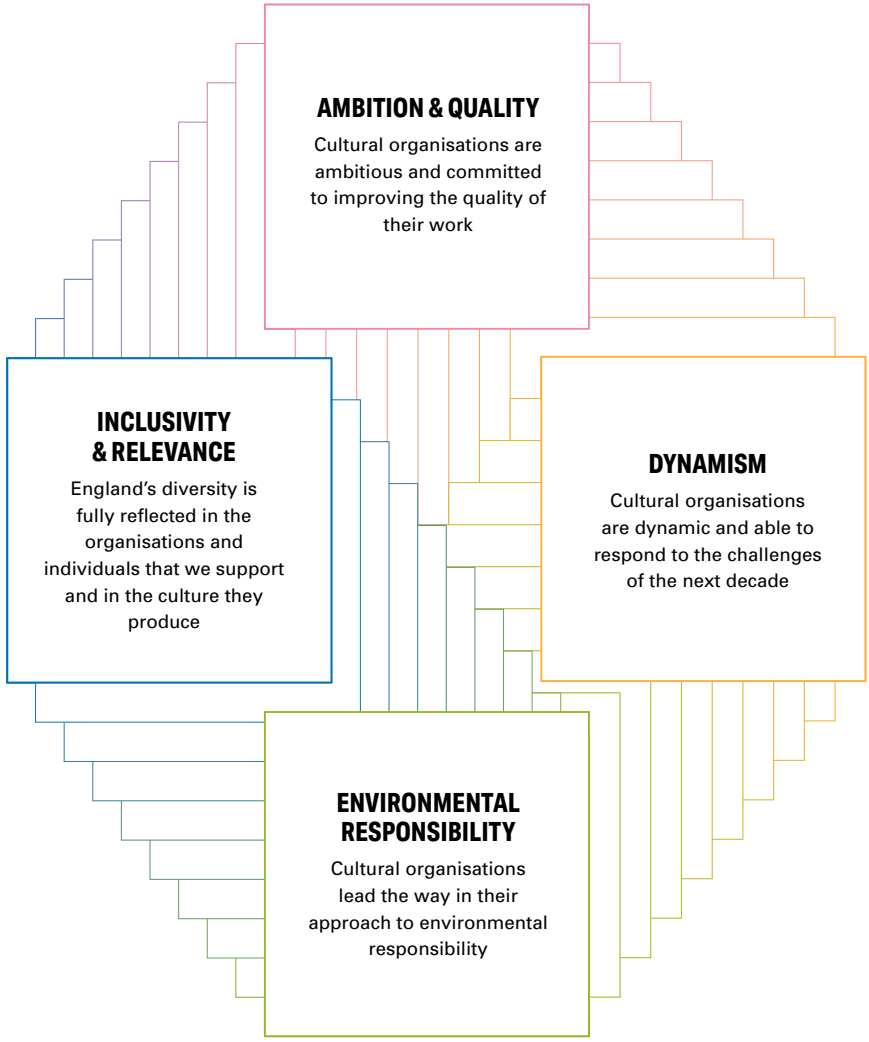
The four Investment Principles set out how cultural organisations will need to develop so that they can better deliver the three Outcomes. Under these Principles, all of the organisations that we fund will be dynamic, highly collaborative, inclusive and relevant in the way they work and the culture they produce, and champions of good leadership. They will be ambitious, and constantly seek to improve the quality of their work. They will be leaders in their communities in their approach to environmental responsibility, and will be able to demonstrate their success through creative and business innovation. Collectively, the organisations we support will represent the diversity of this country. Individually, they will work in ways that are valuable to, and valued by, their communities, creative practitioners and partners.

The Outcomes and Investment Principles are fundamentally linked. We believe people are better able to develop their creative potential if they have easy access – off and online – to outstanding libraries, museums and arts organisations. Such provision must be locally accessible but part of a national cultural ecology: one that is ambitious, inclusive and relevant, dynamic and environmentally responsible. And that national ecology must in turn be strengthened by talented artists from all communities, who have been given equal opportunities to develop their individual creative potential. Taken together, the Outcomes and Investment Principles will guide us towards the creative and cultural nation we want England to become by 2030.

