



Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre 2025-2028

A photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, wearing a blue and white jacket, looking upwards in a forest. The background is filled with trees and sunlight filtering through the leaves. A large orange triangle is overlaid on the left side of the image.

We believe creative experiences matter in life; creating meaningful human connection is what we do. This has been our driving mission for nine decades.

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1 Executive Summary /

Embracing change for a sustainable future

This Business Plan marks a decisive moment for us – a call to embrace agility and build on the foundations of our successes to date. We understand that the economy, climate, and society are changing quickly, and this affects how people engage with culture.

To succeed, we need to change too: focusing more, adapting our methods, and reshaping our business model. These changes are vital for us to continue making a difference and to improve our contributions to audiences, stakeholders, communities, and the cultural sector.

By committing to adapt, we ensure we stay relevant and capable of delivering powerful cultural experiences in a constantly changing world.

Key Focus Areas

Create a Diverse Artistic Programme:

Develop a wide-ranging artistic programme that showcases our organisation's strengths and utilises our team's expertise.

Champion Equality and Inclusion:

Support equality, diversity, and inclusion by always learning and appreciating different perspectives.

Grow Fair Work Initiatives:

Expand Fair Work First initiatives with a strong Workforce Development Strategy and share what we learn with others.

Promote Environmental Sustainability:

Lead in environmental efforts and advocate for climate justice, showing how culture can support a sustainable future.

Measure Impact Effectively:

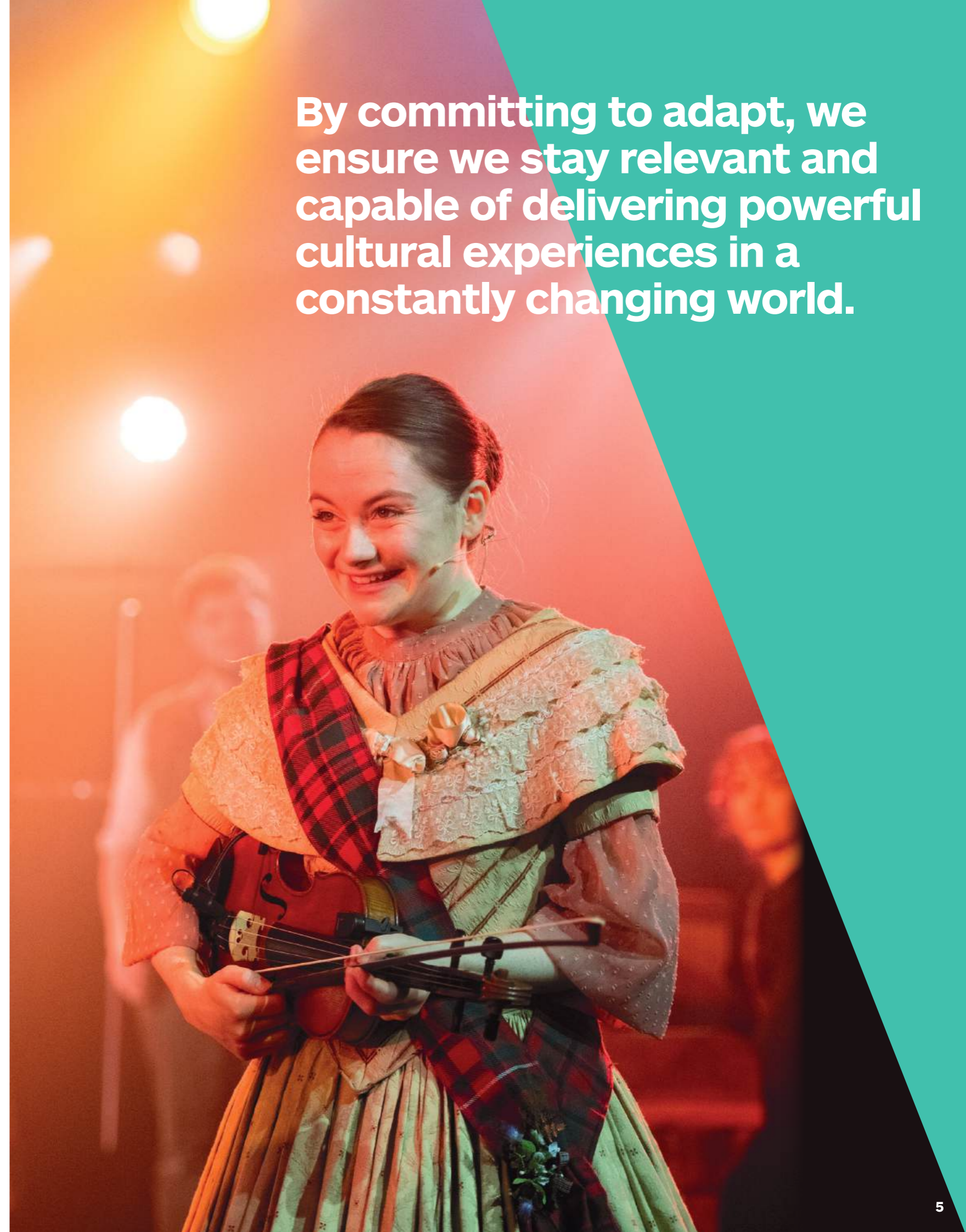
Improve how we measure our impact to ensure we achieve real, positive changes for society.

