

spotlight on cultural leadership

Building on your ideas

You know a cultural leader when you see one. You might be one yourself.

Cultural leaders are as diverse as the sector itself. Some run successful theatre companies, museums or galleries. Others own record labels, run graphic design studios and organise festivals. Cultural leaders also provide services to local communities through libraries, programmes for young people and regeneration schemes. Though they might not always head an organisation, they always play a key role. Leaders are the people who make things happen – despite the challenges, which are becoming more complex.

We need to prepare potential leaders to deal with these complexities. At the same time, we want to attract and train different sorts of leaders, including those who take less

conventional routes to success. By seeking a more diverse leadership that better represents the communities served, we will widen our talent pool and draw the people best able to meet the challenges our sector faces.

That is why from July to October 2005 we called for ideas on how to tackle leadership development for the sector. It was the first step in implementing a £12 million programme initiated by Chancellor Gordon Brown in that year's budget statement. The aim: 'to promote excellence in management and leadership within the cultural sector'.

The response to our call for ideas was generous, informed and inspiring.

It forms the basis of a two-year Cultural Leadership Programme that will be officially launched in May 2006.

Meanwhile, here is a brief update on progress so far.



An extraordinary resource

The importance of the cultural sector in helping to define and shape and deepen our lives as individuals and as communities is well established.

Culture also makes a significant contribution to the nation's prosperity. The sector accounts for over 5% of the gross domestic product (GDP) and, for the past decade, has grown at twice the rate of the economy as a whole.

Identifying and unleashing potential

Where are tomorrow's cultural leaders?

Some are only just emerging from an early stage in their careers. Or they could be new to the sector. Others might be making the move from practising artist or cultural practitioner to a wider or more high profile leadership role.

Others are already operating at senior levels though they still have more to offer in leadership terms as their careers progress. At this stage, they face considerable challenges. These include retaining their effectiveness in more complex working environments, managing a wider range of projects, funding and stakeholder relationships.

The £12 million allocated by the Chancellor to the Cultural Leadership Programme is tangible acknowledgment of these achievements, and a vote of confidence for the creative workforce; the people who have enriched Britain's cultural life at every level.

It is also a recognition that if the sector is to continue growing and serving its constituents' evolving needs, a new generation of leaders must be identified and encouraged. These people – as diverse as the communities they serve – will set ever higher standards and nurture new talent. It will be their responsibility to develop and implement the vision needed to make Britain's cultural life even richer for all.



A third category of tomorrow's cultural leaders will come from the ranks of today's cultural entrepreneurs. They are the people who have had early success as innovators of new products, services or creative or artistic processes. As a result, they have strong ideas about new ways of working and getting access to new audiences and markets. For them, the challenge is to look to the long term and to develop the skills essential for running an organisation.

The Cultural Leadership Programme will tap into existing talent and provide a step up for all three categories of participants.

Delivering through real partnership

Three strategic partners – working together in a new way – will deliver the Cultural Leadership Programme.

Together these partners – Arts Council England, Creative & Cultural Skills (Sector Skills Council) and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council – have formed the Cultural Leadership Delivery Partnership. The Partnership will draw on existing resources, share expertise, and ensure the programme provides value for money and maximum impact. The team has started brokering additional support from throughout the creative community and beyond.

Focus will be on:

- Ensuring that the skills base and support networks for creative leaders are fit for purpose
- Enabling a more diverse range of people to be leaders
- Providing development opportunities for current and prospective leaders at different stages of their careers
- Securing a long-term legacy for cultural leadership by connecting the programme to other major skills developments

Our aim as a partnership is to deliver sector leadership that is dynamic, diverse and genuinely world class. We will publish further details of how this unique partnership will operate shortly.

One programme, six strands

Based on feedback from the initial call for ideas, we have identified six focus areas. Each meets a specific need. All will help develop a new generation of cultural leaders.

Intensive leadership development

The Clore Leadership Programme, working in association with a number of selected universities and business schools in England, will deliver a series of two-week intensive residential courses designed to cultivate the skills of emerging cultural leaders. These courses, starting in July 2006, are for people with at least five years of experience in the middle ranks of larger cultural organisations (or for those at or near the top of smaller ones). The curriculum will cover intensive personal development work, training management skills, financial accounting,

people management and teamwork, strategic planning, media and presentation skills, fundraising, marketing and lobbying, governance and charity law. Each course will not only draw on the expertise of faculty members, but will also rely on lecturers with experience across the whole cultural sector.

Next steps: for information on how to take part in the Clore Leadership Short Courses Programme, visit www.cloreleadership.org (available after 10 May 2006)

Better informing the career choices of people in the sector

Leaders – current and prospective – progress by broadening their experiences and increasing their knowledge. With that in mind, the Cultural Leadership Programme will create a dedicated online service and web portal. Developed by Creative & Cultural Skills, this will make a wide range of material available, including information on development opportunities, specialised industry approved advice tailored to participants' needs and guidance on next steps in training and career development.

This unique learning resource, which is integral to the overall programme, will benefit a huge number of individuals across the UK.

Next steps: planning and design is underway for the service, which should go live within the year. We will be seeking involvement from sector bodies and agencies, trade and professional bodies and from individuals.

