

## **CUPIDO Inspirational Work Package – Highlands and Islands Region**

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## 1. Introduction

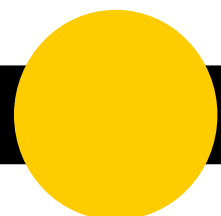
The Culture power: to inspire development in rural areas (CUPIDO) Interreg NSR cultural heritage project is mainly about commercialisation of the culture sector; enabling projects designed to contribute towards creating vibrant, sustainable rural communities that attract people to live, work, visit and improve the quality of life offer. Part of the project supports research – *Power of Culture, the DNA of a region* - to establish ways to strengthen viable and sustainable rural economies, based on the social historic role, core qualities and values of the involved regions, towns / cities and local communities. It identifies trends and best practices to help improve participant regions' local cultural offering. Hence the purpose of this report is to develop an *Inspirational Work Package* based on research findings that will enhance the region's cultural heritage offering and support commercialisation within the sector.

Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) in collaboration with University of St Andrews (UoSA) have designed their CUPIDO *digital heritage* pilot project based on the findings derived from the research, as well as examining existing sector support provided in the region. HIE's involvement in Scotland's 2017 Year of History Heritage and Archaeology led to undertaking sector research which ascertained a market need for specialist advice and targeted investment to accelerate the adoption of digital technologies within the cultural heritage sector. Growing use of digital within the sector is evidenced by many larger national museums employing designated digital teams, and investing in technologies to provide a fully digital interactive experience. However, it is apparent smaller cultural organisations are prohibited from taking advantage of the many benefits enabled through digitalisation of content, due to limited access to finance and specialist technical assistance. This is further evidenced with intelligence shared by HIE's sector teams in respect of limited access to the resources – both staff and digital expertise – needed to assist cultural heritage organisations adopt new technologies and ways of working to respond to current market opportunities and customer needs.

2017 research resonates the findings from CUPIDO research project - *Power of Culture, the DNA of a region* – whereby digital innovation is identified as a key area, by the sector, to help enhance the sector's cultural offering and open up new commercial opportunities. Collectively this has led to HIE and UoSA basing their *Inspirational Package* on the need to support adoption of technologies within the cultural sector that will realise social and economic benefits for participant social enterprises (SMEs) and communities; leading to supporting commercialisation of the cultural sector.

## 2. Analysis of Research Findings / Core Values of Your Region

All CUPIDO research participants identified culture as an important economic driver in rural communities, particularly in relation to supporting tourism which is essential to islands and other remote communities' long-term sustainability. While participants identified the region's incredible landscape, history and archaeology as attracting visitors to the region, they too attributed this to drawing creative companies to the region as it's an inspiring place for creatives. The research highlighted that some other businesses in other sectors such as food and drink, and leisure wouldn't be as successful or exist if it wasn't for the cultural sector – thereby culture is viewed as central to some companies operating in other sectors business' models.



Digital innovation was identified as a key area for development, recognising it plays an increasingly important role in preservation and promotion of communities' cultural heritage, as well as making remote places and sites more accessible. Consensus amongst participants that the next real drive within the sector has to be around use of technologies, and how it is customised to creative output – recognising for example what may fit a self-published author versus a heritage organisation may be very different.

Additionally, improved use of technology within the sector was identified as a commercial driver, helping to monetise creative output, build consumer base, a crowd, creating narrative, distributing product to wider market, and getting product to the customer – all of which enhance commercial growth. One research participant highlighted that strategically this is where young people come in as they have grown up using technology, and incredibly aware of how to use it, and it should be relatively straight forward to transition their digital skills set, adding enormous benefit.

