



EDINBURGH  
INTERNATIONAL  
CULTURE  
SUMMIT

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# 2018 Edinburgh International Culture Summit

**22 – 24 August 2018**

Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh

## **CULTURE: CONNECTING PEOPLES AND PLACES**

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The Edinburgh International Culture Summit brings together Culture Ministers, artists, thinkers and arts leaders from around the world to share ideas, expertise and best practice, with a view to inspiring positive change in cultural policy and investment.

Set against the incomparable backdrop of one of the world's greatest cultural events, the Edinburgh Festivals, the Summit is uniquely placed to facilitate genuine and creative exchange between practitioners and policy-makers.

The Summit will be held in the striking building of the Scottish Parliament, in Scotland's capital city, Edinburgh.

The theme of the Summit, 'Culture: Connecting Peoples and Places,' weaves together three programme strands to reflect on the fractured world in which we live and demonstrate how culture can make connections across perceived divisions in society.

How these divisions, or notions of society, are defined is a matter of cultural, linguistic and environmental difference. Exploring this diversity lies at the heart of the Summit's conversations.



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Taking the succinct and successful format of previous editions, the Summit will address three key themes, each the focus of a plenary session in the Debating Chamber of the Scottish Parliament, supported both by private policy discussions and workshops.



## Culture in a Networked World

How can art and culture help us find common ground in a fractured world? As social networks and online platforms reach across the globe, a new universal understanding emerges as we learn what makes us different. The speed and multiplicity of digital communication transforms human relationships. Unheard voices find a platform and location no longer limits community, but this highly networked world makes demands on society in unprecedented ways. While some feel empowered by the changing global landscape, others are left behind. Reaching peace and prosperity in a radically shifting world will depend on an ethos rooted in the principles of internationalism, respect and mutuality. By exploring facets of our complex and plural identities, artists encourage citizens to understand and respect difference.

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## Culture and Investment

The provision of expensive and elaborate arts centres throughout the world is certainly politically attractive, but what of the art that brings these places to life? How should government policy balance investment in individual artists, creative communities, and buildings? At a time when difficult decisions need to be made about the allocation of modest resources for culture, the Summit will carefully consider the funding challenges facing policy-makers, artistic entrepreneurs and practicing artists alike. If cultural consumption and practice can happen on a street corner or an online video, what are the benefits of investing in artists, buildings, people and places?

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## Culture and Wellbeing

Can culture make a contribution to the health and wellbeing of human society? The sustainable provision of health care is a vital concern for governments around the world. A growing body of neurological and clinical research indicates that participation in cultural activity offers long-lasting benefits for a range of medical conditions. How can the social and economic benefits of arts in health programmes be understood and implemented by policy makers, commercial medical insurers and clinical practitioners? How can the arts improve health outcomes for traditionally marginalised or neglected communities? How can the arts effectively address issues of an ageing society as they relate to chronic illness, social inclusion and the management of healthcare costs? The Summit offers direct examples of the benefits cultural participation has for social and healthcare systems.

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The Summit will give Ministers, senior policy-makers and young people the opportunity to share best-practice in the areas of cultural welfare, economics and globalisation, in order to develop relevant, effective policies, designed to achieve lasting impact. Participation in high-level bilateral and multilateral meetings will enable delegates to identify areas for future collaboration and delivery in their home countries.

The success of the Summit in achieving its agreed outcomes will be rigorously evaluated, and the findings shared with delegates.

## Schedule

Indicative timings are as follows:

<b>Wednesday 22 August</b>	From 13:30	Arrival at Scottish Parliament
	16:00	Opening Ceremony
	Evening	Reception at Palace of Holyroodhouse/free evening to attend Festival performances
<b>Thursday 23 August</b>	09:30 – 17:00	Plenaries One and Two, and private policy discussions/workshops, including lunch
	Evening	Visit to Festival performance
<b>Friday 24 August</b>	09:30 – 12:30	Plenary Three, and private policy discussions/workshops, followed by lunch
	14:00	Closing Plenary (ends 15.15), followed by late afternoon visits

During the Summit, the city will be buzzing with activity, at the height of its summer festivals. Delegates are invited to experience some of the highlights of the season, enjoying a night out in Edinburgh at one of the amazing performances. Details of the events will follow in due course.

As well as being the world's foremost Festival City, Edinburgh is a UNESCO world heritage site, and the world's first UNESCO City of Literature. A safe and compact city for visitors to enjoy, Edinburgh boasts breath-taking architecture and scenery, a captivating literary history, and a wealth of sites and attractions.

Where resources allow, delegations are encouraged to extend their stay in Edinburgh to take advantage of all that the city, Scotland and the UK have to offer. We will send further information shortly, and, in some cases, may be able to suggest complementary programmes appropriate to Ministers' interests and availability.



In addition to its partners, the Edinburgh International Culture Summit acknowledges the significant support of its public, corporate, philanthropic and individual supporters:

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