

Memorandum of Understanding

Preston Creative Partnership



It is recommended that the Preston Cultural Partnership, as it is known now, initially re-name itself the ***Preston Creative Partnership***.

The partnership will continue as an informal body but may look to form a legal entity at a future date.

The existing Executive will remain in place in the short term and will agree with the membership the process for future election/nomination.

The mission, purpose and objectives of the partnership is defined within this Memorandum of Understanding, building on the work to date. This will need further work in consultation with the membership and to be further tested in relation to the purpose and role of the Preston Cultural Framework Board.

The partnership will seek to clarify its relationship, role and representation on the Preston Cultural Framework Board.

Our mission:

"To provide a strong collective voice for the independent arts and creative sector in Preston and realise the cultural potential of the city as a place which people associate with high quality cultural activities"

Our purpose is to:

- strengthen independent arts and creative organisations and build a successful, vibrant and sustainable future for the sector, and contribute to the life of the city
- help promote the arts and creative offer to the outside world, bring visitors to the city, articulate its cultural identity and communicate this effectively
- increase capacity in member organisations by avoiding duplication of funding bids and research and develop increased opportunities for the sector to access funding and encourage ambitious collective approaches to funding
- gather evidence of the impact and benefit of arts and creative enterprises in the city
- provide new experiences for audiences and participants and increase access and attendance from within Preston and beyond
- nurture talent, support innovation and experimentation, raise the quality and ambition of work, and provide new opportunities to collaborate

- provide mutual, professional support and enhance the work of members including professional development and networking opportunities
- encourage new and emergent organisations and individuals to succeed
- work together on joint programmes of arts activity that add value to the arts and cultural offer in the city.

The Business Plan

The Creative Partnership will commit to producing a **business plan**. The following suggestions are a starting point:

- formally adopt the memorandum of understanding, terms of reference, membership base and decision making process for the partnership, including the process for election/re-election of an Executive and membership of working groups
- agree the role of the partnership in delivering the cultural framework for the city and the relationship, representation and mandate on the Cultural Framework Board and in shaping future strategy and priorities for Preston
- agree the partnerships key strategic partners, and how it will work with them
- set out plans to establish the credibility and profile of the partnership
- identify funding to support the effective working of the partnership and implementation of the business plan and help the sector unlock other funding opportunities
- audit the collective offer of the partnership, activities, venues and resources, together with intelligence held on existing audiences and attenders and agree what needs to be further strengthened or developed
- put in place an effective approach to consulting with communities, audiences and participants, to regularly inform the work of the partnership and to be responsive to them
- initiate an effective marketing and communications plan which speaks to the membership and to the public, and the process and funding to make it work, building on existing mechanisms, websites and interactive social media such as the Preston Guide, Two Hats and Guild City website. A fundamental refresh of these existing and proposed initiatives needs to be undertaken in consultation with partners and the cultural framework board
- agree an initial programme of joint activities for the partnership to undertake and have key points in the calendar where the partnership is operating together as a programming team, across the city
- develop a programme of regular socials, networking and professional development opportunities
- identify relevant networks so that learning and ambition will impact on those working within Preston

- test out with the membership, the public and potential funders the plans for A Grand Day Out - it is important to begin to develop an offer that helps the partnership to grow a brand and visibility with audiences. 'A Grand Day Out' will also have a professional development element for partnership members to visit cities and places to help grow the contacts, knowledge, ambition and aspiration of the partnership
- consider further the 'footprint' of the partnership membership in terms of beyond Preston, reflecting wider economic and other factors to include South Ribble, Chorley etc and representation in the wider Arts Lancashire family

Measures of success

It is suggested that the following initial measures of success be adopted by the partnership:

- There is increased local, regional and national profile and recognition for the arts and creative sector in the city and Preston is seen as a cultural destination
- The Preston arts and creative experience can be clearly described in relation to other places
- Independence and collaboration are seen as visible qualities of the Preston arts and creative scene
- There is increased demand from the public- they want more. There is an improved audience perception of the arts amongst the Preston public
- There is increased attendance and depth of engagement
- There are more events and of a bigger scale and impact
- There is an increased quality of offer in the city, increased confidence in the sector, which is recognised outside of Preston
- There is a sustainable arts infrastructure in place, allowing for high profile events to happen
- There is a strong multi-cultural dimension to the offer, that takes account of financial, economic, class exclusion
- Collective working is seen to be adding value and people know what that added value is with people able to work under their own initiative and within a cohesive, effective and inclusive support system
- There is an increase in funding levered for the city and benefiting the sector directly - Preston develops the highest amount of funding for the arts in Lancashire
- There is a shared system for data collection, interrogation and its use. We are able to test regularly the value the arts bring and the impact they make and in turn how collective working adds value to individual arts providers. There is a system for audience testing and rating eg like trip advisor
- There is deepened political support and influence for the arts in the city and council priorities practically respond to, and reflect, the arts community and their contribution is encouraged in forming relevant strategies, plans and resources
- The partnership retains and attracts new members and there are increased opportunities for skills exchange and professional development in evidence which is supported financially and with other resources

- There are more opportunities for emerging artists to make work, create a business and to stay or re-locate
- There are more opportunities for collective showcasing and celebrating success, communicated effectively through a strong marketing presence- including user interaction and social media
- There are new cultural spaces including a potential home or 'hub' for the partnership to have a centrally located physical presence or and/or virtual space serving the needs of the membership

Who is the Partnership

Preston Creative Partnership is a network of independent arts and creative professionals based in, or working in Preston. Our membership is made up of interested individuals as well as organisations. The partnership is made up of individuals who run arts and cultural organisations and projects, or play a clear and focused role in the cultural life of the city.

