**Transcript:** **Welcome Session for NPOs and IPSOS**

**Darren Henley:** OK, let's begin. Good morning, and welcome to today's digital welcome session for our new National Portfolio.

My name is Darren Henley, and I am the Chief Executive of the Arts Council. Today I'll be joined by some of our colleagues here at the Arts Council. Michelle Dickson, our strategy director based in our Leeds office, Peter Heslip, national Director of Visual arts and responsible for the team based in the south-east in our Brighton office and Alex Middleton, the senior manager in our funded organisations team. We are also joined by our BSL interpreters Rosie and Melanie, and live captions are provided for you by Joanne and Marea.

Thank you so much for giving us your time today. We know how busy you are and we really do appreciate you spending your Monday morning with us. Some of you, we've worked with for many years, and some of you represent organisations we have joined the portfolio for the very first time. But absolutely everybody is equally very welcome here. I would like to start by saying congratulations once again, you have made it through what was a really competitive process and we really do appreciate all of the hard work that's gone into getting you here today.

Now, before we get going, some quick housekeeping. We'll be in this main space together for most of the session where our BSL interpreters are pinned to your screens. If you require captions, you can click the CC button at the bottom of your screen to see the live captions. We asked that you keep your cameras and microphones off while we are all in this main space together. But when we go into breakout rooms, we invite you to turn them on if you would like to do so. We are recording this session today, so if your camera is on in the main space, please do bear in mind it will be on-the-recording. We won't be recording the breakout sessions. You can use the chat function in your breakout rooms, but again, we

ask that you avoid using it while in the main room together unless you have any urgent access issues. We'll use an online platform called Menti to gather and together to your questions later on. We really do want you to feel comfortable and able to relax today. We want to have as much interaction with you as we possibly can. You can come and go as much as you please. You won't miss anything, as we will be making a record of course this session, and that will be available for you by the end of May. We'll have a break in the middle of the session, so you can have a breather, and go and grab a coffee or a tea. We expect to be finished in the two hours by 12 o'clock.

So, this is an overview of what we are going to cover today. This a moment, we'll give you a first ice-breaker question for you to answer in the breakout rooms of the they are information we are going to cover includes an overview of the National Portfolio for 2023, to 2026. We want to spend some time discussing how we are going to work together, both what the Arts Council will do and what our expectations of you are as well. At this point, we'll take your question too. We'll then go through some of the support we have available to you. And we'll focus on our new Transforming Governance programme as part of that, and crucially, we'll also get your feedback on what you would like to see from it.

I really do hope that you find this session useful while also getting to know each other and us a little bit more. Before we get started, we wanted to play this film to remind us all why we are here today.

[Video plays]

**Darren Henley:** It's always exciting at the beginning of a new journey, but we also know that, for the last three years it's been a really difficult time for us all, both personally and as a sector. We know that you all still face a really tough operating climate. The pandemic might officially be over, but we are still feeling the effects, as we continue to understand the changes in audience and visitor behaviour. We know it's a tough economic climate as well. It's understandable that these last few years evoke different feelings. And, while we are keen to reset and look forward with optimism, we also acknowledge that you may also be feeling a degree of trepidation as well.

At the Arts Council, we want to offer pragmatic and practical ways to work together. So, with that in mind, we would like you to do a short

exercise in breakout rooms and, offer you the opportunity to share your personal reflections. Take a moment to introduce yourselves and to talk about your ambitions for the next three years. We'd like you to highlight a project that you are particularly excited about and how it will help to deliver Let's Create.

In your breakout rooms, we encourage you to switch on your camera and your microphone if you are comfortable doing so. If you require captions, you can turn on automated captions. If you require BSL interpretation, a BSL interpreter will be in the room with you and you can pin them to your screen. You can also use the chat box in there. If you encounter any issues or leave the breakout room by accident, just rejoin the Zoom call on the link we emailed to you at the start and we'll be there in the lobby and we can support you. A reminder, the breakout rooms are not being recorded. We are going to give you around 10 minutes to do

this now. Bear with us for a moment, while we all get sent to our rooms.

