

A Culture Strategy for Scotland

University Museums and their alignment

AMBITION 1: STRENGTHENING CULTURE

Sustaining and nurturing culture to flourish and to evolve as a diverse, positive force in society, across all of Scotland

Our aims are to:

- Develop the conditions and skills for culture to thrive, so it is cared for, protected and produced for the enjoyment and enrichment of all present and future generations
- Value, trust and support creative people - for their unique and vital contribution to society and the economy
- Encourage greater openness and diverse cultures to reflect a changing Scotland in the 21st century
- Foster international collaboration and build on Scotland's reputation for cultural excellence

How university museums meet this ambition:

- *Offering a range of opportunities for work-based learning and employability:*
 - *Paid and unpaid internships*
 - *Volunteering opportunities (including UoE's community volunteering programme involving members of the Access to Industry programme)*
 - *Work placements*
 - *Student ambassadors*
 - *Board representatives*
- *Providing upskilling and vocational learning opportunities through:*
 - *Modern Apprenticeships*
 - *Kickstart Scheme*
 - *Skills for Success scheme (run by MGS and specifically mentioned in the Cultural Strategy)*
- *UMIS members are currently working on the official national skills framework for culture with MGS*
- *Partnership working with national culture and heritage bodies:*
 - *Museums Galleries Scotland (including their Stakeholder Group)*
 - *National Museums Scotland (including their Scottish Stakeholder Group)*
 - *Museums Association*
 - *Industrial Museums Scotland*
 - *University Museums Group (UK)*
 - *International partners – ICOM-UMAC and UNIVERSEUM*
- *UMIS took part in this year's National Partnership for Culture roundtables run by the Scottish Government*
- *Working internationally:*

- *UMIS members regularly present at international conferences*
- *Working with international researchers*
- *2021 'Cultural Current' knowledge exchange programme (developed with the support of the Department of Culture and Education of the British Embassy in Moscow and organised by Tomsk Polytechnic University, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, Perm State National Research University and UMIS)*
- *Partnerships and involvement with ICOM-UMAC/Universeum*
- *UMIS Arts Award projects:*
 - *Capturing Lives/Power of Public Art*
 - *Young people aged 11-18 from WP backgrounds*
- *Work with schools programming*
- *Outreach activities for communities*
- *UMIS members are recognised in leading sector thinking and practice around decolonisation, restitution and repatriation (UoA repatriation of Benin Bronze is an example here)*
- *Planning is underway for the UMIS conference 2022, themed around equality, diversity and inclusion*

AMBITION 2: TRANSFORMING THROUGH CULTURE

Demonstrating that culture is central to Scotland's wellbeing and cultural, social, economic and environmental prosperity

Our aims are to:

- *Place culture as a central consideration across all policy areas including: health and wellbeing, economy, education, reducing inequality and realising a greener and more innovative future*
- *Open up the potential of culture as a transformative opportunity across society*

Now university museums meet this ambition:

- *Involvement in the National Partnership for Culture discussions (mentioned above)*
- *UMIS conference 2021 'Creating Wellbeing'*
 - *Shared expertise and experience in the impact of culture and creativity on mental and physical health and wellbeing*
 - *Worked cross sectorally with speakers from culture and wellbeing sectors (including Arts, Culture, Health & Wellbeing Scotland who are specifically mentioned in the Cultural Strategy)*
- *Using culture in wellbeing activity:*
 - *UoE Prescribe Culture initiative (now a model being adopted internationally)*
 - *UoS work with 'Culture on Campus' to use their campus and collections as wellbeing resources*
 - *UoStA has reframed all engagement activities to meet at least two of the 5 Ways to Wellbeing*
 - *Wellbeing considered in exhibitions (e.g. UoA Walking with Birds exhibition – emphasis on wellbeing, including nature walks with RSPB)*
- *Involving young people through working with students within HE institutions and pupils beyond*
 - *Integrating collections into courses across the Curriculum/Schools*

- *Capturing Lives/Power of Public Art – using collections in programming*
- *Working with older audiences (particularly UoE and UoS who work with those with dementia and those tackling loneliness, and RGU currently doing a project using AR to connect older people in care homes to collections)*
- *UMIS's current AHRC funded project aimed at increasing uptake in and satisfaction in online learning and teaching with collections in HE settings*
- *The work that each of the UMIS members carried out during lockdown to pivot their services to online delivery and injecting creativity into their programming:*
 - *St Andrews online wellbeing, story and educational programming using collections*
 - *Dundee online Curator's talks, online guided walks and other online content*
 - *Hunterian and RGU current projects to use AR in interpretation of collections*
 - *St Andrews development of Exhibit – an online interpretation tool using user-generated content*
 - *Increased use of, and public engagement with, social media with collections centred content*
 - *UoE films uncovering stories behind their musical instrument collection*
- *In order to ensure UMIS work aligns to the National Performance Framework, it is mapped into the UMIS strategic plan along with our other key stakeholder priorities*

AMBITION 3: EMPOWERING THROUGH CULTURE

Celebrating culture as part of every community; essential to our lives and wellbeing.

Our aims are to:

- Continue to celebrate Scotland's extraordinary cultural contributions
- Extend the view of culture to include the everyday and emerging, the established and more formal
- Extend opportunities that enable people to take part in culture throughout their lives
- Recognise each community's own local cultures in generating a distinct sense of place, identity and confidence

How university museums meet this ambition:

- *Working with diverse local communities*
 - *UoS work with Refugee Festival, local women with custodial orders and those with experience of the justice system, those with learning difficulties and other diverse groups*
 - *Glasgow's Curating Discomfort project is actively engaging with diverse cultural groups within the community to explore collections and legacies*
 - *RGU are looking to connect with those in more remote communities using their AR based Digital Tapestry project*
- *Innovative ways to engage people with culture*
 - *UoG and RGU working on projects using AR*
 - *UoS using podcasts to open up their collections, and have developed Exhibit – an online storytelling tool which is available to all*
 - *UoD work within the local landscape as part of the Public Art Network, offering online guided tours around Dundee and its public art*

- *UoA are working with a range of local organisations, including those representing neurodiverse adults, to improve digital access to collections*
- *UoE's films to explore their musical instrument collection*
- *Involvement (outwith Covid) in local partnerships (see below) further opening up culture to broader audiences*
- *Partnerships with local authorities*
 - *The Hunterian is based in Kelvin Hall along with Glasgow Life and NLS's Scottish Screen Archive – sharing resources and exhibition space*
 - *Regional cultural forums*
- *Involvement in local partnerships*
 - *Place Partnerships*
 - *Regional cultural partnerships*
 - *Regional museums forums*
 - *Involvement in local & regional festivals*
 - *Regional tourism partnerships*
 - *WP schools programmes*
- *UMIS is currently working on a project to establish a national Heritage Research Infrastructure with a variety of partners and led by NMS – research is a major economic driver*

For further information:

This is merely a selection of the work going on in university museums across Scotland which directly aligns to the ambitions of the Cultural Strategy. If you would like any further information, or more detail on any of the projects, please contact:

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