**Transforming Governance: Governance and the Investment Principles– 9 January 2024**

MICHELLE: Good morning. I'm Michelle Wright from Cause4 a great pleasure to see you all. Happy New Year. For the purposes of the tape, I'm a white woman in my 40s, and I'm wearing a grey jumper, I have shoulder length brown hair. We are suggesting that people have cameras off during the speaking because we have got such a large group. But there will be a breakout session where obviously, it will be brilliant if you could have your cameras on to work with colleagues. The chat function is disabled for the session. But the Q&A function is enabled. If you have any questions, during the session, please pop them into the Q&A function. Every question that comes up today as part of the session will be responded to, but after the session, so we will distribute a write up of questions and answers following the session. That's quite important also from the break out groups, you will receive answers to questions that are posed if they are in that Q&A function. Finally, for housekeeping, if anyone requires BSL, would you also just pop a note into the Q&A and we will make sure then that the break out is supported. Welcome to this Transforming Governance session. We are looking in this programme on obviously governance, effective leadership strategy, recruitment, and specifically today about the implementing the Investment Principles. The structure of the session, we have got two speakers today, myself and Hollie Smith Charles from Arts Council England. We will then have a break out session for you to have a chance to work with colleagues. Then we have got Jo Verrent from Unlimited as guest speaker, who is going to talk about her experience of implementing the Investment Principles. Today we are focusing on ambition and quality, dynamism, and environmental responsibility because inclusivity and relevance is the subject of another session. We are going to think about the Let's Create strategy as a whole, and after overview of the Investment Principles as a reminder, and sure we all know them well. How the Investment Principles can guide effective practice, and how in terms of our boards and our governance, we best reflect the Investment Principles and also just thinking about Arts Council England requirements in relation to the Investment Principles. What are we finding easy to navigate, what is more challenging, what might be some tips to think about, the sort of next stages for boards to implement the Investment Principles.

HOLLIE: Thank you, Michelle, Happy New Year. Thank you very much for taking the time to be part of this workshop. I'm Hollie Smith Charles. We are all very familiar by now with the Investment Principles, but, just to recap really, they are part of Let's Create which is of course, our strategy for culture and creativity. And, in it, it sets out the vision for the next ten years, not just the outcomes that we would like to see but also the Investment Principles that we think should underpin this work. So the how, as well as the what and the "why". There are four of them, ambition and quality, dynamism, environmental responsibility, and inclusivity and relevance. For the Arts Council, these Investment Principles are essentially the key characteristics of what a well run modern cultural organisation looks like. It's some of it will be doing already as a sector, some of it will be adapted depending on your organisation. But it's a kind of overarching sense of what good looks like. And for us, this matters because we think that applying these principles will enable us working together as a sector, to better achieve the outcomes of Let's Create. And to maximise the Return On Investment of the public money that we are investing, into the National Portfolio. Also, really to demonstrate that investment in culture really matters and really makes a difference. For you as boards, I think there's a key role that you have in encouraging your executive teams to embed the principles, that's both in the culture and operation of your own organisation so that it's a process of continuous improvement, so we know that for some organisations they will be stronger in some areas than others. It's very much a process of change. We want to see boards and executive teams working together to learn from best practice, and set targets for how you might develop over the portfolio. For a lot of you, you will be thinking we do this anyway. It's familiar. It's a matter of common sense. You will need little support and encouragement to adopt some if not all of the Investment Principles. We do recognise that others feed support in embedding them, and so we have got a range of resources to help organisations and boards that you can access via our website. Or through conversations with your Relationship Manager, or our Customer Services Team as well. Next slide. So first of all, I want to spotlight our Investment Principle support organisations or IPSOs as they are known. They are also members of the portfolio, so they are kind of living and breathing the Investment Principles and the reporting requirements at the same time as the National Portfolio Organisations will be. The IPSOs focus on one Investment Principle or many of the Investment Principles where they have particular expertise and experience to support other organisations in implementing them. So for example, Cause4 who are hosting this session run the arts fundraising and Philanthropy Programme. That's around supporting fundraising knowledge and skills. They work across all four of the IPs and a range of art forms