



Comisiynydd  
Cenedlaethau'r  
Dyfodol  
Cymru

Future  
Generations  
Commissioner  
for Wales

addo

# WORKING TOGETHER FOR CULTURE

A guide for public bodies working with  
cultural freelancers



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**Cenedlaethau'r  
Dyfodol**  
Cymru

**Future  
Generations**  
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The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act \(WFG Act\)](#) sets out a bold vision for a sustainable Wales.

It requires public bodies to think long-term, work with people and communities, and take action to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change.

To achieve this, the WFG Act sets out seven well-being goals. Public bodies must work towards all of them, not just those that align with their remit.

The WFG Act also defines five ways of working that must guide how public bodies operate:

- Long-term
- Involvement
- Prevention
- Collaboration
- Integration

The WFG Act applies to 56 public bodies, 13 Public Services Boards as well as to many town and community councils, who must contribute to their local well-being plans.



A report commissioned by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and written by Addo.

*Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg / This document is also available in Welsh*

The WFG Act establishes the role of [Future Generations Commissioner for Wales](#).

The Future Generations Commissioner's role is to be the guardian of future generations. This means helping public bodies and those who make policy in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions.

Find more information on the WFG Act and the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales on our website: [www.futuregenerations.wales](http://www.futuregenerations.wales)

Find more information on our 2023-2030 strategy for change, [Cymru Can](#), including our [Culture and Welsh Language Mission](#), on our website.



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# Foreword

## CULTURAL WELL-BEING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.

Public bodies in Cymru have a unique opportunity to harness the creativity and expertise of cultural freelancers to enhance public service design and delivery. This guide sets out the benefits of this type of creative collaboration. It also provides best practice examples and principles to guide the process.

“Cultural freelancers” are individuals and micro-businesses - such as CICs, partnerships, co-operatives, small enterprises, and studios - who work within the arts, cultural, and creative industries sectors on a project or contract basis rather than being employed by a single organisation.

There has never been a more important time to ensure we are enlisting creative skills and imagination to help solve the challenges we face and to make sure that we are designing and delivering public services fit for future generations. From the climate and nature emergencies, to decreasing trust in our public institutions, and from the rising costs of delivering public services to increasing levels of ill-health and inequality – we need creative solutions to transform our response now more than ever.

The nature and scale of the combined challenges we face mean we need to work in a different way - involving, collaborating and working across disciplines to integrate our approach and take a system-wide view. Creative freelancers can bring a fresh perspective and essential skills including co-production, facilitation, bringing people together, and catalysing ideas.



Cultural expression, participation, and well-being are core to Cymru's vision of the future we want. Successful working with cultural freelancers not only helps support a thriving freelance sector, which is essential to the functioning of our cultural ecosystem. It also adds value across our public services and helps ensure that cultural well-being is central to the way we work, rather than seen as an add-on or a 'nice to have'.

I encourage you to use this guide to help you integrate cultural freelancers into your work— from developing and implementing well-being objectives and steps, to setting budgets, designing policy approaches, communicating needs and opportunities... and much more.

At Future Generations Cymru, our own work has benefited hugely from the involvement we have with cultural freelancers. From the [artists commissions](#) that helped bring our [2025 Future Generations Report](#) to life, to input that freelancers have across our work through our Purpose Driven Pay Policy, and our recent work with a Freelance Culture Project Commission, we are benefiting from the lens these collaborations bring.

We would love to hear from you about your experiences as you put these principles into action, so that we can continue to add to the collection of inspiring examples that we share.

*We are grateful to Addo, the creative consultancy who worked with us to produce this guide, and for all the contributors who have shaped it along the way, including those who have contributed experience and case studies.*

**Derek Walker**  
**Future Generations Commissioner for Wales**



**Paskaline Maiyo and RightKeysOnly - Artist Commissions**



# Introduction

## **Cultural Freelancers play a vital role in shaping Wales' creative landscape, driving innovation, inclusivity, and community engagement across public sector initiatives.**

Their expertise enhances public services, making them more accessible, dynamic, and impactful. This guide supports public bodies in effectively engaging Cultural Freelancers, fostering mutually beneficial partnerships that align with the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* and contribute to long-term social, economic, and cultural well-being.

“Culture” is difficult to define because it is broad, multi-layered, and constantly evolving. It may include not only the arts but also the ways in which people live, express identity, create meaning, and transmit values. Within the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, culture is understood inclusively to cover heritage, the arts, language (particularly the Welsh language), historic sites, history, sports, and recreation.

While recognising the complexity of defining culture and the wide range of activities it may encompass, for the purposes of this document, “Cultural Freelancers” refers to individuals and micro-businesses - such as CICs, partnerships, co-operatives, small enterprises, and studios - who work within the arts, cultural, and creative industries sectors on a project or contract basis rather than being employed by a single organisation.

These individuals may be engaged on a range of contractual bases, including freelance or worker arrangements, with any employment status and associated rights determined by the specific terms and practical realities of the engagement. For clarity, this guide uses the term “Cultural Freelancers” to encompass all such professionals.







# Understanding the Role of Cultural Freelancers in the Public Sector

**Cultural Freelancers play a vital role in enhancing public services across Wales, bringing creativity, innovation, and diverse perspectives to the development and delivery of projects.**

By working in partnership with Cultural Freelancers and embedding creative expertise into public service planning and delivery, public bodies can extend their reach and impact, enhance community well-being, support economic growth, foster long-term innovation, and promote fair work practices, while embedding culture more deeply into public life.

Their value lies not only in delivery but in the earliest stages of planning and design, where creative insight can inform more effective, imaginative, and responsive approaches. This expertise reaches far beyond the cultural sector, contributing to innovative solutions across health, education, social care, and environmental contexts.

Engaging Cultural Freelancers aligns with the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, which calls on public bodies to support a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. It also supports the aims of the *Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023*, promoting fair work and socially responsible procurement.

To achieve these outcomes, collaboration must be transparent, fair, and sustainable, ensuring mutual benefits for freelancers and public bodies alike, while creating a stronger, more innovative public sector.



## Vision and Values

Successful public sector engagement with Cultural Freelancers is built on four core principles:

**Transparency and Understanding –** Public bodies and Cultural Freelancers should engage openly, with mutual respect, clear communication, accessible opportunities, and defined expectations to build trust.

**Genuine Partnership –** Public sector bodies can harness the skills of Cultural Freelancers in co-creation, service design, and creative problem-solving. Collaboration should be guided by the five ways of working outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration, and involvement.

**Fair Work –** Cultural Freelancers should receive fair pay that meets industry standards or union agreements, and recruitment and contracting should be transparent, inclusive, and accessible.

**Sustainable Engagement –** Public sector organisations should build long-term relationships with Cultural Freelancers, offering professional development and partnership opportunities to ensure a thriving creative workforce.

## Commitments for Effective Engagement

### Public Sector Responsibilities:

To effectively work with Cultural Freelancers, public sector bodies should aim to:

Integrate Cultural Freelancers into service design and delivery to enhance innovation and cultural engagement.

Ensure fair and transparent access to public sector opportunities, making it easier for freelancers to engage with projects.

Strengthen the evidence base on the economic and social impact of Cultural Freelancers, informing future policy and funding decisions.

Provide training and professional development to support freelancers in navigating public sector work and processes.

Public bodies can share their existing training with Cultural Freelancers. Existing public sector staff may also need training to work with Cultural Freelancers, as this may require them to step away from current prescriptive methodologies.

This guide acknowledges that a training model created jointly by the Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales, aimed at both officers and creative freelancers, would be a useful aid.

Local Authorities, health boards and other public bodies may have knowledgeable cultural or arts officers within their organisations that can support other staff and departments to meet these commitments.



Other organisations and agencies can support public bodies in engaging Cultural Freelancers.

For example, the Chief Cultural and Leisure Officers Association (CLOA) advises on and champions culture and leisure across local government UK-wide. Disability Arts Cymru (DAC) supports disabled artists and disability-led creative work across Wales, advocating for inclusion and accessibility so that disabled people can equally create, participate in, and experience the arts, while collaborating with institutions and public bodies to improve representation.

In addition, many Cultural Freelancers specialise in facilitating such partnerships, helping to connect public bodies with the creative expertise they need.

The *Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023* requires public bodies to engage in social partnership when making strategic decisions, and work with trade unions and employers to ensure fair, inclusive workplaces. Therefore, public bodies should consider engaging with unions supporting the arts and cultural sector.

**Key unions and initiatives in Wales include:**

- **Equity** – Represents performers and creative professionals in theatre, film, television, radio, and live performance.
- **Musicians’ Union (MU)** – Supports musicians across all genres, providing legal advice, contracts, and advocacy.
- **BECTU (Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph & Theatre Union)** – Covers workers in film, TV, theatre, and live events, including freelancers and technical staff.
- **Writers’ Guild of Great Britain (WGGB)** – Represents professional writers in TV, film, theatre, books, and video games.
- **National Union of Journalists (NUJ)** – Supports journalists, writers, and content creators, including those working in arts and culture.
- **Unite the Union (Digital & Tech Sector)** – Represents workers across creative industries, including design, publishing, and advertising.
- **Unite the Union (Community, Youth Workers, and Not-for-profit)** - Represents professionals working in charities, non-profits, community organisations, youth services, and social enterprises.

- **Wales TUC Cymru** - the coordinating body of trade unions in Wales, representing around 400,000 working people through 48 unions.
- **CULT Cymru (Creative Unions Learning Together)** is a training and professional development initiative supporting workers in Wales’ creative industries. It is a partnership between BECTU/Prospect, Equity, the Musicians’ Union (MU), and the Writers’ Guild of Great Britain (WGGB), and is supported by Wales Union Learning Fund from Welsh Government.

When engaging Cultural Freelancers, public bodies should consider how procurement processes may leverage the local economic multiplier and support localising economic activity in Wales so that both the work being done and the financial resources involved are kept within the Welsh economy. Thus, further supporting and helping to make the Welsh cultural sector more resilient.

**Freelance Community Responsibilities:**

**Cultural Freelancers engaging with the public sector are encouraged to engage in ways that:**

- Contribute their skills and creativity to public services, enhancing innovation and engagement.
- Advocate for fair work practices and ensure that their contributions align with industry standards.
- Share knowledge and experiences to help public sector bodies develop better freelancer engagement strategies.
- Foster collaboration within the freelance community to strengthen networks and promote opportunities.

These principles are intended to support good practice and constructive working relationships and should be applied in a way that reflects the independent and project-based nature of freelance engagement.



