

# Response ID ANON-2W2V-QHS8-N

Submitted to **A Culture Strategy for Scotland**

Submitted on **2018-09-18 20:53:41**

## A vision for culture in Scotland

### 1 What is your view of the Vision as set out above?

Support the vision

### 2 If you have any further comments on the Vision, please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?

#### If you have any further comments on the Vision, please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?:

The Stove is delighted to welcome the vision as set out in the strategy. This is for two core reasons: 1) The cross sectoral approach, and 2) the balance struck between the importance and value of cultural activity as a transformative/empowering agent for inclusion, diversity and wellbeing in society AND the need to sustain cultural activity and elements of professional delivery/excellence of production.

We consider that this relationship has previously been skewed towards 'professionals delivering culture for others to consume' and are delighted to see this strategy as an attempt to give an equal weighting to the wider role of cultural activity as something for people to be an active part of and something which materially improves their quality of life.

Vision of Culture as a change agent in society is warmly welcomed and positioning it within the new National Performance Framework recognises the cross-cutting importance of cultural activity in all its guises.

In the strategy, culture is sometimes described as a vehicle for other outcomes, and sometimes used as an outcome or output in it's own right - this could be clearer - eg consistently using culture as a verb not a noun? Referring to 'cultural activity' might be clearer in some instances. Is culture an attitude, a type of practice, or things/outputs/stuff? Our experience is that of culture being the 'attitude that dissolves boundaries' or the thing that 'flattens power imbalances and allows the planner and the activist to learn from each other'. An approach might be to look at one dictionary definition of 'culture' as the 'conditions for growth' for example; 'culture is the condition/environment that sustains growth (of people, communities and ideas)'

## Transforming through culture

### 3 What is your view of the ambition, 'Transforming through culture'?

Support ambition

### 4 If you have further comments on the ambition, 'Transforming through culture', please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?

#### If you have further comments on the ambition, 'Transforming through culture', please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?:

We wholeheartedly welcome this ambition. It suggests Culture and Creativity as an 'attitude', a 'way of working/thinking/being' that will be transformational in creating the kind of inclusive, prosperous and healthy society that many in Scotland aspire to.

We would remove the word 'cultural' from the second part of the sentence ie....'Recognising that culture and creativity are fundamental to Scotland's social and economic prosperity'

### 5 Please provide comments on the aims and actions under this ambition. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?

#### Please provide comments on the aims and actions under this ambition. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?:

Aim/Action 1:

Points made at open public consultation hosted by The Stove Network:

- Could we have a 'Champion', 'Advocate' or 'Protector' instead of a 'Leader'? The idea of a Cultural Makar (refreshed after eg. 1-3 years) was also mooted. The role should be a 'representer' of culture rather than leader. Culture should be inherent and mostly leaderless, representing non-hierarchical nature of arts practice. This would be an important example to set for other sectors and could be transformational in itself in changing the culture of leadership and representation in other areas of activity in society.
- Keen to see leadership which encourages others to take leadership rather than a leader themselves. Potentially the 'face of' to excite/draw attention. Not top down but bottom up. Leader should look at the environment for culture to flourish, not to try to understand all of culture.
- Currently culture/creativity is too siloed. Innovation and creativity needs to be more embedded in our societal structures (primarily educational structures mentioned).

Aim/Action 2:

Aim 2 is excellent and of vital importance. Action 2 must take an innovative approach to measurement and articulation of benefits to society. Culture and Creativity should hold its nerve and not merely ape the traditional models and measures of 'benefit' – our society is in need of transformational change and we should not be afraid to look for new ways of defining benefits for individuals, communities of interest, geographic communities and society at large. We would question the emphasis on academic practice for this role – rather we would like to see evaluation and measurement understood as being embedded in creative practice.

We consider that achieving this aim (and the 'Sustaining' aim) will require a deep conversational review of the role of cultural activity within our society...one

during which hard questions such as relative importance (and corresponding command of resource) between 'applied' and 'original' creative practice for our society, should be addressed. This review will be a major action in the Culture Strategy and should be carefully designed by a multi-disciplinary team with expertise in facilitated methods of consultation and debate. The results of such a national conversation would be to set a national framework and parameters for cultural investment, measurement and evaluation.

Aim/Action 3:

Aim 3 is excellent and of vital importance.