THE OUTCOMES

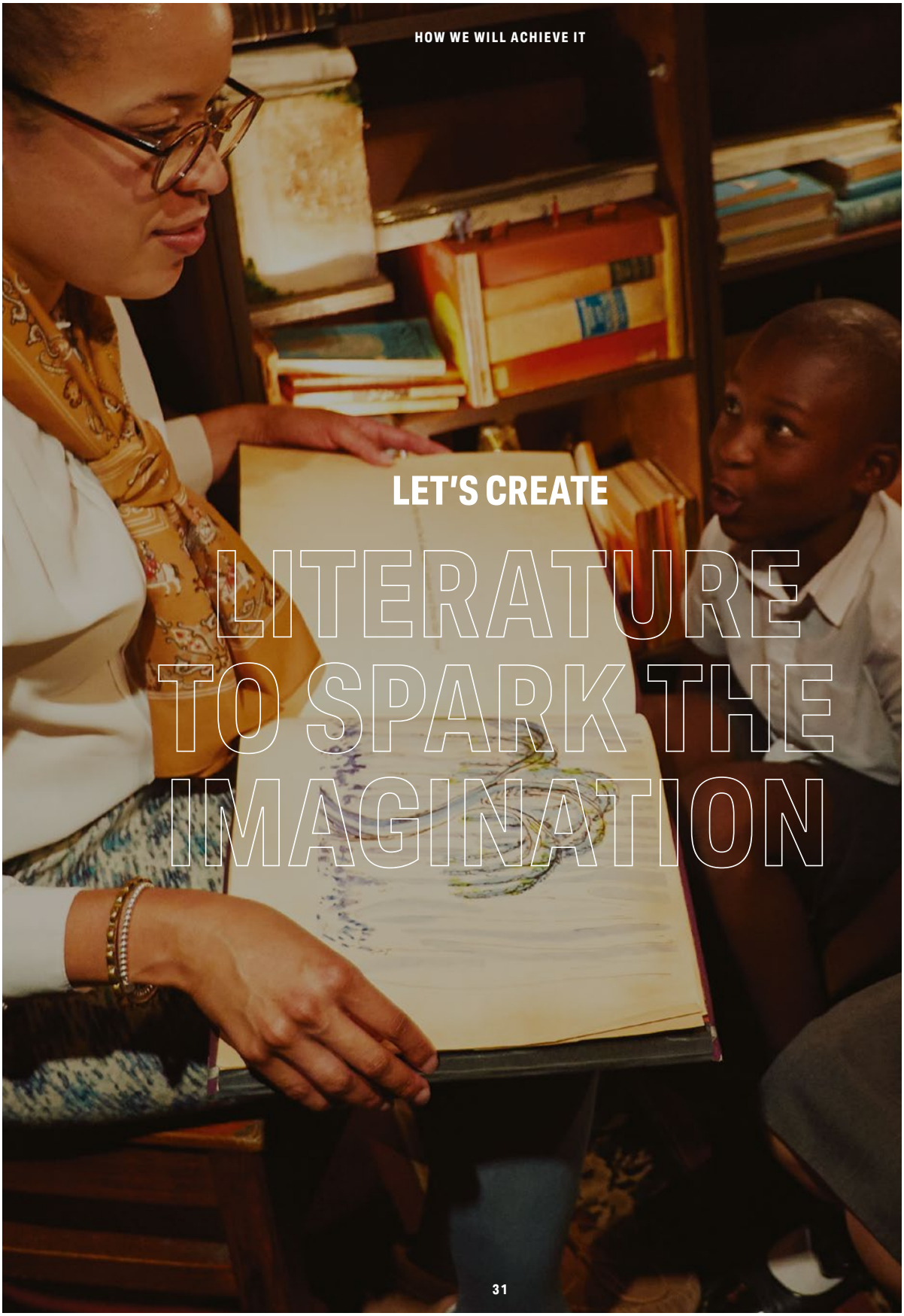


OUR INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES



LET'S CREATE

FESTIVALS FULL OF ADVENTURE

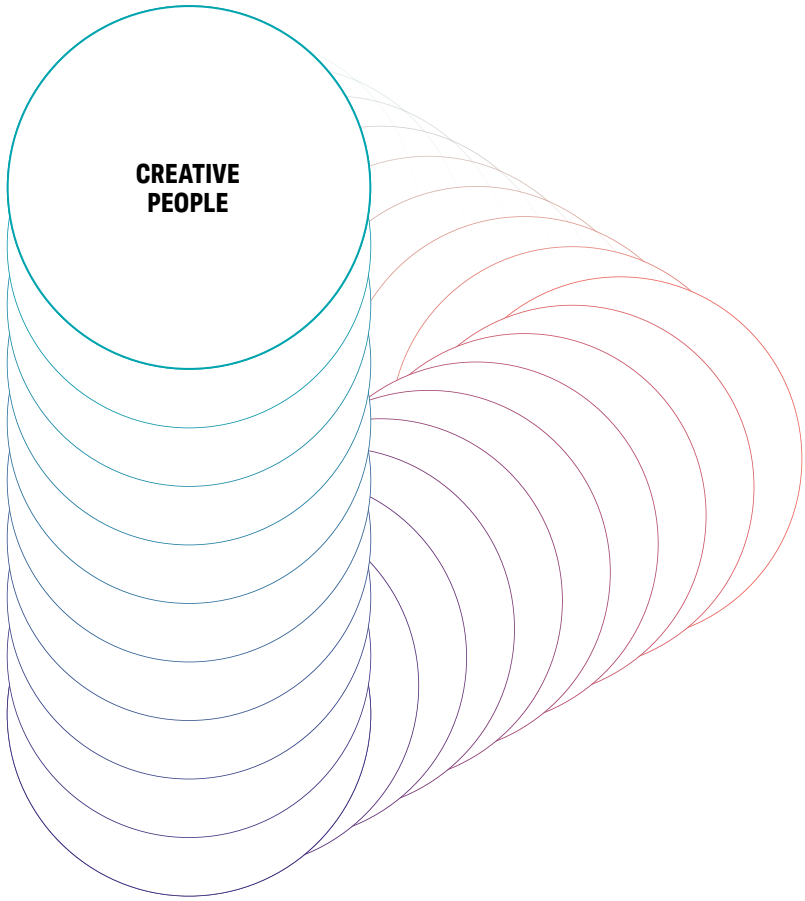


LET'S CREATE

LITERATURE TO SPARK THE IMAGINATION

CREATIVE PEOPLE

Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life



Everyone can be creative, and each of us has the potential to develop our creativity further. Taking part in creative acts such as singing, photography or writing delights and fulfil us, and helps us to think, experiment, and better understand the world.

Getting involved in creative activities in communities reduces loneliness, supports physical and mental health and wellbeing, sustains older people and helps to build and strengthen social ties. People everywhere tell us how much they value opportunities to develop and express their creativity, both on their own and with others. But they also describe difficulties in finding activities for themselves or their children to take part in, as well as barriers to becoming, and then staying, involved. And in many places, the libraries and community spaces that play a vital role in organising such activities are under pressure.

Over the next 10 years we will support communities to design and develop more opportunities for creative activity. Many people already take part in activities that are run by professional or volunteer-led groups, commercial operators, or publicly funded organisations. Where these activities exist, we will encourage the organisations we fund to do more to highlight them to their local communities. And where there are gaps in provision, we will support museums, libraries and arts organisations to use their collections, knowledge, skills and other assets to support community-led activities that are open to everyone.

The public has said how much they value opportunities for children to take part in creative activities, and that they want to see more of our funding directed at widening and improving these opportunities. The pre-school years play a vital role in readying children for school, as well as helping to set the compass for future creative and cultural activity and wider success in life. We believe that it is critical to develop high-quality and affordable early years creative activity across the country, and we will support libraries and cultural organisations, community partners and the public to come together to make this available for all young children and their families.

Children and young people talk passionately about the pleasure they get from creative activities (many of which they undertake in their own time, and often online) and how they use them to express themselves and develop their skills and confidence. They also talk about the important role that creative activities can play in helping them deal with anxiety, stress and social isolation. However, for most young people, access to high quality creative and cultural opportunities outside of the home is too dependent on their social background and their postcode. This has to change. We will make the case for a stronger focus on teaching for creativity and critical thinking across the curriculum, both to school leaders and to the Department for Education. Employers from all industries and sectors spoke of the value they placed on creative skills and critical thinking in their workforces, and over the next decade, we will work to ensure that those skills are developed more effectively in young people.

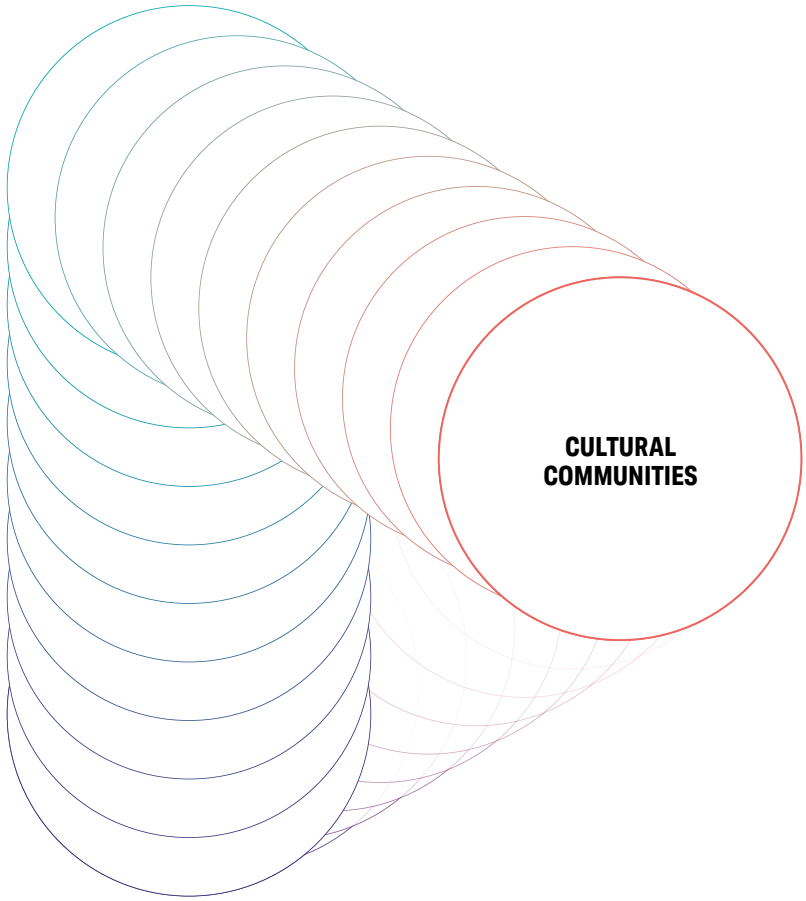
In addition, we are committed to ensuring that a broad and vital arts curriculum is taught in all schools. We will also encourage the Department for Education to build on its current investment in Music Education Hubs, National Youth Music and Dance organisations, In Harmony and Saturday Clubs, so that all children and young people in this country can develop their creative potential, inside and outside of school. Finally, we will create clearer, more accessible pathways for children and young people who are interested in pursuing careers in the creative industries.

LET'S CREATE

THEATRE THAT CHANGES OUR WORLD

CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Villages, towns and cities thrive through
a collaborative approach to culture



Culture and the experiences it offers can have a deep and lasting effect on places and the people who live in them. Investment in cultural activities and in arts organisations, museums and libraries helps improve lives, regenerate neighbourhoods, support local economies, attract visitors and bring people together.

Arts Council England already works in partnership to develop and strengthen cultural opportunities in rural and urban areas across the country. We also invest hundreds of millions of pounds in cultural buildings, organisations and artists throughout the country. In the last 10 years, recognition has grown of the powerful role culture can and should play in transforming the streets, boroughs and neighbourhoods where people live.

We want to see communities that are more socially cohesive and economically robust, and in which residents experience improved physical and mental wellbeing, as a result of investment in culture. Over the next decade we will work with a wider range of partners, including the other National Lottery distributors, local government, further and higher education and schools, healthcare providers, the criminal justice system, the voluntary sector, the commercial creative industries and wider business, to support communities to use creativity and culture to create thriving places to live, work, study and visit.

This will only be possible if there is a shared commitment to removing the geographic, economic and social barriers that currently prevent many people from taking part in publicly funded cultural activity. Many cultural organisations are in the process of evolving how they make and share culture in order to address this, while others already hold it as a core purpose. Our Creative People and Places programme offers clear evidence that when communities are involved in shaping their local cultural provision, a wider range of people participate in publicly funded cultural activity. And when the cultural sector works closely with community partners, the activity itself is richer and more relevant, resources go further, and greater civic and social benefits are delivered.

Museums are centres for knowledge and cultural participation. They work with local communities to create understanding of people and places. Libraries reach audiences from all backgrounds and of all ages, and provide meeting places, maker spaces, and focal points for creative and cultural activity within local communities, in conjunction with their delivery of four national Universal Offers (reading, health and wellbeing, digital and information, and culture and creativity). We will support local cultural organisations, including libraries, museums, Music Education Hubs and arts

organisations, to develop a better understanding of the needs and interests of their communities, and to use that intelligence for the measurable benefit of those communities.