# What Cultural Freelancers Offer

## Who Are Cultural Freelancers

Cultural Freelancers are creative professionals who work across a range of specialisms within the cultural sector and the creative industries. The cultural sector centres on arts, heritage, and culture, aiming to enrich society, promote cultural knowledge, support education, and encourage public engagement.

The creative industries, a subset of the broader cultural sector, focus on economic growth, innovation, and the commercial use of creativity in fields such as design, media, and entertainment, often harnessing new technologies and platforms.

### Cultural freelancer roles include, but are not limited to:

- |                                   |                                 |                          |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Actors                            | DJs                             | Socially engaged artists |
| Animators                         | Evaluators                      | Strategic thinkers       |
| Arts & Education Specialists      | Filmmakers                      | Technicians              |
| Arts, Health & Well-being Experts | Fundraisers                     | Theatre makers           |
| Ceramicists                       | Graphic designers               | Visual artists           |
| Choreographers                    | Makers                          | Workshop leaders         |
| Community artists                 | Marketeers                      | Writers                  |
| Composers                         | Musicians                       | Game Designers           |
| Creative/Arts Consultants         | Participatory artists           | Researchers              |
| Craftspeople                      | Performers                      | Developers               |
| Curators                          | Photographers                   | Publishing               |
| Dancers                           | Poets                           |                          |
| Designers                         | Producers                       |                          |
| Digital artists                   | Public Artists                  |                          |
| Directors                         | Public Art Curators/Consultants |                          |



Cultural Freelancers represent a broad and diverse community of practitioners, ranging from young people and recent graduates to highly experienced professionals and creative leads.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 places children and young people at the centre of sustainable decision-making, recognising them as both current stakeholders and future beneficiaries. Public bodies must consider how their decisions affect young people's well-being now and in the long term, including their access to education, health, culture, heritage, language, and opportunities for participation. Young people can play meaningful roles as Cultural Freelancers, gaining skills, confidence, and professional networks while contributing actively to arts, heritage, and cultural initiatives.

Intergenerational thinking - one of the Act's core principles - requires public bodies to balance present needs with long-term cultural, social, environmental, and economic sustainability. In the context of cultural freelancing, this means creating pathways that nurture emerging talent, sustain established practitioners, and protect and evolve cultural knowledge. Fair, inclusive, and sustainable working practices, combined with investment in training, mentorship, and capacity-building, help strengthen Wales's cultural ecosystem for both current communities and future generations.

Beyond their technical and creative expertise, Cultural Freelancers bring fresh perspectives to project management, strategic planning, and community engagement. Each freelancer brings unique socio-cultural perspectives and experiences that can connect with specific agendas and communities of interest, including the Welsh language. Cultural Freelancers are located across Wales and contribute at local, national, and international levels, making them an essential and dynamic part of the nation's cultural landscape.



**CREATIVE FREELANCERS BRING A FRESH LENS TO EVEN THE MOST COMPLEX CHALLENGES, OFFERING JOYFUL, IMAGINATIVE WAYS FORWARD THAT INSPIRE TEAMS TO SEE NEW POSSIBILITIES.**

**THEIR PRESENCE BRINGS WARMTH AND HUMANITY INTO FAST-PACED SYSTEMS, HELPING US SLOW DOWN AND DESIGN CARE THAT TRULY CENTRES PEOPLE.**

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**Kathryn Lambert**

Head of Arts and Health

Hywel Dda University Health Board





## What Cultural Freelancers Can Do

Creative and Cultural Freelancers bring a diverse range of skills and expertise that can enrich public sector projects, including but not limited to:

**Producing Artistic & Creative Outputs Across Disciplines:** Cultural Freelancers use visual arts, music, theatre, film, digital media, and design to create projects that engage communities and support public services. By making complex topics more accessible, encouraging participation, and offering fresh perspectives, creative approaches help to enhance public engagement, reach diverse communities, make policy messages clearer and more memorable, and promote well-being, inclusion, and social cohesion.

**Community Engagement & Public Participation:** Facilitating workshops, events, and festivals; fostering creative dialogue; and using imaginative approaches to involve communities meaningfully. This includes supporting public consultation processes, encouraging intergenerational engagement through creative interventions that connect different age groups, providing accessible opportunities for people to take part in cultural and creative activities, and responding sensitively and creatively to local stories, needs, and challenges.

**Strategic & Advisory Roles:** Serving on boards and working groups to provide guidance and sector expertise; shaping policy and strategy through expert input; producing and illustrating reports; and supporting visioning and strategic planning.

**Education, Facilitation & Training:** Delivering workshops, mentoring, training, and action learning sets across various disciplines and creative fields; facilitating board, team, and staff sessions; helping to facilitate change processes such as visioning and team-building; and fostering creative dialogue within public sector teams.

**Digital & Communication Solutions:** Providing expertise in and developing AR/VR content, online events, podcasts, websites, creative marketing, interactive media, game design, and digital engagement strategies.





**Fundraising:** Seeking external funding and supporting fundraising efforts.

**Evaluation & Inclusivity:** Creating evaluation frameworks; developing and undertaking creative evaluation methodologies; and supporting access needs to ensure inclusivity in public sector initiatives.

**Public & Outdoor Spaces and Sites:** Engaging communities in shaping public environments, buildings, and regeneration schemes; enhancing cultural ecology of places and communities; producing public artworks and interventions; contributing to placemaking strategies, public art programmes, festivals, and events; and contributing to design processes for public and outdoor spaces, including community engagement.

**Welsh Language & Cultural Advocacy:** Cultural Freelancers undertake consultancy and produce artworks in Welsh that support the language. When engaging Cultural Freelancers, public bodies should place Welsh language at the heart of creative processes, ensuring it is celebrated as an integral part of Wales' cultural fabric.

**Health and Well-being:** Cultural Freelancers significantly support Wales' health and well-being agenda by leveraging creativity to improve physical, mental, and emotional health of individuals and communities. For example, they can:

- Design arts-based programmes to manage stress, anxiety, and depression.
- Create inclusive programmes for marginalised groups, fostering belonging and community cohesion.
- Support physical health through movement, dance, and outdoor activities encouraging empowerment and social interaction.
- Provide safe spaces for healing through creative workshops focused on trauma recovery.
- Deliver community-led initiatives that promote pride and collective identity.
- Raise awareness about health issues using art to spark conversations and challenge stigma.
- Design programmes that boost memory, creativity, and problem-solving.
- Provide art-based programmes for those recovering from illness or addiction.
- Collaborate with healthcare professionals to integrate creative practices into care plans.
- Create engaging content for public health campaigns promoting healthy lifestyles.

By leveraging these skills, public bodies can drive innovation, cultural engagement, and meaningful service delivery. Case Studies demonstrating how this has been done successfully are included on page 53.

## The Importance of the Welsh Language in Public Sector Engagement with Cultural Freelancers

The Welsh language is more than a means of communication; it is a vital thread that connects communities, strengthens identity, and fosters creativity.

Recognised as a living part of culture, Welsh is a way of life for many and a skill to be learned, owned, and celebrated by everyone. When public bodies work with Cultural Freelancers, Welsh should be central to creative processes - supported and celebrated as an integral part of Wales' cultural fabric.

The cultural sector plays a crucial role in achieving the Welsh Government's aim of one million speakers by 2050 and increasing everyday use, safeguarding the language as part of contemporary culture, providing platforms for activities in Welsh, and promoting its presence across literature, theatre, film, television, and other art forms ([Welsh Government, Strategy 2050, pp.64-66](#)). Welsh belongs to everyone and is a shared resource for creative use, regardless of background or ability, and understanding its role in defining Welsh identity, culture, and heritage is essential.

The Arts Council of Wales envisions a future where Welsh language and culture lie at the heart of creativity in Wales, with Welsh serving as a source of empowerment and celebration. Meaningful inclusion should be prioritised, ensuring the language is integrated authentically - not tokenistically - and embraced as a living language for all, embedded across public services and cultural expression to foster innovation, cultural exchange, and global recognition.

The Welsh language is a creative resource that Cultural Freelancers can use to add depth and distinctiveness to their work. Carrying emotion, stories, and cultural significance, it enriches creative practice and offers opportunities for spontaneous, playful, and innovative engagement. By experimenting playfully with Welsh, freelancers can explore new forms of expression, allowing the language to thrive through meaningful creative processes that resonate widely.



Public bodies should support freelancers wishing to work with Welsh, recognising it as a vital and empowering element of creative expression in Wales. Freelancers should be encouraged to incorporate the language authentically into their practice, with public bodies providing the support necessary to make this possible.

Placing Welsh at the centre of creativity and public life is a shared responsibility. While public bodies must create supportive frameworks, Cultural Freelancers play a crucial role in championing the language in their work. Whether fluent or beginners, creatively engaging with Welsh can lead to new ways of using the language, fostering inclusivity and diversity.



## Why Work With Cultural Freelancers

Partnering with Cultural Freelancers brings significant benefits to public sector projects, offering fresh perspectives, innovative solutions, and meaningful community engagement.

### 1. Creative Problem-Solving & Innovation

Cultural Freelancers bring imaginative approaches to complex public service challenges, offering creative solutions in areas such as health and well-being, town planning, and environmental sustainability. Their ability to think outside traditional structures helps unlock new ways of addressing policy, strategy, and community needs.

### 2. Community Engagement & Inclusion

Cultural Freelancers specialise in making arts and culture accessible to all, ensuring that diverse voices and underrepresented communities are engaged in meaningful ways. Their expertise in participatory arts, storytelling, and public engagement fosters stronger connections between public bodies and the people they serve. This approach will help public bodies fulfill their commitment to Cynnig Cymraeg (Welsh Offer) quality standard offered by the Welsh Language Commissioner, in a creative and accessible manner.

Creative engagement differs from traditional stakeholder engagement by using arts, culture, and creativity to deepen participation, spark new ideas, and make engagement more inclusive. While traditional methods rely on structured discussions, surveys, and formal consultations, creative engagement incorporates creative practices, such as theatre, storytelling, visual arts, and interactive workshops, to foster emotional connections, personal expression, and deeper involvement. This approach is particularly effective in reaching diverse communities, generating innovative solutions, and making complex topics more accessible.

By prioritising participation over passive consultation, creative engagement creates more memorable and meaningful experiences, encouraging long-term investment in projects. It is especially useful when working with hard-to-reach communities, addressing sensitive topics, or seeking fresh perspectives. Public bodies can benefit from this approach by fostering stronger community relationships, capturing lived experiences in expressive ways, and driving impactful social change.



### 3. Flexibility & Cost-Effectiveness

Cultural Freelancers offer public sector bodies flexible access to specialist expertise, enabling high-quality delivery without the need for long-term staffing commitments. They can work:

- To a brief or develop new ideas
- Independently or collaboratively
- On short-term projects or long-term strategies
- Within public sector teams or at arm's length in communities

This adaptability allows organisations to access the right skills at the right time, optimising budgets and resources.

