



Creative Scotland's Report on
the United Nations Convention on
**THE RIGHTS
OF THE
CHILD**

Illustrations by
@LaurenMorsley



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

**If you are a child or young person,
these are our
commitments
to you.**

Introduction

What is a Children's Rights report?

A Children's Rights report is a document which sets out the things an organisation has done to help protect children's rights under the UNCRC.

What is the UNCRC?

The UNCRC stands for the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**. It's a legal document written by human rights lawyers from all over the world which lists the rights that children and young people have. Human Rights help make sure we live safe, happy, and healthy lives. Everyone has Human Rights, no matter where they live, what they believe or how they choose to live their lives. Children and young people aged 0-18 have 42 special rights which provide extra protection to make sure they have the best childhood possible.



Why is this report needed?

Creative Scotland is a public body which supports Scotland's Arts, Screen and Creative Industries. This means we give out money from the Scottish Government and The National Lottery to people and organisations who want to make art or help others enjoy making, watching, or taking part in creative activities. We also use our experience and knowledge to help encourage the growth of arts and creativity in Scotland.

We have a duty to ensure children and young people's rights in our work, and every three years we must show what we have done to achieve this. This report covers the period of 2020-2023.

What is in this report?

We have grouped our work into three themes:

Protection

What we have done to keep children and young people safe.

Provision

What we have done to help children and young people access arts and culture.

Participation

How we have listened to the views of children and young people.

We will also explain what we plan to do in the future.

1. Protection

What have we done to ensure children and young people's right to safety?

- Maintained and updated our own child protection policy
- Stayed aware of updates to national guidance on child protection, such as in [September 2021](#)
- Supported staff with training to work with young people safely and responsibly
- Signposted support for organisations regarding safeguarding, both online and offline
- Ensured that our policies and procedures are informed by the [Getting It Right For Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#) principals
- Supported artists to access training to help with their own work with children and young people, such as through the [Youth Music Initiative CPD](#) and the [Youth Arts Training and Workshops](#) funds.



When we provide funding to those who work with children and young people, we ask them to tell us how they will keep them safe. We need to know that they have a child protection policy.

We produced documents like **Creating Safety** to support organisations to create safe spaces.

We have also ensured an appropriate approach in our own work with children and young people.

Through work such as the National Youth Arts Advisory Group (NYAAG), we have listened and responded to the challenges children and young people face.

“

[In particular] with little children, it's not just what they might tell you. If they're pre-verbal or non-verbal, it's also by the physical sharing of things. We really need to listen to what little children have to say... that will help us develop policies and projects and all sorts of initiatives that can really contribute to recovery [from the pandemic] and what Scotland will look like in the future"

[Starcatchers, UNCON panel participant 2021].

2. Provision

What have we done to help children and young people access culture?

One of the main roles of Creative Scotland is to fund the Arts, Screen and Creative Industries in Scotland. This funding comes from both The National Lottery and Scottish Government. The focus of the projects we support can include work for children and young people, as well as work which benefits them, such as festivals and exhibitions.



These are some types of work we support:

Creating more opportunities

Creative Scotland's Open Fund is supported through The National Lottery and supports project based creative activity. Between 2020 and 2023, more than 70,000 children and young people accessed arts, leisure or cultural activities through work funded in this way.

The Scottish Government wants to make sure that every child in Scotland has the chance to learn about music before they leave primary school and has a chance to develop this outside school if they want to. They set up the Youth Music Initiative (YMI), which Creative Scotland manages on their behalf, to help schools, musicians and music organisations offer children and young people opportunities to make music in and out of school.

Giving young people a voice

We continue to support the National Youth Arts Advisory Group programme (NYAAG). It supports children and young people to be heard, to lead, and to act on the issues that are important to them.

NYAAG was originally created as part of the Time to Shine Youth Arts Strategy. Launched in 2013, it set out what we wanted to achieve for youth arts in Scotland and how we would do it.

In 2021, Creative Scotland took over delivery of the programme and continued to work closely with members involved in the previous phase.

Provision is also about children and young people being able to take part in activity that reflects their interests. The Nurturing Talent Fund helped create opportunities for young people to make and share their own work.