We believe that cooperation between cultural organisations and local partners is particularly effective when it is aimed at supporting children and young people. We will encourage cultural organisations to work in partnership with local education providers to plan, resource and deliver a joined-up cultural education programme that ensures every child in their area can access high-quality culture and realise their creative potential.

There is growing evidence that creative and cultural activity can lead to improved health and wellbeing. We want to develop deeper partnerships with the Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England, social care providers and others to support further research in this area, learn from what is proven to work internationally, and explore the potential of promising new approaches such as social prescribing.

People should have access to a full range of cultural opportunities wherever they live – but these opportunities are currently uneven, particularly for those living in towns or rural areas, where public transport is often either unavailable or expensive. We will aim for a better balance of investment across the country and will work with the right partners on a range of projects, including capital investment in physical and digital infrastructure and the use of technology to distribute cultural content into homes, cultural venues and community spaces. We will continue to support the development of touring at all scales, especially into places with the least access to publicly funded culture. We want the cultural sector in every part of this country to be outward-looking. And we will support towns, cities and villages to use culture to connect, nationally and internationally, and to reflect the diverse influences, experiences and knowledge of their diaspora communities in building and understanding collections and creating and presenting work.

LET'S CREATE

ARTS CENTRES THAT OPEN MINDS

A CREATIVE & CULTURAL COUNTRY

England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international

To achieve the first two Outcomes, we need a professional cultural sector that generates new ideas, works easily and effectively with others, and is adept at developing diverse talent from every community. It should aspire to be world-leading – in the way it makes art, in the imagination and expertise with which it makes exciting use of collections and develops libraries, and in the culture it creates and shares.

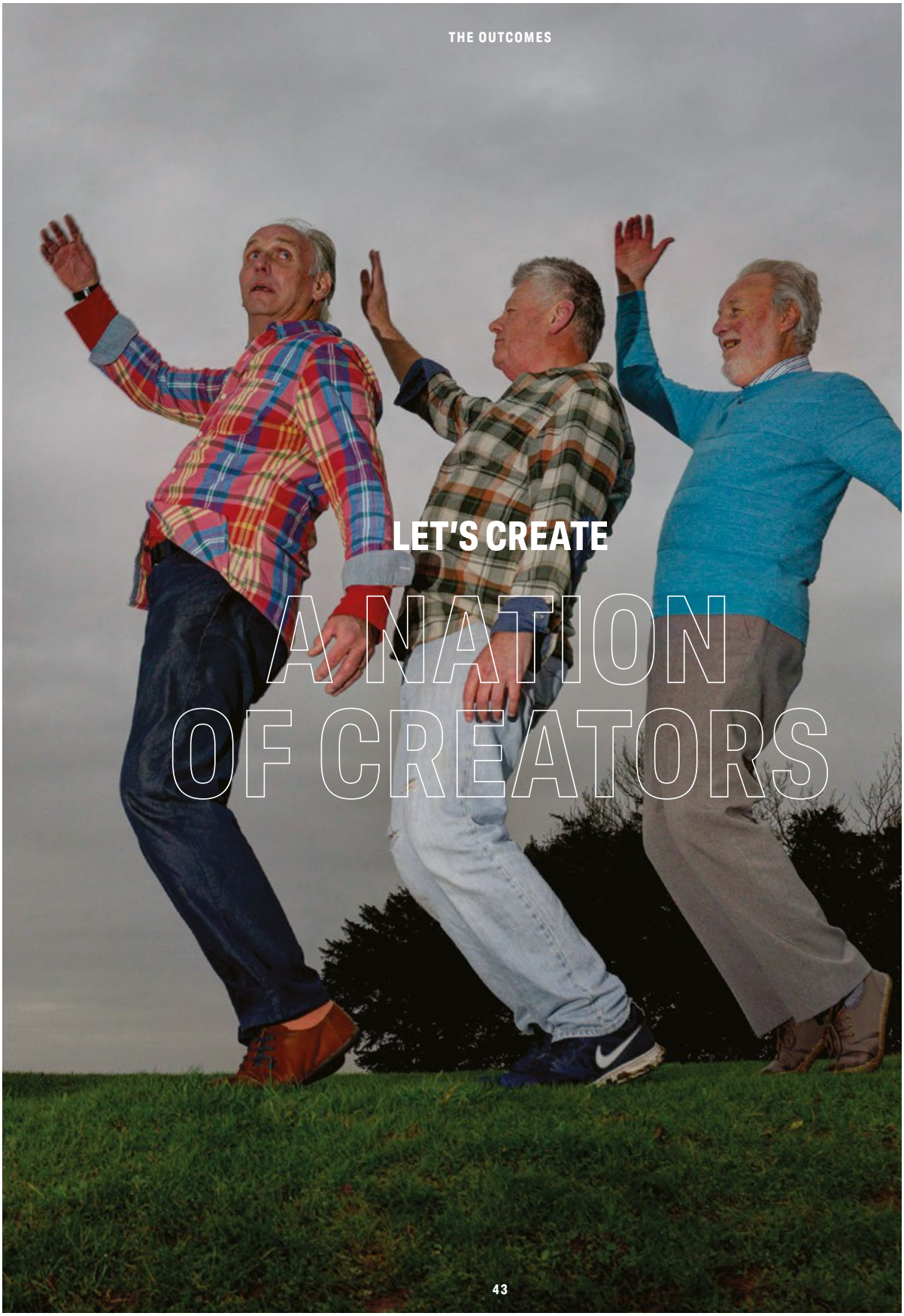
The cultural sector will only ever be as strong as the talent on which it is built. Many artists from this country have developed global reputations for the quality of their work and are in demand around the world. However, it is also the case that many creative practitioners and cultural workers, especially those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, D/deaf or disabled people, and those from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, continue to struggle to develop and sustain financially viable careers. Unless we address this, the cultural sector will fail to achieve its potential, and the global competitiveness of this country's creative industries will come under threat. Currently, the opportunity to establish and sustain a creative career – as a freelance director, writer, maker, performer, designer, composer, producer, painter, curator, librarian, sculptor or choreographer – is unfairly dependent on personal background. We want to help children and young people from every part of the country to understand what a career in the cultural sector or the wider creative industries could look like, and to support everyone who embarks on such a career to remain in the sector and fulfil their potential, regardless of their background. The future success of the cultural sector depends on being able to draw on a talent pool that reflects society as a whole and is much wider and deeper than it is now.

We will encourage the organisations we invest in to embrace innovation. We will support them to adopt new technologies, focusing both on developing new work and reimagining our cultural heritage for the audiences of today, and on experimenting with new ways of reaching the public. We want them to become more collaborative: to learn from each other, share resources and jointly develop talent. We will assist them to forge new partnerships with further and higher education, the technology sector, the charitable and voluntary sectors and the commercial creative industries. We are confident that, in drawing on this wider pool of expertise, organisations will see new creative and business innovations emerge.

