

Delivery Plan 2021-24

2023/24

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Welcome to Arts Council England

The Arts Council has offices in Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Leeds, London, Manchester, Newcastle and Nottingham. We are headquartered in Manchester, and over 79 per cent of our staff are based outside of the capital. 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 arm's-length non-departmental public body, and are accountable to the Department for Culture, Media and 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 work with the Department for Education to deliver a network of Music Hubs, ensuring every child in this country has access to a high- quality music education.

Arts Council England's total annual income for 2021/22 was £942 million. Our main sources of income are Grant-in-Aid (that is the money we receive directly from government which totalled £687 million in 2021/22, including £149 million for the Culture Recovery Fund programme and £82.2 million from the Department for Education, and National Lottery funding) (circa £253 million in 2021/22).

In 2021/22, we spent 68 per cent of our total programme expenditure outside London and our administration costs were 4.4 per cent of our income. In 2023/24 over 69 per cent of our

programme budget will go towards supporting a National Portfolio of nearly 1,000 arts organisations, museums and libraries, who are based all over the country. They currently range in size from the Royal Opera House in London to the Leach Pottery in Cornwall and include organisations who run public-facing buildings as well as touring companies, festivals, publishers and other cultural organisations who provide a range of services to the sector and the public.

Our definition of 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 invest: 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 Let's Create, 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.

Our definition of 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 Let’s Create and this Delivery Plan, we use it specifically to refer to the process of making, producing or participating in ‘culture’.

Introduction

Let's Create, our strategy for the next 10 years, describes our vision that, 'by 2030, England will be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.'

Let's Create was developed over a period of three years through extensive conversations with the public, with individuals and organisations working within the cultural sector, and with partners and stakeholders, and informed by a wide range of data, evidence and research. The strategy aims for three Outcomes and is underpinned by four Investment Principles.

To help us achieve the vision, we will publish a series of Delivery Plans over the next decade. These will set out in more detail the steps we will take to deliver Let's Create and how we will resource them. This first Delivery Plan covers 2021-24. It is a 'live' document that we refresh and update annually. It is intended to provide clarity for those looking to work with the Arts Council about where we will be focusing our resources during these three years.

Our commitment to excellence

The Arts Council is committed to excellence in everything we do because we believe that it is outstanding performances, exhibitions and events that inspire audiences and because the public deserve the best in return for their investment. This means that consideration of quality will be central to all our investment programmes and in our decision making. We will only invest in organisations and individuals that share our commitment to excellence.

We recognise that excellence in culture has different dimensions. At its heart is the technical and imaginative quality of the cultural offer – determined by the flair, expertise and experience of the artists, curators or librarians involved in the project.

Alongside the excellence of our artists and creative practitioners, this country also has a global reputation for the vision and imagination of cultural organisations, both large and small, across England, and for the high-quality technical and craft skills that underpin our creative industries. It is the responsibility of the Arts Council to build that reputation by ensuring that we invest in artists, projects and organisations that combine creative brilliance with the highest level of technical and craft skills.

We believe that one of the benefits of – and reasons for – public investment in creativity and culture is that it improves the quality of what is offered to the public. We should therefore expect those who have been receiving regular public funding over many years to be able to readily demonstrate their excellence. But to ensure that we have a dynamic cultural sector in this country, we need to have an eye on the future as well as a respect for the past.

We must have investment programmes that support innovation and new types of creative practice – as well as backing work that has already proved itself and found its audience. We will ensure our programmes support those organisations and individuals who are already at the top of their game, alongside those at the start of their career who we believe, with our support, have the potential to excel.

We acknowledge that excellence is difficult to define and will mean different things in different contexts. It will always be, quite rightly, the subject of debate. For instance, the criteria for excellence in a theatre performance will not be the same as for

a museum exhibition. They will look different for a large organisation that operates in an international marketplace to one focused on small-scale rural touring.

We are also interested in the way that excellence applies to all aspects of cultural practice – from the imagination that organisations and individuals show in the way they work with and for communities through their education and outreach programmes, to how effective they are in the way they run their businesses. We will factor all these different aspects of excellence into our assessment of applications and our investment decisions.

We will receive more high-quality applications than we are able to support. This will require us to draw on our expertise and experience and use our judgement to make difficult decisions. What will underpin all those decisions is our belief that every successful applicant has demonstrated to our satisfaction a commitment to excellence across all aspects of their work. We will expect that commitment to include a determination to use our investment to improve future performance, something that is critical to ensuring we have a high-quality cultural sector that will continue to be globally competitive and serve all our communities.

In **Let's Create**, we describe a set of four **Investment Principles** – Ambition and Quality, Dynamism, Environmental Responsibility, and Inclusivity and Relevance. We believe that these Investment Principles can work together to create a powerful mechanism that will help organisations and individuals to improve their performance going forward. We will expect successful applicants to use these Investment Principles – and the resources we are commissioning to support them – as development tools to help them focus and track that journey of continuous improvement, and help underpin their commitment to excellence.

We believe this shared commitment is essential to achieve the vision we set out above and the three Outcomes that are outlined on the following page.

Our three Outcomes

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 fulfils us, and helps us to think, experiment, and better understand the world. The public has told us how much they value opportunities for children to take part in creative activities and that they want to see us do more to widen and improve these opportunities.

Over these three years, we will be looking to support high-quality applications that address at least one of these key Elements of Creative People:

- supporting people at all stages of their lives to design, develop and increase their participation in high-quality creative activities
- promoting creative opportunities in the local community to people at all stages of their lives
- providing high-quality early years activities that reach families from a wider range of backgrounds
- widening and improving opportunities for children and young people to take part in creative activities inside schools
- widening and improving opportunities for children and young people to take part in creative activities outside schools
- improving teaching for creativity in schools

- supporting children and young people to develop their creative skills and potential
- developing and improving pathways towards careers in the creative industries

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 creative and cultural practitioners, arts organisations, museums and libraries helps improve lives, regenerate neighbourhoods, support local economies, attract visitors and bring people together. But this can only work 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.

Over these three years, we will be looking to support high-quality applications that address at least one of these key Elements of Cultural Communities:

- improving access to a full range of cultural opportunities wherever people live
- working with communities to better understand and respond to their needs and interests, resulting in increased cultural engagement and the wide range of social benefits it brings
- working collaboratively through place-based partnerships to:
 1. support and involve communities in high-quality culture
 2. improve creative and cultural education for children and young people
 3. improve health and wellbeing through creative and cultural activity
 4. build skills and capacity in the cultural sector and grow its economic impact

- connecting people and places, including diaspora communities, nationally and internationally

A Creative and Cultural Country

England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international.

The cultural sector will only ever be as strong as the talent on which it is built. Its future success 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. 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 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.

Over these three years, we will be looking to support high-quality applications that address at least one of these key Elements of A Creative and Cultural Country:

- supporting new types of creative practice, new forms of cultural content and new ways of reaching new and existing audiences and participants
- collaborating with other cultural organisations and/or with the commercial creative industries and/or with further and higher education, especially with a view to supporting innovation, research and development, new skills and the use of new technologies

- strengthening the international connections of cultural organisations and creative and cultural practitioners, including co-production and touring
- bringing world-class culture to audiences in England
- giving more opportunities to people to start a professional career in the creative industries, especially those who are currently under-represented
- ensuring people have opportunities to sustain their careers and fulfil their potential in the creative industries, especially those who are currently under-represented

Our four Investment Principles

We will expect successful applicants to use our Investment Principles as development tools to help them focus and track their journey of continuous improvement and help underpin their commitment to excellence. Over these three years, we will increasingly direct our investment to applicants that show a demonstrable commitment to the following Investment Principles:

Ambition and Quality

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

The public deserve the best in return for their investment and the Arts Council is committed to the pursuit of the highest quality in everything we support. We will back organisations and creative and cultural practitioners of all ages who have the potential to excel at what they do, as well as support those who are already at the top of their game. We will invest in a cultural sector that is ambitious, determined to improve the quality of its work and that invests in training and skills development.

We will expect it to gather the views of the public and their peers on the quality of what it does and learn and use that feedback in discussion with staff and boards to shape future decisions about its 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 and individuals are dynamic and able to respond to the challenges of the next decade.

The years ahead will be ones of rapid change and will see the public's cultural tastes and habits evolve, new technological opportunities and ongoing pressure on public funding as we emerge from the pandemic.

To navigate these opportunities and risks successfully, cultural organisations and individuals will need to become more dynamic. They will need to be flexible and adaptable so that they can innovate their business models.

We will invest in organisations that are committed to strengthening their governance and leadership, developing the skills and wellbeing of their workforce, improving their data culture, and adopting appropriate new technologies across their business. We will expect them to become more entrepreneurial and develop business models that help them maximise income, reduce costs and become more financially resilient. We will also expect them to look for opportunities to share services and explore mergers with other organisations.

Environmental Responsibility

Cultural organisations and individuals lead the way in their approach to environmental responsibility.

The climate crisis and environmental degradation are the most significant challenges facing all of us. The cultural sector in this country has already taken major steps to reduce its carbon footprint but it will need to go further.

We will expect organisations that we invest in to develop clear pathways towards net zero carbon and to underpin those plans with a framework of measurement and progress reports. We want cultural organisations and individuals to embody the principles of environmental responsibility through the work they create, commission and programme, the way they run their businesses, buildings and projects, and the conversations they have with their stakeholders, staff, peers and audiences.

Inclusivity and Relevance

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

We will invest in a cultural sector that sets out clear measurable plans for how it will ensure that its leadership, governance, workforce, programme and audiences are more reflective of the communities it serves – in terms of geography and socio-economic background as well as protected characteristics (including disability, sex and race).

