



# CREATIVE DUNDEE



## A YEAR IN REVIEW: 2015

**Creative Dundee** is a design-driven social enterprise. Connecting and amplifying the city's creativity, Creative Dundee aims to enable creative talent to base, grow and sustain their practice in and around the city.

In addition to supporting those within the creative and cultural industries, Creative Dundee reinvests its profits into the local creative sector.

Dundee's scale, continued reinvention and determination makes it an exciting place to be based, however although Dundee's creative scene has always been vibrant, its visibility has not always been as evident.

Custom designed and built, Creative Dundee has grown as a result of, and in response to, the opportunities and challenges of Dundee. Through events, online activity and advocacy, it presents Dundee to the world and offers local creatives greater exposure. It is driven by a knowledge of the sector and a desire to encourage collective growth, expertise and innovation.

Creative Dundee started life as a blog in 2008, with the aim of covering innovative people and projects that were not being promoted – and to be a focal point for creativity in the city. It became an organisation in 2013 and is now a city-wide platform, working collaboratively with others and existing to work across the rich but often siloed creative disciplines.

This document offers a brief summary of activities during 2015, key highlights include:

- Playing a key role in Dundee being recognised as the UK's first UNESCO City of Design
- Delivering a range of public and industry events and workshops attended by 2,695 people
- Reinvesting over £17,000 into commissioning the services of local creative businesses
- Collaborating nationally and internationally with BBC, V&A, British Council, Mexico City partners and continued building strong local relationships
- Growing core staff team to create greater delivery capacity in the second half of 2015

# CONNECTING DUNDEE TO THE WORLD

Well-used and frequently updated, Creative Dundee's website is a resource and opportunities hub. It enables people to be seen and heard, profiling 500 fledgling and established creative individuals and businesses during 2015. It is a channel to reach audiences and provides high quality, informative and often inspiring content, guides and videos.

Over 130,000 visits to the site have come from 2,052 cities around the world in the last year. London visitors are the second highest visiting audience with 14% of site traffic, and international visits account for over 12% of total traffic.

Directly supporting individuals, groups, student communities and businesses, Creative Dundee also provides advice and signposting to information and networks. It resources many of the city's great number of cultural events, through providing marketing via its website and social media activities, events management skills and co-ordination. Highlights of Creative Dundee's own events include:

**Small Society Lab 15.** Creative Dundee, DCA and University of Dundee delivered this year's event exploring the small city of the future with international partners, Digital Futures UKMX, in conjunction with V&A Digital Futures and British Council.

The two-day event involved 30 Dundee-based citizens, technologists, artists and designers, with a parallel simultaneous event in Mexico City. It included a number of shared cultural experiences: walking tours of the two cities, fusion food, a digital content bank and live streamed discussions.

Six digital projects and tools fusing the culture of the two cities were developed at the Lab. The event leaves a lasting legacy of resources, new relationships between Dundee and Mexico City and three advanced projects for the city including the GIF Wall, Follow Me! and A Postcard From Dundee – all made with crowd sourced materials from Dundee's citizens.



# CONNECTING

**City GIF Wall** features perspectives of the city in short video format and the wall was displayed within the V&A in London as part of their Digital Design Weekend, during the London Design Festival. Dundee's citizens submitted their footage and a primary school ran GIF making classes to encourage younger audiences to engage. This project also created a unique opportunity for a local designer to showcase his digital products to thousands of attendees in London and speak with an international network.

**Above**  
Small Society Lab

**Cover**  
Pecha Kucha Night Dundee

# ENCOURAGING COLLABORATION AND GROWTH

Working in partnership with cultural agencies across the city, small and large, Creative Dundee has delivered projects with organisations such as BBC's Make it Digital Roadshow, Scotland Re:Designed and Make Works. Creative Dundee has also helped kickstart other creative networks in urban and rural locations within the UK. Other key partnership projects include:

**Creative HubKit.** Creative Dundee and Creative Edinburgh were commissioned by British Council to develop the Creative HubKit, a resource for leaders of hubs – physical or virtual places which bring creative people together. Designed as a flexible resource to support the development of diverse types of hubs, it is made up of best practice examples, experiences and tried and tested approaches from some of the most successful hubs in the UK and Europe. The HubKit is now being used internationally to assist the fast paced growth of creative hubs globally.

**Make/Share.** A monthly event series run in collaboration with Dundee MakerSpace, bringing together makers from all backgrounds. The format includes short themed talks about the process people have gone through to make their products or services, and offers a space to show and demo work, whilst discussing common issues across diverse practices.

**MIX IN.** Creative Dundee delivered this significant event on behalf of the Scotland Food and Drink Network during the Year of Food and Drink 2015. Showcasing the products of local food and drink producers and connecting them with creative and digital businesses to encourage collaboration, over 100 businesses took part in this evening event held in rural Perthshire.

*... the thing that blew me away the most was the atmosphere. I can honestly say that I have never been surrounded by such a supportive, happy, nurturing, creative group of people as I was at that point in time. It blew me away. The love and willingness to collaborate and share ideas with people you've never met before is something that I've always struggled with taking part in... Seeing that this fear had virtually no grounds in the Dundee creative community was a complete revelation. You can be from anywhere, making anything, with any idea and there will always be someone willing to help you make it a reality.*

– Rhia Cook, Textile Design Student, DJCAD, (blogging about Pecha Kucha Night Dundee)



# GROWING

# ENGAGING AND CONNECTING THE CITY'S COMMUNITIES

Enthusiasm, understanding and a strong delivery track record has formed the basis of Creative Dundee's relationships with creative communities, partners, clients, colleagues and supporters.

