

# Culture Investment Programme 2025

## Expression of Interest Guidance



### Introduction

We want Aberdeen to be a city in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where everyone, regardless of background, has access and opportunity to a diverse range of high-quality culture experiences.

We recognise that culture activity has the potential to deliver against a wide range of local priorities and public policy objectives. There is an increasing evidence base to show culture can have real impact on priorities for health and wellbeing, education, the economy and poverty reduction.

The Aberdeen Culture Investment Programme is being designed to support organisations which want to contribute to that goal by delivering sustained programmes of creative or cultural activity. It is intended for Aberdeen based organisations which wish to enter into a strategic partnership with Aberdeen City Council (The Council) to deliver culture activities which meet our outcome priorities.

### Our principles

**Ambition** - Encourage creative ambition and excellence in delivery.

**Public benefits** - Ensure Council investment is used for public benefit, demonstrating impacts to evidence that investment is delivering on our priorities.

**Local Impact** - to support the local culture economy to develop capacity and capability to be more sustainable and successful.

**Diversity** - Reflect the growing diversity of the city and foster creativity in every community.

**Collaboration**- Encourage organisations to work mutually and in collaboration and to support grass roots organisations and individual practitioners, ensuring fair pay and opportunities to develop their activities and careers in Aberdeen.

**Grow investment** – To foster the conditions for the culture sector to maximise opportunity and grow inward investment for culture and creativity in Aberdeen.

**Inclusive** - Make funding guidance clear, easy to understand, accessible and inclusive. To make monitoring consistent and proportionate to the levels of investment.

**Open** - Make decisions based on open applications, share data on decisions openly and use monitoring data collected to inform future investment choices.

## Expression of Interest (EOI) process

The Culture Investment Programme will replace the Council's previous support programmes for culture (both revenue and project grants). The new Programme will build on the strengths of these long running programmes, retaining support for project and revenue funded activity but will open opportunities to a more diverse range of organisations to support development and capacity building.

Anyone seeking revenue or major project support (from 2025 onwards) needs to submit an EOI.

This is because we recognise the amount of work that goes into application writing and planning a project. The EOI stage helps us to filter any projects or activities which are unlikely to meet eligibility and saves you time working on a full application unnecessarily.

The EOI word count is deliberately short (maximum 800 words) to minimise the time and effort for you to complete this stage.

Completed EOIs that pass the eligibility criteria will be invited to apply to the new Programme when it launches in September 2024. If you are unsuccessful, you will be given feedback and will have the option to address the issues for consideration again.

Completing an EOI also helps the Council as a funder to identify financial demand as well as tailoring our application support, shaping and refining the Investment priorities and guidance.

### Who and what we can fund.

- Cultural activities and programmes delivered in Aberdeen for the benefit of its residents.
- Aberdeen based organisations and groups that have not for profit status, such as being a registered charity, social enterprise or community interest company.
- An ability to deliver high quality creative activity within Aberdeen.
- Must have relevant safeguarding policies in place.
- An equal opportunities statement or policy. Applications are welcome from underrepresented organisations.
- Must have relevant accounting procedures in respect to level of activity.
- Revenue and project costs

### What we cannot fund

- Activities which take place outside the Aberdeen city boundary.
- Activities which are not cultural and/or provide no benefits for Aberdeen residents.
- Organisations not based in Aberdeen.
- Individuals with exception of Acorn (a separate process is being developed for individuals).
- Applicant organisations already in receipt of non-cultural grant funding from Aberdeen City Council which contributes to core running costs.
- Profit making companies/commercial activities.
- Council services.
- Education establishments, including Universities, Colleges and Schools (activities can take place at education establishments but they cannot be the applicant lead).
- Capital costs.
- Promoting the causes or beliefs of political or faith organisations.

- Recoverable VAT.
- Costs for any activity that has taken place before investment is awarded (backdated expenditure).
- Refreshment costs, including food and alcohol for opening events.
- Living costs.

## Investment Focus Themes

Through consultation with the cultural sector, a set of new priorities have been identified for the Culture Investment Programme. Applicants are encouraged to consider how their activities can deliver on these priorities for Aberdeen and provide real cultural and socioeconomic benefits for it's citizens. While applicants are not expected to deliver against all the themes, there is a requirement to consider where they align and the impact they can have. For any themes that align to your application, please provide a clear explanation of how that work contributes to the outcome and how you plan to measure that in your project evaluation.

The new Culture Investment Programme is aligned to the Aberdeen Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP). The LOIP is a document which sets out how Aberdeen public sector partners will improve outcomes for and with local people and communities. The vision set out in the LOIP is that Aberdeen will be 'a place where all people can prosper' by 2026.