We will promote equality and fairness, as well as encourage cultural organisations to be more effective businesses by drawing on a wider range of views and experience. We will also expect the cultural sector we support to build closer

connections with its communities, particularly those that it is currently underserving, and applicants will need to tell us how they will take their views and interests into account as they plan their programmes.

Setting the Context

Delivering government priorities

In executing this Delivery Plan, we are building on the remarkable and successful investment made through the government's Culture Recovery Fund (CRF). The CRF has been vital in ensuring that large parts of the cultural sector have been able to navigate their way through the pandemic.

We recognise that the cultural sector will continue to face serious challenges and ongoing uncertainty as a result of the long-term impact of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, rising energy prices, high inflation and labour supply challenges. We will continue to gather evidence and carry out analysis of the long-term impact of Covid-19 and other ongoing economic challenges, including their impact on the creative and cultural lives of the public. We will share that analysis with the government, the sector and our other stakeholders to assist with long-term planning.

Our investment programmes are designed to help the cultural sector manage the current economic headwinds they face and support the development of more dynamic and resilient business models that are better placed to contribute to economic growth in this country. From 1 April 2023, we will be investing in a new cohort of National Portfolio Organisations, Investment Principles Support Organisations and Creative People and Places partnerships. This investment, combined with that we make through our refreshed National Lottery Project Grants and Developing Your Creative Practice programmes, will mean that, going forward, a much wider range of individuals, cultural organisations and communities will be benefiting from public investment in creativity and culture.

These changes in our investment strategy are important early steps in the delivery of Let's Create.

We will work closely with the government on delivering its levelling up agenda. This will include working collaboratively with other arm's-length bodies to support places to respond to government place-based funds, like the Stronger Towns Fund, and ensure that they are able to make the best use of resources to support the development of cultural infrastructure. We will help deliver the government's Cultural Investment Fund (CIF), including its Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND), Library Improvement Fund (LIF) and Cultural Development Fund (CDF) programmes.

Through this Delivery Plan we will help open up access to the cultural sector, improve the geographical reach of our funding and ensure that more people, regardless of their socio-economic background, will benefit from high-quality, publicly-funded culture. We will increase our support for creativity and culture in **109 Levelling Up for Culture Places** across the country over the next three years. We will sustain investment in our Creative People and Places programme, which for a decade has been providing opportunities for communities who have had least access to publicly-funded culture, to shape a high-quality local cultural offer. We will ensure that young people have fair access to a wide-ranging, high-quality creative and cultural offer, and our support for the development of children and young people's creativity will help them develop the skills they need for the future.

We will support cultural organisations to develop more resilient and dynamic business models and innovate through new partnerships with technology companies, the commercial creative industries and more health care and education providers. Our focus on international working will support the

cultural sector to play a key part in building global Britain and contributing to our new trading partnerships.

Our role as the national development agency for museums and libraries

We will work with DCMS to deliver further rounds of the Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND) programme to support the refurbishment of our non-national museums. We will continue to support the fair application of business rates across museums and other parts of the cultural estate. We will support more museums to take advantage of the Museums and Galleries Exhibitions Tax Relief and will make the case to government for its continuation.

We will continue to focus on maximising opportunities to develop and protect our nation's collections so that they are enjoyed by as many people as possible. We will work with our partners in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to ensure that UK-wide government schemes such as Government Indemnity, Acceptance in Lieu, Cultural Gifts, Export Licensing, Accreditation and Designation remain fit for purpose and are delivered effectively and efficiently.

Over the next year, we will complete the integration of our cultural property work into the core business of the Arts Council so that all our collections and cultural property programmes are more strategic, efficient and inclusive.

We will undertake governance reviews of all our collections and cultural property panels and committees (and the advisers that support them) to ensure they have the necessary knowledge and expertise and are more representative of the communities we serve.

Our work designating collections as outstanding will be strengthened to ensure those collections are appropriately recognised, supported and researched. We will also introduce new electronic business systems for Export Licensing and the Government Indemnity Scheme. We will be refreshing the way we deliver museum and cultural property security and protection advice to ensure it remains effective and responsive to sector needs.

Public libraries will be at the heart of work in developing our place-based approach. We will work closely with them to ensure that they play a central role in supporting levelling up and community building, developing employability, helping to deliver health, wellbeing and loneliness strategies, and helping to close the digital divide. To help achieve this, we have refreshed our guidance for National Lottery Project Grants so that libraries can use that programme to deliver the four Universal Library Offers (Reading, Health and Wellbeing, Digital and Information, and Culture and Creativity).

We will work closely with DCMS on the delivery of further rounds of the Library Improvement Fund, a new capital investment programme to support the refurbishment of libraries. We encouraged more libraries to apply to become National Portfolio Organisations and we expect that libraries will also play a key role in our work in our Priority Places.

We will continue to work closely with the British Library on the development and delivery of its LibraryOn project, working with up to 50 library services over three years to develop and test new integrated digital platforms to deliver library services.

We will also ensure closer alignment of our literature and libraries development strategies, building partnerships with the National Literacy Trust and publishers to develop a series of hubs across the country to support the development of reading beyond schools.

We will continue to work with partners to explore the possibility of developing a new accreditation system for public libraries, and we will ensure that the English Public Libraries Strategic Working Group (EPL) continues to operate as the key strategic planning forum for libraries. Across all our engagement with libraries we will work to ensure that they understand the importance of a consistent approach to data collection.

Our five Themes

As we undertake the delivery of the three Outcomes laid out in Let's Create, we will organise our work initially around five Themes:

1. Building a 'fit for the future' cultural sector
2. Strengthening our place-based approach and supporting levelling up
3. Increasing our support for individuals
4. Helping the cultural sector to work internationally
5. How the Arts Council will change

These Themes have arisen out of our conversations with those working in the cultural sector and with the government and they are designed to focus on those areas identified as being in most pressing need of attention and investment if we are to successfully navigate the new, post-pandemic landscape.

Each Theme section is organised in two parts: an introductory narrative and a list of Actions. The narrative sets out a rationale and overview of the Theme. It also includes a number of activities that represent ongoing work as well as policy work in development. We view the activities identified in the narrative as having equal weight to the Actions in terms of their strategic significance and where we allocate our staff resources.

In applying these Themes, we will also remain focused on the commitment to children and young people which we set out in Let's Create. As the evidence begins to mount on the potential long-term impact of the pandemic on children's mental health and educational attainment, we will continue our efforts to help all our children and young people fulfil their creative potential and access the highest quality cultural experiences where they go to school, and where they spend their free time.

We will endeavour to create opportunities for young people to develop their own creative and cultural skills, wherever they live and irrespective of their social and economic background, so that we grow the pool of talent available to the arts, museums and libraries and the wider creative industries. This year sees a focus on children and young people across the UK National Lottery Good Causes distributors, and we look forward to working with the other National Lottery distributors to champion and celebrate creativity and culture for children and young people.

As schools reset themselves in the wake of the pandemic, we will continue to work with the Department for Education (DfE), the public and teachers to highlight the importance of creativity in education, and of a rich curriculum that includes art and design, dance, drama and music. This includes the implementation of the findings of the Durham Commission, including investment in a network of Creativity Collaboratives across the country. We will continue our partnership work with the DfE to review and strengthen the network of Music Hubs, exploring opportunities for Hubs to work more closely with the other cultural organisations in which we invest.

And, given the very public damage caused by Covid-19 to the livelihoods of creative and cultural practitioners working in the cultural sector, we will pay particular attention to supporting those seeking to start a career in the arts, museums and

libraries, and to doing our best to ensure that such careers are open to everyone, regardless of their background.

The pandemic and its legacy have challenged the cultural sector in ways that could not have been anticipated; they have touched every aspect of our work, and their impact will be felt for years to come. As our sector recovers and renews itself, we believe that the Themes and Actions set out in this Delivery Plan will act as a framework to support the cultural sector to help our communities and the wider economy to grow and become stronger than ever, to repair the damage wrought by the pandemic, but also to draw on its lessons and build on the innovations it has generated.

The future is filled with potential, and we believe this Delivery Plan will allow the cultural sector to harness and realise it.

Resourcing the Delivery Plan

How we will do it

We will resource this Delivery Plan primarily through a combination of our distributed staff team and our five main investment programmes, all focused on supporting the cultural sector to continue to recover from the pandemic, help manage the exceptionally strong economic headwinds it currently faces, and deliver our Outcomes and embed our Investment Principles.

1/. National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs), Investment Principles Support Organisations (IPSOs) and Creative People and Places (CPPs)

- NPO and IPSO budget 2023/24: £445.7 million
- CPP budget 2023/24: £9.46 million

2/. National Lottery Project Grants

- Budget 2023/24: £116.8 million

3/. Music Hubs

- Budget 2023/24: £76 million

4/. Capital Programme

- Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND) – budget 2023/24: £22.6 million
- Libraries Improvement Fund (LIF) – budget 2023/24: £5 million
- Capital – budget 2023/24: up to £20 million

5/. Developing Your Creative Practice

- Budget 2023/24: £14.4 million

1. National Portfolio Organisations, Investment Principles Support Organisations and Creative People and Places

From 1 April 2023, we will provide three-year funding (until 31 March 2026) for a cohort of 985 arts organisations, museums and libraries, providing them with security to plan over the long term and contribute to the post-pandemic economic and social recovery of this country. They will, between them, receive the majority of our investment during these three years and will therefore be expected to take on the largest responsibility for the delivery of Let's Create. This cohort will include:

- **National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs):** A group of 945 arts organisations, museums and libraries working across the country to deliver our Outcomes and embed our Investment Principles in the way they work
- **Investment Principles Support Organisations (IPSOs):** A group of 40 organisations that will provide support for the cultural sector to embed our Investment Principles
- **Creative People and Places (CPPs):** 39 partnerships covering 56 local authority areas where cultural engagement is currently low

2. National Lottery Project Grants

Our National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG) programme is a high volume, flexible investment mechanism to help individuals and cultural organisations recover from the pandemic as well as help deliver Let's Create. It supports a wide range of individuals and organisations, professional companies and non-professional groups to undertake projects ranging from small-

scale research and development right through to large national tours.

