## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 About us</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 Corporate priorities for 2018–20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 Key activities: Our operational effectiveness</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 Key activities: Goals, areas, artforms, museums and libraries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area activities</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artform, discipline and cross-cutting activities</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 Budgets</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 Appendix: Corporate equality plan 2018–20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This document sets out Arts Council England’s high-level plan for delivering its 10-year strategy over the period 2018-20. It outlines our key activities for improving our effectiveness as an organisation and the work we will be doing to progress our five goals. It does not cover all our regular ‘business as usual’ work which is set out in detailed annual operational plans produced by each department and area.
About us

Our purpose and mission

Arts Council England’s role is to champion, develop and invest in arts, museums and libraries in England. Our mission is ‘Great art and culture for everyone’.

In 2010 we published our 10-year strategy Achieving Great Art for Everyone, which was refreshed in 2013 as Great Art and Culture for Everyone, the ‘green book’ that included our new responsibilities for museums and libraries.

Our 10-year strategy shows how we will secure the legacy of our arts, museums and libraries. It outlines how we will deliver on our role as a dedicated national investment and development organisation for the arts, museums and libraries, acting strategically to ensure the health of England’s whole cultural ecology in 2010-20.

Our strategy contains five goals that shape all our work with the arts, museums and libraries sector. These are:

**Goal 01**
Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries

**Goal 02**
Everyone has an opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries

**Goal 03**
The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable

**Goal 04**
The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled

**Goal 05**
Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries

This corporate plan for 2018-20 identifies our priorities and describes the main ways in which we will deliver these five goals across areas, artforms and disciplines. It also gives an indication of how we will work to increase efficiency, develop our people, and reduce our environmental impact.

This plan is a continuation of our corporate plan for 2015-18 and is supported by annual departmental plans. The next corporate plan will be published in 2020.
Our values

Arts Council England and all those who work on our behalf aspire to be:

- **passionate:** we believe in the fundamental power of the arts to transform lives
- **bold:** we have the confidence and the courage to take risks and explore new ideas and we encourage others to do the same
- **nurturing:** we help support growth, creativity and innovation in others
- **knowledgeable:** we share the experience and expertise of our people and our partners within a learning environment
- **collaborative:** we listen to and work with our people and our partners to ensure we are greater than the sum of our parts
- **accountable:** we are open and transparent in our decision-making and how we spend money

Our governance

The governing body of the Arts Council is our National Council, which is led by our Chair, Sir Nicholas Serota, and is comprised of 14 other members appointed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

National Council is advised by an Executive Board led by Chief Executive, Darren Henley. It has delegated responsibility for operational matters to the Executive Board.

National Council has established five area councils covering the Midlands, London, North, South East and South West to advise it on strategy, make key funding decisions on its behalf and to act as its eyes and ears on the ground.

Further details on our governance are available on our website.

As a non-departmental public body, we receive funding from central government. Our relationship with central government is regulated through a management agreement with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport sets priorities for the Arts Council which are described in the Arts Council England Management Agreement, alongside our key performance indicators which are:

1. Sustained attendance and visitor numbers in National Portfolio Organisations and Major Partner Museums.
   (a) Total audience/visitor numbers
   (b) Breakdown by five Arts Council areas

2. Proportion of National Portfolio Organisation and Major Partner Museum board members who identify with the following characteristics: a) Black and minority ethnic; b) lesbian, gay or bisexual; c) female; d) disabled.
3. The proportion of National Portfolio Organisations producing at least one screening or broadcast in the reporting year.

4. An increase in contributed and earned income in National Portfolio Organisations and Major Partner Museums
   (a) Total Increase
   (b) Breakdown by five Arts Council areas

5. Proportion of National Portfolio Organisations undertaking international activities in the reporting year.

6. Total number of schools engaged in meaningful contact by Arts Council funded Bridge Organisations.

7. The proportion of grant applications processed within the Arts Council’s published time frame.

**Context**

Our work over the next two years will be inevitably influenced by external factors. And while we can anticipate the general nature of these, we cannot be sure how much each will affect our plans.

The UK’s creative industries continue to thrive and the growing recognition of their importance to the UK economy provides both grounds for optimism and considerable future opportunities for the publicly funded arts and cultural sector.

At the same time, there remains significant concern about the pressure on public funding for art and culture at a national and local level.

The last spending review maintained standstill in our funding from government, and we anticipate that in the short to medium term there will be continued pressure on government spending. We cannot assume our direct grant from the government will be protected and must therefore help to build the resilience of our funded organisations.

Since the last corporate plan, arts organisations have made real progress in terms of earned income, in addition to ticket sales, through commercial activities such as catering, accommodation and merchandise.

Yet these cannot be a substitute for public funding. In practice, the success of those commercial activities is linked to the reputation of the work we support. Consistent audiences are attracted through artistic quality, which requires organisations to be sufficiently financially stable to innovate and take artistic risks.

Local government remains the biggest investor in art and culture and co-funds many arts and cultural organisations with the Arts Council. We will continue to support local authorities in devising new funding models.

Yet local authorities face continued austerity, forcing art and culture to compete for funding with frontline services.
We will continue to work closely with local authorities to maintain and develop the artistic and cultural infrastructure across the country, but we cannot replace lost funding. As cuts continue, there may be conspicuous closures.

This underlines the importance of our advocacy role in persuading local authorities of the long-term social and economic value of cultural services. We will also support the UK Cultural Cities Task Force as it explores ways to sustain cultural investment in cities outside London.

We are committed to building production capacity in the arts and cultural sector outside the capital and set ourselves a target of spending at least 75 per cent of Lottery income outside London during the 2015-18 period.

We achieved that target, but we recognise much remains to be done. We therefore intend to better the 75 per cent target during the period of this corporate plan.

Over the last decade, increases in our National Lottery funding have helped mitigate the effects of less direct grant funding from the government. However, as competition from rival lotteries has grown, we have recently seen some decline in Lottery income. Our financial plans reflect this situation and we will do more to promote the good work the National Lottery does.

