

CHAIRING A WHAT NEXT? CHAPTER

This document is intended to be a useful guide for existing and new Chapter Chairs, which will be updated on a regular basis.

WHAT NEXT? MOVEMENT

- Our Vision, Mission & Values
- Our Working Model
- Our Code of Conduct

ROLE OF THE CHAIR

- Connecting with the UK Wide Movement
- Building a democratic chapter
- Chairing an inclusive and open space for debate - Chatham House rules
- Time commitments and frequency of meetings

FAQS

- FAQs & responses from existing Chapter Chairs

NEW CHAPTER CHAIRS

- Starting a Chapter
- Sample Agenda for your first meeting
- What happens next?
- Contact and further Information

OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES

OUR VISION

Arts and Culture play a vital role in creating a more equitable society. This will be achieved when:

- all people have access to arts and culture, and the sector reflects the full diversity of our communities.
- the arts and culture sector takes greater ownership of its public sector role, improving quality of life for all.

OUR MISSION

What Next? brings people together to debate and shape the future of arts and culture in the UK.

OUR VALUES

- **Democracy:** creating models for open and purposeful conversation
- **Equity:** creating conditions for a more equitable movement and society
- **Leadership:** building the conditions for everyone in our movement to make change
- **Creativity:** embedding and celebrating creativity across our movement
- **Generosity:** sharing our skills, expertise and resources with each other
- **Trust:** building relationships and a more resilient sector.

HOW WE WORK

We are a free-to-access UK wide movement that brings together both freelancers, and small and large organisations to debate and shape the future of the arts and culture in the UK.

We:

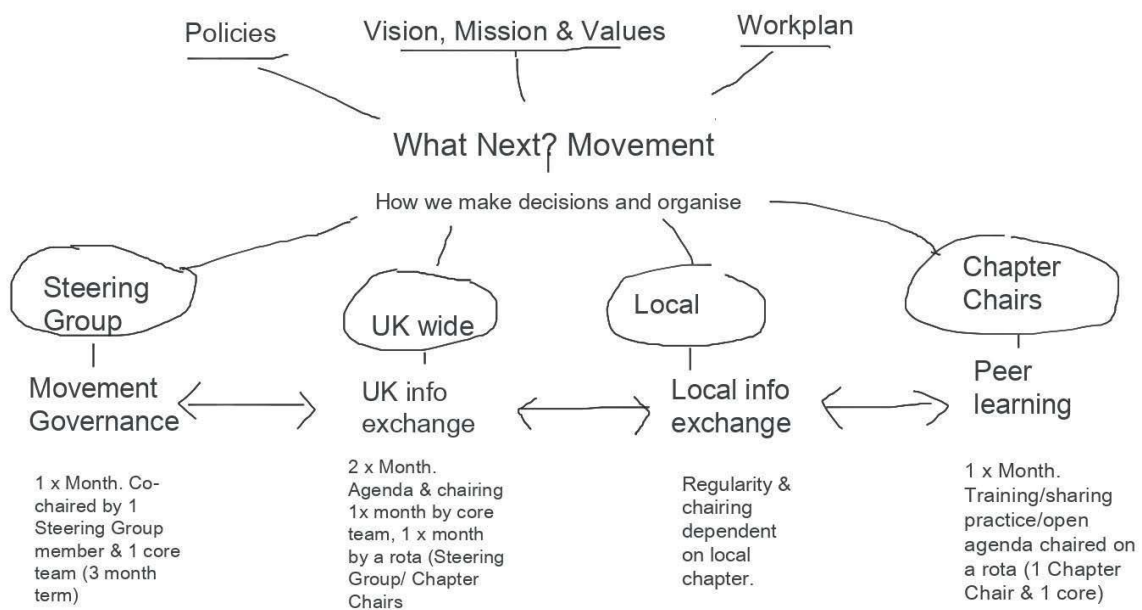
- facilitate conversations with each other, politicians, funders, partners, activists and the public
- build knowledge, relationships and resilience in the arts and cultural sector
- lobby for the arts and culture, creating collective responses to policy proposals and national and local strategies
- create UK wide campaigns and collective resources to effect the things the movement cares about.

