

A Cultural Manifesto for 2021

This manifesto has been crowd-sourced by Scotland's culture sector. We have identified 8 asks for the next Scottish Parliament & Scottish Government for the next 5 year parliamentary term.

Click on any of our Manifesto 'asks' below to read more information.

Promoted by Culture Counts, 30 Grindlay St, Edinburgh.

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01 Place

A commitment to the development of a Culture Act that will integrate culture into communities, enabling Scotland's local economies and wellbeing to flourish and to deliver fair-work. Incorporate minimum levels of cultural planning, stakeholder engagement and allow for percentages of local infrastructure projects to be invested into culture.

The Culture Act (Similar to the Arts Act in Ireland) would require all local authority areas to have a cultural plan. Plans would be collaboratively designed by a wide range of partners including local businesses; colleges, universities, prisons, health and social care, local freelance cultural specialists, artists, cultural organisations, social enterprises and third sector representatives.

The Culture Act would:

- Ensure that Scotland's communities can exercise the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community. Ensure that ambitions are raised and opportunities increase for people with additional needs.
- Require all local authority areas to have a collaboratively produced Cultural Plan.
- Support fair-work for cultural freelancers. Planning leads to commitments which lead to secure work. Freelancers experience the negative impacts of precarious work; this is partly due to a lack of a long-term sustainable planning for the cultural offer in the local community.
- Ensure that all children in Scotland of all ages are assured regular access to a diverse range of cultural experiences. Every school should have a cultural-plan.

- Ensure a resourced culture and health action-plan in each Health and Social Care partnership area.
- Require a percentage of local infrastructure projects and all property development projects to be invested into local culture.
- Include the culture sector including Creative Scotland and Historic Environment Scotland as statutory consultees in growth deals and agreements; such as the 'Falkirk Growth Deal' or 'City Deals'
- Protect libraries, museums and galleries, supporting digital inclusion, access to skills, local freelancers and the future of work.
- In direct response to Brexit and in support of creative people across the nation, open an 'Office for Cultural Exchange' safeguarding international touring, festivals and residencies.
- Secure a minimum data agreement and streamline the type of data collected by local authorities in terms of cultural provision and impact; work alongside the Improvement Service, COSLA, and Centre for Cultural Value, NESTA and the Creative Industries Policy Evidence Centre to design a data and evidence system.
- The introduction of the transient visitor levy (when the time is right), to support investment into culture at a local level.

02 Diversity

Invest in a leadership scheme to ensure that people from diverse backgrounds are heard at an early stage in the design process across Scottish Government policy-making and strategic thinking.

Throughout our discussions we identified that the diversity of the cultural sector itself may be improved by improving structural design. For example: Ensuring diversity on boards needs to be a priority for the cultural sector and for anyone designing strategy or policy (and that includes the government). That's why we think the next Scottish Government should invest in a leadership scheme to ensure that seats are made available and taken up.

This is a first step towards inclusive decision-making and structural design. Having men and women represented is not enough. Diversity is not just about men or women or race, it's about age, class, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, and marriage or civil partnership.

03 Climate & Environment

Introduce a Wellbeing of Future Generations Act; mirroring the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (introduced in Wales in 2015).

The cultural sector has a leading role in expressing, echoing, reflecting and influencing solutions to climate change.

The cultural sector is experimental; we're generating sustainable clothing, eco-friendly festivals, we're exploring micro-renewables. If the next Scottish Government is brave enough to make a commitment such as a Future Generations Act; we'll support you with our ideas and our creativity; assisting in the design of a future that protects Scotland's children, generation after generation.

04 Brexit

In direct response to Brexit and in support of creative people across the nation: invest in an 'Office for Cultural Exchange' safeguarding international touring, festivals and residencies.

There are three key roles for the Office of Cultural Exchange:

Sharing

Scotland has an international outlook and to support and protect that part of our culture, our people need to interact with the international community. We currently share ideas internationally through our world-class network of festivals and residencies. For example: Margaret Atwood Residency at Cove Park; Arundhati Roy at Edinburgh International Book Festival. The combination of Brexit and ill-considered immigration policies threaten our reputation and ability to share in international learning and development. The 'Office for Cultural Exchange' would support the cultural sector to ensure that we are able to host, and share ideas with the most talented, innovative, artists, thinkers and activists from across the globe.

Trade

Scotland is a small marketplace and the livelihoods of many creative freelancers as well as organisations depend on finding audiences beyond our shores. 45% of the current UK creative industries service exports go to the EU, we need to be able to work in the EU, upfront costs and administrative costs of visas, work permits, local taxes and vat could exclude us from competing in an EU market. The 'Office for Cultural Exchange' would support the cultural sector to compete in an EU market by supporting the sector to navigate the new relationship.

Reputation

The strength of Scotland's cultural reputation brings us a voice in international dialogue far beyond our size. The Office for Cultural Exchange would support the cultural sector to connect with individuals, organisations and institutions across Europe and target countries; making Scotland an attractive partner for European Partnership Projects (even if we are a 'third-country') and for wider global collaborations.

05 COVID-19

To ensure a rounded economic and wellbeing recovery from Covid-19, make a commitment to embed culture in Scotland's recovery action planning.

The culture sector alongside the hospitality and tourism sectors have been the hardest hit. In the next Parliament, we call on all of Scotland's political parties to commit to helping national recovery by supporting Scotland's vibrant cultural sector to thrive again and play a valuable role in rebuilding social bonds and livelihoods.

The cultural sector returns a positive impact for a relatively small investment. We can reach people in communities, hospitals, schools and homes, in theatres, concert halls and in outdoor spaces. We generate positive outcomes in place-making, in the visitor economy, in creative entrepreneurship and across mental, physical health and recovery.