[Breakout session 1]

**Darren Henley:** I wanted to share some information, about the national portfolio in numbers.There are 985 of you, which is our biggest portfolio to date. And within that, you'll see we have 275 newcomers and 40 Investment Principles Support Organisations or IPSOs for short.These are there to help other NPOs and organizations and individuals across the rest of the sector to embed our Investment Principles in their work.24 organizations are also part of our Transfer programme. That's 18 NPOs and 6 IPSOs and their organizations are committed to moving outside of London by the third year of this portfolio.

Finally, and although these organizations didn't have to apply for investments at the same time as you, the National Portfolio includes some other types of regularly funded organizations. Creative People & Places are consortia who develop creative opportunities by for and with local communities with historically lower levels of cultural engagement. And there are currently 39 CPPs across the country. We also have 9 Museum development providers. And we have 117 Music Hubs across the country who collectively ensure music education, provision for every child in every school.

Now I spent a lot of my time traveling around the country every single week meeting as many members of the public and creative people and cultural organizations as I possibly can. And I see so many examples of the life changing work, different organizations deliver day in, day out. And it's easy to see numbers on a slide like this and not think much of it. But I hope that you can join me in seeing the huge potential and the exciting possibilities that collectively this portfolio represents.

I'm now going to hand you over to Peter to take you through the next part of our presentation, Peter.

I think we've got a slight problem with [hearing] Peter. So, what I might do is just I might step in and just do a piece of script. Bear with me. And, we'll keep going from here.

So, over the next 3 years, more than 60% of our investment will go into supporting our NPOs and we expect executives and chairs to take the lead in helping us to deliver Let's Create. We want to encourage you to work with each other and support the rest of our sector. We look to you to share resources and to partner with others. And this might include making co productions, doing joint R&D, sharing your data. Or holding joint staff training.

We look to you to support individual artists and organizations outside the portfolio. And that could be via giving advice, support and sharing resources wherever possible.

We also hope you'll build closer partnerships in other sectors. That includes higher and further education, health and the commercial creative industries. We're looking to you as the leaders of our national portfolio to set the pace and to build these relationships.

We also expect you to show best practice by using the Investment Principles. And Michelle will be talking about that in more detail later in the session. So long as her microphone works.

**Peter Heslip:** Darren, can I check? Can you hear me now? I'm so sorry everybody. I'm not quite sure what happened there.

It's great to be here with so many colleagues from around the country. Right, well, Darren, you've handed it over me just in time for the really exciting part of the of the presentation but incredibly important.

This is about the monitoring relationship. Some of you might be familiar with this already. Maybe some of you less if you are new to the portfolio. It is really important that we find ourselves on the same page. So for this funding period, we are changing the way that we interact with the portfolio. We are planning on taking a lighter touch to monitoring your funding relationships and we expect your board to be taking a more central role to ensure that our funding agreement is being delivered. By doing that our staff will have more time to support organisations and artists who don't already have a funding relationship with us and also, to help our

Team work in place, work in communities that don't have high levels of investment with the Arts Council.

You can read more detail about that in a document called The Relationship Framework. You can read about how we'll work together. It has been e-mailed to you and it is available on our website.

The framework which is in that document sets out the baseline level of contact and the following activities are what makes up that which are the bullets on the slide. First of all, the majority of our monitoring will be done by reading the quarterly board papers you send us. Also, you will be asked to make annual reports to the Arts Council which talks about your activity plan, your Investment Principles plans and also some budgets.

Secondly, we will plan to meet with you for an annual progress meeting usually in the first quarter of the year. Our first one of these meetings will be between April and June next year 2024. That meeting will be a chance to talk about the progress that you've made against your plans for the previous year. We'll also use that meeting to talk about the forthcoming year and talk about any risks that we flagged and answer any of your questions or concerns that you've got. Third and finally, our team of Relationship Managers and Senior Relationship Managers will be seeing a representative sample of your organisation's work. That tells us about your progress and will inform the annual review meeting.

So, those three points is what we call the baseline monitoring for everybody. If we consider you to be a low risk organisation, we will not generally attend board meetings and we won't have other progress meetings with you during the year. I'd like to talk about instances where you might be hearing more from us.

