



Lakeside Arts

University of Nottingham

(REVISED) BUSINESS PLAN

2022 – 2025

Part of



University of
Nottingham

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

INTRODUCTION

During lockdown 2020-21, with financial support raised from the Cultural Recovery Fund, the Lakeside team commissioned consultant Louise Emerson (Take the Current) to conduct a comprehensive overview of Lakeside's activities, operation and to a lesser degree, structure, alongside Lakeside's contribution to the University of Nottingham Civic Strategy and position in the city.

The aim was to reimagine Lakeside post-Covid in the context of reduced revenue funding, the need to demonstrate value and relevance to the University as well as the potential to deliver against the Arts Council's Let's Create strategy, plus the increasingly important expectation of operating in an environmentally responsible way. The consultant worked closely with the leadership team throughout the process. They also involved the entire Lakeside team in undertaking a SWOT analysis and the creation of a shared Vision, Mission and Goals.

OUR VISION:

Enriching lives through creativity and culture.

OUR MISSION:

To champion and nurture talent and engage diverse audiences with inspirational creative experiences.

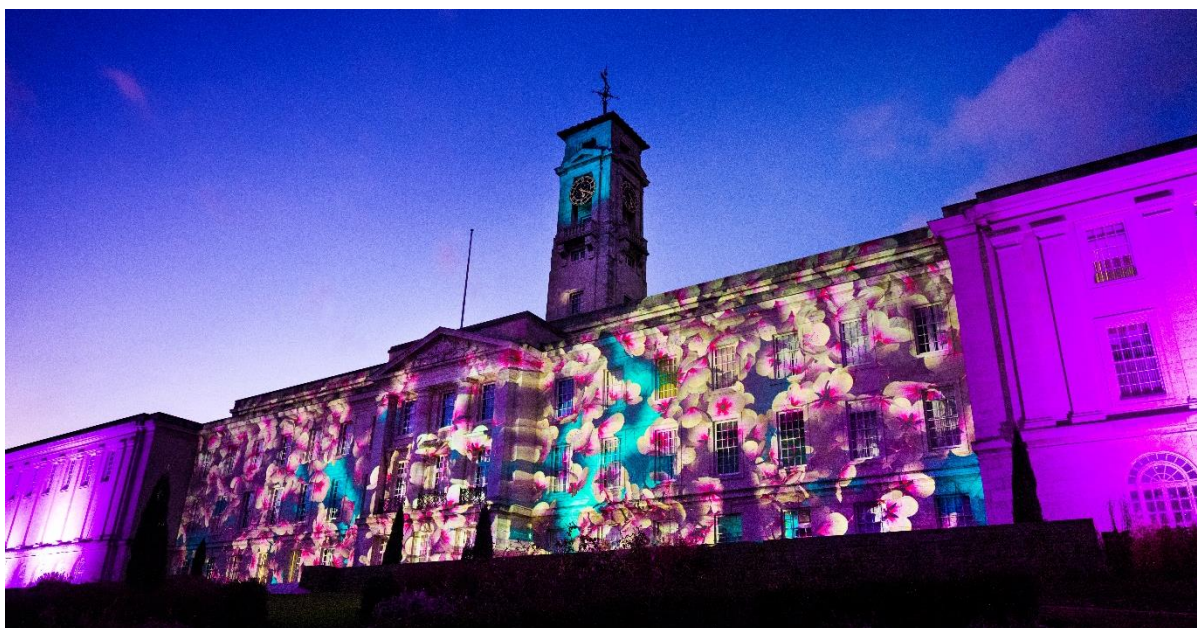
OUR GOALS:

1. Create transformative experiences for children and families.
2. Be more relevant to diverse communities.
3. Introduce, inspire, innovate.
4. Develop new skills, increase knowledge and encourage aspiration.
5. Support professional development in the creative sector.

The plan was completed in April 2021. It was shared with University personnel through presentations over the following 6 months. Academic year 2021-22 provided a baseline year in which a process of change effectively began whilst further plans were developed to identify potential funding sources and submit applications to secure the necessary funding (circa £500k over 3 years) in order to enable the evolution of our next phase of development and delivery 2022-25.

