



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales

Annual Plan 2025-26

May 2025



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Lywodraeth Cymru
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Accessibility

Arts Council of Wales is committed to being open and accessible and will endeavour to provide information in languages other than Welsh or English on request.



Croeso



Light up the Night, Artis Community



Chair's Foreword

I am delighted to introduce our Annual Plan for 2025-26. It reflects our ambition to integrate the arts into the daily lives of everyone in Wales connecting, enriching and inspiring us all now and for future generations.

I am motivated by a lived experience that arts and culture make a difference in people's lives and a professional observation of how powerful that difference can be culturally, socially and economically.

Throughout this plan, we are dedicated to fostering an environment where creativity can flourish, regardless of background or circumstances.

We are committed to widening access, nurturing talent, developing work of the highest quality and celebrating arts and culture as powerful tools for social cohesion, personal development, and societal progress. Our strategic focus is on building a resilient and accessible arts community that can embrace future challenges and make a difference. As you will see the plan is structured around three core goals develop, connect and promote that guide our work.



Biodiversity Carnival, Catrin Doyle and Lucie Powell, NATURponty (Image: Lucy Purrington)

In addition to these strategic goals, this plan emphasizes a deep commitment to inclusivity, climate action, and the Welsh language and the arts reaching into all areas of society. For example, education with our Creative Learning in the Arts programme, Arts and health and beyond our borders with Wales Arts International.

Partnerships and collaboration form the backbone of our work—working with the wider arts sector, government departments, community groups, artists, and other stakeholders—to create a thriving arts ecosystem that is responsive to the needs of Wales today and prepared for the future.

We believe that the arts have the power to transform lives, and through this ambitious plan, we aim to ensure that everyone in Wales can enjoy, participate in, and benefit from the rich cultural offerings of our nation.

Maggie Russell
Chair



Chief Executive's Foreword

Our Annual Plan for 2025-26, is one of ambition that will help deliver our commitment to fostering creativity, inclusivity, and sustainability in the arts.

Our vision is to make the arts an integral part of daily life for the people of Wales, connecting us to each other, enhancing our wellbeing, and inspiring future generations. We want to create an environment where the arts can flourish and where everyone in Wales has the opportunity to engage with and benefit from the arts.

The Annual Plan 2025-26 is structured around three core goals: Develop, Connect, and Promote. These goals are designed to address both the current and longer term needs of the sector, delivering long-term impact and legacy.

We are committed to improving the knowledge, understanding, and sustainable practice of the arts. This includes launching new funding initiatives, supporting arts programs, and enhancing opportunities and experiences through partnerships with key stakeholders including organisations, community groups school and health boards. Our focus on developing talent ensures that artists from all backgrounds can develop sustainable practices careers in the arts in Wales.



Amped Up Academy, NDCWales
(Image: Kirsten McTernan)

Collaboration is at the heart of our strategy. We will advocate for the arts through strategic and international partnerships, and targeted communication efforts. We aim to improve opportunities for the people of Wales to experience and enjoy the arts by simplifying our grant-making processes, fostering partnerships, and engaging with communities. By connecting with diverse groups, including young people and underrepresented communities, we ensure that the arts are accessible and relevant to all.

By investing in infrastructure, supporting creative projects, and enhancing accessibility, we aim to create a more inclusive and resilient arts community. Our focus on equality, engagement, climate justice and resilience ensures that the arts contribute to social justice and environmental sustainability.

We will use outcomes-based evaluation frameworks, enhanced data collection, and regular reporting to track progress and inform future strategies. By sharing our achievements and learnings, we aim to foster a culture of continuous improvement and collaboration.

The arts have the power to enrich lives, connect communities, and inspire change, this plan reflects the early steps in our long term Strategy for delivering on these.

Dafydd Rhys
Chief Executive

Our vision

The arts are part of the daily lives of the people of Wales, connecting us to each other, integral to our wellbeing, and inspiring us for generations to come.



Jukebox Collective

Our mission

The role of the Arts Council of Wales is to create an environment where the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts can flourish and where everybody in Wales can engage with the arts.

We want a Wales of ambition and fairness where the most exciting arts are created; arts that are integral to the health and wellbeing of the nation, relevant to all communities and where opportunities exist for the voices of Wales to inspire and be inspired by the world around us.



About us

Arts Council of Wales is a registered charity, established by a Royal Charter, funded and supported by the Welsh Government.

We are the country's official public body for funding and developing the arts. Every day, people across Wales enjoy and take part in arts activities and we support artists and organisations to create work and reach as many people as possible.

Our work is made possible by using the public funds that are made available to us by the Welsh Government, and by distributing the money we receive as a good cause from the National Lottery. We support, and are supported by, a vibrant arts community that spans the length and breadth of the country, evidencing that the arts can make a difference – to our wellbeing, in connecting and inspiring each other, in creating a fairer and more equal Wales, and removing barriers that prevent people from fulfilling their potential.

Working together with the Welsh Government and other partners we support and promote the important contribution that the arts make to Wales and the World – cultural, social, health, educational, environmental and economic. We do this by investing in Wales' artists, organisations and communities.



Wales International Ballet School
(Image: Sian Trenberth Photography)

Our work sits within the framework of the Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Future Generations legislation and its recently published **Priorities for Culture**. These are:

Priority 1: Culture brings people together

- 1.1 Connecting with people and communities – inclusivity, diversity and accessibility, and supporting cultural rights.
- 1.2 Connecting through a sense of place.
- 1.3 Connecting with children and young people, and an intergenerational approach.
- 1.4 Connecting through well-being.

