

# Case for Culture - Stakeholder Forum Report

9<sup>th</sup> November 2017

## Introduction

On 9<sup>th</sup> November, some 170 people working in arts and heritage came together at the Discovery Museum, to discuss the North East Case for Culture, the challenges, issues and opportunities which are facing the cultural sector in the region.

A large number of people found the event very useful and a welcome opportunity to talk to colleagues – the space and time to keep in touch is getting scarcer, so by arranging the Forum, North East Culture Partnership created the opportunity to have a number of those important conversations. Additionally, it was also felt to be timely to catch up on the Case for Culture and its priorities – there was a lot of support for the actions so far, but an obvious desire for more action



## Delegate Feedback

There were a number of helpful comments about the event and we will take them on board for the next Forum, which we are planning to make an annual event.

Some people had difficulty contributing in a single arena because of the background noise – we were given the venue for free by Tyne and Wear Museums, but we will ensure the space chosen for 2018 allows access to breakout rooms for more productive discussion.

A number of delegates also felt that we should have had people from outside the culture sector there; there were a few, but the aim initially was to allow the sector to have a much-needed regional conversation. However, as the group discussions all pointed to a need for cross-sector advocacy of culture, we will all be continuing to work with partnerships in other sectors, such as health, economic development, education and training.

There was a feeling for some that there could have been more small-scale organisations there and individual cultural and heritage practitioners. Again, we will make efforts to broaden the attendance next time, as too will we seek to broaden our diversity.

It was widely acknowledged that the sector as a whole, needs to be involved in delivering growth for the sector, therefore everyone has a role to play – below is a very short summary of the agreed priorities from within the discussion groups and what happens next.

## **Discussion Groups Overview**

### Participation and Reach:

- Finding effective ways of sharing best practice and learning
- Convening cross sector partnerships, with a particular interest in health
- Raising the profile of small/grassroots organisations and connecting to larger ones
- Using the stories and voices of people we are reaching to encourage others



There will be a meeting in early January of the working group to focus on the priorities for the coming 12 months.

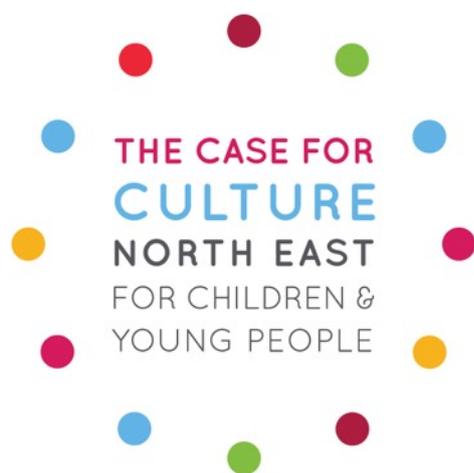
To be involved in this group contact Annabel Turpin. <mailto:Annabel.Turpin@arconline.co.uk>

## Children and Young People:

This group is already meeting and has developed a pledge to gather support for its activity and aims. The discussion identified a number of areas of interest.

- STEM / STEAM: Both sessions highlighted the importance of NECP coordinating influence and campaign work around the place of the arts in schools.
- There was discussion about alignment with national campaigns such as Cultural Learning Alliance and Action for Children's Arts.
- Research base is needed and NECP should take a lead role in communicating alignment with CYP cultural activity with health and wellbeing, school attainment, citizenship etc. Also discussion about key events engaging LA leaders with investment in creativity in early years and improved life chances for children.
- Addressing the aspiration deficit: Cultural leaders engaging with young people in a variety of settings to raise the profile of careers and opportunities within the creative industries.
- Creating a shared definition of outreach and models of consultation with young people that foregrounds best practice and encourages sector collaboration.
- Opportunities for mapping / sharing examples of practice regionally.
- Promotion of cultural spaces as places for young people – Our Place, Our Future campaign?
- Engagement with all stakeholders in childhood – reach beyond the cultural sector
- Coordinated signposting for young people wanting to develop their talent, identification of gaps.

In terms of action, a number of priorities were identified:



- Big Event with speakers to engage more broadly with all stakeholders in this aspiration (including with young people)
- Campaign work to align NECP with key national conversations
- Promotion of research and advocacy with LA decision makers
- Regional professional development and sharing events around models of best practice.

There will be a meeting in early January of the working group to focus on the priorities for the coming 12 months.

**To be involved in this group contact Miranda Thain.**  
<mailto:mirandathain@theatrehullabaloo.org.uk>

## Economic impact:

A lot of the discussion in the economic group was around influencing and working with others – such as the Local Enterprise Partnerships and the private sector and the business community. Key areas for attention included:

- Helping develop the tourism offer
- Advocating culture in other sectors and organisations such as the LEPs and business community
- Becoming a more cohesive sector to argue or value at national and regional level
- Develop more data about the impact of arts and heritage in the economy of the North East
- Help develop the narrative of the region for promoting the North East outside the region

In a number of respects, there were similarities in the work too of the Distinctiveness Group.

**To be involved in this group contact Richard Evans. <mailto:RichardEvans@beamish.org.uk>**

## Distinctiveness and Sense of Place:



We want to make the North East a distinctive and attractive place with a strong cultural identity.

We want to nurture conditions that support innovation and secure investment, helping us to attract and retain the talent and the skills we need to grow, the group identified the following ways to deliver this aspiration:

- Help develop the tourism offer and work with destination marketing organisations to promote cultural tourism
- Advocating the region and developing key messages about the cultural uniqueness and variety of the north east
- Identify key national organisations that we wish to influence and develop a positive image for the North East, both in the UK and internationally, and work with them to develop our profile

**To be involved in this group contact Keith Merrin. <mailto:Keith.Merrin@sunderland.ac.uk>**

## Talent and Progression:

There were a few areas that this group thought were important to help encourage and develop talent in the region and some practical issues to be pushed forward. These included:

- Developing and ambassador/mentor scheme for graduates
- Developing CPD for graduates and new start-ups and giving them new business skills.
- Developing a creative curriculum for businesses and helping get the best out of Creative Apprenticeships
- Similarly, promoting and developing degree apprenticeships across the sector.
- Addressing and championing greater diversity in the workforce and the sector.

There will be a meeting in early January of the working group to focus on the priorities for the coming 12 months.

To be involved in this group contact Sharon Paterson. <mailto:S.Paterson@tees.ac.uk>



## **In Summary**

There were many good ideas in the workshops and these will be taken forward by the working groups; but all the discussion groups at the Forum agreed in a number of things; the sector needs to work together and with other sectors to help meet the aspirations we have for culture – including greater diversity, greater impact, more participation, and realising more benefits through greater integration of arts and heritage into the North East economy and society.

To stay informed more generally, join the Case for Culture mailing list: [www.case4culture.org.uk](http://www.case4culture.org.uk)