



Arts Council England Response to RSA Inclusive Growth Commission

Arts and culture build and shape places and communities where people want to live and work. Arts and culture have a unique and inclusive way of engaging people and communities and transforming lives. Investment in arts and culture drives cultural, social and economic outcomes in one.

The creative industries are one of Britain's success stories. They are one of the highest growing sectors, they are one of our top exports, and they are what we are known for the world over. The GVA of the creative industries rose by 37.5% between 2008 and 2014, compared to 18.2% increase in the UK economy as a whole. 1 in 20 jobs are now in the creative industries. This is a well-paid sector with high growth, high skills levels (graduates making up 58.8% of the workforce in 2014, compared to 31.8% in the economy as whole)¹ and high productivity². Supporting growth in this sector can therefore be beneficial to individuals, local areas and the economy as a whole.

Art and culture are the bedrock for the creative industries: feeding innovation, skills, and infrastructure; supporting local and domestic markets through regeneration and place-making; and growing the foreign market by promoting tourism and encouraging investment. At the same time, promoting engagement with art and culture can help us to tackle society's greatest challenges – many of which stand in the way of us all sharing in the benefits of growth. Arts and culture bring us together as communities, helping us connect with one another to combat social exclusion and achieve great things. As the Government's Culture White Paper noted, "cultural place-making can shape the fortunes of our regions, cities, towns and villages"³.

In response to the key question you outline in your call for evidence, we believe that arts and culture can drive an inclusive and sustainable model of place based growth, a model which addresses social and economic inclusion.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/creative-industries-economic-estimates>

² http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Arts_culture_contribution_to_economy_report_July_2015.pdf

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/culture-white-paper>

Below we highlight some of the ways that arts and culture do this, and outline how a national development agency, like the Arts Council, can support local growth ambitions.

Arts and Culture as a catalyst for renewal

Art and culture can be a catalyst for places to find ways to grow sustainably and to ensure the benefits are widely shared. Much can be learned from initiatives such as the EU Capital of Culture and UK City of Culture. These have provided investment for cultural activity which often leads to growth and renewal in other ways. Hull is the 2017 UK City of Culture and is experiencing an upward spiral of growth with arts and culture at its heart. It is estimated that being UK City of Culture will deliver a £60m boost to Hull in 2017 alone, and the city has seen more than £1bn of investments since 2013, when it was first awarded the title. The stimulus of culture can show people what is possible with their city, and change world perceptions. Hull is now rated as one of the 'top 10 cities in the world' by Rough Guide 2016, a decade after it was voted as the worst place to live in Britain. This follows on from the sustained positive impacts of Liverpool's year as EU Capital of Culture in 2008 and Derry/Londonderry's as UK City of Culture in 2013

Investment in culture infrastructure can lead to culture-led regeneration, with wide ranging positive spill-overs and implications. Arts Council's investment in cultural infrastructure such as the Lowry in Salford, and BALTIC and Sage in Gateshead were the starting point for the revival of former industrial districts and growth of creative clusters. In 2011 we delivered the Turner Contemporary in Margate, and have engaged in a wide range of activity in partnership with English Heritage, Thanet District Council and Kent County Council. The gallery has helped to re-establish Margate as a destination town, encouraging 2 million visits in its first 5 years of opening, 48% of which were made by those specifically coming to visit Turner Contemporary.⁴

Libraries are community hubs

Libraries are located at the heart of neighbourhoods and communities, have high levels of user trust and satisfaction and have a track record of reaching all groups in the community⁵. They have strong potential to promote inclusion, and this can help deliver inclusive growth. The '[Enterprising Libraries](#)' scheme delivered by Arts Council England, British Library and DCLG encouraged libraries to use their roles as community hubs to spark local economic growth and improve social mobility. The projects fostered entrepreneurship by supporting budding business minds who were interested in becoming self-employed.

⁴ <https://www.turnercontemporary.org/media/documents/COaST%20Turner%20SROI%202015-2016%20FINAL.pdf>

⁵ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160204101926/http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/browse-advice-and-guidance/museums-and-libraries-research-review>

The evaluation of the two year project⁶ found that nearly 1,700 new businesses were created and 4,200 new jobs over a 2 year period. Of the businesses created, 47% of the founders were women (compared with the national average of 18%), 26% were from black and Asian minority ethnic groups (compared with the national average of 7%), 14% had a disability (including dyslexia) and a quarter had previously been unemployed or made redundant.

