

Culture and Communities Committee

2.00pm, Tuesday, 20 March 2018

Museums and Galleries Edinburgh: Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2018-2022

Item number	9.3
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All
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Executive Summary

Provision of a temporary exhibition programme, changing regularly to attract new, diverse audiences and to enable creative working with a range of community-based and artistic partners, is a key objective of the Museums and Galleries Edinburgh's Service Plan 2013-2018 which helps progress the aim to deliver a world-class capital city museums and galleries service.

The previous Temporary Exhibitions Policy (2013-2017) has been reviewed and updated in alignment with requirements of the [Accreditation Scheme](#), the United Kingdom (UK) museums sector national standard, and to reflect the Service's current aims and objectives in exhibition programming.

It is requested that Committee approve the new Temporary Exhibitions Policy (2018-2022) which is appended to this report.

Museums and Galleries Edinburgh: Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2018-2022

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 Committee is asked to:
 - 1.1.1 approve the proposed Museums and Galleries Edinburgh Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2018-2022.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Museums and Galleries Service operates 14 'A' and 'B' listed venues across Edinburgh, welcoming over 700,000 visitors a year. The service generates an annual income of over £800,000 and the majority of venues are free at point of access. The collections number over 220,000, including four which are designated by the Scottish Government as being of [national significance](#).
- 2.2 As stated in the current Service Plan 2013-2018, the Museums and Galleries Edinburgh (MGE) vision is:
 - 2.2.1 "To inspire, enthuse and provoke through a shared passion for Edinburgh, art and history".
- 2.3 The MGE mission is stated as follows:
 - 2.3.1 "Museums and Galleries Edinburgh enables people to connect with the city, its many histories and its role in presenting art from around the world. We do this through our collections, temporary exhibitions and public programmes, both physical and digital. We balance our responsibility to preserve, display and interpret collections with our mission to encourage debate, interaction, reflection and exploration".
- 2.3 Provision of a temporary exhibition programme, changing regularly to attract new and diverse audiences and to enable creative working with a range of community-based and artistic partners, is a key objective of the Service Plan 2013-2018 which helps progress the aim to deliver a world-class capital city museums and galleries service.

3 Main report

- 3.1 The existing policy on temporary exhibitions by MGE has expired. A review was undertaken and the policy has been updated in accordance with best practice, as stipulated by the Accreditation Scheme for Museums and Galleries in the UK.
- 3.2 Temporary exhibitions have been a key feature of MGE since the 1970s. They are shown in the City Art Centre, Museum of Childhood, Museum of Edinburgh, Writers' Museum, People's Story, Queensferry Museum and Travelling Gallery, which has a national remit and is a Regularly Funded Organisation of Creative Scotland.
- 3.3 Temporary exhibitions fulfil a number of different functions. They attract diverse visitors to venues and promote public engagement on a range of subjects. They enable presentation of permanent collection items in new contexts and the display of loan material that might not otherwise be available to the public. Temporary exhibitions advance scholarship, knowledge and understanding in different disciplines and media. They serve a social function and act as a platform for education and learning activities. All major museums and galleries stage temporary exhibitions.
- 3.4 The proposed new Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2018-2023 is attached at Appendix 1. It defines the aims and programme focus across the museums and gallery service, including the Travelling Gallery.
- 3.5 The policy is structured in accordance with the national Accreditation Scheme's guidelines. It describes the methods used and people involved in planning the programme of temporary exhibitions and the criteria used in their selection. It explains how exhibitions are developed and implemented, the important role of public programmes and retail as part of the overall exhibition package, and outlines the processes involved in the evaluation and review of exhibitions.

4 Measures of success

- 4.1 Numbers of visitors, levels of retail income, and positive media coverage. Audience research is also conducted to obtain direct feedback, and qualitative evaluation which is used to shape future exhibition policy and programming.
- 4.2 Fulfilling the objectives of the Culture Plan:
 - 4.2.1 Ensure that everyone has access to world class cultural provision;
 - 4.2.2 Encourage the highest standards of creativity and excellence in all aspects of cultural activity;
 - 4.2.3 Support greater partnership working in the cultural and creative sectors and maximise resources available to help them thrive all year round;
 - 4.2.4 Articulate the positive impact of culture in Edinburgh and promote Edinburgh's cultural success locally, nationally and internationally;

- 4.2.5 Develop and support the infrastructure which sustains Edinburgh’s cultural and creative sectors; and
- 4.2.6 Invest in artist and practitioner development, and support and sustain the local artistic community.