NLPG funding will continue to be targeted primarily at individuals and organisations that are not part of the National Portfolio, and we will target our advice giving to those who might not have previously engaged with the Arts Council. This will ensure a more equitable spread of investment at both under £30,000 and over £30,000 levels. We currently have the following priorities:

- supporting museums, including non-Accredited museums, to unlock their collections and make them more relevant, inclusive and accessible
- supporting libraries to deliver fully against the four Universal Library Offers (Reading, Health and Wellbeing, Digital and Information, and Culture and Creativity)

We also run the following ‘ringfenced’ strands within NLPG:

- **Place Partnership Funds** to support our place-making work
- **Touring Funds** to support national and international touring activity
- Nationally Significant Funds to support major projects seeking over £100,000
- Supporting Grassroots Live Music venues and promoters to develop their programmes, their audiences and their business models

We keep our NLPG programme under regular review to ensure that it meets the needs of the wide range of organisations and individuals working in our sector and helps contribute to the delivery of Let’s Create. In September 2023, we will launch a refreshed version of NLPG guidance, designed to improve the user experience for applicants, create stronger alignment with

Let's Create and make clearer in advance what we will and won't support. At that time, we will set out changes to our 'ring-fenced' strands to ensure that they are better able to support the delivery of Let's Create. That will include improving our support for touring ecologies, helping them to re-establish and evolve at all scales so that they are better able to manage post-pandemic and with other ongoing economic challenges. We will at that time also publish a set of priorities for the next year to address and support particular needs and gaps that we have identified. Applications submitted from October 2023 onwards will use the refreshed guidance and application form.

3. Music Hubs

Our role as fund holder – on behalf of the Department for Education – for a national network of Music Hubs will continue in 2023/24. These partnerships deliver activity prescribed by the government's refreshed National Plan for Music Education, and 117 Hubs will receive a total of £76,105,440 during 2023/24. We will support these partnerships via our National Portfolio, Investment Principles Support Organisations and other funded activity.

We will deliver an investment process during 2023/24 to ensure a new portfolio of Hub Lead Organisations – that will support, deliver and enable access to music education activity for children and young people across every local authority in England – is in place for September 2024.

4. Capital programmes

The focus for our capital investment during this period will be three-fold:

- i) We will run a Capital Investment Programme to support projects that deliver our Investment Principles. We will invest in organisations and use our experience to help them develop plans to make physical adjustments to buildings and equipment so that they can operate safely post-pandemic, improve access, seize on technological opportunities and reduce environmental impact. Projects are funded up to a maximum of £750,000. We will launch our next Capital Investment Programme in early 2023/24.
- ii) Our Place Partnership Funds includes support for the development of capital projects that align with our ambitions around place making. We combine our expertise as a national development agency with seed funding to work with local and national government and other partners to make the case for improved and sustainable cultural infrastructure in key places. Our role is focused on providing consultancy and early development funding rather than large-scale completion funding.
- iii) We will continue to work with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Historic England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver the **Cultural Investment Fund** – a package of the three capital funds made up of the Cultural Development Fund (CDF), Museum Estate and Development Fund (MEND) and Libraries Improvement Fund (LIF).

5. Developing Your Creative Practice

This investment programme supports a wide range of individual cultural and creative practitioners to focus on their creative development. It funds research, time to create new work, ideas development, networking, mentoring and international travel and training. We have published an **evaluation of the programme** and **refreshed guidance for 2023/24**.

We recognise that for many individuals, applying for funding can be onerous. We will try to make our application processes as simple as possible and will make it clear in advance the types of applications that are likely to be successful.

Our other investment and development programmes

These five investment programmes set out above will be supplemented by a limited number of new development initiatives. These are set out in the Actions listed in the five Theme sections of this Delivery Plan. In addition, we will continue to run a number of ongoing development programmes. These are set out in the ‘Other investment and development programmes’, which you can view [here](#). We will keep these under regular review to make sure they remain fit for purpose and represent best value for money.

Reset and Innovation

In 2022/23 we ran a small-scale pilot of four projects to test different approaches and help inform the design of a full-scale programme which we had hoped to launch in 2023/24. During the National Portfolio and Investment Principles Support Organisation investment process, National Council decided to use the resources that had been earmarked for the Reset and Innovation programme for our new Transform programme. Transform has been informed by our thinking on Reset and Innovation. It will provide the opportunity for one-off support for organisations that were part of the 2018-22 portfolio and that have been offered reduced National Portfolio Organisation funding for 2023-26. It will help them re-engineer their business models so that they can operate sustainably on ongoing reduced levels of funding. Should additional resources become

available, we will consider launching a full Reset and Innovation programme at a future date.

We will continue to conduct research, evidence gathering and analysis to provide and utilise intelligence on the post-pandemic challenges and opportunities currently facing the sector. As well as playing these findings back into government and the sector, we will also ensure that the Arts Council and our programmes are able to adapt and respond to the emerging situation.

Themes and Actions

Building a ‘fit for the future’ cultural sector

While we may be leaving the acute phase of the Covid-19 pandemic behind, the recovery of the cultural sector is not secured. The uncertainty created by the pandemic and changes associated with our exit from the European Union remains high. Future demand from audiences for cultural activity is still unclear, and competition for support from funders is intense: the Arts Council’s latest National Portfolio Organisation process was the most competitive ever and we could not support every deserving application. In addition to the ongoing impacts of Covid–19, cultural organisations have experienced supply chain issues and energy price raises which have caused surging inflation in their cost base. Wholesale energy prices have come down and there are some signs of more positive consumer sentiment, but overall inflation remains high and most economists expect output to fall in 2023.

This uncertainty has challenged the ambition and dynamism of the cultural sector and slowed progress on inclusivity and environmental responsibility. The past two years have exposed financial vulnerability in the sector, particularly of freelance creative and cultural practitioners. In addition, many cultural organisations feel the risk of programming adventurous work is very high. We recognise these challenges, and some of the compromises that may be necessary to navigate the way ahead. There are limits to the support funders like the Arts Council can offer the cultural sector, so part of the response to the current environment must be helping cultural organisations adapt to become ‘fit for the future’. Many of our cultural organisations have already reset their approach, developing new ways of working – and new approaches to creating and distributing art and other types of cultural content – and

showing ambitions to embrace further changes. Other organisations, however, need to look again at their mission, methodology and their creative and cultural plans in order to flourish in the future.

The Arts Council will encourage organisations to become more entrepreneurial, to optimise income streams, and to develop philanthropic giving as well as new services and products that bring opportunities to our creative and cultural practitioners, and even greater benefits to their communities, as they recover. Organisations will also need to develop more flexible and efficient business models, built around closer collaboration with organisations both within and outside the cultural sector, including shared services and joint research projects with, for example, health and social care providers, further and higher education, or the commercial creative industries.

Cultural businesses will need to consider who leads their organisations, what cultures they foster, and how they make decisions. For individuals, change will be about developing new skills, building resilience, and working in new ways to fulfil creative and cultural ambitions.

Through our consultation with the cultural sector on Let's Create, we developed our four Investment Principles – Ambition and Quality, Dynamism, Environmental Responsibility, and Inclusivity and Relevance. We believe these are even more relevant now given the current environment.

These Investment Principles are intended to galvanise transformational change that will aid the growth of a 'fit for the future' sector. They describe what we believe 'well-run' cultural businesses need to look like to best serve the public, and we are seeking tangible evidence of commitment to – and successful application of – these principles across all our investment programmes. For our recent National Portfolio investment programme, organisations were asked to apply

against our Investment Principles. We will expect every member of the new portfolio to embed these Investment Principles in the way they work, in order to progress and better contribute to the Outcomes in Let's Create.

The Arts Council will promote the application of the Investment Principles not just with investment, but also through our advocacy and development role. This includes providing a wealth of materials on our **Investment Principles Resource Hub** which we have recently refreshed so that it better helps a diverse range of arts organisations, museums, libraries and individuals embrace and implement change. We want the resource hub to be an engaging space to learn, develop and share new ideas, and we will continue to evaluate how it is used and what content would be most useful over the coming year.

The way the four Investment Principles will be applied will vary depending on the size and structure of the organisation. Local authority-run services – such as libraries and museums – will need to apply the four Investment Principles in a different way from standalone cultural businesses. For individuals, we believe that they can be used to help develop their practice and build sustainable relationships across the cultural sector. For organisations who have recently joined our National Portfolio, the application of the Investment Principles will involve setting measurable targets at board level and tracking progress. And across the sector, including non-National Portfolio Organisations and individuals, development will be aided by 40 new Investment Principles Support Organisations, and by partners Julie's Bicycle, Counting What Counts and PwC. Their role will be to support the sector to adopt the principles.

The leaders of our cultural organisations, museums and libraries – regardless of size – must be drivers of this change by working with their boards and oversight groups to champion the Investment Principles and scrutinise the progress they are

making. To support the development of boards, we are launching a new Transforming Governance programme to build their capability to support change and grow organisations that attract and develop a wide range of talent. Who our leaders are, what skills and experience they have, and what decisions they take will have a significant impact on progress towards achieving a ‘fit for the future’ sector.

