2024

TOGETHER WE ARE

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL



ANNUAL REVIEW

RITUALS THAT UNITE US

• MUSIC • THEATRE • OPERA • DANCE • MUSIC • THEATRE • OPERA • DANCE • MUSIC • THEATRE

WELCOME

FROM FESTIVAL DIRECTOR NICOLA BENEDETTI

This year, we celebrated new and reimagined rituals, honoured tradition and sought innovation, uniting our magnificent Festival audience around our curated programme. We reaffirmed our vision in practice – to provide the deepest level of experience through the highest quality art to the broadest possible audience.

The 2024 Festival's programme of music, opera, theatre and dance was guided by a central provocation: Rituals That Unite Us. We deepened our dedication to our audience, bringing behind-the-scenes insights and further diversifying our bold and innovative concert presentations. From a spectacular opening event that told the magical story of this Festival City, to the return of our beanbag concerts, we set out to create a closer union between audiences and artists.

Our programme once again demonstrated our scale and ambition, championed and protected the quality of art for which we are renowned and clearly signalled our contemporary and international identity. Through the immersive ritual of *Nigamon/Tunai*, the wild frenzy of Grupo Corpo, the eclecticism of Osvaldo Golijov's *La Pasión según San Marcos* and our 20 world, European, UK and Scottish premieres, we affirmed our role as an essential destination for arts and culture.

We strengthened our social mission and belief that things are personal and are all about people, creating a Festival more inclusive than ever. Ticket bookings more than doubled for under 18s, young musicians and D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent audiences, alongside our most expansive affordable ticket offer yet – with over 50% of tickets sold at £30 or less. Our work with the community has increasing importance, most loudly demonstrated through our collaboration with Scottish Ballet and Jameel Arts & Health Lab to co-host the first Healing Arts Scotland, the opening celebration of which brought together 265 performers and over 1,000 audience members in a moment of mass participation. Responding to the growing need for collaboration to increase arts access and engagement, our inaugural Community Connections Hub brings the spirit of the Festival directly to the people of Edinburgh, starting in Broomhouse.

Inside our Annual Review, you'll hear from young people, politicians, supporters and audience members – they all share beautiful and profound stories bringing to life the lasting impact our Festival has on people's lives.

As we look towards the 2025 International Festival, we do so with an ambition to gather in pursuit of meaning, embracing curiosity over certainty, and empathy over division.



© Jassy Earl

WELCOME

FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE FRANCESCA HEGYI

This review looks back on the Festival's full year of activities over 2024 and the 78th edition of the International Festival. Producing an event of this scale and ambition is a collaborative endeavour involving thousands of dedicated individuals and partner organisations, many of whom plan for months and years to create a unique but familiar Festival each August. In combination with our year-round community work, the impact of this Festival extends far beyond August.

As you read on, you'll see how we are working hard to realise our long-term aims in the second year of Nicola Bendetti's tenure – a tenure marked by an infectious passion to bring our audiences closer to the art. Our strategy guides our main areas of work: Artistic Programme, Audience Experience, Cultural Leadership, Financial Sustainability, and People & Culture. Each section of this Annual Review sends a powerful reminder of the far-reaching impact of arts and culture which goes beyond the sheer enjoyment of experiencing a performance.

Scotland and its capital city can remain proud of the Festival it originated in the post-war period. We remain the standard bearer for international festivals globally and an essential feature of the international calendar. In 2024, more than 2,000 artists from 42 countries – from Brazil to Kyrgyzstan – attracted over 125,000 people to celebrate the shared rituals, traditions and festivities that connect us all.

This review is published at a time of deep concern and uncertainty for countless arts and charitable organisations in Scotland. Public support remains at a standstill – for the International Festival this represents some 17 years of frozen funding – yet the ambition and creativity with which the many talented artists, producers and wider Festival staff approach each year only increases.

Thank you to everyone who plays a part in making it happen, especially our exceptional team, whose commitment and camaraderie is unmatched, and our Board of Trustees, who give their time, insight and support so generously.



WE ARE

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

OUR ORIGIN STORY

The original festival. We're the one that started it all, the igniting spark that established Edinburgh as the world's Festival City.