Investment through the public library network enables opportunity to reach across the society and geography. The Arts Council's Public Libraries in England fund has awarded over £800,000 to 15 local authorities, to provide faster free WiFi to their visitors. As a result, over 98% of public libraries in England now provide access to free, good quality WiFi. This means that more people can connect with the knowledge and information they need to improve their social and economic life chances.

A report which looks at the economic impact of libraries can also be found here⁷

Tackling society's greatest challenges

Many of the barriers to inclusive growth are complex, and tackling them requires collaboration between public agencies, the engagement of communities, and a willingness to innovate and experiment. Engagement with culture, and the cultural sector can help here. There is evidence that art and culture has a variety of positive impacts on our society and that participation in arts and culture can be effective at meeting a diverse range of needs

- participatory arts activities can help to maintain the health and quality of life of older adults.
- singing improves mental health and subjective wellbeing; dancing and playing a musical instrument reduce the risk of dementia;
- participation in the arts can contribute to community cohesion, reduce social exclusion and isolation, and make communities feel safer and stronger.
- Arts and culture can encourage people to feel a sense of pride and belonging in their local area.⁸

Driven by this evidence, the cultural sector is increasingly partnering with local authorities, and health and social care providers to commission cultural organisations to deliver outcomes that promote inclusion and the creation of value locally.

⁶ <http://britishlibrary.typepad.co.uk/business/2015/06/enterprising-libraries-a-blueprint-for-delivering-economic-growth-in-uk-cities.html>

⁷ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Evidence_review_economic_contribution_libraries_2014.pdf

⁸ See King's College Culture Case website for evidence and research <http://www.culturecase.org/>

For example:

- In Gloucestershire, the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group has funded nine projects that are applying arts and culture across a range of clinical pathways including cancer, mental health and diabetes. They are also exploring how arts and cultural activities can be aligned with the county wide social prescribing scheme.
- In Kent, the County Council has developed a range of new services that included arts and cultural organisations, alongside traditional public service providers. These include a £4m community-based mental health service which includes formal arts and cultural organisations, such as local museums and theatres, as well as smaller, informal arts and cultural groups, such as reading groups and dance classes. They have also been involving arts and cultural organisations in their early help and preventative service and the re-commissioning of Kent's £50 million waste management service.

Cultural interventions are appealing, inclusive, and can reach people without stigmatising them. Working in this way can be cost efficient in terms of delivering outcomes, can support individuals to go on to be active members of their communities and local economy, and can reduce ongoing reliance on other public services.

Cultural education

A cultural education produces well-rounded adults, who contribute as empathetic citizens and creative workers. There is evidence that doing art activities and studying creative subjects at school helps children and young people improve in other areas too: reading and maths attainment, overall educational progression, social and emotional development, employability.⁹ The Arts Council undertakes a range of activities to ensure that the opportunities of cultural education are available to all.

Creative People and Places

Across England, visitor attendance and participation in arts and culture is significant.¹⁰ However, in areas where people have fewer opportunities to get

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https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/260726/Cultural_Education_report.pdf

¹⁰

76.1 % of adults asked between April 2015 and March 2016 had attended or participated in the arts in the previous year; In 2015/16, 52.5 per cent of adults visited a museum or gallery in the last year. Taking Part Survey <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/taking-part-survey>

involved with the arts, or where participation is low, we are investing through [Creative People and Places](#). The programme takes an inclusive and long term, collaborative approach to grow supply and demand for arts and culture. Most of the 21 projects¹¹ happen in communities which don't always benefit from growth.

The programme is inclusive. In its first two years it reached over 1 million people, 75% of whom had not engaged regularly in the arts before. Projects are led by local organisations such as arts groups, and community clubs and projects but work with a diverse range of partners including a rugby league club, a haulage firm and a housing association – the make-up of each partnership is locally led and reflects what is important to that community. It is the communities who are the co-commissioners of their cultural and arts experiences, developing projects that respond to their interests and needs. The work is high quality and challenging, but it comes from the people: it is created with them rather than brought to them.

Over time, the programme sets to test different approaches to growing the cultural sector, and will capture the range of outcomes that the programme will have for individuals and communities. Although not driving the programme, economic development is an expected and long term aspiration for some of the projects.

Building on local strengths

Providing relevant skills and training to people in order to contribute to their local economy can be challenging. In partnership with other investors and delivery organisations, the Arts Council seeks out opportunities to build on the strengths within a local area to support arts and cultural practitioners looking to produce work for a national or international audience, but at same time inspiring and benefitting the local communities who surround them.

