Fringe stands for Freedom: the freedom to take part, making a start, telling your story. Whoever you are.

It’s for the Risk-takers, rule breakers, name makers, artists and audience alike. A place to discover and to be discovered.

It’s an International showcase, meeting place, creative space where anything goes and the world comes to find it. A global stage made in Scotland.
An idea so Nonsensical no one could explain it, copy, own, predict or contain it. A complex design with human heart, ever-changing and state of the art.

The Fringe is Ground-breaking, mischief-making, shaping conversations but never taking itself too seriously. Its birth was an act of defiance and it will never be shushed.

It begins and ends with Edinburgh: its closes and taverns, venues in caverns and waiting in line for a show. That feeling of belonging in a crowd of perfect strangers.

The Fringe that calls Edinburgh home.
HERE’S TO

THE UNINVITED

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to express themselves through creativity and experience the thrill of live performance.

No matter who you are or where you come from, everyone is welcome on the Fringe. No individual or committee determines who can or cannot appear. You, the audience, curate your own festival.

It all began in 1947 with eight companies taking a risk, turning up uninvited and performing on the ‘fringe’ of the inaugural Edinburgh International Festival.

Over 70 years later, the Fringe has grown to become the greatest platform for creative freedom in the world. It is at the centre of a global movement of over 200 fringe festivals, each following in Edinburgh’s footsteps.
Taking inspiration from the original eight, the Fringe Society – a charity established by participants to act as the custodian of the Fringe – is making eight firm commitments that together make up the Fringe Blueprint, a statement of intent that will inform everything we do between now and our 75th anniversary in 2022.

Much like the Fringe itself, we can’t achieve any of this on our own. It will require a huge collective effort – from participants, audience members, government, councillors, businesses, partners and funders – but together we can make the world’s greatest platform for creative freedom even more accessible, affordable, connected and relevant than ever before.

SO HERE’S TO THE ORIGINAL EIGHT.

HERE’S TO THE UNINVITED.
of ticket and transport vouchers were gifted to 26 local charities and community groups by the Fringe Society last year.

Over 3,000 people benefited, including one young person who was so inspired he is now pursuing a career in BREAKDANCING.
ACT

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IN 1947, AT THE YMCA SOUTH ST ANDREW STREET, CHRISTINE ORR PLAYERS (EDINBURGH) PERFORMED

Macbeth by Shakespeare
THE OPEN FRINGE
THE OPEN FRINGE

Remove barriers to entry to ensure that everyone is welcome at the Fringe and anyone can take part.

The Fringe is the world’s greatest festival. We believe that anyone with a story to tell should find a home on the Fringe, regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation or background. We will work alongside partners to remove barriers and ensure the Fringe is open and accessible to everyone.
WE WILL

→ Reach those in Edinburgh that have never experienced the Fringe before by doubling the value of our Fringe Days Out scheme to £100,000 a year, working with 26 local charities to connect communities and open doors to the performing arts.

→ Draw together an expert panel of diverse advisors to support artists from black, minority ethnic, working class, disabled and LGBTQ+ backgrounds.

→ Identify, support and develop the next generation of talented disabled, black and minority ethnic producers through our Emerging Producers’ Development Programme.

→ Increase the number of Fringe performances and events that are relaxed, BSL interpreted, captioned and audio described, and work with venues to make them more accessible to disabled artists and audiences.

→ Identify geographical locations that have not typically engaged with the Fringe, and work with local stakeholders to encourage participation from across Scotland, the UK and overseas.

YOU CAN HELP

In order to make the Fringe accessible for all, we need to tackle the root causes of inequality in access to the arts. Could you or someone you know join our panel of expert advisors? Could your charity work with us to reach underrepresented groups? Or could your company help sponsor our Fringe Days Out ticket scheme? If you share our commitment to the Open Fringe, we’d love to hear from you.
This included the very best of Scottish performing art from 967 companies were represented on stage at last year’s Fringe.
IN 1947, AT THE PLEASANCE LITTLE THEATRE, GLASGOW UNITY THEATRE PERFORMED
The Lower Depths by Maxim Gorky and Laird O'Torwatletie by Robert MacLellan
Develop the Fringe’s international reputation as the place to discover talent.