This document sets out progress to date, highlights developments in 2022-23, and details action plans against our goals.

The Plan will be monitored quarterly against KPIs and reviewed annually in order to account for financial or programmatic developments and to ensure we can deliver our ambitions.



Xīwàng (Hope), part of Lakeside Arts' Chinese New Year 2022 celebrations

PROGRESS 2021-22

Lakeside's team responded with huge flexibility to the necessary phased return to normal operations as we emerged from Covid working practices. We were pleased to be able to welcome public back on a regular basis and to once again see capacity audiences returning for music and family events on many occasions. Our audience numbers built during the year to reach 125,367, but whilst they are considerably improved upon 20-21's figure of 28,596, they remain short of 181,395 pre-Covid.

A Marketing and Communications Plan has been completed with Morris Hargreaves MacIntyre, elements of which are already in place in relation to increased levels of digital activity (Lakeside and audience). A phased roll-out of the MHM plan is scheduled over the next 3 years in order to support the Goals in the plan.

A new Strategic Approach to Education has been adopted and a delivery plan is being developed organically in partnership with a Quintile 5 school, Djanogly Strelley Academy. This new long-term and in-depth relationship was noted in the School's April 2022 Ofsted Report. New funding (£6k) was secured from the British Council to enable the testing of this new way of working with creatives in school matched with a project in Hong Kong; ongoing support from our Learning Officer led to new University personnel involvement from Geography and Physics. Lakeside's Learning Officer is now embedded in the School team and attends regular planning meetings with the School Staff.

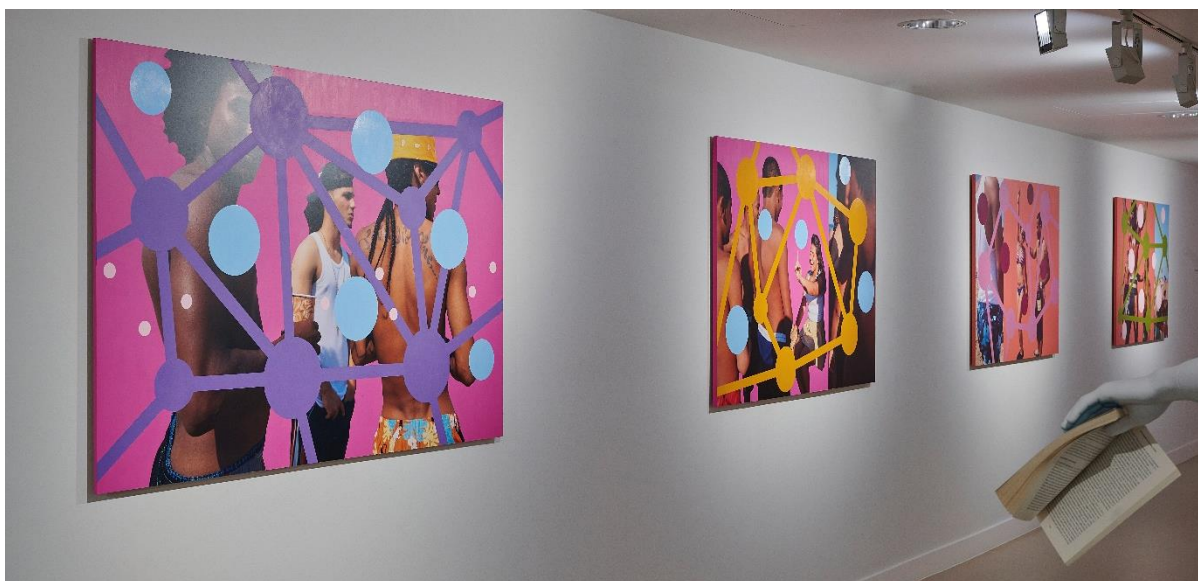
A Memorandum of Understanding was devised in partnership with the Students Union and a regular quarterly meeting established. This has evolved into an ongoing conversation with Residential Experience Managers to identify how we can better engage on-campus students with creative opportunities and experience linked to Nottingham Advantage Award; participatory opportunities; traineeships; cultural experiences.