We recognise that people who work in our sector often have more than one job, often as facilitators and also as practitioners. We believe that our practice is a profession. We are committed to Preston.

Organisation and governance of the partnership

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an agreement by the partners, who are signatories to this document, and who make up the Preston Creative Partnership.

The purpose of the MOU is:

- to define the membership of the partnership
- to define the values and aims of the partnership
- to set out the way in which the partnership is managed
- to articulate how the partnership will work together

It is not proposed that the Partnership seek to establish a legal model at this stage, but continue as an informal partnership model, however, prospective members will be signatories to this memorandum and agree to abide by its purpose, principles and ways of working.

At a later stage the partnership may consider moving to a different 'legal' entity such as an unincorporated association or other model deemed appropriate for its future development. The partnership should further consider if a membership charge should be levied.

The Preston Creative Partnership is not a legal partnership. One partner organisation cannot bid for funding, handle funding or enter into contracts or other agreements on behalf of the partnership without the agreement of the Executive formally agreeing and this being recorded in the meeting minutes. However, to achieve their aims, one or more partner organisations may enter into a legal agreement with one or more other partner organisations to develop and deliver work

The values of the partnership

To always actively promote the partnership

To promote professional practice and value of its members
To encourage new artistic ideas
To promote partnerships and collaboration within the partnership
To be open and honest as well as ambitious and forward thinking
To be inclusive and supportive to all opinions within the partnership
To actively share and seek opportunities with the partnership
To encourage the idea of working professionally in the arts
To ensure that members are well briefed and informed about current developments in the city
To raise funds collectively to further these aims

The Executive

The Preston creative partnership will elect an executive committee from its membership, to co-ordinate the work of the wider partnership. The existing Executive should seek this mandate at the earliest opportunity. It is suggested that the Executive not exceed 8-10 members.

The Executive should agree the breadth of skills, experience and representation it requires and the process for election. The role of the Chair and other Executive members should be defined, together with any individual role or experience required.

The Executive will work to the agreed business plan and be responsible for co-ordinating and monitoring its delivery.

The Executive will elect at least two representatives to serve on the Cultural Framework Board. This is likely to be the Chair and another. Their mandate will be to represent the view of the independent arts sector within the wider cultural family.

The Chair and Executive members should not serve for a period of more than 3 years, and seek re-election at this point. The membership may consider re-electing its Executive annually, with the exception of the Chair who ideally should serve for a longer term of office to ensure continuity. A Vice Chair should also be elected to deputise for the Chair.

The Executive will:

- develop the strategic overview
- take forward the business plan and delegate accordingly to the working groups
- undertake advocacy and maintain key relationships with strategic partners
- secure resources to achieve its aims

The working groups

It is proposed that a number of working groups are put in place to take forward key aspects of delivery on behalf of the Executive. These will be practically focussed groups. Each group will be chaired by a member of the Executive reporting back to the Executive. The Executive will determine the scope and work plan of each group aligned with the mission, objectives and business plan.

These working groups might initially include;

- Marketing and Communications
- Business and Partnership Development
- Community and Engagement
- Events and Programmes

Members can serve on the working groups according to their interest and experience.

The working groups should also include individuals from outside of the arts and cultural sector eg community representatives on the engagement group, private sector representatives on the business and partnerships group and marketing professionals on the communications group.

The wider partnership

The Partnership should look to organise an annual event for all members, at which the Executive committee will report on its activity and be held to account.

This event will be an opportunity for election, nomination to the Executive and the chairs and make-up of the working groups.

The wider partnership membership has responsibility for

- electing the Executive -and holding it to account
- inputting into the agenda for Executive
- approving the mission, purpose and business plan
- serving on the working groups as required
- sharing information and networking

Membership Requirements

Membership is by application to the partnership and is decided by agreement of the Executive Members.

Membership of the partnership is open to arts and creative organisations and individuals based in, or working in, the city of Preston

Membership is dependent on agreeing to abide by the MOU

Executive Members

They are members of the Executive as individuals

They may not send substitutes to meetings

They must attend a minimum agreed number of Executive meetings per year

They are elected by the full members

Partnership Members

Membership of the partnership is for both organisations and individuals

More than one person from each organisation may attend meetings. Members must actively contribute to the work of the partnership

Members who do not fulfil these requirements may have their membership terminated, and Executive members will be asked to stand down and a replacement will be elected

Communications

Minutes from the Executive meetings and working groups will be posted on the facebook page and/or other agreed communication channels. Regular exchanges of conversation should be encouraged to take place in this space. The partnership should establish a dedicated website to promote its activities, if there is not already one in place. This should have a public facing role and a membership facing role and raise the profile of individual members, their organisations and their work with a focus on generating new business opportunities and resource exchange.

The Chair and Vice Chair will attend the cultural framework board with the role of representing the independent arts and creative sector, helping shape decisions and to communicate back decisions to the wider membership.

PRESTON CREATIVE PARTNERSHIP

Application for membership

Name of organisation/individual

Main purpose of my organisation

Contact details

I agree to abide by the Memorandum of Understanding

Signature

Date