Founded in 1947, the Edinburgh International Festival was the inspired idea of Rudolf Bing, a cultural pioneer and Jewish refugee of the Nazi regime. He joined with civic and artistic leaders to create an event that would transcend political boundaries through a global celebration of performing arts in Scotland's beloved capital city. Over the following 77 years the International Festival has flourished, deepening our commitment to artistic excellence and cultural curiosity. Meanwhile, sister festivals have grown up around us, each of them contributing to the atmosphere of unparalleled excitement that transforms the city every summer.

OUR FESTIVAL

We welcome the world to Edinburgh to experience our hand-picked programme of the finest performers in dance, opera, music and theatre. Through their artistry we create space for reflection and reconciliation, debate and celebration, bringing people of different cultures and viewpoints together.



Mahler 5 Inside Out © Andrew Perry

OUR IMPACT

Shining far beyond what you see on stage, we aim to be a beacon for the enormous creativity, curiosity and potential held within individuals, communities and our nation. We offer year-round pathways for people of all ages and backgrounds to discover and participate in live performance, and to help shape the future of our Festival. By nurturing the next generation of artists – from inspiring primary schoolchildren to mentoring rising stars – we want this legacy to be felt for years to come.

OUR MISSION

We exist to promote the exchange of ideas and deepen understanding between cultures through a global celebration of exceptional performing arts.

OUR VISION

Our vision is simple: to provide the deepest experience of the highest quality art for the broadest possible audience.

OUR VALUES

Discovery, Internationalism, Connection.

Learn more at **eif.co.uk/about**

THE 2024 FESTIVAL

The Festival theme Rituals That Unite Us explored the power of live performance to bind us closer together.

Over 7,000 people joined us at the highly anticipated Opening Event: *Where to Begin*, presented in partnership with The Macallan whose dedication to heritage and craftsmanship we share. This ambitious and immersive experience, brought to life by the creative team at Pinwheel, launched Edinburgh's festival season.

Opera once again took centre stage with Opéra-Comique's archetypal *Carmen* celebrating the 150th anniversary of Georges Bizet's masterpiece, while Komische Oper Berlin's *The Marriage of Figaro* put a new twist on a classic. The dance programme ranged from intimate, with Aakash Odedra Company's exquisite *Songs of the Bulbul*, to epic, with Kidd Pivot's extraordinary *Assembly Hall.* Theatre brought us Internationaal Theater Amsterdam's visceral *Penthesilea;* a surprisingly joyous *Hamlet* from Teatro la Plaza; as well as our world premiere co-production with the Royal Lyceum Theatre Company of *The Outrun*. In a series of Keynote Talks, Akala, Caroline Criado Perez and Gordon Brown engaged with our theme.

We reimagined ways in which live performance could bring audiences and artists closer together. Seats were swapped for beanbags for six informal concerts at the Usher Hall. Residencies from Ilumina, Bamberger Symphoniker and Philharmonia allowed audiences a deeper exploration of their repertoire and the ensembles to engage more with the Festival and the city. Our beloved Edinburgh Festival Chorus performed with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Bamberger Symphoniker and The Hallé as well as in a concert of their own.

The Hub series once again welcomed audiences into the home of the International Festival for unforgettable performances from around the world and a thrilling new 'Up Late' strand later broadcast on Sky Arts. It was here where we showcased Rising Stars who had been mentored and inspired by world-leading musicians. The Queen's Hall concert series proved unmissable this year with stars such as Jakub Józef Orliński and Sheku Kanneh-Mason captivating audiences. The contemporary music programme ranged from Declan Mckenna's indie-pop sound filling the Playhouse to Bat for Lashes intimate magical show in the Queen's Hall.

As an international festival deeply rooted in Scotland, an impressive 50% of the artists were from Scotland in 2024. This included representation from all five Scottish national companies – National Theatre of Scotland, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Scottish Opera, Scottish Ballet and Scottish Chamber Orchestra.



Opening Event: Where to Begin © Maxime Ragni

CASE STUDY:

Edinburgh International Festival and The Macallan are two global brands. Each synonymous with Scotland's national identity. Each rooted in people and place but with arms wide open to the world.