Organisations that are new to the portfolio and finding your feet should expect to hear more from us during this first year because we want to help you familiarise yourself with our processes. Our staff are likely to attend one of your board meetings as well.

So that's our welcome year really, but in addition, our monitoring can increase if we think your organisation is at a higher risk and there are lots of reasons why the risk might increase. That might mean that our staff are coming to your board meetings or we might ask for a special meeting with your chair and Chief Executive.

I'm going to park that conversation about risk now and come back to it in a little bit. Let me touch on a few other types of contact that you might expect to have from us. We might have an introductory meeting if you recruit a new Chair or employ a new senior executive or if there is a change on our side. Say your senior relationship manager has changed and we are giving you a new person to meet. We might also ask to be involved as an observer during any recruitment such as your chair or any of your senior executives. And finally, you might expect to hear from us when we are gathering sector intelligence. So we could be asking for example of best practice and innovation and we might be looking at out for gaps in provision or maybe we want to talk about activity in your local area. It might be a Relationship Manager getting in touch with you, but it might be another member of our team.

So in the next slide, we are talking about the role of boards. When I'm talking about boards right now, we are also talking about other oversight groups. We understand there is lots of different organisations with different governance arrangements in the portfolio. But you will know that from the application process that you wrote, and the guidance that you've had, that all of our funded organisations need to have a board. That board needs to meet formally at least four times a year as well. And while NPO executives have responsibility for day-to-day delivery of the funding agreement, we look to your board to take responsibility for overseeing that funding agreement. It is really the board's role to keep track of

progress in terms of the funding agreement and we look to the board to hold the executive team to account where needed.

We will be using your board papers, really importantly, to check on the progress that you're making and your targets and success measures and the papers really help us to gauge how active your board is in its monitoring progress. We recognise that every organisation is different in type and scale and that you will have your own approach, but it is critical that you provide us with what we need. Your board papers should be sent to us every quarter of the year, but in saying that, we're not asking you to align your board's scheduled meetings with our payment schedule. So, if I could just give an example. You might submit papers to us for your July NPO payment, but you might include papers for a meeting that took place earlier in the year, say some time after April up to June. We expect board meetings to happen quarterly so we wouldn't really expect you to send the same board papers more than once. Say for two payment requests in a row. So here we have set out what we expect your board papers to have in them in terms of our Relationship Framework. So as a minimum, as listed here, that should include an agenda for the board meeting, our team will be looking at minutes for the previous board meeting as well and those really need to have enough detail for us to establish what your board was talking about. We expect to see evidence that the board is tracking progress, delivering the funding agreement and also some evidence of risk management.

We also like to see up-to-date financial information and that should include the most recent management accounts and those accounts, just to set that out as it is in the document that you have, should have your original budget for the year, the actual results for the period to date, and any variance and difference between the two, and any revised projections to the end of the year as well. We'd like to see a rolling cashflow forecast that includes opening balances and a forecast to the end of the year and some financial statements. We appreciate that some organisations say if you're a library with a local authority, you might have a different set of reporting so it is worth checking in with your Relationship Manager about what might best satisfy our reporting requirements to really make sure that we're getting the best possible information about your financial progress. But we've worked with

libraries sometimes so we do know about that.

We also expect to see up-to-dated Risk Register for the organisations and your financial statements.

I think finally, we will would expect to see quarterly progress reports and in those reports, that's where we will be looking for targets and success measures that we'd already agreed in your funding agreement. So, for example, you telling your board what you said you would do in terms of your activity plan and your Investment Principles plan and highlighting areas where not enough progress has been made and maybe plans and actions to improve performance where things aren't going to plan. Hopefully it will help you that we've produced templates for you to use for all of those submissions. You need to ensure that your board meetings work for you. We understand that in many cases, we're only one source of income for organisations. You might have other funders that you're reporting to. So it is still crucial that you provide us with what we need to meet our reporting requirements.

So next, let me touch on risk. So, as you know, we distribute government money and we are required by the Government to ensure that money is publicly invested and the portfolio is being used and managed effectively. To demonstrate that we rely on our team to write risk ratings for each NPO and IPSO every quarter of the year. As I just said in the previous slide, our team will use evidence from your board papers to inform those risk ratings.