Action 3 to develop Alliances.....should begin with cultural/creative organisations working at grassroots/community level. These organisations are already forming key alliances across different sectors and agendas. What is important is to extend the national value of this practice and support the forming of alliances/networks between community-based cultural organisations in different places. This approach has the potential to bring the trust generated by individuals at the grassroots of different sectors/places to influence organisations at a higher level (whilst maintaining a link to the original trust network).....to share and grow practice/resources/ideas between places and create a genuine network of inclusive practice/impact across sectors at a national level for Scotland. (please see 'how can you help deliver the strategy' question below)

## **Empowering through culture**

### **6 What is your view of the ambition, 'Empowering through culture'?**

Support ambition

### **7 If you have further comments on the ambition, 'Empowering through culture' please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?**

**If you have further comments on the ambition, 'Empowering through culture' please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?:**

We understand (and 100% value!) the intention behind this ambition but question whether the way it is written will leave it open to misinterpretation.

Some ideas for changing the wording of this ambition:

Expand the idea and practice of cultural activity to be genuinely inclusive for every community and place in our society. Using cultural activity as a tool for everyone to have a stake and voice in the decisions that affect their community and the places they live.

### **8 Please provide comments on the aims and actions under this ambition. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?**

**Please provide comments on the aims and actions under this ambition. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?:**

Aim 1/Action 1

Please refer to our answer for Aim2/Action 2 in the previous section ref 'national conversation' about different forms of cultural activity and the way they are valued/supported/participated in.

Aim 2/Action2 + Aim3/Action3

We agree wholeheartedly with the aims and actions of 2 & 3 of 'Empowering' – we'd like to suggest a bolder version of Action 3 to read: 'using cultural activity as a means of supporting people to have a greater say in shaping the life of their communities, including participatory models of decision-making and community ownership'

As a means to deliver on Aims/Actions 2 + 3:

A policy of active support for the founding of grassroots and artist-led 'civic/cultural/community centres' in communities of all sizes. These centres would vary in what they offered according to the people who set them up and the context of the specific community – but they would share the founding principles of being accessible, inclusive and supportive of people participating in cultural activity.

Such a policy could not be developed by the cultural sector alone – it would need to be a collaborative venture that includes: Local Authorities, Education sector, Health/Wellbeing Sector and Enterprise/Business. 'civic/cultural/community centres' would have the following societal benefits:

- Greater community cohesion and equality
- Giving people a greater voice in local decision-making
- Being a 'connector' between different agendas/policies within a community (eg connecting economic and health/wellbeing)
- Encouraging greater active participation of citizens in running communities (eg 'civic/cultural/community centres' would take over and run former Local Authority assets – and encourage/support other groups to do the same)
- Support inclusion and participation in cultural activity
- Support regeneration in towns/villages and help balance gentrification/over-development in cities
- Support career development, entrepreneurial activity and business innovation in the creative sector.
- Grow Scotland's profile in the world as a place where culture is central to every level of our society/identity

The foundations and contemporary examples of this approach exist throughout our history and culture – we would propose that such a policy starts with in-depth research (involving artists!) looking at such things as: Patrick Geddes, Town Artist movement (David Harding et al), Artist Placement Group, Art Labs, town bands, community festivals, social clubs – as well as contemporary examples such as The Stove Network, Rig Arts, North Light Arts, North Edinburgh Arts, Taigh Chearsabhagh, Deveron Arts, Platform, Wave Particle, CCA, Plantation Productions etc etc

Please connect this answer with Aim/Action 3 for 'Transformation'.....supporting alliances and growing a network of 'civic/cultural/community centres' across the country would be a powerful means to deliver on increased local governance (#DemocracyMatters) as well as a way of grassroots activity translating into genuine influence in local decision-making and community ownership/empowerment.

## Sustaining culture

### 9 What is your view of the ambition, 'Sustaining culture'?

Support ambition

### 10 If you have further comments on the ambition, 'Sustaining culture' please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?

If you have further comments on the ambition, 'Sustaining culture' please provide them below. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?:

This is excellent and well worded ■

Point made at open public consultation hosted by The Stove Network:  
Crafts and making is not given enough mention or priority within the strategy

### 11 Please provide comments on the aims and actions under this ambition. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?

Please provide comments on the aims and actions under this ambition. What do you like, or dislike, or what would you change?:

Aims/Actions 1-5

Our response to all of the Aims and Actions in the 'Sustaining' section are around the need for bespoke strategies for rural and small town contexts in order to sustain cultural activities and economies.