WORKING MODEL

What Next? Movement is made of:

- **Chapter Chairs:** The chairs of 31 chapters operating across the UK, who meet regularly in their own local communities, connect with the UK wide movement, and with each other for peer learning.
- **Members:** UK wide membership of the movement who attend and contribute to local chapters and UK wide meetings
- **Steering Group:** A steering group of 16 sector leaders who provide movement governance
- **Core Team:** A small core team of part-time freelancers who support the delivery work of the movement

This is how we make decisions and organise together



OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

What Next? (WN?) brings people together to debate and shape the future of arts and culture in the UK. As part of this, WN? believes that it is our collective responsibility to create spaces, both offline and online, that are welcoming and respectful to everyone.

This Code of Conduct reflects our commitment to our vision of Arts and Culture playing a vital role in creating a more equitable society, and our Values of Democracy, Equity, Leadership, Creativity, Generosity and Trust:

1. Discrimination on the basis of, and not limited to, age, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, neurodivergance, physical ability, religion and sexual orientation will not be tolerated. People who discriminate will be asked to leave the space and/or asked for a follow-up conversation with the WN? Team.
2. All WN? meetings are Chatham House, whether online and offline. This means you are free to use any information you have heard, but cannot attribute this information with the identity or affiliation of the speaker unless you have express permission to do so by them. Chatham House rules allow for robust and open discussion.
3. We live in a world of unequal power relations. Be aware of the privileges you bring and how that may affect others. Know when to speak, when to stop, and when to listen.
4. Each of us have different communication styles. Give generously to allow everyone the time and space to speak and share their thoughts and ideas. Listen to the wisdom that everyone has to share.
5. Do not make assumptions about how people identify themselves or their backgrounds. Respect self-identification by using preferred pronouns and descriptors.
6. Avoid jargon or over-complicated language. Explain technical terms and acronyms.
7. We are all at different stages of learning. Be kind with your words: 'Respect the person. Challenge the behaviour.'
8. We encourage everyone to share and redistribute any power, benefit or resources that come from being part of the WN? movement.

This code of conduct will be reviewed regularly to ensure that we can meet the needs of all of the movement.

THE ROLE OF CHAPTER CHAIRS

Currently Chapters and Chapter Chairs are self selecting and usually emerge from an identified need for greater collaboration by cultural professionals in a place, a need for an inclusive and open space for debate or a need to link local priorities with national agendas.

Chapter Chairs play a vital role in connecting with the national movement, building democratic chapters and chairing inclusive spaces:

CONNECTING WITH THE UK WIDE MOVEMENT

Chapter Chairs are strategic connectors between UK wide and local activity, who support the exchange of information and a chapter's influence on movement agendas.

Chapter Chairs act as connectors by:

- Representing the issues, concerns, ideas and knowledge of their Chapter members at UK wide meetings and Chapter Chair meetings.
- Proposing to lead a session or engage in peer learning at monthly Chapter Chair meetings
- Proposing to programme and Chair a UK Wide meeting, bringing specific issues to a national platform
- Sharing national movement information with your chapter and feeding into national discussions
- Connecting with other Chapters and attending other chapter meetings
- Using the Facebook group and Twitter to share conversations #wnculture

BUILDING DEMOCRATIC CHAPTERS

What Next? Chapters are primarily run on a voluntary basis. We recognise that this means access and engagement can privilege people with social capital, and/or without caring responsibilities or disabilities. For this reason, we strongly encourage the building of democratic chapters in which responsibilities are equitably shared and resources are distributed to where they are most needed.

