



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Creative Scotland Funding Criteria: 2. Engagement

Introduction

In 2021/22 Creative Scotland refreshed its Strategic Framework, establishing a new set of aims and priorities to guide our work. This refresh took into account our remit and the role we are here to deliver. As part of this, we also updated our funding criteria, on which we will base all future funding activity.

These criteria are:

1. Quality and Ambition

2. Engagement

3. Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

4. Environmental Sustainability

5. Fair Work

6. International (optional - only for applications involving international activity)

Each of the criteria listed above has its own guide, that sets out:

- The outcomes we want to see in this area of our work as a result of our funding
- Where this work aligns to national policy agendas
- Key aspects of the sector's work in this area, including current challenges
- Any links to relevant further information.

To access each guide please **visit our website**.

Please note that applicants to our Funds do not necessarily need to address all the Criteria set out here. Each Fund will have specific questions which will be proportionate to the levels of funding available. We recognise that organisations and individuals work in different ways and will be at different stages in their development. However, Creative Scotland does expect all those we fund to have a clear vision for delivery against the Fund Criteria and to report impact against them.

Engagement

Key outcomes

Our Priority: We want to see more people from all parts of society access, participate in and value a range of cultural and creative activities

What do we want to achieve?

We want cultural engagement in Scotland to be widespread and inclusive. This means growing both the breadth of engagement – the range of individuals, groups or communities taking part – as well as the benefits for those who engage.

People can engage with cultural and creative activity in many ways - as creators, participants or consumers. For some applicants to our funding, engagement may be with the communities they work in and with, or with other professionals who work in the cultural and creative sector.

How do we define what Engagement means?

We want to ensure that alongside the work we fund is the opportunity for everyone in Scotland to engage with it, wherever they are. **Engaging audiences** in activity happens in different ways and in different settings, from cultural buildings and public institutions to smaller scale informal venues, outdoors and even in the home. Technology has changed the way everyone operates, and this is keenly felt across the culture and creative sector where it has enabled new ways of working. Focusing work on the needs of specific groups can help to shape and represent Scotland's **places and communities**, bring significant benefit to learners including **children and young people**, and to Scotland's diverse **language communities**.

Why is this a priority?

Engagement with cultural and creative activity has a range of benefits for our physical and mental health and wellbeing, including enjoyment, fulfilment and personal reflection. As such it contributes to community engagement and belonging, can help reduce loneliness and contributes to inter-cultural understanding.

People in Scotland value the opportunity to engage with culture and creativity and nationally, levels of participation are high. But some groups engage less than others, citing persistent barriers including time, money and travelling to venues. And COVID has significantly affected how and where people are choosing to access creative and cultural activity. While the public's desire to attend events and venues remains strong, recovery of audiences is happening more slowly than in other parts of the economy.

National policy agendas

Our roles and responsibilities

Creative Scotland's founding purpose describes our functions as a public body, responsible for '*Promoting understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture and encouraging as many people as possible to access and participate in them*'.

Our work is aligned to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (NPF) – a way for the Government to measure how it is doing. It comprises of a range of national indicators, including those for culture, which specifically monitor attendance at cultural events and participation in cultural activity.

The Scottish Government's Culture Strategy commits to extending the opportunities that enable people to take part in culture throughout their lives stating that tackling barriers to engagement is a priority for the culture sector in Scotland.

Creative Scotland has a statutory requirement to promote Gaelic language and culture. Creative Scotland's Gaelic Language Plan sets out how our work, and the people and organisations we support, can help deliver the aims set out in the National Gaelic Language Plan, namely: to promote a positive image of Gaelic and increase the learning and use of Gaelic.

Key work in this area

Engaging audiences

Engaging people is core to what creative people and organisations do. Audiences can be defined widely - as attendees or participants at events, performances, exhibitions, screenings or learning and outreach sessions. This includes projects where creative practitioners and communities work together. For some organisations, the key audience will be the artists or creative people with whom they work.

We are committed to increasing the breadth and quality of opportunities for everyone to engage with culture and creativity. We want to see audiences for the work we support grow, diversify and better reflect Scotland's people and communities. Effective engagement strategies can help organisations to reach wider and more diverse audiences and, in some cases, may help open up new income streams, as they discover current or potential untapped demand.

Cultural engagement is high in Scotland - 90% of adults engage in culture, either by visiting a cultural event or place, or by participating in a cultural activity. There is, however, considerable variation in this engagement across society. Cultural engagement remains lowest for those aged over 75; those with long-term physical or mental health conditions; and those living in more deprived areas - suggesting that there are persistent barriers to engagement that need to be addressed.

The benefits of engagement with, and learning in and through, culture and creativity are far reaching and we want to increase the quantity and quality of such opportunities so that everyone who wishes to can develop their full potential. Creative learning takes place when cultural and creative activity leads to the development of understanding, knowledge, and skills. We encourage organisations to develop the reach, relevance, and impact of learning opportunities they deliver within and outside their organisations.

