**Artlink Hull
Short Description**Artlink Hull supports the creation and exploration of art with, in and about communities. In particular we work with individuals and communities experiencing disadvantage to increase the diversity of voices in the arts.

We do this through a range of ways including art projects, exhibitions, commissions, events, learning programmes and forums, working with a range of communities.

Established since 1982, Artlink Hull has continually been involved in the development of participatory and socially-engaged art practices and remains a key organisation in the Humber region working in these fields.

 **Artlink Hull Aims and Values**

Artlink Hull is a charitable arts organisation whose work supports the creation and exploration of art with, in and about communities.

Our core aim is to ensure that people from communities which experience disadvantage have opportunities to engage in creative expression.

We were originally founded to work in the area of art and disability and with the continued disadvantages people with disabilities face within society this is still a key area for us.

We believe that more diverse participation in the arts benefits both individuals and society and adds to the quality and depth of the arts.

We believe in the value of art created through collaborative processes and in the power of cultural exchange to influence social change. We work to provide development and learning opportunities for artists and community members.

We recognise that ideas around art and communities are complex and contested and we want to explore and increase dialogue about them. We take a broad view of what is art and want to play a role in exploring this though we work mainly within visual art and in particular in socially engaged art.

Our base is Hull in the Humber region and this is where we undertake the majority of our work. While we are locally focused we work with artists and partners nationally and internationally.

Our building is an arts hub and venue. However we do much of our work outside of it and place importance on creating and displaying artwork outside of gallery settings and in communities.

Being based in a city impacted significantly by economic decline, we are interested in the role of art in communities that experience this, especially coastal ones.

Our work manifests itself in different ways: exhibitions, projects, workshops, training, forums, events, public art, but all stem from our core aims and interests.

We partner with organisations both inside and outside of the arts, especially those that work closely with different communities and believe this adds strength and depth to the work that we do. **Artistic Strategy** **(detailed)**

Artlink Hull is a charitable arts organisation whose key focus is art and community. We work to create and explore art with, in, and about communities.

We think that due to societal inequalities, opportunities for communities experiencing disadvantage to express themselves through art are not widely available enough. Too many voices remain unheard within the arts and our work aims to help change this.

We believe that more diverse participation in the arts benefits both individuals and society and adds to the quality and depth of expression in the arts. We think that the field of art and community is an exciting and interesting one from which great art can emerge. Artlink has an important role within Hull, the Humber region and the UK engaging in an ongoing exploration and dialogue about this field in partnership with others.

We undertake around four major projects every year, each of which explores an area of art and community. Our core aim is to ensure that people from communities which experience disadvantage have opportunities to engage in creative expression. We work in focus with particular communities over durational periods to develop deeper relationships, further explore the impact of artists working with a community over the long term and offer increased opportunities to community members.

We do our work in a range of ways, from commissioning an artist from a particular community to undertake a project, creating new artwork within a particular community or offering long term opportunities for community members to engage in the arts.

Artlink Hull was originally founded as an organisation with a focus on arts and disability. Given the continued disadvantage people with disabilities experience within society and in particular the barriers they face to participating in cultural life, this is still an area of focus for us and influences around two of our major projects per year.

We also have a focus on working with children and young people as we believe that engaging with the arts at a young age has benefits throughout life. Furthermore, we think that in order to have more diverse voices within the arts, providing opportunities for more young people from diverse backgrounds to get involved in creativity early on is a key way to drive this change.

We’re based in Kingston Upon Hull, a city that has been significantly impacted by economic decline which has contributed to making it one of the most deprived cities in the UK. We want to engage with this as part of our work and explore the role that art and artists can play in disadvantaged coastal communities and involve community participants in this developing field. We undertake the majority of our work in Hull and the wider Humber region. However, while we are locally focused we work with artists and partners nationally and internationally.

While art is not a panacea for all the challenges a community may face, we believe that the ‘third space’ it is possible to create through the arts can contribute to positive community change in a range of ways. We also believe that a society in which a wider range of voices are heard in the creative arts is a healthier one and are interested in the impact of arts on community and individual health. We take a broad view of what can be defined as art and want to play a role in exploring this, though we work mainly within visual art and in particular in socially engaged art.