Priority 2: Celebrating Wales as a nation of culture

- 2.1 A bilingual and a multilingual nation.
- 2.2 Promoting Wales to the world.
- 2.3 Celebrating culture.

Priority 3: Culture is resilient and sustainable

- 3.1 Caring for our cultural places and collections.
- 3.2 Strategic collaboration and dynamic partnerships.
- 3.3 The power of digital.
- 3.4 Investing in research.
- 3.5 The culture sector workforce.
- 3.6 Culture and sustainable development.

These priorities are mapped to our key tasks outlined in this Annual Plan.

This plan reflects these goals and are informed by
'Five ways of working' that define our approach:

Long term

This Annual Plan sets out our key tasks in the delivery of our new 10 year Strategic Framework. Other key programmes of work will also be considered in line with this Plan, including progression of our published Strategic Commitments resulting from our Investment Review 2023 and Welsh Government Priorities for Culture. Additionally, the impact of the supporting Action Plans on Climate Justice, Welsh Language, Strategic Equalities and International, will be in support of Welsh Government's own longer-term plans, including Net Carbon 0, Cymraeg 2050, Anti-racist Wales Action Plan, LGBTQ+ Plan and International Strategy.

Integration

The six principles developed during the Investment Review consultation process are all inter-linked and support the Well-being goals as seen in the diagram below.

Collaboration

We will work with a number of partners and stakeholders within the arts and culture sectors and beyond. Our main partners include several departments of Welsh Government, Future Generations Commissioner, partner organisations, artists and creative freelancers, audiences, and the arts organisations we support.

Involvement

Our work will include engagement and consultation with the wider sector and the public, particularly those from underrepresented groups and communities. Analysis of data, research, feedback, and evaluation will be central to our planning and development of future work.

Prevention

We will continue to reflect on and improve the way we support and develop of the arts in Wales. Through our relationships and engagement with artists, organisations, audiences and communities we will collectively use the power of the arts to address inequalities and help prevent harm to others and our planet. We will adopt an approach based on improving outcomes and removing barriers which prevent people fulfilling their potential. We will embed the Social Model of Disability to create better policy and services.

Our values

Ambition

Ensuring the arts we fund enrich and reflect the needs and aspirations of contemporary Wales, making great things happen at all levels, impacting locally, resonating globally.

Respect

Treating everyone – clients, stakeholders, employees, the creative sector and general public – with dignity and value, irrespective of background, status, age or beliefs, acknowledging their unique contributions to the arts and culture – locally and globally.

Responsibility

Acting ethically and transparently, being fully accountable for our decisions and their outcomes, evaluating and learning from our actions to help drive positive outcomes and foster a culture of trust and improved opportunity for all.



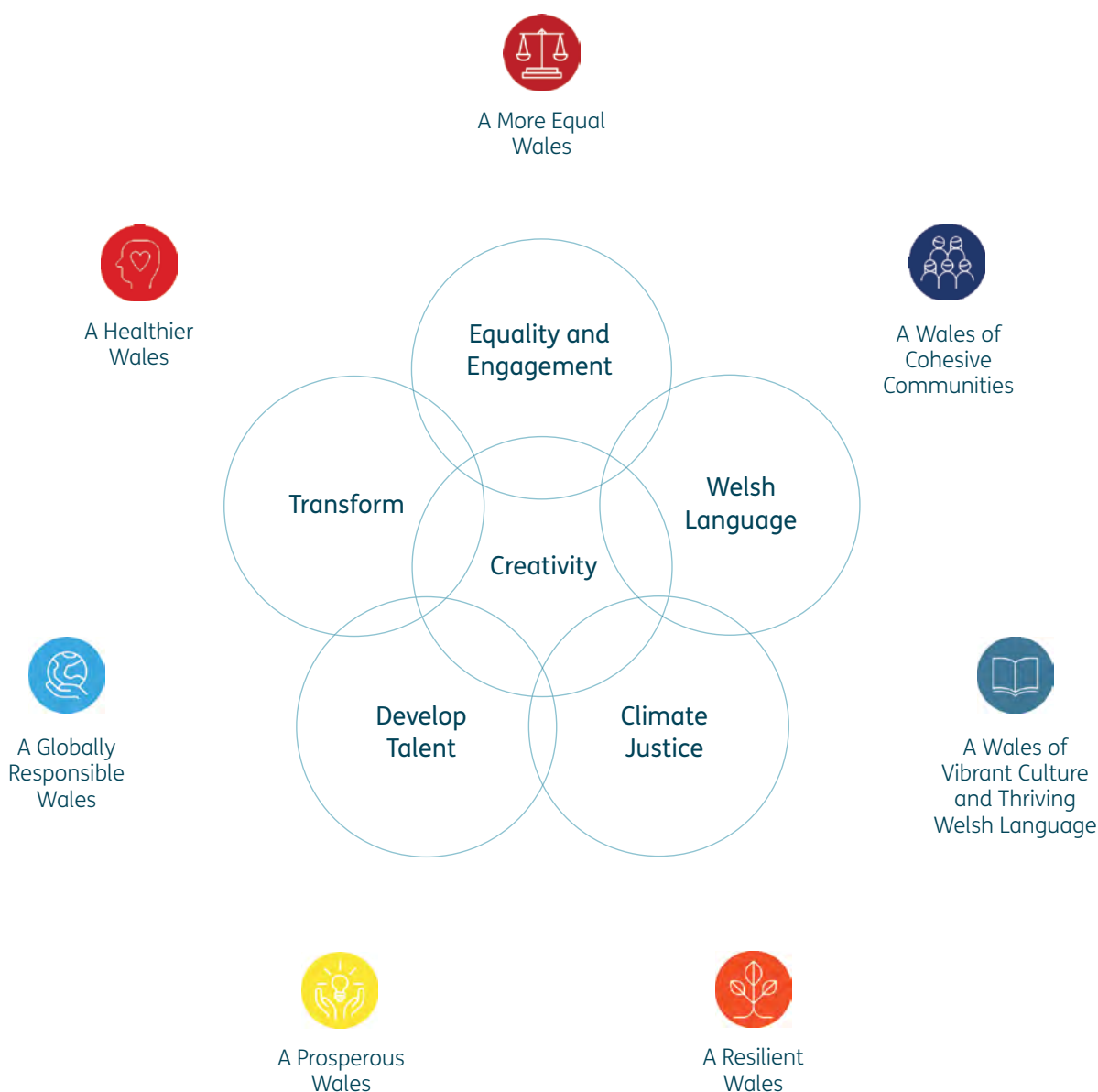
The Welsh Dragon, Theatr Iolo
(Image: Kirsten McTernan)