So we look across a number of different areas when we write the risk ratings as set out in this bullet list here. We talk about activity, that's in terms of our funded activity. So your progress against the targets and the success measures that we agreed in your funding agreement. When we talk about Investment Principles, again, that's to do with the targets agreed in your funding agreement. When we look at the risk around management and governance, that's really us understanding how effectively your executive team and your board are leading and managing the company. Financial viability is the financial health. Organisation and issues arising there. And finally, and very importantly, reputational risk is something which is about issues that might be controversial and may be have the potential to attract negative coverage for your company. Say in mainstream media, social media and to be very clear about that. It is not risk monitoring for us which is about policing the sector. We absolutely support our funded organisations to take artistic risks and we believe in freedom of speech and we understand that sometimes the risk-taking that you do does generate controversy, but we need to keep track of how organisations, staff and independent artists are supported when those issues arise. So, those are the five areas in which we track risk.

Our team will be writing up a risk summary assessment and a rating and those will be sent to you on a quarterly basis using our software, Grantium. It is really important that you send us the information that we need on time so that we can keep our monitoring up-to-date. We also expect that our risk reports that we write will be shared with your board.

The next slide is about intervention. So, if your risk rating starts to increase, we will think about taking a range of different interventions to help mitigate and hopefully help you reduce that risk as well. We recognise that these are extremely challenging economic times for everybody. There is steeply rising costs and continuing audience uncertainty after the pandemic and the Arts Council understands that you might need to adjust your plans to adjust to these challenges. We will be understanding and try to be as flexible as possible in responding to any requests to your plans after the funding agreement has been signed.

If you're concerned about the risk to our investment or we believe that the terms and conditions of the funding agreement have been breached, we might take one of the following measures listed here. So, we might place extra conditions on our grant payments, asking you to send us additional material before we release our funds. If we don't receive or agree on plans to deal with issues arising, we might also make your organisation ineligible for other Arts Council Funding Programmes such National Lottery Project Grants and others. If your board or oversight group papers don't meet our requirements for example, we would raise that in our risk monitoring and start by attending board meetings or we might signpost to our new governance team. A senior member of the Arts Council staff might ask to meet with your chair and Chief Executive to talk about your actions and we might withhold your payments. Please have a look in the Relationship Framework document for other specific actions we'll take and that's where we talk about the time frame in which we take these actions.

I will end by saying a little bit of our approach to financial intervention. We will not be able to directly financially intervene in any NPOs or IPSOs. That means we will

not offer additional funding to support your organisation's liquidy. The Arts Council doesn't have the budget for this. That means you won't be able to request additional funding to meet activity or operational costs which are covered in your funding agreement or for us to give you money to support you with any other financial difficulties. We will, however, consider requests from organisations to use their grant differently for a set period of time. For organisations and financial and other difficulty, that might enable you to review or stabilise your business if you needed it. We would also consider requests for what we call re-profiling which means changing the schedule of payments within a funding year and we might also consider grant advance which means we would give you an advance payment across different funding years as well to help you with your cashflow. In very exceptional circumstances, the Arts Council might provide indirect financial support through commissioning an independent consultant to do a review of your organisation's business. The consultancy is always focused on risk to our investment, but it can provide support to the organisation in terms of analysis of the situation, maybe giving options for ways of moving forward. We always tell the consultant doing that sort of work that additional investment from the Arts Council is not in the scope of their work.

That's it on risk which means I'm going to hand you over to Michelle Dickson.

**Michelle Dickson**: Thanks, Peter. Good morning everyone. It is lovely to see you from sunny Yorkshire.

We're going to take some time to hear from you via Menti. This is a platform that we'll use to cover your questions. So on your computer or smartphone, if could type in Menti.com and the code is on the screen. If you type in a question, it will

appear on the screen here so everyone will be able to see it.

We have over 200 of you with us this morning which is fantastic. But it might make my task as a question master tricky, but we will see how we go. We will wait a minute to see if we have got some questions coming through. We will pick those up and we will try and answer as many as we can.