and disciplines. Other organisations might be focused on one or two of the Investment Principles, or targeted at a particular art form or geographical area. So you can find IPSOs that hopefully will be able to support the work that you are doing. There's around 30 or 40 of these IPSOs, and there's a database on our website on the Investment Principles Resource Hub. You can browse by categories by themes or IP and the types of support they offer to find support. I would really urge you to talk to the Investment Principles support organisations to support your work in this journey. If you are not familiar with the Investment Principles Resource Hub or if you haven't looked at it since making your application, do have a look on our website. There's loads of information in there about how you might embed the Investment Principles into your organisation. It's regularly updated with new content. There are the essential reads that you would have seen when you did your application, but we have also got tool kits, case studies, videos, and we held a big event last year called Let's debate, which was digging into the what the different Investment Principles mean in practice. There are recordings from those sessions as well. Yes do have a look on our website as well. I will recap on the reporting requirements, Illuminate is another tool. All NPOs and IPSOs are required to submit data regularly about their funded activity, and audiences. For most NPOs this is via audience surveys, and ticketing data as well as the annual survey. But I think it's worth just emphasising that of course, Illuminate is helpful for helping you embed the Investment Principles and it supports your improved data culture, and part of the dynamism principle. It can help with audience development by systematically tracking who your audiences are. We hope it will help you analyse the functions, so you can understand where and whether your work is relevant and how you can deepen your reach. As a Leadership Team, what it provides we hope is that you will have that audience data at your fingertips to help you as a board and as a leadership cohort to make informed data driven decisions. These are three other examples of the tools and resources available. They are all free to use and available on our website.

These aren't mandatory, but we would encourage you to have a look and see whether they can support you in terms of different the activities you have got as part of your Investment Principles plan. So the first is the impact and Insight Toolkit and this is a free evaluation and survey tool. It gathers and analyses feedback from the people who experience or interact with your work. That might be staff, and might be peers, and could be members of the public. It helps very much with evaluating your work and measuring progress against the ambition and quality principle. It gives you an opportunity to shape what things you want to measure and how in terms of judging. Of course, ambition and quality they are complex terms, and they mean different things to different organisations at different stages of their development. This is a tool to help you really dig into that Investment Principle. It's not mandatory, but it was developed for and with the sector. Do have a look at that one. We have the environmental responsibility programme and that's delivered by Julie's Bicycle. It was designed to support the portfolio and the wider sector to embed the environmental responsibility Investment Principle. And to take action to respond to the climate crisis in a way that's appropriate to you and your organisation and the work you do. There's a range again, and resources and programmes to support you. Including an Environmental Champions programme that's specifically aimed at Board Members, and that launched late last year, that came on stream. That's got free to access tools as well to help you calculate things like your carbon footprint, and there's various opportunities to take part in webinars or peer discussions so you can learn from one another as well. Again, you don't have to use any of this, if it helps to support your goals then those tools are out there. Finally, I wanted to flag the Digital Culture Network. This is Arts Council's team of tech champions. They are based across England, and all with different specialisms. They offer free one to one support, and expertise in the whole range of areas around digital strategy and marketing, and website creation, and eCommerce, and Box Office & Ticketing, and again if you are looking at your business model or your use of data, or anything like that, they can be very helpful. It's free support, and it's available to all Creative & Cultural organisations, and individuals as well. So, this slide is a recap of the information that we shared at the welcome sessions last spring that I'm sure you attended. I thought it was worth repeating some of this. So all NPOs, and IPSOs need to have a board or equivalent oversight group in place, and we ask that you have at least four formal meetings per year. It's vital that public money is spent well. We all know this, and having an active board or oversight group. So good governance is a really key part in ensuring this. The executive will take responsibility for the day to day delivery of the Funding Agreement that we have with you. We do look to our boards and oversight groups to take responsibility for overseeing how that Funding Agreement is applied. Especially agreeing and then monitoring progress on the targets and success measures. And to hold the executive to account when needed. We are only