Working collaboratively across the city, fragile networks are becoming increasingly robust, encouraging sustainable business connections and creating an innovative, open and responsive ecology.

**Pecha Kucha Night Dundee.** Creative Dundee's regular quarterly public event. The speed presentation format makes for lively, informal engagement with around 300 enthusiastic audience members from a broad range of backgrounds and locations. Peer sharing of information on the night enables valuable and rapid knowledge exchange. Space has also been created for fledging businesses to market test their ideas and gain instant feedback from potential customers.

The filmed Pecha Kucha talks have been viewed over 10,000 times this year, from people across the globe, enabling presenters to gain valuable exposure. Linking Dundee to the global PKN network of over 800 cities has increased the city's profile, creating rare opportunities for sometimes solitary occupations to share experience, products, ideas and processes while inspiring audiences.

**Follow Me!** sparked a pilot exploring cultural hotspots in the Stobswell area of Dundee. Locals shared their insights on a localised physical map and through video and audio interviews, with their stories and hopes for the future. Creative Dundee then produced a digital map and a short film featuring the voices of the community. Using a design approach and digital tools, the project aims to tackle social challenges around perceptions of an area in an inclusive and creative way.

# ENGAGING



*As a designer who has worked in the digital sector in Dundee for the last 4 years, I've found Creative Dundee to have proven invaluable for raising the digital profile of Dundee. They have tirelessly promoted and facilitated digital collaborations around the city and internationally to create opportunities for people locally.*

– Barry Conlon, Digital Designer

# TURNING STRATEGY INTO ACTION

Creative Dundee has the ability to create the conditions for rapid prototyping and experimentation to happen. Activities which are valuable, yet often complex to measure, underpin the city's strengths in fostering the creative sector. Dundee was recognised by the European project Culture for Cities and Regions as a best practice example for Creative Industries: Support for Growth. Creative Dundee was named as an important factor in this case study and assisted in the co-ordination and delivery of a three-day European study visit.

Creative Dundee played a key role in the bid to become the UK's first UNESCO City of Design. It is part of the core team delivering some associated events and activities, as well as setting up and creating content for the website. During the January launch, Creative Dundee ran a pop-up design cafe, co-hosted a workshop and spoke at a public event on how design can change a city.

Driving a number of the priorities within the city's Cultural Strategy, Creative Dundee advocates for the city's businesses and public sector to commission local creative talent where possible. Through earning income from trading, it has invested over £17,000 beyond staff costs, into creative businesses this year, therefore growing its work with communities over the last year.

*The network was also reported to have played a role in the retention of talent within the city ... with more people choosing to remain, or move to Dundee to access opportunities.*

– Mapping Review, 2014

*Creative Dundee is run by people who understand the creative industries having worked within the sector. They are passionate about the industry and their city and are motivated to make a difference.*

– Mapping Review of the Creative City Networks, 2014



# CREATING

# RAISING DUNDEE'S CREATIVE PROFILE

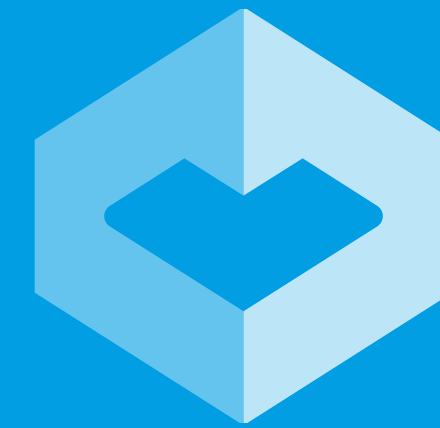
In addition to promoting Dundee's events, projects and initiatives, Creative Dundee is regularly approached by local, national and international media to comment, provide information, images and footage. This has helped create and maintain a positive media profile for Dundee's creative industries which by extension reflects on the city as a whole. This impacts on the city's appeal to visitors, investors and helps encourage attraction and retention of talent.

Creative Dundee actively engages in discussions about Dundee's role in growing Scotland's creative industries. Creative Dundee was invited to meet the panel of MPs from the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee when they visited Dundee to gather evidence for their Inquiry into the Creative Industries in Scotland.

Creative Dundee is uniquely positioned to draw together a direct understanding of Dundee's creative landscape, and its context nationally and internationally. Due to its independence and social capital, it can build expertise and enthusiasm, bridging relationships with practitioners in all scales of enterprise as well as with local, national and international stakeholders and networks.

*An influential catalyst for the increase in the profile of Dundee, not only at a creative industries level but has also increased the city's profile as a whole.*

– Mapping Review, 2014



## CREATIVE DUNDEE

**Creative Dundee** started life as a voluntarily-run blog in 2008 for five years, it grew to having one part-time contractor in 2013, to having one full-time and two part-time contractors in the second half of 2015. As a social enterprise, Creative Dundee is supported by Creative Scotland and Dundee City Council. During the year-ended 2015 Creative Dundee generated 40% of its funding from trading its skills and services, this was in addition to £34,990 of public investment. Creative Dundee reinvests all income back into creative businesses and the local community.

Find out more about the organisation, its history and team  
[Read about Dundee's many impressive creative and cultural organisations](#)

Creative Dundee's future ambitions are to achieve greater financial resilience, continuing to create visibility, tools and projects which encourage the growth of a vibrant, strong and sustainable creative sector and city.

Images

and

Design