



## **Cultural Commission**

### **An initial response from Voluntary Arts Scotland**

*We welcome this initial opportunity to have an input into the concept of 'cultural rights'*

Firstly, we would say that the description needs to be 'cultural rights for the Scottish citizen' and to leave out the creative community reference.

Secondly, we would restate the relevant aspects of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights – though changing the gender exclusive language as follows:

*Article 22*

Everyone as a member of society ... is entitled to the realization, through national effort ... and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the ... cultural rights indispensable for his/her dignity and free development of his/her personality.

*Article 27*

Everyone has the right to freely participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts.... Everyone has the right to protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he/she is the author.

*Article 29*

Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his/her personality is possible.

Thirdly, there needs to be statements of recognition of the conditions we are looking to create through these rights:

- Recognition that everyone has the capacity to be an artist / creative.
- That we are seeking 100 % participation in the arts & crafts by citizens.
- There should be recognition of the validity of your own expression and that such expression is part of one's identity.
- Recognition that whilst we can experience other people's culture we can only exercise our own.
- Recognition that culture is not to be controlled by the state but facilitated by it.
- Recognition of the benefits of involvement in cultural activity such as self improvement, social networking but also recognising that it has an intrinsic value as well as the instrumental benefits.
- It is appropriate for the public purse to support any entitlements – resources, advice and information in line with UNESCO's "state's duty to provide non-discriminatory access to culture, heritage, education and the arts".
- Recognition that quality of participation, product and process should be given equal status.

Next we would look at ways of articulating the rights in more detail:

- Citizens can express themselves through active participation in the cultures of their choice in Scotland.

- Citizens can seek to exercise this expression as appropriate.
- Citizens to have access to opportunities to try different cultures and diverse ways of expression.
- Citizens should have the right level of support for their chosen activity/activities. Any support should enable people to participate according to their individual needs. There should be a level of provision of materials for arts and cultural activity in schools and communities

Lastly we need to identify methods of delivering the rights such as:

- Encouraging participation as this is the fundamental way people will exercise their rights.
- Ensure there is funding to make it possible for people to pursue their interests and encourage / help others get involved.
- Developing links between community and schools – using experience and time resource of community members and groups to enhance students cultural learning and passing on traditions.
- There is relevant legal protection of intellectual cultural property for "creators, transmitters and interpreters of culture" whilst at the same time ensuring that there are community rights to certain traditional aspects of music, language, song and dance.

But we understand that this is the next step in the process!

*Response compiled by Fiona Campbell, Network Officer, Voluntary Arts Scotland*

1/10/04

Ian

**From:** Fiona Campbell [fiona@vascotland.org.uk]  
**Sent:** 18 October 2004 22:57  
**To:** info  
**Subject:** Cultural Rights Response[Scanned]

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Hello

Please find attached our response with regards to cultural rights. My apologies for what appears to be a delay in sending it to you, but I am doing this as I just received the hard copy version I sent to the Cultural Commission back in the post as the Royal Mail do not seem to be able to find Broughton High School! Luckily I put a return address on the back otherwise I would never have known you had not received this document.

So now I am putting my faith in electronic transmission which I probably should have done in the first place, but as I was not going to be around to use my email around the initial response deadline, thought I would use paper instead. I hope you will find the response of interest still.

Regards  
Fiona Campbell  
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"Promoting participation in the arts and crafts"

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