### 4. Cross-Sector Expertise & Alternative Perspectives

Cultural Freelancers bring valuable experience from working across different industries and disciplines and, in many cases, different communities and countries, ensuring fresh ideas and diverse approaches. Their ability to operate outside hierarchical structures and rigid systems encourages innovation and responsiveness to evolving needs.

### 5. Inspiration, Vision & Creativity

Cultural Freelancers bring passion, enthusiasm, and a visionary approach to their work. They offer new ways of celebrating people, places, and stories while providing long-term strategies that challenge perceived barriers and drive positive change.

### 6. Hyper-local and Specific Knowledge

Cultural Freelancers have expertise in engaging and working with communities, revealing or bringing hyper-local knowledge and insight that enables them to respond effectively to the unique needs and dynamics of each area. They may support culturally embedded initiatives, including Welsh-language work through Cynnig Cymraeg (Welsh Offer) plans, recognising it as a shared resource that fosters creative celebration and strengthens connections across diverse and multicultural communities.

By collaborating with Cultural Freelancers, public bodies can enrich service delivery, foster cultural engagement, and support the development of impactful, community-focused initiatives. These creative opportunities help nurture talent within the cultural sector, generate further opportunities, and contribute to sustaining jobs in Wales.



**[THE NORTH-EAST WALES  
MULTICULTURAL HUB] HAS  
SIGNIFICANTLY RAISED THE PROFILE  
OF ALL OUR SMALLER COMMUNITIES.**

**Emily Reddy**  
Community Cohesion Coordinator for North-East Wales Multicultural Hub





# How to Engage Cultural Freelancers

To engage effectively with Cultural Freelancers, public sector organisations can cultivate fair, transparent, and productive working relationships that maximise their expertise. By promoting structured engagement, clear communication, and supportive conditions - even within existing procurement frameworks - organisations can foster successful, mutually rewarding collaborations.

The following outlines key considerations to achieve this.

## Identifying Needs & Opportunities

- Broaden the scope of engagement by considering how Cultural Freelancers can enhance service delivery beyond traditional cultural or engagement roles.
- Engage early to involve freelancers at multiple stages of project development, including strategic planning, to maximise creative input. Staged contracts with break clauses can support co-created approaches within existing procurement structures.
- Define required skills, by identifying specific expertise, such as facilitation, content creation, or strategic engagement, and ensure Cultural Freelancers' contributions are valued as integral to the project.

## Procurement & Project Development

- Ensure accessible recruitment, using open calls, Expressions of Interest, or intermediaries such as curators or consultants to identify suitable Cultural Freelancers.
- Ensure procurement documents clearly explain terminology and processes, which may not be familiar to Cultural Freelancers.
- Encourage collaborative approaches by allowing teams of Cultural Freelancers to bid together.
- Consider embedding Cultural Freelancers in ongoing roles or boards rather than project-specific engagements, while acknowledging current regulatory constraints.
- Provide clear briefs with objectives, timelines, budgets, and expectations.
- Offer support or signpost Cultural Freelancers to resources on tendering, procurement, and professional development (e.g. Business Wales support).



## Fair Pay & Financial Stability

- Ensure transparent pay reflecting expertise using current sector pay guidance (including union-negotiated and industry-standard rates) as a benchmark.
- Ensure transparent pay reflecting expertise.
- Clearly differentiate rates based on experience and skills.
- Cover preparation time, materials, travel, and expenses.
- Adopt contracting practices that protect intellectual property and guard against unpaid hours.
- Facilitate timely payments and simplified invoicing.
- Provide access to funding, grants, and sustainable contracts.

## Recognition & Professional Respect

- Acknowledge Cultural Freelancers as essential contributors to public sector projects.
- Include them in strategic decision-making, policy discussions and co-production processes.
- Maintain clear project briefs, expectations, and timelines.
- Support collaborative environments that respect Cultural Freelancers' working styles and allow for independent and collaborative approaches.
- Mitigate against the challenges of freelancing, such as lack of benefits, training, or career progression.

## Resources & Infrastructure

- Consider providing affordable, accessible workspace, studios, and digital tools.
- Support creative research and development, experimentation, and professional growth.
- Facilitate networking, mentoring, and training opportunities.





## Inclusive & Sustainable Practices

- Consider well-being, mental health, and work-life balance.
- Offer flexible working arrangements to reflect diverse circumstances.
- Commit to diversity, accessibility, and environmental sustainability.
- Engaging young Cultural Freelancers requires additional considerations, including safeguarding, appropriate supervision, and adherence to age-related employment regulations. It is also essential to ensure fair pay, access to training and mentorship, and clear communication of rights and responsibilities, particularly for those balancing education or other commitments.

## Working Together Effectively

- Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and lines of accountability.
- Establish a key contact within the organisation to provide ongoing support.
- Maintain relationships beyond individual projects to foster long-term collaboration.



Mason Rodrigues-Edwards

## Legal & Administrative Considerations

Public bodies should put in place clear and proportionate legal and administrative arrangements that support positive, fair, and sustainable engagement with Cultural Freelancers, while ensuring compliance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements.

- Employment status and IR35: Be mindful of employment status distinctions and off-payroll working (IR35) requirements when engaging Cultural Freelancers. Status should be considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of contractual terms and how the engagement operates in practice, including the degree of autonomy, flexibility and independence within the role.
- Contracts, working arrangements and payment processes: Use clear, accessible contracts that set out the scope of work, deliverables, fees, timescales, and payment arrangements in a transparent way. Contracts and working practices should be aligned, with care taken to ensure that day-to-day arrangements do not unintentionally create expectations of employee-style control, supervision, or integration where this is not intended.
- Policies, training and compliance: Where appropriate, provide Cultural Freelancers with guidance or access to relevant organisational policies, training or information (such as safeguarding, health and safety, insurance or DBS requirements). Such requirements should be proportionate to the role and framed to support safe and effective collaboration, rather than routine managerial oversight.
- Continuity and longer-term engagement: Where projects or programs involve repeat or longer-term engagement, consider structuring arrangements in a way that provides clarity, continuity and stability, while maintaining transparency around roles, responsibilities and decision-making, and preserving appropriate professional independence.



### Overseas Cultural Freelancers and Right to Work Considerations

Public bodies may engage Cultural Freelancers who are based outside the UK, particularly where projects have an international or digital dimension. In these circumstances, the key legal consideration is where the work is carried out, rather than the nationality of the freelancer or where they are based.

Where a Cultural Freelancer is based overseas and carries out all of their work outside the UK (for example, delivering digital content, research, design, facilitation or advisory services remotely), UK Right-to-Work checks do not apply. In these cases, the organisation may contract with the freelancer in the same way as with any other overseas supplier, subject to clear contractual arrangements.

Where a Cultural Freelancer who is based overseas is expected to carry out any work physically in the UK (for example, attending events, delivering workshops or working on site), they must have the appropriate immigration permission to do so and a right-to-work check must be carried out before the UK-based work begins. Not all visitor permissions allow work to be undertaken, so care should be taken to confirm that the proposed activities are permitted.

Public bodies should also ensure that appropriate records are kept of any checks undertaken, in line with their usual governance and audit arrangements.

To support compliance and good practice, public bodies should take proportionate steps to:

Be clear at the outset where the work will be carried out;

Set this out clearly in the contract or engagement documentation;

Establish whether any UK-based activity is planned; and

Ensure appropriate checks are completed where work is to be carried out in the UK.

In terms of payment, the ability to pay an overseas Cultural Freelancer is not dependent on UK right-to-work status where the individual is working wholly outside the UK. Payments may be made in accordance with the contract, although organisations may need to consider tax, withholding and procurement requirements separately, in line with their usual financial and governance processes.



Taylor Edmonds - Poet in Residence



## Embedding Best Practices

- Align internal policies with the *Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023* and the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*.
- Engage with cultural freelancer networks and local authority arts officers to explore collaborations.
- Evaluate organisational engagement by seeking feedback.
- Support ongoing training for both Cultural Freelancers and public sector staff.
- Address power dynamics and respect alternative working practices.
- Collaborate and consult with expert bodies where possible, e.g. the Arts Council of Wales and sector unions.

## Co-Production Principles

Co-production involves shared power and collaboration between Cultural Freelancers, communities, organisations, and stakeholders, requiring time to develop trust and relationships.

Key principles include:

- **Shared Ownership & Decision-Making:** Equal involvement in all stages of the project.
- **Collaboration & Participation:** Active contributions from all partners rather than a top-down approach.
- **Inclusivity & Equity:** Ensuring marginalised voices are heard and valued.
- **Mutual Learning:** Participants gain skills, insights, and understanding from each other.
- **Reciprocity & Respect:** Recognising the value of every contributor and creating mutually beneficial processes.
- **Long-term Relationships:** Building trust and networks that support sustainable partnerships.
- **Creativity & Innovation:** Combining diverse perspectives to produce more inventive outcomes.
- **Transparency & Accountability:** Clear communication about roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- **Social & Cultural Impact:** Creating outputs that reflect the values, issues, and aspirations of all participants.

Co-production requires time to develop trust and relationships, which should be factored into project planning and delivery.



**WE ARE BUILDING A BRIDGE  
BETWEEN TWO WORLDS —  
THE ARTISTIC AND THE  
COMMUNITY — AND THAT  
TAKES TRUST.**

**Krishnapriya Ramamoorthy**

Paallam Arts CIC and member of North East Wales Multicultural Hub



## Project Management

Best practice project management principles should be followed when engaging Cultural Freelancers, with consideration given to the following key stages:

### Planning & Foundations

- Define clear aims and objectives aligned with organisational goals.
- Involve Cultural Freelancers early to embed creativity from the outset.
- Assess commitment and suitability, clarifying expectations and working methods.

### Legal & Ethical Considerations

- Ensure compliance with safeguarding and data protection requirements, with responsibilities clearly defined and proportionate to the nature of the engagement and the role being undertaken.
- Clearly address intellectual property rights (IPR), copyright, and ownership of creative outputs from the outset. This should include clarifying image rights, permissions for documentation, and the Cultural Freelancer's professional practice, including any pre-existing portfolio or moral rights, when negotiating the use of their work to ensure transparency and avoid later dispute.
- Clearly define whether the Cultural Freelancer is responsible for technical delivery, installation, or ongoing maintenance of creative work, and where responsibility sits for health and safety, insurance, and risk management. Any such responsibilities should be expressly agreed and reflected in contractual arrangements.
- Put in place proportionate measures that protect all parties, support safe and ethical practice and uphold professional standards, without creating unnecessary levels of supervision, control, or integration that are inconsistent with the intended nature of the engagement.