We will also support individuals by continuing to invest in leadership development and transformation. We will support a new generation of leaders from across the country, and from a range of backgrounds, to develop the capability and confidence needed to make change, to develop resilience, and to support the wellbeing of their workforces.

Throughout the pandemic, the Arts Council worked extensively with the government to help cultural organisations weather the worst of Covid–19. We will, over the next year, continue to support organisations and individuals to help them adjust to a new, more uncertain, working environment. Our **Digital Culture Network** (DCN) will continue to improve digital skills and data literacy across the cultural sector. We will continue to build our partnership with Google Arts and Culture and the Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Digital Accelerator Programme to help develop digital capacity and capability in the cultural sector.

We will continue to support and enhance the sector’s progress on environmental responsibility by partnering with Julie’s Bicycle to offer access to tools and resources that empower individuals and cultural organisations to better understand their environmental impact, and develop and take appropriate action around climate and the natural environment.

In relation to inclusivity and relevance, the pandemic has demonstrated a clear need for organisations to serve all our communities better, and provide access to high-quality relevant

cultural experiences for people of all backgrounds – across geographies, across protected characteristics and across socio-economic backgrounds. The Arts Council’s new National Portfolio for the period 2023-26 is more representative of this country, with a significant increase in support for diverse led organisations. We recognise that there is further to go, particularly in supporting more disabled led companies.

We remain confident that by working together, we can build a ‘fit for the future’ cultural sector that is creatively ambitious, inclusive and relevant, better able to respond to the needs of our communities and committed to widening access. It will be more dynamic, confident in its use of data to inform and measure performance, and engaged in more sustained research and development, including in the use of new technologies, in order to adapt to new circumstances. We want it to be world-leading in the way it develops its environmental responsibility and reduces its carbon footprint.

We will take the following Actions to help build a ‘fit for the future’ cultural sector in this country.

Actions

Notes:

- **‘Date’** – this is the point when more information will become available. At that point we will publish a link to that information under the relevant Action.
- **‘2022/23 budget’** – we only publish budgets in relation to programmes where there is an open application process. The published figure represents the amount of funding Arts Council England has allocated to this Action. This figure may not represent our full investment in an Action. Funding may have been allocated in previous years or may be planned in future years or may come from programmes that are separately budgeted (eg National Lottery Project Grants).

Developing a ‘single digital presence’ for public libraries

We will continue to work with the British Library on LibraryOn, a ‘single digital presence’ for public libraries. The developing platform will enable the public to better access public library assets, collections, book stock, information, services, events, activities and opportunities wherever they are in the country. As part of this project, the British Library will also run a grants programme to support local authorities to improve their own local public library digital presence, stimulating digital transformation.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-libraries/single-digital-presence-public-libraries>

Introducing a new Access Scheme

We will work with UK Arts Councils and the BFI to launch a new Access Scheme for disabled, D/deaf and neuro-divergent audiences that supports their return post-pandemic by improving access and increasing audience engagement. The scheme website is due to go live before the end of 2023 ahead of a pilot launching the following year.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/investment-principles/investment-principles-resource-hub/inclusivity-workforce/access>

Reporting on pay gaps in the sector

From 1 April 2023, we will encourage National Portfolio Organisations that are legally required to report on gender pay gap data to also publish their ethnicity and disability pay gap data. We will analyse published gender pay gap data to share aggregated sector insights and extend analysis to include ethnicity and disability pay gap data as organisations begin to publish additional data.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/Employer/ZJzirzz0>

Supporting governance

We will launch a new Transforming Governance programme to provide advice and support to help cultural organisations develop and strengthen their governance, with an initial focus on National Portfolio Organisations and Investment Principles Support Organisations receiving investment from 1 April 2023, and then extending to organisations considering applying to join the National Portfolio from April 2026.

Date: Q1 23/24

Building resilience outside the National Portfolio

We will launch a third round of our Elevate programme to continue to develop and strengthen the resilience of a cohort of diverse-led cultural organisations outside of our National Portfolio.

Date: tbc

2023/24 budget: tbc

Development of a Libraries Accreditation Scheme

We will continue to lead the development work on a new Libraries Accreditation Scheme, turning the published draft scheme into a detailed delivery proposal for how the Arts Council should resource, roll out and operate the scheme. **Date:** ongoing

Link to: <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/news/libraries-connected-publishes-draft-accreditation-scheme-public-libraries>

Strengthening our cultural infrastructure

We will launch a new round of the Capital Investment Programme focused on our Investment Principles. It will provide grants of up to £750,000 to help our cultural organisations to operate safely post-pandemic, improve access, support

technological innovation and be more environmentally responsible.

Date: Q1 2023/24

2023/24 budget: up to £20 million

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/developing-creativity-and-culture/capital>

Supporting philanthropy

We will provide targeted capacity to support developing place-based philanthropic giving in three key priority places: Bradford as part of their City of Culture activity; Stoke-on-Trent working with Made in Stoke Philanthropic network; and Bedfordshire and Luton working in partnership with the local community foundation.

Date: ongoing

Link to:

Bradford 2025

Made in Stoke-on-Trent - Staffordshire University (staffs.ac.uk)
Cultural Support Fund | Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation (blcf.org.uk)

• Completed

Building a more representative National Portfolio

From 1 April 2023, we will continue to build a high-quality National Portfolio that is more representative of this country in terms of geographical location and the profile of its governance, leadership and workforce.

Date: Q3 22/23

The new National Portfolio is more representative than previous portfolios, in terms of geographical location and the profile of its governance, leadership and workforce, and an equality analysis of the new portfolio has led to an action plan to address remaining under-representation.

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/investment23> and <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/equality-analysis-2023-2026-investment-programme>

Supporting use of immersive technologies

Building on the successes of the CreativeXR programme, we have invested £1.5 million to UKRI and will work with their Arts and Humanities Research Council and the other UK arts councils to develop a three-year programme, XRtists. The programme will support the creative and cultural sector to experiment with immersive technologies from spring 2024.

Date: ongoing

Strengthening our place-based approach and supporting levelling up

Over the last two years we have increased cultural opportunities in more villages, towns and cities through a more focused place-based approach. We have **identified Priority Places** and refocused our ways of working to create more time for staff to deliver development work. And we have established a new National Portfolio that reaches more places than ever before.

We continue to support all places across England through our three-pronged approach:

- a universal offer available to all parts of the country
- ensuring that our investment in places where joint investment in culture is relatively high delivers greater social, economic and cultural value
- increasing investment and staff development time in Priority Places

We have worked with key stakeholders in our Priority Places to establish shared objectives grounded in the needs and aspirations of local communities and have focused our investment on furthering those objectives. Across the 54 Priority

Places, average annual investment, excluding National Portfolio investment, has increased from a baseline of £24,736,942 in 2019/20 to £47,788,154 in each of the first two years of the delivery plan – an increase of 93 per cent (note 1).

Through the National Portfolio investment process, we delivered significant change in how our investment is spread across the country, with marked increases in investment in both Priority Places and Levelling Up for Culture Places (a total of 109 places outside London identified jointly by the Arts Council and DCMS where our investment and engagement with publicly funded culture have been too low). From 2023/24 there will be 78 new National Portfolio Organisations and Investment Principles Support Organisations in Levelling Up for Culture Places with investment increasing by 95 per cent: a total of £21,196,746 additional investment each year. In Priority Places, National Portfolio investment will increase by 141 per cent.

Libraries and museums often reach into places with little or no other cultural infrastructure. The number of libraries supported through the National Portfolio has more than doubled and National Portfolio investment in libraries has increased by 166 per cent. Of the 25 museums that joined the portfolio, 10 are in Levelling Up for Culture Places. Overall, National Portfolio investment in museums has increased by 21 per cent.

Local government remains our most important strategic delivery partner. We continue to work closely with local authorities, including Mayoral Combined Authorities, as part of our work in place. We welcome the inclusion of culture and commitments to partner with the Arts Council within devolution deals. We support local capacity through providing learning opportunities for elected members and senior officers via our partnership with the Local Government Association. By the end of this Delivery Plan, we will publish a place data platform, ensuring that our partners in place have access to data and evidence that is

relevant to the local area, enabling them to map need, identify opportunity, and form partnerships. In 2022 we partnered with Key Cities to review culture policy and data in urban areas which culminated in the publication of the 'Culture and Place in Britain' report. In 2023/24 we will undertake a new rural evidence review.

We welcome the fact that culture is at the heart of the government's ambitions to level up. Our close working relationship with the government remains central to our ambition to help more places achieve their cultural and creative potential. Investment in culture and heritage is a priority of the Levelling Up Fund, and we will continue to engage with DCMS, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), and our partner arm's-length bodies (National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, Sport England, The National Lottery Community Fund, British Film Institute, and VisitBritain) to support Levelling Up Fund recipients to ensure successful delivery of cultural projects.

In 2022/23 we worked with DCMS to invest over £50 million in communities across England through the Cultural Investment Fund (Libraries Investment Fund, Museum Estate and Development Fund, and Cultural Development Fund). New rounds of the Libraries Investment Fund and Museum Estate and Development Fund in 2023/24 will see a further £33 million invested across the country.

We continue to work with the Department for Education to develop a National Plan for Cultural Education and to deliver the activity outlined in the 2022 National Plan for Music Education. In 2023/24 this will include refreshing our network of Music Hubs. The new Music Hub Network will be a key pillar of our universal offer, ensuring that children and young people in every local authority across England are able to access high-quality music education locally.

