

The Edinburgh Festival  
**fringe**  
society

**ANNUAL REVIEW 2018**





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The Fringe Society is committed to minimising its impact on the environment and the impact of Fringe venues and companies. We work closely with Festivals Edinburgh and Creative Carbon Scotland, and participate in the Green Arts Initiative, a project which aims to build and sustain a Scottish green arts community. We record all waste from the Fringe Society, both recycling and landfill, as well as our energy usage across all buildings and the mileage of our staff and board travel. Measuring our impact allows us to continuously improve our operations and inform future planning.

The pages of this Annual Review are printed on 100% recycled stock.







## Who we are

The idea at the heart of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe is simple: anyone with a desire to perform and a venue willing to host them is welcome. No individual or committee determines who can or cannot perform at the Fringe.

It all began in 1947 with eight companies – six of them from Scotland – taking a risk, turning up uninvited and performing on the 'fringe' of the inaugural Edinburgh International Festival. Over 70 years later, the Fringe has grown to become the single biggest celebration of arts and culture on the planet, second only to the Olympics in terms of global ticketed events. In 2018, 3,548 shows took place in 317 venues across Edinburgh.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society is the charity that was established by artists to act as the custodian of the Fringe. We exist to support, advise and encourage everyone who wants to participate, provide information and assistance to audiences, and promote the Fringe and what it stands for all over the world.







## Chair's introduction

walks of life. It ranged from spoken word to street theatre and from cabaret to classical music. The programme featured some of the world's finest performers gracing stages as diverse as a 1,500-seater concert hall and a caravan.

One of the things that makes the Fringe so special is the way it brings the world to Scotland and Scotland to the world. It was encouraging to see 900 Scottish shows represented in this year's Fringe. Local audiences also continue to embrace the festival. Over 600,000 tickets were picked up by Edinburgh residents alone in 2018. This is an international celebration that simply would not be possible without the support, creativity and passion of Scotland's capital and its people.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe sits at the heart of a global movement of fringe festivals all over the world. This year we welcomed 69 representatives from 35 fringes to the biennial Fringe World Congress. This is an opportunity for festivals to come together and share ideas, tackle difficult issues and celebrate the ties that bind us.

2018 also marked the 10th anniversary of Made in Scotland, a showcase of the best of Scottish theatre, dance and music at the Fringe. Since it started, Made in Scotland has supported over 140 artists to deliver over 200 shows at the Fringe. The onward touring fund (which supports international performances after the festival) enabled 87 productions to tour across six continents. We are very proud

of the continued success of this programme – which this year saw Made in Scotland artists receive a record 32 five-star reviews and nine awards – and look forward to celebrating Scottish success on stage for many years to come.

I would like to warmly thank the people that make the Fringe happen each year. Thank you to the artists, producers, venues, technicians, front of house staff, industry representatives, media, partners and supporters, local residents, and many more besides... it would not have happened without you.

My thanks also go to the staff and board of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society. They dedicate so much time and energy to ensuring that Fringe artists and audiences have the best possible experience. It is my privilege to work alongside you as the Society's Chair and I cannot wait to see where we are headed next on our great Fringe adventure.

See you all in 2019.

**Tim O'Shea**  
Chair



## Chief Executive's introduction

There was so much that was successful about this year's Fringe. We can talk about issuing over 2.8 million tickets or we can talk about what that really means – that more people than ever from Edinburgh, from Scotland and from all over the world experienced the thrill of live performance.

We can talk about the 3,548 shows or we can consider that it was made up of creatives from 55 countries – including 900 shows from Scotland and 1,900 from across the rest of the UK – making the Fringe an unparalleled platform for work to be showcased, seen and commissioned.

We can talk about the scale or we can talk about the content. This year's shows addressed issues ranging from sex and consent to political uncertainty, race, loneliness and mental health, and featured thousands of performers, from famous faces to those making their first appearance on a stage.

I want to talk about some of the things that made this an important year and some of the big things we want to tackle going forward.

The redevelopment of the Virgin Money Street Events has been embraced by artists and audiences alike, and we are proud to have improved accessibility on both the Royal Mile and Mound with accessible viewing areas and stages, BSL-interpreted performances, and sensory backpacks for children and adults on the autism spectrum.

We continued to build our relationships with communities across Edinburgh, including some of the city's most deprived areas. The Society has made a commitment to work with 31 charities across the city over the next five years: giving free access to shows and public transport for local people to come to the Fringe, connecting our charity partners with one another to share ideas and recommendations, and fostering meaningful collaborations between Fringe artists and Edinburgh citizens.

More than anything, we want the experience of the Fringe to be excellent both on and off stage. The Society conducted the biggest independent survey of workers ever undertaken before this year's Fringe, and we have been working closely with employers, venues and promoters ever since to champion best practice, address areas of concern and ensure that everyone has the best possible Fringe experience.

We often talk about the Fringe as the world's greatest platform for freedom of expression; a festival where everyone is welcome. These may sound like lofty ideals, but it is at the core of the Fringe's identity and everything we do springs from these principles. It's for this reason that we have set out our Fringe Blueprint of ambitions ahead of our 75th anniversary in 2022. You can find details of this on the next page; however, it is worth emphasising one key point. Like the Fringe itself, we can only achieve these ambitions with the help, guidance, creativity and commitment of our extended Fringe family.

Alongside our friends in the city, in government, in business, in education and communities, in companies and venues, we can and will make the Fringe the best festival in the world. We need your support to make these ambitious plans a reality.

**Shona McCarthy**  
Chief Executive





# Fringe Blueprint

Taking inspiration from the eight companies that established the Fringe more than 70 years ago, we have made eight firm commitments that together make up the Fringe Blueprint, a statement of intent that will inform everything we do between now and our 75th anniversary in 2022.

## The eight commitments are:

### 1. The open Fringe

Remove barriers to entry to ensure that everyone is welcome at the Fringe and anyone can take part.

