

THE POWER OF CULTURE, THE DNA OF A REGION

Cultural organisations, creative businesses and public sector agencies from across the Highlands and Islands have taken part in international survey researching the ‘Power of Culture, the DNA of a region’.

The work is part of the *CUPIDO (Culture power: to inspire development in rural areas) Interreg North Sea Region cultural heritage project, designed to help partners share resources, knowledge and expertise to explore new business models and to support commercialisation within the culture sector.

The responses from the Highlands and Islands have been analysed by academic researchers and the findings provide useful insights into the importance of the culture sector to our rural communities.

The key findings are summarised here

REGIONAL ATTRACTIVENESS

All research participants identified that culture is valued as an important economic driver in the region’s rural communities. Recognising that some other businesses in other sectors such as food and drink, and leisure wouldn’t be as successful or exist if it wasn’t for the culture sector.

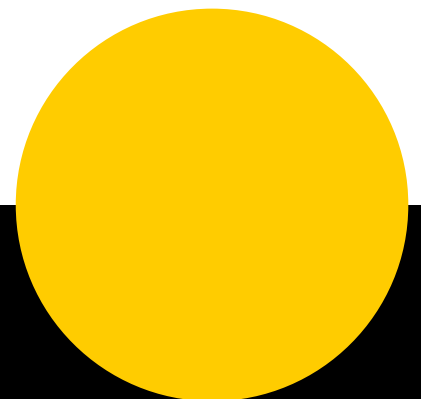
All research participants viewed the region’s incredible landscape, history and archaeology as an important economic asset; attracting visitors and drawing creative companies to the region as it’s an inspiring place for creatives.

42%

identified Orkney as a place of inspiration when it comes to cultural/ heritage attractiveness.

CUPIDO

CULTURE POWER: INSPIRE TO DEVELOP RURAL AREAS



DIGITAL INNOVATION

75%

said the adoption of digital technologies within the sector is an important commercial driver; helping to monetise creative output, build consumer base, a crowd, creating narrative, distributing product to wider market, and getting creative product to the customer.

87%

said digital innovation is a key area for development, recognising it plays an increasingly important role in preservation and promotion of communities' cultural heritage; as well as making remote places and sites more accessible.

YOUNG PEOPLE

All research participants identified the importance of young peoples' contributions particularly in the field of digital being valued, and providing them with education and job opportunities within the cultural sector to enable them to stay in their communities.

63%

highlighted the role young people can play in supporting the uptake of digital within the culture and heritage sector, as well as digital playing a role in attracting more young people to become more involved in their local cultural sector.

ABOUT CUPIDO

CUPIDO North Sea Region Interreg cultural heritage project's primary aim is to develop new business opportunities in the culture and heritage sector. This is to reinforce the economic position, competitiveness and social inclusion of local rural communities.

The project partnership comprises European organisations from Sweden (Länsstyrelsen Värmland – Lead Partner), Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway and UK (HIE and Creative Foundation, Kent). All partners are located in regions with an ageing population, due to both urbanisation and changing demographics. The project runs from 2019-22.

CUPIDO has enabled HIE to partner with University of St Andrews to work with communities and social enterprises across the Highlands and Islands region on a programme of transnational digital heritage activities designed to help commercialise the culture sector.

COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN THE SECTOR AND ACADEMIA

37%

of participants identified the benefits of doing more work with academia, in particular exploring opportunities to work with academic institutions to highlight increasing number of career opportunities with the culture and creative industries sector.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

63%

of participants identified importance of developing more opportunities for young people in entrepreneurship, and how they can develop their own businesses within creative industries and other sectors.

WHAT WILL WE DO WITH THE RESEARCH?

Through the CUPIDO project, HIE will work with the University of St Andrews to develop new cultural development initiatives that are based on the research findings. Additionally, we'll use the findings to help inform future work in helping develop the region's culture sector.

FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE CUPIDO PROJECT:

www.hie.co.uk/cupido
www.northsearegion.eu/cupido
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