Programme ambitions in relation to diversification of audiences and environmental responsibility have been built into the Arts Council application for National Portfolio Organisation status (NPO) submitted in May 2022. Were this to be successful it would provide £297.35k annually for 3 years. The outcome will be known at the end of October 2022.

Meanwhile, involvement in the Diversity Festival resulted in creation of a new exhibition space in the Café to house a photography exhibition by two students, bringing new and more diverse audiences into the venue for the first time. A successful partnership bid with Makers of Imaginary Worlds to NESTA and the National Gallery resulted in a first co-designed project and the delivery of HOME:Zero – a playful, interactive experience reimagining a sustainable future. In addition to testing in London and public opening at Lakeside, the installation has visited Strelley Library in an area of multiple deprivation, with potential further touring subject to funding applications currently in train.

An Opera highlighting the work of dementia carers was rehearsed and premiered at Lakeside with a chorus of NHS carers, ensemble of professional and student musicians, professional opera singers, lighting and technical support.

A funding bid to the Children's Play Activity Trust was successful in July 2022 (£164k over 3 years). This will allow us to build on the ambition of artist/creative technologies installations, continuing a successful partnership with Makers of Imaginary Worlds (spin out from Computer Science) and the creative technologists led by Dr Paul Tennent in the Mixed Reality Lab. There will be a strong focus on biodiversity in the context of this work to reflect our beautiful parkland location and deliver on our environmental commitment.



Michael Forbes' artworks in Blk this Blk that... a state of urgency exhibition

GOVERNANCE

Historic

From 2001-2015 Lakeside reported to Pro-Vice-Chancellors and through them to the University Executive Board. From 2015 this changed to the Chief Marketing and Communications Officer (CMCO) as part of External Relations, laterally reporting to the Registrar rather than Executive Board.

Proposed

Lakeside has agreed with the CMCO to introduce an Advisory Group to provide due diligence, to account for and monitor progress against business plan goals. Whilst this would be a requirement of a successful National Portfolio Organisation funding bid it feels timely under any circumstances to introduce such key support and expertise as would be afforded to the organisation as it moves forward into a next phase of development. Lakeside is working with Rachael Green, Head of Volunteering & Advocacy (University of Nottingham), who has recently undertake a review of University Committees in the context of governance principles in order to take the recruitment forwards.

CHALLENGES

Alongside the ongoing challenges of income generation and fundraising, together with our desire to reach new audiences, we face similar issues to colleagues across Nottingham and in our sector generally in relation to recruitment and retention.

Lakeside's staff are one of its key strengths. Their expertise, combined years of experience and enthusiasm for their work drives and underpins the success of the organisation. However, alongside the need to take forward appropriate succession planning, there are challenges in the context of skills shortages within the sector in key operational areas including technical and all aspects of Front of House, and we will continue to invest in our team members through training and working

collaboratively to embed flexible and agile working in order that we are best prepared to deliver our business goals.

PLANS FOR 2022-23

Introduction of Advisory Group

The role briefs for membership will be completed in September and recruitment will begin in October for a Chair and circa 8 members. It is expected that advocacy will be a key part of each role, however, we will be seeking particular skills to support our executive team in Communications & PR; Education; Createch; Philanthropy/fundraising; Diversification of Recruitment; Skills development/team building; Creative/Artist; and Student and Audience representation (ideally children/families given that strength/emphasis in our programme). Diversity will be enshrined in the make-up, noting intersectionality in terms of protected characteristics and lived experience. Members would be appointed for 1, 2, 3 year terms with optional second 3 year term; meetings will be quarterly in July, October, January and April. Target is to have the Advisory Group fully operational by April 2023.



Opening of Pevsner on camera exhibition in Lakeside's Djanogly Gallery

Programme Developments

Ongoing programming continues with exhibitions, chamber, world, folk, jazz, children/families, dance and theatre performances and linked workshop experiences.