Our commitment to the new National Portfolio and other funding streams is based on reasonable expectations of Grant-in-Aid and Lottery revenue. Changes to either may result in revisions to our funding agreements and to the value of our development funds.

The current uncertainties surrounding Brexit are likely to have a significant impact on the arts and culture sector – which depends heavily on the international movement of talent and access to overseas markets to sell products and services and raise co-investment funds.

A considerable focus of our work over this period will be on advising government on measures to mitigate the negative impacts of Brexit, while ensuring our sector is well placed to take advantage of new trade deals being negotiated.

There has been widespread debate about the declining take-up of arts subjects at GCSE and the potential impact this might have on our talent pipeline. There are also broader questions about the extent to which we are successfully developing the creativity and creative thinking in our citizens needed to ensure successful, cohesive communities.

During 2018-20, we will explore these issues further through two new initiatives:

- The Durham Commission on Creativity and Education will look at independent, evidence-based research and examples of international good practice to identify the best ways creativity and creative thinking can be developed across the curriculum.
- We will also work with De Montfort University in Leicester on a 25 Year Creative Talent Plan. This project will test practical steps we could take to ensure every young person in this country is able, by the age of 25, to fulfil their creative potential.
The findings from these two pieces of work will help shape the development of our new strategic framework for the period 2020-30.

In addition to this, we will also build the case for the social impact of our investment in arts and culture. We will support and celebrate the contribution creative practitioners and cultural organisations make across vital areas of public policy, including health and wellbeing and criminal justice.

We will develop a coherent and strategic approach to investment, seeking partnerships with major stakeholders in health and criminal justice and the support of specialist cultural organisations working in these sectors to raise quality, broaden delivery and attract new revenue streams.

We will work with higher education institutions and other agencies to build a more robust evidence base and will provide strategic support for the further development of this kind of practice across our portfolio.

Across England there are moves towards devolution. We welcome them for the opportunities they bring to focus on the richness of local culture, and to be involved in partnerships that make a difference to our communities.

However, we know through long experience that local provision needs to be part of a national strategy and that the Arts Council plays an important role in developing and strengthening a national arts and culture ecology. We will continue to provide expert advice on national best practice as well as encouraging regional, national and international collaboration.

Internally, we face continued public sector pay restrictions. We will be looking at what we can do to retain staff, offering more development and progression opportunities. We also need to recruit more widely to equip ourselves with skills relevant to a technologically-aware and diverse society.

Last year saw the publication of two important reviews of our activity. The government’s Tailored Review was a vote of confidence in the Arts Council as a steward of public funds. It also made some key recommendations, identifying Arts Council England as the development agency for arts and culture.

This was followed by the Mendoza Review, an independent review of museums in England, which recommended greater collaboration across the sector and the better harmonisation of funding with Arts Council England taking the lead in setting strategy for the sector as a whole.

The recommendations of these reviews can be read here: Tailored Review, Mendoza Review.

The outcome of both reviews will be integral to our future work.
Our investment approach

Between 2018 and 2020, Arts Council England will invest a projected £939 million in Grant-in-Aid (funding from government) and approximately £425 million of income from the National Lottery in the arts, museums and libraries sector. We offer three main types of investment:

- National Portfolio: we provide funding to a portfolio of 829 arts organisations, museums, libraries and Sector Support Organisations in England to enable them to deliver their business plans and advance our five goals.

- Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants: an open-access programme for arts, museums and libraries projects. Grants range from £1,000 to more than £100,000. The programme will support a broad range of arts and cultural performances, events and projects across the country.

- Development and investment funds: we use targeted investment to assist our development role by addressing specific challenges and exploiting opportunities for the sector. This includes investment in capital projects to support resilience, and Developing Your Creative Practice, a new funding programme for individual creative practitioners with grants ranging from £2,000 to £10,000.
Corporate priorities for 2018–20

In pursuing our five strategic goals for the remainder of our current 10-year strategic framework, we have identified six corporate priorities that will provide focus for our efforts, inform our investment decisions, and lay the groundwork for our next strategic framework which will take effect from 2020.
These priorities set the direction for the whole organisation, with activities specific to operational effectiveness, areas, artforms, museums, libraries and some of our cross-cutting work to follow in sections 3 and 4.

1. Promoting equality and diversity

We remain committed to ensuring the arts and cultural programmes presented by our funded organisations, the audiences they engage, and the staff, board and volunteers they recruit, reflect the diversity of England. Our definition of diversity includes all the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Duty 2011 and also encompasses class and socio-economic status.

This commitment extends to diversifying the workforce and governance of Arts Council England.

We will make sure the organisations we invest in set themselves increasingly demanding targets in responding to our Creative Case for Diversity. We will support new joiners to the National Portfolio, and have set a requirement for band 2 and 3 organisations to achieve a ‘strong’ creative case rating by 2021.

We will focus on improving data collection on audience diversity and socio-economic reach and using this data to inform future investment decisions.

We will support new Government initiatives in this area including the work of the DWP Arts Disability Champion and learn from and promote best practice in the public, charity and private sectors.

A detailed corporate equality plan is set out in the appendix.

2. Shaping our next 10-year strategy

We will work with the public, the arts and cultural sector and our stakeholders to shape our next strategy which will run from 2020 to 2030.

We have already started ‘the conversation’, a wide-reaching exercise where we listen to the arts, museums and libraries sector and the public to capture their views. As part of this exercise we will be targeting diverse audiences, younger people, and communities where participation with arts, museums and libraries is currently low.
We will publish the new 10-year strategy in autumn 2019 and it will shape our investment, development and advocacy work from 1 April 2020 onwards.

3. Developing a culture of enterprise and innovation in the sector

We will support funded organisations to be more enterprising and innovative, to improve their capacity to drive up income and become more resilient. We will do this by making targeted investments and developing a single strategic funding programme to support goals 3 and 4 of our strategic framework.

We will increase the amount of repayable loan finance available by co-investing in a small number of opportunities to leverage additional resources for the sector, and demonstrate where loan finance can replace or complement grant funding.

We will continue to invest in international exchange, collaboration, and market development, working together with partners such as the British Council, the GREAT campaign, and the Department for International Trade. This will include investing in opportunities for organisations in England to present work to international festival bookers and partners.