- The next Scottish Government should invest in a five-year plan for the continued development of the National Arts Force as outlined in the report 'Towards a robust resilient wellbeing economy for Scotland' from the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery. A pilot of the project will be launched soon and learnings from this can be taken into the five-year plan.
- The next Scottish Government should provide a minimum of a three-year-guarantee investment agreement to organisations such as Creative Scotland. The impact of one year agreements is a major problem for our sector and regularly stalls the cultural sector's ability to plan for and work in a sustainable way. A three-year agreement would make a huge difference to the sector as would the introduction of budget that takes account of inflation. The sector has worked with budgets which don't include inflation for too long and results are now plain to see; this norm should not continue.
- The next Scottish Government should support pilot test and trace systems (including investing in the technology required) and distancing requirements based on test evidence of risk by investing in partnerships between industry and Scottish universities; supporting our events, venues and world-renowned festivals to re-start as soon as possible.

06 Education

Invest in a scheme to ensure that all children in Scotland of all ages are assured their right to regular access to a diverse range of cultural experiences.

Scotland is set to be the first country in the UK to directly incorporate UNCRC (the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) into domestic law, with the Bill introduced to Parliament in September 2020. The cultural sector applauds this move to strengthen and protect children and young people's rights in Scotland. Duties under Article 31 include:

1. States Parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

All children should be introduced to a variety of potential hobbies, interests and potential careers. Many cultural hobbies and interests are good for our mental and physical health and children should be able to have knowledge of what the options may be.

Children should be introduced to a diverse range of cultural experiences; for example; dancers, architects, writers and archivists across a range of talks or demonstrations as part of assemblies; full theatrical productions taking place inside or outside of school and participatory experiences expanding the individuals range of expressive skills. [See Arts Backpack.](#)

This widens the perceptions and interests that children have and sparks ambitions for the future. For example: (You have to see it to be it) if a working-class child hears a talk from a working-class culturecounts.scot

writer, that child then understands that s/he can be a writer. (You have to see it to be it) works across all protected characteristics; so the more diversity the better.

The cultural sector sparks imagination; access to cultural experiences will spark the imagination and ambition of children, for both their personal and potentially for their life-long professional goals.

Furthermore, the Justice sector should seriously consider the power of art (in the broadest possible sense) across all stages of its work. This includes working with at-risk young people, young people in custody, adults in prison, and also people serving community sentences. It has great potential to reach vulnerable individuals, preventing them from entering into the justice system in the first place – this focus could of course be applied in the education sector in conjunction with the justice sector.

Every school should have an annual cultural-plan; agreed in collaboration with the parent council. This enables parents to support head-teachers to bring culture into the school. Schools could submit their cultural plans to the Scottish Government via their local authority to demonstrate their compliance on children's rights as per the requirements of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill.

You can find more information on the 'Arts Backpack' and feasibility studies here: <https://www.childrensarts.org.uk/campaign/the-arts-backpack-uk/>

07 Health

A commitment to cross-departmental working between Health and Culture, with a resourced action-plan to ensure an arts and culture offer supporting health, wellbeing and quality of life in all Health and Social Care Partnership areas in Scotland.

The health benefits offered by the cultural sector are well-known and both culture and health are eager to work together more. The opportunity to connect and the financial resources are currently missing and we must find a way to build these connections and strategically plan for the future. In order to ensure a cultural offer supporting health, wellbeing and quality of life we need a resourced action-plan in every Health and Social Care Partnership in Scotland.

Community link workers are a good thing, though not every community has one and access to culture for health is currently determined by postcode. The local cultural plan / group would look similar to the 'Paisley Partnership Group' (who were originally brought together from all over the area to work on a bid for the city of culture), culture and health planning partnerships would include for example general practitioners, cultural trusts, care homes, prisons; community link workers, women's aid; local social enterprises, social workers, health visitors, artists and cultural freelancers.

The culture sector has great potential to reduce recidivism (working on mental health in particular), and this has been used in projects that receive funding such as the Violence Reduction Unit <http://www.svru.co.uk/> who have used a public health approach. The Justice sector should seriously consider the power of art (in the broadest possible sense) across all stages of its work. This includes working with at-risk young people, young people in custody, adults in prison, and also people serving community sentences.

[Link to Cultural & Health Evidence \(Page 2\)](#)

08 Procurement

Increase opportunities for local enterprises and for the self-employed by transforming procurement into a simple, transparent and open system that encourages local partnerships and consortiums; aligns structure and process with equality of opportunity.

Procurement should be opened up to freelancers, partnerships and consortiums. The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 includes a requirement for Sustainable Procurement, and a duty to consider Community Benefits throughout the procurement process. This means that procurement has to offer benefits and this is welcomed, though we must also actively encourage self-employed people, partnerships and local consortiums to be involved.

Some local authorities have introduced Supplier Development Programmes and websites to support SMEs within the procurement process. One authority also held a Business Gateway Workshop on Winning Public Procurement to provide information and practical sessions to businesses on finding and tendering for contracts. This is positive though in the majority of areas local authorities do not have a proactive approach to encouraging freelancers, partnerships and local consortiums.

We therefore call on the next Parliament to streamline a universal, simple, transparent and open system that encourages local partnerships and consortiums; to align structure and process with equality of opportunity across Scotland.

Manifesto Supporting Statements

[Read examples](#) of supporting statements we recieved from across the culture sector which helped inform our thinking and developed our crowd-sourced manifesto.

Culture Manifesto 0221 Data is available [here](#).

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