Presented in partnership with The Macallan, the highly anticipated Opening Event: Where to Begin launched Edinburgh's festival season with an immersive experience which drew upon our combined commitment to creativity and excellence that lies within our shared Scottish identity.

Crafted without compromise.
Please savour The Macallan responsibly.
Do not share with anyone under the legal purchase age.



Opening Concert La Pasión según San Marcos © Andrew Perry

OUR STRATEGIC AIMS AND HOW WE'RE ACHIEVING THEM

ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

Present an artistic programme of the highest excellence, that connects people and cultures from around the world

One way we achieved this in 2024
International excellence was exemplified in the two-concert opening weekend in the Usher Hall: the Scottish premiere of Osvaldo Golijov's boundary-crossing *La Pasión según San Marcos* was contrasted with Johann Sebastian Bach's sublime *St Matthew Passion*. These concerts united musicians from around the world in a shared exploration of choral Passions from two very different musical traditions, offering an enriching interchange for those who saw both performances.

Over **2,000** artists from **42** countries

171 performances across **10** venues plus **76** opportunities to experience the *900 Voices* installation at St Giles' Cathedral

3 Keynote Talks and **20** Artist Talks

22 free pop-up performances

20 premieres (**6** World / **2** European / **8** UK / **4** Scottish)

15 million engaged with **24** concert broadcasts in partnership with Radio 3 and Sky Arts



Mahler 5 Inside Out © Andrew Perry

AUDIENCE EXPERIENCE

Reimagine a distinctive audience experience with broad appeal that results in a deeper culture of listening and understanding

One way we achieved this in 2024

This year we reimagined how to enhance our audience's experience with supporting materials. From pre-show emails to printed programmes, blogs to on-stage surtitles, our offerings spanned a range of formats. Two standout innovations, both freely offered, captivated our audiences. The Warm Up, our bespoke audio introductions sent to audiences ahead of selected performances, drew nearly 33,000 listens. Additionally, most Festival events featured a complimentary keepsake freesheet, providing essential information, interpretative content and an attractive memento. 68% of audience members agreed that the freesheets enhanced their audience experience – something which we are planning to refine in future.

Over 127,000 attendances

52% of bookers were first time ticket buyers

93% of survey respondents rated the whole experience good or very good and **88%** agreed that the International Festival is part of what makes Edinburgh a special place to live and visit

12% of bookers were international, from **86** countries



44% of bookers were based in Edinburgh

17% of bookers were based in rest of UK

27% of bookers were based in rest of Scotland

6,463 pieces of media coverage, an **8%** increase on 2023

74% increase from 2023 in coverage from international media outlets with **1,402** pieces reaching audiences in **90** countries

Over 542,000 website users representing a **48%** increase from 2023

Over 89,000 engagements across social media, with key channel Instagram's engagement increasing by **320%** from 2023



Grupo Corpo © Andrew Perry

CULTURAL LEADERSHIP

Demonstrate global leadership and contribute to the civic and cultural life of Scotland

One way we achieved this in 2024
We proudly welcomed 26 international delegations, creating meaningful connections with key influencers across Scotland. Among the highlights were four high-profile receptions with delegations from Poland, Germany, the USA and Brazil, featuring guest lists that included ministers from the Scottish and UK governments, ambassadors and private sector leaders. Adding to the momentum, we hosted Secretary of State Lisa Nandy for an engaging round-table discussion with industry leaders and partners, including our sister festivals, the British Council, National Library, National Galleries and the Edinburgh International Culture Summit. These dynamic exchanges underscored our role as a hub for global collaboration and cultural dialogue.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Put the Festival on a sustainable financial footing

One way we achieved this in 2024
Ticket sales income increased by 13% from 2023, thanks to a flexible pricing strategy that balanced cost with demand to maximise attendance. To improve the financial accessibility of live performance, our pioneering affordable ticketing initiatives guaranteed that over 50% of tickets were sold at £30 or less. These were tailored for those for whom cost is one of the biggest barriers to attending the Festival: D/deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent people, under 30s, young musicians and those hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis.