Our strategy

We have developed a new 10-year Strategy which was launched in December 2023. Closely aligned with the goals of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, our Strategy also links to the Welsh Government's 4 priorities – A Healthier Wales; Green Jobs and Growth; Opportunity for every family and Connecting Communities. Our Strategy is a framework – it will be flexible and respond to what's currently needed as well as being relevant to new developments and changes. This 10-year Strategy has our future generations in mind.

To achieve this, we will be reviewing and further developing our Strategy at regular intervals throughout its 10 years. This work will be done through regular consultation and building feedback and evaluation into our operational systems. The changes and updates will be communicated through Annual Plans and Communications Strategies.

Our Strategy has been shaped by the 6 principles developed and consulted upon in our Investment Review 2023. These principles underpin all of our work going forward, and align with the 7 wellbeing goals.



The 6 Principles

Creativity

Art in all its forms has the power to connect and help us understand each other and the world around us. It challenges our thinking and sparks our imagination. It brings joy and hope to audiences and participants.

Creativity is in everything and everyone we support. We want to see a wide variety of creative forms and practices, developed with audiences and communities in mind, encouraging artistic innovation of the highest quality.

Equality and engagement

Everyone has the right to enjoy and take part in our culture, language, landscape, and art.

Arts and culture in Wales should reflect the lives of everyone – they belong to us all.

We will seek to remove the barriers and challenges faced in experiencing the arts. We will ensure people from diverse communities are fully represented in the workforce, as leaders, decision makers, creators, visitors, participants and audience members.

Welsh language

Our aim is for Welsh language and culture to be at the centre of creativity; it belongs to everyone. It offers creative celebration and inspires connection between communities.

We will encourage and share creative opportunities that contribute to growth in the use and ownership of the Welsh language. We will support the arts sector to place the Welsh language at the centre of creativity and communities by asking what is needed, listening and learning from each other. We will work together to increase the availability of Welsh language services and creative opportunities.



Ali Goolyad
(Image: Gavin Porter)

Climate justice

We are committed to championing the important role of the arts in transforming our society and economy to tackle the climate and nature emergencies. At the heart of our approach is a recognition that climate change is about more than the environmental repercussions – it is about addressing social justice and inequality as part of the solution.

We will support the arts sector to develop creativity that inspires people to take action for climate justice, and work towards an environmentally sustainable and globally responsible arts sector grounded in social justice.

Develop talent

We will create an environment to help artists thrive.

We need to make sure that there are pathways that allow people from all backgrounds to develop sustainable creative careers, skills, and leadership.

Working collaboratively, we will ensure that the opportunities available for artists are distributed fairly, that we provide fair work and improve outcomes for the people of Wales, now and in the future.

Transform

We will seize new opportunities and be agile and confident enough to respond in a positive way to all the changes happening around us. We will take risks, build resilience and be responsive to change, whilst remaining relevant to the people and communities of Wales. We want to find the best opportunities for the arts, and to learn from what's happened in the past and to share what works best.

Our 3 goals

Our Strategy is based on the 3 Goals that reflect our original remit outlined in our Royal Charter and the Wellbeing goals of the Future Generations Act. These goals are:

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Develop | Develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and sustainable practice of the arts. |
| Connect | Work together to improve the opportunity for the people of Wales to experience and enjoy the arts. |
| Promote | Collaborate with partners to promote a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language. |

This Annual Plan reflects year 2 of our 10 year Strategy. We have identified key tasks across our three goals that will provide support for the sector, audiences, and the communities of Wales. We have focussed these tasks under 6 areas of activity:

- Develop Art forms
- Modernisation of the way we work internally
- Simplify and align our grant making process
- Deliver our strategic interventions to ensure we support the sector as best we can
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Advocacy and Influencing

These will address the current needs of the sector and communities of Wales, capturing the learning needed to ensure longer-term impact and legacy. The key tasks we have identified for progression during 2024-25 are set out in this document.

