

What Next? Response to Arts Council England Strategy Consultation: Next ten years Key questions for the movement to consider

EC 06/08/19

In December this year Arts Council England plans to publish its next 10-year strategy. The strategy, which will shape how it delivers its development, advocacy and investment approach for the next decade, will come into effect in April 2020. You can download the draft strategy here: https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Draft_Strategy_summer_consultation_2019.pdf

In this document we have cut and pasted some of the key questions from Arts Council England's current online consultation. **If you have thoughts that you would like included in the What Next? collaborative response please do send Lizzie an e-mail on lizzie@culturallearningalliance.org.uk by COP September 4th 2019.**

There are a lot of different sections to this consultation (and we haven't included any of the questions that involve drop-down lists or scoring). **Please don't feel that you need to respond to all of them – just pick any that you are interested in / passionate about and let us know your thoughts.**

If you need something to kick-start your thinking, here are just some of the key issues that have already come up in What Next? discussions:

- The strategy represents a real shift in language and intent towards *everyday creativity*. The words 'art' and 'heritage' are purposefully not used throughout the document and have been replaced with 'culture' and 'creativity'.
- Colleagues have asked whether ACE sees the strategy as a way of replacing lost local government investment and whether it is acknowledging that LA structures will not be restored to pre-austerity levels.
- Colleagues have asked about the fact that 'Children and young people' is no longer an explicit goal and is now stranded across other areas of the strategy. Does this strengthen or weaken outcomes for children? Colleagues have asked for more clarity about the ACE pledge to '*make the case for a stronger focus on creativity and critical thinking across the curriculum, both to school leaders and to the Department for Education*' and for clarity about the relationship between Arts Council England's draft strategy and the forthcoming Durham Commission.

- Does this strategy represent an ambition for Arts Council England to become a stronger development agency, and not just a funder? This would mean it would use its powers to convene and advocate as well as fund. There are inherent tensions between these two functions, as, for example, the latter would require ACE to reach and influence beyond its funded portfolio.
- We know that current ACE reporting mechanisms can be seen as burdensome to many organisations, especially smaller ones. Does this strategy fully address this and strike the balance between ensuring reporting is light-touch and robust?

If you only have a few minutes to tell us what you think about the strategy, then let us know:

- **What do you love about it?**
- **What would you like to change?**
- **What's missing?**

Strategy Consultation Questions

Chapter 1: Vision

‘Our vision is for England to become a country where the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a rich and remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences.’

Let us know your thoughts on this vision and on some of the key shifts in the document. They involve:

- Widening the range of culture and creativity that Arts Council England supports.
- Stronger support for individuals including diversifying the talent pipeline and sustainable careers.
- Stronger focus on partnership working to help creativity & culture build thriving communities.
- Embedding children and young people across the stated outcomes and principles
- Increasing the focus on international working.

Chapter 2: Outcome: Creative People

Priority A: Ensuring more people, of all ages and all backgrounds, find, access and take part in a wide range of creative activities, both in their communities and online.

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Explore the most effective ways to increase the visibility of the local creative offer provided by voluntary, publicly funded and commercial organisations.
- Consider ways that Arts Council funded organisations and their partners could collaborate to increase the creative offer available to local people of all ages.

- Explore how we can support and enable better connections between the professional and amateur/ voluntary sectors.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please let us know

Priority B: The creativity of pre-school children and their families.

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Look at what lessons can be learnt from Talent25 (a longitudinal action research programme currently run in partnership with De Montfort University) to inform the design of a strong national offer for preschool children and their families.
- Identify high quality programmes that are already being delivered by arts organisations, museums and libraries for pre-school children and their families.
- Identify new partnerships that could help us reach pre-school children and their families, including media and broadcast, commercial leisure and entertainment, community groups and others.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority C: The creativity of 4-19 year olds both within and beyond the curriculum

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Explore what a national schools programme for creativity and culture could look like, including:
 - Develop and test ideas with classroom teachers, headteachers, governors, parents and pupils to make sure we understand and respond to need
 - Work with the cultural sector to identify best ways to support the school curriculum
 - Advocate to the Department for Education for increased and sustained policy and funding support for creativity in education.
- Consider how we can best respond to the forthcoming recommendations from the Durham Commission on creativity and education.
- Explore whether National Lottery Project Grants could be used further to develop the creativity of 4-19 year olds.
- Consider whether there are early lessons from the five new Youth Performance Partnerships that can be used to inform ongoing work in this area.
- Research models for talent development provision to better understand how we can build more equitable and inclusive progression routes for children and young people.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority D: Help for people from all backgrounds to understand and access careers in the creative sector.

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Work with partners including industry bodies and further and higher education to identify the right interventions across the country to deliver this priority.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Do you think there is a priority missing?

Chapter 3: Outcome: Cultural communities

Priority A: Place-based partnerships which deliver shared outcomes, i.e. to strengthen and connect communities, and support inclusive growth.