Our focus on ensuring that all children and young people are given more opportunities to realise their creative and cultural potential remains clear. We will work with schools to reach as many children and young people as we can by implementing findings from the Durham Commission including continued investment in Talent25, refreshing our Artsmark programme, and working with the public and teachers to highlight the importance of creativity in education, and of a rich curriculum that includes art and design, dance, drama and music. We also support children and young people through a range of open funds. One of the first grants made through our Place Partnership Fund strand of NLPG, for instance, will support Kirklees' Young People's Year of Music in 2023 and include a focus on music education, aspiration and skills, and inclusion. Our support for the King's Coronation also includes additional investment in Music for Youth to help them produce a concert series delivered by children and young people on bandstands across England.

We have continued to deliver on the ambitions in our plan for creative health by investing in key roles in the National Association for Social Prescribing and in Integrated Care Partnerships across England. Over the next year, we will ensure that these roles are fully embedded, build the evidence base for the impact of culture on health and wellbeing, and develop new projects to support cultural organisations and individual creative and cultural practitioners to play a key role in supporting the health and wellbeing of communities.

Place-based partnerships including Cultural Compacts and Local Cultural Education Partnerships (LCEPs) are increasingly important for the effective development and delivery of cultural strategy in place. They create capacity for strategy partnerships with other sectors, and for delivery. In October 2022 we launched a peer learning network for Cultural Compacts, LCEPs, and Creative People and Places delivery organisations,

invested £400,000 in Cultural Compacts, and commissioned research into LCEPs. In 2023/24 we are committed to increasing the number of Cultural Compacts in England by 50 per cent and to understanding the impact of having multiple place-based consortia in a single place.

In 2022/23 we made the first grants through our new Place Partnership strand of NLPG; £7 million across 13 projects. Each of these projects is led by a place-based partnership and will make a sea change in cultural provision that will be felt across communities. Many of the projects focus on social cohesion, health and wellbeing, pride in place, and economic development. Almost all include a substantial offer for children and young people, including opportunities to engage in creative activity in and out of school as well as opening up career pathways.

Note 1: £24,763,942 is the non-National Portfolio investment made in priority places in 2019/20, which we are using as a baseline given the unusual nature of investment in 2020/21. £47,788,154 is the average annual non-National Portfolio investment in priority places within the delivery plan period to date. This has been calculated as an average of the annual non-National Portfolio investment in priority places in 2021/22 and in 2022/23.

Actions

Supporting named Priority Places

We will increase our staff resources and financial investment in Priority Places over the course of the Delivery Plan and will publish data on our progress and an evaluation report.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/your-area/priority-places>

Building creativity and culture into health and wellbeing infrastructure

Following our investment in a senior post at the National Academy of Social Prescribing, we will work with partners to develop a pilot programme with up to seven Integrated Care Systems and test new ways of establishing culture as a key intervention in the health and wellbeing of communities.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://socialprescribingacademy.org.uk/>

Delivering the government's Cultural Investment Fund

We will continue to work with the DCMS to deliver further rounds of the Cultural Investment Fund (Museums Estate and Development Fund, Libraries Improvement Fund, and Cultural Development Fund) – a major capital programme aimed at improving cultural infrastructure and unlocking local growth and productivity.

Date: Libraries Improvement Fund and Museums Estate and Development Fund – ongoing; Cultural Development Fund – Q3 2023/24

2023/24 budget: £33 million

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-open-funds/cultural-investment-fund>

Supporting local government to build leadership and delivery capacity

We will work in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) to build capacity among local government's political leadership and senior officers. We will support the LGA to deliver a new round of training programmes for culture portfolio holders and senior officers in cultural and library services, as well as peer challenges for cultural services and libraries teams in local authorities.

Date: ongoing

Link - <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/research-and-data/our-research/place-our-partnerships-local-and-national-government>

Refreshing our Artsmark programme

We will move to a new delivery model for Artsmark, our flagship schools programme that supports schools, children and young people to develop their creative lives. As part of this refresh, we will introduce new 'cultural education champions' and target delivery in Priority Places.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <http://www.artsmark.org.uk/>

Increase capacity for culture through place-based consortia

We will increase the total number of Cultural Compacts across England by 50 per cent, from 28 to 42, with a focus on Priority Places and Levelling Up for Culture Places.

Date: ongoing

Link <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/review-cultural-compacts-initiative>

Supporting use of data in cultural development plans

We will develop an easy to access, regularly updated hub of place data including our investment information and other data related to place. We will also provide partners in place with tools to support them and to capture and analyse data to support the development and evaluation of place-based strategies.

Date: Q4 2023/24

Strengthening place-based Museum Development

We will invest in a new network of five Museum Development delivery partners across England with strong links to each of our Area teams and a clear focus on place-based support for Accredited and non-Accredited museums.

Date: ongoing

2023/24 budget: £6 million

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/supporting-museums/museum-development-programme/museum-0>

Supporting museums and public libraries to access National Lottery Project Grants

We will deliver a series of workshops for museums and public library services across England, helping them to understand how they can use Arts Council resources to increase cultural engagement and support their communities.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/ProjectGrants>

Working collaboratively with other arm's-length bodies to support places to respond to government place-based funds

We will collaborate with our partner DCMS and arm's-length bodies (National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, Sport England, The National Lottery Community Fund, British Film Institute, and VisitBritain) to deliver the Levelling Up Fund Place Programme. The programme will support local authorities in receipt of Levelling Up Fund awards to deliver successful cultural projects. Led by Historic England it will run over two years (2023/24 and 2024/25) with £2.4 million investment from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

Date: ongoing

• Completed

Increasing investment in Levelling Up for Culture Places and improving opportunities for underserved communities

The new National Portfolio process will result in investment in organisations committed to delivering increased creative and cultural opportunities for currently underserved communities. It will also increase investment in organisations in Levelling Up for Culture Places. The new National Portfolio has increased delivery for underserved communities and increased investment in organisations in Levelling Up for Culture Places.

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/your-area/priority-places-and-levelling-culture-places>

- **Completed**

Increasing capacity and connectivity across creativity and culture, and health and wellbeing in place

We will work in collaboration with strategic partners to develop capacity by delivering a project that increases connectivity in place, enabling local cultural networks and creative practitioners to gain access to healthcare partners and engage with social prescribing and associated opportunities.

We have awarded a grant to the National Centre for Creative Health (NCCH) to fund Creative Health Associates, a group of new strategic posts based in NHS settings, linking cultural, health and social care sectors. This will increase cross-sector capacity and connectivity, from local neighbourhoods to Integrated Care Systems.

Link to: ncch.org.uk

- **Completed**

Peer learning programme

We will deliver a programme of peer learning focusing on themes that support the membership, leadership, and staff teams of Creative People and Places delivery organisations, Local Cultural Education Partnerships and Cultural Compacts. We have set up and are delivering a programme of peer learning.

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/your-area/place-based-peer-learning-programme>

- **Completed**

Supporting the Commonwealth Games

We will support the development, delivery and future impact of the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games Cultural Programme and raise the profile of the West Midlands as an international centre of creativity and culture.

We supported the Commonwealth Games Cultural Programme with a direct grant of £3 million that supported 165 projects and 56 commissions, reached 2.4 million attendees and over 40,000 participants, and involved 3,647 artists. A further £3.1 million NLPG investment was awarded to organisations and individuals for projects aligned to the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Link to: <https://www.birmingham2022.com/festival>

- **Completed**

Refreshing how we work with local government

We will revise our Shared Statement of Purpose with the Local Government Association to serve as a set of principles by which we will seek to work with local government, our most important strategic local delivery partner, to deliver Let's Create.

We published our revised Shared Statement of Purpose with the Local Government Association in March 2023.

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/research-and-data/our-research/place-our-partnerships-local-and-national-government>

Increasing our support for individuals

The cultural sector depends on the talent, creativity, skills and experience of the freelancers that work independently and with organisations across the country. Although the sector is recovering from the pandemic, it continues to face multiple challenges because of the rising cost of living. Many practitioners are still experiencing ongoing precarity around pay, working conditions and wellbeing. Evidence continues to suggest that freelancers are taking up opportunities in other sectors, resulting in skills gaps and shortages in the cultural sector.

This year, we will launch a major ongoing freelancer survey that will benchmark current conditions and use this to provide evidence to central and local government, and to inform how we collaborate and partner within and beyond the cultural sector to directly support and invest in freelancers. Separately, we will also continue to research and consult on how best to support children and young people to develop their creative potential, leading to a draft progression framework.

In 2022/23 we supported creative and cultural practitioners through National Lottery Project Grants (NLPG) and Developing Your Creative Practice (DYCP). A total of 1,247 practitioners received £28,929,587 through NLPG and 1,543 received £14,529,961 through DYCP. For the first time, we have tracked the number of freelancers who benefit from NLPG investment through being involved in Arts Council funded projects. The 1,247 awards to individuals are expected to offer 19,607 opportunities for freelancers, and we expect there to be a further 59,610 opportunities for freelancers through our awards to organisations. We know there is more work to do on NLPG to ensure it is more straightforward for applicants. We'll develop and test changes to the programme with freelancers before rolling out a refreshed programme in September.

An **evaluation of DYCP** showed that the programme is delivering well against its key objectives, clearly supporting practitioners to make a step change in their work. Practitioners reported increased enthusiasm and confidence in their work, which helped to drive their careers forward, and that the quality of their work had improved. They also reported that they felt better able to sustain their careers following investment through DYCP. In response to the findings and suggestions from the evaluation, we have increased the upper grant limit from £10,000 to £12,000 and provide unsuccessful applicants with a decision reason as to why they were unsuccessful.