Glossary of icons

We have identified how each of the 6 principles link to these goals, and the way that this work supports the objectives outlined in the Welsh Government's Priorities for Culture.

The following icons are used to identify these relationships:

Six Principles



Creativity



Equality and
Engagement



Welsh
Language



Climate
Justice



Develop
Talent



Transform

Welsh Government Priorities for Culture



- Priority 1: Culture brings people together
- Priority 2: Celebrating Wales as a nation of culture
- Priority 3: Culture is resilient and sustainable

Biodiversity Carnival,
Catrin Doyle & Lucie
Powell, NATURponty
(Image: Lucy Purrington)

Develop

Develop and improve the knowledge, understanding
and sustainable practice of the arts.

Area of Activity

Develop art forms

Links



- 1.1 People and Communities
- 1.2 Sense of place
- 1.3 Young people
- 1.4 Health / wellbeing
- 3.1 Cultural places / collections
- 3.5 Culture Sector Workforce

We will

- With additional funding support from Welsh Government develop and launch a new Capital funding plan and supporting programme.
- Work with Arts and Humanities Research Council and the UK arts councils on the Immersive Arts programme and associated opportunities in the field.
- Deliver year 1, of 3 year partnership with Creative United to provide Ein Celf /Own Art in Wales that will aim to increase sales of visual and applied arts work to protect and sustain careers and livelihoods in the sector.
- Progress Welsh Government's National Contemporary Art Gallery project.
- Explore, develop and implement programmes which support communities to shape and design their own arts experiences, in line with our commitment to cultural democracy.
- Promote initiatives such as Night Out that benefit in particular under-represented communities and those in areas of high deprivation.
- Conclude and evaluate Phase 3 programme of work and launch a newly funded programme – Creative Learning Cymru.
- Work in partnership with Welsh Government, education and arts sectors to deliver a new programme of work centred around developing creativity and curriculum design. Our work will have a specific focus on improving outcomes for learners in relation to literacy, innovation, health, and wellbeing. Children and young people living in areas of high deprivation and those who face life challenges will remain a priority.
- Develop and launch a strand in Create which provides opportunities for young people to lead on the creation and production of their own art.
- In partnership with the NHS Confederation and Health Boards, and with the support of Welsh Government, continue to develop our Arts, Health and Wellbeing in Wales programme.
- Build on our partnership with the Baring Foundation to deliver a 4 year programme with a focus on promoting art which helps improve mental health.
- Undertake an evaluation of Arts and Minds.

Area of Activity

Modernisation of the way we work internally

Links



1.4 Health / wellbeing
3.3 Power of Digital
3.4 Investing in research
3.6 Sustainable development

We will

- Develop an outcomes-based evaluation framework that may be applied to all areas of our work, including key projects and grant funding such as the International Wellbeing Evaluation Framework.
- Improve datasets to accommodate real time reporting for data driven decision making.
- Review and update our website to improve access to our information and resources.
- Improve our own internal operational systems to become more efficient including consideration of AI and automation.
- Improve our internal communications.
- Transfer our document and records management to ensure efficiencies, support and security arrangements are maintained.
- Review and update staff resources and to maximise efficiencies and provide necessary support for staff to operate effectively.
- Introduce initiatives that support the wellbeing of our own staff.

Dirty Protest
(Image: Fez)



Connect

Work together to improve the opportunity for the people of Wales to experience and enjoy the arts.

Area of Activity

Simplify and align our grant making process

Links



1.1 People and communities
3.5 Culture sector workforce



We will

- Implement revised monitoring and reporting on progress of our multi-year funded organisations against Year 2 of their Funding Agreement commitments.
- Review, simplify and relaunch our grant funding opportunities and application process.

Area of Activity

Deliver our strategic interventions to ensure we support the sector as best we can

Links



1.1 People and communities
1.3 Young people
2.1 Bilingual and multilingual
2.2 Celebrating culture
3.5 Culture sector workforce
3.6 Sustainable Development



We will

- Invest in opportunities for training, skills development and capacity building to support organisations and individuals to meet their commitments to climate justice.
- Create mentoring and training opportunities to work with the sector to take forward our Welsh language commitments. We will co-ordinate this work to help identify opportunities to work collectively.

Deliver our strategic interventions to ensure we support the sector as best we can (continued)

- Develop learning from Llais y lle methodology for working with Communities and implement learning in other programmes.
- Progress the agreed recommendations for delivery in 2025-26 following the review of English Language Theatre in Wales.
- Progress the agreed recommendations for delivery in 2025-26 following the review of dance in Wales.
- Progress the agreed recommendations for delivery in 2025-26 following the review of traditional music in Wales.
- Develop business support resources and training for organisations, to support transformation and resilience.
- Commence a review the outdoor arts sector in 2025/26 and consider strategic support.
- Commence a review into strategic support for the visual arts sector in 2025/26.
- Support Craidd (formerly RAMPS Cymru) to create meaningful and sustainable change to improve the representation of disabled people across the mainstream theatre sector in Wales.
- Work with partners such as Creative Wales and creative unions to identify training and skills development opportunities in the sector where there is most need and will protect and sustain careers and livelihoods for those working and who wish to work in the arts.
- Continue with our partnerships to support underfunded genres of music and creators, such as Power Up! and Accelerator with PRS Foundation and Gorwelion/Horizons with BBC Cymru.
- Develop regional and national conversations and networks to provide peer support and mentoring to look collectively at best approach and share practice.
- Develop our relationships with local authorities to see how we can work together to ensure the best arts for everyone, especially in areas that
 - › are underserved by our funding
 - › where we co-invest in arts organisations or programming (for example, venues).
- Ensure young people are involved in the development of our strategies, programmes and decision making.