one source of income in many cases for organisations and you will have wider considerations and other funders that you need to report to. Your Board Meetings need to work for you, and the structure of those is of course, up to you. What we have got on the list there are the board papers we need to see for the reporting requirements. Again for most of you, much like the Investment Principles these are going to be common sense and papers that you would be using to structure your meetings anyway, and to structure your conversations. We use these papers both to check your success, and monitoring progress. It's critical the capturing of those conversations. It's critical that we have them, and we do recognise that every organisation and every board will be different in its type, and its scale, and its access needs, and that you will have your own approach and that's fine. Thinking about the Investment Principles specifically, I thought it was worth just drilling down on the requirements that last one around quarterly progress reports and what we mean by that. The quarterly reports should record the activity you have undertaken towards the Funding Agreement with the Arts Council, and that's your activity plan and your Investment Principles plan. We expect that the activity reporting is shared with you as the board or oversight group, and that this is then documented in the minutes. So the minutes are a really key way of capturing the conversation and decisions that have been happening. It's you know, where applicable these plans should capture areas where you know, insufficient progress is being made or where the board might have concerns, and what actions you are taken to mitigate risk or to support progress and performance. We would strongly encourage you to use the Arts Council template, so you know that you have got everything covered but again you are not required and again if there is issues talk to your Relationship Manager about how you are reporting. I won't talk about the activity plan in depth. We covered that back in the welcome session. Hopefully, you are in the swing of that. That essentially covers how you are contributing to the Let's Create outcomes, and their associated elements. The Investment Principles plan, and essentially this is a tool to help you as a team, as a board to consistently keep track of how your organisation is doing in embedding the Investment Principles, and checking what actions you are taking to kind of achieve these goals. Fundamentally, it's a tool for you as an organisation to monitor progress and make change. Then it's a tool, also to share with us in a systematic way how you are doing. Part of your funding agreement is to provide quarterly update on progress against agreed actions for us. And, that is a mandatory requirement, but we also hope that this process is a starting point for a dialogue for the organisations and the sector as a whole about the successes and challenges you are facing in being or becoming an ambitious high quality dynamic inclusive relevant and environmentally responsible organisation. In other words, how you are doing against those Investment Principles. If you are using the Arts Council template, it has got space for updates, and there's a tab. And there's information about what you are taking, and the plans in progress or established. Again, there's space to note any challenges that you have faced. I won't go into more depth than that, but just to say that there's lots of information on reporting requirements, and templates on the website in the section here for current NPOs, and IPSOs. Of course, you can talk to your Relationship Manager or Customer Services as well. Next slide please. To summarise really, the board's role is vital in helping to demonstrate the value that creativity and culture brings for your own organisation, and the communities that you work with, and serve, but also, as I said at the start to embed the Investment Principles and show what a modern well run cultural organisation looks like, and that really helps to demonstrate the sector's huge public benefit, and to increase that public benefit so we have got a strong case for investment. It's the kind of individual organisation picture but also, as a sector as a whole. It's way to share gross and challenges against your activity and Investment Principles plans. Michelle will talk in detail about what it might mean in practice for you. We see this as an opportunity to share learning and progress and challenges, and between exec teams and the board, and also with us in dialogue with the Arts Council as well. It's definitely a process, and a journey and the Investment Principles are still relatively new, and so we hope that even if everything is not going as expected we want to see what plans are if place to address that. We don't expect that every Board Meeting will include discussion of every initiative on the Investment Principles plan, there just isn't time to do that. But our hope is that your work together with the team to find a structure to the meetings in a way that makes sense. And you are not required to use the Arts Council templates so long as your reporting covers everything we need for monitoring. It's more complex. And as well as containing the prompts that you need, and we hope that the templates can be useful for keeping you as the board regularly cited in a report. And I gave examples of the support that's out there. Yes, every organisation will be different, and do talk to us if you have any further questions. I will hand over to Michelle who will talk about this in practice.