Breaking down barriers to accessing arts

Creative Scotland is named as a Corporate Parent. Being a Corporate Parent means we help provide the things children need when they cannot live with their parents or have experience of being in different types of care. We do this by working with other Corporate Parents to make sure we understand what care experienced children and young people need.

We are also committed to ensure that care experienced children and young people will grow up loved, safe and respected through '**The Promise Scotland**'.

Creative Scotland has a commitment to help tackle child poverty. We have supported projects and programmes of work that break down unequal access to the arts, such as the YMI Access Fund.

Helping recovery from COVID-19

Creative Scotland distributed over £85 million in Scottish Government emergency funding support between 2020 and 2021. There were six funds designed to protect jobs and help the youth art sector weather the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

An example was the Youth Arts Fund which supported projects that focused on mental health and wellbeing during lockdown and other COVID mitigations.

Another fund, the Small Grants Fund, supported a number of young artists who had lost work or income due to the pandemic.

An overview of the impact of the Youth Arts Fund 2021 can be found on the [Creative Scotland website](#).

Supporting arts education in schools

The Screen Education Fund improves the provision of screen education, increasing its reach, depth and inclusivity. It has provided just under £3 million in support for film education in schools, cinemas and film festivals since 2020.

The Creative Learning Network Fund supported regional networks of schools, councils and arts organisations to work on Scotland's [Creative Learning Plan](#).

The [Creative Wellbeing Fund](#) ran from October 2021 to June 2022. It supported six schools to work together with a creative partner to address the impact of COVID-19 on learner wellbeing through creativity.

“

I feel really grateful to have received this funding. It's going to be hugely beneficial to my work and I am really excited for the drawings I'll be able to make as a result of the money.

Usually, I work part time to fund my studio work, but with the pandemic closing the hospitality industry it's been difficult both to find new work and to be motivated to create, so this funding really couldn't have happened at a more opportune time”

[Nurturing Talent Fund recipient, 2021].

“

I need access to loads of materials and instruments... I need to feel free to make whatever... I need to spend time with my friends when I'm being creative.”

[UNCON 2021 contributors from Edinburgh Young Carers/Collective].

3. Participation

What have we done to listen to children and young people on what is important to them?

We work with lots of organisations, artists and young people across Scotland. This means we are listening to lots of voices. How we respond to these voices is an important part of the UNCRC.

The following are some of the things we heard during the last report in 2017-2020 and how we have worked to make sure children and young people have been able to shape how we address these goals.

Creative Scotland should listen to voices of more young people, not just those we engage with already.

The **NYAAG** programme is just one way we listen to children and young people.

In February 2021, members of NYAAG delivered a **'Youth Arts Jam'** supported by Young Scot. It asked young people in the arts what they needed during COVID-19 recovery.

In 2022, Creative Scotland supported NYAAG Forums to support children, young people and the youth arts sector to come together to share ideas, learning and skills. Some of the learning from these projects was shared as part of **UNCON 2023**.

We want to keep working with a wide network of young people so that we can hear a range of voices and experiences.

Creative Scotland should let young people lead on programmes of engagement.

We want to create more chances for children and young people to directly shape Creative Scotland's work.

One way we have done this is through UNCON, a showcase of the best of youth arts and creativity in Scotland. Since 2016, it's been held every two years. It is designed by young people, for young people.

- In 2021, we held an online edition, due to COVID-19 restrictions, which looked at young people's experiences of staying creative during lockdown.
- In February 2023, we hosted in-person events in Edinburgh and Inverness. These were for young people to celebrate work, share experiences and talk about the issues that matter. Both events were organised by young people involved in the NYAAG programme of work. More information about 2021 and 2023 can be found on the [UNCON website](#).

We also worked with early career youth arts professionals.

- In 2022, we supported a young programmer to deliver the Youth Culture Summit, an online space for youth delegates involved in the Edinburgh International Culture Summit, and young people from Scotland to share ideas, practices, and to connect.



Creative Scotland should create more funding opportunities for young people, both as recipients and as decision makers.

- Creative Scotland supported the **Nurturing Talent Fund (NTF) until 2021**. The fund was open to young people between the ages of 11-25 for their creative ideas and activities. Since 2014 it **awarded nearly £230,000 across more than 360 projects**.

Because the fund was successful, we looked at how to create more opportunities for young people to access funding like NTF.