Ensure Financial Stability:

Use a solid financial plan to manage risks and keep our finances stable.

We are committed to these changes, driven by a core value of continuous **learning**. Through transparent and reflective practices, we aim to strengthen Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre as a cultural cornerstone locally, nationally, and internationally for the next 90 years.

By committing to adapt, we ensure we stay relevant and capable of delivering powerful cultural experiences in a constantly changing world.



2 Who We Are /

Driven by the belief that creative experiences are essential to life, we have been crafting meaningful human connections through the arts for nine decades. Our story is one of people: artists, creatives, staff, participants, and audiences. Our mission is driven by a commitment to being welcoming, collaborative, and always learning from people and experiences.

Nestled in the cultural heart of Dundee, we stand as the city's heartbeat of creativity. Together, Dundee Rep Theatre and Scottish Dance Theatre create and present works for local, national, and international audiences, with education at our core.

Dundee Rep Theatre, a leading force in Scottish theatre, has produced numerous acclaimed and award-winning productions, including the Scottish premiere of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *August: Osage County*, world premieres of new musicals *A History of Paper*, *No Love Songs* and *Oor Wullie*, and the 80th Anniversary season world premiere of Peter Arnott's *Tay Bridge*.

Scottish Dance Theatre, founded as a grassroots community company in 1986, has evolved into Scotland's flagship contemporary dance company. Rooted in Dundee, a city with a proud industrial heritage and surrounded by nature, farming, and fishing communities, we are dedicated to our art form and the people we share it with. We collaborate with artists worldwide, bringing our work to remote village halls in the Scottish Highlands, opera houses in South America, art festivals in Europe and local schools, prisons and shopping centres.

At Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre, we believe high-quality artistic and creative experiences should be accessible to all. Our dedicated Engage team builds local and national partnerships, fostering learning, creativity and community performance. For 30 years, we have been one of only two UK theatres providing dramatherapy for adults and families, offering therapeutic mental health support in a creative, non-clinical environment.

Our impact is profound and far-reaching. We have grown into a world-class organisation, with two artistic powerhouses in Dundee, sharing our passion for the arts with the world.

We are Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre.



3 What We Stand For /

In developing our Strategic Framework, we've focused on our purpose, values, and goals, inspired by Simon Sinek's Golden Circle principle.

WHY (Our Purpose)

We believe creative experiences matter in life; creating meaningful human connection is what we do. This has been our driving mission for nine decades.

HOW

We achieve this by being welcoming, collaborative, and always learning from people and experiences.



Our strategic aims shape everything we do, ensuring we stay relevant and impactful.

WHAT

Our strategic aims shape everything we do, ensuring we stay relevant and impactful:

Artistic and Community Development

We collaborate with local, national, and international communities to create, design, and deliver high-quality dance, music, and theatre programmes. These activities are designed to meet community needs, offering opportunities to experience enriching art for personal well-being, collective enjoyment, and cultural engagement.

Business Operations and Sustainability

We develop and implement a financially robust business model with diverse income streams, including the commercial use of our activities and intellectual property. Our focus on audience-centric programming aims to boost attendance, forge new partnerships, and optimise resources for sustainable growth.