### 2. The world's Fringe

Develop the Fringe's international reputation as the place to discover talent.

### 3. The affordable Fringe

Tackle the rising cost of attendance at the Fringe to ensure the festival is affordable for all.

### 4. The Fringe home

Secure a new home for the Fringe to provide year-round assistance to participants and support a vibrant Fringe community.

### 5. The inspirational Fringe

Foster a lifelong passion for the arts amongst Scotland's young people and champion creative learning in our schools and colleges.

### 6. The street Fringe

Support and develop the world's greatest street festival at the heart of the Fringe.

### 7. The green Fringe

Reduce the festival's carbon footprint and champion initiatives that limit our impact on the environment.

### 8. The Fringe story

Tell the remarkable story of the Fringe and build awareness of, and support for, our charitable mission all over the world.

Much like the Fringe itself, we can't achieve any of this on our own. It will require a huge collective effort - from participants, audience members, government, councillors, businesses, partners and funders - but together we can make this extraordinary festival of creative freedom the best possible experience of live arts for audiences and artists alike.

For more information and to find out how you can help, visit [edfringe.com/blueprint](https://edfringe.com/blueprint).



# Supporting artists, producers and venues

Supporting and empowering the risk-takers and change-makers who make the Fringe happen every year is at the very heart of our work. We provide year-round advice, encouragement and resources for artists, producers, companies, venues, arts industry and media professionals to help make their Fringe experience as smooth and rewarding as possible.

## A home for artists

Fringe Central is home for the Fringe community in August. Based at Appleton Tower, it's open to everyone taking part in the Fringe. As well as hosting an unparalleled programme of creative and professional development events, it has a wealth of useful resources such as rehearsal spaces, meeting rooms and printing facilities. Above all, it's a place for Fringe artists to connect with each other and with Society staff for practical and moral support, to share ideas and experiences and to collaborate.

Fringe Central was officially launched by writer, comedian and host of the Guilty Feminist podcast, Deborah Frances-White, who delivered a passionate speech about art as the exploration of the human condition and the importance of storytelling at the Fringe. Here 'there are no gatekeepers telling audiences what stories to consume - there are only artists, each with their own stories, their own fury, their own hopes, their own funny curiosities'.

Welcoming Fringe participants and encouraging them to discover stories outside their life experience, Deborah added 'behind every door is a chance to see the world out of someone else's eyes'.

This year marked the 10th anniversary of the Fringe Central Events Programme and featured the largest programme to date. Delivered alongside 65 partner organisations, participants could take advantage of 125 free events designed to enhance skills, expand networks, develop careers and inspire discussion. Events included networking opportunities, creative labs and conversations tackling relevant issues and challenges to participation at the Fringe, including female representation and accessibility.

To mark Scotland's Year of Young People we worked with a panel of 16 to 26-year-olds in the programming and delivery of the Fringe Central Events Programme. Designed as a professional development opportunity for young people with an interest in curation, the panel's contribution was invaluable, resulting in an energised and relevant series of events.

Fringe Central was more accessible than ever this year, reaching level two status in the Venue Access Awards. We trialled a new initiative, the Neatebox Welcome app, which allowed participants with specific access requirements to notify us prior to their arrival so we could provide the best level of customer service possible. We also created a more family-friendly environment by registering as a breastfeeding-friendly venue, providing childcare equipment and offering a free crèche service as part of the Parenting in the Performing Arts initiative.

## Developing artists' careers

Alongside the many professional events at Fringe Central, we provide a bespoke advice service to help artists and companies progress their careers and maximise the many opportunities that the Fringe presents. In 2018, 450 Fringe participants came to us for tailored advice on how best to approach industry professionals - producers, programmers, promoters - who come to Edinburgh in August specifically to discover work and, as the Fringe is often just the beginning for many productions, how and where to progress their work afterwards.

