



THE GUERNSEY ARTS MANIFESTO

“EVERY CIVILISED NATION FUNDS ITS ARTS PROPERLY”

Sir Gerry Robinson

Arts and Culture are often seen as a cultural luxury, a “nice to have”, and the first thing to go when budgets get cut. This manifesto sets out the case for the arts to be seen as vital community assets. Not only are the arts a vital driver of economic growth, they also promote community wellbeing, and social cohesion.

As the umbrella organisation which supports the arts on the Island, we firmly believe that supporting the arts is an investment in the future of Guernsey. Supporting the arts promotes creativity, innovation, and inclusivity while enhancing the island’s international reputation. Here are our key reasons why politicians should prioritise funding and support for the arts:

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

The arts contribute significantly to the local economy by attracting visitors, creating jobs, and supporting the Island’s creative industries. Events organised and supported by Guernsey Arts include Arts Sunday, KPMG Castle Nights, The Guernsey Photography Festival, The Guernsey Literary Festival, Vale Earth Fair, Guernsey Street Festival, and La Beltane. These events are an economic draw for tourists and locals alike, boosting spending in hospitality, retail, and other sectors. Indeed, when you look at a VisitGuernsey, Guernsey Marinas or Locate Guernsey brochure, you will see the arts offering very clearly reflected.

Additionally, the Creative industries (From Marketing, PR, Social media, Advertising, Photography, Copywriting to Graphic Design and Film Production, museums and Libraries) provide opportunities for young professionals. AI may be on the rise but it is human touch and creative thinking in conjunction with technological trends which helps business solutions to thrive. We must invest in the creativity of our people at all stages of their lives.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & WELLBEING

The arts bring people together and create a sense of community, belonging and pride. Guernsey Arts funded initiatives such as the Victor Hugo bench, Public Art murals, and accessible exhibitions (e.g., exhibitions which include resources such as Navilens for the visually impaired) enhance public spaces and make the arts inclusive for all. Studies show that participation in the arts improves mental health, reduces social isolation, and strengthens community bonds. Loneliness is on the increase in Guernsey, we must protect and develop our amazing creative cultural scene and free opportunities for all.

EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING

The arts inspire creativity and critical thinking, essential skills for the modern workforce. By engaging with schools and community organisations, Guernsey Arts promotes lifelong learning and skills development, preparing the next generation for success in a rapidly changing world. We regularly host Work Experience students, assist with creative pitches for the Guernsey Institute and partner with organisations to promote our Island's Nature, History, Culture and Heritage through an artistic lens, so it is compelling and easy to engage with. Recent examples include the Bailiwick Wildlife Photography Exhibition in conjunction with the Guernsey Nature Commission & The Pollinator Project, The Island Games Cultural Programme including poetry, visual arts and public installations, and Liberation 80, a programme encompassing poetry and prose competition in schools and across the community, working with Heritage, the Liberation timeline in the George Crossan Gallery, a contemporary exhibition of local artists in the greenhouse gallery and public art installations on hoardings in St Peter Port and at L'Eree.

CULTURAL DIPLOMACY & GLOBAL REPUTATION

As part of "The Plan For the Arts", Guernsey Arts are committed to lift up the profile of local artists to international heights and to bring world opportunities and talent to Guernsey, through theatre, performance, music and visual arts. The arts elevate Guernsey's profile on the international stage and show that we are more than just a tax haven. Collaborations with organisations such as ArtHouse Jersey, BIAN and the Channel Islands Brussels Office have showcased the island's vibrant culture. Since our inception in 2008, we have developed cultural exchanges and strengthened diplomatic ties through exhibitions, screenings and performances in Sark, Alderney, Jersey, France, Italy and Belgium and following the Island Games 2023 initiating Creative Island conversations.

SUSTAINABLE FUNDING MODEL

Guernsey Arts has demonstrated its ability to leverage external funding, with over half of its budget now sourced from grants, sponsorships, and memberships. Additional funding is essential to sustain staffing costs. Our staff engage directly with the Community, ensuring the delivery of ambitious projects such as art within the public realm, expanded exhibition spaces and 1:1 project support with creatives of all ages.

MULTIPLIER EFFECT

Investment in the arts yields significant returns. Every pound spent on the arts generates economic, social, and cultural benefits that ripple across the community. Supporting the arts is a strategic investment in Guernsey's future wealth, health and happiness.

FUTURE POLITICIANS - THIS IS YOUR CALL TO ACTION

By supporting the arts, you can champion economic growth, community well-being, and cultural enrichment. Guernsey Arts has a clear plan, measurable KPIs, and a proven track record of delivering impactful initiatives. Increased funding and support will enable the arts to thrive, ensuring Guernsey remains a vibrant, creative & inclusive community for generations to come.

Let's work together to **PROMOTE | SUPPORT | INSPIRE** the arts in Guernsey

