

Creative Dundee 2021/22 Annual Activities Overview

Hello!

Welcome to our Annual Activities Overview for 2021/22! A whistle-stop tour through the many programmes, projects, events and partnerships that our team have been working and collaborating on.

Creative Dundee believes that culture and creativity are essential catalysts for positive change. We exist to support Dundee's strong creative ecology, working collaboratively with partners across sectors in the city, country and beyond.

We amplify, connect, collaborate and cultivate creativity in Dundee, guided by three key intersectional issues that face those in the city and creative industries to guide all that we do. Aided by evolving understanding, these focuses are: Justice, Wellbeing and Sustainability. We're committed to creating a culture where equality, diversity and inclusion are prioritised and promoted across our programming and the city at large.

As we navigate a not-quite-post-pandemic world, this period has seen a return to big collaborative projects and in-person events. Read on to find out about our continued initiatives, new developments and everything else we've been up to over 2021/22.

Partnerships

Our work is supported by two key partners—Creative Scotland and Dundee City Council—who have been increasingly supportive as we expand and set our sights even higher.

As a social enterprise we also generate income through trading activities, reinvesting profits back into creative businesses and the local community.

We invested over 37% of our 2021/22 annual budget into 79 local creative businesses and freelancers, through commissioned services and paid opportunities. We are committed to fair work and fair pay, and are proud to be a Living Wage Employer.

Stay in touch

www.creativedundee.com

news@creativedundee.com

<http://facebook.com/creativedundee>

http://twitter.com/Creative_Dundee

https://www.instagram.com/creative_dundee/

<https://vimeo.com/creativedundee>

Amps

Building on the growth and strengthening of our [Amps network](#) that took place over the pandemic, we've been delighted to be able to connect in so many different ways with our community of people who make and cultivate creativity in Dundee. Our network of 176 supporters includes individuals, organisations, students, and people supported by Pay It Forward subscriptions made possible through donations.

We've continued to connect through online Breakfasts, a weekly email, our [annual Forum](#) event, and sharing updates about Amps and their work on [social media](#). We marked [one year of peer-support project Ampersand+](#), and were thrilled to host our first in-person Amps event in over two years. Our [summer Meet-Up](#) at Hot Chocolate Trust held space for many people to finally connect face-to-face, with discussions and a live audit inviting our network to [share their thoughts on creativity in Dundee](#).

In 2021/22:

- 62 new supporters
- 100 renewals
- 25 exchanges via Ampersand+
- 38 Amps events
- 32 profiles shared

Two Years of Virtual Breakfasts

We celebrated the milestone of two years of weekly gatherings, with our 84th virtual Amps Breakfast event since March 2020. These opportunities to come together have not only been a way to find out about the creative endeavours of the city's artists, designers, illustrators, theatre makers, architects, musicians and much more; they've been an anchor in our weeks during a time of uncertainty, described as a "lifeline" by many.

To mark the occasion, we shared blogs about how a [shift to digital](#) has benefited our network and the [icebreaker questions](#) we ask. We hosted a series of [micro-commissions](#), inviting nine Amps to create a piece of work that celebrated building community, forming connections, and the joy of Amps Breakfast.

60% of our current Amps supporters have joined at least one online Breakfast since March 2020, with an average of 19 joining per session in 2021/22.

Community Ideas Fund

This annual initiative brings our Amps network together and encourages everyone to team up to develop and collaborate on new projects that can creatively and positively impact the wider city, with the community voting for which project should be awarded the fund to enable it to come to life.

In 2021 we received five amazing proposals from 13 Amps, with recurring themes including mental health and wellbeing, play, and creating space for young people to be heard. Each team pitched their idea at our annual Amps Forum, and [City Soundscapes](#) were chosen to receive the fund. The project encourages people to make their own sounds and music in the place where they live.

50% of each Amps subscription goes towards the fund. In 2021/22 we were able to award £2,500 to the successful project, thanks to our growing network.