5 Financial impact

- 5.1 The costs involved in implementing Museums and Galleries Edinburgh Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2018-2023 will be contained within the Culture Service revenue budget. Considerable additional funding to mount temporary exhibitions is secured through grants, sponsorship and partnership working.

6 Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 There is no risk, policy, compliance and governance impact arising from this report.

7 Equalities impact

- 7.1 The report’s contents are not relevant to the general equality duties of the Equality Act 2010.

8 Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The impacts of this report in relation to the three elements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 Public Bodies Duties have been considered. Temporary exhibitions by Museums and Galleries Edinburgh will continue to help achieve a sustainable Edinburgh by contributing to the city’s reputation as a cultural destination. This will benefit residents by contributing to Edinburgh’s high quality of life, promote wellbeing, and will also support the city’s economy.

9 Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Consultation has been carried out with staff and exhibitions feedback compiled from museums and galleries visitors was reviewed

10 Background reading/external references

- 10.1 Report to Executive of the Council, 6 September 2005 [City Art Centre – Proposed three year exhibition strategy.](#)

10.2 Report to Culture and Sport Committee, 12 March 2013 [Museums and Galleries Edinburgh: Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2013-2017.](#)

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11 Appendices

Appendix 1 Museums and Galleries Edinburgh Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2018-2022

Museums and Galleries Edinburgh

Temporary Exhibitions Policy 2018 – 2022

1 Relationship to other relevant policies

This policy is a revision of the statement that was last adopted by the Culture and Sport Committee on 12 March 2013. This policy sets out:

- Our mission, strategic aims and objectives
- Policy Aims
- Programme Focus
- Programme Planning, Criteria, Development and Implementation
- Programme Evaluation and Review

This policy relates to Aim 2 of the National Strategy of Scotland's Museums and Galleries and its accompanying objective: *Strengthen Connections: Between museums, people and places to inspire greater public participation, learning and well-being.*

At Council level, this policy forms part of our service's commitment in fulfilling the Council's 52 Commitments, published in 2017.

It is an important component of the Museums and Galleries Edinburgh (MGE) current Service Plan, aim 1 of which states that as a service we want to: *Deliver a world-class capital museums and galleries service.* This document most directly relates to objective 1.3: *Provide a dynamic range of exhibition and public programmes.*

1.1 MGE Statement of Purpose

Our Vision: To inspire, enthuse and provoke through a shared passion for Edinburgh, art and history.

Our Mission: Museums and Galleries Edinburgh (MGE) enables people to connect with the city; its many histories and its role in presenting art from around the world. We do this through our collections, temporary exhibitions and public programmes, both physical and digital. We balance our responsibility to preserve, display and interpret collections with our mission to encourage debate, interaction, reflection and exploration.

This policy provides guidance on the programming, planning and staging of exhibitions at Museums and Galleries Edinburgh (MGE) venues, which are operated by the City of Edinburgh Council. These venues include the City Art Centre,

Travelling Gallery, Queensferry Museum and the four venues on the Royal Mile - Museum of Childhood, Museum of Edinburgh, Writers' Museum and People's Story.

2 Policy Aims

- To present stimulating and challenging exhibitions on a variety of subjects.
- To promote public engagement and participation through a vibrant programme of changing exhibitions and thereby raise awareness of the permanent collections.
- To provide inspirational and learning experiences in welcoming environments.
- To attract local and international visitors to MGE venues.

3 Programme Focus

MGE cares for a wide range of collections in a number of different venues. The broad appeal of the collections and diverse programme of temporary exhibitions and events attract a cross-section of the community, developing existing audiences and encouraging new ones.

Exhibitions are an integral part of MGE's mission and have been a key element in the development of the Service over the last 55 years. The City Art Centre has been an important part of Edinburgh's cultural infrastructure since the 1960s and has played a major role in defining temporary exhibitions culture in the City. The Travelling Gallery is a unique national institution that plays an important educational role in presenting contemporary art across Scotland. The four museums on the Royal Mile are well-established and have staged significant temporary exhibitions over the years.

3.1 City Art Centre

The City Art Centre is home to the City's collection of historic and contemporary Scottish art, one of the most comprehensive in Scotland. It also stages a vibrant temporary exhibitions and events programme.

The City Art Centre's collection of Scottish art is *Recognised* by the Scottish Government as being of national importance. The collection consists of around 4,800 works, including paintings, watercolours, drawings, prints, photographs, art textiles, sculpture and installation art dating from the 17th century to the present day. It lies at the heart of the City Art Centre's exhibitions and events programming, which is showcased in a variety of ways.

