

Arts Council of Wales response to questions from the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

1. Explanation of 98% reduction in audiences

Our research team are involved in regular monitoring of arts audience and participation activity throughout the year and produce year on year data.

Through our partnership with **Audience Finder** we produced analysis of **Ticketed Events in 2020/21**

- The overall number of tickets issued by participating venues dropped by 98% from 2,706,544 in 2019/20 to 50,556 in 2020/21.
- Percentage of total tickets issued by region:

Percentage of all Tickets Issued	2019/20	2020/21
Cardiff	41%	33%
North Wales	19%	30%
South Central Wales	3%	2%
South East Wales	5%	3%
South West Wales	32%	32%

- As with previous years there is a correlation between the number of ‘bookers’ and where they live in terms of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation. In 2020/21 it highlights those living in the most deprived areas are less likely to purchase tickets.

In addition, we gathered data through **Insight Alliance** and their **Missing Audiences – Wave 1** survey

10,834 responses were gathered across the UK during the first wave of the Missing Audiences survey that has been delivered by the Insights Alliance.

- A significant proportion of previously frequent cultural attenders have not yet returned to any cultural venue and less than 1 in 3 of those have a future booking.
- For those who have not yet returned, Covid safety concerns are the key factor holding them back, with 61% saying they are avoiding interacting with crowds and 23% saying they are waiting until they can attend as 'normal'.
- 74% of non-returners expect to attend less often in the next 12 months, while 47% of those who have returned will also attend less often.
- However, those who are not returning to cultural venues are also less likely to be taking public transport, going on domestic holidays or taking part in other social and leisure activities.
- Over a third of those who have returned in-person have continued to watch cultural content online and 73% of those who are engaging online and not yet returning say that they are engaging online because they don't feel confident returning in person yet.

2. Wales Arts International raising the profile of Wales internationally and examples of international partnership work with Welsh Government and independent projects/programmes;

The international activities of Arts Council of Wales extend across the whole of our organisation and across the breadth and depth of our investments. These activities are often (but not exclusively) developed, supported and / or co-ordinated by our in-house agency, Wales Arts International (WAI).

Our WAI team work with individuals across all of Council's portfolio; as well as with Welsh Government officials, British Council and others to support a global outlook to the arts and culture of Wales. We work in partnership to develop a focused ambition and to realise our combined international potential.

WAI's purpose is to:

- ensure Welsh artists engage internationally;
- help develop and enrich artistic practice, careers and ambition;
- grow new global opportunities for the arts and culture of Wales;
- invest in artistic collaborations that inspire and connect people in diverse communities in Wales.

As well as supporting the Council's corporate objectives and the arts sector's international ambitions (as identified in the International Strategy and corporate plan) WAI has a 3-year Service Level Agreement (2020-23) with Welsh Government's International Relations Department in the First Minister's team. Through the agreement WAI develops international projects and relations that support the realisation of Welsh Government's International Strategy and action plans.

The agreement sets out:

- A shared programme of work in key markets
- Global communications campaigns
- Funding arrangements
- Shifting to evaluate international work against the Future Generations 7 goals to ensure the agreement is yielding tangible benefits to the wellbeing goals

WAI works with various government units and teams in Wales and in-country teams in Canada, Germany, Ireland and Japan currently.

Highlights of our international programme in 2021 include:

Our global campaign **#PethauBychain #SmallThings** launched as part of St Davids Day in lockdown 2021 highlights how doing the small things can make a difference in our communities, to our planet, our own wellbeing, and for future generations. It features a wealth of creative content made accessible to view globally through our social media and our AM Channel has been created and curated by individual artists and companies in Wales responding in their own ways to the 7 Wellbeing Goals of the Future Generations Act. We resumed the **#PethauBychain** campaign in November 2021, sharing the messages of the 7 Wellbeing Goals through the arts on a weekly basis.

Year of Wales in Germany: Although significantly affected by Covid 19, the year has featured online seminars and exchanges; a delegation visit by Amgueddfa Cymru; a survey of artists working in Germany and funding provided through our International Opportunities Fund. Artists supported include seven north Wales based visual artists, featured as part of CARN (Caernarfon Artist Regional Network)'s pop-up exhibition at Neukölln 48hrs festival, Berlin. An arts and health collaboration between Welsh music prize winner Kelly Lee Owens and Berlin artist Lindred has been postponed into 2022 due to tour cancellations.

Focus Wales Wrexham

The twice cancelled event returned in force in October 2021 and welcomed international delegates from across the world. The showcase programme featured an exciting strand of MOBO music from Wales including artists like Mace the Great who has been invited to showcase in several international events on the back of Focus. WAI's partnership with Focus has enabled many digital collaborations and events during lockdown.

Arts Infopoint UK: Co-funded by Welsh Government, Scottish Government, Arts Council of England and Arts Council of Northern Ireland, and delivered in partnership with Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Northern Ireland and Arts Council of Wales, the Infopoint team run a programme of workshops to advise and support artists to overcome barriers to work internationally as a result of EU exit and Covid for the arts in Wales and the UK to continue to invite and work with the best of international arts.

4 Nations International Collaboration Fund

Wales Arts International has been actively supporting the development of a new international collaboration fund for artists in 2 of the UK Nations to work with international partners. The full list of funded projects will be shared mid January 2022.

Another collaboration across the 4 nations includes the Cultural Bridge Partnership with Germany's Fonds Soziokultur Fund, Goethe Institut in London and the British Council in Berlin. Valleys Kids and German partner Emanuel Geibel School and Lübeck University of Musik are one of the awarded collaborative projects of the new pilot fund encouraging socially engaged collaboration between Wales and Germany.

International Showcase Fund

WAI partners with PRS for Music Foundation and other UK partners to fund musicians invited to showcase in international events. Although many of the showcases have been postponed or presented digitally, we are hoping that 2022 will bring more live events such as SXSW, Showcase Scotland, New SkoolRules and Classical Next.

International Indigenous Music Summit

In preparation for the launch of Mawr y Rhai Bychain – the first international indigenous music festival by Neuadd Ogwen in Bethesda and to prepare for a year of collaboration between Wales and Canada in 2022, WAI supported Neuadd Ogwen and Lisa Jen to attend the hybrid the IIMS event.

WOMEX 2021

Wales Arts International represented Wales as part of the Horizons partnership at WOMEX 2021 and hosted networking events and participated on panel discussions on artist mobility with On the Move the European network for Artist mobility.

Wellbeing of Future Generations Goals Climate Emergency and Climate Justice

Arts Council of Wales/WAI has a partnership with **Future Generations Commission** to support the role of the Future Generations Poet in Residence. WAI supported the Wales Fringe event on the last day of COP26, including the creation of the Future Generations Chair by the National Eisteddfod and the Blot-deuwedd film by Ynys Blastig. WAI contributed to and attended the wider programme at COP and engaged with a number of leading global thinkers on the power and responsibility of the arts in terms of Climate Emergency and climate justice.

In addition to our commitment to the 7 Goals of the Wellbeing Act generally, we are looking specifically at how we re-think our international work against the 7 goals and in particular our own commitment to reducing our carbon footprint. Key initiatives we are involved in include:

- Through our work with the 4 Nations Arts Councils in England, Northern Ireland and Scotland we are developing policies relating to Climate Emergency and introducing slower and greener touring approaches for the Arts.
- WAI is involved in international networks discussing Climate Emergency and the arts such as On the Move and IETM.
- Prioritising Climate Justice in our culture and language work as part of the UN Decade of Indigenous Languages and in our work with Ireland, Canada, Germany and in the year of Wales in in Showcase Scotland at Celtic Connections in 2022/ 23 connected
- Supporting the new partnership between Natural Resources Wales and Arts Council of Wales and Future Fellowships to be launched in 2022.

- WAI hosted a discussion as part of Wales Climate Week with international guests on the theme of International Touring and Climate Emergency: Curtain Raiser or Showstopper and can be seen from 1:04:20 [here](#).

Ireland – following on from activity in Ireland for St David’s Day 2020, we have continued to support artistic connections between Wales and Ireland. Under the shared Statement of Intent, signed by Welsh and Irish governments in March 2021, we have begun working with our counterparts in Arts Council Ireland towards a Memorandum of Understanding and exploring joint areas for future activity. At the event in Wales Climate week demonstrated, developing sustainable touring routes is part of that conversation. Through our International Opportunities fund, we supported Dirty Protest and Fishamble’s online exploration of creative collaborations.

Things coming up/to look out for in the first quarter of 2022:

Showcase Scotland and Celtic Connections

Wales is the Focus Nation at Showcase Scotland in Celtic Connections in January 2022 and a delegation of international festivals will visit North Wales immediately after for the launch of Mawr y Rhai Bychain, the first international indigenous music festival programmed by Neuadd Ogwen Bethesda, which is likely to be a hybrid/digital event.

UN Decade of Indigenous Languages

To mark the first year, Wales Arts International will run Gwrando/Listening - a programme of activities to listen to the endangered languages of the world particularly those affected by climate emergency.

Announcements of the 4 Nations International Fund (mid-January).

Announcements of artists supported through our International Opportunities Fund and a review of the fund (January- April).

St David’s Day will build on the #PethauBychain campaign with even more creative content (and hopefully some live events Covid permitting!)

Arts Council of Wales

December 2021