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Identify current best practice, in the UK and abroad, of cultural organisations and others who are working in place-based partnerships to deliver cultural and other outcomes to a wider range of people.
- Research what type of evidence-based, place focused analysis of the creative and cultural needs of communities across England could inform and support more joined-up planning and delivery.
- Consider how we can best sustain and develop the Creative People and Places programme over the next decade.
- Explore how we can deliver this priority with a range of partners, including local government, business, further and higher education and schools, healthcare providers, the criminal justice system, the commercial and voluntary sector, and other funders.
- Reviewing the contribution to local economic growth of the Business and Intellectual Property Centre Network in public libraries in partnership with the British Library.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority B: Cultural provision, including touring and distribution, that responds to the needs and aspirations of local communities

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Consider how we might use the learnings from programmes such as Creative People and Places to support community co-design across the cultural sector.
- Review what learning can be taken from the new Performing Arts Producing Hubs pilot, and especially the use of a local needs analysis to help design a collaborative programme of place-based activities.
- Consider whether a new mechanism to provide small grants for grassroots organisations might help deliver this priority.
- Review best practice in connecting communities to collections and ensuring that collections are developed and used to reflect and speak to the public.
- Consider the pivotal role that libraries can play through their position, platform and reach into local communities in supporting cultural engagement.

- Review how we use data to build and share a more sophisticated picture of investment at a local level, and to operate more effectively as an expert and strategic national development agency.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority C: Place-based cultural education that is co-designed with young people and others, and delivered through local partnerships of cultural organisations and education providers.

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Identify features of success in various local models of partnership working including Music Education Hubs, Local Cultural Education Partnerships, Youth Performance Partnerships and Artsmark.
- Explore what a national schools programme for creativity and culture could look like, including:
 - Develop and test ideas with classroom teachers, headteachers, governors, parents and pupils to make sure we understand and respond to need
 - Work with the cultural sector to identify best ways to support the school curriculum
 - Advocate to the Department for Education for increased and sustained policy and funding support for creativity in education.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority D: Cultural initiatives that achieve health and well-being benefits for people of all ages

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Consider how we can work more effectively in partnership with health, cultural and community partners to deliver culture with health and wellbeing benefits.
- Undertake research, consider international best practice, explore promising new approaches such as social prescribing and give specific consideration to the needs of children and young people and older people.
- Consider the viability of a programme that supports prototypes – small cultural experiments with measurable outcomes that could in the long term contribute to both practice and a measurement framework for social outcomes.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Do you think there is a priority missing?

Please suggest a new priority below

Chapter 4: Outcome: A creative & cultural country

Priority A: Support for independent creatives that enables more people from all backgrounds to sustain careers in the creative sector

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Review what methods might best be used to provide sustained and targeted support to independent creatives from all background including stipends, business support, training, peer support networks, and leadership programmes.
- Consider how Arts Council England, and those we invest in, can better support independent creatives from all backgrounds, e.g. through place-based co-ordinated talent development, showcases, skills development and the involvement of practitioners in governance.
- Review how programmes like Developing Your Creative Practice, National Lottery Project Grants and BBC/Arts Council New Creatives are currently helping to deliver this priority.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority B: Innovation and research and development, including the use of new technologies, to support new ways of creating and sharing cultural content

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Consider what steps Arts Council England should take to signal its appetite for innovation, and “give permission” for risk taking within the sector.
- Consider what approaches might best stimulate innovation in the cultural sector.
- Consider how we might develop better partnerships and collaborations with Higher Education Institutions to enable the cultural sector to access cutting edge research facilities, equipment and academic expertise.
- Consider what lessons can be drawn from the Digital Culture Network, CreativeXR, Living Knowledge Network and the From Live to Digital research and support programme.
- Consider the next steps and implications for realising 'a single digital presence' for libraries.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority C: Ensuring the country’s collections are dynamically managed, researched, curated and shared to the highest standards

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Consider how we can ensure that more collections are strategically developed and managed so that they are relevant and able to connect with the widest possible audience. This will include ensuring more museums have access to, and make ambitious use of, collections, knowledge and expertise.
- Consider how to promote partnerships across museums, both within and beyond Arts Council England’s National Portfolio Organisations, and identify opportunities for shared approaches, resources, knowledge and collections.
- How to maximise the effectiveness, reach and understanding of the Arts Council’s collections and cultural property responsibilities including the Government Indemnity Scheme, the Acceptance in Lieu and Cultural Gifts Schemes, export

controls, the Accreditation Scheme, Designation Scheme and Designation Development Fund, Subject Specialist Networks, and the Arts Council/V&A Purchase Grant Fund.

- Consider how we can best support the development of digitisation and digital engagement projects and initiatives that increase access and usage of England's collections by the widest range of people and communities.
- Consider what lessons can be drawn from the Arts Council Collection's National Partners Programme.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Priority D: International, national and local collaboration that harnesses and develops the best talent, expertise and ideas, and can open up new markets

[To prepare for the first delivery plan, we have identified areas of initial research and review. Click here to see these areas.](#)

- Review how best to support international market development, exchange and collaboration, drawing on lessons from Arts Council England's current international showcasing initiatives and the approach of other arts councils around the world.
- Consider how we can develop and support new ways of working for our sector with partners in Europe, including bilateral engagement and new multi-national clusters.
- Explore how we can build stronger more effective collaboration with arts councils, cultural agencies and other partners working internationally, including The International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, The British Council, and the Department of International Trade and the GREAT campaign.