We will encourage the organisations we invest in to develop relevant commercial sector skills and to explore opportunities – including mergers and shared services – for developing new business models.

4. Adding value to places through arts and cultural investment

Investing in art and culture can fill a place with possibility and creativity, can help people learn more and lead happier, healthier lives, and can improve a place’s economic prospects.

We will advocate for culture being taken into account in the development of central and local government policy relating to place (for example through the UK Cultural Cities Task Force and through research into rural communities and culture), and in our own emerging strategic framework from 2020 onwards.

We will work closely with Government to deliver the new Cultural Development Fund, ensuring that it acts as an effective demonstrator of the role that investment in place based cultural infrastructure can play in driving economic growth.

Hull’s 2017 City of Culture programme was a clear demonstration of how investment in arts and culture can transform a place, and we will help ensure a strong legacy for Hull, as well as providing support to Coventry as it begins preparations to take on the City of Culture mantle in 2021.

Through our investment programmes, we will help make great art and culture happen in places across England. We will also support the capacity of local government and other partners to provide leadership for a resilient cultural sector in their localities.
5. Making the case for arts, museums and libraries as we prepare for the next spending review in 2019

Our work to make great art and culture happen relies on the continued support of the government, parliament, local politicians and officials, the public, and the media.

We will work together with our sector to build consensus around the benefits brought by public investment in arts, museums and libraries.

We will use the Treasury’s spring statement and autumn budget as a springboard for our evidence and advocacy work, beginning in 2018-19 with a focus on place.

We will support an inquiry into the future of cultural funding in cities through the UK Cultural Cities Task Force.

We will monitor the implications of Brexit on the arts and cultural sectors, and advocate for the importance of ensuring they are taken into account in the negotiations between the UK government and the European Commission.

6. Promoting the use of data and new technologies

We will promote the development of a data culture, both within the arts and cultural sector and the Arts Council. We want to ensure there is a more widespread use of data to influence decision making and inform the effective and efficient use of resources.

We will also support the sector to use new technologies to help develop their businesses, reach new audiences and develop new forms of artistic and cultural practice.

All band 2 and 3 National Portfolio Organisations are required to have digital policies as part of their funding agreements. We will monitor their implementation and support the sector to develop the skills to ensure those policies become ever more effective and ambitious.

We will work with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to ensure the effective implementation of its Culture is Digital recommendations, taking a lead (in partnership with HLF) on developing a Digital Maturity Index, a Digital Code of Conduct and a Digital Culture Network.
Key activities: Our operational effectiveness

This section outlines the work we will do alongside our regular ‘business as usual’ activity to improve our effectiveness as an organisation.
Developing our people

- We will increase the diversity of the Arts Council workforce through recruiting new apprentices, reviewing our recruitment practices, and enhancing the way we communicate what it feels like to work for the Arts Council to potential external candidates.
- We will provide the learning and development required to equip all staff to continue to perform to the highest standard and meet changing organisational needs.
- We will review and refresh our organisational values and behaviours in line with aspirations of the new 10-year strategy.
- We will develop our performance management to ensure Arts Council employees have the right skills, role models and recognition to meet new challenges and opportunities.
- We will ensure the structure of job roles and teams, the locations staff work in, and the times they work are responsive to those new challenges and opportunities.

Improving our openness and customer focus

- We will work to ensure we communicate our processes clearly – particularly around investment and governance – so we can be accountable to the outside world for the public funding that we receive.
- We will ensure we consider the views and vision of all our stakeholders in developing the Arts Council’s next 10-year strategy.
- We will work towards ensuring our grant administration processes are compliant with the minimum standards for government general grants.
- We will establish a single repository for tracking and managing our relationships with all stakeholders.
- We will ensure the Arts Council is open to the flow of information, insight, ideas and people via creative internal communications.
• We will use platforms such as our State of the Arts programme to demonstrate thought leadership in debates around cultural policy and the cultural health of England.

• We will foster support for the arts, museums and libraries in society, and build awareness and support for public investment among Westminster stakeholders, local politicians and officials, the public and the media. We will work with our sector to reach those audiences.

• We will guard the Arts Council’s reputation as a responsible, efficient, effective and intelligent investor that first and foremost upholds the arm’s length principle.

• We will build awareness and understanding of our work with a more diverse spread of the sector – in particular groups protected under the Equality Act (2010).

Measuring and reporting on our impact

• We will develop our performance framework to improve how we monitor and report progress on delivering our corporate strategy and enhancing organisational performance through continuous improvement.

• We will continue to invest in robust evaluations so we are able to clearly explain the outcomes and impact we are achieving in the sector and beyond.

• We will develop a consolidated, business intelligence solution, delivering organisation-wide analytics and performance reporting.

• We will improve our public reporting by adopting best practice in our annual report and accounts, including links to the Arts Council’s performance management framework.

Reducing our environmental impact

• We will reduce carbon emissions through estate changes set out in the 2017-22 property strategy.

• We will reduce the amount of travel to internal meetings by expanding our use of conferencing technologies.

• We will ensure the appropriate alignment of our environmental policy and practice with that required of National Portfolio Organisations.
Increasing our efficiency

- We will implement a continuous improvement framework that will reduce waste and improve the efficiency of our processes across the organisation.
- We will improve the overall efficiency of our use of office space to 8 sqm per FTE by implementing ‘smart working’ practices at our offices in Cambridge (by March 2018), Bristol (by June 2018), Brighton (by September 2018), Newcastle (by 2019) and at The Hive (by February 2020).
- We will identify our future property needs for Manchester post 2020 and London post 2022.
- We will adopt a ‘cloud-first’ internet data storage strategy for the delivery of IT services.
- We will improve counter-fraud capabilities to ensure the Arts Council implements Cabinet Office Counter-Fraud Functional Standards by March 2019.
- We will improve financial management within the organisation, with a target of ensuring the year-end spend is within 1 per cent of forecasts submitted in September.
- We will implement process improvements and resource efficiencies within administration budget areas including procurement. We will implement an online procurement system by March 2019.
- We will benchmark and share resources with others. The main areas of administration expenditure will be benchmarked with other Lottery distributors by March 2019.
- We will improve efficiency by developing and implementing a comprehensive records management strategy.
- We continue to invest in cyber security and take the necessary steps to protect the organisation against cyber-attack.
04. Key activities: Goals, areas, artforms, museums and libraries

This section sets out key activities for each goal, area, artform and cross-cutting theme.