### Project Structuring

- Set fair budgets that cover Cultural Freelancer fees, creative development time, research and experimentation, materials, specialist equipment, fabrication, and technical support.
- Clearly define roles, responsibilities, and timelines, including defining the Cultural Freelancer's creative autonomy and decision-making authority.
- Allow for creative flexibility and iterative development processes, recognising that creative processes may require experimentation, revision, and unexpected pivots, and allowing sufficient time for research, development, prototyping, and refinement, alongside delivery.

### Delivery & Collaboration

- Engage participants and audiences inclusively, supporting Cultural Freelancers in facilitating creative participation while maintaining appropriate safeguarding and ethical standards.
- Maintain open communication and transparency throughout the project, creating space for creative dialogue and feedback that supports creative processes.
- Plan marketing and communications that appropriately credit freelancers, including agreeing who holds rights to documentation for future use.

### Monitoring & Evaluation

- Consider engaging a professional evaluator from the Cultural Freelancer pool who understands creative practice and impact. Recognise both tangible outputs (artworks, performances) and intangible outcomes (skills development, community connections, cultural value).
- Establish evaluation criteria and frameworks at the start of the project.
- Track progress to ensure objectives are met.
- Capture both qualitative and quantitative measures of creative impact and social value.
- Evaluate the creative innovation and artistic merit of the work produced alongside more traditional metrics.
- Recognise contributions from all involved, ensuring Cultural Freelancer acknowledgment and proper attribution.
- Document the creative process as well as final outcomes to capture learning and methodology.
- Reflect on lessons learned to inform future projects.



### **Sustaining Partnerships & Legacy**

- Maintain ongoing relationships with Cultural Freelancers and collaborators.
- Plan for legacy, ensuring creative outputs have lasting impact, beyond the initial project.
- Ensure Cultural Freelancers can use the project as a stepping stone for future work, including permission to document and showcase their contribution in their professional portfolio.
- Consider how creative work might inspire or inform future initiatives.
- Clarify long-term ownership, display rights, and archiving of creative outputs.

### **Project Completion**

- Establish clear criteria for sign-off, ownership, and archiving.
- Recognise and respect contributors' rights.

By following these principles - focusing on fairness, strategic planning, and respect for creative processes - organisations can achieve meaningful outcomes while supporting the sustainability of the cultural sector.







# Case Studies

## Artist in Service Programme Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

**The Artist in Service programme, delivered by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council (RCTCBC), was created to reimagine how a local authority can meaningfully engage with Cultural Freelancers and reshape its relationship with culture within the county borough.**

Rather than focusing on commissioning outputs or short-term project delivery, as had historically been the case, the programme embedded two local artists, Harriet Fleuriot and Rhys Slade-Jones, into council services and community settings over an eight-month period. This allowed them to work in ways driven by curiosity, local knowledge, and artistic integrity.

The intention was to move away from transactional models of engagement and towards more equitable, flexible, and place-sensitive collaborations that align with the *Freelancer and Public Sector Pledge*.

This meant ensuring fair pay, transparent communication, flexibility for caring responsibilities and practice needs, and openness to long-term relationship building.

Structured across three stages, the programme invited both artists to shape their own journeys through the council and its communities.

The first stage introduced them to officers, services, and local infrastructures. In the second stage they explored areas of personal and artistic interest, identifying where their practices could intersect with public service work. By the third stage, they were beginning to develop relationships, ideas, and initiatives whose value would extend beyond the programme itself.





Throughout, the emphasis remained on dialogue - with residents, community groups, council officers, and other artists - rather than on producing specific artworks. Nonetheless, both Harriet and Rhys generated an impressive range of outcomes, including community events such as the *Winter Welcome Centre* and the *Park & Daring festival*, public consultations, strategic research, application-writing support for other freelancers, and two short films exploring questions of place and identity.

These activities emerged organically from their interactions with local people, reinforcing that the programme's success lay in enabling artists to listen, observe, and respond rather than fulfil predefined briefs.

Recruitment for the programme was open and competitive, attracting 32 eligible applicants from which seven were shortlisted. The two successful artists were contracted for 60 days each at a fair-pay rate (at the time of publishing, the fair-pay rate recommended by Arts Council Wales is £300 per day), alongside a materials budget and full autonomy over their intellectual property.

Their base at the Park & Dare Theatre ensured access to staff, spaces, and communities while giving them a supportive home within the authority.

The programme itself grew from earlier work on public value and co-production, particularly through ACW-funded initiatives and discussions at CABAN events, where artists repeatedly asked for open-ended, trust-based frameworks rather than output-driven commissions. Harriet and Rhys brought this ethos to life, quickly establishing community conversations and exploratory events that created genuine co-production opportunities. One striking example came from Harriet's observation - shared in conversation - that "*I know a few cold artists.*"

This reflection catalysed the creation of a warm hub that has since expanded into the year-round *Tŷ Agored / Open House*, demonstrating how small insights from embedded artists can reshape service provision.

The programme achieved wide-ranging impacts across communities, the local authority, and the freelancers themselves. In Treherbert, where much of their hyper-local activity unfolded, the artists cultivated new relationships, activated underused spaces, and drew previously disengaged residents into discussions about cultural life. Their *Artist Dinners* and *RAFT* events connected practitioners from across Rhondda and beyond, modelling forms of generosity, transparency, and peer support that the council is now adopting more widely.

The authority, meanwhile, gained a clearer understanding of freelancers' working conditions and the diverse forms artistic practice can take - particularly when it does not culminate in a tangible artwork. This has prompted a shift towards fairness, equity, and open communication becoming foundational rather than aspirational principles for engaging cultural workers.

For the artists, the programme opened significant professional pathways. Rhys secured a fully funded PhD with Aberystwyth University and the National Botanic Garden of Wales, alongside a residency at Ffotogallery. Harriet developed work that led to an international exchange in Mauritius funded by Wales Arts International, later sharing her findings at a Scratch Night in the Park & Dare. Both artists strengthened local networks and deepened their understanding of how artistic practice can intersect with public service systems - knowledge that continues to shape their work and the council's cultural strategy.

Evaluation took place through in-person feedback, resident responses, attendance data, and documentation, all of which contributed to the decision to continue the programme for a second year.

The learning generated - particularly around communication, the importance of hyper-local focus, and the confidence that comes when artists feel publicly supported - now informs the journey of the newly appointed cultural freelancer, poet Clare Potter. Crucially, the programme has demonstrated that embedded artistic practice can provide a vital new route for community consultation, service design, and cultural equity. Its legacy is already visible in ongoing initiatives, strengthened relationships, and a transformed approach to how a local authority values and collaborates with Cultural Freelancers.

## Natural Resources Wales' Creative Nature Programme

**The *Creative Nature Programme (CNP)* emerged from a shared commitment between Natural Resources Wales (NRW) and the Arts Council of Wales (ACW) to deepen public engagement with nature, culture, and climate justice across Wales.**

Developed following a Memorandum of Understanding in 2020, the programme set out to expand access to arts and nature for communities that have historically been underrepresented, and to bring cultural and environmental sectors into closer, more reciprocal collaboration. Running between 2021 and 2025 and supported through ACW, NRW, and Lottery funding, CNP positioned climate justice and connection to nature as central organising principles, with Cultural Freelancers playing a crucial and highly visible role in shaping, delivering, and interpreting the work.

Freelancers were embedded across all stages of the programme's design and delivery. They advised on strategy, led public engagement, facilitated workshops, created new artworks, and contributed to co-production processes with environmental organisations.

Twenty-six freelancers undertook research and development focused on the *Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015*, while others were directly commissioned for their expertise in climate justice, community engagement, or nature-based creative practice. Some roles were secured through open calls - such as those within the *Future Wales Fellowship (FWF)* or the *Natur am Byth (NaB)* arts engagement strand - while others were invited to collaborate because of their specialist knowledge. All were paid in line with ACW standard rates, with commissions ranging from short contributions of only a few days to long-term engagements extending over eighteen months.

The programme's ambitions were expressed through four major strands. The *Plan for Climate Justice and the Arts* outlined a ten-year pathway for embedding climate justice principles within ACW's *Strategic Framework*. The *Future Wales Fellowship* offered sixteen artists the space, time, and support to challenge dominant narratives around food systems, energy, transport, and human-nature relationships. NRW's contribution through *Natur am Byth* extended the programme into communities connected with threatened species, using creative practice to deepen ecological awareness and well-being.





Finally, the *Climate Justice and Nature Connection Consortium* enabled cross-sector conversations, bringing together artists, environmental practitioners, and land managers to explore how artist-led approaches can strengthen public understanding of ecological crises.

Co-production was a consistent feature of the programme. Cultural Freelancers were central to developing the Climate Justice Plan, working alongside cultural organisations as co-designers and acting as critical friends during the drafting process. Across the FWF and NaB strands, freelancers were consulted regularly, supported by partner organisations such as CAT, Peak, and Addo. Even in the Consortium's early scoping exercises, Cultural Freelancers' expertise was valued through paid honoraria, ensuring that their insights shaped proposals from the outset. This approach will continue into the next phase, which includes a focus group designed to bring artists with diverse lived experiences into dialogue with environmental and land management organisations. The aim is to identify opportunities for collaborative practice, resource-sharing, and artist participation in decision making about climate and nature at multiple governance levels.

Evaluation across the programme highlighted the impact of sustained, well-supported Cultural Freelancer involvement.

*The Plan for Climate Justice and the Arts* used reflective methods developed by CAT Innovation Lab to refine the co-design process. The first *Future Wales Fellowship* was assessed through interviews and focus groups, offering rich insights into the Fellows' experiences. The second Fellowship adopted both ACW's *Outcome Based Accountability* framework and the *Most Significant Change* methodology. Addo's evaluation of the *NaB arts programme* combined quantitative data with interviews, questionnaires, and creative storytelling.

These evaluations revealed meaningful outcomes, especially for Cultural Freelancers. Many Fellows described transformations in how they work - with new non-hierarchical forms of exchange, immersive approaches to engagement, and practices grounded in situated dialogue. They reported greater confidence, authenticity, and clarity in their artistic identities, supported by a programme culture that prioritised trust, care, and the freedom to determine the direction of their own development. This mutual support model also influenced partners, several of whom continued collaborating with Fellows beyond the programme. For instance, the work of Manon Awst and Dylan Huw carried insights from their Fellowship directly into *Wales in Venice*.