## Marketing and media advice

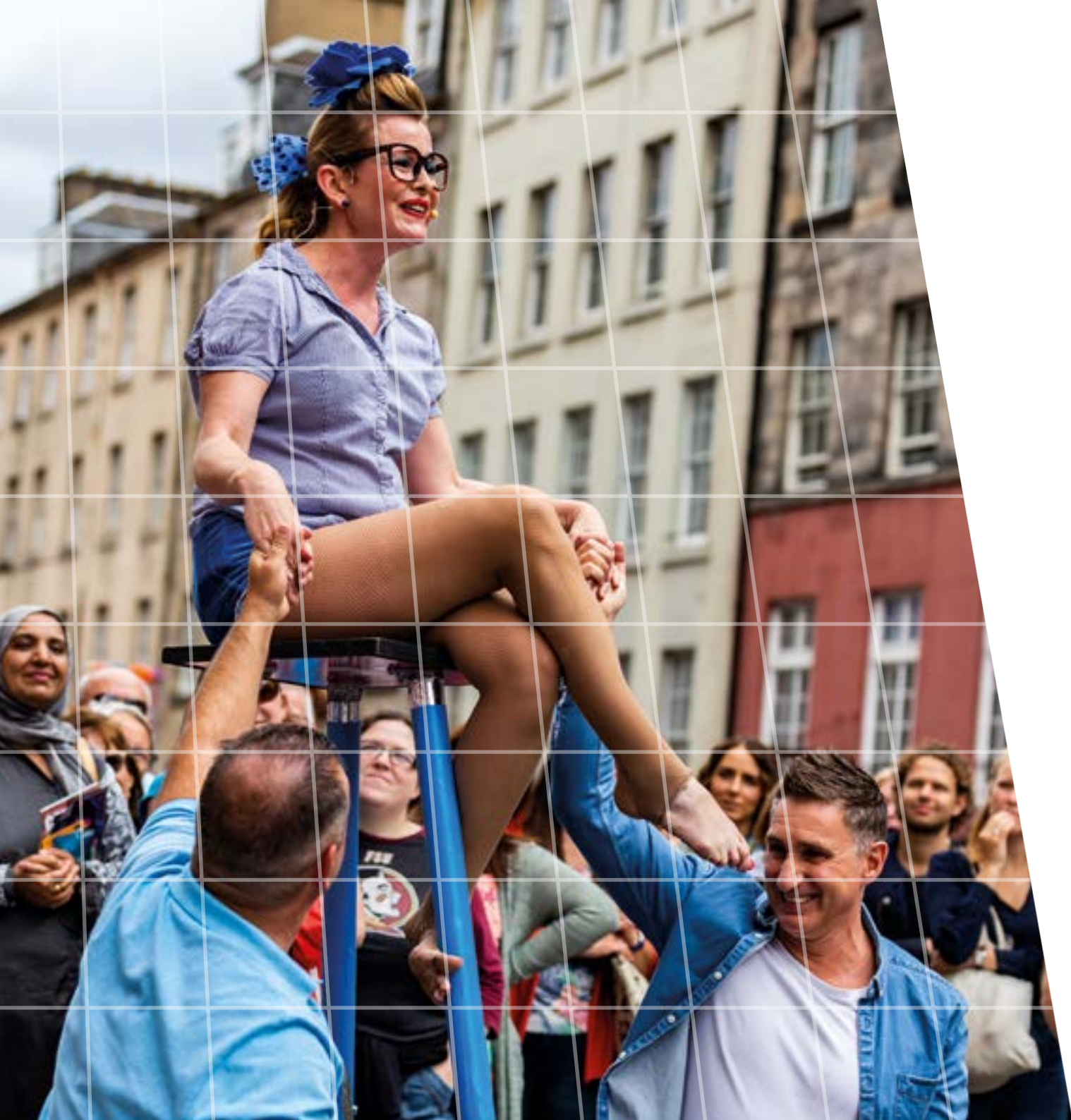
With an array of incredible performances on offer in August, it's essential that artists and companies are equipped with the expertise and resources to attract audiences to their shows. This year, 180 participants sought advice from us on all aspects of their media and marketing campaigns, including how to make an impact on social media, how to write press releases and how to target relevant media titles and websites.

Fringe artists and venues were once again given the opportunity to come face-to-face with media representatives at Meet the Media, the biggest event in the Fringe Central calendar. Over 600 Fringe artists delivered their elevator pitches to journalists, broadcasters, bloggers and reviewers from media outlets including The List, The Scotsman, The Skinny and The Herald.

**We supported  
32,697 artists from  
3,548 shows across  
317 venues.**







### A global showcase for talent

The Fringe is a top cultural destination and global arts meeting place unrivalled in scale and diversity. Producers and programmers from all over the world come to buy work, discover talent, create partnerships and exchange ideas. Our Arts Industry Office helps industry professionals find what they're looking for by providing advice, a ticketing service, contact details for artists and invitations to exclusive industry events. A record 1,360 delegates from over 40 countries accredited with the Fringe Society this year.

Funded by the UK Government's Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, we developed our services to provide greater support for artists and companies with tour-ready work to connect with national and international promoters who come to Edinburgh specifically to discover work. In partnership with eight Fringe venues and delivered by three appointed artform-specialist brokers, we piloted the Fringe Forward initiative to provide a bespoke service for over 60 specially selected industry professionals to help them connect with work to suit their programming interests.

Another development for 2018 was the Young Arts Industry Programme, created as part of Scotland's Year of Young People. The four-day programme granted six curators aged 16 to 26 access to exclusive development and networking events, ticket vouchers to support their engagement with the Fringe Programme and a travel bursary.

### The next generation of producers

The Emerging Producers' Development Programme is a project for aspiring UK-based producers to broaden their professional networks, develop their skills and explore new work and artists at the Fringe. Supported by the British Council, the programme identifies and supports the next generation of talented producers, with a particular focus on disabled and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) voices.

The 2018 programme provided 14 emerging producers (nine identifying as disabled and/or BAME) with access to bespoke networking and industry mentor sessions, Fringe ticket vouchers, and a travel and accommodation allowance.

### Celebrating the best of Scotland's theatre, dance and music

2018 marked the 10th anniversary of Made in Scotland, an annual showcase at the Fringe which celebrates the wealth and diversity of Scotland's theatre, dance and music in a truly international context. The programme presented 23 shows, featuring a vibrant mix of established artists and emerging talent, to international audiences and industry experts at the Fringe. It was an incredibly successful year, with 32 five-star reviews and nine awards received across the showcase.

Made in Scotland is a partnership between the Fringe Society, the Federation of Scottish Theatre, the Scottish Music Centre and Creative Scotland, and is supported by the Scottish Government's Festivals Expo Fund. Since it began in 2009, Made in Scotland has supported over 140 companies, ensembles and artists to present over 200 shows at the Fringe. The onward touring fund, which supports international performances after the festival, has enabled 87 productions to tour across six continents, visiting 38 countries.

