

fringe

development goals





Our six development goals are a shared roadmap to a vibrant, sustainable Fringe. They will make the Fringe work for everyone, helping us to fulfil our vision to give anyone a stage and everyone a seat.

The Fringe development goals identify six themes that will shape the success of the Fringe for years to come, encompassing artists, venues, audiences, producers and all our stakeholders.



1 Thriving artists



2 Fair work



3 Climate action



4 Equitable Fringe



5 Good citizenship



6 Digital evolution



1 Thriving artists



Goal one

Be the best place in the world for artists to perform and the best platform for talent to emerge.

Overview

For artists, the Fringe is a global stage. It's where audiences come to discover new voices, and where the world's media and arts industry come to discover and champion talent.

Together with venues and producers, our goal is to ensure that the festival is an opportunity for performers to grow and develop their skills; experiment and test innovative ideas; develop new connections and networks for future collaborations; engage with existing audiences and find new ones.

New commitments

- Source new income streams, sponsorship and investment, to support Fringe artists and particularly those who face the greatest barriers.
- Create a board-level Venue Funding Committee tasked with ensuring affordability for artists is central to delivery and decision making, meaning artists can be offered the best deals possible.
- Recruit high profile advocates, patrons and donors to support the recovery of the Fringe.
- Expand our Arts Industry services to ensure we attract the widest range of international curators and commissioners from both stage and screen to book and buy work and offer touring opportunities to Fringe shows.
- Seek and secure local and global media coverage and reviews for the Fringe and Fringe artists.

Targets

- 1.1 Freeze registration fees until 2027 and advocate loudly for fair treatment and fair income for artists and freelancers.
- 1.2 Re-focus our £7.5m Support the Fringe fundraising campaign to clearly articulate how funds will be channelled to support a better Fringe for artists.
- 1.3 Seek annual core public investment in the Fringe Society so that it can uphold the shared values of the Fringe and deliver the development goals.
- 1.4 Recruit at least five diverse Fringe alumni as Patrons to champion the renewal of the Fringe, alongside our Honorary President, Phoebe Waller-Bridge.
- 1.5 Measure the success of the Fringe as a marketplace, tracking artists' career paths and the onward journey of Fringe shows.
- 1.6 Collaborate with partners in Scotland, the UK and overseas to build greater potential for Fringe artists and venues to engage in co-productions, co-commissions and touring.
- 1.7 Work with Creative Informatics and Fringe Biscuit to maximise the value of reviews for artists and audiences .



2 Fair work



Goal two

Eradicate any remaining unfair or exploitative working conditions at the Fringe.

Overview

Working and volunteering at the Fringe should be rewarding for all involved. It is important that employees receive fair pay, are contracted for reasonable working hours, and work in safe conditions. Volunteering has a valuable role to play in the festival – especially in not-for-profit models, of which there are many at the Fringe.

It is essential that every opportunity is fair, and that volunteering is exactly that and not a replacement for what should be paid work.

Fair work is a hugely important issue – not just across the Fringe – but in the wider arts sector and for Scotland as a whole and the national living wage commitment. Whilst the Fringe has come a long way in recent years, we are committed to eliminating any remaining exploitative, unfair or unsafe working conditions. We have convened a standards committee with BECTU, Volunteer Edinburgh and Equity, and we commissioned the most wide-reaching independent survey of working conditions at the Festival. We will take further measures, as set out here, to ensure that working or volunteering at the Edinburgh Fringe is fair and rewarding for all.

New commitments

- Introduction of a three-stage system of monitoring and penalty to address inappropriate or poor working conditions and practices: Warning/Notice/Suspension.
- Increase frequency of our workers survey to benchmark working conditions every other year.
- Support workers and volunteers by relaunching and promoting our formal reporting channels.
- Update our working and volunteering standards guidance for 2022, and develop and share new best practice guides and case studies on safe and inclusive working environments from across the Fringe community.

Targets

- 2.1 By 2027, 95% of paid employees working at Fringe venues will be paid the Real Living Wage.
- 2.2 In 2023, introduce a formal 'kitemark' for venues, companies and promoters who exceed minimum standards and are examples of best practice.
- 2.3 By 2024, in partnership with the other Edinburgh Festivals launch a central Festival Jobs portal advertising employment, work experience and volunteering opportunities at kitemarked organisations.



