

Newcastle Gateshead Cultural Venues

[NGCV](#) is a partnership of 10 building-based cultural producers operating 20 venues across visual arts, performing arts, music, dance, film, writing and literature, heritage, archives and museums and science communication:

[Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art and BALTIC 39](#) (visual arts)

[Centre for Life](#) (science centre)

[Dance City](#) (national dance agency for North East)

[Live Theatre](#) (new writing theatre)

[Northern Stage](#) (producing theatre)

[Seven Stories](#) (national centre for children's literature)

[Sage Gateshead](#) (music performance and learning)

[Theatre Royal and City Hall](#) (receiving and touring productions)

[Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums](#) (9 museums, galleries and heritage sites, plus the area archives)

[Tyneside Cinema](#) (independent cinema)

NGCV principles and working together

NGCV shared vision

We work together to maximise the artistic and economic potential of the cultural sector in the North East. We achieve this by developing strategic and creative initiatives, sharing practice and resources and by being a strong collective voice.

NGCV Sharing protocol

- Agreed aims and objectives and how to collaborate
- Savings must outweigh costs, with a balance of benefits for larger and smaller organisations
- Flexible collaboration for those who wish to engage
- Activities should be practical and have a real impact
- Evidence of progress – track benefits of collaboration
- Demonstrating added value through collaboration

NGCV priorities and activities

Sustain and develop cultural offer

- Continue to deliver world-class culture

Build public engagement and develop audiences

- Engage more deeply with a growing and diverse audience and promote cross venue participation and engagement

Maximise efficiencies

- Be as lean as possible, whilst ensuring best quality

Generate income

- Investigate new income streams, explore commissioning, diversification and becoming more entrepreneurial

Influence policy and strategy

- Engage with stakeholders and influencers (locally, regionally, nationally and internationally) on issues of importance to the group, region and sector

Membership criteria

- Responsible for significant public cultural buildings
- Not for profit cultural organisations, in whom the public sector are significant stakeholders, where all executive decision-making resides with the CEO
- Sharing commitment and capacity to work collaboratively with other NGCV partners to increase public engagement in our work and knowledge and understanding of the arts, sciences and culture, and collaborate to develop more resource-efficient ways of working
- Responsible for significant, originally created education and community programmes

Establishing strong relationships

- High degree of trust and openness at Chief Executive level
- Building relationships between staff over time, bringing people together from the 'back offices', as well as front of house, learning teams and creative programmers
- Regular face to face meetings of staff in working groups, sharing information, giving support
- Sharing responsibility for different collective actions
- Supporting communication through a neutral online social network (ning) which staff can join and share information. Weekly 'ning-mails' to share details of activities, offers and opportunities and to encourage visits and awareness of each others' venues and activities

Making the most of the critical mass

- Renegotiation of contracts, preferred suppliers, using the bargaining power of NGCV and knowledge of suppliers
- Supplying each other with goods and services.
- Working together around advocacy and lobbying

Experimenting and taking risks

- Taking more risks by sharing the risk/responsibilities. The group can more readily test new approaches to priority areas of work, by sharing costs, staff, expertise, risk and responsibility. Tests are allowed to fail, with learning feeding in to the next steps. Activities which are successful can be scaled up.

Independent economic impact assessment

£87.3m Total economic contribution to the North East
1,985 FTE Jobs supported in the North East
1,296 Employees across all the organisations employed
Directly in full and part time posts
54% Direct/indirect spend on suppliers within N.E.
£15.7m Additional visitor spend in NewcastleGateshead
3.8m Attendances at the venues
958,608 Learning and participation engagements
£4.61 Return on investment (per £1 of public subsidy)
1,007 Volunteers giving 40,024 hours of their time
* *NGCV Economic Impact Assessment 2015-16* ([ERS](#), Nov 2016)

Sharing information and expertise

- Internal surveys to establish baselines and understanding (back office costs and contracts, utilities consumption, training needs and provision, IT infrastructure, earned income, funding, staffing)
- Ongoing sharing of expertise and resources across venues, within and outside groups on key themes
- Sessions with experts (e.g. HR and employment, facilities, finance, facilities issues, digital trends)
- External expertise and research on key issues relating to public engagement, digital strategy and capital assets.

Examples of activities

- Annual [NGCV Economic Impact Assessment](#) demonstrating the collective impact of the members
- Achieving standards of excellence across all organisations e.g. [Equality Standard Gold Award](#) for excellence in equality and diversity, which we have all achieved in both 2014 and also in 2016
- Joint action research leading to public initiatives around audience development to reach more audiences and move them between cultural forms and venues ([Family Explorers](#) and [The Insider](#))
- Supporting talent ([Artist Development Network](#))