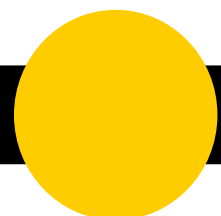
Majority of research participants shared concerns of the 'brain drain' of young people from rural and remote communities, very much see it is a destination they want to get away from. It was identified that there could be benefits of doing more work with academia whereby the industry can work with academic institutions to highlight the career opportunities within the culture and creative industries sector. Additionally, there is a need to look at developing more opportunities for young people in entrepreneurship, and how they can develop their own businesses within creative industries and other sectors. Digital and young people were often referred to, identifying digital as an area that can attract more young people to participate, work, and study within the sector.

Whilst the research identified an overall need to develop use of technologies within the culture sector to bring about commercial benefits as well as help preserve cultural heritage for future generations, it also provided helpful insights into other development needs within the sector. Majority of research participants highlighted congestion at key historical sites and need for improved strategic marketing to disperse visitors. All participants associated the strong tourism offering the region has in respect of its landscape, natural and cultural heritage, but also the need to improve basic infrastructure such as better toilet facilities, roads and improved public transport in response to the increased numbers of visitors to the region.

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The findings from the research have been analysed to identify a core set of values, which have then been applied to the design of HIE and UoSA inspirational package and pilot project. This set of values are as follows:

- Culture is valued as an important economic driver in the region's rural communities.
- The region's incredible landscape, history and archaeology is valued as an important economic asset; attracting visitors and drawing creative companies to the region as it's an inspiring place for creatives.
- Digital innovation is valued as a key area for development, recognising it plays an increasingly important role in preservation and promotion of communities' cultural heritage; as well as making remote places and sites more accessible.



- Adoption of digital technologies within the sector is valued as an important commercial driver; helping to monetise creative output, build consumer base, a crowd, creating narrative, distributing product to wider market, and getting product to the customer.
- Young peoples' contributions particularly in the field of digital are valued and providing them with education and job opportunities to enable them to stay in their communities.

### 3. What is happening in the World / Global Trends

As part of the CUPIDO research project, data has been gathered and shared in relation to global trends. This section provides a summary of the key trends identified. A number of important consumer trends and relevant trends for culture and history are identified relating to new future mindsets and new product-market combinations.

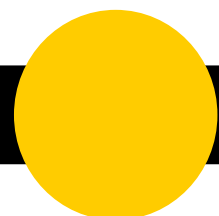
**Globalisation** is the process of integrating economies into the world, driven by current transportation and communication options. Advances in technology mean people can be continuously connected to each other worldwide. Whilst the world is getting bigger in relation to international travel and we can go anywhere, it also means that the world is getting smaller in respect of products produced and transported all over the world. Global development changes in the world are recognised as having a major impact on the individuality of cultures.

**Demand Economy** recognises consumers know what they want and no longer want. Globalisation and the internet make it easier for companies to take product to market and establish a consumer base; and makes it easier for consumers to purchase products. It's recognised globally we are moving from a supply to a demand economy.

**New (Newism)** is an important concept. For consumers raised in an 'expectation economy', new has a positive sound, especially for the younger generations. Advances in technology and internet allow an endless flow of new and better products. New is also identified as a status element; new equals interesting experiences and being the first to do or have something. 'Newism' does not mean that all attention from new consumers will be focused on the 'new'. For example, classic/ traditional products and/or services and brands have unprecedented opportunities in the global world, as long as they continue to offer high quality product for the customer.

Additional data regards 'value' as a relevant, consistent and well-told story behind a product or service. It also identifies provenance of cultural product to enhance USP, which is particularly important when competing in a global market place. This was reinforced by one of our research participants, acknowledging the Highlands and Islands is particularly powerful when it comes to provenance, and highlighted the amount of time consumers are now interrogating the provenance when purchasing product is powerful data. Additionally, it was identified the next real drive has to be around using technology and how it can act as a commercial driver.

**Covid-19 Impact** is having a major global impact to health, economy and way of life. The current lockdown means now is the time more than ever before where individuals, communities and businesses are becoming increasingly reliant on the role of internet and technology to stay connected and continue to do business. In Scotland's Highlands and Islands region, it is reported cultural



organisations and museums are looking at ways to adapt to a more digital way of working to respond to the Covid-19 associated restrictions to enable them to continue to engage and do business.