**OUR POWYS-BASED PROJECT HAS COLLABORATED WITH SIMON WHITEHEAD ON HIS "BECOMING LICHEN" PROJECT... TO ENGAGE THE LOCAL COMMUNITY - MANY OF WHOM MAY BE NEW TO NATURE AND LICHENS - THROUGH DANCE AND MOVEMENT.**

**THE PROJECT WILL NOT ONLY ENHANCE WELL-BEING BUT ALSO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE OF LICHENS AND FOSTER GREATER ENGAGEMENT WITH THE OUTDOORS.**

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**Dr Kirsty Williams**

Natur am Byth Arts Engagement Programme

Natural Resources Wales



Impact on communities was particularly visible within the *Natur am Byth* programme, which engaged neurodivergent, disabled, LGBTQIA+, and Welsh-speaking groups, while qualitative data suggests broader ethnic diversity than quantitative data captured. Participants frequently expressed increased connection to local habitats, developed species-inspired artworks, and took part in conservation activities such as bat box installation and habitat restoration. Many articulated a deeper commitment to protecting nature as a result of the creative process.

Public sector partners also felt the programme's influence. NRW officers reported that the arts engagement work empowered conservation staff to collaborate confidently with artists and integrate creative methods into their well-being and community engagement work.

Examples include partnerships with Simon Whitehead in Powys for dance-based lichen engagement, and with Wrexham University Art School on species-inspired artworks supporting ecological outreach.

As the programme concludes, its legacy continues to evolve. Upcoming outputs include a scoping paper to support the development of a *Climate Justice and Nature Connection Consortium* by 2026, and a major exhibition at Tŷ Pawb in 2027 celebrating the work of *Natur am Byth* artists. Although organisational strategies have shifted, the knowledge gained through working closely with cultural freelancers - particularly the value of long-term, trust-based, mutually beneficial relationships - remains a lasting and transferable outcome, ready to shape future cross-sector collaboration in Wales.





## Embedding Creativity in Healthcare

**Through a strategic partnership with the Arts Council of Wales, Hywel Dda University Health Board has embedded an Arts and Health Team within its Patient Experience Directorate.**

This work builds on a strong partnership between the Arts Council of Wales and Public Health Wales, through which Wales has been leading the way on arts and health. The programme positions creativity as a core element of how services are designed, environments are shaped, and how staff and patients experience healthcare.

From the outset, the Health Board recognised that its greatest potential lay not in building a large internal Arts and Health Team, but in harnessing the expertise of the region's existing creative workforce and connecting them with healthcare professionals and patients. This principle now underpins Hywel Dda's collaborative model, which prioritises co-creation and partnership with freelancers and arts organisations.

This approach is reflected in the Health Board's *Arts & Health Charter (2024)*, shaped through extensive co-creation involving public engagement, facilitated sessions with the Wales Arts Health & Well-being Network, and deep collaboration with creative partners. Cultural Freelancers were part of a much wider conversation, but their perspectives helped ensure that creativity and imagination were woven into the Health Board's long-term vision to integrate the arts into the work of the Health Board to improve health and well-being and promote healing and recovery.

On the ground, cultural freelancers are helping to transform our understanding of healthcare. Their ability to reframe challenges, slow down conversations, and foster emotional connection within high-pressure systems has become an invaluable asset.

This impact is clearly demonstrated in programmes such as the *Hywel Dda Arts Referral Programme (HARP)*, where creative practice supports core health priorities, not as an add-on, but as an integrated element of service delivery.





In HARP, artists work with individuals living with long-term conditions who frequently access their GP, creating kind and safe spaces that reconnect people with their creativity. This approach improves well-being, fosters patient activation, and helps reduce demand on clinical services. HARP also provides a supportive pathway into the vibrant, ongoing community provision delivered by artists.

Hywel Dda works hard to build partnerships with a wide range of artists and arts organisations through a fair, supportive, and ethical approach. This not only nurtures and strengthens the arts sector but also enables the Health Board to access a diverse range of creative skills.

*Arts Boost* illustrates this model in action: an award-winning programme for 12 to 18-year-olds known to Hywel Dda Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), developed in 2022 in response to rising mental health need. Delivered in partnership with Span Arts, People Speak Up and Small World Theatre, Arts Boost offers “Creative Freestyling” sessions across the three counties, with activities ranging from animation and aerial work to journaling, clay, painting and DJ’ing.

The programme is grounded in a strong evidence base demonstrating the impact of the arts on well-being, self-esteem and self-expression. To further strengthen understanding of the benefits of arts engagement for young people, Hywel Dda is contributing its findings to the national Arts and Minds programme, an Arts Council of Wales initiative, funded in partnership with the Baring Foundation, which seeks to embed arts and creativity within NHS support packages for children and young people experiencing mental health challenges.

The influence of Cultural Freelancers is also evident in the physical healthcare environment. At the Leri Cancer Unit in Bronglais Hospital, Aberystwyth, artists collaborated with clinical teams and patients to create permanent artworks shaped by patient experiences and community identity, drawing on therapeutic qualities of art and nature to support both patients and staff. Similar approaches are now emerging in emergency departments and other clinical settings, helping to make healthcare spaces calmer and more person-centred.

Creativity is increasingly being used to support staff well-being, a growing priority across public bodies. Participation in arts activities helps staff reconnect with agency, expression, and reflection, supporting emotional well-being, reducing sickness, offering hope, and inspiring better care. The *Creativity for Staff Well-being* programme is driving a cultural shift, where creativity is recognised as a meaningful tool for both service design and staff support.

Hywel Dda’s experience demonstrates the value of collaborating with Cultural Freelancers, an often-underused resource brimming with energy, talent, insight, and lived experience. When treated as strategic partners, they bring fresh perspectives that can transform established ways of working. Cultural Freelancers can positively influence everything from policy development and service design to patient experience.



**BY WORKING COLLABORATIVELY, WE SUPPORT FREELANCERS FAIRLY AND STRENGTHEN A SECTOR FULL OF TALENT AND POTENTIAL.**

**AND BY NURTURING MANY SMALL, VIBRANT COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE, WE CREATE SPACES WHERE CREATIVITY FLOURISHES AND EVERYONE - PATIENTS, ARTISTS, CLINICIANS AND COMMUNITIES ALIKE - CAN CONTRIBUTE EQUALLY TO SHAPING BETTER HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.**

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**Kathryn Lambert**  
Head of Arts and Health  
Hywel Dda University Health Board



# UCAN Productions – Creative & Inclusive Collaboration with Cardiff University School of Optometry and Vision Sciences

**UCAN Productions, a charity specialising in creative confidence-building for blind and vision-impaired young people, has maintained a 15-year partnership (2007–present) with Cardiff University’s School of Optometry & Vision Sciences, working from a shared base within the School of Optometry.**

Over this time, UCAN has engaged 14 Cultural Freelancers, including drama facilitators, sound producers, forum theatre practitioners, musicians, poets, and vision-impaired creative professionals, many of them former UCAN members, to deliver a wide range of arts, health, well-being, and inclusive education activities that deepen vision-impairment awareness and promote youth development.

Supported by project-based funding from BBC Children in Need, the National Lottery, Arts Council Wales, AHRC, Erasmus+, and other grants, alongside substantial in-kind support from the School of Optometry, the partnership contributes meaningfully to several national well-being goals, including A More Equal Wales, A Healthier Wales, A Wales of Cohesive Communities, A Wales of Vibrant Culture, and A Globally Responsible Wales.

UCAN Productions was established in 2007 after earlier volunteer work in Sierra Leone and a UK tour with a blind choir, experiences that shaped the organisation’s commitment to improving the confidence, creative expression, and social inclusion of young people with vision impairment.

The partnership with Cardiff University emerged to provide UCAN with a safe and reputable home, and to enhance both the confidence of young people and the competence of trainee optometrists through creative, relational learning.

Together, UCAN and the School of Optometry co-produce training materials and lived-experience-based education for optometry and medical students, improve clinical experiences for children with vision impairment and their families, promote youth independence and self-advocacy, and create inclusive pathways into employment for vision-impaired young people. The collaboration reflects the principles of the Freelancer & Public Sector Pledge by championing equitable practice, community-led design, and long-term relationship-building.

Cultural Freelancers are central to UCAN’s approach. They contribute to the co-design of workshops and performance programmes, delivery of creative sessions, development of training resources, and participation in research projects such as navigation technology and human–computer interaction studies.

Their work includes drama and improvisation, vocal and physical confidence training, Vision Awareness Training, forum theatre, sound and media work, conference presentations, and co-produced training for healthcare audiences. UCAN uses a flexible producer-theatre model, expanding or reducing its Cultural Freelancer workforce according to project needs.



**I JOINED UCAN AT JUST 13 YEARS OLD AND AM NOW A FREELANCE ASSOCIATE DRAMA DIRECTOR FOR THE ORGANISATION.**

**UCAN HAS PLAYED AN INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT ROLE IN MY LIFE, BOTH PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY.**

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Jake Sawyers



Increasingly, former UCAN members are employed as freelancers, bringing lived experience and a strong understanding of inclusive practice. They work on project-based contracts, paid fairly in line with sector standards, contributing to collaboratively developed content used in ongoing training and education.

The UCAN–Optometry partnership is deeply co-produced. UCAN has been embedded within the School of Optometry for 15 years, sharing rooms, offices, and facilities. An active student volunteering scheme enables optometry students to take part in UCAN workshops, helping them build confidence and communication skills while forming meaningful relationships with young people who have vision impairment.

Together, the partners have co-designed educational modules such as *The Impact of Blindness for Year 4* medical students, integrating humour, film, and lived-experience testimony to create effective and memorable learning. They also developed *Maggie's Club*, created with families, optometrists, and researchers to support children with vision impairment and additional needs.

Youth-led work is central: UCAN's 18+ group, SASI (Self-Advocacy for the Sight Impaired), regularly consults on external research projects such as InclusiveXPlay and technology-focused studies.

The partnership also extends internationally through Erasmus+ collaborations, exchanges with Theatre of the Blind in the United States, and innovation projects with organisations such as Calvium on navigation technology. Decision-making remains shared, iterative, and grounded in relationships rather than tied to strict project cycles.

This longstanding collaboration has delivered wide-ranging impacts. It has built a rare, sustained arts–health partnership that has created new clubs, training modules, volunteering structures, and accessible educational resources for students, along with regular performances at major conferences including the *Welsh Assembly Eye Care Conference*. UCAN also provides training for organisations such as the Royal College of Drama Wales and the Sherman Theatre.

For communities, the work has transformed clinical environments, helping children with vision impairment feel safe, confident, and welcomed in settings that once caused anxiety. Families report increased trust in clinical services, while young people gain friendships, creative outlets, confidence, and leadership opportunities. Many alumni now deliver workshops, contribute to funding applications, support organisational development, and act as visible role models.