**'Now more than ever, showcasing Scotland as an inclusive, outward looking country - that's very important.'**

**Simon Thacker,**  
Made in Scotland participant



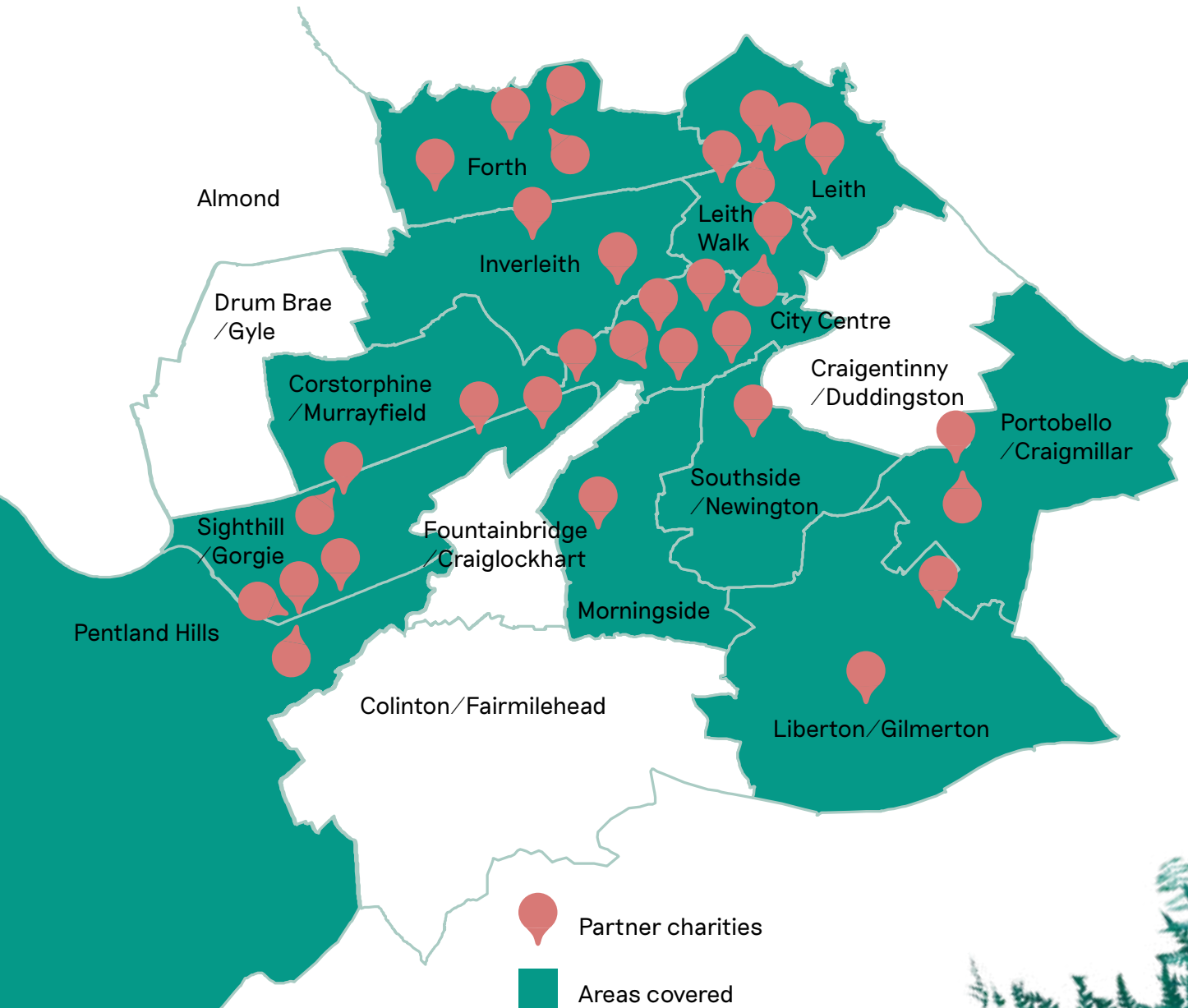
### Welcoming the world to Scotland

The Fringe is made up of artists from all over the world, and this year we welcomed international artists from 55 countries. With the UK due to exit the EU on 29 March 2019, we are committed to ensuring that the Fringe remains a globally connected festival, at the centre of an international network of artists, producers, arts industry and media representatives. We are working with other festivals, partners and the UK Government to preserve our permit-free status and support ease of mobility, so that artists, cultural workers and audiences can continue to experience this international celebration of arts and culture without difficulty.





# Fringe Days Out



For the second year we delivered the Fringe Days Out scheme, providing 31 Edinburgh-based charities and community groups with £50,000 of Fringe ticket vouchers and bus tickets to allow their service users to experience the magic of the Fringe free of charge.

Designed to reach people in Edinburgh who do not typically engage with the Fringe, the Fringe Days Out scheme includes charities and community groups such as Stepping Stones North Edinburgh, Vintage Vibes, Dads Rock, LGBT Youth Scotland, Lothian Autistic Society and Sikh Sanjog. Our charity partners are based in parts of Edinburgh which are recognised as areas of poverty and low income – 10 of our partners work with people living in the top 20% most deprived areas in Scotland, with two of these operating in the top 5% most deprived areas.

**4,000 people have visited the festival via the Fringe Days Out scheme.**

**'The tickets are used and appreciated by all ages. The great joy of the voucher system is that groups and individuals can decide what they want to see and when they want to see it. It gives them the freedom and flexibility to choose.'**

**Kate Craik, North Edinburgh Arts**

The Fringe Days Out scheme is specifically designed for people who are at risk of social exclusion. Over the past 12 months we have worked with a broad range of individuals and groups, including young people, single parents, isolated elderly, disabled people, ethnic minority communities, refugees and asylum seekers, the LGBT community and many more.

Our charity partners are trusted in their local communities and have built long-lasting relationships with their service users. By forming these relationships, we have been able to reach a broad cross-section of the community and encourage recipients to take more risks in what they choose to see by fostering open conversations with people they know and trust.

The project is also designed to address geographical barriers. Working in partnership with Lothian Buses, we provided free bus passes, removing the additional costs of transport for those living on the outskirts of the city.

After the 2017 Fringe we undertook an evaluation of the Fringe Days Out scheme, and asked our charities to provide feedback and ideas on how to develop the programme to ensure it has the maximum possible benefit on quality of life, wellbeing and community aspirations. Through this we identified new ways to open up collaborations between different groups and provided a supportive environment for ticket recipients to have a broader conversation about arts and culture.

Over the last two years, an estimated 4,000 people have visited the festival via Fringe Days Out, a significant proportion of whom had never experienced the Fringe before. We are committed to continuing the Fringe Days Out scheme for the next five years, with an ambition to double the value of ticket and travel vouchers gifted from £50,000 to £100,000 by 2022.