Environmental Sustainability

We lead by example in demonstrating how culture can contribute to an environmentally sustainable future, guided by principles of climate justice. Sustainability practices are embedded across all our operations to minimise environmental impact.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

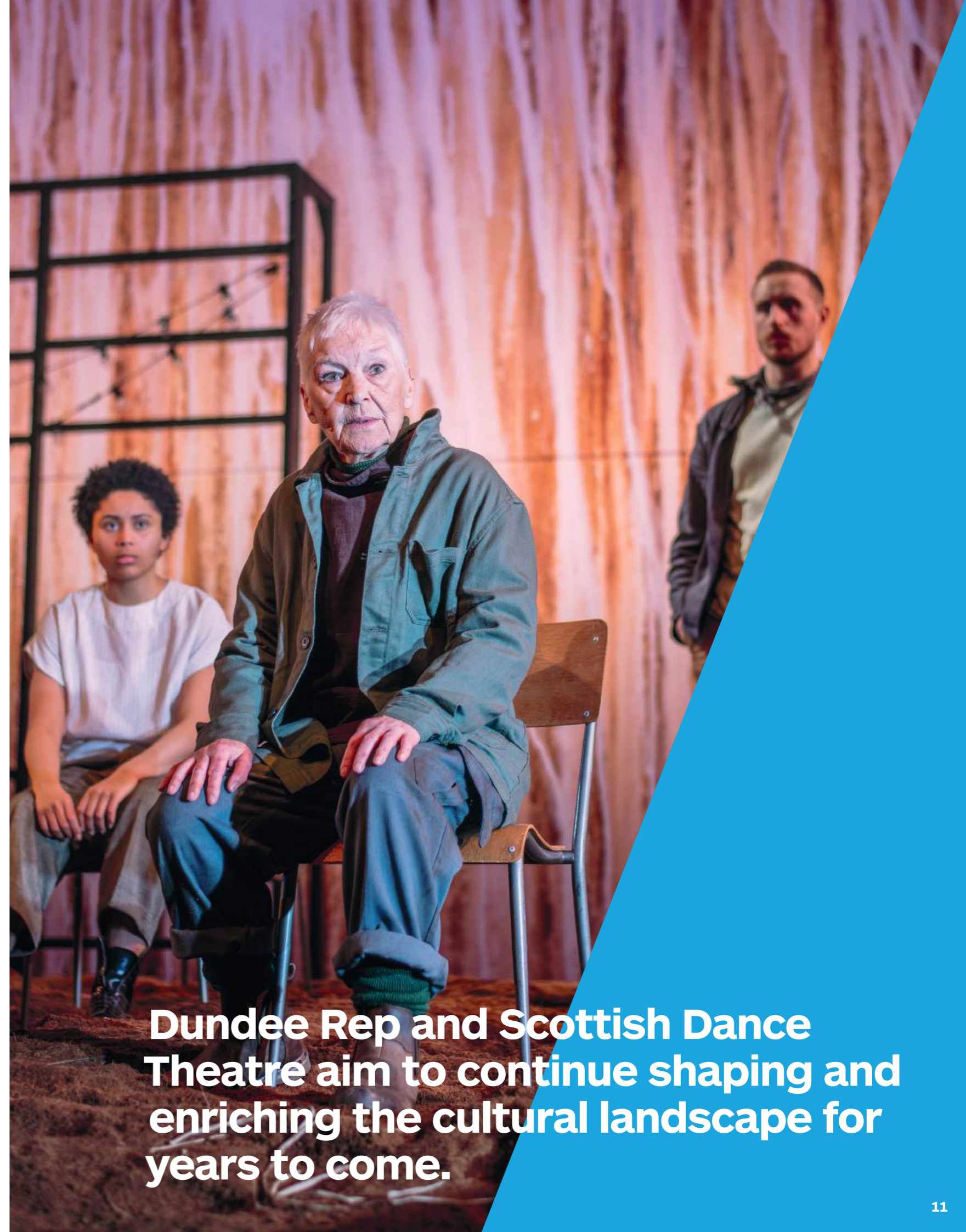
We prioritise equitable access to our activities and services, striving to champion social and racial justice initiatives.

3.1 How We Do It /

Primary Activities

- Producing and presenting professional theatre, dance, and music experiences locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Hosting performances and events at Dundee Rep Theatre by external companies.
- Offering creative engagement experiences to the public.
- Providing hospitality and commercial services.
- Tailoring creative engagement activities to specific groups with therapeutic or social justice objectives.
- Providing development opportunities for artists, sector professionals, and individuals in training.

By focusing on these strategic goals and core activities, Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre aim to continue shaping and enriching the cultural landscape for years to come.



Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre aim to continue shaping and enriching the cultural landscape for years to come.