Glass making is a key element in the history of Sunderland, bringing together its religious, social and industrial heritage. [The National Glass Centre](#) is a combination of museum and gallery and a hub for creativity and learning. Operated as part of University of Sunderland it is home to 130 students studying glass and ceramics from Foundation level to doctorates. It provides a base for artists to work and collaborate. Thousands of school children take part in education events each year, and there are free events for families.

The role of national agencies like the Arts Council

¹¹ Projects are in Hull; Stoke-on-Trent; SE Northumberland; Barking & Dagenham; Hounslow; Black Country; W. Yorkshire; East Durham; Ashfield, Bolsover, Mansfield and NE Derbyshire; St Helens; Slough; Swale & Medway; Blackpool & Wyre; Corby; Fenland & Forest Heath; Peterborough; Luton; Doncaster; Pennine Lancashire; Sunderland & S Tyneside; Boston & S Holland.

Interventions, innovations and policies that enable culture's contribution to inclusive growth rely upon numerous partners and their interactions with communities. As the national development agency for arts and culture, our ambition is to deliver great art and culture for everyone. Through our suite of investment programmes we work to increase opportunities for people to work, visit, engage and participate in arts and culture. Our responsibilities include working to make our sector more inclusive, and also supporting local areas to maximise the contribution that arts and culture can make in their local economy. We are increasingly working in a place based way, working with local communities and partners to help deliver local aspirations.

We know that socio-economic status and low education levels are barriers to cultural engagement for audiences, for artists, and for the wider workforce. We know that those who engage with arts as a child are more likely to go on to engage as adults. But, for many children and young people from minority communities and from the least prosperous parts of our society, the arts aren't a part of life. If culture is to contribute to inclusive growth this has to change. A number of programmes seek to tackle this issue.

- [Cultural Education Challenge](#) , an inclusive approach to providing opportunities and access to arts and culture for young people. As well as ensuring young people develop essential skills required to support the growing creative industries, they develop a range of 'soft' skills which improve life chances overall, including employability.
- [Creative Employment Programme](#) There is an over-reliance on degrees amongst new entrants to the cultural sector which contributes to a lack of workforce diversity in terms of socio-economic background. Whilst volunteering is crucial to some sectors there are important diversity issues around who is able to volunteer including the use of unpaid internships as a way to gain experience. An ambition within our current strategy is to promote a diverse workforce, with the aim of creating fairer entry and progression routes in the arts and culture sector. Entry routes should be open to all. Apprenticeships can provide a viable entry route into employment in the arts and cultural sector. They also help employers build a workforce with the right skills.

However, a large number of organisations operating in the cultural sector are SMEs and or charities and struggle to find the time and resources to offer paid internships and work placements or to take on an apprentice. To address this challenge, the Arts Council continues to work with our sector skills councils to consider ways we might support the sector to increase the number of apprentices it can offer.

- [Creative Case for Diversity/audience diversification.](#) In order to get great art and culture to everyone, we support organisations who are committed to diversifying

cultural content and the diversification of audiences. Diversity and equality are crucial to the arts because they sustain, refresh, replenish and release the true potential of England's artistic talent – from every background.

We recognise that to fully realise culture's contribution to inclusive growth locally, other partners and agencies will need to take account of the potential of that contribution.

As a national development agency we can work with local enterprise partnerships to help them embed culture in their Strategic Economic Plans. With our expert and England-wide perspective, we are able to engage at a local, national and international level and can work with local government to help them realise the potential value that new powers, freedoms and flexibilities might bring. In our view devolution offers many opportunities for culture. We have developed locally focused strategic programmes to engage local partners with the potential for culture in their areas. These include:

- **Cultural Destinations Programme (£3m):** The culture and visitor economy have an interdependent relationship. Cultural institutions and events attract visitors to a destination, can extend the visitor offer out of season and change the visitor profile. The programme enables arts and culture organisations working in partnership with destination organisations to increase their reach, engagement and resilience. Putting culture at the heart of plans for local visitor economy group can help make tourism sustainable and provide higher skilled and paid employment opportunities.
- **Creative Local Growth Fund (3.8m):** supports the growth of the cultural sector and its contribution to economic growth and the creative industries outside of London. The fund puts art and culture at the heart of growth plans by:
 - securing long-term partnership between LEPs, the Arts Council and other local partners to support the cultural sector
 - helping to leverage European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs) – particularly European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) – investment within the LEP area into the cultural sectorThe fund has put culture at the heart of LEP plans to grow local economies and to provide high quality employment opportunities.