Cultural organisations play a key role in supporting, developing and working with creative and cultural practitioners. For our 2023-26 investment programme, we encouraged National Portfolio Organisations and Investment Principles Support Organisations applicants to better support individuals, and in particular to attract and retain new and diverse talent and entrants to the sector. At the point of application, over two-thirds of the new National Portfolio planned to deliver activity that will: develop and improve pathways towards careers in the creative industries; give more opportunities to people to start a career in the creative industries; and ensure there are opportunities for people to sustain their careers and fulfil their potential. We will track the impact of our investment in these areas.

We continue to collate and commission resources to support individuals. Freelance: Futures was delivered by freelancers, and brought together organisations, funders and policymakers to focus on equitable working conditions for freelancers. The resources and recorded conversations from Freelance: Futures are **still available** for the sector and the Arts Council to use to support progress towards more equitable conditions. Through consultation with freelancers, we have **identified resources and training** on business skills, safeguarding, and networking, and have developed a 'place' toolkit, which will support freelancers and local bodies to work together. We will also publish a short information sheet for practitioners to support their interactions with cultural organisations. Over the next year, we will develop more resources based on what freelancers have told us they want. We will also ensure that the Investment Principles Resource Hub is effective in supporting practitioners to develop and sustain their creative careers.

We want to make sure we're working widely and consistently with freelancers at the Arts Council and, to support our staff in this, we will write and publish a 'consulting with freelancers' policy. We will continue to engage with a range of networks

supporting creative and cultural practitioners and take the actions listed below hand-in-hand with the individuals they are intended to support. We will listen and learn, work collaboratively, build and share our collective resources and strengthen our understanding of the needs of individuals.

Actions

Improving training and development resources

We will provide resources and training to help individuals develop their business skills, gain knowledge on how to keep themselves and others safe and support their mental health.

Date: ongoing

Improving our understanding of creative and cultural practitioners

We will launch a regular freelancer survey to focus on the composition of the self-employed population, career progression, income and expenditure, patterns of working, employment and financial security and professional practice issues, to help us map the freelance workforce and gather direct insight on current trends and issues.

Date: Q3 2023/24

Reviewing National Lottery Project Grants to improve its support for individuals

We have reviewed National Lottery Project Grants with freelancers to better understand how well it is supporting individuals, and we will make improvements to the programme as part of its annual refresh.

Date: Q2 2023/24

2023/24 budget: £116.8 million

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/ProjectGrants>

- **Complete**

Evaluating and refreshing Developing Your Creative Practice

We will publish an evaluation of the programme and use it to make improvements to our Developing Your Creative Practice programme in 2023/24.

Date: Q2 2022/23

In 2022/23, we published an evaluation reviewing the programme, and updated the programme guidance which included an increase to the upper limit that applicants can apply for.

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/DYCP>

- **Complete**

Supporting a symposium for creative and cultural practitioners

We will work with partners to support a symposium to bring together individuals, funders, organisations and wider partners to learn from the pandemic and improve support for individual practitioners in the short, medium and long term.

Freelance: Futures was delivered in 2022, and recordings and resources are available online.

Link to: <https://www.freelancefutures.org/>

- **Complete**

Maximising the impact of creative and cultural practitioners on the places they live and work

We will develop a toolkit to unlock the potential of creative and cultural practitioners' contributions to where they live and work and help them build sustainable careers post-pandemic.

- **Complete**

Ensuring our National Portfolio provides better support to individuals

From 2023, we will fund a new National Portfolio of cultural organisations that are committed to providing more equitable and transparent support for creative and cultural practitioners and offer clear progression routes into the industry.

Date: January 2022

We asked applicants to the National Portfolio to ensure they provided better support for freelancers, and published this information sheet to help organisations better consider the needs of individuals.

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Supporting%20Practitioners%20information%20sheet..pdf>

Helping the cultural sector to work internationally

International collaboration by English organisations and practitioners has begun to adapt to the combined challenge of our exit from the European Union and pandemic restrictions. ‘Live’ international activity reduced slightly before the pandemic (due to regulatory barriers) and then more dramatically once Covid-19 lockdowns came into place. However, virtual collaboration during lockdowns allowed a wider range of organisations to collaborate internationally and across a broader geographical reach, especially across Asia. Now, in the wake of the pandemic, physical international collaboration and exchange have resumed but have yet to return to pre-pandemic levels.

The Arts Council invests in a range of international activity across our funding streams. In 2022/23 National Lottery Project

Grants invested £16,824,296 in 428 projects featuring international activity, and through Developing Your Creative Practice we made 394 awards worth £3,738,609 to support individuals to undertake international research and development. Of the 985 National Portfolio and Investment Principles Support Organisations awarded funding for 2023-26, 491 plan to 'strengthen the international connections of cultural organisations and creative practitioners, including co-production and touring'.

As the last of the Creative Europe co-operation projects including UK organisations come to an end, Arts Council England will continue to develop new partnerships and networks with key European nations and regions, with a focus on Germany, France and Italy. We will also work with our partners in Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Ireland to deepen our relationships with the Nordic and Baltic States.

International mobility for artists continues to be a shared commitment for the four UK arts councils and a second enhanced round of the Four Nations International Collaboration Fund will open during 2023/24. We will also jointly continue our support to Arts Infopoint UK which offers mobility guidance to promoters and artists wanting to work and perform in the UK and, through its membership of the On the Move Network, to UK artists developing projects overseas.

The Arts Council continues to invest in major events where the UK hosts the world and which offer opportunities to forge links between creatives based in this country and their counterparts around the world. In 2023/24, these include Eurovision in Liverpool (May 2023) and the International Society of Performing Arts (ISPA) Congress in Manchester (June 2023). We also invest to support the ambitions of our cultural organisations to showcase their work at key marketplaces, including Shape's plans for a disability-focused pavilion in

Venice in 2024 and Xtrax's presentations at La Merce and Fira Tarrega in Catalonia. We will continue our investment in the Horizon showcase in Edinburgh (theatre and dance) and have agreed a further three-year investment in both Under the Radar Festival in New York (theatre) and British Underground's Future Arts and Culture programme at South by South-West in Austin, Texas (new technologies).

A focus of our work over the next year will be to build on the success of city-to-city international partnerships, such as those between Manchester, Aarhus and Aalborg, and the more recent animation-focused compact between Bradford, Viborg and York. As part of our deepening work around place, we will look for further opportunities to encourage and support more of these international city-to-city partnerships.

Over the next 12 months, the completion of our new systems for export licensing and government indemnity will provide both better experiences for users and new data relating to the export and import of cultural property which will inform future policy to support the growth of the sector. We will also build on our initial research into climate standards for object loans to develop agreements with international partners and sector bodies to remove unnecessary climate standards for object loans.

The Arts Council believes strongly that future international collaboration and exchange must be built on the principles and practice of environmental responsibility. We will look for opportunities to collaborate with other arts funders and green agencies such as Creative Carbon Scotland, Theatre Forum Ireland and Julie's Bicycle to develop and embed these principles in international cultural practice. This will include working with the British Council to establish a set of environmentally responsible benchmarks. In 2023/24 we will jointly map existing research into environmentally responsible approaches to international activity before convening

international-facing producers and artists to construct a greener vision for international exchange and collaboration in the future.

Actions

Growing the International Touring and Environmental Responsibility (ITER) programme

We will invest in a third year of the ITER fund, with Danish Arts Foundation, Julie's Bicycle and new partners Arts and Culture Norway (Kulturradet) to support more sustainable ways of touring across new English/Nordic partnerships.

Date: Q3 2023/24

2023/4 budget: £60,000 (Arts Council England contribution)

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/our-open-funds/international-touring-and-environmental-responsibility-fund>

Growing our investment in the Four Nations International Fund

In partnership with Creative Scotland, Arts Council Wales and Arts Council Northern Ireland we will increase our investment in the second round of our joint funding programme to support mobility and collaboration between creative practitioners in at least two UK nations working with an international partner.

Date: Q2 2023/24

2023/24 budget: £240,000 (Arts Council England contribution)

Link to: <https://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/targeted-funding/four-nations-international-fund>

Growing our investment in the Cultural Bridge partnership programme with Germany

Working with our partners Creative Scotland, Arts Council Wales, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Goethe Institut London, Fonds Soziokultur and the British Council in Germany, we will increase our investment in the Cultural Bridge programme and

grow our support for joint projects in the field of community-led arts practice in the UK and Germany.

Date: Q3 2023/24

2023/24 budget: £200,000 (Arts Council England contribution)

Link to: <https://www.cultural-bridge.info/>

Continuing our partnership programme with France

In partnership with Creative Scotland, Arts Council Wales, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Fluxus and the Institut Francais, we will invest in a second year of Magnetic – a programme of visual arts residencies that will develop stronger links between institutions in France and the UK.

Date: Q3 2023/24

2023/24 budget: £30,000 (Arts Council England contribution)

Continuing our investment in the UK Arts Information Point

This is a joint initiative, funded by the four cultural agencies of the UK, to provide promoters, producers and artists advice and support on international mobility.

Date: ongoing

2023/24 budget: £30,000 (Arts Council England contribution)

Link to: <https://artsinfopointuk.com/>

Developing a new partnership with Italy to support dance and disability

In partnership with the Italian Cultural Institute, British Council Italy and the Italian Ministry of Culture, we will jointly support a pilot programme of residencies focusing on disability and dance between Italy and England.