Chairing a Chapter can be done as one person, but it's much more sustainable to consider how the role of chairing can be shared by a group of people. This allows:

- Shared work, accountability and resources (so that work does not fall on the shoulders of just one person)

- Learning between a group of people with different skills and lived experiences
- Modelling democratic working amongst peers that can be taken into different spaces
- Shared leadership could look like eg. a set of Chairs that is rotated every 2-3 months, or a larger group of Chairs eg. 20 people, who support when / where they have capacity.

Building democratic chapters includes:

- Strategically considering how your chapter connects with the national movement
- Designing ways to build shared leadership of the chapter
- Thinking about how your Chairs broadly represent the areas you serve
- Drawing up an initial list of invitees for the first meeting that represents the communities your chapter is seeking to represent
- Finding an accessible platform and/or venue to hold meetings
- Drawing up an inclusive agenda and inviting a diverse range of speakers
- Sending meeting invites and reminders to the mailing list
- Maintaining the mailing list
- Embodying the vision, mission and values of What Next? in the way you organise
- Learning from other Chapters and making time to evaluate what is working / not.

CHAIRING INCLUSIVE SPACES

Chapter Chairs define the agenda for Chapter Meetings and create an inclusive and equitable atmosphere to hold a discussion and take action. Things to consider include:

Code of Conduct

- Refresh yourself with WN? Code of Conduct.
- What Next? Meetings are Chatham House.

Curating Thematics and Speakers

- Consider how the subject matter plays out across the UK. How is it differently experienced depending on your location?
- Consider diverse perspectives to the subject matter. Who is most impacted? Who holds power? What perspectives need to be heard?

Making the meeting accessible

- All What Next? UK Wide meetings are captioned
- Consider local fundraising for additional access needs such as translation or BSL interpretation
- Send agendas in advance
- Don't assume that people have been to meetings before

Useful links to resources about how to Chair a meeting effectively.

- <http://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/working-in-higher-education/2306/tips-and-techniques-to-chair-meetings-effectively>
- <http://www.youthworkconference.co.uk/how-to-chair-a-meeting/>
- <https://meetingtomorrow.com/content-library/how-to-chair-a-successful-meeting>

TIME COMMITMENT

Starting up the chapter takes the most amount of work; pulling together an initial list of invitees, finding a space to host the meeting and defining what the first meeting should be. On average a chair spends approximately 0.5 days on each meeting. Chapters are often supported by organisations who have a space where the meeting can take place and can offer administrative support for some of the logistical details.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

(WITH RESPONSES FROM EXISTING CHAPTER CHAIRS)

How often do you meet?

- As often as is useful for those who attend. Many chapters meet every week or once a month. This can be flexible in times of need but it is a good idea to keep the meetings at regular set times with plenty of notice.
- It's good to take a break sometimes eg. some chapters don't meet in December or August.

How many attendees do you have? What is the best way to get attendees?

- In person chapters may sometimes have single figures and online sometimes more than 100! There is no right or wrong size for a chapter. Ideally when meetings are face-to-face, it's good to ensure the group can fit in one room and speak together
- It's good to speak from your own experience of what you have gotten out of being involved with WN? Why do you attend? You can also talk to people about WN?'s Vision, Mission, Values; what it has achieved; and that it is a free-to-access cultural movement that doesn't ask for membership fees
- See Q below on gaining diverse leadership and engagement with your chapter
- Ask people to 'try twice not just once' and remind them every meeting is very different.

Do WN? Chapters have to be in-person meetings?

- Before 2020, Chapter meetings were mostly in-person meetings, and shifted to on-line platforms during the pandemic. Online platforms have allowed chapters to create more accessible spaces in terms of timings and captioning, which has supported colleagues with caring responsibilities and/or with disabilities.
- We can imagine that Chapters will continue to experiment with a hybrid model, using online and in-person meetings, depending on the needs of their chapter.

How do you decide an agenda and speakers?