Area of Activity

Diversity and Inclusion

Links



- 1.1 Communities and people
- 1.2 Sense of place
- 1.3 Young people
- 2.1 Bilingual and multilingual
- 2.2 Promoting Wales to the world

We will

- Deliver year 1 commitments in our published Welsh Language action plan.
- Publish and deliver year 1 commitments in our International action plan including agreement with Welsh Government's International Relations team including:
 - › Develop and implement year 1 of Cymru yn Fenis action plan.
- Deliver year 1 commitments in our published Strategic Equality action plan, underpinned by the Social Model of Disability, including actions to remove barriers that prevent people from fulfilling their full potential and recommendations and commitments outlined in Welsh Government's Anti-racist Wales Action Plan and LGBTQ+ Plan.
- Develop a legacy to continue the commitments and key actions in our joint Widening Engagement Action Plan.
- Develop and deliver our plans to increase opportunities for children and young people to engage with and experience the arts outside of the school setting, including through initiatives such as Young Promoters, focussing on those living with poverty.
- Evaluate our engagement with our Associates and deliver a new call out to refresh our pool of potential Associates, ensuring that under-represented voices and those with living experiences are included across areas of our work in addition to grant making decisions.
- Explore and develop an apprenticeship opportunity for a young person within the Arts Council.
- Increase training and mentoring opportunities for staff with and through the medium of Welsh, increasing understanding of Welsh context and creativity and further support staff to learn Welsh.

Promote

Collaborate with partners to promote a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language.



Kizzy Crawford, Gŵyl Tawe

Area of Activity

Advocacy and Influencing

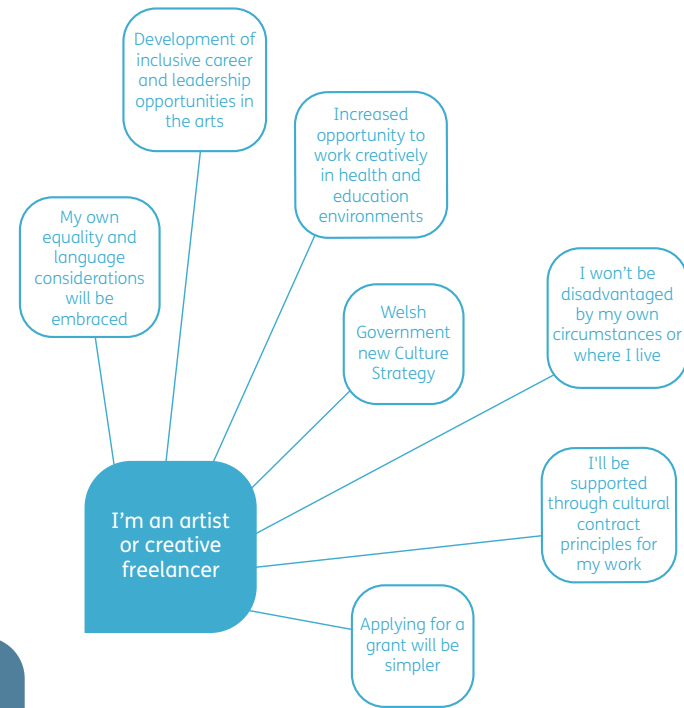
Links



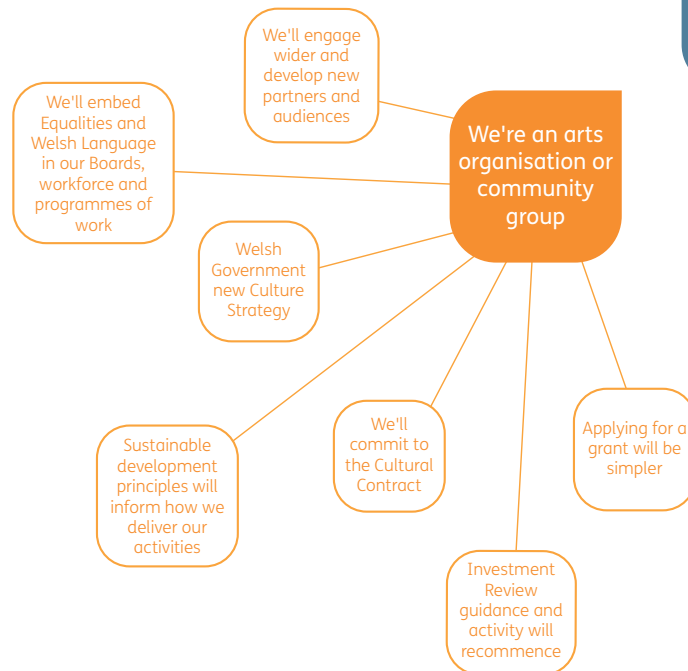
1.1 People and communities
1.3 Young people
2.1 Bilingual and multilingual
2.2 Promoting Wales to the world
3.1 Caring for our cultural spaces
3.6 Sustainable development