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Offer a welcoming and inclusive culture where people are supported and enriched by working with and for the Festival

One way we achieved this in 2024
We led an all-staff engagement survey to understand and enhance the employee experience. An impressive 95% of 60 permanent staff shared their insights, providing valuable benchmarks against the five pillars of the Fair Work framework: effective voice, fulfilment, opportunity, security, and respect. The results were inspiring – 87% expressed pride in being part of the International Festival team, reaffirming our commitment to creating a workplace where people feel valued and empowered.

OUR MOST INCLUSIVE FESTIVAL EVER

AFFORDABILITY

Cost shouldn't be a barrier to cultural discovery, and we made changes this year which made 2024 our most inclusive Festival yet. This is due to our bold commitment to affordable ticketing. Over half of all tickets were sold at £30 or less, and our new £10 Affordable Tickets saw 3,100 tickets snapped up at this unbeatable price. Young audiences were at the heart of our efforts, with discounts and offers designed just for them. More than 3,500 tickets were issued to under 18s at a 50% discount, while 5,200 tickets were purchased for 30% off by under 30s. Through the Young Musician's Pass, 1,900 free tickets were given away to young people aged 8 to 18. On top of this, our Youth Connections programme distributed over 1,100 free tickets to Festival events, ensuring even broader access for children and young people.

"THE AFFORDABILITY OF THE FAMILY CONCERT ALLOWED US TO INTRODUCE OUR YOUNG DAUGHTERS TO THE MAGIC OF MUSIC. THEY WERE SPELLBOUND." 2024 AUDIENCE MEMBER



Young People at The Hub © Andrew Parry

Over 50% of tickets were issued for **£30** or less

Over 10,000 free tickets were issued through ticketing initiatives such as Young Musician's Pass, free essential companion and our Discovery and Participation activity

The number of ticket bookings with the concession discount for D/deaf, disabled and neurodivergent nearly doubled, rising from **2,334** in 2023 to **4,624** in 2024.

ACCESSIBILITY

Breaking down barriers for disabled audiences and fostering greater engagement became an increased focus this year. Expanding eligibility for our Access Pass to include neurodivergent individuals ensured those who had often felt "not disabled enough" could now participate fully. Additionally, the concession for D/deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent bookers was increased from 30% to 50% off full-price tickets, encouraging nearly double the number of bookers compared to 2023. This is an acknowledgment of the financial challenges many disabled people face. The results spoke volumes: Access Pass sign-ups soared to 712 in 2024, up from 255 in 2023.

"MY PERCEPTION OF THE FESTIVAL HAS COMPLETELY CHANGED THIS YEAR[...] TO OFFER HALF-PRICE TICKETS TO NEURODIVERGENT PEOPLE IS RADICAL."

2024 AUDIENCE MEMBER



Access Pass sign-ups almost trebeled, from 255 in 2023 to **712** in 2024. In total, there are now over **1,250** Access Pass members

35 accessible perfomances (audio described, British Sign Language interpreted, captioned and relaxed performances



Hamlet © Jess Shurte

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Progress continues in our three priority areas: enhancing representation and access for D/deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent people; engaging young audiences; and amplifying voices from the Global Majority.

Artistic Programme – Our commitment to representation and accessibility on stage continues to strengthen. We embraced integrated access provisions and created transformative opportunities for diverse emerging talent. A highlight was Teatro La Plaza's *Hamlet* from Peru, performed by a cast of actors with Down's syndrome. Another landmark moment was the introduction of BSL musical interpretation in our first Family Concert, setting new benchmarks for inclusive performance.

Our People – Promoting an inclusive organisational culture is incredibly important to us. Staff feedback reflects a strong sense of belonging, bolstered by initiatives such as anti-racism training and updates to our Code of Conduct. Recruitment practices are evolving to increase representation of D/deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent people, alongside individuals from the Global Majority. At the same time, we are expanding entry routes into the arts to support young people in pursuing creative careers. This year we initiated the Access Panel, comprised of six disabled people who meet quarterly. Through this paid opportunity, the panel provide the Festival with a lived experience perspective and feed into strategic planning around access.