Measuring Impact

Just as you are considering how to measure the impact of inclusive growth, we find different ways to understand the many benefits that investment in arts and culture

can have on individuals, society and the economy. We, and others, have explored different ways of understanding and capturing the 'value' of arts and culture.¹² We gather evidence about the impact and value of cultural investment around themes which we describe as the 'holistic case'¹³ – and includes both economic and social outcomes. Evidence for the outcomes and impact of arts and culture were gathered in an Arts Council Review¹⁴. More recently, evidence was assimilated and summarised by Createquity [here](#)¹⁵

Our [Arts Council Research Programme](#)¹⁶ supports projects which explore and 'measure' the value of the arts and museums from a diverse range of perspectives and disciplines. For example, one project with **Yorkshire Dance** and the School of Biomedical Sciences at the University of Leeds, explores the impact of a youth dance programme for 11–19-year-olds living in deprived neighbourhoods in Eastern Leeds. The study will explore the holistic benefits of dance programmes for young people in deprived communities, aiming to explore health, wellbeing, social, behavioural and emotional outcomes.

The evidence we gather helps inform our future investment and can support local commissioners to make decisions about how best to meet the needs and demands of the communities they serve.

Maximising the contribution that culture can make to economic growth?

A flexible approach to devolution of budgets and responsibilities which supports innovative approaches to addressing local needs and demand

A significant challenge to culture realising its potential to contribute to inclusive growth have been reductions in local government expenditure. We agree with your findings that more inclusive growth will require more local resources. Local government is our most important strategic and delivery partner in developing arts and culture in England. Despite cuts and difficult decisions, local authorities invest more collectively in culture than the Arts Council. Local authorities understand local need, leverage resources and broker partnerships. There has been significant

¹² <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/>;
<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/research/fundedthemesandprogrammes/culturalvalueproject/>;
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/case-programme>

¹³ <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/why-culture-matters/holistic-case-art-and-culture>

¹⁴ <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/exploring-value-arts-and-culture/evidence-review>

¹⁵ <http://createquity.com/2016/12/everything-we-know-about-whether-and-how-the-arts-improve-lives/>

¹⁶ <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/exploring-value-arts-and-culture/research-grants-programme-2015-2018>

reduction in local government financial support for arts and culture¹⁷, and this has a negative impact on local government's ability to lever the potential of arts and culture to realise inclusive local growth.

The cultural sector and local government, supported by the Arts Council, recognise this risk, and are seeking to mitigate it through finding new business models, partnerships and activity that can sustain the cultural sector, promote engagement and help culture play a role in inclusive growth¹⁸.

We consider that devolution contains the potential for culture to contribute more to inclusive local growth. There is a significant opportunity for devolution to enable sustainable business models for cultural organisations to develop, for communities to be better engaged with the question of how best to provide local opportunities, and for local partnerships to be meaningful and effective. If these opportunities can be realised then there is huge potential for the cultural sector to be sustainable, and to contribute to inclusive growth. As the national development agency, able to invest strategically at scale, the Arts Council will be a vital partner to combined and local authorities looking to make the most of culture through devolution¹⁹.

It is worth noticing that some policy levers to help culture contribute to inclusive growth are underused. [The National Planning Policy Framework](#) already recognises that 'cultural well-being' is an essential element of the social aspect of sustainable development. This should enable local planning authorities and their partners to consider how planning can enable culture's contribution to inclusive growth. Where capital investment is required, culture can benefit from developers' contributions from under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act and also through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

Supporting new talent and the diversification of the creative workforce

Cultural education can help underpin inclusive growth. It turns STEM into STEAM: it fires the curriculum and creates individuals who are more inquisitive, persistent, imaginative, disciplined and collaborative. Arts and culture subjects need to remain secure in our national curriculum and appropriately resourced if we want to continue developing the talent required to continue growing the creative industries.

Arts Council England recognises the benefit of encouraging the employment of apprentices, in diversifying the workforce and attracting and maintaining talent. We would like to see that any national schemes such as the Apprenticeship Levy

¹⁷<http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/wp-content/uploads/Funding-Arts-and-Culture.pdf>

¹⁸http://www.nlgn.org.uk/public/wp-content/uploads/ON-WITH-THE-SHOW_FINAL.pdf

¹⁹http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Arts_Council_England_and_devolution.pdf

acknowledge sector difference and engage future-facing apprenticeships, not just apprenticeships in traditional areas.