The public sector also benefits significantly. Optometry students gain real-world experience and confidence in working with visually impaired individuals, develop more empathetic practice, and confront assumptions through exposure to the creativity and talent of UCAN members. Their engagement supports improvements in clinical practice and patient experience across the university community. Freelancers benefit too: they gain specialist skills in accessible creative practice, see increased opportunities for vision-impaired practitioners to lead and shape programmes, and participate in clear pathways for peer-to-peer employment, with alumni taking positions as facilitators, family officers, and engagement workers.

The partnership has also faced challenges, particularly instability caused by the lack of core funding, the need for Cultural Freelancers to receive specialist training before working effectively with visually impaired people, inconsistent accessibility across public buildings (including new builds), and difficulty scaling projects such as the *UCAN Go* navigation app because of commercial barriers.

These challenges have led to important learning: creativity thrives when participants feel safe; youth leadership is vital for long-term sustainability; lived experience must be embedded from the beginning of any project; and strong, informal relationships between partners often deliver more impact than formalised structures.

Evaluation is ongoing and built into the partnership through participant feedback, staff and family observations, responses from students during training, and long-term tracking of alumni success, with former UCAN members now working in the arts, public sector, and creative industries, including one who is now a professor at Cambridge. The legacy of the collaboration includes its 15-year longevity, the development of a growing workforce of vision-impaired creative professionals, international networks, continued delivery of training for public bodies, and a planned leadership transition supported by National Lottery funding. Together, these elements ensure that UCAN's creative, inclusive, and youth-led practices will continue to evolve and thrive into the future.





# Theatr Clwyd Summer Hub

**The Theatr Clwyd Summer Hub is an annual programme, running since 2020, delivered by Theatr Clwyd’s Creative Engagement team in partnership with Flintshire County Council, Social Services.**

It brings together a multidisciplinary team of around 7 creative freelancers annually - including actors, dancers, musicians, visual artists, drama practitioners, and welfare-focused staff - supported by academic research and evaluation from both Bangor and Wrexham Universities.

Taking place at Theatr Clwyd and across local outdoor and community spaces in Flintshire, the hub supports vulnerable children and young people referred by Social Services, providing transport, meals, and fully accessible creative opportunities.

The project focuses on well-being, mental-health support, social development, and creative engagement, contributing to national well-being goals by boosting resilience and emotional regulation, fostering friendships and a sense of belonging, and promoting a vibrant, inclusive cultural environment through its bilingual delivery.

Overall, the Summer Hub offers nurturing, play-based creative experiences designed to build confidence, strengthen social connection, and support positive mental health through high-quality arts activities led by a skilled freelance team.

The programme aims to support vulnerable children and young people referred by the local authority by providing safe, creative spaces that encourage participation, curiosity, and confidence. It seeks to address growing mental-health challenges by creating environments where young people feel accepted, connected, and able to try new activities without judgement. At its core, the programme is designed to promote emotional well-being, build psychological flexibility, nurture positive social relationships, and support personal growth through rich, arts-based experiences.

Freelancers have formed the backbone of the Summer Hub, bringing expertise in acting, music, dance, visual arts, playwork, inclusive facilitation, and youth engagement. They lead daily creative sessions, model positive risk-taking, encourage participation, and adapt activities responsively to individual needs.

Their role includes creating welcoming, safe environments; monitoring and supporting well-being; and offering creative alternatives when an activity isn’t working. Many had additional backgrounds in counselling, support work, or ALN/ADHD/autism experience, strengthening the project’s inclusive practice. Freelancers were recruited through Theatre Clwyd’s networks and partnerships and included first-time and returning practitioners.

The programme is delivered collaboratively between Theatre Clwyd, Flintshire Social Services, local authority referrers, and Bangor University researchers. Creative freelancers co-produce sessions with young people, responding to their interests and ideas. Children help shape activities - choosing to share their passions, trying new art forms, and influencing the direction of workshops. Library-style inclusive practice, Welsh-language capability, welfare oversight, and multi-disciplinary co-delivery contribute to a shared, participatory model.

The programme delivers ten days of creative activity each summer for vulnerable young people referred by Social Services, providing transport, meals, and an inclusive environment that ensured equitable access for all participants.



**COMING TO SOMEWHERE LIKE THIS GIVES YOU THAT RENEWED FAITH IN HUMANITY AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

Creative Team Member, Summer Hub



**WE HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF WATCHING THE ICE THAW AWAY... EVENTUALLY ALL THE YOUNG PEOPLE RECOGNISE THIS AS A SAFE SPACE.**

Creative Team Member, Summer Hub



Through a wide range of multidisciplinary workshops - including music, dance, drama, visual arts, outdoor exploration, and collaborative performance - it creates a nurturing space where even the most hesitant children feel able to “turn up,” “try,” and “share,” unlocking meaningful engagement.

The impact on communities is significant: the hub reduces isolation for children in foster care or with limited peer networks, helps rebuild and form new friendships, and offers joyful, confidence-building experiences that encourages emotional expression and open participation. For the public sector, the programme strengthens the partnership between Theatr Clwyd and Flintshire County Council, demonstrating how arts-based, community-rooted initiatives can complement formal mental-health systems and contributing valuable evidence aligned with Welsh Government well-being frameworks such as NEST and the Whole-School Approach. Freelancers also benefit, gaining rewarding and restorative work that boosted morale, enhances skills in inclusive and trauma-sensitive practice, and fosters a strong sense of team identity, trust, and mutual support.

The programme highlighted several challenges, including the need for constant vigilance, flexibility, and responsiveness from the creative team in meeting the emotional and behavioural needs of vulnerable young people, alongside the importance of strong training, daily reflection, and shared

pedagogical principles to maintain a consistent approach.

Some children require significant time before feeling safe enough to join group activities, demanding sensitive, patient facilitation, while others need activities to be dynamically adapted when they struggle or disengage. Balancing individual needs, group dynamics, and emotional regulation remain an ongoing challenge throughout delivery, requiring considerable skill, teamwork, and a supportive creative environment.

Bangor University carried out an in-depth thematic evaluation of the Summer Hub using interviews, observations, and researcher analysis, identifying five key themes: the contributions young people make to the process, the importance of nurturing and safe contexts, how both children and facilitators cope with challenge, the centrality of relational development, and the pedagogical principles that underpin positive change. Together, these themes illustrate how creative practice can strengthen psychological flexibility, emotional resilience, and social connection. As a result, the Summer Hub now stands as a strong model of community-based, preventative mental-health support - one that complements overstretched clinical services, aligns with national well-being frameworks, and clearly demonstrates the transformative impact of arts-led early intervention.



# THE MULTICULTURAL HUB IS AN INCLUSIVE CREATIVE FAMILY... A PLACE WHERE I FEEL WELCOME TO EXPRESS MYSELF.

**Mfikela Jean Samuel**

Artist and member of North East Wales Multicultural Hub

## North East Wales Multicultural Hub

**The North East Wales Multicultural Hub is a co-produced model of cultural cohesion, community resilience and meaningful engagement between cultural freelancers, unpaid community leaders and its many members, and public sector bodies.**

Established in 2019 by Race Council Cymru (RCC) as a small WhatsApp group of 18 culturally diverse residents, most representing an entire diverse community group, sharing information and celebrating heritage, it has since grown into a dynamic regional network spanning Wrexham, Flintshire and Denbighshire.

The Hub is supported by RCC, the North East Wales Community Cohesion Team and Tŷ Pawb, forming a partnership that brings together grassroots community experience with institutional infrastructure.

In 2022, the Hub received £240,000 through the Welsh Government's *Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (Culture, Heritage & Sport Fund)*, enabling it to formalise its governance, expand its activities and appoint a part-time Cultural Community Coordinator (Iolanda Banu Viegas of Bom Dia Cymru).

This investment strengthened its ability to support cultural expression, build partnerships and facilitate community-led initiatives. The Hub now comprises more than 20 members, including artists, performers, community leaders and volunteers, working together through schools, festivals, public spaces and regular gatherings at Tŷ Pawb.

A wide range of community groups and residents actively attend and stay engaged with local activities and events. The Chinese community attracts around 150 people to its events, while the NWEMA group has approximately 200 attendees. The Polish community is particularly well represented, with 300–400 people attending activities and an estimated 10,000 Polish residents living in Wrexham. Refugee Kindness supports around 200 families with children. The Portuguese community includes approximately 2,000 residents, with Bom Dia Cymru - an activity run by CLPW CIC for retired people - having around 20 members.

The Keeala community numbers about 650 people, many of whom work in the NHS, alongside the Filipino community, which has a similar employment profile.



Each group has many active members and volunteers and maintains strong communication networks, primarily through Facebook and WhatsApp, enabling them to reach large numbers of people easily. Attendance at MCH meetings is usually by community leaders representing these groups.

The Hub's core aims are to strengthen community cohesion; celebrate cultural identity; amplify seldom-heard voices; support the creative expression of minority ethnic communities; and create safe, welcoming spaces for dialogue, cultural exchange and collective problemsolving. Members emphasise the importance of learning from one another, and the Hub's work actively challenges racism, stigma and misrepresentation by increasing cultural visibility and widening public participation.

Cultural Freelancers are integral to this work, contributing across co-production, creative delivery, public speaking, cultural education and strategic advocacy. For example, dance artist and festival producer Krishnapriya Ramamoorthy (Paallam Arts), collaborates with communities through movement and intercultural dialogue, using her lived experience to push back against the notion of art as mere hobby and instead frame it as a vital cultural and social force. She also represents minority ethnic creatives in wider strategic discussions across the region.

Painter and public speaker Mfikela Jean Samuel uses his work to communicate African cultural heritage and inspire young people, describing the Hub as *“an inclusive creative family... a safe space where I am welcome to express myself.”*

Cultural Freelancers are typically engaged through the Hub's established networks, with small seed-funded opportunities allowing individuals to test ideas and develop projects. While paid opportunities are offered where possible, limited resources mean that voluntary contributions remain a part of the model. Nevertheless, Cultural Freelancers consistently highlight the Hub's role in providing validation, confidence, peer support and pathways into new professional opportunities.

Although creative practice plays an important role, the Hub is not an arts project, but a cultural and social platform shaped through co-production. Its collaborative approach includes regular shared-decision meetings; a membership representing first-generation migrants, second-generation communities and local Welsh residents; co-designed activities across food, festivals, dance, language, heritage and social issues; and strong partnerships with schools, cultural venues, local authorities and national bodies. Members frequently describe the Hub as a “family”, emphasising the emotional safety and encouragement it provides.