Presentation and distribution

Ways of presenting and distributing creative content have continued to evolve and diversify. The adoption of digital technologies is driving rapid and major change in human behaviours and the use of digital tools and media is increasingly dominant in the way we communicate. This has re-shaped how to present and share cultural content.

We want to see individuals, and cultural and creative organisations utilise all the benefits that digital tools can bring to help change the way they run their operations, generate revenue, broaden their audiences and influence creative activity. In particular there are clear benefits to utilising digital tools to connect with audiences and learn about their needs. Although digital inclusion and literacy remain issues for many in our society, the changes these technologies bring are here to stay and we have a role to help people use them to support their needs.

While digital capacity expands and grows, live performance remains a fundamental part of public engagement. We want to see funded organisations support the touring of work and its presentation at other venues, reflecting the diversity of art forms and communities which we serve. We want to see toured work re-engage with audiences.

Place and communities

Cultural engagement and participation has huge benefits for Scotland's communities, and building capacity in local areas is key to producing sustainable outcomes. We want to see cultural and creative organisations rooted in their communities and developing partnerships at a local level for the benefit of those living there.

Creative organisations are vital community hubs as well as key cultural institutions. They play a civic role in communities, providing places for people to come together and spaces to help their voices to be heard. By reflecting the communities of which they are part, organisations can sustain community wealth and enrich those who live and work there.

Places are also shaped by culture and creativity, defining the identity of a village, town or city, and encouraging residents to celebrate the places and spaces they share. Access to culture and creativity also supports inclusion, leading to an increased sense of belonging and tackling isolation.

Children and Young People

All children and young people have the right to access and participate in high quality arts activity. Cultural and creative experiences offer children and young people opportunities to learn, explore and create within both formal and informal settings. We want to increase the quantity and quality of opportunities that support children and young people's wellbeing, expression and learning through arts and creativity. We want to highlight pathways for individual growth in the arts and establish networks to help our young people reach their full creative potential.

We want to see applicants who can offer high-quality creative learning opportunities for children and young people, enabling them to explore, develop key skills, work collaboratively, to play and to develop decision making processes that put them in control of the creative process. Facilitating this work is a highly professional practice, requiring a workforce that can draw on a range of recent and relevant resources to ensure that participants are kept safe, encouraged, and are challenged in a way that is appropriate to everyone.

While these ambitions apply to both formal and informal (ie in school and out of school) settings, we know that some children and young people face systemic barriers to being able to fully access their cultural rights. Scotland has a commitment to tackle child poverty and 'The Promise Scotland' commits public bodies about the change demanded by the Independent Care Review to ensure that care experienced children and young people will grow up loved, safe and respected.

Language communities

Scotland's indigenous languages of Gaelic and Scots (alongside English and BSL) are a key part of our distinctiveness and provide a significant contribution to the cultural life of our nation. Arts and creativity play a critical role in building and sustaining strong communities. We want to ensure that people from language communities, including Gaelic and Scots, have substantial and meaningful engagement with culture and creativity.

We want to support Gaelic culture and creativity at both a strategic and practical level. This includes support for individuals and organisations working in the Gaelic language or reflecting Gaelic culture, across all art forms, as well as traditional arts. We believe that supporting the development of Gaelic in communities, wherever they may be, will provide opportunities for artists and strengthen the role of the language in arts and culture.

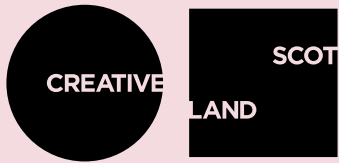
Scots language is also an integral part of Scotland's identity and cultural life. We value the important role that Scots language has played, and continues to play, in shaping the cultural landscape of Scotland. Scots is part of our history and our cultural heritage, with rich oral and written traditions that are still very much alive today. Creative Scotland is committed to working with partners in order to enhance the status of Scots language among people and communities across Scotland, promote the learning and development of Scots and encourage the increased use of Scots as a valid and visible means of communication.

British Sign Language (BSL) is the fourth official language of Scotland, recognising the value of BSL and Deaf culture, and the contribution it makes to our wellbeing and the vitality of our communities. In line with Scottish Government commitments, we want to enable BSL users to engage with creativity and culture as participants, audience members and professionals. This includes increasing information in BSL about culture and creativity on websites and at venues, improving access to cultural activity and events for BSL users and supporting professional pathways to enable BSL users to consider a career in culture and the arts.

Further information and supporting resources

Below are links to policies, guidance and research which may be helpful. Please note that it is not necessary to read these in order to apply but may help you understand the wider context in which your work fits:

- [Creative Scotland Annual Plan](#)
- [Scottish Government Culture Strategy for Scotland](#)
- [Scottish Government National Performance Framework](#)
- [Scottish Audience Intentions](#)
- [Scottish Household Survey](#)
- [The Audience Agency resources](#)
- [Creative Scotland Creative learning resources](#)
- [National Gaelic Language Plan](#)
- [Creative Scotland Gaelic Language Plan](#)
- [Creative Scotland Scots Language Policy](#)
- [Scottish Government British Sign Language \(BSL\) National Plan](#)
- [Our Creative Voice](#)



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