The Fringe is a global meeting place for creative talent, with artists travelling from over 50 countries to take part each year. We aim to build upon Edinburgh’s reputation as the world’s premiere arts industry platform, where creatives come to exchange ideas and develop co-productions, media come to review and critique, and global arts industry come to discover, co-commission and select work.
WE WILL

→ Ensure that artists can attend the Fringe wherever they are in the world by securing the permit-free status of the festival following the UK’s exit from the EU.

→ Identify tour-ready work being showcased on the Fringe to enable buyers in the city to find it easily, and develop digital tools to connect Fringe participants with commissioners and buyers across the globe.

→ Work with media industry partners to explore alternative models of critical review, ensuring that artists get the recognition and audience they deserve.

→ Provide a distinct platform for Scottish music, dance and theatre on the Fringe through our Made in Scotland programme, helping the best of Scottish work be seen and selected for touring domestically and internationally.

→ Collaborate with partners in Scotland, the UK and overseas to build stronger connections and networks for co-production, co-commissioning and touring.

YOU CAN HELP

It has taken 70 years to establish the Fringe as one of the world’s leading performing arts markets. In uncertain political and economic times, it’s more important than ever that we support the people that make the Fringe happen each year, from political advocacy to media coverage, partnership working to funding for artists touring to and from the Fringe.
But you don’t need to be a millionaire to afford a Fringe ticket: you can get in free to over 900 shows. £173 million is generated each and every year for the Scottish economy.
IN 1947, AT THE PLEASANCE LITTLE THEATRE, EDINBURGH PEOPLE’S THEATRE PERFORMED

*Thunder Rock* by Robert Ardrey
THE AFFORDABLE FRINGE
Edinburgh during the Fringe is unlike anywhere else on earth, and we want to ensure this experience is affordable for participants, audience members and stakeholders. We are committed to reducing the long-term cost of performing at and visiting the Fringe; however, we cannot achieve this alone. We will need the support of government, councillors, local businesses, universities and accommodation providers to ensure the Fringe remains at the heart of Edinburgh’s cultural landscape.

Tackle the rising cost of attendance at the Fringe to ensure the festival is affordable for all.
The moment Edinburgh becomes too expensive for artists is the moment the Fringe ceases to function. In particular, we would like to address the costs of accommodation, travel, licensing, venue rental, and food and drink over the next five years. If you have influence or a contribution to making Edinburgh more affordable during August, we’d love to hear from you.

WE WILL

→ Freeze participant registration fees until at least 2022, making it nearly two decades since they were last increased. We will also reduce the commission we take on box office transactions from 4% to 3% over the same period.

→ Seek to increase the availability of affordable accommodation options through partnerships with accommodation and transport providers.

→ Support artists to grow their audience and box office income, while exploring affordable ticketing options to help audiences see as much work as possible, irrespective of their budget.

→ Work closely with regional and national funders to increase support for artists and their work.

YOU CAN HELP

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We work all year round to support participants and audiences at the world’s largest arts festival, with a full-time team of just 24 people.

600,000 TICKETS were purchased by Edinburgh residents last year, more than the city’s population.
IN 1947, AT THE PLEASANCE LITTLE THEATRE, EDINBURGH DISTRICT COMMUNITY DRAMA ASSOCIATION PERFORMED

The Anatomist by James Bridie
THE
FRINGE
HOME
Secure a new home for the Fringe to provide year-round assistance to participants and support a vibrant Fringe community.