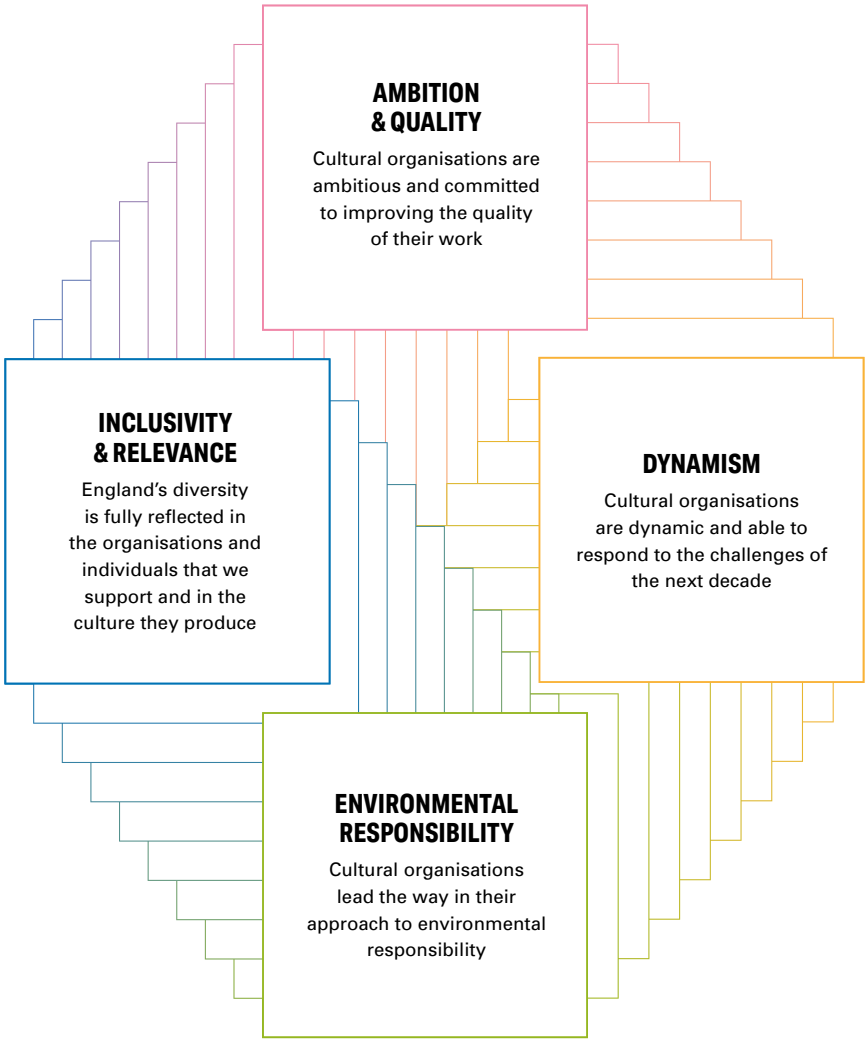
The publicly-funded cultural sector already acts as an incubator for the commercial creative industries: spotting and nurturing talent and undertaking early development of new content. We will deepen those connections, supporting the creative industries to build on England's international reputation for creativity and act as an ever more important engine for the country's economy. We want to work in partnership with further and higher education and the commercial sector to undertake more effective research, and strengthen training opportunities so that more people working in the cultural sector become ready adopters and developers of new technologies. We believe that this will help people in creative careers to be more adaptable, thus supporting them to move back and forth between the publicly funded cultural sector and the commercial creative industries, circulating knowledge and skills as they do so.

Risk taking and innovation are critical to the success of the cultural sector. But funding pressures over the last decade have made it harder for many cultural organisations to experiment and undertake formal research and development. In future, the Arts Council will do more to support innovation. We will be clearer about the fact that we are open to taking risks, and that we accept that not all of our investments will be immediately successful.

Many of this country's creative practitioners and cultural organisations are already celebrated internationally, with reputations that contribute to England's position as a global tourist destination. We want to build on this success and support more organisations and practitioners to develop stronger international connections. As this country moves to reposition itself within Europe and the wider world, we will seek to encourage and develop a cultural sector that is outward-looking and globally connected, and that is committed to working with and learning from international talent and expertise. We will support the development of new international partnerships that enable knowledge-sharing, co-investment and trading opportunities, and will deliver financial and cultural benefits for the country as a whole. We will also encourage more international research and dialogue about the global collections held in the country's museums, and support those museums to take a collaborative and inclusive approach to working with their collections, based on a clearer understanding of their origins. And we will encourage the organisations we support to bring the very best of world culture here, to delight audiences and to inspire current and future generations of librarians, curators and artists.



LET'S CREATE A NATION OF CREATORS


AMBITION & QUALITY
Cultural organisations are ambitious and committed to improving the quality of their work
INCLUSIVITY & RELEVANCE
England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support and in the culture they produce
DYNAMISM
Cultural organisations are dynamic and able to respond to the challenges of the next decade
ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY
Cultural organisations lead the way in their approach to environmental responsibility

OUR INVESTMENT PRINCIPLES

To achieve the Strategy's three Outcomes, both Arts Council England and the organisations and people we invest in will need to change. Our four Investment Principles will help steer that change. We believe that organisations that are committed to applying them will be better able to deliver the Outcomes, and to provide greater benefit to the public.

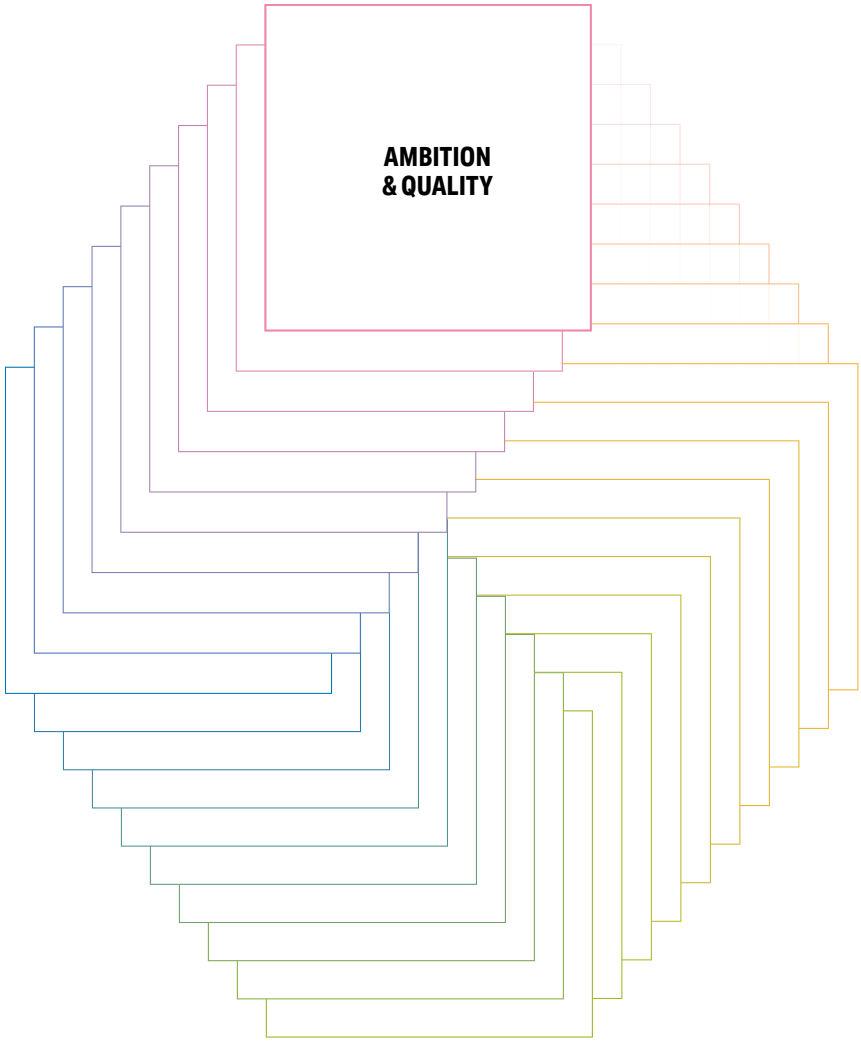
Over the next 10 years we want to create an environment in which cultural organisations can more readily change and develop, as well as come and go. By 2030 we will be investing in organisations and people that differ, in many cases, from those that we support today. Some will be members of our current National Portfolio that have evolved to meet the future needs of communities and artists. Others will be new to us. Their work will be valued by their communities, creative practitioners and partners. Collectively, they will reflect the diversity of this country.

We will expect organisations seeking investment from us to tell us what plans they have to apply each of the four Principles, and how they will work on improving their performance against them. It will be the Arts Council's responsibility to ensure that each organisation's plan is appropriate and ambitious, and it will be the responsibility of the organisation's board to monitor and report on the progress they are making. We will encourage organisations to learn from what works best around the world, and support them to change where needed.

We will also apply these Principles to our own organisation, setting out how we intend to develop and improve, and we will report on our progress.

AMBITION & QUALITY

Cultural organisations are ambitious and committed to improving the quality of their work



The public deserve the best in return for their investment, so the Arts Council is committed to the pursuit of the highest quality in everything we do. We believe in the value of training and skills, and we will use our investment to support organisations to develop talent and improve quality – across all their creative work and processes, and in the way in which they run their organisations.