3 Climate action



Goal three

Become a carbon net zero event by 2030.

Overview

The Fringe Society is proud to be a founding signatory of the Edinburgh Climate Compact, led by the Edinburgh Climate Commission – which was set up to radically reduce the city's emissions.

In recent years, the whole Fringe community has taken steps to addressing waste across the entire festival – with 75 venues signed up to Creative Carbon Scotland's Green Arts Initiative, and schemes such as prop swap shops, eco toolkits, and recycling centres established.

But this journey is far from over, and there's still so much more to do: from reducing printed materials and single use plastics, to investing in greener energy supplies and sustainable transport options. We're making further commitments now to tackle these big issues, for the future of our festival, our city and our planet.

New commitments

- Significantly reduce print collateral at the Fringe to reduce our environmental impact.
- Develop science-based metrics to measure carbon emissions encompassing all elements of the Fringe by 2025.
- Promote the use of and prioritise local suppliers across the supply chain, including staff, catering and materials.
- The Fringe will make carbon conscious decisions on travel, transport and supplies, and work with ethical partners on carbon off-setting.

Targets

- 3.1 The Fringe will be an e-ticketed festival from 2022. We will develop a fully integrated and accessible digital ticket solution that works for the majority of Fringe venues.
- 3.2 The Edinburgh Fringe will be 90% print free (including flyering) by 2027.
- 3.3 Provide an environmental monitoring and educational toolkit to all venues and shows on the Fringe. The first of its kind, this will be piloted in 2022 with planned rollout to the wider Fringe landscape.
- 3.4 All regular venues signed up to the Creative Carbon Scotland Green Arts Initiative by 2027.
- 3.5 Double the number of FringeCasts, Fringe Connect artists/participants, and global curators programmers and commissioners on Fringe Marketplace, to reduce the need to travel for staff, artists or arts industry.
- 3.6 75,000 trees to mark the Edinburgh Festival Fringe's 75th anniversary. In partnership with Caledonian horticulture and Forth Resource Management, working with communities throughout Scotland to establish 75,000 native trees in suitable locations over the next 5 years. The right trees in the right places to offset carbon and benefit both wildlife and humankind.



4 Equitable Fringe



Goal four

Who you are and where you are from is not a barrier to attending or performing at the Edinburgh Fringe.

Overview

The Fringe is for everyone, and everyone should be able to experience the magic of live performance. There is work still to do to improve the festival's accessibility. Edinburgh's historic infrastructure and the nature of some venues (which are not designed as year round performance spaces) can create barriers for disabled artists and audiences. Without increasing provision for captioning and BSL interpretation, d/Deaf artists and audience members face exclusion from some aspects of the festival. There is increasing demand to improve our provision of audio description and we've made some really positive steps in all these areas – from developing a Venue Access Award scheme to committing to BSL interpretation at all Fringe Society events.

Costs – such as accommodation – can disadvantage artists from varied socio-economic backgrounds. It's important that we tackle barriers both mental and physical, and ensure that the Fringe truly provides a stage for anyone and a seat for everyone and that all artists see the Fringe as a world-class, positive experience.

New commitments

- Work with key partners and specialists to identify specific areas of the Fringe where accessibility needs to be improved.
- Support and champion, as a priority, under-represented artists and arts professionals.
- Engage young people through meaningful and active programmes to develop the talent pipeline.
- Develop a robust lobbying plan to ensure costs for artists can be controlled / influenced.

Targets

- 4.1 Online booking for wheelchair ticketing live by 2024.
- 4.2 Double the number of venues achieving Venue Access Awards Silver and Gold.
- 4.3 By 2025, increase the value of Fringe Days Out (our community access voucher project) to £150,000.
- 4.4 Extend the Working-Class Producers Mentorship programme from pilot scheme to full initiative in 2023.
- 4.5 Develop new initiatives in partnership with our sister festivals, Festivals Edinburgh and further education colleges, to connect young people directly with arts experiences and career opportunities from 2023.
- 4.6 Work with citywide partners to unlock affordable accommodation – doubling the number of affordable rooms for artists by 2024 and triple by 2027.



5 Good citizenship



Goal five

The Fringe, a force for good in and for the City of Edinburgh.