Opportunities for emerging and mid-career leaders

The Cultural Leadership Programme also features a work-based initiative. This will be demand-led and focus on peer learning, networks, coaching and mentoring. Action learning sets will support participants in experimenting with new ways of working within their current organisations. A pilot initiative, involving as many as 15 partner networks, begins in April 2006. Partners will be drawn from across the country and span the cultural sector. A specific initiative will

address the needs of disabled people as leaders. Based on this experience, a full-scale programme will start in November 2006. Ultimately, around 500 people will enhance their leadership skills by participating.

Next steps: you can find out more about the pilot initiative at our launch in May. Details of further opportunities will be available from November.

Powerbrokers Black and minority ethnic development programme

A diverse society needs cultural leaders from every part of the community. Powerbrokers will start to address the existing imbalance by ensuring a high level of participation in the Cultural Leadership Programme by people from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Powerbrokers is exclusively tasked with driving forward the change needed to diversify the leadership of the cultural sector. A sector-wide consortium will be tackling the barriers that frustrate the progress of Black and minority ethnic people in cultural organisations through a combination of direct support and advocacy. While this strand provides additional support for specifically targeted people, we will also provide opportunities for a wide and diverse range of aspiring leaders across the whole programme.



Photo: The Hip Hop Collective, decibel Showcase 2005. Photographer: Dinu Li

Next steps: Details of an activity programme will be available at our launch.

Governance development

Good governance has rightly become an overarching issue, transcending sectors and disciplines. A major role for the leadership programme will be to establish and promote best practice for governance bodies within cultural organisations. A significant part of this effort will be to embed an understanding of the need for leadership in governance. Equally important will be facilitating development opportunities for governing bodies and their members, with

particular emphasis on the role of chairs; executive leadership; succession planning and risk management.

Next steps: we are carrying out a review of governance issues in the cultural sector and looking at best practice elsewhere. At our May launch we will publish these findings and an action plan.

Developing entrepreneurs as leaders

Our call for ideas raised a number of issues that cultural entrepreneurs face in their career development. Consequently, we will work with a group of entrepreneurs to define their leadership learning needs and create appropriate opportunities to run from April 2007. This work will usefully be informed by a number of other initiatives in this area, including the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's Creative Economy Programme, in which a number of entrepreneurs are already involved.

Next steps: we will continue to develop this initiative throughout this year. Opportunities for individuals to benefit will be available from April 2007.



Photo: Cockpit Arts. Photographer: Nily Izadi

Looking ahead

The Cultural Leadership Programme is work in progress – informed and led by the sector it serves.

Your response to the call for ideas demonstrated the sector's enthusiasm. Now we are seeking your continuing interest and support for the next two years.

To help keep you involved we will invite you to the Cultural Leadership Programme's official launch in May and provide you with bulletins and online information on current and future opportunities.

Until our dedicated website is up and running, please visit the websites of the three delivery partners:

www.artscouncil.org.uk

www.ccskills.org.uk

www.mla.gov.uk

You might also be interested in joining the small team that will oversee the programme. Details will be available from the Arts Council website from late April 2006.

A few FAQs

How do I participate?

We hope many leaders and emerging leaders will benefit directly from the Cultural Leadership Programme during the next two years. We will advertise initiatives through a regular bulletin and on our websites. The first opportunity will be the Clore Leadership Short Courses Programme, starting in July. For details, visit www.cloreleadership.org from 10 May 2006.

Who is eligible to take part?

The programme is for emerging leaders, people mid-way in their careers and cultural entrepreneurs. England is the primary geographic focus, but opportunities will be open to people throughout the UK working in the core cultural sector of crafts; libraries and archives; museums and galleries; music; and the performing, literary and visual arts – as well as those working in the wider creative and cultural industries

Will the programme fund my project ideas?

The Cultural Leadership Programme is not about open-application grant funding. Therefore, we cannot respond to individual project applications. The 2005 call for ideas demonstrated the importance of being demand-led, allowing current and future leaders to outline their own needs and ensuring that what we do responds to those needs. We will invite you, through the bulletin, to share ideas with us during the course of the programme.

The programme **will not** fund:

- Existing initiatives or offer replacement funding
- Duplication of existing initiatives
- Existing management and leadership courses including Further and Higher Education course development

Photo: Much ado about nothing, Library Theatre
Photographer - Nilu Izadi

How do I contribute?

If the Cultural Leadership Programme is to make a difference, it will need support from throughout the sector. Not just emotional or abstract intellectual commitment, but active involvement that makes demands on time and energy.

In organisations that are already stretched, this will be a challenge. Existing leaders will be asked to give up their time to shadow, mentor, advise and guide the people who will eventually succeed them. And those future leaders will have to juggle their existing commitments in the interests of their own development.

None of this will be easy. It will require energy, creativity, insight and dedication – the very qualities that already contribute to the sector's remarkable success.

By applying those same qualities to fully inclusive leadership development, together we can ensure that the nation – and the world – will continue to benefit from the cultural powerhouse that is contemporary Britain.

Whom can I contact?

If you have any questions, please contact Kate Booth, the Cultural Leadership Programme's Administrator.

She can be reached by phone on **020 7973 5542** or email:

cultural.leadership@artscouncil.org.uk