**'It is important to me as a project worker that the young people we work with are exposed to new and exciting experiences. The Fringe is a big event on the cultural calendar and to be able to book and see shows was very exciting and we had a great time.'**

**Natalie Thomson, Young Carers Project, Broomhouse**





## Ensuring access for everyone

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to express themselves through creativity and experience the thrill of live performance. Over the course of the year, we made great progress in removing barriers to attendance and participation, making the Fringe as open, welcoming and accessible as possible for everyone. We have ambitious plans to increase resources in this area to support our work in 2019 and beyond.

### Working with local communities

The long-term future and sustainability of the Fringe continues to rely on the city and its residents. We work closely with many communities across Edinburgh to enable participation and attendance for those who, for many reasons, do not traditionally engage with the festivals. Alongside our Fringe Days Out scheme (see pages 12 and 13), we contributed to the summer programmes of activity at North Edinburgh Arts and WHALE Arts in Wester Hailes by facilitating workshops with Fringe performers and arranging trips to see the same artists perform at the Fringe.

In partnership with Imagine, we delivered the Wee Night Out project for a third successive year, providing young people the opportunity to experience and critique shows at the Fringe. 2018's Wee Night Out project extended to include children from Pilton, Muirhouse and Wester Hailes as well as those from Craigmillar, our original project area.

Alongside the Director of the Edinburgh International Children's Festival, the budding critics saw nine Fringe shows over the course of a week and, after careful deliberation, awarded The Denim Juniors the Wee Night Out Prize. In May 2019, the group will come together again to apply their expertise at the Edinburgh International Children's Festival.

### Children and young people

There are almost 15,000 children and young people in and around the Edinburgh care system, many of whom do not have the same opportunities to experience live entertainment and culture as other children in the city. We expanded our work with the City of Edinburgh Council and with the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council to provide complimentary tickets to children and young people in foster and kinship care in the Edinburgh area. Thanks to the generous support of Fringe artists and companies, tickets for 900 shows were made available to children and young people across the city.

**'It was wonderful to witness the impact on our pupils and the sense of enjoyment they gained through attending many of the events... I know, for most of them, this was the first opportunity they had ever had to participate in this festival.'**

**Ross Hunter, Headteacher,  
Gracemount High School**



### Transforming street events on the Royal Mile

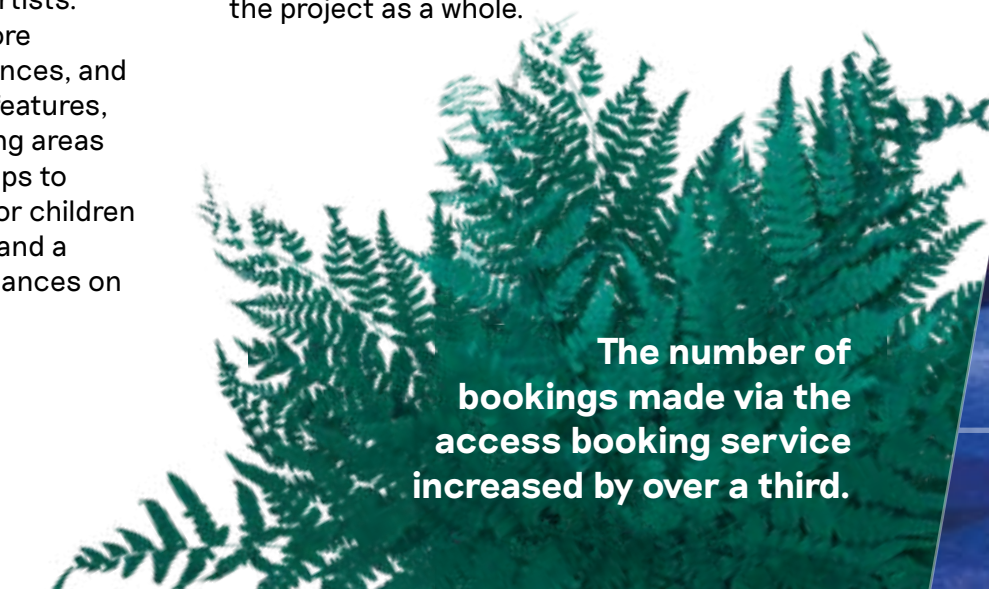
The Virgin Money Street Events have long been the most visible and accessible part of the Fringe, offering hundreds of shows for free in two outdoor, non-ticketed spaces. It is now 20 years since the Fringe Society was asked to manage the street events by City of Edinburgh Council and we made significant changes to the infrastructure and layout of the Royal Mile area. These changes were designed to better reflect the creativity and diversity of our performers, and to improve the experience for the hundreds of thousands who gather to see its world-class street performances.

As well as transforming the look of the street to more accurately reflect the joyous nature of the event, the redesign included more flexible staging and equipment to enable performers from different genres to showcase their work, from stand-up comedians to aerial artists. The street events were also made more accessible for both artists and audiences, and we introduced some important new features, including dedicated accessible viewing areas for wheelchair users, wheelchair ramps to access stages, sensory backpacks for children and adults on the autism spectrum, and a weekend of BSL-interpreted performances on West Parliament Square.

Working in association with technology partners Virgin Money and iZettle, we became the world's first street festival to offer tap-to-tip payments for performers. Following feedback from street artists noting a decrease in people carrying cash, iZettle readers allowed Fringe-goers to show their appreciation using contactless technology. We also upped our efforts in reducing the environmental impact of the street events by turning waste collected on the High Street and Mound into renewable energy, in partnership with local supplier Enva.

We were thrilled to receive a nomination for Creative Edinburgh's Social Award for the Virgin Money Street Events, an award which recognises an outstanding creative contribution or activity that benefits or contributes to a group or interest. We are deeply indebted to Virgin Money for their generous support of the street events redevelopment, and for their shared ethos and ambitions for the project as a whole.