Let us start to pick some of these up and some of the ones in the chat as well. Alex, who is a colleague from our funded organisations team. Alex, do you want to answer the question about whether the templates are compulsory or optional?

**Alex Middleton**: Sure. Hi everyone. It is nice to see you. So, we have published templates that you can use for your board reporting throughout the year. They are optional to use. We do need you to use the templates once a year when you report directly to us every April so we can see your activity for the ensuing year in a format that's consistent and reportable, but during the year, whilst we are encouraging you to use the templates, it is up to you to find a format which works for your organisation and for your board.

**Michelle Dickson:** Brilliant. There was a question about submitting board papers. Do they get submitted by Grantium, do people need to send them to their Relationship Manager as well?

**Alex Middleton**: They do need to be submitted on Grantium every quarter, because as Peter was outlining, that's the main way which we are monitoring your funding agreement and your delivery, but we do ask as well that you add your Relationship Manager to the distribution list for your board papers. So depending on when your board meeting falls, it might be a while in advance of the quarterly you payment request for payment. If you could add your RM, that would be really

helpful.

**Michelle Dickson:** Brilliant. Thank you.

Various questions and comments about monitoring and how light touch is this really? I think for low-risk organisations it certainly is lighter than in previous rounds and you will have less direct contact and engagement with your Relationship Manager so we are putting a lot of emphasis on the board papers and being able to keep an eye on those to ensure progress. Peter outlined where we will step up that monitoring and that's related to risk. So, rather than scale it according to the size of your organisation, or the level of funding that we are making to you, it is scaled in terms of risk. Alex, I don't know if you want to add anything to that?

**Alex Middleton**: Yes, I think the points around proportionality. We've set out the basic expectations around board papers which are fairly basic in terms of agenda, minutes, things like that. We do expect that board papers will look wildly different so if you're a very, very big organisation, lots of strands of activity, lots of departments, of course, your board papers will be a lot more complex than board papers of a smaller organisation. So, I think we're not trying to be too prescriptive around the board papers. The thing that we really do need to see is that you are reporting on the funded activity. So the activity that we originally agreed to see in your funding agreement, but your board papers are going to need to function for many other purposes and stakeholders as well and we completely acknowledge

that.

**Michelle Dickson:** We're not expecting everyone to record on everything in every set of board papers either, are we? So, you know, you might have lots of activities in relation to your progress against the Investment Principles and so on. We're not expecting every set of board papers to be a full account of your progress in each of those activities. It has got to be relevant and I think that's what we mean by saying these are your board papers and they have to work for your organisation whilst giving us enough insight and understanding as to how you are progressing against the plans that you applied against in your application.

We're going to talk in the second half of this session about boards and the support and what you might need in terms of support for your boards and also the Investment Principles and some of the tools and resources we have in place to offer you there. We'll pick up some of those in that part of the session. There is a point about reasonable adjustment and access. Alex, do you want to pick that up? The Alex.

**Alex Middleton**: Yes, we have said as with the application process where there are any specific access needs where we might need to make reasonable adjustments, we will talk to organisations about that. So that covers the monitoring relationship as well. Obviously these kind of things are very specific organisation by organisation. So, do talk to your Relationship Manager, your Relationship Manager will then have conversations with our teams internally about what we might be able to do and I know we're certainly already talking to a few organisations about changes that we might need to make to accommodate.

**Michelle Dickson:** Great. Thank you. Did any colleagues pick up on any of the questions that they wanted answer?

**Alex Middleton**: I think we're getting some feedback on the fact that the templates are using Excel and that that can be a barrier and access issue sometimes. So just to note that we are - I know at the moment we are working across a different of platforms. We've got Grantium and other platforms which are using Excel, but do continue to provide feedback. One of the reasons we're not making the Excel templates mandatory throughout the year because we know they don't work for everyone. So, do continue providing feedback. We obviously want to make them as user-friendly as possible.

**Michelle Dickson:** Thanks, Alex. There is a question there I can see about

headline details on ACE strategy. We will be publishing a plan and that will set out the programmes and it will have further information. We will let you know when that's updated and you can have a look at that. Illuminate and Impact & Insight Toolkit, we will cover in the next session.