- **In 2021, we supported Nurturing Talent: New Routes**, a series of small-scale projects to fund young people who were less supported through NTF, including people who are care-experienced, have additional support needs, and those from certain geographic areas.
- In 2023, we supported two youth-led funds. **Access all Arts** was run by Children in Scotland to help young people with support needs or disabilities get funding. **Step into the Arts** was run by Youth Scotland to get young people involved with the arts. Both funds were led by youth panels who lead on decision making.



Creative Scotland should emphasise the importance of children and young people across the whole organisation, not just our youth focused teams

‘**Children and Young People**’ is now a key area under ‘Engagement’ as part of **Creative Scotland’s Strategic Framework**. This means we want more young people to be able to access, participate in, and value the arts.

Some funds we deliver, including the **Youth Music Initiative**, now ask applicants to tell us how children and young people have been involved in the design and delivery of projects.

One aim of the **Film and Screen Curriculum** is to introduce film and screen education from Early Years and upwards. Screen Scotland is providing accessible information about roles and routes into the industry at the earliest possible stage. They also involve children in recruitment processes where candidates will be involved in direct delivery to young people.

Creative Scotland has published responses to public consultations. These include the **proposed hobby premium** and education reform process, both in 2022.

“

I think when it's from other young people, it's less scary when you're submitting work, because you can actually talk to the person and they understand you”

[UNCON 2023 Participant, Edinburgh Student Housing Cooperative].

“

[Young people] don't want arts to be seen or perceived as extracurricular activities. We want people to know the real value of the arts activities, and how life changing and how much of a lifeline they've been in our lives...”

[Media Education, UNCON panel event, 30 Jan 2021].

“

It's important for [young people] to represent ourselves, and to say what are our priorities and what are our needs.”

[NYAAG member, speaking at Edinburgh International Culture Summit 2022].

Next Steps

What's important to children and young people and what do they want us to do in the future?

Since 2020, children and young people we have worked with have told us about the importance of creative activity on their mental health and some of the things they would like us to do more of.

- Create more chances to collaborate between children and young people from different backgrounds and regions
- Support more projects that improve access to space, equipment and facilities for children and young people
- Support more opportunities to listen to the voices of early years and children.

Q

“If you had one piece of advice, just one thing, what would you say to someone in charge of the country?”

A

“What did you make?”

Next Steps

Starting in 2023, we will create a **new Youth Engagement Strategy**

We'll work with researchers to look at what we've learned from the NYAAG programme in 2022.

We'll use this learning to help us plan our **Youth Engagement programme in 2023** and beyond. We will use our learning from 10 years of delivering NYAAG to support more children, young people and groups to get involved, be heard and take action.

2023 is the 10-year anniversary of Time to Shine. Many of our programmes of work that involve children and young people in decision making in arts and culture started when it launched in 2013.

While the youth arts strategy is still important, the Youth Engagement team

will work to make sure that other teams across Creative Scotland and our partners know about the work that is being led by children and young people.

In 2023, the **Scottish Government will publish new actions relating to the National Culture Strategy.** This was first published in 2020 and recognises that taking part in culture and creativity from a young age is beneficial to the development and wellbeing of children and young people.

We will work with them and other partners to **achieve the strategy's goals for children and young people** across culture and education.

We will work with our partners to develop a **Children's Rights-based approach** to decision making and budgeting.

This includes **supporting a 3rd year of Access All Arts in 2024.**

We will **work with the Corra Foundation in 2023 to understand how we can improve how we listen** to what children and young people are telling us when they apply for youth-led funding. We will use this learning to help us find the best ways to support young funders and youth-led funding from 2024 onwards.

This will be the work of the Youth Engagement Team at Creative Scotland.

Get involved and let us hear your voice.

Sarah McAdam (Youth Engagement Manager)

sarah.mcadam@creativescotland.com

Sarah Lockhart (Creative Learning Officer)

sarah.lockhart@creativescotland.com

Allan Berry (Youth Engagement Coordinator)

allan.berry@creativescotland.com

Waverley Gate
2-4 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh EH1 3EG
Scotland UK

—

The Lighthouse
Mitchell Lane
Glasgow G1 3NU
Scotland UK

www.creativescotland.com
enquiries@creativescotland.com

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ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL