

# Development goals

**Updates**



# Thriving artists

## Objectives

**Source new income for Fringe artists**, particularly those who face the greatest barriers to participation in the festival.

**Create a board-level Venue Funding Committee** to ensure affordability for artists is central to decision-making and artists get a good deal.

**Recruit high profile Advocates, Patrons and donors to support recovery.**

## Progress

- **£100K Keep it Fringe (KIF) pilot fund in 2023**, thanks to donations from Edinburgh Gin and the Fringe Society's honorary President, Phoebe Waller-Bridge.
- **£1Mn KIF fund investment** from DCMS for 2024 and 2025.
- **£300K+** raised through **FringeMakers** platform in partnership with Crowdfunder.
- **£150K** raised through **Save the Fringe** campaign.
- We have lobbied and provided evidence to ensure the creative industries were included in the UK Government's industrial strategy plans, recognising this as a route for direct investment in artists, with KIF providing a well-evidenced and ready case for support.

- **In 2025 registration fees have remained frozen for the 18th year.**
- Board research group established to secure research exploring the affordability of the Fringe for artists, alongside the wider economics of the Fringe.

- **President** – Phoebe Waller-Bridge (2021).
- **Patron** – Suzy Eddie Izzard (2022).
- **US Ambassador** – Brian Cox (2024).

# Thriving artists

## Objectives

**Expand our Arts Industry service** to ensure it remains an attractive and beneficial opportunity for artists and industry.

**Seek and secure global media coverage and reviews.**



## Progress

- Arts industry accreditees – including programmers and bookers from around the world – increased by 30% from 2023–2024.
- New engagement and show discovery programmes developed since 2022 to deepen industry engagement, maximising artist opportunities.
- Screen Fringe, our engagement strand for the film and TV sector, saw an **88% increase in delegates**.
- **Over 300** accredited industry attended shows in the Made in Scotland showcase.

- **137 individuals** from international media outlets were accredited in 2024, from 25 countries, accounting for almost 15% of total media accredited.
- **In 2023 and 2024** we secured a partnership with Playbill, a US publication that champions live theatre and supports audience development in the US.

## Fair work

### Objectives

**Introduce monitoring and review of pay and work,** including ways to report and address inappropriate or poor working conditions and updated guidance and best practise.

## Climate action

### Objectives

**Significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the Fringe Society,** and influence change in the wider Fringe, supported by monitoring and accountability.

### Progress

- **New venues accredited as Real Living Wage employers.**
- **Job portal in scoping for new website,** though this requires investment.
- **Biennial workers' survey in place.**

### Progress

- **E-ticketing introduced in 2022.**
- **Programme print volume reduced by 50%.**
- New 'how to flyer' sessions added to Fringe Connect and Fringe Central.
- **Digital transformation** programme exploring audience discovery and reduced carbon footprint of digital services.
- **New Fringe Central** will reduce the Fringe Society's emissions significantly.
- **First 75 trees planted in Inverleith Park in 2022.**



# Equitable Fringe

## Objectives

Work with a wide range of partners to ensure access and inclusion at the Fringe, ensuring disabled, working-class and marginalised artists are represented.



## Progress

- **Digital evolution strategy** focused on improving digital accessibility.
- **Annual investment from the Fringe Society** and funders for access, engagement, learning and community work.
- **New Fringe Central** prioritising access and sustainability as core pillars of development.
- Partnership with **Unlimited** established to improve access for disabled artists at the Fringe.
- Over **50% of Emerging Professionals programme participants** were from a working-class background, and/or identified as disabled, and/or as part of the Global Majority, and/or the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Around 30-35% of successful Keep it Fringe funding recipients** have come from a working-class background across the three years of the project, while **38% identified as disabled or having a health condition**.
- **Captioning project** to increase the number of captioned shows, with a total of 152 registered captioned performances in 2024.
- Partnership with the **Deaf Festival** to improve BSL provision across the Fringe.
- Delivering projects with **Additional Support Needs** schools
- Working with **Creative Access** to deliver bespoke disability equality training to Registration, Customer Service and Box Office staff.
- Continued to offer online and in-person equalities training to both Fringe Society and venue staff.

# Equitable Fringe

## Objectives

Develop young people's knowledge and understanding of the Fringe.

Ensure the Fringe is affordable for all.

## Progress

- Annual delivery of **Fringe Days Out** and wider learning programme.
- **Young Fringe Ambassadors** launched.
- Annual delivery of the **Community Stage**, giving young people in Edinburgh the opportunity to perform in the Fringe and find out more about street performers.
- Widening exposure of the Fringe by providing opportunities for schools and young people to see work.
- Targeted projects engaging young people as artists.

- **Keep it Fringe** investment focused on inclusion, prioritising marginalised artists.
- We've supported and championed a wide range of venue and performer models at the Fringe – including **Free, Pay What You Want / Can**, ticket offers and more – to support wider access and affordability at the festival.

# Good citizenship

## Objectives

Ensure Edinburgh residents have access to the Fringe across the widest possible geography of the city.



## Progress

- **Fringe Days Out** and Community Ticketing Initiative delivery in all wards of the city.
- Delivery of Fringe events in areas of the city that the Fringe doesn't reach, such as **Broomhouse, North Edinburgh (Muirhouse, Pilton, Drylaw and Granton) and Burdiehouse.**
- Providing street performers and a Fringe presence at community festivals.
- Fringe artists and street performers took performances to over **650** people unable to attend the Fringe in person, in places such as Royal Hospital for Children and Young People, Capability Scotland, Merchiston Ward at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Cyrenians Farm, Artlink and seven care homes across Edinburgh.
- Providing the opportunity for over **180** people from across the city to perform on the Community Stage, including working with a LGBT Youth and an artist to develop a co-created piece of theatre to be performed on the stage.

# Good citizenship

## Objectives

Ensure the Fringe is in balance with the needs and positive / negative impacts to the city and that residents can benefit from the Fringe in a variety of ways.

Ensure a range of voices are heard in the shaping of the Fringe Society's objectives and strategies.

## Progress

- **Edinburgh remains the largest audience for the Fringe**, with surveys confirming a positive attitude to the benefit of the festival.
- Research working group established to explore the true benefit of the Fringe to Edinburgh (650 shows in the 2024 programme were from Edinburgh artists).
- Attendance at community councils, 'Meet the Fringe' sessions, EPAD events and many more.
- We've broadened the eligibility criteria of our Community Ticketing Initiative, allowing even more local residents to experience the Fringe who otherwise wouldn't have the chance.

- **Fringe Society membership development strategy in place**, with key objectives to grow membership and increase range and diversity of voices, including on the board of directors.
- 70% of our board (12 out of 17 members) are elected from the Fringe Society membership, representing the wider Fringe community.



# Digital evolution

## Objectives

**Future-proof the Fringe Society's digital services**, providing a world-class ticketing service that is easy to use and accessible alongside a range of digital tools for all.

**Ensure digital literacy and data-driven decision-making for all who wish to take part in the Fringe.**

## Progress

- **Investment for new website** to meet these ambitions is secured through DCMS and partner funds — this is due to commence in August 2025 and be ready in time for Fringe 2027.
- We've developed a strategic plan with critical pathways defined and funding in place for delivery in **2026**.

- **Work is built into our digital transformation strategy, with funding and investment in place** to deliver, including making the Fringe an 'Open Data' festival.