MICHELLE: Thank you. I'm going through some of the headlines and in IPSO we have the oversight committee, we are not a charity board, and we are finding some of the things easy to navigate, and challenging as we do through. So the four headlines that we have taken through from our reporting are to have board development days, or specifically focused and this continues to go through in terms of specific focus time for our boards and thinking about how successful we are being in applying the principles. We need to think about how our skills and expertise of our boards are supporting the embedding of the principles. I will talk a little bit more about that shortly. Because, it is all new. We need different potentially different skills and different expertise than we might have previously had on the board to be able to respond to the Arts Council requirements. Arts Council have suggested possibly, assigning responsibility to relevant sub committees or individuals and some organisations to find enough time to be able to discuss the principles in detail, and have formed sub committees, or had particular Trustees or Board Members assigned specifically with looking at sections of the Investment Principles and again, I will come back to that in a moment. And to make sure that the Investment Principles are standard agenda items in much the same way we expect the business plan to come back, the Investment Principles embedded as part of that to come back consistently, and so that as Board Members we can retain the information, and understand what we are reporting against, and I think it has been incredibly important for our organisation so we can see what we are making and it's consistently part of our board agendas. To go through some of that in a little bit more detail. Again these are a sort of Arts Council headlines, that I'm responding to and the first is the skills, and knowledge on the board. You know, what are the gaps? How do we invest in the skills development as needed? We already certainly for charitable boards, and any type of board have a huge number of responsibilities as volunteers. You know, the Charity Commission guidance is getting more and more intensive at the same time as our funders are expecting more. This Arts Council investment round I think is a really good example of that. So, you know, more expectation, and more for us to do, and more monitoring, and more oversight from all types of boards, and different skills of organisation. This is challenging. I think often in terms of skills, boards take a very formulaic approach, so we sort of perhaps do a skills audit, and we identify that we need a finance person or a legal person, and somebody that has oversight of our artistic or curatorial programme. Those things are obviously really important, we do need those skills for sure, and we need skills that meet the needs of our strategy, and Arts Council funding and ambitions for that period of that funding or that strategy. Thinking about skills this that context rather in a formulaic way can be helpful. I have been working with some organisations that are building their boards to meet the requirements of their strategy for a three year period. So they are actually recruiting Trustees, and Board Members for that period of delivering the business plan which feels smart and comfortable to me. So, for sure in terms of Arts Council requirements, there will be areas where we might need more or different skills. We might need to increase our financial reporting, or we might need to increase our artistic knowledge in areas around ambition and quality for example. From our perspective, it's been incredibly important to have Board Members, and committee members that are also having to apply the Investment Principles that are navigating the process that are learning what they need to put in place because that has just been incredibly valuable in terms of the dialogue that we have had at Board Meetings. The other aspect is sharing of course, with peer organisations, the Investment Principles support organisations have working groups where we learn from each other, and we speak to each other about how we are applying this sort of knowledge, and how we are evidencing it, and what templates we are using. Where there might be some flexibility from Arts Council, again I know that's another time requirement, but to have those conversations has been very important because otherwise, we are just kind of navigating individually as organisations rather an overwhelming set of circumstances, and information requirements. In terms of the second point, who will lead different areas, and how they will report back to the wider governance structure, and for organisations that have really a high level of Arts Council funding, I have certainly seen many create a sub committee structure that will give them time to be able to... boards time to really be able to understand what their responsibilities are.