**The number of bookings made via the access booking service increased by over a third.**





## Making the Fringe more accessible

At the Fringe Society, we believe that coming to – and getting around – the Fringe should be as easy as possible for artists and audiences, regardless of their circumstances. We work to continually promote inclusivity across the Fringe landscape, and this year developed many existing projects and created new ones to improve the experience of everyone who attends the Fringe.

After a successful pilot scheme in 2017, we rolled out our online booking service for those requiring free personal assistant tickets to all eligible customers. We expanded the information available on edfringe.com and in the programme to include access information about all spaces within venues, helping Fringe customers make more informed decisions about what they were going to see.

**61% of performances were wheelchair accessible.**

**Accessible performances increased by 40%.**

For the second year running, we provided a Changing Place toilet in the George Square area. Changing Place toilets are fully accessible toilets with adult-sized changing benches and hoists for people with complex disabilities who are unable to use standard accessible toilets. We used the Neatebox Welcome app to allow customers with additional support needs to inform us when they were coming to the Fringe Box Office, shop, or Virgin Money Street Events, so they could advise us of any specific assistance they required.

To promote BSL-interpreted performances at the Fringe, we commissioned Deaf Action to create video flyers describing shows in BSL to support D/deaf audiences in choosing what to see. The short films were hosted on our website and were used by artists and companies to promote their shows.

For the first time we made sensory backpacks available for children and adults on the autism spectrum, to make the Fringe as enjoyable and stress-free as possible. Each backpack contained items designed to help the user relax and overcome overwhelming situations, including a fidget toy, earplugs, water bottle, stress reliever, ear defenders, a social story outlining what visitors should expect to experience and a list of relaxed performances at the Fringe. The backpacks were available to borrow from three central locations and came in two sizes – one for adults and one for children.

**'I have visited the Fringe over a number of years with my son... For the first time, I felt his complex needs had been taken into account this year to try and allow him to experience as much of the Fringe as he could possibly manage. The backpacks were absolutely invaluable (especially the ear defenders).'**

### Parent of a sensory backpack recipient



In partnership with Attitude is Everything, we continued to champion accessible practices by encouraging venues across the Fringe to be as accessible as possible through the Fringe Venue Access Award. Each level of the award recognises a series of achievements made by venues to improve accessibility, from measures such as clear information and staff training, to accessible toilets and lowered counters. By the end of the 2018 Fringe, 33 venues had achieved award status.

In recognition of our efforts to make the Fringe more accessible, we received the Euan's Guide Spirit of Inclusion award at the end of this year's Fringe.





# Promoting the Fringe

A major strand of our work is promoting the Fringe to all our stakeholders – audiences, artists, the media and arts industry – cementing its position as the world’s leading arts festival, a melting pot for artistic talent and a powerful advocate for freedom of expression.

## A global showcase for artists

The Fringe is one of the most globally recognised performing arts festivals in the world and audiences come from far and wide to see the 3,500 plus shows on offer in August. The Fringe also embodies the entire ecosystem of the arts industry: it’s where creative people come to exchange ideas and develop co-productions, where media come to review and critique, and where global arts programmers come to discover and commission work.

**We welcomed visitors from 157 countries.**

International participation is crucial to the success of the Fringe and we were delighted to welcome 1,360 arts industry professionals from 42 countries this year, alongside 1,001 members of the media from 23 countries. Twelve countries presented showcases at this year’s festival, including Canada, Belgium, Finland, China and South Korea. 19% of all registered shows were international.

We delivered information sessions to potential participants in locations as far afield as Adelaide, New York and Buenos Aires, and reached thousands more with 12 interactive online panel discussions. Designed to encourage and support participation, these sessions are full of practical information and provide an excellent opportunity for artists to ask any burning questions about taking part.

Society staff travelled to flagship cultural events throughout 2018, including the International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts in Brussels, the Australian Performing Arts Market in Brisbane and the International Society for the Performing Arts in New York where – in partnership with Creative Scotland and Scottish Government – we hosted an event celebrating the cultural connections between Edinburgh and the United States.

Closer to home, we worked with Arts Council England to establish a stronger pathway for artists coming to the Fringe from England, and a domestic strategy is underway to ensure we have more robust links to Wales and Northern

Ireland. The Chief Executive deepened political engagement with the Fringe, welcoming the Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and members of the royal family to Edinburgh in August. In addition to regular engagement with Scottish Government Ministers and local leaders in the City of Edinburgh Council, she also met with the Culture Secretary and senior officials in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The latter led directly to the first DCMS funding in 70 years of Edinburgh’s festivals, and recognition of the Fringe as a vital platform for UK artists.

## An international family of fringes

Fringe World Congress is a unique forum which brings together fringe festivals from around the world to learn from each other, exchange ideas and build future collaborations, strengthening the fringe community across the globe. We were proud to host the fourth Fringe World Congress in Edinburgh this year, the event returning to the city where the fringe spark was first ignited in 1947. Taking place from 16 to 20 August in the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation, 69 delegates from 35 fringes engaged in a packed programme of networking events and panel discussions on everything from the accessibility of fringe festivals to mental health and diversity.

Building on the success of the inaugural World Fringe Day in 2017, we once again celebrated all things fringe with our counterparts across the world on 11 July. World Fringe Day trended across the UK and over 200 fringes joined us on Twitter to share what makes their festivals and home cities unique, reaching over four million users.

In Edinburgh, in partnership with Parabola and Edinburgh Trams, we marked the occasion by taking over a Fringe-branded tram and hosting a silent disco with some of our community partners and street performers. The accompanying film has been viewed over 80,000 times.

**69 delegates from 35 fringes attended Fringe World Congress.**



## Taking a leap #IntoTheUnknown

The Fringe transforms Edinburgh into a magical world where anything is possible. This year, we invited artists and audiences to take a leap #IntoTheUnknown to explore Edinburgh's secret spaces, discover new work, take risks and create their own adventure. As a non-curated festival where anything can happen – from Shakespeare to silly walks, comedy to cabaret, circus to children's shows – we wanted Fringe-goers to step outside their comfort zone and try something different, be that a new genre, an unknown artist, a different part of town or an experience out of the ordinary.

