

hearts & minds

Cultural Commission Consultation Process Phase 1

Education:

It is my belief that human beings develop artistic, cultural and social skills as well as cultural knowledge through access to the arts and cultural activities as children, as early as possible. The arts activities provided should be of the highest quality and should also give an opportunity for the child to explore his or her own creative potential - to access and practice art and therefore develop their own artistic and cultural skills and a social consciousness and celebrate the child's individuality. At an early age, children are greatly influenced initially by their families, teachers and later on by their peers. I think it is fair to say that raising the profile, interest and access to culture for parents and teachers will have an additional great impact on early experiences for children and should be a key focus. Later on as young adults, age-appropriate cultural experiences will connect young citizens with their community. It must be our vision to provide high quality age-appropriate arts activities, to each child. The content of these activities must challenge stereotypes and treat the participants as full member of our society. Provision should be made to respond to children's views and needs rather than institutional opinion as to what it is what children and young people want and need.

The institutional infrastructure

Scotland greatly benefits from a governing body to organise the cultural sector and distribute the funds. In my opinion the Scottish Arts Council has done a very good job in this regard. Rather than reinventing the institutional infrastructure, I would envisage a creative approach to reorganisation of the existing body, responding to the current needs and change of the cultural sector following this review,

The delivery of services and access to them

Theatres, museums, concert halls etc are vital environments to continue catering for people who are

geographically and physically in the position to access them. However I think providing arts and cultural activities in the community - whatever kind of community - is a fantastic and unexpected way of accessing, engaging and involving people and this is where culture might have the greatest impact on people's lives. Culture must be accessible in the least likely places as they will shape and change institutions and create a more modern life experience: schools, hospitals, shopping centres, prisons, etc - particularly in areas where people are marginalised due to their age, illness, behaviour etc.

Encouraging creativity

- To give access to arts and cultural activities to children at an early an age as possible.
- To give access to activities in the community: take arts and culture to the people.
- To provide additional funding opportunities for arts and culture in the community.
- To encourage mainstream culture to collaborate with communities.
- To support and learn from existing initiatives.
- To encourage a modern approach.
- To take risks.
- To allow risks being taken.
- To have a belief and confidence in Scottish culture.
- To look beyond Scotland.
- To look beyond the UK.
- To encourage cultural exchanges.
- To celebrate achievements.
- To invite international exchanges.
- To encourage an international community.
- To celebrate the individual.

The concept of cultural rights

Every Scottish citizen, independent of age, religion, heritage, sex, physical ability and mental health, etc should have a right to cultural activity in an environment that is safe and accessible for them. The creative community and the governing bodies have to respond to these rights and provide activities that are suitable and accessible in these environments and circumstances.

For us and our organisation - main priorities

Hearts&Minds' main priority is to continue to provide our Clowndoctors programme for children in hospital and hospice care and our Elderflowers programme for elderly people in hospital care. It is our vision to extend our programmes initially to give access to all sick and hospitalised children and elderly people in Scotland and potentially to all sick and hospitalised people in Scotland.

Hearts&Minds' main priority are those children and Scottish citizens, who spend a great deal or all their lives in health care, a transient community by nature. There is a need for access to the arts for people who cannot leave that environment or due to their abilities and communication needs cannot visit conventional theatre spaces and events. There is a demand for, and appreciation of, provision of high quality theatre and performing arts activities to spaces out with the conventional theatre remit and I believe that access should be provided for every Scottish citizen who due to their ill health or ability cannot access more conventional theatre spaces. I would like to express my sincere hope that children, elderly people with dementia and all other sick and hospitalised people in Scotland will be on the agenda of the cultural review.

Identify key issues

There is so much need and so little provision.

Changing attitudes of health care staff - greater promotion of the benefits of the arts to health care staff.

There is too little funding available for the arts-in-health sector.

In the arts sector, Hearts&Minds faces the challenge of having to continuously reinvent our companies' activities to be able to fulfil funding criteria - rather than being funded for what we are good at: The delivery of ongoing programmes rather than one-off projects. There is a danger that this might lead to diluting our strengths.

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