CULTIVATE

[CULTIVATE](#) is a regional leadership programme that is part of Creative Scotland's [Culture Collective](#), a network of 26 participatory arts projects. Our ambitious project supports creative practitioners, partner organisations and local communities across the Tay region to collaboratively explore new ways of embedding creativity at the core of grassroots collective action for climate justice.

Our work on CULTIVATE makes clear our capability for significant long-term cross-sector programming, as well as our ability to support tangible projects that demonstrate the critical impact of community engagement and the role of creativity and culture in this process.

An open-call for an initial round of six CULTIVATE commissions was launched in May 2021, and we've supported seven creative practitioners (including one duo) in collaborating with communities and bringing to life six projects across Dundee, Perth & Kinross, Angus and North East Fife.

“Community projects are not an alternative to large-scale investment in infrastructure, housing retrofit and public transport, but should be viewed as complementary.” – extract from the UK Climate Change Committee's Climate Conversation Report, as a result of us co-hosting their visit to Dundee.

60% of our CULTIVATE budget spent to date has been on the fees of 40 freelance creative practitioners.

CULTIVATE Commissions

The first round of commissions, in partnership with seven community partners, has now been completed. Each project engaged with groups on the fringes—from people facing poverty-stigma to those in rurally isolated communities—and facilitated space for people to come together and imagine, share, celebrate, organise, plan and act for the future.

Through arts, culture and creativity, the practitioners developed and used various processes and approaches to engage people/groups with climate justice, including: practising radical hospitality; amplifying and celebrating people's experiences through creativity; networking, learning, and sharing with peers; and exploring collective actions that have multiple benefits.

We are now creating case studies for the six commissions, which will document each project's aims, activities and outcomes in detail, acting as both an archive and inspiration for the next stage of CULTIVATE.

Find out more about each commission:

- [Wee Wardrobe](#)
- [Tayport in 2030](#)
- [The Entangled Tea Set](#)
- [Gig in the Garden](#)
- [The Little Green Repair Café](#)
- [Book to the Future](#)

CULTIVATE Partnerships

Alongside developing partnerships through our Creative Practitioner commissions, CULTIVATE has enabled us to expand and strengthen relationships across the Tay region and in different sectors through piloting projects, collaborating on events, and knowledge sharing.

We co-produced the [Tayside Climate Beacon Event Series](#) with Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre, hosting three free events in Arbroath, Dunkeld and Dundee that explored the connections between communities, culture and climate action.

Working with UNBOSI and ScrapAntics, we delivered [free outdoor family-friendly workshops](#) across the city, using interactive marble runs built from reclaimed materials to reimagine our neighbourhoods together. We also took part in piloting a cross-sector field trip with scientists and artists, in a collaboration between the Tayside Climate Beacon, Abertay University and the University of Dundee/Festival of the Future.

We've worked with 19 partner organisations across our CULTIVATE activities.

Inclusion & Access

We reflect on three defined key intersectional issues in the development of all that we do, one of which is Justice. Our commitment to this means continued learning, questioning and willing change in our programming, digital work, events and partnership working. We also: caption or provide alt text with digital media; develop effective practices alongside consultants; hire accessible venues; prioritise staff training; and include external panellists for recruitment and commission opportunities.

We partnered with Art Angel to enable a project for participants to be an active part of the COP26 Dundee Climate Rally. We also recruited a CULTIVATE [Access Producer](#) to work with us on addressing social, economic and structural barriers that exist for communities across the Tay region, and develop an access plan to inform future programming.

We were delighted to hold a special [online PechaKucha with OutFest](#), a festival of activity, exploration and celebration during LGBTQ+History Month. We collaborated with Shaper/Caper and Dundee Pride to host speakers who each shared a topic that mattered to them, including exploring nonbinary identity in dance, the thrill of horror, and transgender joy in sport.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Another key intersectional issue we address is Wellbeing. We firmly believe that culture and creativity positively impact our lives and places. The transformative effects that artists, designers and makers generate with, by, for and of local communities is evident across the city. We've shared original content designed to amplify [organisations](#) and [community events and initiatives](#) that creatively address ways to support positive mental health.