The campaign was fully integrated across multiple channels including digital, out of home, print, social media and merchandise. As well as our core markets of Edinburgh, London and Glasgow, we targeted new audiences in Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, Aberdeen and Inverness, and younger audiences through Instagram activity.

**#IntoTheUnknown  
and #edfringe  
reached 168 million  
unique Twitter users.**

Starting in April, the campaign created a buzz of anticipation and excitement, and ran through to August, when we encouraged ticket buyers to keep exploring and taking risks. Although the Society cannot recommend individual shows, the campaign celebrated the fact that artists and audiences can, and we actively encouraged conversations about shows on our social media platforms.

The campaign was a resounding success, resulting in a 5% increase in ticket sales from 2017, with a 32% increase on the Fringe app alone. The campaign hashtag #IntoTheUnknown was used more than 78,000 times on Twitter in August, and from programme launch on 06 June reached more than 27 million users. Our year-round hashtag #edfringe was used 186,000 times and viewed on more than one billion occasions. And beyond the numbers, it was encouraging to see Fringe artists, audiences and venues embrace the spirit of the wider campaign, engaging in conversations, sharing their thoughts and recommendations, and taking a leap #IntoTheUnknown.

The media continued to play a crucial role in helping to grow our audiences and in helping them decide what shows to see. We received a huge volume of positive coverage across a broad range of media outlets, and key media moments included the launch of the programme, the redevelopment of street events on the Royal Mile and the introduction of sensory backpacks.

We welcomed 1,001 accredited media professionals – reviewers and features writers to broadcasters and bloggers – from 23 countries, including Chile, Hong Kong and Russia. The Media Office was on hand to provide advice on navigating the programme, assistance in arranging interviews and a comprehensive ticketing service for reviewers. Based on feedback from journalists in 2017, we hosted a series of events in Fringe Central aimed specifically at media professionals, including 'The State of Arts Criticism' and 'Responsible Reviewing'.

## Celebrating Scotland's young people

2018 was Scotland's Year of Young People, a year-long programme celebrating their achievements, valuing their contributions and creating new opportunities for them to shine in Scotland and beyond.

Inspiring the next generation of artists, audiences, arts professionals and journalists is integral to the Fringe's future, and we embraced the Year of Young People across all our activities. We brought together a panel of young advisors to help pull together the Fringe Central Events Programme, from concept to delivery, developing their curatorial, project-management and marketing skills.

Through the Young Arts Industry Programme, we worked with arts organisations across the UK to bring aspiring young programmers to see work at the Fringe. The young delegates could take advantage of all the services and resources available from the Arts Industry Office, including one-to-one career advice.

**'It's an amazing opportunity to be a part of the Fringe team, have my voice heard, and gain extra experience in events and marketing.'**

**Liv Ancell,**  
member of the 2018 Youth Panel



We worked with Youth Theatre Arts Scotland to nurture and support the next generation of arts critics through the 2018 Young Critics' Programme. The mentorship scheme supported eight young people to develop their understanding of the fundamentals of arts criticism and hone their writing skills through a series of workshops. Throughout the Fringe, these young critics reviewed shows and received feedback on their work from leading arts journalists.

The Fringe Young Writers' Award was established to recognise the best review of a 2018 Fringe show by a young writer aged 16 to 21. Flora Gosling was the talented winner of the inaugural award and she will receive mentoring from arts writers at The Scotsman and paid work as part of the newspaper's review team at the 2019 Fringe.

After nearly 40 years, 2018 marked the final year of the Fringe Schools' Poster Competition in its current form. Since its inception in 1980, the competition has captured the imagination of generations of Scotland's schoolchildren, with over 100,000 young people taking part and submitting their unique poster designs.

However, the time is now right to reimagine our engagement with schools and colleges to ensure our programmes more effectively reflect the nature of the Fringe and the performing arts, and align with current teaching practices. We will gather the views of young people, teachers, community groups and cultural organisations over the next 12 months in order to shape our approach to creative learning in and out of the classroom.