Date: Q3 2023/24

2023/24 budget: £40,000 (Arts Council England contribution)

Investing in CROWD, the European dance exchange project

In partnership with Goethe Institut London, Creative Scotland, Nordic Culture Fund and NRW (North Rhine-Westphalia), we will support 10 dance artists to undertake residencies across Europe, supported in-kind by host venues and partners in Ireland, the UK, Germany, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Iceland and Finland.

Date: Q4 2023/24

2023/24 budget: £12,000 (Arts Council England contribution)

Supporting this country's global art trade

We will commission a report giving industry insight into the current and future challenges and opportunities for the UK's global art trade.

Date: Q4 2023/24

• Complete

Expanding our bilateral partnership with Denmark

In partnership with Viborg Municipality and Via University, the Danish Arts Foundation (Agency for Culture and Palaces), and Mediale, we will deliver a pilot programme that will support collaboration between artists and cultural organisations in York, England and Viborg, Denmark, to develop joint projects in connection with the cities' shared status as UNESCO Media Cities.

Date: Q1 2022/23

We delivered a pilot animation project linking Bradford, York and Viborg (Denmark)

Link to: <https://mediale.org.uk/immersive-assembly/vol-2/>

- **Complete**

Developing a better understanding of current international activity in the cultural sector

We will commission and publish a report on international investment, collaboration and exchange in the publicly funded arts sector in England.

Date: Q3 2022/23

How the Arts Council will change

In **Let's Create**, we made clear that to deliver our new strategy and become a more effective national development agency for creativity and culture, the Arts Council will need to change. We have already demonstrated, in the way that we responded at pace to the pandemic with our own Emergency Relief Funds and in our management of the government's Culture Recovery Funds, that we can be agile and adaptable.

We will continue to build on the lessons we have learnt from the pandemic. We will accelerate the changes that need to take place so that we can embody fully the four Investment Principles that underpin Let's Create in our own organisation. We will be clearer in our commitment to supporting ambition and quality, and we will continue our work on reducing our environmental impact. We will also become more inclusive and relevant, and more dynamic.

We will ensure that we approach everything we do from the perspective of our 'customers': the individuals and organisations seeking investment and development support from us; the local and national partners and co-investors looking to work with us, including other arm's-length bodies and

National Lottery distributors; the government, which will hold us to account for the money we invest on its behalf; and the public, who are the ultimate beneficiaries of everything we do.

We aim to be relevant and accessible to all those customers and will ensure that external voices continue to shape our work through our Area and National Councils, through new race and disability advisory groups, and via the use of external advisory groups for all major projects. We will continue to pilot our work with our Youth Advisory Board to ensure that there are opportunities for young people to provide advice and input into our policy development work, including the Cultural Education Plan and consulting on our Investment Principles Resource Hub.

We will commit more of our staff development time to supporting communities, cultural organisations and creative and cultural practice with which the Arts Council has been historically less engaged.

All our processes and decisions will be based on fairness and equity, and we will strive to make them simpler and more transparent for those who want to access our funding or our expertise, and in order to improve our efficiency. We will focus on making high-quality decisions and learning all the time from what we do. Our ambition is to improve continuously and to set higher and higher standards for efficiency, effectiveness and excellence in the way we serve the needs of our customers. We will adopt new ways of working to achieve greater organisational efficiency and better use of our office locations. We will continue our progress in becoming an agile, innovative and responsive organisation, where staff work flexibly, and in which appropriate technology is deployed. We will equip our workforce with the skills to adapt to changing circumstances and demands.

We will set clear targets that enable us to lead the way as an environmentally responsible arm's-length body, both in our working practices and in the decisions we make. We will also audit our access provision and set targets to ensure we are an inclusive employer whose workforce, in terms of their profile, experiences and location, is reflective of contemporary England.

Underpinning these changes will be the implementation of a new data strategy. We will become an ethical, open data organisation, in which evidence is core to what we do – enabling us to make better, more informed policy, and to show evidence of the impact and benefit of our work. We will continue to invest in improving our data infrastructure and literacy to enhance our policy making and insight, helping our staff to have access to the right information at the right time in order to do the best work that they can, and to better support our stakeholders and our customers – the cultural sector, and ultimately the public, and our stakeholders. Increasing the effective use of technology and data will increase the accessibility of the work we do.

Finally, we will ensure that our values – ‘we care, we learn, and we are ambitious’ – are embedded in all of our work.

Actions

Strengthening our commitment to Ambition and Quality

We will introduce a new electronic licensing system to improve the quality of our support for the art market in this country and ensure that we remain a globally competitive centre for the international trade in arts and antiquities.

Date: Q2 2023/24

By 2025, we will consolidate the Arts Council Collection's two art stores into a new location in Coventry and contribute to the legacy of the City of Culture programme. This state-of-the-art logistics centre, which we will share with the British Council and Culture Coventry, will give long-term space for growth, enable a more ambitious national touring and lending programme and provide opportunities for improved collaboration and efficiencies.

Date: ongoing

We will commission the supplier to produce an updated version of our Grantium grant management system for user testing and roll out, aimed at improving the quality, access and usability of the experience for applicants.

Date: Q3 2023/24

Strengthening our commitment to Dynamism

We will assimilate the learnings from our Investors In People gold standard assessment and build these into a future plan of improvement for how the Arts Council operates.

Date: Q1 2022/23

In partnership with DCMS, a new national participation survey for adults will commence in May 2023, with results available in Q2 2024/25. The Arts Council is also currently developing a dedicated version for children and young people. Both of these surveys will be key instruments in enabling us to understand the impact at local authority level of Let's Create over its lifespan.

Date: Q1 2023/24 (adults)

Strengthening our commitment to Environmental Responsibility

We will continue delivering our Environmental Action Plan, including publishing our carbon footprints and launching carbon literacy training and a green book for staff.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/18507/download?attachment>

Strengthening our commitment to Inclusivity and Relevance

We will set targets to make our workforce, leadership and governance more representative of the country and report annually on progress.

Date: ongoing

Link to: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/lets-create/delivery-plan-2021-2024/how-arts-council-will-change>

We will develop the Arts Council's policy on how we will work with creative and cultural practitioners. This published policy will set out how the Arts Council will ensure that all the freelancers we engage are treated consistently and paid fairly for their time.

Date: Q2

Our National Council has engaged Nous Group to undertake an equality review of the Arts Council, to understand which areas we need to improve and to strengthen our approach to inclusivity and relevance.

Date: Q3

We will increase the proportion of our staff based in offices outside of London. Currently, 79 per cent of staff are based in offices outside London and, over this next year, we aim to move five more national roles out of London.

Date: ongoing

We will publish annual data on our staff gender and ethnicity pay gaps.

Date: Q1

Link to: Gender and ethnicity pay gap | Arts Council England

- **Complete**

We will be leading the appointment of new chairs of the Acceptance in Lieu panel and the UK Accreditation Committee and will be supporting the process of the appointment of the new chair of the Reviewing Committee. We will also recruit three new members for the Acceptance in Lieu panel.

Link: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/uk-museum-accreditation-scheme/accreditation-how-apply#t-in-page-nav-8>

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/supporting-collections-and-cultural-property/acceptance-lieu#t-in-page-nav-5>

Equality Objectives

Improving access and opportunity and achieving our equality objectives.

Our Equality Objectives 2021-24

- We will ensure a more equitable distribution of our investment to improve opportunities for everyone, especially those with under-represented protected characteristics and from disadvantaged socio-economic groups.
- We will invest in inclusive cultural organisations whose leadership, governance and workforce – and the independent creative and cultural practitioners they support – represent the diversity of contemporary England.
- We will invest in a cultural sector that is more relevant to all of England's communities, especially those that have been historically underserved by public investment in culture.
- We will become a more inclusive and relevant national development agency for creativity and culture that models good practice.

We have a legal duty to consider equality in our policy making. We aim to prevent discrimination and promote equality and diversity for people from protected characteristic groups defined in the Equality Act 2010 – including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We also recognise the barriers that arise from class and socio-economic status and will seek to go beyond our legal duty to ensure that the work we invest in is reflective of the diversity of contemporary England. In addition, we take into account the geographic distribution of our investment and other resources to try to ensure that our support reaches all parts of this country.

The four Equality Objectives set out how we will put our legal duty into action. They will remain in place for the duration of this Delivery Plan. These objectives will inform the design and delivery of all our work and will be supported through the development of discrete equality analyses for all new work that we undertake. Read the Equality Analysis for this Delivery Plan

These equality analyses are designed to ensure that no one with a protected characteristic or from a lower socio-economic background is impacted adversely by our investment programmes or other development work.

Our commitment to this is not only about fulfilling a legal duty. The only stable foundation for a sustained recovery for the cultural sector is one where it reaches more people, nurtures talent wherever it is found and finds inspiration from every quarter. Everyone should have a chance to discover the cultural sector and make a career in it if they have the talent.

A number of the Actions set out under each of the Themes are specifically designed to further our Equality Objectives and to create the conditions for more equitable distribution of our investment. They are also designed to help build a sector that is more inclusive of, and relevant to, the communities we serve. Critically, they require the Arts Council to lead by example through the targets we set, and the culture change we are committing to.

These Actions are informed by what the latest evidence and data is telling us on where we should focus our resources, and they are supported by targeted implementation plans. The Actions will be reviewed and reported annually and will include analysis of data on the workforce, leadership, governance and audience of our National Portfolio. They will also include an analysis of the profile of individuals and organisations receiving

our investment as well as information on the make-up and location of Arts Council staff.

It will only be possible to deliver Let's Create if there is shared commitment across the cultural sector to creating more inclusive working environments that develop and value all our talent. This means that we will actively support the development of safe workplaces where harassment and discrimination are challenged and eliminated so that everyone is treated equitably and fairly and supported to realise their full potential.