We will

- Deliver year 1 commitments in our published Climate Justice and the Arts action plan.
- Advocate for the arts through regular dialogue with key stakeholders, the sector, groups and communities, and publication of key sector statistics presented in a way to facilitate dialogue and evidence the value of the arts.
- Progress the Capital development of Theatr Clwyd.
- Continue to work in partnership with the Arts Councils within the UK and Ireland, on specific initiatives including All In.
- Develop relationships with other funders to support further investment in the arts.
- Contribute to and support development of Welsh Government's Priorities for Culture.
- Increase partnership working with Welsh Language Commissioner and National Centre for Learning Welsh.
- Revitalise existing partnerships and seek new partnerships to develop and progress shared priority areas, through increased investment and resources.
- Progress the commitments within the partnership agreement with British Council.
- Allocate resource to raise the profile of the arts sector in Wales and internationally.
- Use and publish stories to share and highlight progress of our key objectives and promote good practice with others.
- Invest in our own communications and brand so we can simplify our messaging and reach further with our advocacy.



What this plan means for you



Measuring our success

We do this in a number of different ways:

- surveying the activities and outputs of our multi-year funded organisations, through revised and enhanced reporting arrangements.
- outcomes based evaluation of the impact of specific initiatives or funding programmes.
- increased engagement with the Sector, supported through in person events.
- Marketing and advocacy initiatives.
- reporting on our progress to the Welsh Government, our Council and its Committees publishing annual reports.



In the tables on the following pages we give overall examples of some of the ways that we measure our success.

Area of Activity	Measure of Success
Develop Art Forms	We will have developed a revised Capital Strategy.
Priorities for Culture:	Through our partnership with Creative United to provide Ein Celf / Own Art in Wales we will have increased sales of visual and applied arts work.
1.1 People and Communities	There will be improved infrastructure of the National Contemporary Art Galleries gallery network following completion of the capital investment.
1.2 Sense of place	
1.3 Young people	We will promote and support opportunities for local communities and young people to shape and design their own arts experiences.
1.4 Health/wellbeing	
3.1 Cultural places/ collections	There will be Increased opportunities for young people and children to access creative activity and apply this to everyday learning, both inside and outside of the school setting.
3.5 Culture Sector Workforce	Increased resources to continue and further build on our Arts, Health and Wellbeing Programme.
	Increased provision and resource to support and deliver strategic arts interventions focused on improving people's health and mental health.
	Impact Increased financial support and further resource for the sector's infrastructure including venues, galleries, theatres, providing additional opportunities and increased public benefit. Through our partnership with Creative United to provide Ein Celf/Own Art, careers and livelihoods in the sector would be protected and sustained through increased sales. Increased opportunity for the public to experience and enjoy national treasures, within their own locality. Local and co-creation of arts experiences by and in communities will promote greater participation in the arts, particularly for groups and communities that are currently under-served by the arts. Arts programmes are led and co-produced by communities and people empowered to shape and create their own arts and cultural experiences. Continued and enhanced opportunities for schools and young people to develop their creativity and creative skills and to participate in and experience the arts through the extended Creative Learning programme. More people benefit from engaging with Arts, Health and Wellbeing focussed projects and programmes.

Area of Activity	Measure of Success
Modernisation of the way we work internally	We become more efficient ourselves, our information and funding opportunities easier to access, and our communication clear and simplified.
Priorities for Culture:	We will have developed an outcomes-based evaluation framework and improved data collection and analysis of our activity and funding that may be applied to all areas of our work, including key projects and grant funding.
1.4 Health/wellbeing	
3.3 Power of Digital	We will have improved internal communications and access to our information and resources.
3.4 Investing in research	We will have improved internal operational procedures, allowing staff to maximise efficiencies, and collaborate more effectively.
3.6 Sustainable development	We will have measures in place to support our staff wellbeing and capacity.
Impact We will be able to evidence the impact of our work, financially and on wellbeing goals, including health and the environment and in support of Welsh Government goals across Equalities, Welsh language and climate justice. Through improved data gathering, analysis and outcome – based evaluation we will better understand the changes that are taking place and use this information to inform future strategic thinking. We provide a bilingual and accessible website that continues to be fit for purpose and encourages creatives to engage in opportunities and anyone interested parties to read about the work funded by us. We will be able to ensure internal resources are deployed as efficiently as possible, allowing staff to work more effectively and provide more support where needed, through reduced administrative burdens. This in turn will have a beneficial effect on the arts sector through improved flow of communication, support and information.	

Area of Activity	Measure of Success
Simplify and align our grant making process	Our organisations in receipt of new multiyear funding agreements will be supported to deliver their proposals which support and promote our own strategic objectives. We will be able to gather data to develop a more unified picture of the impact of the arts in Wales and use this to advocate and shape future work.
Priorities for Culture: 1.1 People and communities	We will have reviewed, simplified and relaunched our grant funding opportunities and application process.
3.5 Culture sector workforce	Impact Increased accountability, transparency and timely reporting by MYFOs against their individual Funding Agreement commitments under each of the 6 principles will allow us to accurately report on their collective contribution to driving forward our 6 principles. Through a review of our grant funding opportunities we will have developed a new structure to modernise our approach in response to an evolved arts sector facing financial pressures, resulting in a more strategic, accessible, and effective funding framework. This framework targets geographic and demographic imbalances and provides a more equitable opportunity and approach to accessing our funding.