The Hub has raised the profile of minority ethnic communities across Wales, with government departments and cultural bodies now seeking its insight and involvement. It has enabled community members to participate in nationally significant events such as the Llangollen International Eisteddfod and the National Eisteddfod, helping to embed cultural diversity within Wales' wider cultural narrative. It is hoped that further funding commitments will allow regular access to space at Tŷ Pawb - one weekday and one Saturday each month - which will remove financial barriers and give communities a stable environment to rehearse, create, plan and connect. This consistency will strengthen cross-community collaboration, support collective problem-solving on issues including discrimination, community safety and public representation.

For communities, the Hub's impact is felt in increased confidence, visibility and belonging. It offers safe, culturally sensitive environments where individuals can explore traditions, challenge stereotypes and discuss topics that may be taboo or culturally sensitive. The Hub has forged new friendships, strengthened inter-group relationships and connected communities that were previously isolated. Local residents attending events also report a deeper appreciation of the region's cultural diversity.

Public sector bodies increasingly view the Hub as a vital source of lived experience and cultural insight. It has informed Welsh Government arts and culture strategies, community safety approaches and broader regional planning. Through its approach to co-production, the Hub demonstrates how culturally grounded collaboration can improve public sector responsiveness, build trust and contribute to more equitable policymaking.

For Cultural Freelancers, the benefits are both personal and professional. Many report increased confidence, expanded networks and reassurance that they have "somewhere to turn to." The Hub has created pathways for international work, new audiences and opportunities to engage young people who might not otherwise encounter their art forms. It has also enabled freelancers to act as ambassadors for cultural diversity across the public sector and cultural forums. Operating such a diverse network presents challenges.

Ensuring equity requires sensitive facilitation, especially since many participants do not identify as "artists" and require encouragement to participate fully. Limited funding constrains the hiring of professional practitioners, necessitating creative and flexible approaches to skill development and project delivery. Long-term sustainability also remains a pressing concern as current funding cycles come to an end. Despite these challenges, the Hub demonstrates that co-production, trust-building and cultural humility are essential to effective engagement between public bodies and cultural freelancers.

A multi-year SROI evaluation confirms the Hub's strong social value, growing reach and meaningful contribution to community cohesion. With the full evaluation completed in December 2024, the Hub is now focused on securing long-term funding for its coordinator role, alongside admin, accountancy and an expanding programme of events aimed at different communities, developing dedicated cultural spaces for regular practice and events, deepening connections between communities and public services, and strengthening pathways for emerging artists to grow professionally.



**IT HAS SIGNIFICANTLY RAISED THE PROFILE OF ALL OUR SMALLER COMMUNITIES. AS A COLLECTIVE, WE NOW HAVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION.**

**Emily Reddy**

Community Cohesion Coordinator for North-East Wales Multicultural Hub



# The Talking Shop Model

**The Talking Shop is an innovative model designed by cultural freelancer Yvonne Murphy of Omidaze Productions to increase cultural and democratic participation through creativity, conversation, and community connection.**

Part art installation, part living room, and part civic space, each Talking Shop transforms an empty shopfront into a welcoming, homely environment - "like a cross between an art installation and your nan's house" - where everyone is invited to engage in dialogue, explore ideas, and participate in cultural life. A shop that sells nothing, it offers free information, creative encounters, democratic deliberation, and endless cups of tea, removing barriers that often prevent people from engaging in public decision-making or cultural activity.

At the heart of the model is *The Democracy Box Story*, a creative resource that helps visitors understand the basics of UK democracy and encourages year-round participation beyond the ballot box.

By grounding civic learning in storytelling, conversation, and creative practice, the Talking Shop enables people who may feel disconnected from political systems to build confidence, ask questions, and contribute to the democratic life of their community.

Since 2022, the Talking Shop model has been trialled in Cardiff, Newport, Merthyr Tydfil and Caerphilly County Borough. Across all trials, more than 17,000 visits have been recorded, with thousands of conversations taking place between community members, creatives, public bodies, and visiting partners. The model has trained 56 freelance hosts, 8 assistant producers, and over 10 volunteers, demonstrating the essential role cultural freelancers play in holding space, facilitating dialogue, leading workshops, and co-creating programmes with local communities.

Creative activity is central to the Talking Shop experience. Across the trials, more than 166 creative sessions, workshops, and events have been delivered, supported by 24 collaborating organisations from the cultural, civic, academic, and public sectors.





Studio and exhibition spaces within the shops have supported artists to develop and showcase work, creating opportunities for emerging and established practitioners alike.

The Talking Shop model has emerged as a powerful example of how creativity can support the aims of the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015*, particularly around participation, community cohesion, cultural vibrancy, intergenerational connection, and long-term thinking. Its informal, homely setting helps tackle isolation and loneliness, while its conversation-led approach fosters trust, reduces polarisation, and encourages meaningful engagement with public services and democratic processes. Visitors consistently describe the space as welcoming, safe, and transformative.

Building on the success of the trials, a *Talking Shop on Tour* has now been developed, taking the model to beaches, parks, town centres, and housing estates across Gwent and the Cardiff City Region. This mobile version expands reach and awareness while connecting people back to permanent or longer-term Talking Shop sites. The long-term vision is that each of Wales's 22 local authorities hosts a permanent Talking Shop, supported by cross-sector partners who repurpose existing budgets for consultation, engagement, and participation. This approach aligns with the Act's five ways of working, creating a sustainable, cost-effective model of democratic involvement grounded in creativity and community voice.

The Talking Shop and Talking Shop on Tour models also demonstrate significant potential as preventative mechanisms for public bodies. By providing six-day-a-week facilitated creative conversations, both within the permanent Talking Shop spaces and through the mobile Talking Shop on Tour, public bodies can remain meaningfully "plugged into" communities all year round. This sustained presence enables policy development and decision-making to be routinely informed by lived experience, rather than relying on episodic or extractive consultation. Through regular, informal, and trust-based engagement, 'on the ground' impacts can be understood earlier, challenges identified sooner, and preventative approaches prioritised. In this way, the model supports a shift from reactive service design to long-term, preventative thinking rooted in real community insight, aligning strongly with public sector duties around prevention, participation, and long-term well-being.

The Talking Shop model provides a blueprint for how artists, cultural freelancers, public bodies, and communities can work together to strengthen democratic and cultural participation across Wales. Its impact demonstrates that when creativity leads engagement, conversations deepen, barriers fall away, and people feel empowered to shape the decisions affecting their lives - **#OneConversationAtATime.**



**[THE TALKING SHOP] GAVE US A UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO THE HEARTBEAT OF THE COMMUNITY, ENABLING US TO SHARE INFORMATION, ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS, AND CONNECT WITH A WIDER CREATIVE NETWORK.**

**WORKING WITH CULTURAL FREELANCERS LIKE YVONNE TRULY ENRICHES THE WORK OF PUBLIC BODIES AND STRENGTHENS THE CREATIVE FABRIC OF OUR COMMUNITIES.**

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**David Chamberlain**  
Arts Development Manager  
Caerphilly County Borough Council



# Annexe



# Useful Links

## The Value of Creative and Cultural Freelancers

[The power of creativity: Growing Welsh creative businesses](#)

Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

[The potential impacts of devolution and increased local decision making on freelance workers in the UK's creative industries and cultural sector.](#)

Dr Heidi Ashton, University of Warwick and Culture Commons

[Forging Freelance Futures Report](#)

Creative UK

[Creative and Cultural Freelancers study 2024](#)

Arts Council England

[Working Guidance for Arts Freelancers and Organisations](#)

March for the Arts

[Mind the understanding gap: The value of creative freelancers](#)

[Wales Arts and Health Network](#)

## Engaging Cultural Freelancers

[Job Opportunity listings](#)

Arts Council of Wales

[Cultural Freelancers Study 2024: Our largest piece of research into the freelance sector](#)

Arts Council England

[Bectu](#) - Representing contract and freelance workers in the media and entertainment industries.

[Creative Freelancers](#)

Creative Industries Federation

[Writers Guild](#) - Trade union for writers in TV, film, theatre, audio, books, poetry, comedy, animation and video games.

[Equity](#) - The performing arts and entertainment trade union.

[Musicians' Union](#) - Working to protect members' rights and campaign for a fairer music industry.

[National Union of Journalists \(NUJ\)](#) – Supports journalists, writers, and content creators, including those working in arts and culture.

[Unite the Union \(Digital & Tech Sector\) –](#)

Represents workers across creative industries, including design, publishing, and advertising.

[Unite the Union \(Community, Youth Workers, and Not-for-profit\)](#) - Represents professionals working in charities, non-profits, community organisations, youth services, and social enterprises.

[Wales TUC Cymru](#) - The coordinating body of trade unions in Wales, representing around 400,000 working people through 48 unions.

[CULT Cymru \(Creative Unions Learning Together\)](#) - Training and professional development initiative supporting workers in Wales' creative industries. It is a partnership between BECTU/Prospect, Equity, the Musicians' Union (MU), and the Writers' Guild of Great Britain (WGGB), and is supported by Wales Union Learning Fund from Welsh Government.

[Creative UK](#) - The independent network for the UK's Creative Industries.



## Developing and Managing Your Project

[Addo Toolkit](#) - for Artist-Partner Collaborations, in conjunction with Wrexham University

[Public Art Online](#)

## Co-Creation and Co-Production

[Gathering Summary – Co-Creation and Participatory Arts](#)

Artworks Alliance

[Considering Co-Creation](#)

Arts Council England

[Co-Creation Toolkit: From design to implementation](#)

Oxfam

[Co-creation Toolkit](#)

Mental Health Europe

[Co-production](#)

Involve

[International approaches to local cultural decision making](#)

Culture Commons

## Well-being of Future Generations and the five ways of working

Further information on the Well-being of Future Generations Act can be accessed using the following links:

A Guide to the Well-being of Future Generations Act: Easy Read

<https://www.futuregenerations.wales/>

## Welsh Language

[Synhwyro'r iaith \(Sensing the Language\)](#)

Arts Council of Wales

[Cynnig Cymraeg](#)

Welsh Language Commissioner and Arts Council of Wales

## Fair Pay

[Exhibition Payment: Paying Artists](#)

a-n / AIR

[Artist's Resale Right \(ARR\)](#)

DACS

[Rates of Pay Guidelines](#)

Artists' Union England

[Salary Research and Recommendations: 2024 Update](#)

Museums Association

[Paid-for services for authors](#)

The Society of Authors

[Equity](#)

[Empowering Musicians to Say No to Unpaid Work](#)

Musicians' Union

[United Voices of the World \(UVW\)](#)

[Artists Union England \(AUE\)](#) – Advocates for visual artists and cultural workers.