Obviously, for any type of board, the danger with that is there's a huge positive to it, in terms of having proper time to consider what we are required to do for Arts Council. The negative to it is potentially for other Board Members, they think that's been taken care of over here, so I don't have to worry too much. Of course for any type of board, it's a team effort. We need to understand together what we have to deliver. For charitable organisations, the collective of the Trustees are collectively responsible should anything go wrong in terms of our organisation, and certainly therefore in terms of meeting funders' requirements. We need times where we bring it all back to the whole board, and that the whole board is completely clear of what they are responsible for, and not. But having some additional time as part of the sub committee for further investigation, for talking to other organisations, and learning from them about their application of the Investment Principles, I think can be helpful. Similarly, having a lead Board Member or Board Members, for particular Investment Principles can be helpful in a similar way. You know, if we have people that can take the time to understand the new requirements, and how we are delivering against them and where we might need to amend or develop, that can be useful. In terms of thinking about the outcomes, we want to achieve, and how we are holding the organisation to account, I think what many of us are facing, is this overwhelm of information, and you know, new requirements, and new responsibilities more that we have to do and with the guidance, with one thing the organisation has done practically is to pop those outcomes onto a one page sheet. That's actually what we use to drive the conversations at each Board Meeting. As Board Members, Trustees Oversight Committee Members are seeing information consistently from one organisation, from one meeting to the next. And that we have consistently having and taken an overview of the same information that isn't too overwhelming because of the way that it's presented. Hollie mentioned that regularity, and I think again, it's like good practice from a board perspective in terms of the analysis and strategy, and that we are bringing back the strategy and the business plan requirements in different ways to each Board Meeting so we can have consistent and regular review and learning for that particular cycle. Different organisations have different scales will have different waiting to different Investment Principles. We, as an Investment Principle Support Organisation chose to take forward four Investment Principles. We therefore report on all four. But, we have in terms of our waiting of activity far higher commitment the dynamism than to the other two. We have got to be mindful of that again, in terms of the weighting of discussion at Board Meetings that the activities are weighted accordingly. A very kind of big area at the moment is as we all know arts cultural heritage organisations are facing as the wider charity sector and other industries are a kind of compounding set of issues and challenges that we are all grappling with. So, you know, not only are we recovering from covid and audiences we have got funding challenges, we have got cost of living, we have got different types of audience behaviour, we have got issues in terms of Local Authority funding, all those things are kind of compounding, and coming together. Arts Council has its own very detailed requirements because this is public funding, any funder though will see funding to any organisation as an investment. This is where the board has such an important role to play. There will be things, undoubtedly in a number of organisations, activity plans, as they set out to Arts Council are the funders that can't be delivered because of that very complex set of external circumstances that we are all facing. We need to have proactive conversations with our funders when we need to change activities, or things can't happen in the way that we originally envisaged. In the organisations that I work with, there's obviously a huge amount of fear in doing that, fear that we won't be funded again. Fear that there will be some judgment, you know, fear because we set out a particular ambition, and perhaps that can't be realised in the way that we would wish. I think if Board Members can really be supportive of organisations having proactive conversations with funders, with Arts Council, that's very, very important. The funders, and certainly in the dealings I have with funders, funders tend to be incredibly supportive, unless there are particular surprises or the organisation hasn't been honest or has regular discussions if things need to be amended or changed. In terms of the outcome framework, proactive conversations, and being able to amend activities should we need to, and also, our sector needs our changing, so Arts Council and other funders, will be supportive, because the needs of our beneficiaries, and audiences are changing faster than we anticipated. This is the same point in terms of consistency, and the information we are taking forward to boards, and we make sure that that is backed up with good data, and that we are improving our processes as we can in our organisation, and because whilst we have a big portfolio we are only a small team of ten people. We are trying to minimise and be efficient with data and therefore changing the templates or the communications where we can in discussion with Arts Council if that's making life easier in terms of our delivery. There's then the risk management aspect. We are required as Hollie said to submit a Risk Register, and most boards will have that as a formal requirement. Those of you that are structured as charities, and you are required to have one from a Charity Commission point of view as well. It's a simple thing to say. But I think framing the Investment Principles as part of that Risk Register is useful, because then the whole board will be paying attention to that as a key aspect of risk planning for your organisation. It makes complete sense because obviously, if our funding fails or we are not able to deliver in the way that was originally anticipated and that presents a key risk for the organisation. I think also, you know, something that's new from Arts Council is this quarterly play back from their perspective of the risk, that your organisation, the risk level that your organisation might be under. Those risks are obviously the same for every organisation, there will be things that happen that we can't prevent, and you know for example if a key member of staff leaves then it might be that that risk rating rises. You know, these are parts of the running of organisations, the regularity of organisations, and again, I don't think we should be fearful of discussing where we are, or changes to strategy or needs to change activities with Arts Council very proactively, as we see them. There's the way that Investment Principles