4 Context

A Changing World

We're adjusting our business model in response to significant economic challenges. Public funding has decreased since 2008, exacerbated by pandemic-related reductions in audience numbers and cuts to arts funding. Rising costs, such as meeting the Living Wage, are putting pressure on cultural organisations. There's uncertainty ahead regarding future funding and income as we work to rebuild our audiences alongside others in the sector.

Insights from the *'Disappearing Act?'* report, commissioned together with five other Scottish producing houses outlined the health of building-based producing theatres in Scotland and made a number of recommendations. We're focusing on workplace culture, engagement strategies, and salary benchmarks. Collaborating with other theatres provides updated market insights for live theatre in Scotland, influencing how we generate income, develop audiences, and market our productions.

Considering local, national, and international economic realities, our research highlights low theatre attendance in Dundee and Angus, reinforcing our commitment to engage local communities beyond ticket sales.

Our strategy includes:

- Targeting markets during economic uncertainty.
- Increasing revenue from creative initiatives through local projects, touring, and co-productions, supporting Scotland's cultural strategy and the Wellbeing Economy.
- Locally, aligning with goals in Dundee City Plan by addressing poverty, supporting economic development, and promoting environmental sustainability through partnerships and projects.

Our research indicates significant opportunities to increase theatre attendance in Dundee and Angus, further motivating us to engage local communities and enhance their cultural experience beyond just ticket sales.



5 Our Strategic Aims and Ambitions (2025 – 2028)

HUB MODEL: The DD1 Quad Hub Model

Our business plan revolves around four strategic aims and modes of operation to meet local needs, strengthen national ecological resilience, and ensure financial sustainability. Three of these aims require explicit funding from Creative Scotland.

1.

'The Rep' as Civic & Social Space

Range of creative experiences where commercial objectives are balanced with social and civic objectives. While revenue may be generated, the net financial contribution may be 'loss making' in many instances requiring grant support to be viable.

2.

'The Rep' as Commercial Space

Commercially viable shows (produced and visiting) that return net positive contribution; commercially viable events (produced and hires); commercially viable hospitality offer.

Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre

3.

'The Rep' as Sector Development Space

Range of development and progression opportunities for artists, other sector professionals and those in training and pre-training, and whilst revenue generation may be present it is not the primary objective. Significant grant support is required to underpin this.

4.

'The Rep' as Creation Centre

The development, creation and production of professional theatre, dance and music product and experiences, up to the point of first production, where the work is then intended to generate significant revenues in markets beyond Dundee.



We collaborate closely with local, national, and international communities to create high-quality, engaging works.

Artistic and Community Development Programme

We've crafted a bold, multi-artform programme for 2025-2028 that includes dance, music, and theatre, directly tied to our strategic aims and the DD1 Hub model.

Engagement

We collaborate closely with local, national and international communities to create high-quality, engaging works that enhance personal and collective well-being and provide entertainment.

Goals

- Increase audience and participant engagement by 20%.
- Optimise resource use through strategic partnerships.
- Ensure all activities align with our sustainability goals.

Quality Evaluation

We ensure impact through:

- Self-evaluation during and after each project.
- Annual reviews with Peer Reflectors and key stakeholders.
- Extensive analysis of audience feedback.
- Evaluation of published reviews and discussions against project intentions.

Business Operations and Financial Sustainability

Financial Plan

We're strengthening our financial foundation by diversifying income sources, including commercial activities and intellectual property.

Goals

- Achieve an average audience attendance of 75%.
- Align ticket prices with national standards.
- Enhance efficiency to grow income from trading and partnerships.

Strategies

- Implement robust financial systems to improve Return on Investment (ROI).
- Ensure all artistic projects promote community inclusion and benefit.

Actions

- Extend our Income Generation Plan.
- Optimise assets and prioritise high-return activities.
- Enhance our approach to ticket sales and donations.



We're fostering a workplace culture where equality, diversity, and inclusion are fundamental.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Culture

We're fostering a workplace culture where equality, diversity and inclusion are fundamental.

Goals

- Further develop and implement an Environmental Sustainability and EDI Plan.
- Promote fairness, inclusion, social justice, and climate justice.
- Ensure equitable access to professional development and training, embracing Fair Work First principles.

Actions

- Monitor progress through data on protected characteristics, community involvement, and Fair Work First metrics.
- Use Sentiment Analysis to monitor attitudes towards EDI and Fair Work principles.
- Ensure 20% of activities benefit the wider community.
- Implement recommendations from the 'Disappearing Act?' report to enhance fairness and inclusion.
- Enhance data analysis capabilities to support EDI and Fair Work initiatives.
- Invest in our team's development, including freelancers, to support EDI and Fair Work principles.
- Use staff feedback to continuously improve our EDI and Fair Work practices.

Environmental Impact and Sustainability

Commitment

We're responding to the climate crisis with significant action to reduce our carbon footprint and lead the cultural sector by example.

Goals

- Embed environmental sustainability across all activities.
- Reduce international travel emissions by one-third.
- Advocate for Theatre Green Book standards.

Actions

- Launch a comprehensive plan to further reduce emissions.
- Track progress with guidance from Creative Carbon Scotland.
- Adapt creative processes for sustainability.



6 Artistic Programme 2025-28

The Artistic Programme at Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre is created together by our Artistic Team.

We care about audiences:

Our artistic programme aims to create meaningful creative experiences and foster human connection.

We create multi-artform work:

We blend theatre, dance, music, and social practice, focusing on cross-disciplinary work that challenges genre boundaries.

We are artistically ambitious:

We aim to advance the art form in each project, investing in artistic quality and innovation.

We are connected:

We engage communities in shaping our programme through input and co-creation.

We are committed to tackling inequalities in our society and our environment:

Through our programme, we aim to bring about meaningful change in what we create, how we create it, and who gets to experience it.

We understand the need for balance:

Combining work with wide audience appeal with output, artists, and practices that need more proactive support (e.g., emerging artists or the development of contemporary dance audiences).

We are local and outward-looking:

Our programme, rooted in local communities and landscapes, ambitiously connects with audiences across Scotland, the UK, and globally.

We collaborate:

Our programme thrives on collaborative partnerships with artists, companies, communities, and third-sector organisations in Dundee, Scotland, the UK, and globally.

We are entrepreneurial:

We look for opportunities to co-produce and co-create with partners across the non-profit and commercial sectors.

We are informed:

Our programme incorporates input from all departments for financial strength, market responsiveness, and feasibility.