[Scottish Artists Union \(SAU\)](#) - Supports visual artists and makers in Scotland.

[Sustainable Cultural Futures](#) - A collaborative project exploring sustainable futures for the cultural sector, between the Department of Culture, Media and Creative Industries at King's College London (UK) and the Department of Economics at Doshisha University (Japan).

[Policy approaches to tackle precarity in freelance cultural work: How are campaign organisations, labour unions and policymakers approaching the precarity in cultural freelancing in the UK?](#)

Sustainable Cultural Futures

[Freedom or working for free? Freelancers in the creative economy.](#)

Creative Access (2023)



## Equality and Access

[Disability Arts Cymru \(DAC\)](#) - The lead organisation for Disability arts in Wales.

[DASH](#) - a Disability led visual arts organisation. We commission exciting new work by disabled visual artists; we run workshops; mentoring for artists and training.

[Unlimited](#) - an arts organisation that commissions work by disabled artists and promotes inclusion within the cultural sector.

[Leadership diversity in the creative & cultural industries: Benchmarking leadership diversity in the cultural and creative industry – findings and recommendations.](#)

Creative UK

[Creative diversity: The state of diversity in the UK's creative industries, and what we can do about it.](#)

Creative Industries Federation and MOBO Awards

[The creative majority: A report on 'What Works' to support diversity and inclusion in creative education and the talent pipeline, with a focus on the 16+ age category.](#)

All-Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity

[Creative Access Thrive Reports](#) - Annual research by Creative Access tracking progress on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the creative industries — including the experiences of freelancers from under-represented backgrounds and employer practices.

[Socio-economic diversity and inclusion toolkit: Creative industries.](#)

Social Mobility Commission

[Beyond growth: promoting inclusive development of creative clusters in the UK.](#)

Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre

[Inclusive Arts Alliance \(Inc Arts UK\)](#) – A UK-wide network of practitioners and cultural leaders focused on building inclusive creative environments and championing the rights and representation of creatives with lived experience of marginalisation.

[Creative Future](#) – Supports under-represented artists and writers facing barriers due to disability, mental-health challenges, socioeconomic background, gender identity and racial inequity.

## Equality and Access

[Culture& \(Culture and Heritage\)](#) – Works with artists and institutions to promote diversity in arts and heritage workforce and creative programming.

[Arts Emergency](#) - an award-winning mentoring charity and support network that works long-term with under-resourced young people in London, Greater Manchester and Merseyside.

## Evaluation

[Is this the best it can be? A reflective toolkit for artists, arts organisations, partners and participants.](#)

Creative Scotland

[Creative & Credible](#)

[Better Evaluation](#)

[Failspace](#)

[The Audience Agency](#)

[Centre for Cultural Value](#) - a national research centre based at the University of Leeds. We want to enrich lives by building an equitable, confident and sustainable cultural sector.



# Jargon Busting

When working with Cultural Freelancers in the UK, local authorities or third-sector organisations might encounter certain jargon or terminology that might not be familiar to them. Below are some common terms and recurring words used in the cultural and creative sectors:

## Processes

### Community Engagement

The process of involving the community (often local or underserved) in cultural projects, which can include outreach activities, workshops, or participatory arts events.

### Co-art / Co-Creation / Co-Production

Working collaboratively with communities, audiences or groups in the creation of a cultural project or artwork. A practice that involves the cultural freelancer and other members as equal contributors to the process or outcome.

### Social Practice / Socially Engaged

A form of art where the artist's primary focus is on the social or political context rather than solely the creation of an aesthetic object. Often involving collaboration or engagement with communities as core to the practice.

### Community Art

Artists working in collaboration with a community, usually in a local setting, through dialogue and participation. Linked to the social change movements of the 1960's. Latterly seen as collaborative activity which encompasses dialogue and diversionary activity for its own sake.

## People / Roles

### Cultural Intermediaries / Cultural Connectors

Individuals or groups that act as bridges between the arts/cultural sector and wider communities. E.g. working with artists to connect them to non-arts audiences within underrepresented communities.

### Artistic Director / Curator

These are key roles within creative projects or organisations. An Artistic Director is responsible for shaping the vision of a project, event, or venue. A Curator manages and organizes artistic content, particularly exhibitions.

### Early Career / Established

An early career creative is someone who has graduated but isn't yet considered 'established' in a particular field of artistic practice. Established practitioners have a longer career/practice and therefore more skills. The latter practitioner would require a higher fee.

## Terms

### Residency

A programme where artists are given time and space, usually with financial or logistical support, to focus on their practice. This can include research and development (R&D). These are often temporary positions offered by galleries, museums, or other arts organisations. Increasingly used within performing arts and music to denote a run of several shows/performances over a short period of time at one venue.

### Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

Legal protections granted to creators of intangible assets, such as creative works, designs, methods, to allow creatives to control how their creations are used and exploited and by whom.

### Creative Commons Licences

A public copyright license that allows creators to retain copyright while granting others permission to use, share, and build upon their work under specific conditions. There are a series of different licenses available for agreement and application with freelancers, funders and other invested parties.



# Acknowledgements

This guide builds on the work of the *Freelance and Public Sector Pledge Working Group* - a collaborative initiative established to foster collaboration between Cultural Freelancers and public bodies and to create a more resilient and integrated cultural landscape in Wales.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of this guide.

This guide was written and developed by Addo ([addocreative.com](http://addocreative.com))





# A Quick Guide

**A report commissioned by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales and written by Addo.**

For ease of use, this section distills the document's main points into a brief guide so readers may quickly grasp the key messages and recommended actions.

This Quick Guide accompanies more detailed guidance for public bodies in Wales, helping them engage effectively with Cultural Freelancers - individuals and micro-businesses, working across the arts, culture, and creative industries.

It supports the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* and the *Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023*, promoting fair work, inclusivity, and sustainable public service delivery.

Whilst this guide is intended for public bodies, it may also serve as a best-practice resource for others working with Cultural Freelancers.

## The Role and Value of Cultural Freelancers

Cultural Freelancers are essential to Wales' creative ecosystem.

They bring innovation, flexibility, and community engagement to public sector projects, often working across disciplines such as visual arts, music, theatre, digital media, and design. Their contributions span artistic production, strategic advice, education, health, environmental, and community development initiatives. Freelancers usually operate independently or in small collectives, contributing to both local and national agendas.



**CREATIVE FREELANCERS BRING A FRESH LENS TO EVEN THE MOST COMPLEX CHALLENGES, OFFERING JOYFUL, IMAGINATIVE WAYS FORWARD THAT INSPIRE TEAMS TO SEE NEW POSSIBILITIES. THEIR PRESENCE BRINGS WARMTH AND HUMANITY INTO FAST-PACED SYSTEMS, HELPING US SLOW DOWN AND DESIGN CARE THAT TRULY CENTRES PEOPLE.**

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**Kathryn Lambert**  
Head of Arts and Health  
Hywel Dda University Health Board

Freelancers make an impact in many areas:

- **Artistic Production** – Creating engaging, accessible works across disciplines.
- **Community Engagement** – Facilitating participatory events and consultations.
- **Strategic Input** – Advising on policy, fundraising, and organisational development.
- **Education and Training** – Delivering workshops, mentoring, and team-building activities.
- **Digital Innovation** – Developing AR/VR content, websites, and interactive media.
- **Evaluation and Inclusivity** – Designing inclusive frameworks and approaches.
- **Public Space Design** – Enhancing cultural identity through placemaking interventions and public art.
- **Health and Well-being** – Supporting mental and physical health through creative programmes.

These contributions help public bodies connect with diverse communities, improve services, and strengthen social cohesion.

Public bodies benefit from Cultural Freelancers' ability to tackle complex challenges creatively, foster inclusive engagement, and provide cost-effective solutions. Their cross-sector experience and alternative perspectives enrich public services and help embed culture into everyday life.

By sharing their creativity and language skills, freelancers also support the Welsh Government's vision of a vibrant culture and the goal of reaching one million Welsh speakers by 2050.



## Working Well Together

Four core principles for successful collaboration are:

**Transparency and Understanding –**  
Open communication and mutual respect build trust.

**Genuine Partnership –**  
Freelancers may be involved at all levels of service design and delivery, including in co-creation and strategic planning, guided by the five ways of working: long-term, prevention, integration, collaboration, and involvement.

**Fair Work –**  
Freelancers should be paid at or above industry standards, with transparent recruitment and contracting processes.

**Sustainable Engagement –**  
Long-term relationships and professional development opportunities help build a resilient creative workforce.

The guidance encourages public bodies to involve freelancers in the design and delivery of services, offer appropriate training to support their roles, and recognise the value of their contributions. Collaboration with unions and support organisations is recommended to ensure fair and inclusive practices.

Cultural Freelancers, in turn, are expected to contribute their expertise, advocate for fair work, share knowledge, and foster collaboration within communities. This strengthens engagement strategies and amplifies the sector’s collective voice.



To thrive, Cultural Freelancers need:

**Fair Pay and Financial Stability –**

Transparent pay structures, timely payments, and access to funding.

**Recognition and Respect –**

Inclusion in decision-making and policy development.

**Supportive Working Conditions –**

Clear briefs, collaborative environments, and equitable contracts.

**Access to Resources –**

Affordable workspaces, digital tools, and professional development opportunities.

**Inclusive Practices –**

Access support, flexible arrangements, and commitment to diversity.

Meeting these needs helps address the challenges of freelance work, such as financial insecurity and limited benefits, while building a strong and resilient workforce.

Public bodies should adopt flexible procurement methods, including staged contracts and collaborative bidding, to accommodate creative processes. Co-production is promoted as a model for inclusive and creative project development, emphasising shared ownership, mutual learning, and long-term relationships. Projects should be structured with clear aims, adequate resources, and flexible timelines. Monitoring and evaluation are essential for measuring impact and sustaining partnerships.

## Welsh Language & Culture

Our Welsh language is a vital cultural asset, which should be authentically integrated into creative work and service design and delivery as a living, inclusive language.

The principles set out in the guide support meaningful engagement, including recognising Welsh as a shared resource, ensuring support for all levels of fluency, and supporting freelancers and communities in using the language confidently.

This aligns with the Arts Council of Wales’ vision of Welsh as a language for creativity, learning, and empowerment.

## Case Studies and Resources

The main guide includes case studies showcasing successful collaborations in areas such as climate action, health, and cultural regeneration.

A list of resources is provided, including toolkits, union guidance, and links to organisations supporting freelancers.

A jargon-busting glossary helps public bodies navigate sector-specific terminology.





Comisiynydd  
Cenedlaethau'r  
Dyfodol  
Cymru

**Future  
Generations**  
Commissioner  
for Wales

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