Audiences – The growth of the Access Pass allows more attendees to share their specific access requirements, select tailored seating options, and book accessible performances online. Looking ahead, we are assembling a Youth Collective – made up of a diverse group of young people from Edinburgh – to co-create initiatives such as the Young Musician's Pass and help shape the Festivals of the future.

DISCOVERY AND PARTICIPATION

Our Discovery and Participation work offers year-round opportunities that empower the discovery of the arts, leading to a lifetime of opportunities to participate.

YOUTH CONNECTIONS

Our flagship classical music workshop, Art of Listening reached a record-breaking 2,812 Primary 7 pupils from across Edinburgh. Across 112 dynamic workshops, 53 schools, representing every Edinburgh Council ward, came together to take part.

Discover Opera took on Opéra-Comique's production of Georges Bizet's *Carmen*, captivating 15 secondary schools. A staggering 200 free tickets were eagerly claimed by students for the exhilarating mainstage performance. Meanwhile, Discover Theatre hosted an exclusive schools' performance of *The Outrun*, complete with a lively Q&A with the creatives and a tailored resource to support higher drama qualifications.

In Discover Music, 445 students and teachers gathered at Usher Hall for a thrilling open dress rehearsal with the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra. And, in an inspirational visit for young dancers, Discover Dance took the young dancers to Grupo Corpo and *Assembly Hall*.

Twenty-six young people from across Edinburgh came together to participate in a curated programme of performance and conversation during the Festival. This activity has deepened our understanding of our young audience's experiences of the Festival and informed how we will develop this area of work.

"I FELT INSPIRED BY SEEING THE OUTRUN AS IT SHOWS THAT NO MATTER HOW BAD THINGS GET THERE IS ALWAYS A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL." YOUNG CREATIVE



Young Person's Guide to the Festival
© Cassandra Harrison



Philharmonia VR at Broomhouse Hub © Jess Shurte

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We launched our first ever Community Connections Hub, in partnership with Space @ The Broomhouse Hub. This new initiative is a co-designed, long-term community residency, developed from the positive learnings from prior community-based Festival activities. In August, Space @ The Broomhouse Hub hosted Philharmonia Virtual Orchestra – a VR experience which immersed viewers within the orchestra, welcoming over 300 local audience members.

At the Scottish Parliament, our Healing Arts Scotland Opening Celebration brought together 265 young musicians, dancers, and NHS staff, all united by the transformative power of creative participation. Meanwhile, *Please right back*, a poignant play by theatre company 1927, explored the complexities of growing up with a parent in the criminal justice system. Drawing on the play's themes, we connected families with loved ones in prison to emerging animators, offering a creative platform for storytelling through animation.

Our Culture Clubs sparked connection and creativity, with 99 community members coming together to share meals and attend performances in free, hosted experiences. Festival Fridays take the International Festival beyond the concert hall and into the community. In 2024, we expanded Festival Fridays to boost our year-round offer, reaching 1,323 people. Musicians from the likes of Bamberger Symphoniker, VRï and Domo Branch Trio performed in health and community settings, reaching communities who may not otherwise be able to attend the International Festival.

"I'VE NEVER HELD A VIOLIN BEFORE IN MY LIFE BUT WATCHING [NICOLA BENEDETTI], I FELT LIKE I WAS PLAYING." VR AUDIENCE MEMBER

CASE STUDY:

Throughout 2024, Festival Fridays brought free pop-up concerts to 1,323 people in Edinburgh and the Lothians. In collaboration with Tonic Arts, the NHS Lothian Charity, Festival Fridays brings the joy of the Festival to people who otherwise can't otherwise attend. Jenni Minto, Minister for Public Health and Women's Health, attended one of our Festival Friday performances and praised the project for demonstrating 'the positive impact culture can have on mental and physical health and wellbeing'. Both staff and patients fed back about the transformative effect of the concerts. At the final Festival Friday, the Resol Quartet performed at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital. On the dementia ward, a very ill former violinist, who normally wouldn't speak or leave his bed, was moved to stand and listen as a quartet member played for him. After the music stopped, he simply said, 'Please, stay.'