If you have an additional idea for how to realise this priority, please suggest it below.

Do you think there is a priority missing?

Please suggest a new priority below

Chapter 5: Dynamism & environmental sustainability

The opportunities and challenges that a dynamic organisation might need to respond to include changes in demographics; consumer interests and demand; competition; technology; funding/finance; legislation and/or best practice. Would you suggest any different or new opportunities or challenges?

We have identified four key characteristics that make up a dynamic organisation – culture, people, assets, and systems and processes.

[Culture characteristic - click to read what we think this could include](#)

Are there any other features of culture within a dynamic organisation that we should consider?

[People characteristic - click to read what we think this could include](#)

We think a dynamic organisation:

- Has an inclusive approach and workforce across the organisation
- Has strong effective leadership across the organisation
- Clearly understands the different roles of non-executive and executive leadership

- Distributes leadership across the organisation and supports people to build leadership capability
- Has clear entry and progression routes into and throughout the workforce, and a clear approach to succession planning
- Communicates purpose and values internally and externally
- Empowers staff to work together to meet challenges and provides them with the resources to deliver
- Invests in staff development and learning.

Are there any other features of people within a dynamic organisation that we should consider?

[Assets characteristic - click to read what we think this could include](#)

Are there any other features of assets within a dynamic organisation that we should consider?

[Systems and processes characteristic - click to read what we think this could include](#)

Are there any other features of systems and processes within a dynamic organisation that we should consider?

Do you think there is a missing characteristic? If yes, please suggest it below

- Should we introduce the dynamic part of the principle for applications to the portfolio in 2022?
- Should we introduce the environmental sustainability part of the principle for applications to the portfolio in 2022?
- Should the dynamic & environmental sustainability investment principle be applied to everyone in the portfolio?

Chapter 6: Inclusivity & relevance

England's Diversity is fully reflected in the organisations and individuals that we support and in the culture we produce

What being an inclusive and relevant organisation means in practice

We think that inclusivity and relevance should be considered in relation to:

- **Programming** – the experiences, exhibitions or performances on offer, how these are selected, developed and presented and who is involved in production and commissioning.
- **Workforce** – the people that work for the organisation.
- **Leadership** – people at director level and above within the organisation: those responsible for taking decisions.
- **Governance** – the board members or trustees.
- **Audiences** – the audiences, participants and visitors – who they are, and how they are engaged, involved and communicated with.

Would you suggest any different or new areas?

Please identify up to three key contextual factors that you believe should be taken into account as we develop this framework, using the below examples if you think they are relevant.

[Click here for examples of contextual factors](#)

Programming

Aim: To build on the work established around the Creative Case for Diversity so that the work produced, presented and collected reflects the diversity of contemporary England.

[Click here for more information about programming](#)

To achieve this aim, should the Arts Council change how it balances its investment across the range of organisations it supports?

Workforce, leadership and governance

Aim: For all funded organisations to be taking active measures to diversify their workforces, leadership and governance to reflect the diversity of contemporary England, both across protected characteristic groups and all socio-economic backgrounds.

[Click here for more information about workforce, leadership and governance](#)

If the aim above is to be realised by 2030, what progress needs to have been made by NPOs by 2025? List up to three ideas.

Audiences

Aim: For all funded organisations to reach audiences that reflect the communities they are based in and they serve.

[Click here for more information about audiences](#)

What types of active measures do you believe Portfolio funded organisations should be required to take in order to widen audience reach and remove barriers to engagement and access? Suggest up to three measures.

Relevance

We want the organisations and individuals we support to be valued by their audiences and partners and to deliver a wider civic role within their communities. **How can organisations best respond to the interests and needs of their communities and stakeholders?**

Should the inclusivity and relevance investment principle be applied to all National Portfolio Organisations?

Chapter 7: Ambition & quality

To realise the strategy, both Arts Council England and the organisations and people we invest in will need to change. In order to move ourselves and our sector forward, our new strategy introduces three principles that will apply to our investment, especially in relation to the National Portfolio. We think the application of these principles will develop so that they become more demanding over each investment period between 2020 and 2030, and in line with the level of funding being sought.

Over the coming months we want to co-create a framework for each investment principle. To start that process, we would like to test our early thinking about each investment principle with you and to gather your thoughts and insights.

You can read more about the three investment principles in our [draft strategy](#).

This section focuses on the Ambition and quality investment principle.

[Click here to read about this investment principle](#)

What does it mean to demonstrate ambition and quality?

[More Information](#)

Do you have any other suggestions of what a framework on ambition and quality should apply to?

How could new applicants to our funding demonstrate creative potential?

Can you suggest any processes by which organisations can learn from best practice in their field – locally, nationally, internationally?

Can you suggest any further ideas that should be considered for a framework designed to assess ambition and quality?

Chapter 8: Applying the investment principles

What support do you think would be most helpful for organisations in the delivery of the investment principles?