Each year we welcome thousands of participants, audience members, media, arts industry professionals and alumni from all over the world to Edinburgh. We will secure a new space to welcome them to the city and to the Fringe, bringing together local, national and international stakeholders as one vibrant Fringe community.
WE WILL

→ Find a new home for the Fringe Society, open year-round for participants, audience members and supporters alike to come together and collaborate.

→ Open our doors to Edinburgh residents, connecting them with an international creative community and inspiring the next generation of Fringe performers and audience members.

→ Link fringe festivals from all over the world as part of the biennial Fringe World Congress, hosted from our new home, encouraging the sharing of ideas and expertise across borders.

→ Build a strong network of Fringe alumni to spread the word about the work we do and champion freedom of expression all over the world.

YOU CAN HELP

Can you help us secure a home that reflects the Fringe’s personality and commitment to open access? As a small charity with limited resources at our disposal, we will need assistance to identify suitable locations, raise the necessary funds and, most importantly, ensure our new home is fit for purpose for all stakeholders to benefit from. Just please don’t buy us a toaster.
100,000+
young people have entered the Schools Poster Competition since its inception in 1980

Fringe tickets were donated to children and young people in the Edinburgh care system by 1 IN 3 SHOWS
IN 1947, AT THE GATEWAY THEATRE, LEITH WALK, PILGRIM PLAYERS PERFORMED
The Family Reunion / Murder in the Cathedral by T.S. Eliot
THE INSPIRATIONAL FRINGE
We will engage with young people across Edinburgh and Scotland to foster a lifelong passion for the arts, rooted in a clear understanding of the Fringe as a vital gateway for creative exploration. Using the launchpad of the Year of Young People and the solid foundations of the Fringe Schools Poster Competition, we will reimagine our engagement with schools, based on wide-ranging consultation and collaboration.

Foster a lifelong passion for the arts amongst Scotland’s young people and champion creative learning in our schools and colleges.
WE WILL

→ Gather the views of young people, teachers, community groups, cultural organisations and others to help shape our approach to creative learning in and out of the classroom, linked closely to the Curriculum for Excellence.

→ Connect young people more directly with performing artists and performing arts experiences, inspiring the next generation of artists, producers, writers, crew and audience members, and developing Scotland’s young workforce.

→ Work closely with cultural partners, other festivals and policymakers to help close the poverty-related attainment gap, providing creative experiences for young people regardless of their social circumstances.

→ Inspire the next generation of arts journalists through the development of the Fringe Young Critics’ Scheme and Young Writers’ Award.

YOU CAN HELP

If you have a passion for the arts and are currently at school or college, or are a parent, teacher or community worker, please get in touch with us. The Fringe Society is committed to deepening the engagement of young people in the arts irrespective of their background, and we would welcome your input and ideas. We would also welcome feedback and support from political decision makers, ensuring that arts education is embedded within the curriculum both now and in the future.
The street has played host to many a famous name over the years, including Eddie Izzard.
ACT

IN 1947, AT THE YMCA SOUTH ST ANDREW STREET, EDINBURGH COLLEGE OF ART THEATRE GROUP PERFORMED

Easter by August Strindberg
THE FRINGE STREET
Support and develop the world’s greatest street festival at the heart of the Fringe.

The Fringe street events are the most visible, accessible and recognisable event of the Edinburgh Festivals. They are also a great way for people on a limited budget to access hundreds of shows. We will improve the infrastructure and design of the street to properly reflect the creativity of our performers, providing a quality introduction to the world of the Fringe and easier navigation and access for the audiences who come to see work.
WE WILL

Revitalise the street events footprint on the Royal Mile and The Mound, providing better facilities and staging for participants, an easier to navigate layout, technological innovations including cashless payments, and spectacular new showcases of the best the Fringe has to offer.

Improve access for all participants and audience members, including the introduction of fully accessible stages, level viewing areas, BSL interpreted shows, quieter spaces, and sensory backpacks for children and adults on the autism spectrum.

Explore ways of connecting our offering on the Royal Mile and The Mound with hard to reach audiences, including the potential of taking our street events on tour.