link into strategy. I think because obviously, the way that we as organisations are structured, and our reliance on particular aspects of funding and streams from different funding sources varies enormously, some organisations will be very reliant on Arts Council, for others the Arts Council funding will form an important but perhaps much smaller part of the overall income stream. The nature of how we are being asked to report, and the increase in governance oversight for the Arts Council reporting in particular, I think presents a danger in so far that we see this or can be dealing with it as almost a separate activity to our key organisational strategy. In terms of our organisation, we couldn't cope with that very well, so we have absolutely embedded the Arts Council activity as a key part of our overall organisational strategy, and also the Investment Principles as well. So we see them as a running strand across the overall strategy, and therefore, from an oversight committee perspective, and also from a wider board perspective, it means that we have got a greater handle on our responsibilities as Board Members in terms of prioritisation. At the moment, and especially I think in January where we all come back from hopefully, a bit of a break, it can feel very overwhelming in terms of what we have to deliver, how we are going to navigate through difficult external circumstances, how we are going to meet the requirements of funders, and the balancing of activities, and it's obviously therefore completely critical. Really, effective boards have a real grip on prioritisation of what the organisation is doing. They act as both an accelerator, and a break. You know, what are we going to accelerate because we are able to, and we have capacity to do so, and what needs to be changed, and amended or stopped. I think therefore, embedding the Arts Council Investment Principles activity as part of overall Strategic Plan gives an oversight for the board to be able to do that more effectively. So you know, for sure, right now, effective boards will be gripping that prioritisation in just the way that I articulated you know, what are we going to do because it's the most important thing for our organisation, its future, and the audiences and beneficiaries, and what are we going to pause and what are we going to need to stop doing because we need to create space for other things. In that way, that flexible conversation and proactive conversation with Arts Council becomes really, really essential as well. We need to meet the requirements of the wider business environment, we need still some agility in terms of responding to opportunities, to not be bogged down in the administration, and bureaucracy. Again, in terms of how we are spending time and this is where boards can really help executive teams and you know, will need more resources, and capacity, if Arts Council represents 50% of your income then obviously, we are going to have to you know, have a sort of greater amount of time allocated to that activity at board than if Arts Council represents 5% of our activity. So for boards to be very clear sighted about how we are spending time linked to the importance of Arts Council in terms of the overall income is really important. As Hollie said to discuss adaptation of templates with Arts Council. In terms of standardisation of reporting information, we can absolutely see how that's important for Arts Council, and in dealing with the investment of the portfolio as a whole, it can be more challenging for us as individual organisations to be able to respond to if it means that we are creating different sets of documents outside of already created documents. Or if we are disabled led organisation, and we are having to adapt particular documents. So we need to discuss that adaptation of templates with Arts Council to make sure that we are just again, not creating more overwhelm in the administration. Thinking and reflecting on evaluation. Obviously there's the evaluation of the overall success of Arts Council programme, and for us as a whole, and as individual organisations, and as Board Members we will be looking at the evaluation of our strategy, and business plan and has that classic dynamic for Board Members where we have created a strategy or set of activities that we are committed to, but actually, if someone were to ask us, you know, is that successful, are we on the right path, that it can be very difficult to answer. Thinking about the kind of overall three year or four year horizon for particular aspects of funding, and strategy and I think it's useful obviously to think about the Investment Principles as part of that overall evaluation as well. The Centre for Cultural Value has articulated this embedded evaluation model and they have four principles, and how beneficial it is, and how committed the organisation is to learning, and ethical and applicable and the robustness of the evaluation, and how people centred it is. And how connected. So, how transparent are we as an organisation, and is the information shared and our learning shared, so there on a final point, their articulation of this that if we are going to be successful, and the Investment Principles roll out success, then it will have more chance if they are embedded systematically, and cultural organisations work collaboratively to apply them. We want to make sure we have got those principles of reflection and learning, and we are objective, and critical, and we are building them into every stage of delivery from planning to end. So they are embedded in the strategy and that we are using them to inform future developments and that they are formalised and shared with key partners, and key funders. We are going to have a break, a ten minute break, and when we come back, we will outline the break out session for discussion. Back in ten minutes. We will start break out in a couple of minutes. We will start the break out in a minute or two. The discussion question is in break outs as well. The question is what have been the opportunities and challenges in your organisation to ensure you are embedding and implementing the Investment Principles effectively. What processes or ideas have supported the process?You will be sent an invite to break out room shortly. What we would really like you to do is to nominate somebody to scribe, and post two or three points as a summary of your discussion into the Q&A. And additional questions you would like answers to pop them in the Q&A as well. All questions will be answered post the session, and everybody will get access to those. We have got about 15 minutes to have this conversation and then we will bring everybody back for the guest speaker. I hope it's a fruitful interesting conversation.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

MICHELLE: I’m delighted to welcome Jo Verrent from Unlimited who is going to do the final talking for this session in terms of her organisation's experience around the Investment Principles.