- Think about urgent issues, common concerns, what's happening right now - and how that speaks to WN?'s priorities as a movement. Use the time you have together to be provoked, inspired and respond. Look a little ahead at what might be coming up in your locality or sector.
- The What Next? UK resources page is a good place for inspiration <https://www.whatnextculture.co.uk/resources/>
- You can engage your chapter in a survey to find out what the pressing issues are for them

- If you would like to replay a talk given at a UK Wide meeting, ask first if just their presentation (not Q&A or discussion) could be recorded / shared.

What is the WN? Movement? What is it trying to achieve? What impact do we wish to have?

- WN? is a free-to-access national movement in culture that brings together both freelancers, and small and large organisations to debate and shape the future of the arts and culture in the UK. Other networks including the Creative Industries Federation, Trade Unions, and leaders group are either based on membership fees and/or target a specific audience and sector.
- See WN? Vision, Mission, Values above as a starting point as to what we are trying to achieve and how, which was collectively written over 2019-20.
- For the impact we are wishing to have, we have a Work Plan that looks at our priority work areas for 2021-23, which is going through a collective process of articulation

Are we clear about what 'Chatham House Rules' means?

- When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rules, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed. Chatham House Rules allows for a more robust and open conversation.
- If you would like to attribute the identity of the speaker with the information they have shared, you must ask them first.

What structures do you put in place to create accessible spaces?

- We have a set introduction text that all chairs/hosts use every session which welcomes folks, sets out the basics of the meeting etc. If possible, meetings are also captioned and BSL interpreted.
- Having an accessibility champion who can be contacted before or during the meeting, including offline via whatsapp etc
- Sometimes a group of connected cultural leaders can be intimidating. Make sure your sessions feel inclusive and everyone's voice is heard and appreciated. Reiterate that the sessions are for all regardless of your role. WN? meetings are not just for directors of organisations but for anyone who wants to attend.
- Always consider new attendees.

How do we create and maintain healthy working practices and environments?

- Chairing a chapter is not a one person task. The biggest difficulty for chairing is a lack of time and capacity to create agendas, to invite people and to run the meetings. It can sometimes feel like an extra job, which is why it is important to share the responsibility between a few people and not have one person responsible for the whole chapter.
- Utilise the WN? Code of Conduct to think through what a healthy and safe meeting space looks like. Ask your members what structures would support them to feel safe and included, and create structures for this. eg. establish a process and a contact person when there is a conflict within the Chapter.

How have you encouraged a diverse leadership and engagement of your chapter?

- We have now built an organising group of 20 people who help coordinate with many different protected characteristics and lived experiences, but recognise this is exceptional. Even having co-leadership of several people would be a start
- Having access in meetings has made a big difference to who comes
- Asking current attendees to encourage at least one other person to join the mailing list and to come, or setting up a buddy system (like IETM) where seasoned regulars invite fresh faces, especially those who may not feel WN? is for them or them for it.
- Bringing in speakers and co-hosts from other sectors (eg sport, business, third sector)

What's the best way to get speakers from beyond the cultural sector, e.g. politicians?

- Ask them! Many want to come to engage, understand, explain and meet people; they're elected after all! Explain what the WN? movement is, that you are the local chapter, and be specific about what you want from them in that session.

Do I need to have 'permission' or sign off meeting agendas or to invite new members?

- No. We all have a collective responsibility to take part in and run WN? You bring your own expertise and insight to running meetings and we trust each other to make decisions in good faith that align WN? Vision, Mission and Values with the needs of your chapter.
- Instead of thinking about 'permission', we can think about the movement as a space for collective learning, accountability and action via Chapter Chair meetings and the UK Wide meetings. If you are uncertain about something, raise your question with other Chairs or the Core team.

If we don't have financial resources available, how do we engage speakers for meetings?

