

## **MAJOR NEW STUDY SETS OUT A TEN YEAR STRATEGY TO SUSTAIN AND STRENGTHEN EDINBURGH'S WORLD LEADING FESTIVAL CITY STATUS**

Thundering Hooves 2.0, an ambitious new strategy with a series of recommendations to sustain and strengthen Edinburgh's status as the world's leading Festival City was unveiled this morning.

The study considers and assesses the significant achievements since the ground-breaking 2006 Thundering Hooves report as well as the local and global opportunities and threats relevant to the future development and sustainability of the festivals, and proposes a reinvigorated strategy and action plan.

The study was commissioned by the Festivals Forum to review progress on Thundering Hooves and to chart a new course for the next ten years and has been funded by the Scottish Government, City of Edinburgh Council, VisitScotland, through its EventScotland team, Creative Scotland, British Council Scotland and Scottish Enterprise. Festivals and Events International (FEI) and BOP were appointed in July 2014 to undertake this major piece of work.

Chair of Festivals Forum **Lady Susan Rice** said *'Following the publication of the first Thundering Hooves, the results achieved to date are compelling testament to the power of ambition and collaboration. We're delighted to share Thundering Hooves 2.0, an important report which sets out the strategic plan and recommended actions for Festivals Forum to take forward during the next ten years. While much has been delivered already, this review and re-focus will ensure Edinburgh addresses key challenges and opportunities ensuring the Festival City retains its global competitive edge in the months and years to come.'*

Through this review six key themes have emerged as significant drivers of change and thirty eight recommended actions have been identified. The six key themes are:

- **The Festival City:** Infrastructure and operations need to continue to evolve to ensure The Festival City provides an unrivalled experience for its citizens, and the artists, audiences and opinion formers who visit from around the world
- **Deep and Wide Engagement:** The festivals must collaborate to support educational aims and social justice through participation, learning and belonging
- **National and Global Positioning:** Relationship-building and developing strong international partnerships is central to forging a new understanding of leadership for the city and Scotland, with branding and marketing providing a voice on the world stage
- **Digital Ways and Means:** A consideration of the balance between the live and digital experience, through support of a strategy for digitising the Festival City. New technologies should be embraced incorporating partnerships across the public and private sector
- **Investment and Enterprise:** Recognising the challenges facing public finances, the report urges that funders maintain core and project funding whilst alternative funding models are considered, and encourages the wider business community to invest in the festivals from which they so greatly benefit
- **Developing and Delivering:** A recommendation of ways for stakeholders to develop the Festivals Forum by adopting new terms of reference and responsibilities, to allow for structures to evolve and embrace new opportunities to take Edinburgh's Festivals through the next decade.

Commenting on the report's launch, **Councillor Richard Lewis, Festivals & Events Champion for the City of Edinburgh Council** said *'Our festivals are worth in excess of £261m to the Scottish economy. While recognising the financial constraints we currently have to deal with as a local authority, we need to work together with festival partners to support their ambitions and ensure our residents, visitors, businesses and educational institutions continue to benefit from them in the future. The partnership approach to the first study has clearly paid off and while progress has not been possible in every area, there is a solid foundation from which to work as we all aim to take the findings of the new Thundering Hooves 2.0 report forward.'*

Commenting on the report's launch, The Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs **Fiona Hyslop** said, *'The Scottish Government recognises the importance of Edinburgh's Festivals to the whole of Scotland. The first Thundering Hooves report was an important catalyst for Edinburgh's major festivals and the city. Since then we have seen more collaboration, new ideas and invention and a shared vision for the future of the Festivals. The Scottish Government is proud to support the ambitions of the festivals through the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund and through our national agencies, Creative Scotland and VisitScotland. We welcome today's report as a driver for future change and will consider its recommendations in due course.'*

*In the past ten years the environment has evolved beyond anything that could have been imagined and Edinburgh's Festivals face new challenges and new challengers. Our festivals need to be dynamic and brave to embrace future opportunities and to protect Edinburgh's position as the world's leading festival city.'*

**Ken Hay**, Chair of Festivals Edinburgh added *'This is an exciting and critical time for Edinburgh's Festivals. We are looking forward to building on the successes of our collaborative approach over the next ten years in addressing the many opportunities and challenges facing us, not least ensuring that Edinburgh retains its position as the world's leading Festival City. The Festivals thank and recognise the invaluable and ongoing support of both the Festivals Forum and our public funders in supporting our ambitions, benefitting our host city and Scotland as a whole.'*

Edinburgh's Festivals, with the support and collaborative leadership of the Festivals Forum and Festivals Edinburgh will have a vital role to play in leading new dialogues, developing new approaches and shaping another ten years of innovation, collaboration and programming excellence.

**Nick Dodds**, Director of Festivals and Events International (FEI) and **Josephine Burns**, Senior Associate of BOP Consulting said *'In developing the new strategy we have been impressed by the depth and quality of the festivals' offer and their growth and resilience over the last ten years. There are many significant challenges ahead. But as long as the festivals continue to innovate, develop and attract investment in the ways we recommend, Edinburgh will remain a pre-eminent world class Festival City.'*

Edinburgh is a small city but its festivals put it onto the world stage. The next ten years will be about capitalising on this reputation and advantage, and finding new ways of experiencing and investing in one of Scotland's greatest assets.