IMAGE: IN HARMONY INSTRUMENT WORKSHOP. OPERA NORTH, IN HARMONY. PHOTO © TOM ARBER.
WATERMARK: SOPHIE CLEMENTS: SHALL I THIS TIME HOLD YOU? (LONDON GFTA @ BARBICAN, APRIL-MAY 2017). PHOTO © SUZANNA ZHANG
Goals

All our investment, advocacy and development work over this period will continue to be shaped by the delivery of our five goals:

**Goal 1: Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries**

The main way we will deliver Goal 1 is through the investment of £386 million in 783 National Portfolio Organisations distributed across the country. These museums, libraries and arts organisations will all be aspiring to deliver artistic work and cultural experiences that represent the height of ambition, talent and skill.

We will commission a Consumer Insight Toolkit to help National Portfolio Organisations, and us, better understand what their audiences and peers think about the quality of their work.

In addition, our Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants programme will provide further opportunities to deliver high-quality programmes across the country.

Our Developing Your Creative Practice programme will provide opportunities for creatives to receive grants of between £2,000 and £10,000 to make a step change in their practice.

We will continue to ensure all National Portfolio Organisations understand and respond to the Creative Case for Diversity and that band 2 and 3 National Portfolio Organisations are making good progress towards their objective of achieving a minimum Creative Case for Diversity rating of ‘strong’ by October 2021.

As we move into a post-Brexit landscape, we will continue to build this country’s reputation as a world centre for cultural excellence.

We will champion and invest in international exchange, collaboration and market development, working with partners in England and abroad, and creating more opportunities for more artists and organisations to work with international counterparts.

**Goal 2: Everyone has the opportunity to experience and be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries**

As with Goal 1, the main way we deliver Goal 2 is through the investment of £386 million in 783 National Portfolio Organisations distributed across the country. These museums, libraries and arts organisations will all be working to ensure more and a wider range of people have an opportunity to experience and participate in the arts and cultural offer they deliver.

We will continue to require all these National Portfolio Organisations to use Audience Finder to build understanding about who they are reaching.

We will monitor National Portfolio Organisation performance against Goal 2 through mechanisms such as smart objectives in funding agreements, annual survey data and case studies, and an annual audit of audience development plans.
Our Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants will provide further opportunities to deliver arts and cultural programmes to people who are not reached by our portfolio.

We will invest a further £17 million in our Creative People and Places programme through a combination of extension funding for existing places and investment in new places. While the core principles will remain the same, the programme will also support places that wish to incorporate an enhanced focus on one or more of the following: digital content and engagement; arts and health; and entrepreneurship and social investment.

Goal 3: The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable

The arts and cultural sector, and our portfolio in particular, has made considerable progress over the last three years in reducing its dependence on Arts Council funding and becoming more environmentally sustainable.

We will continue to support the sector through our National Portfolio investment in five Sector Support Organisations delivering against Goal 3.

We will establish a new development fund which will provide opportunities to build fundraising capacity, explore new business models (including mergers and shared services), develop new international markets, and test how use of data and new technologies can build financial resilience.

We will also continue to invest in Julie’s Bicycle to provide support to the sector to develop its environmental sustainability.

We will work across arts, museums and libraries to advocate for increased understanding and adoption of fundraising best practice, including the implementation of new data protection regulatory changes.

Drawing on the learning from the wider third sector, we will undertake an evidence review into the potential for increasing the amount of private giving to arts and culture organisations, and commission further research, in addition to the Private Investment in Culture survey, to fill any gaps identified through future development funds.

We will develop an increased number of strategic partnerships with external philanthropy stakeholders, such as trusts and foundations, the network of community foundations and individual philanthropists to share knowledge and support future programme development.

We will continue to oversee the current Catalyst investments (Evolve and Small Grants), allowing for continued learning and knowledge transfer across the arts, museums and libraries.
**Goal 4: The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled**

We recognise that ensuring the organisations we invest in are well led and governed, and that their workforce and boards are diverse and appropriately skilled, is key to maximising the return to the public of their investment in arts and culture.

In 2018-20 our approach to workforce development in the arts and cultural sector will focus on five themes:

- careers
- apprenticeships
- skills
- leadership
- governance

Research to be published in this period will inform our approach to strategic investments in pursuit of this goal, and we will continue to pilot and support innovative new approaches to all five themes.

We will use our influence to push for change in how the sector develops its workforce, including using our annual Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case report to challenge our National Portfolio Organisations to aim for greater diversity in the make-up of their boards, leadership and workforce. We will look to extend this data to include the socio-economic backgrounds of the leadership and boards of National Portfolio Organisations.

We will play a leading role in the development of policy with respect to apprenticeships in the sector, and we will lead by example by employing apprentices ourselves.

We will support apprenticeships, skills, and workforce development through our National Portfolio investment in Sector Support Organisations, including a Museum Development Network to help museums develop a diverse and appropriately skilled workforce, as well as the relevant Sector Skills Councils, Creative and Cultural Skills and Creative Skillset.

**Goal 5: Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries**

Involvement with arts and culture is crucial to imagination, self-expression and creativity in young people. It also develops the skills that fuel the success of the UK's creative industries, and that will result in the next generation of creative talent across the country.

A total of 573 organisations from our National Portfolio – representing 91 per cent of our investment – will be delivering against Goal 5. This includes seven National Youth Music Organisations.

They will be supported by 28 Sector Support Organisations, including 10 Bridge Organisations, to ensure the organisations we are investing in are working effectively together and with schools to deliver the Cultural Education Challenge and ensure as many children as possible receive high quality, relevant arts and cultural experiences inside and outside school.
We will undertake a review during this period to assess the impact of the Cultural Education Challenge and use the findings to inform our future strategy.