- A majority of WN? speakers do so without a fee, if they are presenting for a short time (eg 5-10 min) on a subject they know well, and are salaried, or agree with the ethos of WN? and want to share their knowledge voluntarily. For people who are not salaried, we encourage you to think about a small sum eg £50 for someone's participation. You can build up resources in these ways:
- Ask for the strategic support of partner organisations who can support the chapter with a space, as well as fees.
- WN? offers a capacity building fund, which chapters can apply for to support a specific need
- Remind regular attendees that WN? is a free-to-access movement, which is supported via grants and donations. Encourage people to donate, however small the amount is.
- Explore local fundraising for smaller grants eg to support access costs, translation, marketing or exceptional events

- Ask your funders if there are any strategic funds for a support structure that your chapter is creating

How do we engage in rigorous conversations and allow them to continue.

- Use sharable running documents (eg. a google doc, jamboard, miro) so people can add to it, and/or keep abreast of the conversation
- Chapter Chair meetings are flexible spaces for peer learning and conversation, and are flexible to the needs of Chapter Chairs
- Suggest programming a conversation either at the UK wide meeting or Chapter Chairs meeting to dig into complex conversations you wish to engage in, or to harness peer-learning around doing things differently/bravely to take us into fresh futures

How do I get advice from established Chapter Chairs?

- Chapter Chair meetings are a space for peer learning where you can voice questions. We could also structure meetings to make room for a standing item for people to ask questions/give advice
- You could directly ask for support from a particular Chair whose experience seems most relevant, and or set up a buddy system with them. You could ask the UK core team to suggest who that might be if you're not sure or don't know.

How is WN? resourced?

- In order for WN? To be a free-to-access network, WN? applies for grants from trusts and foundations and strategic grants from Arts Council England. We also rely on donations from within the sector, where possible
<https://www.whatnextculture.co.uk/donate/>

What do Chapter Chairs get from WN?

- National and local connectivity
- Up-to-date knowledge and information - on the ground - and on a national level.
- Access to lobbying and influencing government policy
- A sense of community. At best some solidarity in the shared work and commitment towards a more equitable landscape
- Contacts
- Hearing and understanding what is going on for other orgs and individuals
- Hearing about funding and other opportunities and collaborations
- Improving everyone's participation in culture through our work. WN? makes a difference
- Hearing what IS working, and how people have made phenomenal shifts, and surprising impacts.
- Energy! Exciting ideas! Fuel to be brave and courageous

- A lovely early morning gathering, especially when people take time to breathe between words
- Smiles and rigour, those are moments when I am most fully present, and not multi-tasking
- Peer to peer learning and advice
- Fresh ideas that inspire my work, and things to join up in my head and between people/organisations
- Continuing Professional Development, which is especially helpful when you are freelance
- A spring board to action.

NEW CHAPTER CHAIRS

SAMPLE AGENDA FOR YOUR FIRST WHAT NEXT? MEETING

1. Introductions
2. About the What Next? UK Wide movement
3. Local priorities: What do we want to focus on?
4. Future chapter meetings: How it will work?

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

You Will...	We Will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Arrange your first meeting and invite attendees- Let us know the date so we can attend- Send us info about your chapter to include on the WN? Website (via this simple googleform https://goo.gl/forms/mBRd2S3VyVuY1GK83)- Add Clare, Cath and Joon Lynn to your chapter's email distribution list	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Add you to our central mailing list for chapter chairs- Add you to the distribution list for WN? UK Wide (so you can see examples of the chapter agendas and forward any relevant information to your chapters)- Arrange a phone-call with you before your first meeting- Add your chapter information to the website- Arrange a follow-up phone call with you after your first meeting- Invite you to a one-off induction meeting for new chapter chairs and the monthly chapter chair meetings for all chairs

CONTACT & FURTHER INFORMATION

If you are interested in starting a chapter, please contact National Movement Leads Clare Thurman clarethurman@gmail.com and Joon Lynn Goh joonlynngoh@gmail.com
To find out more about the different chapters and WN? activity, visit the What Next? Website <http://www.whatnextculture.co.uk/chapters/> or on twitter @wnculture #WNculture