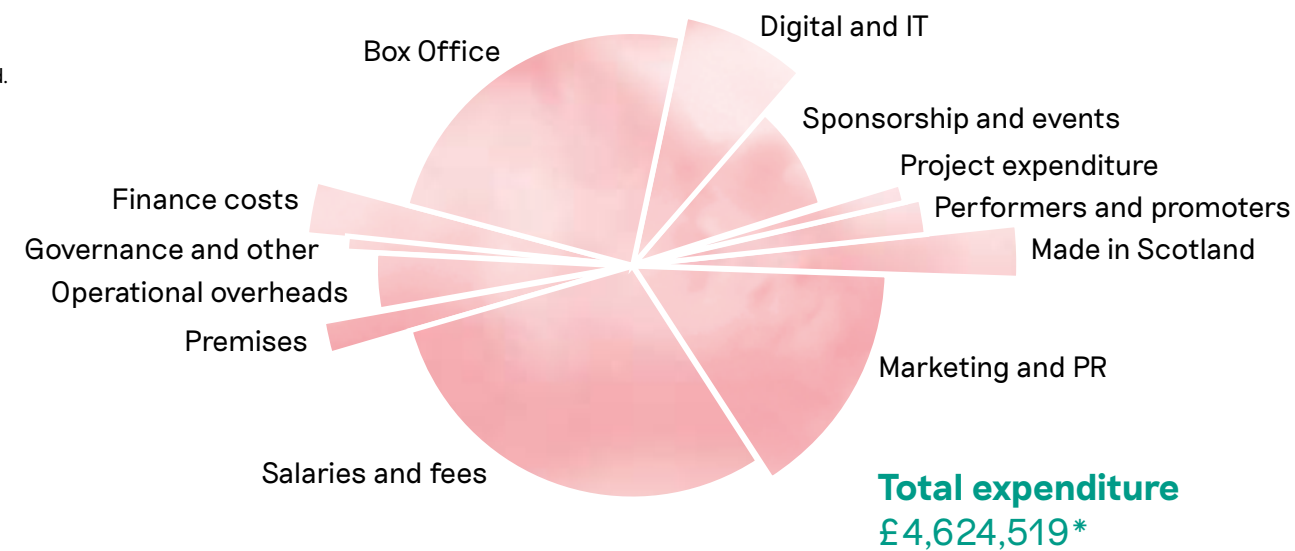
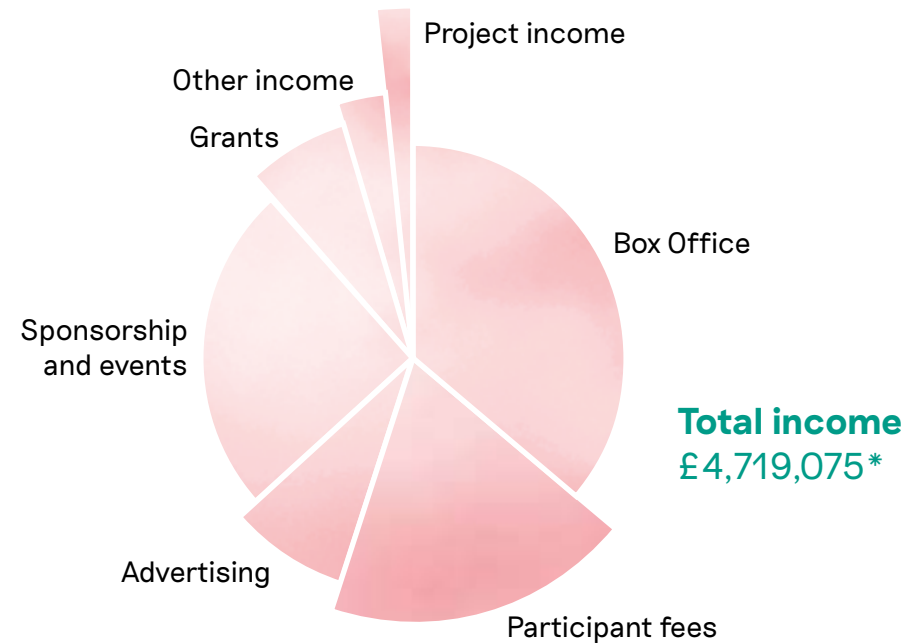
# Charitable activities

The majority of our income is generated through commission and fees connected with the Box Office, advertising associated with our publications and the website, registration fees, our Friends of the Fringe scheme, and sponsorship and events. We are grateful for the continued support of the City of Edinburgh Council and from the Scottish Government for Made in Scotland through the Festivals Expo Fund, managed through Creative Scotland.

Other income includes donations, rental income, Gift Aid and a management fee from our trading subsidiary.

The majority of our expenditure goes on providing box office services and infrastructure, staffing the Society, marketing the Fringe in its entirety, and producing publications and the website.

\*Please note that these figures are unaudited.



# We couldn't have done it without you

The Fringe Society is a registered charity which relies on both the support of sponsors and partners and the generosity of our Angels, Patrons, Friends and supporters, without whom none of the work covered throughout this review would be possible.

Continuing to deliver and develop our core aims of supporting participants, assisting Fringe audiences and promoting this wonderful festival to the rest of the world requires the support of many individuals and organisations. We ask you to join us in supporting this creative endeavour and ensuring that the Fringe remains a platform for the arts to develop and thrive.

To find out how you can support the Society, please visit [edfringe.com/support](http://edfringe.com/support) or contact us on +44 (0)131 226 0036.

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|--|---|
| Airbnb   | MediaCom Scotland   |
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| Arts & Business Scotland   | Murgitroyd  |
| Attitude is Everything   | North Edinburgh Arts  |
| Audio Description Association Scotland                                       | Out of Hand   |
| BBC  | PAMIS   |
| BECTU  | Parabola  |
| Birds of Paradise Theatre Company  | Parents in the Performing Arts  |
| British Council  | Pickering's Gin   |
| Burness Paull  | Pindar  |
| Caledonian Brewing Co.   | PRS for Music   |
| Chewigem   | Red61   |
| COMMON   | Scottish Enterprise   |
| Creative Scotland  | Scottish Government   |
| Deaf Action  | Scottish Music Centre   |
| Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport                             | Screenmedia   |
| Dynamic Earth  | Signal  |
| Edinburgh Airport  | Take One Media  |
| Edinburgh Art Festival   | The City of Edinburgh Council   |
| Edinburgh St James   | The List  |
| Edinburgh Tourism Action Group through the Festivals Tourism Innovation Fund | The Scotsman  |
| Edinburgh Trams  | The Skinny  |
| Edlets   | The University of Edinburgh   |
| Education Scotland   | UK Government   |
| Enterprise Screen  | Victor and Carina Contini   |
| Euan's Guide   | Virgin Money  |
| EventScotland  | VisitScotland   |
| Federation of Scottish Theatre   | Waterstones   |
| Fest   | Waverley Mall   |
| Festivals Edinburgh  | WHALE Arts  |
| Imaginate  | Whitespace  |
| International Society for the Performing Arts                                | World Fringe Alliance   |
| LNER   | Our Fringe Days Out partners  |
| Lothian Buses  | Fringe Angels, Patrons and Friends and all those who donated to the Society at the Fringe Box Office and via the website. |
| Lyra Arts  |   |



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**‘ There are no gatekeepers telling audiences what stories to consume – there are only artists, each with their own stories, their own fury, their own hopes, their own funny curiosities... behind every door is a chance to see the world out of someone else’s eyes. ’**

Deborah Frances-White