
Culture Aberdeen



Introduction

Culture Aberdeen, a network of cultural organisations in Aberdeen and the City Council, has developed this new strategy for culture also titled Culture Aberdeen.

How we developed this strategy

In developing this strategy over a number of years we have engaged in a number of activities, including:

- A conference on the approaches to cultural strategies within other oil and gas cities with guest speakers from Stavanger, Houston and Calgary.
- A programme of workshops which examined a series of themes in turn to identify key priorities for the next ten years for the cultural sector in Aberdeen.
- A number of consultation sessions throughout the process with the cultural community and the creative industries sector.
- Consultation events engaging with representatives from communities, business, education and other sectors to consider wider impacts of culture.
- The development of a Citizens' Circle to consider the view and standpoints of individuals from a range of backgrounds and prior experience of cultural participation and engagement.

Our ambitions

AMBITION 1: Releasing our creativity

Our vision for Aberdeen is a city opening doors, where everyone can be transformed and inspired through engagement in the arts and culture; a place releasing our creativity.

Short-term outcomes	10-year outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Improve the accessibility of information available on the range of cultural activities across Aberdeen.2. Improve accessibility and engagement with individuals from all protected characteristics and ensure that cultural activities reflect more clearly the increasingly cultural diversity of Aberdeen.3. Increase the opportunities to use cultural engagement as a means of promoting well-being, social cohesion and a tool to support individuals through challenging life transitions and positive destinations.4. Develop and implement approaches to working within the Community Planning Partnership so cultural activities can contribute to other city-wide strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Our citizens are fully informed and recognise the range and diversity of opportunities available to engage and appreciate Aberdeen's cultural offer.• Inclusive cultural opportunities are supported, that brings us together to reflect upon, embrace and celebrate our diversity and shared values.• Our citizen's lives have been transformed by cultural and artistic activity which is celebrated as being central to their quality of life.• All our citizens have the rights and opportunities to be a cultural confident and creative society through engagement and empowerment, discernible through a strong and robust evidence base of cultural impacts and lasting social legacy.

AMBITION 2: Becoming Scotland's creative lab

Our vision for Aberdeen is a city to experiment in, a home, a place, a destination and testing ground for artists, creative enterprises and new ideas; a place which has become Scotland's creative lab.

Short-term outcomes	10-year outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Foster a producing culture through a balanced approach to support and funding, supporting the development of local artists to produce and tour work while attracting high quality artists and work from elsewhere to enrich the city.2. Ensure funding opportunities empower artists and organisations to undertake and promote bold, experimental, high-quality, risk-taking work.3. Grow the number of individuals whose main occupation is a creative one by supporting the development, retention and celebration of our city's creative talent.4. Increase the volume of supported spaces available for creative practitioners to use and grow the numbers of makers in incubation spaces.5. Grow the number of creative start-ups and businesses in Aberdeen by co-ordinating and enhancing entrepreneurial and business development support across a range of agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aberdeen is recognised as a destination and testing ground for artists and creative producers to create world quality work.• Aberdeen has a strong track record for support, development and retention of creative talent. Aberdeen has a more creative and diverse economic workforce through a strong and resourceful independent creative sector.• Aberdeen has a diversified and prosperous economy through its growing number and variety of innovative artists and creative businesses.

AMBITION 3: Making all the city a stage

Our vision for Aberdeen is a city which inspires, where exciting cultural experiences are around each and every corner and where there are no creative boundaries; a place where all the city is a stage.

Short-term outcomes	10-year outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Investment in Aberdeen's Cultural infrastructure to support the realisations of the strategy ambitions.2. Animate and promote the heart of Aberdeen as a vibrant cultural centre.3. Extending the range of locations used for cultural programming across the full range of Aberdeen's neighbourhoods and encourage greater ownership by those communities.4. Deliver activities and new commissions which enable the city and its people to explore and reflect on Aberdeen's distinctive character and its rich and evolving heritage and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aberdeen continues to develop its cultural infrastructure, ensuring world class visitor experiences, increasing tourism, supporting the local economy and enriching lives of both residents and visitors.• City centre venues which are thriving and attracting a growing number of residents and visitors alike to high-quality artistic activity• Cultural activity engages and empowers a wide variety of individuals which is visible across the whole city.

AMBITION 4: Connecting us to the world

Our vision for Aberdeen is a city like no other, where we celebrate and promote our culture and heritage, the things we make and create, a place where culture connects us to the world

Short-term outcomes	10-year outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increase the amount of individual and organisational work created in Aberdeen shown nationally and internationally.2. Create and implement a plan which priorities the cultural sector's international links and sustains existing European partnerships.3. Increase the number of organisations with international partnerships and events which have an explicit international element in their programming.4. Build stronger and deeper Aberdeen-wide national and international exchange programmes benefitting artists and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aberdeen uses cultural activity to confidently tell its story to the world and has been recognised internationally as a creative city, producing unique and high quality work.• Aberdeen and its arts organisations develop strategic partnerships and shared best practice values with international organisations and leading global cultural institutions.• Aberdeen is a home for international dialogue between artists and organisations, routed in a spirit of cultural exchange widening practise and cultural understanding.

AMBITION 5: Shaping our future

Our vision for Aberdeen is a city whose cultural sector is growing in ambition and confidence with a strong collective of cultural leaders collaborating to realise the city's potential; a place where the arts shape our future

Short-term outcomes	10-year outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Diversify the income of cultural organisations within Aberdeen to attract more external investment to the region.2. Develop and deliver a leadership programme to grow entrepreneurial cultural leadership and succession planning.3. Establish Culture Aberdeen as the regional independent Cultural Sector development body.4. Develop and implement a system of peer evaluation of Aberdeen's cultural organisations.5. Improve mechanisms for collecting, sharing and analysing information amongst different organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural organisations that have creative, collaborative and entrepreneurial approaches with a quality and depth of leadership talent.• A cultural sector that plays a pivotal role in the development and implementation of major city developments and regional strategies.• The sector develops its infrastructure to better support the realisation of the Cultural Strategy ambitions.• Cultural organisations across the city develop their individual and collective capacity for developing robust evaluation.• A rich and in-depth range of information on cultural activity within Aberdeen is readily accessible to plan and allocate resources more effectively.

Culture Aberdeen's long-term ambitions include:

- Ensuring access to cultural activity to all within the city and that cultural activity is broadly representative of our communities;
- Developing dedicated living and working spaces for our creative practitioners to enable and increase retention of talent;
- Establishing a Scottish Centre for a particular art form in Aberdeen;
- Creating an Aberdeen Biennale of festival activity to celebrate Aberdeen;
- Applying for designation as a UNESCO Creative City;
- Recognising the importance of culture within city development by pledging to follow the principles contained within the international Agenda 21 for Culture.

