



What Next?

Culture in the 2017 General Election

27/04/2017

The UK's investment in culture has a tangible impact on inward investment, regional regeneration, tourism, skills and exports and generates significant returns in revenues from associated VAT. It also has demonstrable social impacts across a range of measures from social mobility and education to mental health outcomes. As the UK considers its future outside the European Union, British culture will provide a lens through which the rest of the world will see us.

Public funding for culture represents less than 0.1% of overall government investment but sustains thousands of jobs in every area of the country and is the seed money for the recent explosive growth of the UK's creative economy and creative industries. The cultural sectors are a key part of the industry, generating much of the innovation, creativity and generation of ideas. There is a complex, porous, critically important relationship between the voluntary, publicly funded and commercial parts of this sector.

Our five key asks of government:

- A commitment to the right of everybody to participate in a cultural life: sustained investment in arts and culture at or above current levels and in line with inflation across the whole country
- A continuation of sector-specific Creative tax reliefs
- Schools should only be judged outstanding by Ofsted if they offer outstanding cultural provision
- A national priority for STEAM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and the Arts, and the introduction of 50 STEAM schools.
- An exit from the European Union that works for culture: a sector deal on free movement of talent and skills, a commitment to addressing sector specific visas and a commitment to protect access to international cultural funding streams and markets.

We are asking government to make commitments in the following areas:

- Contribution to growth sector of the economy
- Education and life chances
- Cultural export and cultural diplomacy
- Joined up action on key issues; education, local authorities and Access to Work

1. Contribution to growth sector of the economy

- **A strong, secure and stable funding base for the cultural sectors.**

We are calling for government to commit to sustained investment in the cultural sectors at current levels and in line with inflation across the whole country.

- **A continuation of sector-specific tax reliefs**
The current tax reliefs for Theatres, Orchestras and the Visual Arts have been extremely beneficial to our sector and we believe the forthcoming Exhibition Tax credit will build on this. Although it is too early for us to be able to provide meaningful statistics, anecdotally we are aware that they are providing essential revenue to businesses. We also hope there can be a commitment for the delayed Finance Bill to retain the April 2017 start date for the Exhibition Tax relief.
- **The development of Creative Industry Zones**
We are calling for a place-based approach to developing creative industry zones / clusters across the country: local ecosystems that include both the public and commercial sectors, access to key advice, support and shared resources for freelancers and business start-ups, Local Enterprise Partnerships and a strong network of education partners. These clusters will be able to respond to local need, capacity and assets, and will be built around existing strengths and growth areas. They will serve to regenerate areas, as well as providing local employment, rich educational opportunities and the potential for innovation.
- **Continued relationships with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and its arms-length bodies**

We value our strong relationships with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and with its arms-length bodies; Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund and the British Film Institute. We also value our close working relationships with the Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Creative Scotland, and with the BBC.

2. Education and life chances

A strong creative and cultural education is the key to diversifying our workforce, tackling social inequality and giving young people the skills they need to innovate and to contribute to the global economy.

- **Truly outstanding schools**
Schools should only be judged outstanding by Ofsted if they offer outstanding creative cultural provision.
- **Continued funding for arts education**
The Department of Education currently funds a number of important strategic initiatives via Arts Council England and directly to others, including a network of Music Hubs and Museums and Schools Partnerships. These programmes have national significance and it is critical that they be maintained and confirmed.
- **A national policy focus on STEAM**

The government has rightly identified the need to prioritise STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), but employers are clear that our young people must also be creative, innovative and problem solving. Studying the arts alongside STEM subjects (creating a focus on STEAM) is essential to ensuring our future leaders have the right skills.

We are calling for the creation of 50 STEAM specialist schools across the country to work with industry leaders, local arts partners and to become trailblazers for a world-class STEAM education.

- **An Arts and Wellbeing Premium to match that for PE and Sport**
The Government should mirror the current Premium for PE and Sport (where every school with primary age pupils gets ring-fenced funds of approximately £8,000 per school for the promotion of PE and Sport). It should create an equivalent for the arts and wellbeing.
- **A strong talent pipeline for the creative cultural sectors**
We are calling for changes to the deployment of the Apprenticeships Levy funds to allow for local and sectoral coordination and support for Creative Apprenticeships. We also need new technical qualifications developed in real partnership with industry, and which reflect the needs of the freelancers and micro-businesses that make up the creative sector. **We need careers advice that is delivered locally by specialists; clusters of education and creative industry partners**, and which reflects real jobs and careers.

3. Cultural export and cultural diplomacy

It is essential that Britain's exit from the European Union works for the arts, culture and the creative industries. We need a package that ensures our talent pipeline, our access to funding and free movement of people.

- **We are calling for a commitment to work towards a sector deal on free movement of talent and skills, a commitment to addressing sector specific visas and a commitment to protect access to international cultural funding streams and markets.**
- **We must remain a part of Creative Europe**
Creative Europe provides an excellent platform for collaboration and a vital channel to European audiences, markets and ways of working, as well as enabling the flow of ideas between countries. Currently, the UK has more active cultural partners in the programme than any other European country. Losing the UK from Creative Europe would reduce the overall pool of talent, reduce the *Creative Europe* budget and affect the quality of projects.

It is essential that our current levels of investment into Creative Europe are matched in future.