Floor -1 of the City Art Centre is dedicated to the display of its collection, with a changing programme of two exhibitions annually. On the other gallery floors, artworks from the collection are used as starting points from which to explore wider

aspects of Scottish art, with works acting as centrepieces for exhibitions supplemented by external loans. Works from the collection also act as springboards for more in-depth re-assessments of Scottish artists, particularly those who have been largely passed over by art critics and historians. To this end, the City Art Centre welcomes new strategic partnerships with organisations and/or freelance curators from the wider cultural and heritage sector for the development of exhibitions and projects that tie in closely with its collection.

The City Art Centre also showcases group and one-person exhibitions by contemporary Scottish or Scottish-based artists and makers, ideally with links to the fine art collection. Through its programme, the City Art Centre seeks to engage with the rich and diverse artistic community within Edinburgh (galleries, collectors, art historians, artist-run spaces, artists, makers, amongst many others), giving opportunity for collaboration and occasions when the latest contemporary work being produced in the City can be displayed.

The City Art Centre will continue to work alongside curators and artists to present exhibitions that explore current debates and topical issues.

3.2 Travelling Gallery

Travelling Gallery is a contemporary art gallery in a bus and is unique to Scotland. Its function and core mission is to take an exciting and experimental programme to every part of Scotland, allowing access and learning for all.

Travelling Gallery presents two 16 week exhibitions a year which tour remote, rural, urban and suburban communities throughout Scotland. It builds strong partnerships with local authorities, schools, colleges, arts organisations and festivals to work collaboratively across Scotland and create a sense of place and improve quality of life through an understanding of the potential of creativity. Each exhibition has a strong creative learning programme of artist talks, film screenings, workshops, events, learning packs and interpretative materials. All Travelling Gallery staff spend time with the gallery on tour to present the exhibitions to audiences of all ages and a volunteer programme is in place to give opportunities to anyone seeking a career in arts provision and education.

Travelling Gallery exhibitions and learning programme continue to reflect diverse practices from local and international artists. It has successfully commissioned artwork and exhibitions that have inspired audiences from all ages and backgrounds, and has been a successful spring board for recent graduates and early career artists.

The majority of funding for Travelling Gallery comes from external sources (such as Creative Scotland, foundations and local authorities). The programme will therefore address the strategic priorities of these stakeholders.

3.4 Museum Venues

The museum venues with designated temporary exhibition space include Queensferry Museum, Museum of Edinburgh, People's Story, Museum of Childhood and Writers' Museum. Across these sites the Service manages and displays a rich variety of objects from History, Decorative Art, Childhood, Literary and Fine Art collections, some of which are *Recognised* as being of National Significance. There are many different collections within these broad categories, many of which relate to the history of Edinburgh and surrounding area, and its people from early times until the present day. Others have a broader range; for example, the Childhood collection is international in scope, and the collection of Scottish Pottery is national in scope.

The historic fabric of most of these buildings mean there is limited space available for temporary exhibitions; nonetheless there is a regularly changing programme of exhibitions within this constraint.

The diverse collections housed within the Museum Venues allow the exhibitions to encompass four distinct themes - Edinburgh (including Queensferry), Exploration of Childhood, Scottish Literature and Community Outreach. These are described below:

Edinburgh Focus

The Museum of Edinburgh holds the History collections, a variety of objects that tell the story of the City, from James Craig's plans for Edinburgh's New Town to Greyfriars' Bobby's dinner dish. The building itself is also of intrinsic historic and architectural value.

The Museum of Edinburgh also displays material from the Nationally Recognised Decorative Art collections, namely Edinburgh and Canongate Glass and Silver, and Scottish East Coast Ceramics. The aim of temporary exhibitions featuring these collections is to provide regular opportunity to present stored material, explore their design and manufacturing history and to create strong links to the History collections which include items about the people who made and used decorative art.

The People's Story explores the domestic and working lives of Edinburgh's people from the late 18th century to the present day. Displays include a bookbinder's workshop, wartime kitchen, tea room and jail cell – all material focus on the social history, culture, crafts and trades, and the people of Edinburgh. The aim of temporary exhibitions staged here is to foster pride in Edinburgh's heritage; to provide a safe and welcoming space to explore contemporary, sometime challenging, issues, and to provide a platform for community-led or co-produced displays with and by local people.

Exploration of Childhood

The Museum of Childhood presents exhibitions designed to increase awareness and understanding of the history of childhood and to explore issues related to current concepts of childhood.