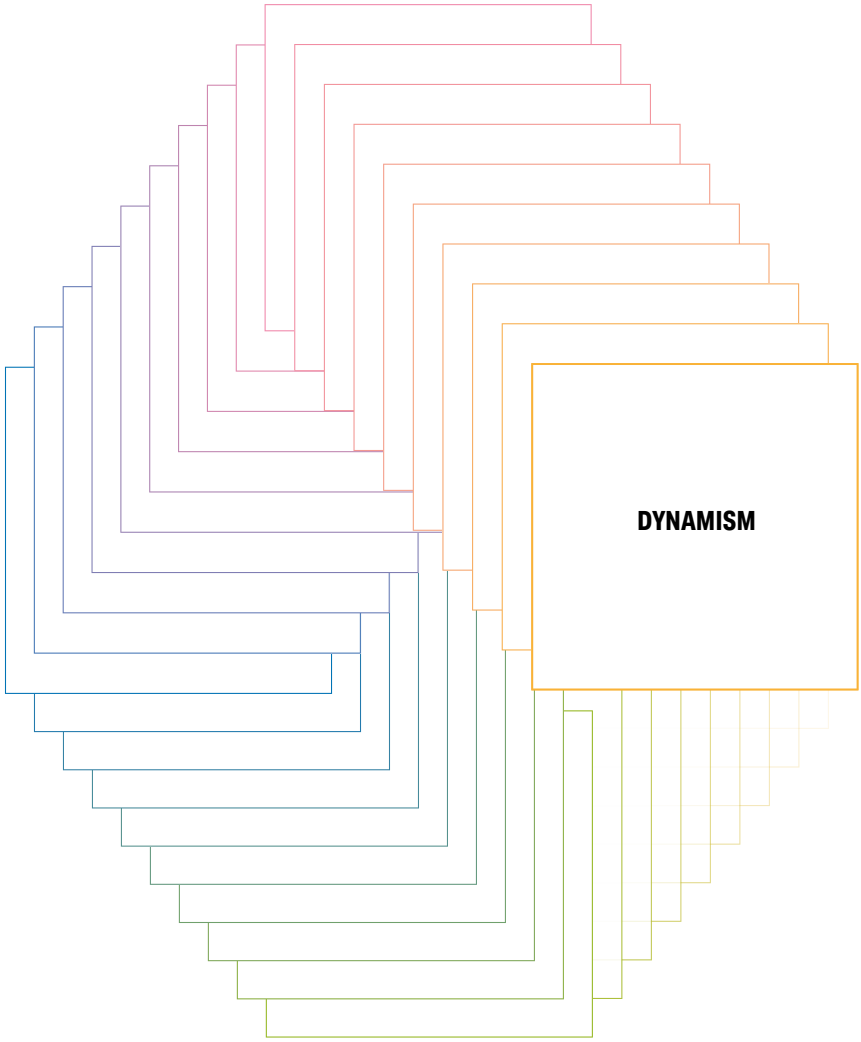
We do not believe that certain types or scales of creative activity are inherently better or of greater value than others: excellence can be found in village halls and concert halls, and in both the process of participation and the work that is produced. We are committed to backing organisations and creative practitioners of all ages who have the potential to excel at what they do, as well as supporting those who are already at the top of their game.

Judgments about quality are inevitably complex and open to debate. We will therefore continue to work with the cultural sector to establish a shared language around it, which we will draw on as we consider and explain our investment decisions. But in the end it will be the Arts Council's responsibility to use our experience and expertise to make the judgments that determine those decisions.

We want to invest in organisations that are bold, and are determined to improve the quality of their work. We will expect applicants to set out their ambitions when they apply to us for investment, and to talk about how they plan to make their work better. We will expect them to gather the views of the public and their peers on the quality of what they do, and use that feedback in discussion with their staff and boards to shape future decisions about their work. We expect them to be aware of the best work in their field – wherever it happens in the world – and to tell us how they will apply that knowledge to their own development.

DYNAMISM

Cultural organisations are dynamic and able to respond to the challenges of the next decade



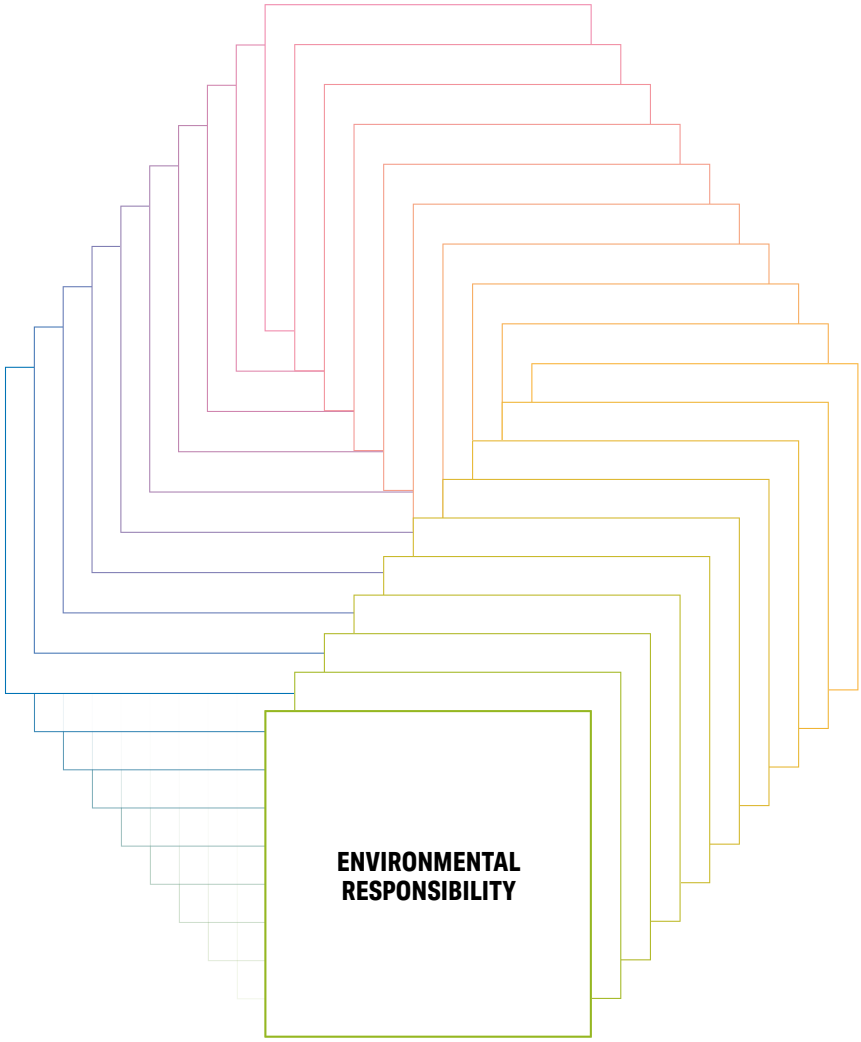
As we move through the next decade, we expect to see changes in the tastes and habits of the public, alongside new technological opportunities, and ongoing pressure on public funding. To navigate these opportunities and risks successfully, cultural organisations will need to become more dynamic. This may involve organisations changing both their missions and their business models.

We will expect cultural organisations, especially those in our National Portfolio, to invest in their workforces in order to develop the skills required to respond as quickly and effectively as possible to a rapidly changing external environment. Good governance and leadership will be critical in inspiring positive change and growing teams that are happy, inclusive and able to draw on the widest possible range of ideas and experiences in order to build successful businesses over the next decade. Cultural organisations will need to become more entrepreneurial and develop business models that help them maximise income, reduce costs and become more financially resilient. We will expect them to look for opportunities to share services and explore mergers with other organisations.

We want to see the development of a more informed and effective data culture within the organisations that we fund, and the adoption of appropriate new technologies across all aspects of their businesses. We know that the cultural sector has yet to fully utilise the power of data to understand its audiences and the impact of its work. We will build partnerships with the technology sector and with further and higher education to help drive improvement in this area.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Cultural organisations lead the way in their approach to environmental responsibility



The climate crisis and environmental degradation will be the most significant challenge facing all of us over the next decade and beyond. The cultural sector has already taken major steps to reduce its carbon footprint, partly as a result of a range of initiatives supported by the Arts Council. Alongside this, more and more artists and organisations are engaging with the subjects of climate, biodiversity, waste and energy in the work they create, programme and support. Research using natural history collections, meanwhile, helps people better understand these issues and suggests ways in which policy and behaviour might be adapted to address them. This creative and scientific dialogue is shaping a cultural response to the climate crisis that provides new insights and reflects the demands of audiences.

Over the next 10 years, we will expect the cultural organisations we support to redouble their commitment to environmental responsibility. We will ask them to make plans to reduce their impact, and to measure, understand and report on their progress in doing so. We want cultural organisations to act as leaders within their communities in terms of taking an environmentally responsible approach to running businesses and buildings: by lowering carbon emissions, increasing levels of recycling, cutting their use of plastic and reducing water consumption. We also expect them to promote the need for environmental responsibility in the communities in which they work, through their partnerships and with their audiences. They should be aware of the cultural sector's role in helping to lead change, and they should aim to be innovative and responsive in the choices they make.

INCLUSIVITY & RELEVANCE

England's diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support and in the culture they produce

In 2011 Arts Council England launched the Creative Case for Diversity. In the years since, it has helped focus attention on the decisions that cultural organisations make about the work that they produce, present and collect. It has led to a wider recognition that choices about which artists to commission, what repertoires to stage, which exhibitions to mount and which performers to employ play an important part in representing the diversity of this country and ensuring that public money is invested to the benefit of all communities.