Area of Activity	Measure of Success
Deliver our strategic interventions to ensure we support the sector as best we can	Through delivery of our published strategic commitments from our Investment Review we would have made significant progress in addressing identified gaps in current provision, including areas such as English language theatre, dance and music.
Priorities for Culture 1.1 People and communities 1.3 Young people 2.1 Bilingual and multilingual 2.2 Celebrating culture 3.5 Culture sector workforce 3.6 Sustainable Development	Through our financial and resource investment and partnership working, key projects are visibly progressed, which will bring new and increased opportunities for arts employment, mentoring opportunities, engagement and enjoyment, including through the medium of Welsh. We will be continuing to work for fair pay, greater stability and career and development opportunities for arts organisations, artists and creative workers. Underfunded genres of music and creators, will be supported and promoted. Developmental areas and strategies include increased representation of young people's voices. There will be regional and national conversations and networks to provide peer support and mentoring to look collectively at best approach and share practice. There will be increased engagement and collaboration with local authorities to ensure that the arts are accessible to everyone, both as a practitioner and an audience member.
	Impact We will have an agreed set of recommendations and will be evidencing progress in addressing the gaps identified in the current provision for English language theatre, dance and music. Through our direct action and partnership working, the arts will become more inclusive and representative of all individuals and communities in Wales. This will drive change across the sector and lead to new and sustainable opportunities to enjoy, take part and work in the arts. There will be increased business support resources and training for organisations, to support transformation and resilience. Improved Welsh Language and opportunities across the Sector and for audience and participants. Increased opportunities for support, collaboration and sharing of good practice across the sector will result in a more resilient, sustainable and flourishing provision of engagement and opportunities to work in and experience the arts, for organisations, practitioners and audience members. Ther inclusion of young people in the development of our policy will ensure the arts are for everyone, now and for future generations.

Area of Activity	Measure of Success
Diversity and Inclusion	We will have actively involved diverse communities and stakeholders in all our work and work to eliminate all forms of discrimination relating to protected characteristics.
Priorities for Culture:	We will have developed increased opportunities for engagement and sustainable careers in the arts, including those for young people and people from under-represented groups and communities, accessing funding and support to create and present their own art on their own terms.
1.1 Communities and people	
1.2 Sense of place	
1.3 Young people	We will have increased the diversity of those engaging with the arts as audience members and creative participants.
2.1 Bilingual and multilingual	We will have launched and progressed year 1 of our Cymraeg and the Arts Plan, promoting increased representation of the Welsh language across the Sector, including through resources, employment and creative output.
2.2 Promoting Wales to the world	Delivering the commitments in year 1 of our International Strategy and contributing to the International Strategic Partnership agreement with Welsh Government that support its International Strategy and action plans. This work includes developing programmes for priority regions and countries, including leading on the delivery of Arts Infopoint UK initiative; 4 UK nations partnership including 4 Nations International Fund and Northern European Mobility Fund (with Nordics and Ireland); programme delivery support including advice on international matters to sector; Government and international stakeholders; participation in stakeholder groups.

Area of Activity	Measure of Success
Diversity and Inclusion (continued)	Impact Cultural democracy will be at the heart of our work, including how we approach engagement, consultation and information sharing with our partners, stakeholders, sector and communities. Existing barriers to engagement removed ensuring that more people from all communities and backgrounds in Wales will be able to access the arts through improved provision and infrastructure and choose to make the arts part of their lives. Re-prioritisation of funding will ensure a fairer distribution of investment and provide opportunities for more D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent people and ethnically and culturally diverse people to direct their own creative offer for their communities and develop their creative talent. Increased opportunities for young people and emerging artists to inform our policy and decision making, work in the arts, including opportunities outside of the school setting. The enhanced focus on Welsh will lead to new opportunities for all to enjoy, take part and work in the arts, encouraging increased input into the development of arts activity and our own policy, and encourage speakers of all abilities. The arts will become more inclusive and representative of all individuals and communities, locally, nationally and internationally. There will be support for initiatives that will help develop a workforce that reflects the diversity of Wales by increasing the number of people with protected characteristics working in the arts and represented in the governance and leadership of arts organisations and the Arts Council itself. We'll be able to demonstrate that we're making a clear and positive contribution to the Well-being goals through our work home and abroad. Our international investments will be measured against the well-being outcomes, mapped against our six published principles. This enables us to use this information to make strategic decisions and allows us and stakeholders to see the impact created. This will help us to understand the changes that are taking place as a result of our programme and make adjustments to ensure the programme remains appropriate and effective.

Area of Activity	Measure of Success
Advocacy and Influencing	We will have deliver year 1 of our Climate Justice in the Arts Action plan.
Priorities for Culture:	Increased engagement and national conversations will help inform development of our plans and the impact of our work.
1.1 People and communities	Maximising our public value partnerships, we will be working with others to co-invest in strategic work so we can achieve more together.
1.2 Sense of place	Increased investment and profile for the arts in Wales.
2.1 Bilingual and multilingual	Use of case studies, facilitating sharing of progress of our key objectives and promoting good practice.
2.2 Promoting Wales to the world	Impact Through the delivery of the initial year of our Climate Justice in the Arts action plan we will be helping to ensure sustainability of creative practice in way that ensures it does not harm our planet and may be enjoyed for generations to come. Partnerships and collaborations are working towards shared objectives allowing for increased resources, maximised efficiencies and shared learnings which will lead to more impact. Increased advocacy for the arts through regular dialogue with key stakeholders and publication of key sector statistics presented in a way to evidence the value of the arts Further investment in the arts through increased partnerships and relationships developed with other funders. Through offering a wide range of examples of artistic practise on our own communications channels and in the wider media, there will be increased accountability, transparency and timely reporting of both our own progress and our impact on our goals and contribution to the progress of all 6 of our published principles.
3.1 Caring for our cultural spaces	
3.6 Sustainable development	

Glossary

Community / Communities

Communities are experienced and made in many ways. Communities are an identified group of people who are connected: geographically by locality with people living in a particular place, and/or through common identity, and/ or through special interest or practice.