As a team, we've supported two charities who work with young people and have a focus on health & wellbeing, and we champion individual staff welfare through an annual wellbeing allowance for each team member.

Supported by the Communities Mental Health & Wellbeing Fund, we commissioned filmmaker Bonnie MacRae to make [a film that demonstrates the power of creativity](#), in order to inspire greater cross-sector collaboration and collective action. Three creative practitioners who work with communities shared how taking part in creative activities positively impacts the mental health & wellbeing of those they work with.

Dundee Cultural Recovery

The third intersectional issue integrated into our work is Sustainability, where we consider how we can best support and advocate for emerging, local and global recovery in the creative industries and Dundee, and ensure our work accounts for climate action and justice.

This includes initiating and leading the dissemination/communication of Dundee's Cultural Recovery report 2021, supported by Culture Counts.

The report was authored by Dr Lauren England, who also wrote a blog about [care, connection and collective action in cultural recovery](#) for our website. We invited Councillor John Alexander to write an opinion piece based on the report for The Scotsman: [How cultural activity can fuel Scotland's recovery](#).

“The pandemic has highlighted the importance of cultural ecosystems, and the need for ecological approaches to understanding creative and cultural economies, policymaking and the recovery process.”

Dandelion

We've collaborated with partners to bring [Dandelion](#)—a national creative celebration of growing, music and community—to the city. Dundee's [Fair Growing Green](#) is a space to Sow, Grow and Share not just food, but ideas, music, knowledge and communities.

The garden brings new life, fresh produce and a programme of events to the former bowling green in the popular Fairmuir Park over summer 2022, leading up to a celebratory Dandelion Harvest in September. Musicians in Residence, St Kilda Mailboat, have been creating a collaborative performance with communities, and the garden is open for anyone who wants to visit, help with tasks or share skills. We've supported an Emerging Creative Producer for the project, who has developed an exciting programme of creative events, workshops and collaborations.

Fair Growing Green is delivered in collaboration with the University of Dundee, Dundee City Council and community group, Friends of Fairmuir. We are working closely with the local community on the vision and legacy of the garden, to ensure it can continue to thrive in their care when the project ends.

Dandelion is commissioned by EventScotland and funded by the Scottish Government, and is Scotland's contribution to UNBOXED: Creativity in the UK.

Fair Growing Green is one of 13 Unexpected Gardens growing across Scotland.

Digital Features & Updates

Our digital work is core to all that we do, acting as our primary channel for amplifying voices, communities and important issues in Dundee.

As both an active platform and archive of over a decade of sharing the vital impacts of culture and creativity, our website hosts information about events, opportunities and news alongside original features. These features showcase the city's creative ecology, spotlighting the people, communities and organisations that make them happen.

Recent original features include [reflecting on life after art school](#); sharing creative spaces in the city, like [Double Door Studios](#); a whistle-stop tour of [DJCAD Degree Show 2022](#); and [public art](#) as a reflection of Dundee.

We also connect with and strengthen relationships with people, organisations and projects in the city via a monthly News Mail Out and regular updates about our work and the work of others via social media.

In 2021/22 we shared:

- 55 original features and 69 news/events posts on our site
- 194 Instagram posts
- 686 Facebook posts
- 719 Tweets

InGAME Insights

Our partnership with InGAME continued, creating space to explore a collaborative future for the local creative and video games sectors.

We developed and hosted [Sound: Designed in Dundee](#), an evening of connection, discussion, interaction and live music. The audience could play interactive VR sound performance project, Sound of Light, developed as an InGAME Cluster of the Future R&D project. A panel of four local speakers also discussed what the future holds for engaging the world through sound for health and wellbeing and immersive experiences.