We also work with the Department for Education to deliver a network of Music Education Hubs, ensuring every child in this country has access to a high-quality music education.

We also invest in seven National Youth Music Organisations, In Harmony, the National Youth Dance Company, Youth Music and BookTrust, who are all focused on supporting high-quality arts and cultural education for children and young people.

We will set out our approach to a 25 Year Creative Talent Plan and we will work in partnership with the University of Durham on the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education.

**Monitoring contributions to our goals**

We will monitor the contribution funded organisations are making to our goals in several ways, including:

- an annual survey of National Portfolio Organisations
- quarterly risk reports on our portfolio investment
- the relationships they have with their Relationship Manager
- evaluations of specific development funds

We will pay close attention to our National Portfolio Organisations, particularly the large number who are new to the portfolio for 2018-22, to ensure they are delivering on the goal commitments in their funding agreements.
Area activities

The six corporate priorities described in section 2 and the goal activities listed above will form the basis of our work across our five areas.

Each area team has also identified the following key activities that respond to specific opportunities and challenges that characterise their area.

**London**

- We will maintain and support London as a world cultural capital, building on its international and national reputation and its strengths as the home of the largest concentration of cultural organisations and creative practitioners in the UK by supporting creative hub developments like the Culture and Education District in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and emerging creative clusters in the Great Place and London Borough of Culture programmes.
  
  **GOAL 01**

- We will work with our funded organisations to develop audiences and participants from sectors of London which are least engaged, in particular outer London boroughs, and areas of high deprivation.
  
  **GOAL 02**

- We will continue to implement the objectives and priorities contained within our memorandum of understanding with London councils, which aims to encourage greater involvement of London boroughs in widening cultural opportunities by, with and for their constituents.
  
  **GOAL 02**

- We will pursue investment for a new Creative Land Trust for London, working with the Greater London Authority and private investors to protect and grow cultural workspace with a view to attracting and retaining creative talent in London.
  
  **GOAL 03**

- We will continue to work in partnership with Queen Mary University to support the development of diverse and skilled cultural and creative leaders in the east of London and beyond.
  
  **GOAL 04**

**Midlands**

- We will pilot specific approaches to areas with high investment and low engagement, eg Birmingham, Coventry and Leicester, and we will work with a broader range of partners in places of low engagement and low investment, such as Tamworth, Cannock Chase and Telford & Wrekin. We will seek opportunities to bring the sector together to share expertise and draw on the learning and methodology from our investment in previous strategic programmes to increase engagement and reach, with a particular focus on less engaged Audience Spectrum groups such as ‘Facebook Families’.
  
  **GOAL 02**
• We will support and invest in significant place-based opportunities like City of Culture, the Commonwealth Games, Mayflower celebrations, Birmingham’s Dance Hub, Ambition for Excellence projects, the centenary of the women’s vote and Nottingham’s City of Literature status.  
   **GOALS 01, 02, 03**

• We will work with key stakeholders to develop the potential of Leicester, Birmingham, Nottingham and Wolverhampton in particular as Black and minority ethnic talent hotspots, and to identify and empower a new generation of Black and minority ethnic cultural leaders in the Midlands. We will work with individuals to identify their needs and strengthen their skills, and we will build capacity in emerging Black and minority ethnic-led or focused organisations that demonstrate strategic potential.  
   **GOALS 03, 04**

• We will develop a progressive relationship with the Midlands Engine to further embed culture into its agenda, providing suggestions for cultural collaboration and investment. This could involve providing cultural data, guidance and support to help realise major regeneration plans, developing a strong cultural brand for the area, working with public/private partners on skills development programmes, or supporting cross sector innovation.  
   **GOALS 03, 04**

North

• We will monitor and support the development of the Factory in Manchester as a capital project, and the sustainable growth of Manchester International Festival to become the operator, towards a successful opening in 2020. We will ensure the project is well managed and that the Arts Council’s responsibilities to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and to HM Treasury, in oversight of the investment, are fulfilled.  
   **GOAL 01**

• We will work with partners in Hull to achieve a long-term beneficial legacy from the UK City of Culture year which continues to build engagement, secures capacity to deliver future events and programmes of national significance, and promotes sharing of learning from the year.  
   **GOAL 01**

• We will take opportunities to encourage and take part in place-based plans for culture which contribute to wider strategies for local development and economic growth. Examples include the cultural plan for the Tees Valley Combined Authority, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority’s 30-year Culture and Creative Strategy, a potential cultural strategy for Greater Manchester, and Rotherham Cultural Strategy and North Yorkshire County Council.  
   **GOAL 02**
• We will work to raise the profile of arts and culture within the Northern Powerhouse initiative to secure benefit to the cultural sector from the economic growth agenda including Local Enterprise Partnerships, combined authorities, devolution and tourism through membership of the Team North initiative.

GOAL 03

• Building on existing work, we will test ways of establishing closer working relationships with chairs and boards from April 2018, addressing specific concerns around the effectiveness of boards in some northern arts and cultural organisations. This will include a suite of measures to increase understanding of their role and responsibilities, to increase personal knowledge of and contact with the Arts Council, to improve the information flow from the Arts Council to chairs directly, and to set up a peer-to-peer online information sharing and support network for chairs of National Portfolio Organisations.

GOAL 03

South East

• We will foster creative clusters throughout the area to nurture skills and talent, while working with practitioners, our Sector Support Organisations such as Creative Cultural Skills, and higher education institutions such as the University of Kent, University of Bedfordshire and Reading University to ensure excellent arts and museum experiences that reflect the diversity of contemporary England. We will do this through Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants, advice giving, and other development programme opportunities and discussions.

GOAL 01

• We will help build on strategic partnerships with Local Enterprise Partnerships, National Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund, higher education institutions and other organisations to engage with audiences in places of lower engagement and help the place-making and audience development ambitions of market towns, rural areas, coastal and new-town environments. We will do this through Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants advice giving, the Great Place Scheme and supporting our Creative People and Places programme and targeted development.