I have seen comments about paperwork. We have been consistent in our messaging that we have limited capacity and want to spend more of our staff

time with a wider range of organisations and individuals and you will still have a

Relationship Manager. You will still be able to speak to somebody if you need to, but we are consciously and intentionally trying to make that shift so that we can free up more of their capacity in that way.

I think we've picked up most of these themes that I spotted. If there is anything that we haven't covered now, ask your RM if you need to and we'll have a quick scroll back through the break and make sure that we've covered all or about to cover most of what we can here. So, thank you for those.

So, we're going to take a break now. I'm going to be very strict and precise. We're going to have a 15-minute break. If we can come back at 11:15. I hope you have time for a bit of fresh air and a cuppa and we will see you at 11:15.

[Break]

**Michelle Dickson:** Hi, everyone, welcome back. I hope you grabbed a cup of tea and we'll get started again.

So, we will publish some FAQs to go with this recording and also from the sessions we did in-person as well. So, bear with us and we will work our way through those questions. There are lots of questions and suggestions in the chat. We are going to give you a chance to collaborate with each other in a moment. Please do try and just use that chat for essential stuff because it's quite distracting I think to have multiple conversations going on at the same time.

Let's put you in breakout spaces again, and we'll do that for 15 minutes. We'll give you a few more minutes than last time and we'll try and give you a bit more warning when the time is running out.

Collaboration is hugely important and it's at the heart of Let's Create I think. So, thinking about what we've already shared and discussed, please do try and use the time to introduce yourself very briefly and think about how you might collaborate with the wider sector and potentially with each other as well.

If you are comfortable to, please switch on your camera and mic. If you need captions, you can turn on automated captions, and if you require a BSL interpreter, they'll be in the room and you can pin those. We won't record the breakout rooms. If you need anything or drop out, you can jump back in via the joining link and we'll be here to help.

So we'd like you to talk through, as I say, who you are and your plans and ideas for collaboration over 15 min.

Okay, thank you.

[Breakout session 2]

**Michelle Dickson:** So welcome back everyone. We'll keep moving and we'll focus on our Investment Principles now.

So our four Investment Principles are the characteristics of what well run modern cultural organizations look like. As we develop our approach to future investment in the portfolio, we're likely to focus increasingly on how well applicants for funding have embedded these Investment Principles.

We think boards have a key role in encouraging the executive to embed the principles. And we see it as a process of continuous improvement.

Everybody is somewhere on the spectrum for each of the Investment Principles and we want boards and executives to work together learning from best practice and setting increasingly ambitious targets for improvement for your company. We recognize that for many of you these Investment Principles are already part of your day to day business and indeed the Investment Principles came from consultation with the sector as part of the development of Let's Create. However, other organizations might want, more support and help with embedding them. And so we've developed a range of resources to help you all. These are set out on the next few slides.

None of these tools are mandatory. Apart from using the Illuminate platform to share audience data with us on a regular basis. This helps us to analyze what's happening with audiences across the portfolio as well as supporting us to make the case to government for the impact of our investment.

So our Investment Principles Support Organisations. IPSOs will focus on those investment principles where they have expertise and experience in supporting others to adopt them. That will help us to support the sector, not just NPOs, but other organisations and individuals to really get to grips with the investment principles. So there'll be a database on our Investment Principles Resource Hub where you can browse the epsilon and see what they've got on a firm and what use it might be for you.

If you're not familiar with the Investment Principles Resource Hub or if you haven't looked at it since you made your application to be an NPO and it say, please do have another look. It's got a wealth of information about the Investment Principles and how you can. Embed them into your organization and activity. It's regularly updated with new content and there are essential reads, case studies, toolkits, videos.

All NPOs and IPSOs are required to submit data about their funded activity and audiences. This will include where events are happening and the total audience numbers. NPOs will be required to collect survey data from a representative sample of their audiences and submit the data and upload ticketing data where you're able to. But some of you may be exempt from these 2 requirements.

