

YouthLink Scotland

Cultural Commission

A response from YouthLink Scotland (phase 1)

The organisations that have contributed to this submission are YouthLink Scotland and the following YouthLink Scotland member organisations: Fairbridge Scotland; Boys and Girls Clubs Scotland; The Duke of Edinburgh's Award; West Lothian Youth Theatre; YMCA Scotland; Glasgow City Council (Cultural & Leisure Services ; Libraries Information & Learning).

YouthLink Scotland

YouthLink Scotland (YLS) and its member organisations support 40,000 youth workers across Scotland to deliver a wide range of quality services to over 300,000 young people. Together our aim is to improve Scottish youth work services so as to unlock the potential of young people nationwide.

YLS believes that where the experience of the arts is positive, young people are more likely to stay engaged with arts and culture on a long-term basis, with significant benefits for their own personal and social development.

Therefore YouthLink Scotland is working in partnership with the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) to develop the arts in informal education in Scotland. SAC Education Department Creative Links Programme has supported the creation of an arts development officer post in YLS, which has now been extended to 2008.

YouthLink Scotland arts project is currently engaged in the following:

it's up to you to **CREATE** Scotland: arts for youth work
www.createscotland.co.uk

AD: arts dimensions fortnightly email news bulletin

CREATE s p a c e: events and information. Aims to catalyse youth friendly arts developments in youth spaces and cultural venues

TOP UP: accredited training for arts practitioners in skills for engagement with children and young people

Response to the commission

Education: How do we develop artistic, cultural and social skills and provide cultural knowledge for young people in Scotland?

Knowledge that has relevance

- Making knowledge accessible and relevant to young people in it's content and style.
- Links from existing youth based websites like Young Scot to cultural knowledge sites

Opportunities

- Widen high quality out of school hours opportunities for creativity and skills development for young people
*YouthLink Scotlands arts for youth work website, CREATE Scotland
www.create-scotland.co.uk
- Continue to develop youth work services outwith the traditional youth work / club / activities settings inspiring young people to try new creative activity.

Investment

- This requires real investment in creativity in youth provision, schools and colleges.

Links to employment

- Links from creative informal learning into creative industries and employment.

Integrated policies

- Integrated policies to ensure we are all working together to develop the best services for young people in Scotland.

Creativity in the school curriculum

- Start early; providing artistic, cultural and social experiences to children at a young age so that these experiences become a part of everyday life.
- Develop techniques in which the arts can be used to deliver subjects across the curriculum
- Engage artists to work in schools on projects and in partnership with teachers.
- Develop continuing professional development programmes for teachers to enable them in the longer term to deliver the curriculum using the arts.
- Link creativity in schools to out of school hours creative activity.

The relevance of art in informal learning

**Many artists have experience of working with children and young people in informal out of school hours settings, and many have a well developed sense of the educational benefits of the work they are doing e.g. West Lothian Youth Theatre, National Youth Choir of Scotland.*

Art serves three main purposes in the Fairbridge programme.

1. It encourages our young people to expand their skills base, through developing new skills and techniques, whilst using art as a creative outlet for stress in an informal learning environment.
2. It helps us to build self-confidence in our participants. Low self-esteem is extremely common in the young people we work with, as many have experienced rejection and low expectation from the adult figures in their lives. Something as simple as creating a mural or a woodcarving can have immeasurable benefit to the feeling of self worth in a young person. This feeling is magnified if their work is exhibited in public.

3. It encourages young people to look at their surrounding community for inspiration; this can then lead to a new found respect for their local area. Contributing to the local landscape through art only serves to strengthen this respect and can help a young person find a sense of belonging

We use a variety of media to bring art to our young people including graffiti, wood carvings including totem poles, craft and design for retail on our street market stall., dance, DJ courses.

The institutional infrastructure: How best to organise and support the cultural sector in Scotland to deliver the maximum value in the most effective manner to young people?

Bringing the arts into the heart of community planning

- An infrastructure which supports young people in their communities.
- A community that values young people and their development.

Artists/ youth workers equipped to engage

- Develop the training of artists to be able to work with children and young people in a meaningful and appropriate way.
** YouthLink Scotland is currently develop the TOP UP training with Children in Scotland. This initiative looks at creating a national accredited training equipping artists with the skills necessary to engage with children and young people.*
- Create an optional module in creative training for youth workers through Community Education degree.