GOAL 02

• We will work with Art31 to trial the involvement of children and young people in governance and consultation. We will ensure integration of quality principles within our National Portfolio Organisations and Music Education Hubs, support Local Cultural Education Partnerships’ growth across the area, and help strategic development of the 25 Year Creative Talent Plan.

GOAL 05
South West

- We will support Mayflower 400 to deliver a world-class series of events, public art and community cultural projects in Plymouth to mark the 400th anniversary of the sailing in 2020.
  GOALS 01, 02

- We will initiate transformational change in literature development by: increasing the number, quality, diversity and geographical spread of activities and support infrastructures for authors, readers and organisations; developing a talent pathway from early years through to publication; and working with key partners in Bath to trial new models of support.
  GOAL 01

- We will work with local stakeholders to support the cultural development of Weston-Super-Mare and the Isle of Wight, increasing opportunities to create and experience high quality arts and cultural activities.
  GOAL 02

- We will champion the South West as a capital of innovation in arts technology. We will also work with partners including University of the West of England in Bristol, Bristol, Bournemouth and Plymouth local authorities, and funded organisations such as Watershed, Rio and Create Studios, to:
  define the parameters of excellence; invest in strengthening infrastructure; broker partnerships between arts, technology and higher education establishments; and raise the profile of the South West as a world leader in arts technology within the wider creative media sector through proactive communication.
  GOAL 03

- We will work with key stakeholders in Swindon and Gloucester to develop the emerging reputations of both places as Black and minority ethnic talent hotspots, and identify and empower a new generation of Black and minority ethnic cultural leaders in the South West. We will work with individuals to identify their needs and strengthen their skills, and build capacity in emerging Black and minority ethnic-led or focused organisations with substantial strategic potential.
  GOAL 04
Artform, discipline and cross-cutting activities

The six corporate priorities described in section 3 and the goal activities listed above form the basis of our work across all artforms and disciplines.

Each artform, discipline, and cross-cutting team has also identified the following key activities that respond to the specific opportunities and challenges that characterise their specialism.

**Combined arts**

- We will identify and showcase current high-quality ‘social arts practice’, increase expertise of assessors and decision-makers internally and share Arts Council expertise with partner organisations and funders.
  
  **GOALS 01, 02**

- We will develop a more coherent approach to supporting subsidised work in commercial festivals.

  **GOAL 03**

**Dance**

- We will work across artforms to investigate how dance can maximise available support networks and develop progression routes, with a focus on South Asian Dance, urban genres and new technologies.

  **GOALS 01, 03**

- We will work to ensure a more even national distribution of dance infrastructure, though hub models (Birmingham, Leeds and East London) or more in-depth residencies, particularly with a view to addressing deficits in provision for dance artists in areas such as the North West and South West.

  **ALL GOALS**

- We will undertake research to establish the current landscape for the independent dance sector and its development needs now and in the future.

  **ALL GOALS**
International

- We will create bilateral co-investment opportunities for artistic exchange, collaboration and co-creation with (provisionally) Argentina, Denmark (and/or Nordic Council) and Canada (and/or wider North America).
  \( \text{GOAL 01} \)

- We will support international market development including investing in opportunities for organisations in England to present work to international festival bookers and partners.
  \( \text{GOAL 03} \)

- We will develop our partnerships including using the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) as partnership facilitator, reframing the British Council partnership, establishing a strategic plan with GREAT and the Department for International Trade, and securing co-investment partnerships with other countries.
  \( \text{GOAL 03} \)

Libraries

- In our role as the national developmental agency for libraries, we will work with DCMS and the Libraries Task Force to ensure that, as we approach the end of the remit for the Task Force in 2020, a seamless transition of its work to appropriate agencies is accomplished.
  \( \text{ALL GOALS} \)

- We will strengthen and embed the quality and impact of libraries as cultural hubs through our National Portfolio Organisations and Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants investment.
  \( \text{GOAL 02} \)

- We will provide a leadership role in the development of a single digital presence for public libraries, working in partnership with the British Library and the Carnegie UK Trust.
  \( \text{GOAL 03} \)
• We will collaborate with our partners (including through investment) the Chartered Institute for Library and Information Professionals and the Society of Chief Librarians in the delivery of the Public Libraries Skills Strategy. **GOAL 04**

• We will increase libraries’ contribution to the Cultural Education Challenge. **GOAL 05**

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**Literature**

- We will implement the recommendations of our response to the Canelo report, *Literature in the 21st Century: Understanding Models of Support for Literary Fiction*, to include:
  - growing the Arts Council’s support for small/independent literary fiction publishers through Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants **GOALS 01, 03**
  - developing interventions to bolster reader development, including closer work with the libraries team and the establishment of a working relationship with the country’s network of independent bookshops **GOALS 01, 02**
  - producing a report on the state of diversity in children’s literature, in partnership with children’s reading charity BookTrust **GOAL 01**

- We will support the development of a strong and integrated literary ecology in the South West, in response to weaknesses in the current portfolio, and work with the Nottingham and Manchester UNESCO City of Literature teams to maximise the opportunity for literature development in the cities as they grow into their roles. **GOALS 01, 03**
Museums, collections and cultural property

- We will monitor and review Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants to ensure museums are being reached and supported effectively.

**GOALS 01, 02**

- We will respond to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport’s *Mendoza Review* by:
  - working with DCMS, Heritage Lottery Fund and national museums as appropriate to develop an action plan to deliver on the priorities identified by the review
  - developing a high quality national Museums Development programme
  - producing guidance for museums moving to trust status
  - developing a framework to identify and respond to museums and collections at risk
  - collecting and disseminating museums data to inform policy making and establish benchmarking
  - relaunching a refreshed accreditation scheme to ensure it continues to contribute effectively to the health and development of museums
  - ensuring our integrated investment is delivering effective support against the priority areas identified through the *Mendoza Review*

**GOAL 03**

- We will further integrate our museums, collections and cultural property work into the Arts Council so museums and other stakeholders benefit from fully-aligned investment, development, advocacy and business systems support.

- We will agree priority actions with the DCMS in response to the *Tailored Review*.