Scottish Literature

Collections at the Writers' Museum primarily celebrate the lives of three of Scotland's most influential writers: Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Louis Stevenson. The Museum is linked to Makars' Court, an evolving national literary monument. The Writers' Museum aims to encourage the appreciation of Scottish literature, and reading and writing more generally.

In line with Edinburgh's status as the first UNESCO City of Literature, the Writers' Museum also serves to promote recognition of Edinburgh and Scotland as a world centre for literature and literary activity. Space for temporary display is limited due to the historic nature of the building, but all exhibitions have a literary theme or draw inspiration from Scottish writers, Scottish literature, reading or writing, using a diverse range of media.

Community Outreach

The aim of MGE's Outreach Programme is to work with the City's residents to empower them to connect with museum and gallery resources and participate in, or co-create, a wide variety of activities, exhibitions or events. The programme focuses on those who, for various reasons, do not already access MGE resources. This involves working in partnership with community and special interest groups across Edinburgh's different neighbourhoods.

Temporary exhibitions displayed in community venues such as libraries, schools, care homes and shopping centres are a key part of this work. Limited temporary display space is also available for community organisations to mount exhibitions within the Museum Venues, following approval of exhibition proposals submitted which fit with the requirements of this policy.

All proposed community exhibitions will complement or enhance MGE's collections and the themes that they illustrate. They will also either:

- Relate specifically to the Edinburgh area, or
- Explore topics relevant to the people of Edinburgh.

4 Programme Planning

4.1 City Art Centre

The City Art Centre programmes at least two years in advance with some exhibitions planned up to four or five years in advance. Most of its exhibitions run for four to five months. All exhibitions should show a high standard of work and be of exceptional quality. They should also align with the Service's vision and key objectives.

Exhibitions with more popular appeal will generally be staged to coincide with the Edinburgh Art Festival. The majority of exhibitions have free entry, but admission charges, where necessary, may be levied to help cover costs.

4.2 Travelling Gallery

Since Travelling Gallery only initiates two exhibitions per year, the Curator does not actively encourage proposals from artists or organisations, but invites artists on an individual basis to participate in a programme up to three years ahead. However, the Curator does consider proposals which address Travelling Gallery's objectives, especially collaborations with other organisations which have a geographic emphasis.

4.3 Museum Venues

Together the Museum Venues host a minimum of three temporary exhibitions each year, consisting of a mixture of in-house exhibitions devised by curatorial staff, loan or touring exhibitions, and displays created in collaboration with local groups, individuals or other partners. Due to high demand for the limited space available, exhibitions tend to be programmed at least one or two years in advance.

These exhibitions fulfil one or more of the following criteria:

- Attract new audiences
- Highlight items from MGE collections, including the Reserve Collections
- Be of local or national relevance
- Involve collaborative working
- Have a community focus
- Focus on contemporary issues

5 Criteria

5.1 City Art Centre

The City Art Centre does not accept unsolicited proposals for exhibitions. Anyone wishing to discuss a potential proposal should in the first instance email museumsandgalleries@edinburgh.gov.uk with the subject 'City Art Centre Proposal'. All proposals will be carefully considered by the curatorial team at the City Art Centre. Advice and comments are also sought, where relevant, from colleagues and senior management.

5.2 Travelling Gallery

Travelling Gallery exhibitions programme is approved by stakeholders and the Travelling Gallery Advisory Group.

5.3 Museum Venues

All temporary exhibition proposals received will be carefully considered on a regular basis by the relevant curatorial staff. Advice and comments are also sought, where applicable, from colleagues and senior management.

Exhibition proposals must meet the specified criteria outlined above. In other words, proposed exhibitions must:

- Fit within the defined strategic aims and exhibition themes;
- Meet the high-quality standard required (this standard must be met by the individual items and by their overall presentation);
- Be considered likely to attract the projected audience;
- Be achievable within budget.

Written guidance is available to individuals and groups interested in proposing a temporary exhibition with MGE and all applicants are encouraged to get in touch to discuss ideas early on in the process. Contact museumsandgalleries@edinburgh.gov.uk for further information.

6 Development

6.1 Standards

All exhibitions follow MGE conservation and collections procedures to ensure activities adhere to Museum Accreditation Standard 2014 and SPECTRUM. All loans to the Service will be covered by an agreement signed by both lender and MGE.

