

## Creative Community Hubs Network statement on proposals for a Visitor Levy for Edinburgh:

The Creative Community Hubs Network (currently comprising WHALE Arts, North Edinburgh Arts, Lyra, Craigmillar Now, granton:hub, Out of the Blueprint, Duncan Place Community Hub and The Crannie Community Hub) welcomes a proposed Visitor Levy for Edinburgh and a percentage of proceeds dedicated to the objective of sustaining, supporting and developing:

“Edinburgh’s culture, heritage and festivals provision to ensure it remains world-leading and competitively attractive to visitors as well as residents.”

For the Network, which is made up of community-embedded organisations (often located in or adjacent to areas of high multiple deprivation), the reference to residents in relation to culture here is key. Community-embedded organisations (like the ones that make up the Network) provide access to culture on people’s doorsteps around the city, all year round. We therefore welcome the new community fund as one of the investment areas proposed from the Visitor Levy.

However, we would like to remind the Committee that some community-based organisations are located in and providing a service for areas of multiple deprivation within the city centre, alongside the recognised drawbacks of funders choosing to focus on supporting new work as opposed to existing work that is proven to be already making a positive impact on our communities. As one of our respondents is quoted in the *Funding Communities Better* report launched in June 2024: “We talk about this a lot [as a challenge], but not funding existing work that’s been proven to be effective, not seeing the value in something that’s meant to be long term. The thing we do best is now under threat.” (p15, *Funding Communities Better*, Cunningham & Muir 2024)

We hope that the Committee takes on board these reflections from the Network, and that the resulting community fund is subsequently developed in collaboration with community-based organisations, in order to be most effective and impactful in our communities who are resident in Edinburgh all year round.