Creative Learning [Cymru]

Creative Learning supports teachers to explore and develop new approaches to school curriculum design through a teaching practice that places the arts and creativity at the heart of education. Creative Learning Cymru is the name of this programme.

Cultural Democracy

Cultural Democracy is a term derived from the ‘capability approach’ that was developed by economist-philosopher Amartya Sen and philosopher Martha Nussbaum, which states that capabilities are ‘real freedoms that people have to achieve their potential doings (activities we are able to undertake) and beings (the kind of people we are able to be). Real freedom in this sense means that one has all the required means necessary to achieve that doing or being if one wishes to. That is, it is not merely the formal freedom to do or be something, but the substantial opportunity to achieve it’. The Welsh cultural theorist and novelist, Raymond Williams also developed a significant body of thought around the concept of cultural democracy.

At its core, Cultural Democracy is about people having the freedom and capability to create versions of culture that are given expression and celebrated in a horizontal, equitable and democratic manner. It is a framework that makes us all equal stakeholders in what counts as culture, who experiences it, who creates it and where it happens.

Ethnically and Culturally Diverse

Finding a term that encapsulates the differences and breadth of the communities we serve and are a part of is challenging but we have chosen to use ‘culturally and ethnically diverse communities’ as we believe that this term captures this breadth more than any other.

By placing culture and ethnicity adjacently, we are recognising the ways in which culture and identity intertwine and intersect, forming the essence of who we are as people.

Investment Review (2023)

Our Investment Review is the process that decided how £29.6m of public money would be distributed to various arts organisations in Wales. Investment Review multi-year funding of organisations is a major way that we support the arts in Wales and deliver on the priorities of our Strategic Plan. As with all our work to support the arts, it is made possible due to Grant in Aid funding from Welsh Government and allocation of funds from National Lottery.

Living/Lived Experience

Living (or lived) experience has become an increasingly popular term that describes an individual’s human experiences, choices and options and how people live through and respond to those experiences.

The term ‘living experience’ seeks to understand the distinctions between lives and experiences and tries to examine why and how some experiences are privileged over others.

Living experience is gained through direct, first-hand involvement in particular events, situations or experiences rather than through representations constructed by other people.

Living experiences become especially significant when examining the ways in which these experiences are shaped and influenced by policy, society and the world around us.

Individuals with living experience have unique knowledge, insights and perspectives that are valuable for our growth and our push towards equity and social justice.

Llais y Lle | The Voice of Place

An Arts Council of Wales fund to support artists to work with communities to develop the use and ownership of the Welsh language. It aims to empower creative individuals to collaborate with specific communities, fostering the use and broadening the ownership of the Welsh language.

Neurodiversity / Neurodivergent people

‘Neurodiversity’ is a term pioneered originally by Australian sociologist Judy Singer in the 1990s which encourages people to view neurodevelopmental differences as a natural and normal variation of the human genome. It urges society to reject any of the entrenched negativity associated with those that learn things in a certain manner or those that experience life in a different manner from a neurological perspective.

Neurodiversity is also a reference to the virtually infinite neuro-cognitive variability within the human population. We all have unique nervous systems with a unique combination of abilities and needs and thus the whole of society is neurodiverse.

Neurodiversity is a state of nature to be respected, an analytical tool for examining social issues and an important aspect of the conservation and facilitation of human diversity. Neurodiversity should be recognised and respected as a social category in the same vein as gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic class etc.

We recognise that there is no ‘right’ way of thinking, learning and behaving and these differences should be celebrated rather than be perceived as deficits.

Social Justice

Social justice refers to creating a fair and equitable society where everyone has equal rights, opportunities, and access to resources, regardless of their background or identity. It aims to address inequalities and ensure that everyone has the chance to reach their full potential.

Social Model of Disability

The social model of disability says that people are disabled by barriers in society, and not by their impairment or condition. Barriers can be physical, such as poor access to buildings, attitudes, communication and institutional practices. Removing these barriers creates equality and fosters greater independence, choice and control for disabled people. This model is embedded within Welsh Government policy. The Arts Council of Wales completely supports the perspective of the social model of disability, and we strongly affirm that it is our responsibility and the responsibility of the organisations we fund to address the many barriers preventing disabled people achieving creative fulfilment in the arts and fulfilling their potential.

Strategic Interventions / Commitments

Through our Investment Review 2023, we identified gaps in provision – whether by artform, opportunity or geography – across Wales. We therefore committed to a number of strategic actions to help address these gaps. These actions are referred to as Strategic Interventions or Strategic Commitments.

Strategy / Strategic Plan

Our Strategy / Strategic Plan is a framework which sets out our vision, mission, values and principles and both immediate and longer-term commitments.

The Strategy and the way we are delivering on these key strategic commitments will be regularly reviewed and revised, and we will measure its progress through our Annual Plans.



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales

Annual Plan 2025-26

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