13,592 engagements / **10,437** participants in Discovery and Participation initiatives

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

We recognise the immediacy of the climate emergency and are making every effort to be part of the solution across our programme and operations.

The International Festival made major strides towards the British Standards Institute Net Zero Pathway – the UK Government's aim is to cut emissions by 81% by 2035 compared with 1990 levels and reach net zero emissions by 2050. We implemented the ISO 14064–1 standards, a method of comprehensive carbon reporting agreed on by experts and verified by the British Standards Institute.

Launched in 2022, the residency model is designed to reduce artists' air travel while amplifying their impact on stage. Instead of a one-off concert, resident orchestras now commit to three to four performances per trip. This year, we welcomed Bamberger Symphoniker, Philharmonia and Ilumina, who delivered a series of unforgettable performances both on the Festival stage and for the local community.

The impact of the climate crisis was powerfully brought to the forefront in our theatre programme. Both *After the Silence* and *Nigamon/Tunai* explored indigenous people's relationship with nature and colonial exploitation of land resources in Brazil and the Colombian Amazon respectively, sparking vital conversations around environmental justice.

"NIGAMON/TUNAI PRESENTS A 'HARD-EDGED POLITICAL ARGUMENT ABOUT THE MULTIPLE DESTRUCTIVE FORCES THAT NOW THREATEN [INDIGENOUS PEOPLES'] WAY OF LIFE, AND THE LIFE OF THE EARTH ITSELF" THE SCOTSMAN

Nigamon/Tunai © Andrew Perry

Behind the scenes, we embraced sustainability by introducing electric vehicles and e-bikes for staff travel, monitoring energy use at The Hub and reducing waste through our food and beverage concessions. We purchased Fair Trade uniforms, collaborated with University of Edinburgh postgraduates to rethink printed materials and shared stored equipment via the MyTurn database. Additionally, we engaged in cross-sector sustainability efforts, including chairing the Festivals Edinburgh Sustainability Working Group.



First Minister's visit to *The Outrun* © Iain Masterton

LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL IMPACT

LOCALLY

We co-produced the stage adapation of Amy Liptrot's memoir *The Outrun* with the Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh. Written by Stef Smith and directed by Vicky Featherstone, the production gripped nearly 9,000 audience members at the Church Hill Theatre.
Learn more about our local impact with young people and communities on pages 16–19.

NATIONALLY

Nationally, we strengthened ties with Scotland's leading arts organisations. In collaboration with Scottish Ballet, the World Health Organization and Jameel Arts & Health Lab, we launched Healing Arts Scotland at The Hub, offering insightful talks and workshops on the health benefits of the arts. The National Theatre of Scotland premiered David Ireland's play *The Fifth Step*, while the Scottish Chamber Orchestra performed with Opéra-Comique for their production of *Carmen*. Scottish Opera took an innovative approach with their promenade production of Igor Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*, set against the awe-inspiring backdrop of the National Museum of Scotland's grand gallery. Additionally, we engaged with policy leaders and contributed to arts sustainability discussions across the UK, collaborating with Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, the European Festivals Association and the University of the Arts London to support arts advocacy and resilience.

GLOBALLY

Globally, our partnerships reached new heights, beginning with Festival d'Avignon, Institut Français and ONDA to deliver a workshop for industry professionals on post-war festivals and emerging festival models, opening the door to ongoing international collaboration. In August, we co-hosted discussions with the International Presenting Commons (a group of presenters and producers) and key US and UK creatives.
Our commitment to fostering global cultural exchange was further underscored by visits from over 25 international ministers, ambassadors, and cultural leaders.

CASE STUDY:

The impact of our Youth Exchange stretched from an Orkney secondary school to the Scottish Parliament. First Minister John Swinney joined young people from Orkney and Edinburgh to hear about about how the Youth Exchange left a lasting impression on these young people. His experience moved him to speak in Holyrood about this 'utterly motivating example of cultural exchange'. He highlighted the 'extraordinary' creative writing by the young participants and praised the International Festival team's work. The participants were equally affected, with one young person saying: 'I will cherish the memories of feeling proud of my work [...] as well as the friendships I have made.'