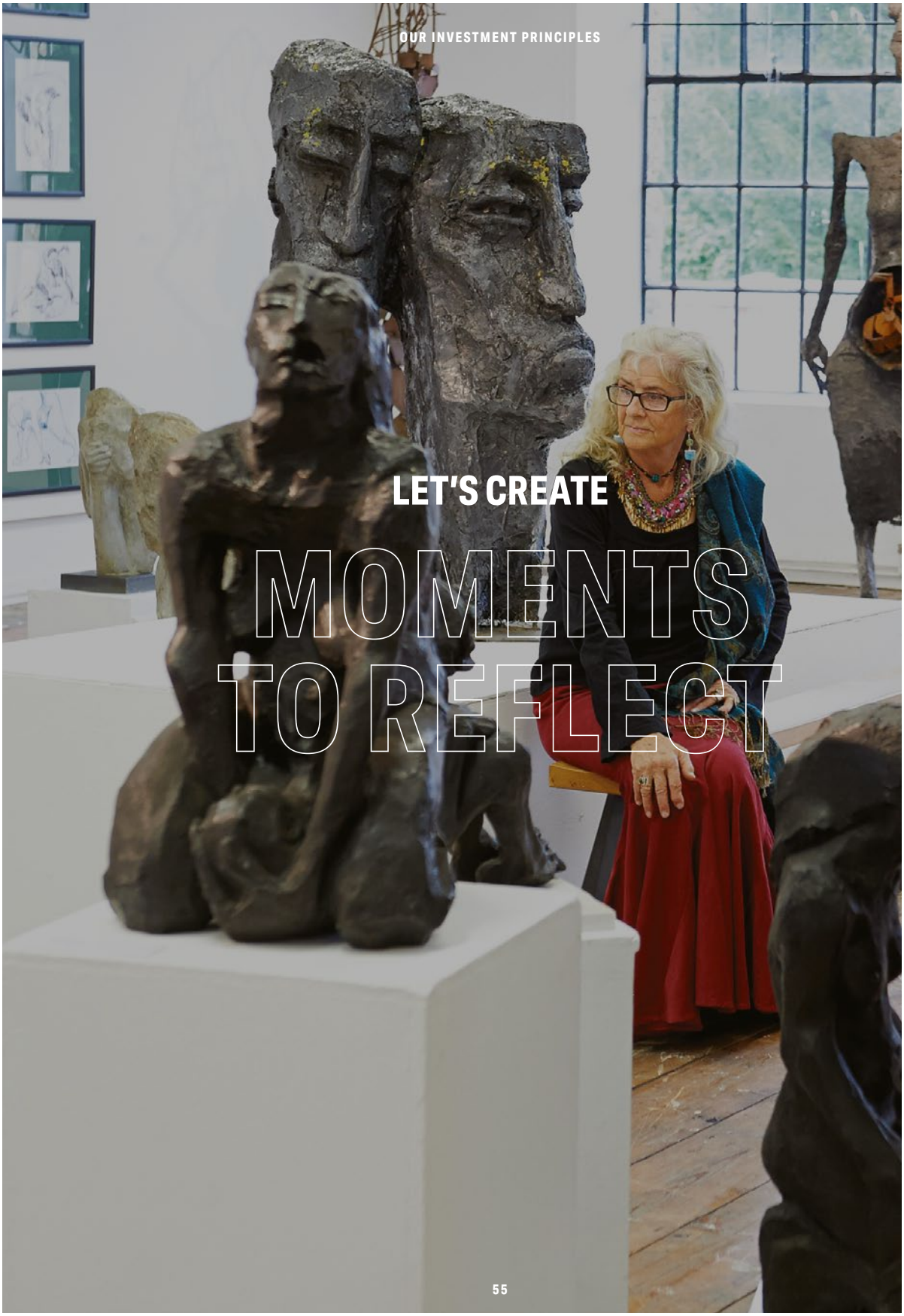
The Creative Case for Diversity has deepened the quality of cultural provision in this country, giving voice to talented creative practitioners who have too often been overlooked. It is now time to build on this work and address the persistent and widespread lack of diversity and inclusivity in cultural organisations' leadership, governance, workforce and audience. This will promote equality and fairness, as well as ensuring that cultural organisations are more effective businesses.

The 2010 Equality Act requires Arts Council England to exercise its Public Sector Equality Duty to consider and advance equality in our investment and policy making. In future, we will ask organisations who receive regular investment from us to agree targets for how their governance, leadership, employees, participants, audiences and the work they make will reflect the communities in which they work. These targets will cover both protected characteristics (including disability, sex, and race) and socio-economic background.

We also expect the organisations we support to change in other ways. We want them to build closer connections with their communities, particularly those that they are currently underserving. We want them to mean more, to more people: to strengthen their relevance to the communities, partners and practitioners with whom they work. We will therefore ask them to demonstrate how they are listening to the voices of the public, including children and young people, artists, and creative practitioners, as well as the partners they will need to work with to deliver our three Outcomes. We will also ask them to tell us how they are reflecting what they hear in the planning of their work.

In future, we will judge organisations for the way in which they reflect and build a relationship with their communities, as well as for the quality and ambition of their work.

LET'S CREATE PLACES TO CELEBRATE



LET'S CREATE MOMENTS TO REFLECT

OUR ROLE AND COMMITMENT

To deliver this Strategy
Arts Council England must change.

The following commitments are designed to set out how we will work over the next decade: to keep our delivery on track, to ensure that we are held to account, and to serve as an invitation to others to join us as partners. They're not exhaustive, and they will inevitably evolve over time – but they will help us to stay focused, to work differently, and to continue to develop as an organisation.

Over the next decade, in our national role, we will:

- Build our capacity, understanding and knowledge at a local level by retaining our network of local offices, combining this with strong national intelligence. We will continue to bring together local and national decision making to ensure that we operate as an effective development agency.
- Establish, nurture and maintain strong partnerships – including across national and local government, in all areas of education, and with the commercial, not-for-profit and voluntary sectors.
- Grow our expertise and capacity to support and broker more international opportunities for organisations and individuals working in culture.
- Provide platforms for debate and support the cultural sector to learn from the best new ideas from around the world.
- React quickly and effectively to national and local opportunities and challenges.
- Strive to be relevant and responsive to the public, the cultural sector and the places that we are here to serve, by listening and giving voice to a wide a range of people, including young people.

In our investment processes, we will:

- Regularly review our application processes and our monitoring and reporting requirements to ensure that they are as accessible, easy to understand and inclusive as possible.
- Become a more flexible investor, developing alternative investment schemes (such as loans or stakes) to support our traditional time-limited grants.

- Invest in new technologies and use them to improve existing services and develop new ones.
- Answer the following questions before making investments:
  1. How well does this proposal help to achieve our three Outcomes?
  2. How well does it address the priorities in our current delivery plan?
  3. To what extent is the applicant able to demonstrate commitment to our four Investment Principles?
  4. How well does this proposal contribute to achieving a good balance of activity across the country and across disciplines (including artforms, museums and libraries)?
  5. Would the activity or service happen without our investment?
  6. Will our funding leverage additional investment that might otherwise be lost?
  7. What is the best type and duration of investment (revenue or capital funding, grant, loan or stake) for the proposal?

In our workforce, we will:

- Accelerate our progress in ensuring our workforce, leadership and governance is representative of this country's population.
- Ensure more D/deaf and disabled people work with and for Arts Council England.
- Identify the skills, expertise and knowledge we will need for the next decade and invest in and develop them through training and recruitment.
- Reduce our impact on the environment, and measure, understand and report on progress.

In terms of our research and data, we will:

- Be clear on what we want to measure and how we will do so.
- Be a dynamic and responsible collector and user of data, applying both current legislation and open data principles.
- Use research to improve our understanding of what the public and our stakeholders want, and to learn from others, both within and outside of the cultural sector.
- Ensure that any research we undertake is readily available for use by others.

And in terms of our accountability and targets, we will:

- Develop a series of Delivery Plans that set out what our priorities will be for the period in question and the actions we will take to deliver those priorities.
- Include in those Delivery Plans a set of performance measures that will set out how we will track and report on progress in achieving both our Outcomes and our priorities. We will also include detail on how the Arts Council intends to improve its performance against the four Investment Principles.
- Provide regular reports on progress against our Strategy, on targets and on the investments we are making on behalf of the public and our stakeholders.
- Provide a clearer account of the impact we, those we invest in, and the wider cultural sector make.
- Learn from and share our successes and our mistakes, our progress and our challenges.
- Continue to generate efficiency savings in all areas of our operations in order to invest more resources in supporting creativity and culture.