If you are exempt, you'll have been informed by your relationship manager already. For the most part, you're required to provide audience data reporting on a quarterly basis and this must be kept up to date throughout the funding period.

So what's Illuminate and what else can I do? It's an audience insights platforms that’s owned by the Arts Council and built and managed by PWC. It uses survey and box office data to provide you with analysis to support your audience development and improve the dynamism of your organization. It will help you understand if what you're creating, producing or promoting is relevant for your customer base or your local community and support you to deepen that reach.

As a leadership team, you'll have audience data at your fingertips to make informed data driven decisions. There will also be a training area where you can access guidance and other training materials. NPOs and DIPs are also required to complete the annual survey.

The annual data survey as a condition of your regular funding. Over the coming months, we'll be sharing more information with you about how the annual survey will change as we move into the need funding period.

PWC have already held some sessions introducing Illuminate to users. We have FAQs on our website that we're updating as the tool develops and we'll keep sharing these with you through our regular emails. So keep an eye out for that. There'll be more introductory sessions and more information available to you online is the illuminate platform develops and launches at the start of June. So we'll keep in touch about those too.

So we wanted to give you a rundown of some of the other tools that were available to you. So firstly, the Impact & Insight Toolkit. Say this could help you measure progress against the Ambition & Quality Investment Principles. It's a free evaluation and survey tool. Which enables you to gather and analyze feedback about your work so you can set your intentions for a piece of work and then seek responses from people who experience or interact with it, including staff, peers, members of the public. So do you have a look at that if you haven't already.

Our environmental responsibility program is delivered by Julie's Bicycle. It's designed to support the portfolio and the wider sector to improve their environmental responsibility and take action to respond to the climate crisis. Julie's Bicycle have lots of plans to support you. This includes an environmental champions program for board members and an organizational and place focused resilience program. Other program strands includes an energy management program transforming energy, which is for venue based organizations. And the Creative Climate Leadership Lab, which is designed to support emerging and underrepresented leaders in the sector. Additional resources which will continue to share with you over the course of the funding period include more free tools and how you can calculate your own carbon footprint.

Our Digital Culture Network is made up of a team of Tech Champions who are based across England and all have different specialisms. It's funded by the Arts Council and our Champions are there of the free one to one support and expertise to you and others in a range of areas including digital strategy and marketing, content, e-commerce, analytics, ticketing in CRM, websites, search engine marketing and optimization and digital accessibility. In addition, there are regular webinars and an online knowledge hub. So please tell colleagues within your organization about the Digital Culture Network if they don't already know about it. The team are really responsive to so if you have a gap if you have a need let them know and do what they can to help you.

We now want to take a few minutes to introduce you to a new initiative we're developing at the moment, transforming governance. You'll be glad to know this isn't a funding program. You don't have to apply for it.

It's an offer of support from us on all things governance. This program will support chairs, trustees and executive leadership to understands roles and responsibilities, including in relation to Arts Council funding, to better manage and monitor organizational risk and diverse by governance through inclusive recruitment, change, succession planning and to embed the Investment Principles.

So over the next 3 years, we want to support you all to further diversify your leadership and governing bodies to be more representative of the communities you serve, particularly in relation to disability.

The Transforming Governance program will provide practical advice and support to help boards diversify. There'll be four strands:

Free resources, toolkits and inspiration available on the Investment Principles Resource Hub, support for the portfolio beginning with these Welcome Sessions; but also online workshops and peer to peer networks; a focus on the future, exploring new and alternative models of governance; independent advice, mentoring and training for potential future portfolio applicants; and finally, specialist advice. So tailored action plans for organizations seeking or needing additional support.

The wider program will be delivered from September this year through to March, 2025.

So with all that in mind and as we develop Transforming Governance, we wanted to take a moment to ask you what do you need from us? So we're going to, move to Menti again. So if you type in the code in and then we'll ask you 2 questions.

The first question. Is how best can we provide you with governance support over this period. And we've got a mixture of chairs and board members here and staff. So please do start your answer with board or leadership just so we know who you're talking about.

So feel free to submit your thoughts and ideas here. Thank you.

So the question, how best can we provide you with governance support over this period? But there's lots here, which is fantastic.