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Careful marshalling of our financial resources in 2024 supported an outstanding Festival, both on stage and within communities and schools.

The public sector funding landscape continues to be extremely challenging. As we enter our 18th year of standstill public funding, we received crucial help from the continuation of UK creative industry tax relief levels into 2024, reducing the amount of corporation tax that creative organisations like ours pay. The August programme, combined with a targeted strategy and effective revenue management, drove a 13% increase in ticket sales income compared to 2023, underscoring the Festival's growing appeal.

Fundraising, partnerships and public funding remain the backbone of our income, contributing to 63% of total revenue. A key highlight in 2024 was the success of our revitalised membership programme, thanks to a record number of 2,500 members who joined or renewed their memberships.We also formed a groundbreaking partnership with The Macallan, exceptional Single Malt Scotch Whisky, rooted in our shared heritage, creativity and global reach, to ignite the Festival season with The Opening Event: *Where to Begin*..

In this challenging economic climate, support from the private and public sector is more vital than ever, enabling the Festival to fulfil its vision. We are deeply grateful to our public funders – Creative Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, Event Scotland and DCMS – for their investment. Sincere thanks also go to the trusts, foundations, corporate partners, international funders and thousands of individual supporters for their continued generosity.

13% increase in ticket income from 2023

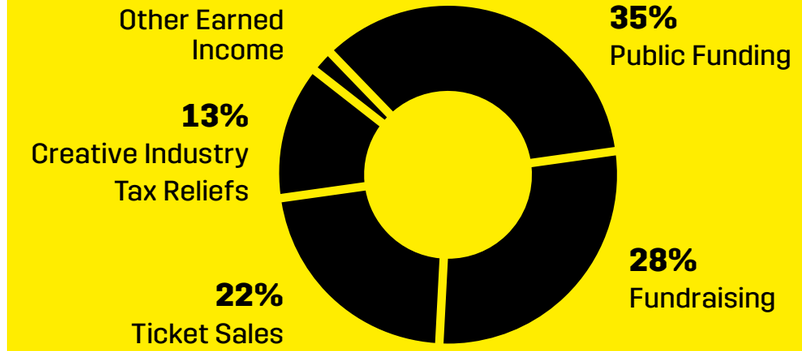
53% of total expenditure (excluding payroll) reinvested in Scotland

232 Scottish suppliers procured

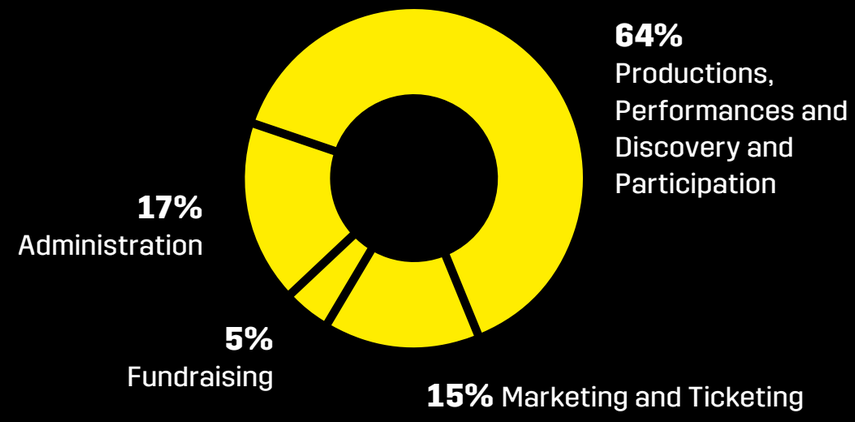
219 Scottish freelancers employed

165 Full Time Equivalent posts employed for the 2024 Festival

INCOME



EXPENDITURE



CASE STUDY:

We re-launched the Ambassador Circle, a membership circle that offers a closer connection with the Festival. Gavin, who has supported the Festival as a Friend for many years, joined the Ambassador Circle and thanks to a generous match funder, his upgraded membership was matched pound for pound. He said, 'Being an Ambassador helps me feel that little bit more connected with the Festival, which plays such a big role in my life each summer.' Thanks to Gavin and all our new Ambassador Circle members, we unlocked an impressive £25,000 in matched funding.