A full copy of the report is available for download from [www.edinburghfestivalcity.com/thunderinghooves](http://www.edinburghfestivalcity.com/thunderinghooves).

**Ends**

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **1. QUOTES FROM STAKEHOLDERS**

**Paul Bush OBE**, Director of Events for VisitScotland said: *'Edinburgh's Festivals are, collectively, one of Scotland's biggest assets, attracting domestic and international visitors throughout the year. They are at the heart of Scotland's reputation as a world-leading event destination, showcasing the country as the perfect stage for events. We welcome this new strategy and action plan and look forward to working together to further enhance Scotland's reputation as a world class events destination.'*

**Janet Archer**, Chief Executive for Creative Scotland said: *'Providing a vital platform for artists and audiences from both home and abroad, this is an exciting time as Edinburgh's Festivals enter their next phase of development. This report sets out a clear and ambitious strategy and we look forward to working alongside our Festivals Forum colleagues to encourage the implementation of these recommendations to continue to develop the festivals' essential role in Scotland's creative ecosystem.'*

**David Smith**, Sector Portfolio Director Creative Industries for Scottish Enterprise said: *'Edinburgh's Festivals make a substantial contribution to the economic prosperity of Edinburgh and Scotland. In addition to the direct impact of £261 million per year that they generate, their position as a world-leading cultural brand provides Scotland with a platform which helps to increase Scotland's trade overseas and encourage inward investment.'*

**Lloyd Anderson**, Director for British Council Scotland said: *'We recognise the importance of Edinburgh's Festivals as a global cultural platform. This essential new phase of development is driven by a spirit of internationalism and we look forward to working with the festivals and partners to build richer and wider partnerships and connections, exchanging knowledge and understanding that we can all benefit from.'*

### **2. CONTEXT AND COMMISSIONING PARTNERS**

Thundering Hooves - Maintaining The Global Competitive Edge of Edinburgh's Festivals was published in May 2006 following research into the 2005/6 Festival season comprising the 11 festivals that made up the then fledgling Festivals Edinburgh. By the time that this report (TH2.0) is published in full, ten years will have elapsed.

The Festivals Forum, the body of stakeholders with a shared interest in ensuring Edinburgh maintains and develops its position as the world's leading Festival city, commissioned Festival and Events International (FEI) and BOP Consulting in May 2014 to undertake a new study considering the future sustainability, success and development of Edinburgh's now 12 major Festivals.

Reflecting on progress following the original Thundering Hooves report, the new report reconsiders the opportunities and threats relevant to the future sustainability and development of the Festivals in order to inform a reinvigorated strategy and action plan. The study has been undertaken in four phases:

- A review of the Thundering Hooves Action Plan and achievements to date (Phase 1)
- A review and analysis of the local, national and international operating context for each of Edinburgh's 12 major festivals and for Edinburgh as a Festival City (Phase 2)
- A planning exercise to consider possible futures for the Edinburgh as a Festival City (Phase 3)
- The preparation of a robust development strategy incorporating an action plan comprising a prioritised list of approaches and ambitious joint initiatives (Phase 4).

**2a. The Festivals Forum** is the body of stakeholders with a shared interest in ensuring Edinburgh maintains and develops its position as the world's leading Festival City. Members include: British Council Scotland, City of Edinburgh Council, Creative Scotland, Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, Edinburgh Tourism Action Group, EventScotland, Festivals Edinburgh, Marketing Edinburgh, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Government and VisitScotland.

**2b. The Thundering Hooves Steering Group** is responsible for delivering the Action Plan and recommendations set out in Thundering Hooves 2.0 and reports directly to the Festivals Forum. The group contains representatives from the major funders of Edinburgh's Festivals and includes British Council Scotland, the City of Edinburgh Council, Creative Scotland, EventScotland, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Government and Festivals Edinburgh.

**2c. Festivals Edinburgh** is the high-level organisation created in 2007 by the Directors of Edinburgh's 12 major festivals to lead on their joint strategic development and maintain their global competitive edge. The 12 member festivals are as follows: Edinburgh International Science Festival, Imagine Festival, Edinburgh International Film Festival, Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival, Edinburgh Art Festival, Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh International Book Festival, Edinburgh Mela, Scottish International Storytelling Festival and Edinburgh's Hogmanay.

**2d. Festivals and Events International** is a project management and consultancy company specialising in large scale public events and providing advice to public agencies looking to use festivals to achieve their social, cultural or economic objectives. FEI's directors have many years' experience leading some of the world's great events including London 2012, Edinburgh and Brighton Festivals. Established in 2007, FEI has offices in London and Brighton and has undertaken advisory projects for cities in the USA, Vietnam, Singapore, Iceland and across Europe. [www.feik.com](http://www.feik.com).

**2e. BOP Consulting** is a leading international research and strategy firm, specialising in culture and the creative industries. BOP works with funders, development agencies and cultural organisations to assess the value of what they do and to help them plan for the future. BOP has offices in London, Edinburgh, Taipei and Shanghai and regularly work in international markets through its [World Cities Culture Forum](http://WorldCitiesCultureForum.com), and through ongoing assignments in People Republic of China, Taiwan, Brazil and Oman. [www.bop.co.uk](http://www.bop.co.uk).