Seek partners to develop a brand new award to recognise excellence in the field of street performance.

YOU CAN HELP

First and foremost, we’d love you to come and experience our street events first hand. For those of you that have never been, or haven’t been for several years, the variety and quality of work on offer is extraordinary, and our performers will welcome your presence (and donations in the hat!). Once you’ve experienced it, we’d love you to spread the word and support our vision for street performance in select locations across the city.
paper is used to produce the Fringe Programme

Our Fringe ‘swap shop’ allows participants to donate and exchange unwanted props, from tables and chairs to

A CONVENT FULL OF NUNS’ HABITS
IN 1947, AT THE NEW VICTORIA CINEMA,
MANCHESTER MARIONETTE THEATRE PERFORMED
*a series of short puppet plays*
THE GREEN FRINGE
Since 2010, the Fringe Society has worked with Creative Carbon Scotland to provide advice and guidance on sustainability for Fringe participants, and to limit the impact of our activities on the environment. We will build on these foundations and significantly reduce the festival’s carbon footprint, exploring technological solutions to reduce paper and energy usage, encourage recycling, limit air travel, and champion green initiatives.

Reduce the festival’s carbon footprint and champion initiatives that limit our impact on the environment.
To secure a long-term reduction in the Fringe’s carbon footprint, we will need every part of the Fringe community to do their bit, from venues adopting green technologies to participants reducing the number of flyers they produce and audiences considering greener travel options. If you’re at the cutting edge of mobile wallets, blockchain and other tech wizardry, or have any other ideas or innovations that might help reduce the festival’s impact on the environment, please get in touch with us.

**WE WILL**

- Dramatically reduce the number of paper tickets we produce through a fully-integrated digital solution which works for all venues, no matter what their size.
- Work with partners including Creative Carbon Scotland to produce a comprehensive guide to sustainability for Fringe venues and roll it out across the festival.
- Provide a free of charge ‘swap shop’ service for participants to drop off and exchange unwanted props and materials at the end of the Fringe.
- Reduce our paper usage by at least a third by investing in digital solutions, with particular emphasis on the Fringe Programme, flyering and other advertising materials.
- Ensure sustainability is incorporated into every aspect of the design of our new Fringe home.

**YOU CAN HELP**

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There were 20,993 news articles about the Fringe last year, but the number of stories was IMMEASURABLE.
THE FRINGE STORY
THE FRINGE STORY

Tell the remarkable story of the Fringe and build awareness of, and support for, our charitable mission all over the world.

The Fringe has an exceptional story to tell. A festival that started in Edinburgh with just eight companies has grown to become not only the world’s largest, but also the inspiration behind over 200 fringe festivals around the world. We will develop a new suite of materials to tell that story locally, nationally and internationally, and provide meaningful opportunities for the public to engage with our archive.
WE WILL

Establish a publicly available, searchable archive for the Fringe, and encourage members of the public to submit their own materials and memories.

Document the unique artistic legacy of the Fringe, its connection to Edinburgh, Scotland and a global network of fringe festivals, and the vibrant future it has ahead of it.

Create a legends of the Fringe scheme to recognise and pay tribute to those who have made an outstanding contribution to the festival over its 70-year history.

Celebrate and grow World Fringe Day alongside over 200 other fringe festivals, highlighting the remarkable cultural gift that Edinburgh has given the world.

YOU CAN HELP

If you have any rare or unseen material, or would like to help us sort, order and display the material we already have, we’d love to hear from you. Likewise, if you have any compelling stories or memories of the Fringe, now is the time to write them down and send them through to us. Finally, if you work for a media organisation, museum or art gallery and would like to collaborate, do get in touch with us.
If you’ve been inspired by any of the ideas in this Blueprint and think you can help the Fringe Society achieve any or all of our eight commitments, we would love to hear from you.

For more information, email

blueprint@edfringe.com

or call

+44 (0)131 226 0026
THANK YOU