

EACC Meeting 6 Jul 2023

Julia Amour, Director, Festivals Edinburgh, and
Lyndsey Jackson, Deputy Chief Executive of the Fringe Society, on:

*The Summer 2023 Programmes;
The Festival Events' reach into communities and schools;
Their boost to city jobs and livelihoods.*

We're entering year two of the Summer Festivals' return from Covid.
How strong are the programmes?
What has changed?
What plans for the future?

Edinburgh Festivals 2023 Peak Season

2022: comeback at scale for 11 festivals

Recovery from Covid – Positive rebound

	2022	2019
SCALE	c 3.2 million ticketed attendances (c 70% of 2019)	c 4.7 million ticketed attendances
OFFER	4,751 performances/events (64% of 2019)	7,455 performances/events
AUDIENCES	40% Edinburgh, inc 300,000 free attendances 20% Scotland 40% beyond Scotland (10% international)	40% Edinburgh 20% Scotland 40% beyond Scotland
CREATIVES	c 20,500 participants	c 30,000 participants
INTERNATIONAL	Work from 70 countries	Work from 80 countries
INDUSTRY	2,000 professional delegates	2,500 professional delegates
ECONOMIC IMPACT	£400 million new income to Edinburgh 5,850 full-time equivalent jobs	£300 million 5650 full-time equivalent jobs

Festival events are big economic generators for the city.
But the recovery picture remains fragile – Festival programme needs a more sustainable footing and renewed support from key stakeholders.
Centre for Moving Image (film) collapse a big blow – Film Festival future slowly being pieced back together.

2023: fragile recovery

- 10% increase in number of events against 2022 (to 70% of 2019 levels)
- 85% decrease in number of online events against 2022 (still > 100 more than 2019)
- Cost of living crisis seriously affecting costs for audiences, artists and organisers – locally and internationally
- Cash budgets at roughly 2019 levels can now only deliver 70% of 2019 outputs
- City infrastructure and regulatory impacts adding to complexity of delivering festivals
- 2024 higher risk still with public funding due to decline further
- Compared to 2010, Festivals delivering 150% of benefits with 50% of grant value

Strong positive impact on local economy – catering, hospitality, contractors – locals have growing involvement.

Fringe has less reliance on ‘volunteers’ – stronger emphasis on ‘good employers’ and ‘living wage’.

Consider restrictions on ‘home sharing’ (licence requirements etc.) as overly-restrictive

Edinburgh Festivals Impacts and Plans

‘Size’ is not the objective – pedigree and reputation (city / UK / global) more important.

See Edinburgh as ‘part of an international arts conversation’.

International Festival tie-up with Radio 3.

Tone of the Tattoo changing – stronger arts / creative element.

Book and International Festival audiences ‘ebbing’ (demographics).

Fringe remains vibrant – don’t want ‘bigger’ Fringe – want deeper (local) audience engagement – want to reduce the negative impacts (congestion, transport, waste, energy use).

Fringe has little control over ‘size’ – venue access / availability a function of CEC venue licensing permits and of Univ. of Edinburgh expansion of space made available to commercial producers.

Supportive of Visitor Levy if proceeds at least in part fed back into infrastructure support.

Supportive of CEC Public Space for Events and Filming ‘guidelines’ – yet to appear.

Artists and professionals

- Edinburgh's Festivals work with on average 120 local arts organisations and 480 local artists each year
- 133 PlaCE partnerships with culture organisations and professionals took place in 2021/22
- Platforms for Creative Excellence Programme (PlaCE) increased co-created activities by 360% between 2019 and 2022, despite two years profoundly disrupted by Covid lockdowns and event restrictions
- Over 500 people took part in professional development in 2021/22, with 85% reporting enhanced skills and knowledge they could not find elsewhere, and 95% keen to return

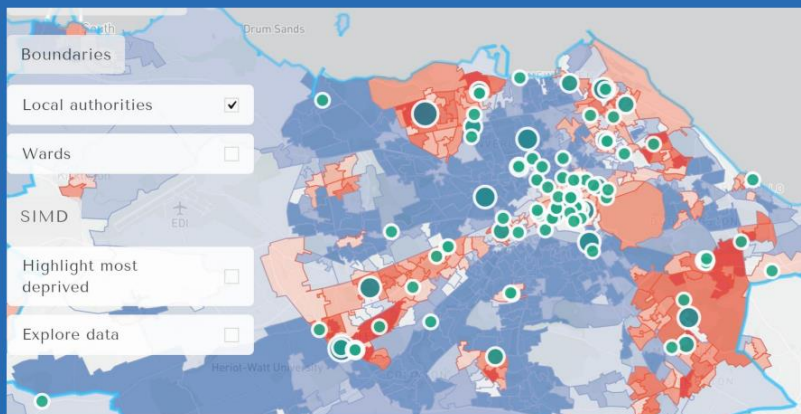
Stronger Fringe support for artists and professionals.

Move to widen community engagement.

Initiatives like 'Fringe Day Out' and the Sensory Backpack Scheme; BSL interpreted performances.

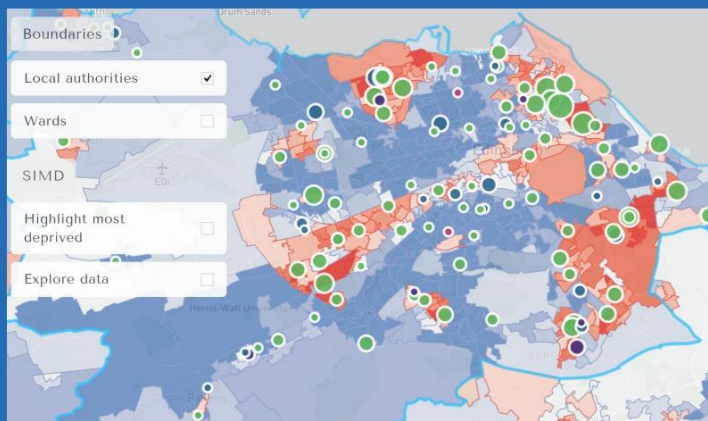
Community partners

- 148 community engagements in 2021/22, up from 65 in 2018



Schools partners

- 855 school engagements in 2021/22, up from 497 in 2018



<https://www.edinburghculturalmap.org/research/festivals-communities-map/>

City of Imagination: 2030 Vision



- Drive for Edinburgh to be a more powerful global meeting point for sharing ideas in dangerous times
- Increased links with local colleges, universities and suppliers to open up access to work opportunities
- Proposals to secure longer-term support for community connections & infrastructure
- Study into how integrated multi-year planning could improve Edinburgh's cultural mega-event
- Shared commitments to carbon reductions
- Call for local and national authorities to align ambitions, resources and regulatory impacts

Edinburgh Festivals are:
world-leading cultural brands
increasing economic powerhouses
important drivers in the national economy
crucially supportive of city jobs and livelihoods
loved by locals
generators of £33 in economic impact for every £1 invested from the public purse.

More here:

[Unique Edinburgh Festivals programmes strengthen recovery \(edinburghfestivalcity.com\)](https://edinburghfestivalcity.com)

June 2023 Economic Impact Report

[Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study digital original.pdf \(edinburghfestivalcity.com\)](https://edinburghfestivalcity.com)

Past Impact Studies

[Research Reports | Documents | Edinburgh Festival City](#)

Access the Fringe

[Accessibility | Edinburgh Festival Fringe \(edfringe.com\)](#)

Audience Insights Map

[Edinburgh Festival Fringe Open Audience Insights Map – The Edinburgh Culture and Community Mapping Project \(edinburghculturalmap.org\)](#)