At the core of our work to deliver our Equality Objectives will be the roll out of our four Investment Principles, and especially our Inclusivity and Relevance principle. As we implement Let's Create, we will tie more and more of our investment to evidence that applicants are embedding our four Investment Principles in their work. This will include expecting applicants to provide evidence that their governance structures, leadership, workforce, volunteers, audience and programming are increasingly representative of their communities.

Measuring Impact

In **Let's Create**, we made a commitment to develop a set of performance measures that will set out how we will track and report on progress in achieving our Outcomes, as well as the work set out in each of our Delivery Plans. We also promised to provide a clearer account of the impact we, those we invest in, and the wider cultural sector make.

We have developed an Impact Framework to help us do this. It sets out the measures we will use over the lifetime of Let's Create to assess progress towards our three long-term Outcomes – Creative People, Cultural Communities, and A Creative and Cultural Country.

The framework also sets out the measures we will use to demonstrate progress on each of the five Themes in this Delivery Plan and how our delivery against these Themes contributes to the long-term changes set out in Let's Create.

As an arm's-length body we have also agreed a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) with our sponsor department DCMS. They create a link between Let's Create, our Delivery Plan Themes and the government's priorities to which our work contributes.

We know that our activity is only part of the picture, and that the support, partnership and actions of individuals and organisations across the cultural sector and beyond will play the largest part in the delivery of **Let's Create**. Our Impact Framework seeks to measure both the direct achievement of our work as a development agency and the wider societal change that we are contributing to.

We recognise that capturing data on the impact of our work is challenging and we will refine and improve our approach as we learn from our experience. However, we also recognise that this work is essential if we are to demonstrate effectively how we invest public money for public benefit.

You can read about our progress on this Delivery Plan in our **Annual Report and Accounts**.

The framework is simple; we see it as a pyramid

At the bottom, the Actions are the foundations – the progress we are making in delivering the list of Actions that we have set out under each of the Themes in this Delivery Plan. We will use these to help us refresh our Delivery Plan.

In the middle section, the Themes set out the progress we are making against each of the Themes in this Delivery Plan as well as how we are performing against our DCMS KPIs. They provide early information on whether we are on track towards delivering our three Outcomes and embedding our Investment Principles. We will report on these annually via the annual updates to the Delivery Plan.

At the top, the Outcomes set out the progress we are making against the three Outcomes and the long-term change set out in Let's Create. We will report on these every three years.

In order to gather the evidence to report against this Impact Framework, we will invest in new data collection surveys including a large-scale national Creative and Cultural Lives Survey and a survey of individual creative and cultural practitioners. We will also review and refresh how we gather data from our National Portfolio and other grant recipients, with a focus on improving the quality, timeliness and relevance of that data.

Outcomes

Assessment of the progress against the long-term change envisioned by **Let's Create's** three Outcomes.

Themes

Assessment of the progress against the Delivery Plan themes and DCMS KPIs.

Actions

Assessment of progress against each of the Actions set out in the Delivery Plan.

Our Impact Framework

We have identified a set of key indicators that we will use to track the long-term impact of our work in delivering **Let's Create**. They will help us to account for our contribution and track the cumulative impact of work across the sector to deliver our ambitions by 2030.

Let's Create

The change we want to see.
The indicators of change.

Creative People

Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life.

- A broader range of people are participating in creative activity, eg playing an instrument, creative writing, etc.
- More children and young people from all backgrounds participate and progress in developing their creativity.

Cultural Communities

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

- Community engagement in local culture is broad and representative of the local population.
- Communities engage in and shape cultural provision so that it is more relevant to the community.
- Communities value culture for the social and economic benefits it brings.

A Creative and Cultural Country

England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international.

- The workforce of the creative and cultural sector reflects the diversity of England.
- Pathways into careers in the creative and cultural sectors exist and are accessible to children and young people regardless of background.
- Cultural organisations are collaborative, sharing resources, learning from each other and establishing new partnerships in the education, technology and charitable sectors and with the commercial sector.
- The cultural sector contributes to England's international reputation for creativity and builds sustainable international partnerships.

Let's Create

The data and evidence

Creative People

- Demographic picture of individuals participating in creative activity in England by age, gender, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic breakdown.
- What do they do? How do they participate?
- Who with? How often?

- More children and young people are able to progress in their creative lives.

Drawn from our new Creative and Cultural Lives Survey, Music Education Hub data and individual programme evaluations.

Cultural Communities

- Geographic and demographic picture of individuals engaging in culture in local areas and our priority places.
- Partnership working between arts organisations, museums and libraries and local communities and other local partners.
- Extent to which people feel that culture contributes to their sense of belonging – wellbeing, relief from loneliness, community cohesion.
- Economic value of the local cultural sector, for example number and distribution of jobs, GVA, tourism.

Drawn from bespoke economic research reports on National Portfolio and Project Grant data, and our Creative and Cultural Lives Survey.

A Creative and Cultural Country

- Profile of individual creative and cultural practitioners.
- National Portfolio workforce and leadership breakdown by age, gender, ethnicity, disability, socio-economic background:
 - demographic profile of new entrants to workforce and leadership
 - career progression of workforce from protected characteristics groups
- Number of active formal partnerships in place between National Portfolio Organisations and:
 - community partners
 - higher/further education
 - commercial partners
 - international partners
- Creative industries and cultural sector exports and imports.

Drawn from Participation Survey (formerly referred to as the Creative and Cultural Lives Survey), National Portfolio, Music Education Hubs and government data, and Arts Council England freelancer survey.

Delivering change through our Delivery Plans

For each of the Delivery Plans we will follow during the lifetime of Let's Create, we will set out key measures against which we will track our activities and evidence the changes they are designed to produce.

For this first Delivery Plan we have set key measures for each of the five Themes and our Equality Objectives. The DCMS KPIs act as a complementary set of measures that will also allow us to track progress against each Theme.

In addition to these measures, we will continue to use case studies to help tell the stories of the organisations and individuals our investment supports.

Delivery Plan Theme

Building a 'fit for the future' cultural sector

Delivery Plan Measures

- Take up and use of the Investment Principles tools and resources (engagement with online resources + participation on development programme).
- National Portfolio Organisations in the 2023+ portfolio that have committed to develop a net zero carbon pathway within their environmental action plan.
- Number of organisations responding to the Environmental Responsibility Investment Principle in National Lottery Project Grants.

DCMS Framework Agreement KPIs

Opening up access

Percentages for each protected characteristic (Black, Asian and ethnically diverse, LGBTQ+, female, disabled, age) and a breakdown by socio-economic background:

- National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) board membership
- NPO leadership
- NPO workforce
- NPO audiences

Resilience and Dynamism

Contributed and earned income in National Portfolio

Organisations:

- Increases in percentage of contributed/earned income.
- Breakdown by five Arts Council Areas.

The number of organisations and individuals engaging with the Digital Culture Network:

- Breakdown by five Arts Council Areas.

Increasing our support for individuals

- Increased financial support for individual creative and cultural practitioners (first-time funding recipients and demographic data by age, ethnicity, disability, gender, socio-economic background).
- Number and profile of individuals accessing training and development opportunities.

Strengthening our place-based approach and contributing to levelling up

- Increase in investment in Priority Places 2021-24.
- Percentage of Arts Council funding spent in Priority Places.
- Percentage increase in the number of library and museum National Lottery Project Grants applications, success rate and percentage increase in overall funding.

Levelling up

Percentage of overall Arts Council funding spent in areas of low cultural engagement as defined by the Active Lives Survey.

Youth

The total number of children and young people attending events and activities provided by Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations in areas of low cultural engagement as defined by the Active Lives Survey.

Helping the cultural sector to work internationally

- Number and profile of individuals/organisations reached as a result of collaborative work between the four nations' Arts Councils (number of unique website visitors to Arts Infopoint UK and number of grant awards from joint programmes).

International

- Number of international engagements undertaken by National Portfolio Organisations, broken down by live and digital, international region/country, and size of organisation.

How the Arts Council will change

- Data on geographic location of Arts Council staff.
- Progress by the Arts Council on its net zero carbon pathway.
- Progress on the implementation of new data strategy's milestones.
- Opening up access.

Percentages for each protected characteristic (Black, Asian and ethnically diverse, LGBTQ+, female, disabled, age) and a breakdown by socio- economic background):

- Arts Council board membership
- Arts Council leadership
- Arts Council workforce

Cultural property

Report against key DCMS targets:

- Export licences issued within five working days of the Arts Council receiving the application (unless information is missing from the application, the application needs to be referred to an Expert Adviser, or further enquiries need to be made in respect of the object's provenance).

Delivery Plan Theme

Delivery Plan Measures

DCMS Framework Agreement KPIs

- Report to DCMS on the applications considered at each Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA) meeting within two weeks of the meeting.
- Government Indemnity Scheme claims with recommendation submitted to DCMS within two weeks of receipt of all paperwork.

Equality Objectives

(In addition to the measures already referred to under the Themes above)

- Data on National Portfolio 2023+: analysis of leadership by disability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and socio-economic background (number of National Portfolio Organisations and percentage of total investment).
- Data on National Lottery Project Grants awards made to organisations with Black, Asian and ethnically diverse, disabled, female and LGBT leadership (number of awards and percentage of total investment).
- Data on Developing Your Creative Practice awards made to Black, Asian and ethnically diverse, disabled, female and LGBT applicants (number of awards and percentage of total investment).

Transcribed into Large Print by: A2i Transcription Services
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Ref number: 37015