In Dumfries and Galloway we have not had the benefit of the 'social/cultural' remit that was part of Highlands and Islands Enterprise and that has helped creative industries and social enterprise flourish in the North. HOWEVER, this lack of top down support has meant that a vibrant and well-networked local ecology of cultural and creative activity has been built up at grassroots community level. In the past 5 years creative/cultural/community organisations and groups have been working in partnership around D+G to share knowledge, resources and projects – all in the collective effort of a networked approach to regional economic development – with community and creative industries at the heart of this work. We are currently looking to grow this to the next stage in partnership with the new South of Scotland Enterprise Agency.

We would propose that the National Culture Strategy look at the potential for multi-agency investment in Civic/Cultural/Community spaces in places too small to sustain traditional arts infrastructure...and support these spaces to work as part of networks with each other to share resources, experience and skills.

This approach in Dumfries and Galloway is proving highly effective at:

- 'creativity giving people a voice' eg community planning etc
- 'creativity leading (and joining up) regeneration initiatives'
- 'creativity as part of economic development strategy' eg skills, employment and cross-sectoral building

In particular we are seeing:

- young people staying in the region to start careers
- 'young returners' coming back to the region after higher education etc
- people from disadvantaged backgrounds starting community enterprises and entering the creative industries as self-employed people
- Significant partnership working between Local Authority and local people – brokered by creative projects and organisations.

The 'Sustaining' ambition also relates to development of the 'Arts Sector' and the role of Creative Scotland...on this The Stove Network board make the following comments:

There is a considerable gap in skills and professional development across the various professional groups in the 'sector'. This is reflected also in the lack of other sectoral features seen in other professions/industries such as professional bodies, national and regional networks, cross-sectoral promotion and investment to mention a few. A gap analysis and 'Sector-building Action Plan' should be considered to address these issues.

Related to the above point and other aspects of the draft strategy is the current and possible future role of Creative Scotland. In recent years the perception of CS has predominantly evolved as that of 'funding agency'. Consideration should be given to the potential for evolving CS as the broader 'sector builder' for culture. This would involve assessment of the current scope and operation of the agency and revisiting aims and responsibilities. Simply administering funding when there is little control over strategy is both constraining and thankless and a new approach to the roles and responsibilities may avoid the singular focus on CS funding decisions of recent years.

## Delivering A Culture Strategy for Scotland

### 12 Please provide details of any examples of good work and best practice, from Scotland or internationally, that you think could be included in the final strategy? We are interested in a range of different approaches.

Please provide details of any examples of good work and best practice, from Scotland or internationally, that you think could be included in the final strategy? We are interested in a range of different approaches. :

We would like to propose The Stove Network as an example of best practice in Scotland for using creative/cultural activity as a tool for involving people in local decision-making, combatting social exclusion, town centre regeneration and growing a sustainable creative economy in a rural context.

Other examples of good practice include:

Rig Arts (Greenock), North Edinburgh Arts, Taigh Chearsabhagh, Deveron Arts, Platform, Wave Particle, CCA, Plantation Productions (Govan)

### **13 What can you or your organisation do to support the vision, aims, ambitions and actions of the strategy?**

#### **What can you or your organisation do to support the vision, aims, ambitions:**

'Transforming through Culture'

Action 3: The Stove Network is actively working with similar groups in Paisley and Leith to explore ways of sharing experience/ideas and further extending cross-sectoral working by creating opportunities for creative sectors in the different locations to move between the places in the partnership and so establish pathways for both sustainable practice and cross-fertilization of ideas, resources, experience and working methods.

This work has the potential to become a pilot for Action 3 of 'Transforming through Culture'

'Empowering through Culture'

Aim 2/Action2 + Aim3/Action3:

Please see our response to aims/actions 2+3 (above).....The Stove would be very happy to share learning from our first 6 years of existence as a 'civic/cultural/community centre' and be part of planning a strategy for developing a network of such centres around the country. For example we are already exploring a partnership approach with initiatives similar to The Stove in Paisley and Leith and this could be used as a pilot for wider national programme?

'Sustaining Culture'

Aims/Actions 1-5

Please see our response to Aims/Actions 1-5 (above).....The Stove Network would be pleased to work in partnership with the National Culture Strategy and 'South of Scotland Enterprise Partnership' to evaluate and share learning from a creative industries regional development model based on community networks in the South of Scotland. This learning could be transformative in meeting many of the aims of the National Culture Strategy...Empowering, Transforming and Sustaining ....also supporting wider governmental objectives for community empowerment, expanded local governance and community ownership.