Theme	Description	Outcome
<b>Experience</b>	Recognising the intrinsic value of creativity and removing barriers to experiencing culture.	Everyone who calls Aberdeen home has the opportunity to engage in high quality creative and cultural activity.
<b>Celebrate</b>	Creating a clearer/ stronger identity and cultural narrative	The creative diversity of our people and communities is celebrated, we use culture and creativity to share and celebrate our stories to the world.
<b>Our Economy</b>	Economic resilience and diversity through Increased creative industries employment, people in sustained fair employment and reduction in reported skills gaps.	Aberdeen's economy and workforce is resilient and diverse, through our skills support and cultural employment opportunities
<b>Our Children &amp; Young People</b>	Increased sense of confidence, safety and wellbeing in children and young people, reducing need for Tier 3 services.	Our children and young people's physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing is improved and have access to cultural education experiences and post-school opportunities.
<b>Our citizens</b>	Increased healthy life expectancy through cultural engagement	Our citizens benefit from healthy life expectancy, mental wellbeing and positive life choices through cultural intervention.
<b>Our Place</b>	Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions, protecting our natural and built environment	Our cultural assets are well cared for and cultural sector is contributing to climate change resilience .
<b>Our Community</b>	Building strong personal and community resilience, enabling people to participate in decisions that help change things for the better.	Culture provides a voice for community capacity building and decision making.

Sitting behind the LOIP is the [Population Needs Assessment \(PNA\)](#), which brings together a broad range of data covering the people, place and economy of Aberdeen and explores how this can be related to the services and interventions that are being provided by the Council and its partners.

Our Programme recognises culture's role as a change maker and its ability to have real impact on people's lives and opportunities, be it socially, economically or sense of community and place.

## Timeline

The following is the indicative timeline for the Culture Investment Programme.

Timeline	
Culture Investment Programme launched for application	September
Advise sessions and workshops	September/October
Application Deadline	November
Application Reviewed by panel	November/December
recommendations for funding reported through budget process	January 2025
Budget Meeting/ Funding approved	March 2025
Culture Investment begins	April 2025

## How to submit your Expression of Interest

### Contact Details

Please list your current contact details and please update us of any changes. Normally applicants are contacted via email, and we require an up-to-date email address.

### Organisation Capacity

Please provide information on the current staff levels within your organisation, this can include board members, volunteers and freelancers.

### Previous Support

Please complete if you have been in receipt of either revenue or project funding from Aberdeen City Council in the past, this will help to identify any subsidy implications.

### Your Ambitions

Please provide a brief summary about your organisation; outlining your key areas of work, your core aims and your track record for delivering high quality cultural and creative activity. You can write about key projects and achievements. Also, highlight how this experience will support you to manage and execute your proposed activities.

Please provide a concise summary on the proposed activities you would be seeking support towards, if it is revenue, project activity or a mix of both. If you are seeking to apply to the Programme as match funding to Creative Scotland Multi-Year support, please provide information on the activities which align to our investment focus.

Please indicate if your intended activities will fall under any of the investment themes and or targeted at underrepresented groups /those with protected characteristics.

### **Location**

Please indicate the physical location of where your activity will take place, this can be both your main base of operations and any physical outreach activities such as performances or workshops in communities. (audience and participant addresses should not be counted here).

### **Budget**

Please outline your indicative investment request up to a maximum of 3 years. Please include information on any match funding applied for or already secured as this will help to articulate both the level of demand for investment but also amount of non-Council funding which could potentially be leveraged in. Please also articulate why Council investment is required for activities to happen.

### **Declaration**

Please sign to confirm the information is correct and you are content for the information to be used in accordance with our data handling policy.

### **Deadline**

Completed EOI forms should be submitted by email to [creativefunding@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:creativefunding@aberdeencity.gov.uk) prior to submission of a full application. No EOI's will be accepted beyond October 24<sup>th</sup> 2024.

### **What happens next?**

Upon submission you will receive an acknowledgment email within 10 working days. If you do not get a response within 10 working days, please email again so Officers can investigate.

Completed EOI forms will be reviewed against the new criteria, those that meet the criteria will be invited to apply when the programme opens in September 2024.

Those that are unsuccessful will be given feedback on why they do not meet the eligibility criteria. Where there is a viable resolution to resolve eligibility, the organisation can resubmit an EOI for another chance to seek investment support.

Please note approved EOI's do not guarantee either support or the level investment you may receive.

### **Further Information**

If you have any questions on the EOI process or criteria, please contact [creativefunding@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:creativefunding@aberdeencity.gov.uk)