JO: Fantastic, thank you very much for inviting me. I‘ve got some slides. They include pictures of art, and at the end of today the thing we should be left with is the fact that we are all working in the arts sector. So it’s a blue image, Unlimited logo, and somebody in a pink leotard looking up wearing a headdress. My name is Jo Verrent, I’m the director at Unlimited. There’s a headshot there of me. My pronouns are she/her and I'm a 50 plus white woman with fading blue hair, tending towards the plump sitting at home in Wakefield. Next. An image of somebody in a carnival costume, bright green. Lovely. Outside the Southbank Centre. So, what does Unlimited do? We commission extraordinary artworks, all by disabled artists. We back disabled artists and we challenge the cultural sec, sector, and by doing that, and in a whole host of other ways. And, through all of this, we are trying to change the perceptions of disability. Next we commission across all art forms this is an image of two dancers, one who happens to be a wheelchair user next. And the key one. And we also have a strand called connect, and that's about connecting those artists to the Cultural Industries, and vice versa, connecting the industries to disabled artists. We have a strand called developed which is about developing the knowledge and skills of all those we work with. And artists and cultural sector, and we have a strand called support which is about supporting disabled artists to have sustainable careers. And we have a strand called change. We have a strand called change which is the whole reason for our existence. We are here to bring about lasting positive change, and when that happens, our aim is to close. Next. Another image of some of our work, and this is two dancers in a hospital setting, and either side of a young person in a bed who is joining in with that dance work. Next. We have four values we value equity, and we need to do things differently to reach a whole range of people. We are very proud of our commitment to intersectionality. Next. A painting of a Dalek. On a 70s wallpaper which is purple with yellow flowers. A Visual Arts, and another big part of what we do. Next. The other thing to know about us before I can even start to talk about the Investment Principles is where we kind of fit within the UK, around um... disabled people really. So 22.% of the working population are disabled people and 60% of the deaths from covid have been disabled people. The community has been decimated. Covid is not over. We are going through the biggest resurgence we have had since the pandemic began.

Yet when we come to look at the arts stats which Arts Council really helpfully publish, we know that only 7% of staff, 9% of Board Members, and 8% of arts audiences are disabled people. So our job is to try and change those stats. To provide more product, and to provide more support, and guidance, etc. For us, our board is 93% disabled people, and our staff, we average 83, and we are about to update these, we have got some staff on board changes at the moment. Next. A textile work. Very complex woven tapestry with many different elements on it. In pinks, blacks, purples and I can see an octopus, a monkey, and a cat and CDROM. So, the Investment Principles. How the hell do they work within our organisation? So we have a Senior Management Team of four. Each one of us leads on one Investment Principle. The board obviously get quarterly reports on those activities and on our progress, and the IPs often form discussion sessions for board mini meetings. I would disagree with something earlier. We did have to change our board structure to fit with the reporting requirements and we used to have three main meetings and in between it's mini meetings. We used to meet every two month. We had to go to a quarterly structure. It was the only way we could fulfil our reporting requirements. Sometimes, we do have to shift sadly, our innovative dynamic ways of working in order to fit with the computer driven process driven reporting requirements of some funders. Next slide. Under water wheelchair, who knew? A picture of somebody in a wheelchair, water, coral fish, beautiful image. One of the original Unlimited commissions back in 2012. So, the Investment Principles were new to all of us. We found two of them incredibly easy to adopt and integrate to what we are doing. It's what we do. It's our bread and butter. It's, we have so much activity that already fills that, we have found that a real easy one to progress along with. The other one that's really easy for us is dynamism. Because, having been a programme for ten years, we made the shift and became an independent organisation. So as we were at the beginning of that process, we were already going through a whole number of choices about how we would work best to support our you know, heavily disabled people. We have a geographically dispersed team. We have a central hub in Wakefield. We have very high levels of flexible working. A whole range of things which naturally we were trialling and we have an action research approach, all of these things we were trialling fitted very neatly