4. Joined up action on key issues

There are a number of underlying issues that must be addressed by government and the sector working together:

- **Education**

The current recruitment and funding crisis in schools must be addressed, or the arts will become an unintended casualty, with cuts to arts courses and to specialist teachers in schools. We need a school system that is well resourced and which focusses on equality of access to creativity and culture for all children and young people within a broad and balanced curriculum.

The English Baccalaureate has become the overarching policy priority for secondary schools, with current DfE proposals to judge secondary schools as many as six times on the same measure. This cannot be efficient or effective and is narrowing choice and provision for children and families.

We are calling for the school accountability system to be radically simplified, reducing needless bureaucracy. At the same time, we want to see government and the arts sector working together to actively promote the benefits of culture in education.

- **Local government**

Local Authorities are the largest overall funders of culture. Over the last seven years, significant cuts have been made to their budgets. These cuts have been difficult for authorities to absorb and have been passed on to creative and cultural organisations, to schools and to education providers. As these cuts continue we expect to see more organisations struggling to survive, despite the innovative models and flexible approaches that they are developing in response.

We are calling for a commitment to place creativity and culture at the heart of regeneration strategies, city, devolution and Growth Deals, as well as including culture within plans for Opportunity Areas and in Local Economic and Higher Education Partnership strategies.

- **Access and diversity**

The talent and vision of Deaf and Disabled artists is vital to the success of our creative and cultural ecology. We are world leaders in this field and need to build on and protect our international reputation. It is essential that key schemes such as Access to Work are structured to meet the specific needs of our sector.

We are calling for a review of Access to Work for the creative and cultural sectors to address issues such as the National Insurance requirement, the personal cap and minimum earnings

Notes

About the Creative Industries

The creative industries together form a key sector of UK industry, generating around £90bn per annum and making up over 5% of the UK's economy. They are one of the fastest growing sectors of the British economy, growing at more than twice the rate of the economy as whole. They directly employ some 2 million people and are responsible for nearly 10%, or £20 billion, of the UK's annual service exports. They span many different disciplines, from video-gaming and product design, to music, theatre, film and fashion.

About the arts funding ecology

The creative and cultural sectors are supported by a complex funding ecology including: national public subsidy (chiefly Grant-in-Aid via the Arts Council and direct funding from the Treasury); funding from local authorities; National Lottery money; philanthropy; and earned income from commercial endeavour. Each essential funding source serves to attract, leverage and enable the others, but public investment underpins all, giving organisations the stability to take risks.

Despite a welcome increase to the share of National Lottery funding allocated to culture, the sector has faced significant overall financial cuts over the last few years. Grant-in-Aid for the arts distributed through Arts Council England fell by £106 million in cash terms from 2009/10 to 2013/14. In real terms this equates to more than a third of core national arts funding being lost. Although in the 2015 Spending Review the Chancellor chose to largely protect funding for the arts (an extremely welcome decision), funding for local authorities did not receive the same treatment.

During the same time period, Local Authorities in England cut funding to arts and museums by £57 million in cash terms. In real terms this equates to a removal of almost a quarter of local funding for arts and museums.

Lottery funding must always remain additional to core government spend. It cannot replace it – and it doesn't. The two sources of funding serve very different purposes – with Grant-in-Aid providing the back-bone of the sector and Lottery filling the gaps, such as supporting capital, training and projects.

It can be difficult to get a clear picture of cultural investment by Local Authorities and figures and headlines can be contradictory. Recent [research](#) by the Arts Council and the New Local Government Network shows that Local Authorities have been generally working to protect culture wherever they can. Although LAs have faced significant cuts of over 20% overall, the average cut to the arts is around 17%. This is a testament to the role that the arts play in delivering against core Local Authority priorities. Data from the [Arts Index](#) show deeper cuts to culture, but all colleagues agree that these cuts are due to increase. It is therefore imperative national government makes this issue a priority.

About What Next?

<http://www.whatnextculture.co.uk>

[What Next?](#) is a national movement of cultural organisations, artists, funders, policy makers and individuals who come together regularly to articulate and strengthen the role of culture in society. We're interested in how we can act together to make change happen and how we can hold an authentic conversation about value with each other, the public and with decision makers.

Over the last four years the What Next? movement has grown to include thousands of people and organisations and 35 different Chapters, each meeting regularly across the country; from Norwich, to Cardiff, to Newcastle.

Some of these groups are headed by cultural leaders, some by young professionals at the start of their careers. Some focus on key issues like the diversity of the sector. The meetings include representatives from a broad range of cultural organisations including; the Young Vic, Sadler's Wells, the Roundhouse, Voluntary Arts Network, Fun Palaces, Royal Opera House, Creative England, IntoFilm, Battersea Arts Centre, the Imperial War Museum, the Sage Gateshead, the National Theatre, the BBC, the Royal Shakespeare Company, Kettles Yard, Farnham's Maltings, Hull City of Culture, HOME, Derby Quad, Corby Cube, Norfolk and Norwich Festival, Bolton Octagon and the University of Sunderland. These colleagues are joined by philanthropists, activists, Universities, Local Authority representatives and by individual artists like Bob and Roberta Smith. Our meetings are regularly joined by Ministers and by civil servants from different government departments.

What Next? works closely with the Cultural Learning Alliance on matters related to education and learning.

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