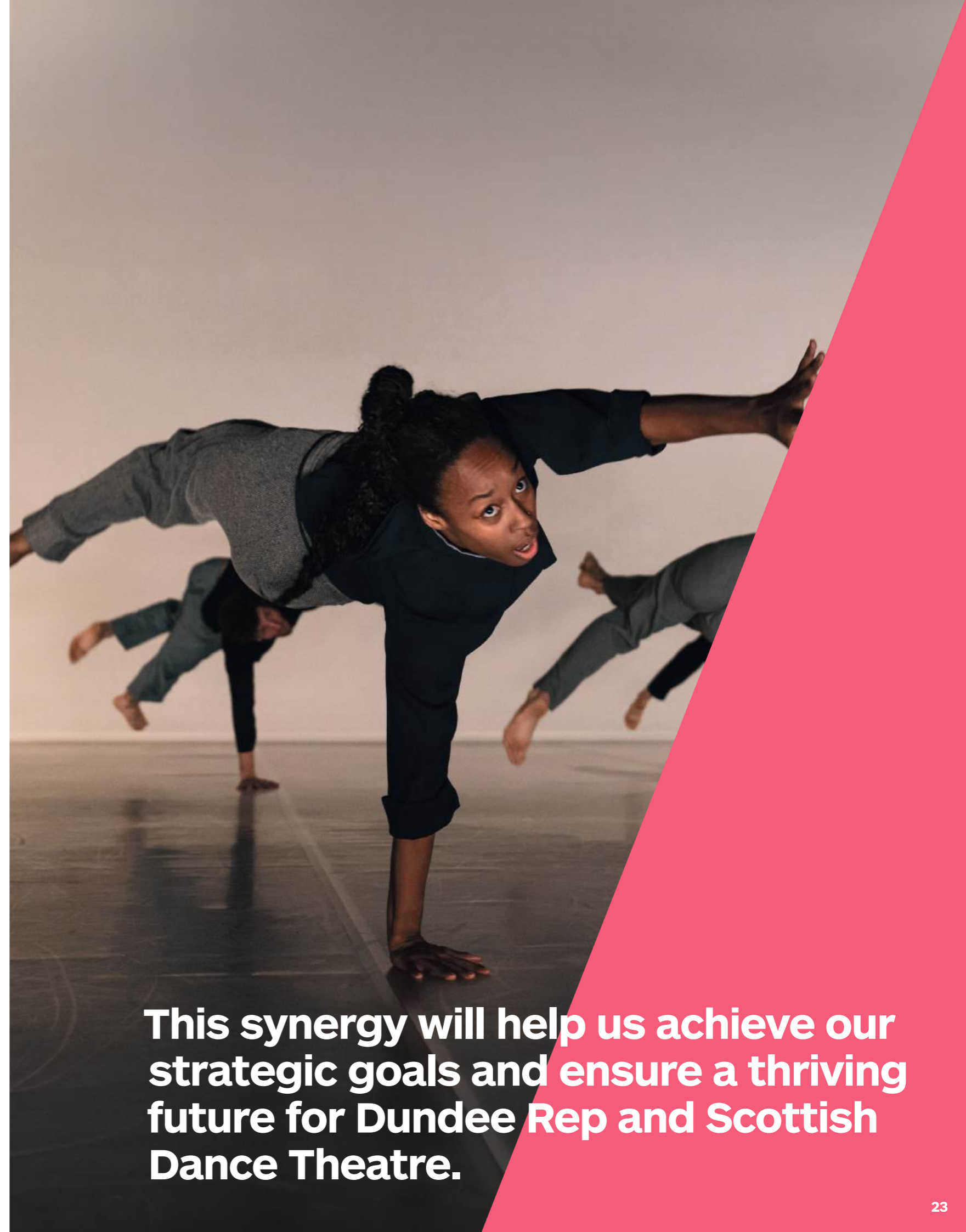


Intended Impact

By April 2028, we envision that our Artistic Plan – focused on Engagement and Artist Development, Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre Productions, and Visiting Productions – will harmoniously work even better together. This synergy will help us achieve our strategic goals and ensure a thriving future for Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre, positioning us as integral creative hubs in our community.

Our goals for this period are to:

- Provide high-quality artistic experiences that resonate with audiences and communities, positively impacting their well-being.
- Increase audience and participant engagement by 20% across all parts of our Artistic Programme.
- Enhance our commitment to underrepresented artists and communities, ensuring 20% of our artists come from these groups, and promote wider access to the sector.
- Expand the reach of our work sustainably, testing and developing models for sustainable production and distribution, aiming to reduce our carbon footprint from international travel by one-third.
- Achieve a balanced spread of our activities geographically, with 20% of our work happening beyond Dundee Rep Theatre/Tay Square, reaching communities across Dundee and Scotland.
- Maximise our resources by delivering 30%-45% of our work in partnership with other organisations through collaborations, co-productions, and Research and Development.



This synergy will help us achieve our strategic goals and ensure a thriving future for Dundee Rep and Scottish Dance Theatre.

7 Looking Ahead /

As we enter the next phase of our development, shaping the organisation for continued success over the next nine decades, we recognise the growing challenges faced by us and our sector. The current way of operating is no longer sustainable. We understand that embracing transformative change will be challenging, but we are ready for the task. In fact, we've already begun!

With 90 years of experience, a skilled and creative workforce, a committed board, and a supportive community, we are well-prepared for the future. Our agility and focus, coupled with a clear vision outlined in this Business Plan, position us to tackle the challenges of the coming decades.

Through our plan, we aim to forge thousands of meaningful connections within Dundee and beyond. We seek to spark reflection, emotional engagement, and resonance, guiding our audiences on new journeys. Beyond entertainment, we aim to enhance the well-being of the communities we serve and contribute to envisioning and shaping more socially and environmentally just futures.

We will evolve our organisational model, invest in our staff and facilities, and ensure our business model remains resilient and adaptable through innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit. Collaboration within and beyond our sector will be crucial as we learn and share our discoveries.

Our goal is to open our world to as many people as possible, striving towards a more equitable society and broader cultural participation.

We believe these changes will have a positive ripple effect throughout the sector, aligning with the priorities of local and national governments and their agencies. We are committed to delivering excellent value for public investment.

We have mapped out various pathways to our future, and with support from Creative Scotland, we can realistically achieve the comprehensive changes outlined here. Additional funding is crucial to fully realise our ambitions.



Photography credits: Genevieve Reeves, Tommy Ga-Ken Wan, Tiu Makkonen, Brian Hartley, Clara Mammana, Viktoria Begg, Alastair More, Miheala Bodlovic, Tao-Anas Le Thanh, Eoin Carey



Change is possible. Let's begin!