6.2 Partnerships

MGE actively seeks to work with a diverse range of partners locally, in the UK and further afield. The aim is to build long term relationships in order to increase scope for subject matter, audience composition and funding opportunities. Partnerships also provide the opportunity to stage ambitious work, share knowledge and develop skills, enabling efficiencies, as well as increasing public profile. MGE will continue to establish new partnerships, with arts organisations and individuals, creating longer term strategic connections to build capacity, develop resilience and underpin future growth. These relationships will be used to realise new temporary exhibitions and to explore the potential of site-specific commissions.

6.3 Curatorial Research and Travel

Curatorial staff require time for research and travel to seek out exhibitions, develop proposals with partners and to plan self-generated projects. Continuing professional development activity will be encouraged to address individual needs and specialisms.

7 Implementation

7.1 Public Programmes

MGE develops a dynamic programme of events to engage with a range of groups and to create diverse events for everyone.

The learning programmes encourage family groups to enjoy the buildings and collections together. A varied programme of workshops, historical lectures and special events is also aimed at adults. Community groups are encouraged to visit the venues, and MGE will tailor an event to suit these groups.

Public Programmes also work on a project basis with different groups across the city. Gallery-based learning experiences are developed for different groups, such as the learning spaces in the galleries that promote learning for all.

MGE cultivates partnerships with different organisations to develop projects and events, with a particularly strong tradition of working with and developing programmes for schools and Higher and Further education institutions.

Public Programmes organise a variety of different programmes accompanying select exhibitions including:

- Special tours
- Talks and lectures
- Adult craft events

- Family learning programmes
- School programmes
- Venue-based community programmes
- Programmes and project-based work with Further and Higher education institutions
- Programmes for children under 5

For information on programmes and public events visit edinburghmuseums.org.uk. Events are listed under the 'What's on' page.

7.2 Retail and Publishing

Exhibitions are supported by the MGE shops. A range of merchandise is provided for visitors, which helps to generate income to support the programmes.

Catalogues: An exhibition catalogue is generally only available where resources allow.

Other merchandise: With temporary exhibitions bringing in additional visitors the aim is to provide an interesting and relevant range of goods for them to buy. This may be split between 'off the shelf' products, where items are already produced by an external supplier, merchandise produced by partners, and products developed by MGE.

Off the shelf merchandise: Products are sourced for each exhibition from a wide range of suppliers and contacts.

Exhibitor and artist merchandise: Merchandise may already be available from partners. Otherwise support may be available for partners to help produce catalogues and other items, such as postcards and prints. This merchandise would tend to be bought on a sale or return basis and with a standard mark-up. Certain exhibitions may attract a different approach that would need to be agreed with MGE.

Product Development: MGE can produce merchandise specifically for exhibitions developed from MGE collections, and occasionally for exhibitions developed from partners' collections. This involves securing the relevant permissions and associated costs and working with suppliers to produce a range of merchandise.

7.3 Funding

The Service has three principal sources of funding: Council budget (which includes a dedicated exhibitions budget), commercial income and public grants.

Planning for all exhibitions includes the identification of appropriate external funding bodies and/or sponsorship, both of which usually require a two-year lead in period. This may be increased or reduced depending on the scale of the exhibition.

7.4 Legacy

The exhibitions programme should produce a legacy, so that the benefits of today's activity and investment are preserved for future visitors and staff. This might take a number of forms, depending on the nature of the exhibition and may include outputs such as core exhibition module designed to tour to public venues, a photographic archive, publication of new or revised collections information, online resources and acquisitions. Outcomes may include increased staff skills, new audiences or greater public awareness of the collections.

8 Evaluation and Review

8.1 Programme Evaluation

MGE exhibition programmes are analysed as to their impact, the effectiveness of the marketing and to identify visitor profiles and motivation. This is particularly useful for exhibitions designed to attract new audiences or a particular demographic group. Performance indicators currently employed include:

- Visitor figures
- Online feedback/Trip advisor reviews
- Figures of booked groups coming in via Public Programmes
- Retail income including spend per customer and visitor to customer conversion rate
- Media coverage
- Visitors' comments
- Attendance at related events and their evaluation
- Audience research including Culture Republic reports, focus groups, web research and physical evaluations of gallery spaces and gallery-based surveys
- Digital visitor feedback and number of page visits
- Social media profile and level of engagement
- Income generation (admission charges, Public Programmes charges)

Evaluation data is reviewed regularly and used to enhance or alter the exhibition programmes accordingly.

8.2 Policy Review

This Temporary Exhibitions Policy will be reviewed every five years. Feedback is welcome throughout this period and will be sought from a range of stakeholders.

Comments or suggestions about either the exhibitions programmes or Temporary Exhibitions Policy, should be communicated through the website: edinburghmuseums.org.uk.