We shared 16 pieces of original InGAME online content across five months, featuring 17 practitioners who are connected to the local game and creative sectors.

Creative Industries

We work alongside a wide range of creative and cross-sector partners to deliver and support projects that benefit creative communities and make Dundee a viable place to start, grow and base a practice or business.

To enable an expanded Scotland-wide network for creative practitioners, we joined forces with Glasgow Connected Arts Network, Creative Stirling Edinburgh and Creative Stirling for a digital [SUPER EXCHANGE](#) session.

Work on the [Indigenous Materials Library](#) continued through further connecting and collaborating with MaticHub in Cebu, Philippines. We commissioned hidden route Theatre Company to [conduct research](#) that explored barriers for girls considering a career in the creative industries. Amid ongoing conversation around lack of creative spaces in the city,

we've prompted conversations with our Amps network and spoken with designers Agency of None as part of a [podcast series](#) exploring the issue.

At our Amps Meet-Up, we asked about barriers to building a sustainable practice in Dundee. 40% of responses mentioned affordable space.

PechaKucha Night

In November 2021 we hosted [PechaKucha Night Dundee vol 28](#); our first in-person event since March 2020 and Dundee Rep's first full house audience since pre-pandemic. As the event coincided with COP26, we had a big focus on the care and regeneration of our planet.

It was brilliant to be back in the room with a wonderful audience and sharing the stage with 11 brilliant speakers. Our first 100 ticket bookers were given a Riso print of the PKN28 artwork by Daisy MacGowan, with a design featuring 20 suggestions for reducing your carbon footprint.

PKN28 marked a decade of PechaKucha Night Dundee! We've been hosting the event since 2011.

Place & Sector Development

We continue working on the recovery and future needs of our sector locally, nationally and internationally, delivering workshops and talks on community engagement, placemaking and network leadership.

Creative Dundee is included as a case study on [Our Place](#), in a series highlighting effective place-based practices across Scotland. In [Design Outsider](#)'s series of global creative cities we are noted as being a benefit in supporting the city's strong creative ecology, and a [DISCE Regional Case Study Report for Dundee](#) notes: *"Local network Creative Dundee is a particularly interesting asset for the development of the creative economy in the city, deliberately supporting wider communication and relationship-building within Dundee's creative industries, and between the creative industries and other parts of the overall cultural ecosystem."*

In a report by Circular Communities Scotland (previously CRNS), titled [The Creative Industries in Scotland: Embracing the Circular Economy](#), CULTIVATE is cited as an example of how the creative industries can positively influence the circular economy space.

In a Discussion Paper produced for the PEC on [Relationships Between Cultural Organisations and Local Creative Industries in the Context of a Cultural District](#), it is noted that *"Having a dedicated initiative (e.g. Creative Dundee) to facilitate networking and cooperation in the sector, along with advocacy and funding functions, proves beneficial to*

the creative sector and the anchor cultural organisations who gain access to a centralised and coordinated network of locally based creatives.”

Team

Our team over 2021/22 were:

Claire Dufour, Creative Climate Producer;

Andy Truscott, Team Producer;

Gillian Easson, Executive Director;

Jen Collins, Programmes Producer;

Laura McSorley, Digital Engagement Producer;

Steph Liddle, Digital Content Freelancer: Social Media & News;

Eilish Victoria, Emerging Creative Producer;

Abhigyan Khargharia, CULTIVATE Intern;

Rhia Cook, Digital Content Freelancer: Original Features & Editorial;

Jordan Butler, Access Producer

We're so grateful for the support, skills and expertise of our voluntary Board of Directors: Gill Donoghue (Chair), Rachel Williamson, Anzal Baig, Dave Close, Maryam Deeni, Louise Dickson, Jason Nelson, Richard Neville and Sorcha Pringle.

Find out about our [current team and board](#).