Music and music education

- We will undertake research with the classical and opera sectors (including Music Education Hubs, conservatoires and employers) with a view to developing a joint action plan that will strengthen the diversity of talent pathways.

**GOAL 04**

- We will work with Music Education Hubs, national youth music organisations, Youth Music, National Portfolio Organisations and Bridge Organisations to develop a greater degree of join-up across all those organisations we support to undertake music education.

**GOAL 05**
- We will utilise learning, evidence and data, including the outcomes of the Durham Commission, the 25 Year Creative Talent Plan pilot and Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce case studies to develop ambitious plans for music education, including the Department for Education’s National Plan for Music Education, via our role as fundholder for Music Education Hubs.
  **GOAL 05**

- We will seek to address weaknesses in the current portfolio around jazz development in the South West and South East.
  **GOAL 01**

**Theatre**

- We will explore fresh initiatives to develop new national and international markets for independent, emerging, and mid-career artists.
  **GOAL 03**

- We will implement the proposals set out in our response to *Analysis of Theatre in England* (published in November 2016). This will include:
  - developing initiatives to strengthen theatre touring
    **GOAL 02**
  - piloting the ‘producing hub’ model in one region outside London.
    **GOALS 01, 03**

**Touring**

- We will actively manage the transition from Strategic Touring to Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants, ensuring an oversight of touring activity is retained nationally and investment is well targeted.
  **GOAL 02**

- We will integrate touring activity for museums and libraries into our wider support for touring, with a specific focus on touring museum collections, through circulation of inclusive guidance, sector development activity and monitoring and evaluation of application and success rates.
  **GOAL 02**

- We will review how changes to our funding streams are impacting on funded organisations’ propensity to tour to areas of low engagement.
  **GOAL 02**
Visual arts

- We will manage changes to the Arts Council Collection and run another round of the Arts Council Collection National Partnership programme.

- We will support the visual arts sector to maximise the new Museums and Galleries Exhibitions Tax Relief and use it to promote touring collaborations nationally and internationally. We will also promote the relief to stimulate increased artist production in England.

- We will collaborate with non-arts partners such as heritage and natural agencies to enable new commissioning opportunities and greater reach.

- We will review the portfolio’s support for artists with disabilities in terms of exhibition programming and talent development schemes and begin a dialogue about how any gaps can be addressed.

GOAL 02
GOAL 03
GOALS 01, 02, 03
05. Budgets
## Administration budgets

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## Programme budgets

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Appendix: Corporate equality plan 2018-20
Introduction

This action plan is informed by the work we undertook during 2015-18. It is also influenced by the following:

i) The equality analyses that accompanied our 2018-22 National Portfolio Organisation investment and the remodelling of our Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants programme.

ii) Equality analyses and evaluations of our current strategic funds.

iii) The latest Creative Case ratings for National Portfolio Organisations.

iv) Audience data drawn from National Portfolio Organisation returns and Audience Finder.

v) Data on the workforce of the arts and cultural sector drawn from National Portfolio Organisation returns and other research.

We remain committed to ensuring the arts and cultural programmes presented by our funded organisations, along with the audiences they engage, and the staff, board and volunteers they recruit, reflect the diversity of England.

This commitment also extends to diversifying the workforce and governance of the Arts Council.

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1 The Creative Case for Diversity is based upon the principle that diversity, in the broadest sense, is an integral part of the artistic and creative process. It recognises the importance of arts and cultural organisations in England reflecting the diversity of wider society in the work they programme, curate and present. The Creative Case requires National Portfolio Organisations to ensure they reflect the diversity of wider society in their arts and cultural programming. They will receive an annual evidence based performance rating in 2018-22 that will be ‘not met’, ‘met’, ‘strong’ or ‘outstanding’.
Progress during 2015-18

During 2015-18 we made significant progress in promoting and advancing our work on equality and diversity. We:

1. launched our new annual *Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case* report which publishes data on our investment, the arts and cultural workforce, creative case ratings and audience insights. The first report was published in December 2015, with subsequent editions in December 2016 and January 2018.
2. successfully launched four diversity strategic funding programmes – *Unlimited, Elevate, Change Makers* and *Sustained Theatre*, which collectively invested over £11.8 million to support diverse artists and diverse-led organisations. This represented a significant increase in investment from our planned expenditure of £6 million for 2015-18, reflecting both the quality of applications received and the importance of the equality and diversity agenda to the Arts Council corporately.
3. introduced annual Creative Case performance ratings for National Portfolio Organisations to increase accountability and to ensure organisations receiving regular funding were able to demonstrate how they were contributing to the Creative Case for Diversity.
4. updated our definition of ‘diverse-led’ to cover four protected characteristics (disability, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation) and introduced a *self-definition option*.
5. completed our investment process for our 2018-22 National Portfolio, which has seen a significant improvement in both the number of diverse-led organisations we are supporting and the total level of investment made in diverse-led organisations. We completed and published a comprehensive *equality analysis* to accompany the investment process, which includes detailed insights into our investment from an equality and diversity perspective for Black and minority ethnic, disabled, female and LGBT-led organisations.
6. commissioned and published a guide to *equality action planning* for arts and cultural organisations, produced by the Stephen Lawrence Trust.
7. continued to develop the Arts Council’s capacity to respond to the equality and diversity agenda by introducing mandatory equality and diversity training for all staff.

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2 We now report on the number of organisations where 51 per cent or more of the board and senior management team are Black and minority ethnic, disabled, female or LGBT, as well as the number of organisations that self-define as ‘diverse-led’ based on key strategic decision makers.
• commissioned and published the *Making the Shift* report, identifying the reasons for the low number of disabled people working in the arts and cultural sector

• updated all job descriptions to contain a requirement to actively contribute to and champion the organisation’s commitment to advancing equality and diversity across the arts and cultural sector

• commissioned the Institute of Employment Studies to test perceptions by job candidates of the Arts Council’s reputation as an employer, and the EW Group to review our recruitment processes to improve our ability to recruit staff from diverse backgrounds. Both pieces of work have informed our equality objective: to develop our capacity to respond to the equality and diversity agenda as an organisation during 2018-20

• launched needs analysis guidance and a template for Music Education Hubs to ensure equality of opportunity and progression for all children

• commissioned and published research showing how challenges and barriers to continued musical progression can be overcome through support from families, schools, music education infrastructure and programmes such as In Harmony

• joined the government’s Disability Confident employer initiative
Equality objectives for 2018-20

We have set five equality objectives over the period 2018-20. They are to:

1. Continue to promote the Creative Case for Diversity, making sure all the organisations we invest in on a regular basis, including museums and libraries, set themselves increasingly demanding targets.