LET'S CREATE THRIVING COMMUNITIES

SO NOW, LET'S CREATE

Darren Henley
Chief Executive, Arts Council England

Ten years is a long time. If a Strategy spanning such a period is to succeed, it needs to be flexible, not rigid; a guiding light, rather than an instruction manual. So what we have set out here is not an action plan, but a vision: of the richer, wider, deeper role creativity and culture can play in this country, and of the ways in which we believe we must all adapt, and all work together, to achieve it.

When I joined Arts Council England in 2015, I made a pledge to spend as much time as possible out of the office. In the five years since, I've travelled the length and breadth of the country, and stayed in towns, cities and villages from Cornwall to Cumbria. I've talked with artists and arts organisations, visited museums and libraries, and listened to pre-schoolers and care home residents. I've drunk many cups of coffee and enjoyed a lot of homemade cake. And in the course of my travels, I have learned that while the range and scope of cultural activity in this country is breathtakingly wide, there is one thing that draws it all together. Whatever shape they take and wherever we experience them, creative activities and cultural experiences improve our lives. They challenge perceptions, broaden horizons, form and transform communities, and enable us to flourish in previously unimagined ways. The bottom line is: they make us happy.

Over the past few years, I have been lucky enough to encounter more inspiring, impactful, uplifting cultural experiences than I can count, but one example, for me, stands out. In 2015, I visited the Escape Family Support Centre in Ashington, Northumberland – a part of the world that has suffered chronic economic and social challenges since the closure of its coal mines. A group of women at the centre, which assists individuals and families affected by substance abuse, had been working with a local artist, Maureen Hanley, as part of a project developed by the area's Arts Council England Creative People and Places programme. The centre was already a much-loved community space for these women. But through the guidance and encouragement of Maureen, who supported them to make their own works to hang on the walls, the place, and their place in it, it was transformed.

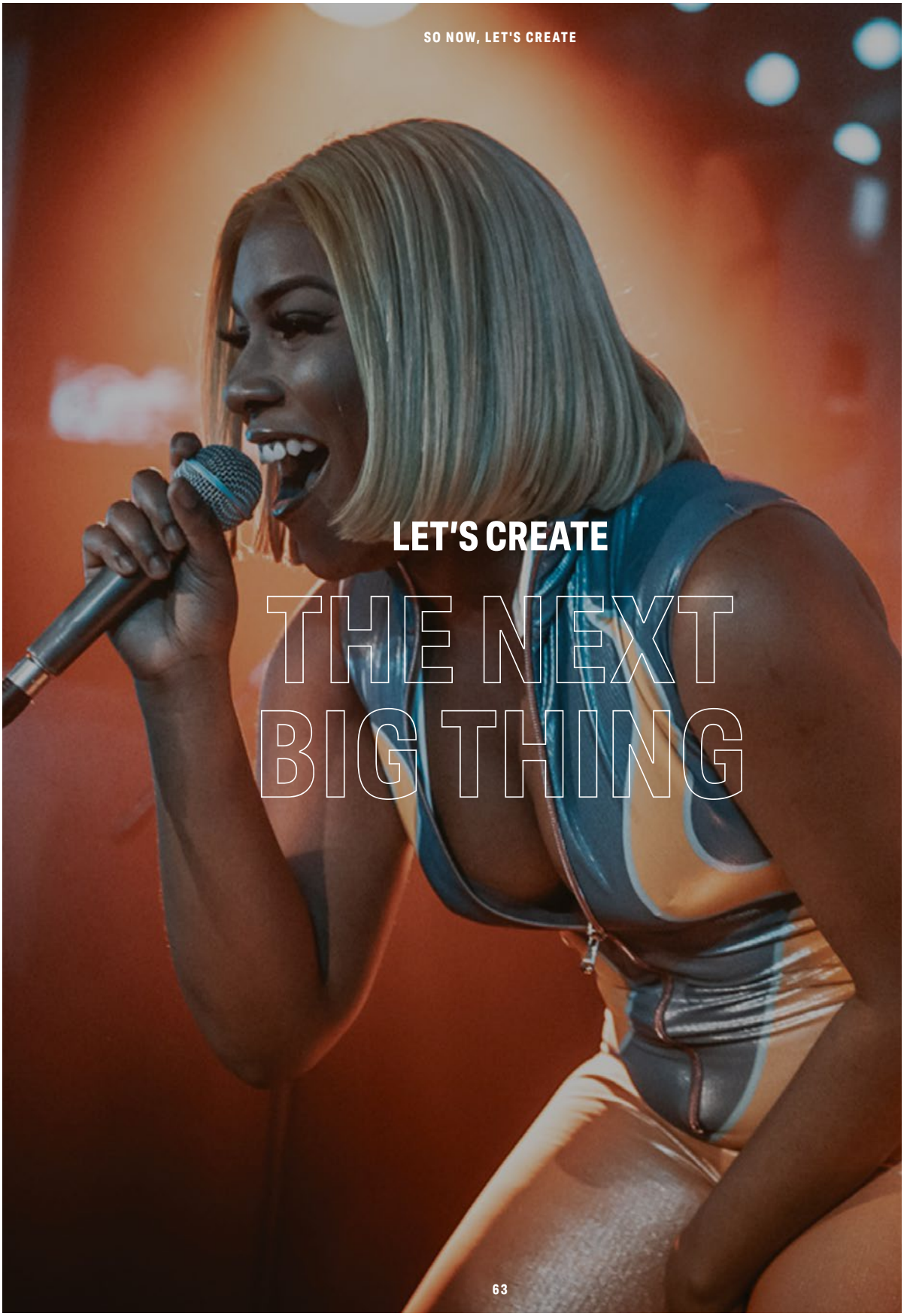
LET'S CREATE BETTER LIVES

As they led me down the centre's corridors, pointing out their paintings, each and every one of them told me that through the work, they'd gained a renewed sense of pride and purpose. They discovered talents they didn't know they had, and found new, more powerful ways to tell their own stories. Previously, they'd been a community united by the difficulties they were facing; now, they were united by something else: by a shared creative act.

It is every bit as vital for the Arts Council to invest in the creativity and cultural ambitions of people in towns such as Ashington as it is to ensure that London is a capital city that continues to stand as a cultural beacon on the world stage. The vision of this Strategy, therefore, is of a country in which the creativity of everyone living here is celebrated and supported: in which culture forms and transforms communities, and in which cultural institutions are inclusive of all of us, so that whoever we are and wherever we live, we can share in their benefits.

But it's not just our vision. When we began to think about this Strategy, I was determined that the Arts Council should do as I've done in my role as its Chief Executive: seek out the views of individual artists, of the people who work in our museums, libraries and arts organisations, and of members of the public of all ages, and learn from them. Over a year-long consultation, two clear, unifying messages emerged. On the one hand, people talked about the deep joys and broad dividends that creativity and culture bring – especially for children and young people. But on the other, we heard again and again that while talent in this country is everywhere, the opportunities to use it are not. The vision of this Strategy, and its Outcomes and Investment Principles, reflect and respond directly to both of these messages. This Strategy was not conceived behind closed doors. We worked together with the sector we represent, and the communities we serve, to create it.

And it's in this spirit of collaboration that we will continue, now that the Strategy is complete, and the real work of delivering it begins. Over the course of the decade in front of us, the world in which we're operating will inevitably alter: economic, social, political and environmental challenges will shift and evolve, and new opportunities, particularly around technology and data, will arise.



LET'S CREATE

THE NEXT BIG THING

In such a rapidly changing landscape, we'll need to be nimble and responsive in the way we work, in order to navigate the risks and make the most of the opportunities. But the Outcomes that we've identified – the common aims of the development and support of creative people, cultural communities, and a creative and cultural country – will remain constant. And the Investment Principles that sit hand-in-hand with those Outcomes – the shared commitment to ambition and quality, dynamism, environmental responsibility, and inclusivity and relevance across all of our work – will provide us with the necessary tools to meet challenge and drive change through the years ahead.

Over the next 10 years, in order to deliver this Strategy, Arts Council England will focus more strongly on our role as the national development agency for creativity and culture. We will do so through investment: in a new generation of creative practitioners and cultural organisations, equipped to learn from and test the boundaries of new technologies, and to innovate and take risks in all areas of creative practice. We will do so through partnerships: through building connections between communities, businesses and institutions, and the creative practitioners with whom they work. We will do so through advocacy: through making the case more clearly, and to more people, for the benefits that creativity and culture bring. And finally, we will do this together, in a way that is inclusive and appreciative of the creativity and culture, and the talents and needs, of every one of us. Because if we're going to support the cultural sector to be fit for the future, we have to make sure that everyone, everywhere, benefits from it and can be part of it. If we fail at this, we won't succeed at anything else. We need to be an Arts Council for the whole of England – and this Strategy is our route-map.