Overview

Edinburgh and the Fringe are intrinsically connected. The whole concept of Fringe and Fringe festivals started here 75 years ago, and led to a movement of some 300 Fringe festivals across the world, celebrating art and culture on every continent. The Fringe is part of the cultural heritage of the city and it's important that everyone who lives and works here feels like the Fringe is for them.

It's uplifting that in recent years, Edinburgh and the Lothians have been increasingly represented at the Fringe: in 2019, there were over 750 shows from local artists, while a record number of tickets (over 856,000) were issued to audience members from the Edinburgh area. There are valid concerns from some residents that cannot go ignored: from managing the scale of the festival to ensuring that green spaces are preserved.

The Fringe provides thousands of valuable jobs to residents, alongside access to world-class performing arts for all. It makes an enormous contribution to the city socially and economically, and to the entire country's global reputation and cultural richness. The Fringe needs to be in step with the citizens and the social fabric of its home.

New commitments

- Ensure the Fringe offers Edinburgh residents a free to access experience of the festival.
- Implement mechanisms to manage the scale of the Fringe without compromising its open principles.
- Enable active conversation between venues and communities about how to spread the Fringe across the city to the benefit of all.
- Work with venues to guarantee city residents get the best of the fringe, including resident discounts, jobs and participatory activities.

Targets

- 5.1 Introduce one day each year, as a free-to-access annual family event for Edinburgh residents, in different parts of the city, complementing existing community activity.
- 5.2 Manage scale by registering only performing arts shows in the Fringe Programme. Provide constructive professional advice, alongside working with the UK's and international arts agencies, to encourage artists to make informed choices about whether their show is Fringe ready.
- 5.3 Fringe Society will hold information sessions in locations across Edinburgh to share knowledge on how to participate.
- 5.4 Establish a new year-round home for the Fringe Society by 2027. A place that will tell the story of the Fringe and welcome all who want to learn about, engage with or participate in the festival.
- 5.5 Grow the membership of the Fringe Society to ensure that voices of Edinburgh residents, communities, audiences are represented in the governance and policies.



6 Digital evolution



Goal six

Enhance the live Fringe experience by ensuring a world-class digital experience.

Overview

Advancing our digital services will mean we are better able to meet artists' and audiences' needs. It will support us in our sustainability goals, and it will help us remain internationally relevant.

Our goal will always be for technology to support and enhance our existing services - not replace them entirely to the exclusion of some groups and communities.

We pledge to keep in mind those who cannot access digital services as easily as others, and to ensure that digital evolution helps us break barriers, not build new ones.

New commitments

- Future-proof the Fringe through continuous development of digital solutions for artists, audiences, media and arts industry, while measuring success and capturing data that enables positive progress.
- Development of a universal and world-class ticketing experience for disabled users, to improve their Fringe experience.
- Introduce a new ticketing wallet to support e-ticketing and ease of audience engagement and attendance.
- Support digital literacy and inclusion for all artists and audiences, ensuring there are no barriers for engaging fully with the Fringe.

Targets

- 6.1 By 2024, launch a fully accessible ticketing journey, offering a quality digital experience to all, including wheelchair users.
- 6.2 Deepen and double the engagement from Arts Industry on Fringe Marketplace by investing in both the technology and the human resource to support that growth by 2027.
- 6.3 Triple the number of artists on our year-round online networking and learning platform, Fringe Connect, by 2027.
- 6.4 Create new partnerships with digital broadcasters and partners internationally to bring new audiences to our artists and revolutionise the global reach of the Edinburgh Fringe without the need to travel by 2030.

Key stakeholders



There are many contributors to the success of the Fringe, and we will work with a range of stakeholders to support and deliver on our shared vision for the Society and the Fringe.

Some of the key ones are:

- Accommodation providers
- Arts Councils and national support bodies across the UK
- Arts Councils and national support bodies across the world
- Catering vendors
- Creative Scotland
- Diplomats, Embassies and Consuls
- Disability charities
- Edinburgh City and Community Councils
- Edinburgh residents and their representative community bodies
- Edinburgh's universities
- EventScotland
- Fringe artists
- Fringe venues
- Fringe workers and volunteers
- International arts communities
- Scottish Enterprise
- Scottish Government