The above key global trends researched and provided by one of the project’s research partners in conjunction with the region’s research findings have been taken into consideration when developing key trends and themes for the Highlands and Islands region, as outlined in the next section.

#### 4. Specific Trends for your Region / City and Themes / Target Audience

The research findings provide an overarching theme on the need to further develop the use of digital within the cultural sector to drive commercial growth and bring about social benefits. There are trends emerging on types of digital technologies relevant to the cultural sector such as VR, interactive maps, and enhancing on-line presence to help diversify SMEs consumer base. A further trend identified is on the role young people can play in supporting the uptake of digital within the culture and heritage sector, as well as digital playing a role in attracting more young people to become more involved in their local cultural sector. This in turn has led to developing the following culture actions / inspirational work package to respond to emerging themes and trends from CUPIDO cultural research.

The target audience is identified as cultural social enterprises / SMEs, communities and young people.

#### Inspirational Work Package

Inspirational Work Package
Provide the cultural sector with skills workshops relating to use of technologies relevant to cultural sector.
Provide tailored digital support to enable cultural heritage organisation adopt new technologies and create digital representations of historical exhibitions and sites, and create digital centres of excellence.
Work towards engaging young people in digital activities as part of the pilot project.
Share research findings with our strategic partners with the view to influence areas of policy and sector development support.
Work with pilot organisations to develop on-line cultural heritage mapping to help promote and market communities’ local cultural offering.
Create opportunities for knowledge exchange and networking amongst cultural organisations, academia, and national cultural organisations to explore and progress new creative ideas.



## 5. Positioning Scenarios Based on the Regional Values Combined with Trends

**Driving Trends:** Globalisation Covid-19 Crisis Advances in Technology Digital Adoption

**Key Words:** Culture & Heritage – Important Economic Assets; Digital Adoption

**Target Groups:** Cultural social enterprises / SMEs, remote and rural communities, and young people

Incredible Landscape | Heritage and Archaeology | Digital Innovation | Culture & Heritage – Important Economic Assets | Preservation & Promotion | Digital – Monetising Creative Output | Digital & Young People | Digital – Enhance Commercial Growth | Advances in Technology | Collaborating with Academia | Transitioning Digital Skills Set | Making Remote Places & Sites More Accessible | Improving Visitor Experience | Respond to Market Need & Opportunities | Enhance Region’s Cultural Offering | Support Commercialisation within the Sector | Accelerate Adoption of Technologies | Provenance & Product

**Scenario:** *Helping Communities Promote and Preserve their Local Heritage and Commercialise the Cultural Sector through Digital*

Scotland’s Highlands and Islands region has an incredible landscape, archaeology and heritage that add to the attractiveness of the region as a place to visit, live, work and study. Likewise, the region’s culture and heritage sector make a considerable contribution to the attractiveness of place. Digital is identified as a key area for development within the region’s cultural and heritage sector, helping communities to preserve and promote their local heritage as a means to attract increase in visitor footfall. Additionally, advances in technology are opening up new opportunities to help monetise creative product; as well as provide new cultural experiences through VR / AR etc. Digital creates opportunities for many cultural and heritage businesses to do business in new ways. Young people are identified as being highly skilled in the use of digital as it’s something they’ve grown up with, creating opportunities to transition their skills set to support adoption of digital and become more involved within the sector. There are opportunities to connect academia with the cultural sector to develop digital products and services designed to preserve and promote communities’ cultural heritage, as well as open up new business opportunities. Combining those identified emerging values and trends has influenced the design of Scotland’s Highlands and Islands *Inspiration Package*. Through CUPIDO HIE will engage the academic expertise of University of St Andrews to support the adoption of new technologies with the region’s cultural sector – aiming to help promote and preserve communities’ cultural heritage, as well as support commercialisation of the sector. We will seek to engage young people’s throughout the project.