Artlink Hull has been involved for many years in encouraging and developing artists’ skills in working with communities. With more artists than ever interested in this field of practice, we want to continue and be an important centre for this in the Humber region and nationally. We also equally value the contribution of communities to what we do and want to work with community members as active participants in our programmes while providing personal development opportunities for them.

We believe in the value of art created through collaborative processes and in the power of cultural exchange to influence social change. As an organisation we are constantly reflecting on the work we do with different communities and engaging in reciprocal learning with them. We also work to ensure that we engage with those who are not currently active participants in community activities.

With our interest in collaboration, we partner with organisations both inside and outside of the arts that work closely with different communities on programmes and projects. These range from state agencies to other charities to grassroots groups and we believe that this adds strength and depth to the work that we do. Within Hull we have a wider civic role as the key champion of work around art and community and advocating for greater equality of opportunity in the arts, partnering with other organisation and individuals to achieve this.

As well acting as a showcase for our own work, Artlink Hull’s building is also a local arts hub for Hull. It operates as a display space for local artists and makers and as a venue and facility for other grassroots arts, cultural and learning organisations and initiatives, all encouraging engagement in the arts in a friendly community venue. However we feel it is a vital that a significant proportion of our work takes place outside of our building and within communities and public spaces where we think it can have more impact and generate wider involvement and dialogue.

As the area of art and community has grown and developed since Artlink Hull was founded, critical dialogue around this field has increased and new terminology and ways of working in collaborative and social practice have developed. Artlink wants to take an active part in the discussion about the role of art in communities experiencing disadvantage and best practice in this field. We also want to continue to innovate, experiment and take managed risks with the work that we do in this area. We are a lead advocate within Hull for equality of opportunity within the arts and we work actively to maintain and develop networks and support in the city and the Humber region around this. This includes organising a Disability Arts Network for the region and other development opportunities around art, community, collaboration and diversity.

Hull was UK City of Culture in 2017, and remains so up to 2021. This initiative has had a huge impact on the city, generating greater interest in arts and culture within the community. With a new appetite created for engagement in the arts, Artlink Hull sees it as its mission to ensure that, beyond 2017, those facing disadvantage in the city continue to have opportunities for active participation in the arts. Furthermore, we want to ensure that ideas around art and community continue to be explored in Hull as it grows in stature as a creative city. With this is mind, we will focus our work in the period that follows 2017 on an exploration of what art and culture means to communities in Hull and what role it can play in continued social change.

Artlink will be forty years old in 2022. During its history it has consistently been an important organisation in the area of art and community. By 2022 we aim to be an exemplar in this field, creating work that’s important to, impacts on and is reflective of our base in Hull, but that also has relevance nationally and internationally.

**Artlink Hull**

**Vision**Artlink Hull is a leading organisation exploring art and community. Developing opportunities for people experiencing disadvantage to engage in creativity and working to ensure more diverse voices are heard within arts and culture.

By 2022 we aim to be an exemplar in this field, creating work that’s important to, impacts on and is reflective of our base in Hull, but that also has relevance nationally and internationally.

**Mission**
To create and explore art with, in and about communities in Hull and work to ensure diverse voices are heard in the arts by:
 **Actions**
Developing and commissioning a range of art programmes, projects and provision
Developing strong and reciprocal relationships with the communities we work with
Developing durational projects which have social impact
Supporting artists and other participants in their growth and development in this area
Working in partnership with other organisations and groups inside and outside of the arts
Exploring the role of art within community life and specifically in cities experiencing economic decline
Being a lead advocate for this type of work within Hull and the Humber region and exploring best practice within it
Promoting our work through a range of marketing and media channels
Engaging in critical reflection around ideas of art and community
Encouraging innovation and openness within the field art and community
Leading networks in this field of the arts for Hull and the Humber region
Developing as a sustainable organisation so we can continue our work **Artlink Hull Programme Plan**Over the next three years, Artlink Hull aims to develop a cohesive core programme to deliver on its vision, aims, values and mission. This programme will unite Artlink Hull’s traditional strengths in delivering creative projects, exhibitions and learning activity.

Our core aim is to explore art and community and in particular develop opportunities for communities experiencing disadvantage to engage in the arts.

For the next three to five years, our programme will have a particular focus on art and disability and art and place, working in collaboration with people with disabilities and in communities of place on developing a series of projects.