### **14 What do you think success for the strategy will look like?**

#### **What do you think success for the strategy will look like?:**

There will be a Civic/Cultural/Community Space in every community in Scotland – each will be the centre of local creative economic prosperity, community decision-making and vibrant cultural activity and self-expression. These Civic/Cultural/Community Spaces will also be networked nationally – sharing knowledge, resource and experience – they will be building capacity and skills in local workforces and creating pathways for exchange of skills and people through the network. This network will be partnering effectively internationally and be the model for a network for international embassies for an independent Scotland.

When people internationally think of Scotland, one of the first things they will say is 'Scotland had the courage to put culture at the foundation of its policies for inclusive growth and that strategy has paid off a hundredfold'

### **Monitoring the Impact of the Strategy**

### **15 What is your view of the proposed approach to monitoring and evaluating the strategy set out in section 5?**

Don't support approach

### **16 If you have further comments on the proposed monitoring and evaluation approach, please provide them below.**

#### **If you have further comments on the proposed monitoring and evaluation approach, please provide them below. :**

The proposed approach is not innovative enough. The National Culture Strategy must take a truly innovative approach to measurement and articulation of benefits to society. Culture and Creativity should hold its nerve and not merely ape the traditional models and measures of 'benefit' – our society is in need of transformational change and we should not be afraid to look for new ways of defining benefits for individuals, communities of interest, geographic communities and society at large. We would question the emphasis on academic practice for this role – rather we would like to see evaluation and measurement understood as being embedded in creative practice.

This will require a deep conversational review of the role of cultural activity within our society...one during which hard questions such as relative importance (and corresponding command of resource) between 'applied' and 'original' creative practice for our society, would be addressed. This review will be a major action in the Culture Strategy and should be carefully designed by a multi-disciplinary team with expertise in facilitated methods of consultation and debate. The results of such a national conversation would be to set the framework and parameters for cultural investment, measurement and evaluation.

### **Other comments**

### **17 Please use this section to provide any other comments that you wish to share about the strategy.**

Please use this section to provide any other comments that you wish to share about the strategy.:

### **Impact Assessments**

### **18 Do you think the partial Equality Impact Assessment has identified where the strategy might impact on people differently depending on characteristics such as age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender identity?**

Don't know

### **19 If you have further comments on the Equality Impact Assessment, please provide them below. For example, what would you add or change?**

If you have further comments on the Equality Impact Assessment, please provide them below. For example, what would you add or change?:

**20 Do you think the partial Children's Rights and Welfare Impact Assessment sets out how the proposals presented in the strategy might impact on the rights and welfare of children?**

Don't know

**21 If you have further comments on the Children's Rights and Welfare Impact Assessment, please provide them below. For example, what would you add or change?**

If you have further comments on the Children's Rights and Welfare Impact Assessment, please provide them below. For example, what would you add or change?:

**22 How do you think this strategy might impact upon people on low incomes, people living in deprived areas, people in material deprivation, people with no / or low wealth and people from different socio-economic backgrounds? Please provide comments below.**

**How do you think this strategy might impact upon people on low incomes, people living in deprived areas, people in material deprivation, people with no / or low wealth and people from different socio-economic backgrounds? Please provide comments below.:**

We consider that the strategy will have a significantly positive impact on people with low incomes, living in deprived areas etc...please see our answers to 'Empowering' and 'Sustaining'

**23 Do you think the partial Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment identifies how the proposals presented in the Strategy might impact on businesses, the third (voluntary) sector or have any regulatory impact?**

Don't know

**24 If you have further comments on the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment, please provide them below. For example, what would you add or change?**

If you have further comments on the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment, please provide them below. For example, what would you add or change?:

## **About you**

**What is your name?**

**Name:**

Matt Baker

**What is your email address?**

**Email:**

matt@thestove.org

**Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?**

Organisation

**What is your organisation?**

**Organisation:**

The Stove Network. Dumfries

**The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:**

Publish response only (without name)

**We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?**

Yes

## **Evaluation**

**Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)**

**Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:**

Very satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**

The two stage process of consulting with people, followed by a draft for comments has been very useful and accessible for our organisation.

**Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:**

Slightly satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**

clear and easy to use...but limited in formatting options for self-expression