within the dynamism Investment Principle and have been very easy for us to report on. It's been really easy and moderately hard to plan our work around ambition and quality. It's worth noting that when we put our application into Arts Council, and got our successful NPO badge back we were told to get back the Investment Principles. There was a feeling we were going to do three years' work in a year. We had to go through and reduce things. And ambition and the quality is the one that's changed most over this year. For example, we put in a big commitment around training up our staff on conflict resolution. We had to stop all of that and pivot to a really big piece of training work around mental health. We spent 3500 pounds, and training and making four of us mental health first aiders. We had to respond to the needs of our staff and artists and board and the sector as a whole. The hardest one has been environmental responsibility. Not because we don't think it's important. Some of our practices go against some of the principles that are out there. Access counters some of the principles around best practice. We found there was so much information out there that we would have to have two or three full time members of staff just reading all of that information in order to determine what to do. So it's been the hardest one for us to find our own path through and in fact, we have had to really slow down in order to do it properly. We are not as far ahead as we would like, but we are much surer about the steps that we are taking. What we did is we put one of our lead through the IE TM European green school which was a series of seminars, and individual mentoring, and we have come out of that with not signed off yet, and we are checking it with our board and artists, and our freelancers and staff. We have come one a statement that I will talk through in a moment.

This image is chosen deliberately for here. It's of 250,000 helium balloons lifting up a disabled artist from the floor at Sydney Opera House. Again, a piece that if we were doing now, would have very different caveats around it in relation to environmental practices, it is actually an environmental piece, the helium is not medical level. The balloons are all biodegradable. When this piece was in Australia, the artist did receive death threats because there weren't overt about publicising its environmental credibility as they should have been. This environmental statement. This is an extract. It says our focus is on fairness, and making a positive impact. We strongly believe that achieving climate justice is inseparable from social justice. The harsh reality is that the impacts of climate change hit some communities much harder, especially those who have contributed the least to the problem. However, not everyone has the same access to sustainable living options. At Unlimited we advocate for better access and inclusion and challenge ableist systems as a priority. We understand that sometimes what's good for the planet might clash with what's accessible for everyone. Wheelchair user dressed as a snail in an outdoor environment. For us it was important to make that statement, and to build our own confidence around being able to say no, access first environment second. We didn't have that confidence at the beginning of the process, everyone we have spoken to along the journey has agreed with us that that social justice route is the right one for us to take. Taking our time, and changing our plans and involving everyone, the team and board and artists. Going back to first base to those basic principles rather than just shoving in a meaningful target because that's what we thought we should do. Then, setting purposeful targets and then monitoring the progress. Taking a slower route round to make sure we are really sure about what we are monitoring next slide please. And celebrating slide to end on. A vogue ball. This is something in black leather, probably plether to be honest with their hands raised in a power salute. I have just put the all of our social handles, and our info information our website and e mail address on the slide. We are really interested in making contact with organisations who have a social justice base within their environmental principle IP, or people who are interested in inclusion and relevance where we might have resources that might help you. We really hope that we can have discussions, and I think somebody mentioned earlier that peer support is one of the ways through this, and for us, peer support has been the way that we have been able to find the wood through the trees. There's so much information out there on the Arts Council site, on our sites, there's just so much there, and trying to work out which bits of it to look at, we have found peer support to be the most valuable way of doing that thank you.

MICHELLE: Thank you so much Jo wonderful to hear from you. We are going to stop the session there thank you so much to everybody for attending. As I say, all the information slides, and questions, and answers will follow through in the next few days, thank you everybody, and have a great afternoon!