We will:

• support new joiners to the National Portfolio (including museums and libraries) to understand and respond to the Creative Case for Diversity. All National Portfolio Organisations will be supported to ensure the work they produce, present and distribute better reflects the diversity of contemporary England

• require all band 2 and 3 organisations in our National Portfolio to achieve a minimum of a ‘strong’ Creative Case rating by October 2021

• publish individual Creative Case performance ratings for a selection of our portfolio by October 2021

• promote and share best practice in delivering the Creative Case for Diversity through our website and social media platforms

• work with museum development partners to develop case studies documenting the Creative Case outside our National Portfolio

• work with the publishing industry to diversify children’s literature

• require applicants for our largest Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants in 2018-20 to give evidence of how their proposed activity will contribute to the Creative Case for Diversity

• require all Music Education Hubs to undertake an annual needs analysis and audit of music education provision to ensure equality of opportunity and progression for all children, regardless of the school they attend, their background or personal circumstances

• work with Youth Music to support projects that engage children and young people in challenging circumstances and promote and share good practice

2. Encourage more diverse audiences for arts and culture, and improve measurement and reporting of audience diversity.

3. Invest in the continued growth of diverse leadership and promote a more diverse workforce, including fairer entry, more equitable pay and improved progression routes.

4. Develop new measures to capture data and report on socio-economic background and social mobility in the arts and cultural sector.

5. Continue to develop the Arts Council’s capacity to respond to the equality and diversity agenda and ensure we model best practice in delivering that agenda.
2. Encourage more diverse audiences for arts and culture and improve our measurement and reporting of audience diversity.

We will:

- ensure National Portfolio Organisations submit improved data on the make-up of their audiences
- utilise data to inform future investment decisions
- continue to invest in our Creative People and Places programme to support arts and cultural activity in disadvantaged parts of England to increase engagement
- work with museum development partners to support museums outside the National Portfolio to improve collection and use of audience diversity data
- work with Music Education Hubs and Youth Music to ensure they utilise the pupil-level data they collect in informing their future plans

3. Invest in the continued growth of diverse leadership and also promote a more diverse workforce, including fairer entry, more equitable pay and improved progression routes.

We will:

- require our National Portfolio (including Sector Support Organisations) to have equality action plans that address and respond to the challenge of diversifying the workforce, ensuring fair entry and progression opportunities for people across protected characteristic groups and class. We will continue to require all organisations receiving funding to observe recognised minimum pay and conditions for their industry
- encourage National Portfolio Organisations and Music Education Hubs to put in place effective succession plans for both their boards and senior leadership positions
- continue to publish annual data on the composition of the workforce, board and senior leadership roles for our largest National Portfolio Organisations
- continue to invest in a range of leadership initiatives and resources to support the development of existing and emerging Black and minority ethnic and disabled leaders
- use our development funds in this period to address the diversity issues identified in this plan, including building on the learning from Elevate and Change Makers
- encourage arts and cultural organisations to review the inclusivity and accessibility of their board recruitment and working practices to increase the proportion of disabled board members and their ability to play a full governance role
- require all National Portfolio Organisations to put in place plans to ensure their boards are more reflective of the communities they serve
4. Develop new measures to capture data and report on socio-economic background and social mobility in the arts and cultural sector.

We will:

- establish a working definition and a clear rationale across our investment, advocacy and development work to enable us to gather better data on the socio-economic status of those reached by our investment (including audiences, workforce, leadership and boards)
- integrate the capture of data on socio-economic status and social mobility into our reporting in the same way we do across other protected characteristic groups

5. Continue to develop the Arts Council’s capacity (including in our staff and governance structures) to respond to the equality and diversity agenda and ensure we model best practice in delivering that agenda

We will:

- work to improve the diversity of our staff and governance bodies
- ensure our recruitment practices encourage applications from under-represented protected characteristic groups through considering alternative formats for application, jobs description, and person specifications, and increase understanding of unconscious bias among staff involved in recruitment
- launch a recruitment campaign for new apprentices to join Arts Council England, prioritising advertising sources which can attract a diverse range of potential candidates

- continue to develop apprenticeship and other entry routes into arts and culture
- work with the arts and cultural sector and other stakeholders to respond to recommendations in the Making a Shift report to address the barriers to employment facing disabled people
Implementing and monitoring progress on equality and diversity

The implementation and delivery of our equality and diversity action plan and equality objectives will be led by our Director of Diversity and our Deputy Chief Executive, Arts and Culture, who is the Executive Board lead for our equality and diversity work.

Our internal diversity working group will be responsible for monitoring ongoing progress in relation to our equality objectives, with regular updates provided to both Executive Board and our National Council. We will also publish an annual *Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case* report to update external stakeholders and partners on our progress.

- publish gender pay figures and respond to any issues identified
- capture data on both protected characteristics and socio-economic background for Arts Council staff
- review all new job descriptions to ensure they do not contain skills and experience requirements which unnecessarily exclude a more diverse range of candidates from considering applying
- continue to offer family friendly benefits and working arrangements
- respond to and address any potential adverse equality impacts on protected characteristic groups arising from our Arts Council National Lottery Development Funds, Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants and Developing your Creative Practice funds in 2018-20
- continue to invest in and promote access support for disabled applicants across all our funding programmes, removing barriers they may face when submitting an application
- continue to work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to raise awareness of the needs of disabled people in the arts, especially freelance artists and practitioners, and to advise them on the likely impact on the arts and cultural sector of any changes to Access to Work and other support payments for work