YEAR-ROUND STAFF

Nicola Benedetti
Festival Director
Francesca Hegyi
Chief Executive

Rachel Ashenden
Copywriter
Katie Bevan
Development Assistant
Scott Blair
Executive Assistant to the CEO
Sarah Broadwell
Project Co-ordinator
Andrew Brownlie
Head of Finance
Jean Burke
Digital Experience Manager
Kate Carter
Director of Audiences
Rosie Castle
Campaigns Manager
Siobhan Clark
Contracts Manager (partial year)
Lucy Clarke
Campaigns Officer
Paul Claydon
Head of Production
Sarah Cockburn
Head of Brand & Campaigns
Carrie Cruikshank
Office & Facilities Manager
Leila Cruickshank
Digital Officer
Kirsty Dickson
Audience Insights Manager
Caroline Donald
Head of Discovery & Participation
Dean Dyer
Senior IT Officer
Isabella Feros
Media Manager
Amy Firth
Youth Connections Manager
Kate Garbutt
Head of Philanthropy
Grace Gilbert
Youth Connections Officer
Oliver Girdham
Management Accountant

Leon Gray
Head of Ticketing
& Audience Experience
Joyce Green
Ticketing Manager
James Grossmith
Chorus Director
Florence Gygax
Senior Officer, International Partnerships
(partial year)
Emma Hay
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Julia Hickey
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Caitlin Higgins
Assistant Ticketing Manager
Jenny Howard-Coombes
Head of Partnerships (partial year)
Kirsty Hughes
Music & Scheduling
Co-ordinator
Alison Hunter
Finance & Payroll Officer
Hal Hutchison
Music Production Manager
Holly Johnson
Membership Officer
Jill Jones
Head of Artistic Management (partial year)
Sebastian King
Individual Giving Manager
Rob Knight
IT Support Manager
Roy Luxford
Creative Director
Claire Macdonald
Head of Events & Stewardship
Callum Madge
Access Manager
Maebh Martin
PA to Festival Director
Christy McCurdy
External Relations Manager (Secondment from
the Scottish Government; partial year)
Susan McIntosh
Director of Finance & Commercial
Neil Mickel
Head of Production (partial year)

Hugo Mintz
Head of Communications & Digital
Cara Moloney
Discovery & Participation Trainee (partial year)
Andrew Moore
Head of Music (partial year)
Sam Mudie
Head of People and Culture
Alyson Orme
Corporate Partnerships Manager
Katie Paterson
Head of Strategy
Katherine Planas
Director of Development
Marcin Potępski
Senior Graphic Designer
Sunniva Ramsay
Community Connections Manager
Terry Roberts
Sustainability Manager
Piotr Schmidtke
Finance Officer
Ian Shannon
Head of Estates
Paul Sharp
Head of Artistic Management
Katherine Shaw
Philanthropy Manager
Jessica Smith
Audiences Assistant
Ally Steel
Head of Partnerships
Kirsten Stewart
HR & Payroll Manager
Katy Taylor
External Affairs Manager
Amy Taylor
Media Officer (partial year)
Cate Williams
Projects Production Manager (partial year)
Gemma Wallbanks
Chorus Manager
Lucy Webb
Digital Officer (Social) (partial year)
Drew Young
Artists Co-ordinator
Nicolas Zekulin
Head of Music Programme

FESTIVAL STAFF

Danni Bastian
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Graeme Beattie
Artist Manager
Alex Benn
Queen's Hall Concerts Manager
Ernesto Berardino
Artist Manager
Catriona Blair
Ticketing Administrator
Davide Boschi
Ticketing Assistant
Stephanie Bowring
Digital Assistant
Gina Brewer
Event Officer
Yasmine Bridge
Campaigns Assistant
Tommy Brophy
Stores & Logistics Supervisor
Lucy Brunton
Ticketing Administrator
Harriet Bunnett
Development Associate
Joanna Burns
Usher Hall Concerts Assistant
John Campbell
Head of Lighting
Steph Clarke
Artist Manager
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