So this is still the question of how best can we provide you with governance support over the period. And we are crowd sourcing your responses. And our team here will be able to use this to inform the shape of the resources and that we put in place for you.

And we've got nearly 60 responses. So it's going to be a challenge to pull these together but having just sort of scan through them.

Recruitment, annual reviews for board members, training, in various aspects of being a board. Also, the interaction between leadership and board should be crucial, but others saying that they're fine, they're good.

And so importantly, just to reiterate what we put in place will be available for you to make use of as you need to or as your board feels it needs to be nothing is obligatory here.

Great, thank you. So we have one more question. For you on, which is specifically about whether having a network for chairs would be helpful. So we'll move on to that question.

Thank you. So would you find a network for chairs helpful?

Obviously, to hear from Chairs or other board members here but feel free to think if you're a member of staff, whether your chair might find it helpful.

If you would find it helpful, do you have any, preferences about how it might be set up? In person or online. By your artform of discipline or by place? And facilitated or self-organized? So think about those things as well as a yes or no.

Great, so lots of responses here, I think, mostly supportive, but spanning very different ways of setting it up, which I think reveal some of the challenge.

Yeah, rotating chairs, that's fine. It doesn't have to be the same person.

And so, yeah, I will, take this away. I'm not sure we're going to, from looking at these responses anyway, I'm not sure we're going to come up with a solution that works perfectly for everybody but we will see what we've got and what we had in the other sessions as well and see what we can do.

Thanks so much everybody for this input. So I'll just leave this question open for another minute in case people are still responding.

And that bring us to the end of today's session.

**Darren Henley:** Thanks, Michelle, and thank you, for all of that. Really, helpful. So as Michelle says, we've nearly got to the end of today's session.

Before we close, I just want to take some time to talk to you about the importance of making the case for the public investment that you're in receipt of, whether that's coming from the government or from The National Lottery.

The message that investing in creativity and culture makes amazing things happen across the country needs to be shared all the time and we need your help in doing that. And the reason this is so important is that because the more that the public and other audiences make the connection. The more that translates into a better case that we can make for more investments in creativity and culture moving forward.

And that's important for the case we constantly made to national government and it's also important that we're making the case to local government as well.

So I want to take this opportunity to emphasise the importance of not only using the correct logos and branding your work properly but also making sure you're talking about this investment in other places as well. We've got an updated toolkit on our website. Where you can find lots of different resources to help you acknowledge our investment.

For example, we have a section all about engaging your local MP and if that's not something you've tried before. We really recommend inviting them to see your work or to visit your venue.

And there are different ideas in the toolkit so they can match organizations at different sizes and scopes. You can also tell us more about your work and your find contact information for your local area communication teams and they're also there to help you tell your story.

We're going to send a post event survey to you by email very soon. It will be really great if you were able to take a few minutes to complete it. We're very keen to know how today went and how we can improve it for you for next time.

In the coming weeks we'll be in touch again linking to all the resources that we've talked about today.

And finally we've recorded this session today. And we'll make that recording available online shortly. And share that with you too.

And we'll also come back to you and answer some of those questions you asked in the first half that we didn't have time to cover in detail so you can make sure that there's nothing that we're, not answering that.

Once again, I want to thank you very much, for coming along today. We, really do appreciate you spending time with us this morning. It's great to have you with us. I hope that you are as excited as we are to be going on this journey together.

Thank you again. Have a very happy Monday. And let's ends with this short film. Let's Create.

[Film plays]

Let's create a country united by culture to be happier, healthier, excited, inspired. To make sense of our world.

Sense of ourselves. Conference in the lonely, helping kids become grown-ups and grown-ups become kids again.

Bringing us all together with the freedom to ask difficult questions and take a stand. To make your mark and make a difference.

Where your age, you’re colour and your bank balance don't matter. Where it's about who you are, not where you're from.

About what you do not what you can't. For the change the world-ers and the just for fun-ers.

The kids with ambition. And the ambitious with kids. Villages, towns and cities and playgrounds and packs concert halls.

In rooms above pubs and festivals and fields. Playing the crowds of thousands and audiences of one.

Now, let's create.