Youth friendly facilities

**CREATE space (a YouthLink Scotland initiative) aims to catalyse youth friendly developments in the youth work, arts, heritage and cultural sectors. Contact cruckley@youthlink.co.uk for further information.*

Strategic thinking

- Encourage strategic thinking to result in best practice being implemented across Scotland.

Showing young peoples work

- Create high profile regular opportunity for the public display of young peoples work. This will increase the self esteem of those have produced the work whilst acting as an inspiration for other young people.

The delivery of services and access to them: How best to provide cultural facilities and ensure the widest access for young people?

Creative spaces, relevant facilities

- Make venues more children and youth friendly
**CREATE space (a YouthLink Scotland initiative) aims to catalyse youth friendly developments in the youth work, arts, heritage and cultural sectors. Contact cruckley@youthlink.co.uk for further information.*
- Involve children and young people actively in venues (from consultation to management).

- Consult with children and young people about the facilities they want.

Funding

- Target more funding at participatory youth arts activities – the Youth Music Initiative has not been matched by similar funding streams for youth theatre or youth dance, despite the clear evidence of the huge benefits to young people of taking part.

Relevant productions

- Commission a wider range of theatre, music and dance that is accessible to and appropriate for young people to take part in and to watch/hear.

Consultation and commitment

- REAL consultation with young people and a REAL commitment to investing in their ideas.

Financially accessible services

- Too often new buildings and resources are priced out for young people. Recognition of the role IT has in young people's lives and ensure we are keeping up to date and not always playing catch up. Make it work for them and for us.

**The young people who access Fairbridge often face financial hardship and cannot as a result access many cultural facilities.*

Quality as well as access

- Most importantly, deliver a genuinely high quality activity that young people will want to come back to again and again.
- Get the interest of young people by targeting them in school.
- Again real engagement with them and investment in resourcing appropriate opportunities.
- Encourage high levels of participation, both in and out of school (this will result in greater attendance as audience or participant in later life.)

Access for all young people

- Access for all rather than targeting labelled or specialised groupings
- Using youth work methodologies to create access to the cultural sector

Opening the doors

- Offer open days to Galleries, Theatres etc*
- Opportunities should be offered through alternative routes to help demistify the cultural sites taboo.
- Set up posts to develop widening opportunities to reach grass routes in informal learning (such as the arts development post in Boys and Girls Clubs Scotland).
- Millennium Encore type provision.
**provided financial support for young people from deprived areas to attend performances – BGCS took part in this initiative*

Marketing and promotion: How to increase and broaden the profile of the young audience and the young people engaging with cultural activity in Scotland?

The right kind of marketing

- Provide networks for marketing etc which are accessible and known by young people e.g. websites.
- Maximise the use of word of mouth publicity to generate audiences and participants, through bring a friend schemes, young reviewer schemes etc
- Use marketing techniques appropriate to children and young people – websites, e-mail, text messaging.

Positive images of young people

- High profile national campaign through the national media for positive creative young people of Scotland to inspire others.
- Good publicity and good press **celebrating** what young people are already currently doing creatively.
- Celebrating what is happening in every community and encourage more through real resourcing and promotion- but not gimmicks!
- Involve young people in positive media development.

Encouraging creativity: What is the best way to maximise the creative potential of the young people of Scotland?

Excellence in out of school hours

- High quality out of school hours arts provision, especially theater and dance, where creativity is developed through devising and improvising.

Ask young people what they want

- Ask the target audience what they want.

Creative approaches to learning and teaching

- Through the relaxation of parts of the educational curriculum to allow time for more creative approaches to teaching and learning in schools.
- Through the use of creative/artistic techniques in the delivery of the curriculum.

Developing a sense of achievement

- Through the celebration of all types of creativity, encouraging the development of a sense of achievement in arts participants.
- By embracing and regularly showcasing forms of culture that appeal to young people such as graffiti art, DJ courses etc.

For further information:

Further information can be found on the Commissions website:

Website: <http://www.culturalcommission.org>

Please email this form back to Chrissie Ruckley at YouthLink Scotland at:

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