A country in which the creativity of everyone living here is celebrated and supported

I believe in the vision of this Strategy. I believe in the power of artists, curators, librarians, arts organisations, museums and libraries to deliver it. I believe, above all else, that people with creativity and culture in their lives are happier and more fulfilled human beings. With this Strategy, we want to build a country in which every single one of us has the opportunity to benefit from creativity and culture. So I ask you to join today in committing to the Principles and realising the Outcomes that we've set out here. Together, let's create better lives.

LET'S CREATE NEW WAYS OF THINKING

Glossary

CREATIVE PEOPLE AND PLACES

A National Lottery-funded programme created by Arts Council England to allocate investment to parts of the country where involvement in arts and culture is significantly below the national average. Its aims are to transform the opportunities open to people in those places, support the public in shaping local arts and cultural provision and, in so doing, increase attendance and participation in publicly-funded art and culture.

IN HARMONY

A national programme that aims to inspire and transform the lives of children in communities with lower access to publicly-funded culture, using the power and disciplines of ensemble music-making. It is jointly supported by Arts Council England and the Department for Education.

NATIONAL YOUTH MUSIC ORGANISATIONS

Organisations that operate across the country and provide progression routes and pathways for talented young musicians to develop, across a range of musical genres. They are jointly supported by Arts Council England and the Department for Education.

THE GREAT CAMPAIGN

A campaign designed to showcase the wide range of experiences to be had in this country, while also promoting the UK internationally through the themes of culture, heritage, sport, music, countryside, food and shopping. It was launched in 2012, and is co-ordinated by the Department for International Trade.

MUSIC EDUCATION HUBS

Groups of organisations – such as local authorities, schools, cultural organisations, and community or voluntary organisations – working together to create joined-up music education provision. They respond to local need and fulfil the objectives of the National Plan for Music Education. Arts Council England manages funding for Music Education Hubs on behalf of the Department for Education.

THE NATIONAL PORTFOLIO

The term we currently use to describe the group of arts organisations, museums and libraries, ranging in size and location, in which we invest over multi-year periods.

SATURDAY CLUBS

A national programme developed in 2009 with a vision to create regular opportunities for young people to be inspired by and develop within the creative industries. The programme is open to anyone between the ages of 13-16 and is delivered in colleges and universities across the UK. It is jointly supported by Arts Council England and the Department for Education.

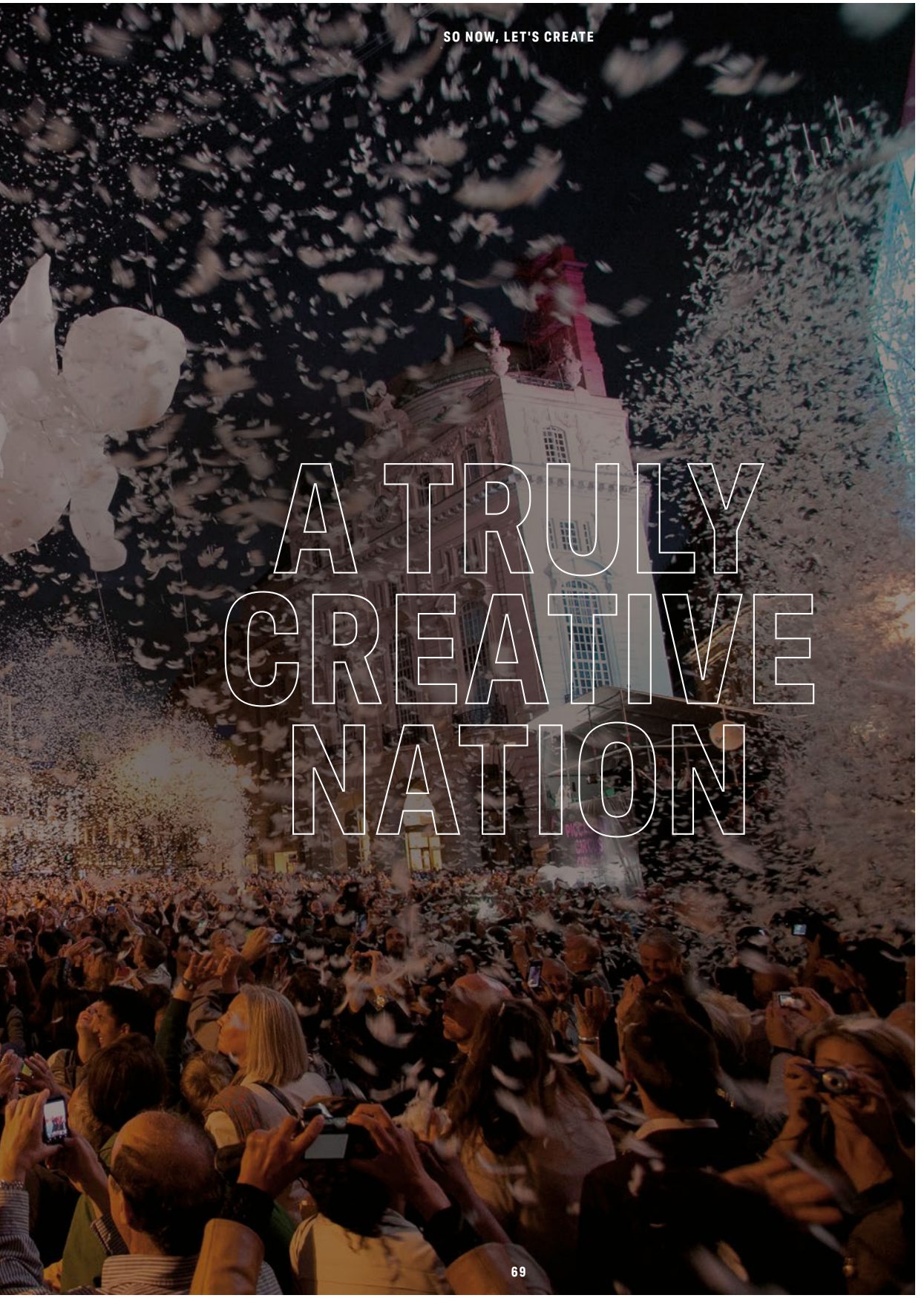
PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is against the law to discriminate against someone because of a protected characteristic. According to the Act, those characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Arts Council England also recognises class and socio-economic background as barriers to opportunity.

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

The prescription of creative and cultural activities by health care professionals, and other referral services, to people experiencing anxiety, stress-related symptoms, depression or other mental and physical health problems.

LET'S CREATE



A TRULY CREATIVE NATION

Arts Council England

WHO WE ARE

The Arts Council has offices in Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Leeds, London, Manchester, Newcastle and Nottingham. We are governed by a government appointed National Council which is supported by five Area Councils, covering London, the Midlands, the North, the South-East and the South-West. We are an independent charity as well as an arms-length non-departmental public body, and are accountable to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). We were established as a distributor of National Lottery funds under The National Lottery Act 1993.

In 2011 our responsibilities were expanded to include the support and development of museums and libraries, alongside the arts. We are tasked with various statutory UK-wide responsibilities that enable objects and collections of special interest to be acquired, shared and protected for long-term public benefit. We also work with the Department for Education to deliver a network of Music Education Hubs, ensuring every child in this country has access to a high-quality music education.

We own a large and growing collection of modern and contemporary art featuring work by over 2,000 UK based artists. The Arts Council Collection is on view to the public in galleries and public buildings across the country.

Arts Council England's total annual income for 2018/19 (the most recent year available) was £712 million. Our main sources of income are Grant-in-Aid (that is, the money we receive directly from government, which totalled £487 million in 2018/19) and National Lottery funding (£224 million in 2018/19). Our remit is to use all these funds to support arts and culture for the benefit of the English public. We currently disburse these funds via three streams:

i) **The National Portfolio:** a core group of arts organisations, museums and libraries, ranging in size and location, in which we invest over multi-year periods

ii) **National Lottery Project Grants:** a rolling programme that provides support for one-off projects

iii) **Development funds** which support specific strategic initiatives identified by the Arts Council

The Arts Council works with a wide range of partners in delivering its objectives. In central government these include the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, the Department for Education, the Department of Health and Social Care and the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, among others. We work with local government, often investing alongside councils into local cultural infrastructure. Other important partners include local enterprise partnerships and further and higher education institutions. We have active relationships, often underpinned with Memoranda of Understanding, with a range of public bodies including the Local Government Association, National Lottery Heritage Fund, the National Lottery Communities Fund, the British Film Institute, the British Council, the BBC and Historic England. The Arts Council is an active member of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies, the International Society of Performing Arts and the Informal European Theatre Meeting.

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Arts Council England is the trading name of The Arts Council of England. Charity registration number 1036733.

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