Whilst the outcome of Arts Council NPO decisions will influence the speed with which we can implement specific actions aligned to every business goal, we continue to deliver programme developments. Lakeside is co-commissioning HOMELAND – an exciting multi-artform project led by the African musician Seckou Keita and will be hosting the first residencies; the Chinese American composer Chen Yi has been commissioned with 50% funding support from NCI (£5k) to deliver a new

work to be performed by Xufei Yang (guitarist) and small orchestra in February 2024. The first major solo exhibition by Michael Forbes Blk this & Blk that ...a state of urgency opens in the Djanogly Gallery in September, with an accompanying workshop programme seeking to better understand how Lakeside is perceived amongst diverse audiences, spearheaded by Bo Olawoye.

A successful seed fund proposal (£15k) was awarded by Nottingham Confucius Institute (NCI) to develop a small-scale theatre work to tour to libraries and schools as part of the Spring Festival. The new work Moon Rabbit and Other Stories from China will introduce audiences to Chinese myths and folk tales and has attracted match funding from Arts Council England (£28k). This project will contribute to the proposed citywide Year of Stories to help celebrate the new city centre library.

A small fund from The Mighty Creatives (£1.5k) will be match funded by Djanogly Strelley Academy and Lakeside Arts to support Arts Award programme delivery in school in 2022-23. Fundraising continues in order to deliver an ambitious participatory project involving a Graham Fitkin commission & Music Hub collaboration in June 2023. The vision is to involve circa 400 school pupils in a music promenade programme titled Rebellion in Nottingham Castle grounds.

We are co-commissioners of a first DARKFIELD container experience for family audiences, including co-design and testing workshops. The resultant project will be programmed in October 2023. We continue to support the production weeks for Tom Dale Company and will premiere his new work alongside SURGE LIVE (premiered at Lakeside in 2022) in March 2023.



Peatbog Faeries performing in Lakeside Arts' Djanogly Theatre



DNA by Dennis Kelly, a Lakeside Arts and Nottingham New Theatre co-production

Academic Programming Partnerships & Civic Engagement

The commissioning of interactive installations delivered with supervision and involvement of Mixed Reality Lab personnel will begin with a view to the first being in place in the Wallner Gallery in spring/early summer 2023. A PhD student, Pavlos Panagiotidis, has been assigned to work collaboratively on this programme in Summer 2023.

Work continues with Professor Chris Denning and the Biodiscovery Institute which has a commitment to engage artists to help communicate research knowledge through practical workshop activities involving institute staff and general public.

Lakeside is contributing programmatically through DARKFIELD creative technologists/theatre practitioners and Tom Dale Dance Company to the Music and Digital Technologies module delivered by Dr Elizabeth Kelly and Research Fellow Adrian Hazzard; in addition to hosting a final exhibition/display installation in December 2022.

Work is beginning with Research Fellow and artist Ulrike Kuchner (Physics and Astronomy) on a Djanogly Gallery exhibition inspired by the work of Professor of Mathematical Sciences Silke Weinfurthner. The intention is to create an immersive digital experience developed by Barret Hodgson as well as physical representations illustrating understanding of the Big Bang to engage a wide range of audiences, including school children, with the subject matter.

An application (circa £3m) is being drafted for completion in September in collaboration with Professor Steve Benford (Computer Science) and Professor Elizabeth Kelly (Music) to AHRC with a view to securing capital investment to renew & upgrade facilities for creative & cultural research within the Department of Music and across Lakeside. Such investment would not only support

research and student engagement with great digital infrastructure but would also benefit artists creating work in/for our spaces and the public who would engage with the results.



Motionhouse performance outside Lakeside Arts

Infrastructure

A procurement exercise to replace our CRM and ticketing system as a result of the dissolution of Ticketing Network East Midlands partnership in February 2023 will conclude in October; and implemented in Spring 2023. This system provides vital data and analysis to support both income targets and understanding of our audiences.

A new Spirio D Steinway will arrive in the Djanogly Recital Hall resulting from an extremely generous donation from an individual donor. This piano will both enable new levels of engagement, experimentation and research involving Music students, academics and artists, and enable us to continue the excellent reputation of the Djanogly Recital Hall (cited as one of the top ten Chamber Halls by BBC Classical Music Magazine).

A feasibility study conducted by Richard Woods of Urban Fabric Architects looking at the reimagining of existing public and exhibition space in the Pavilion and Djanogly Gallery/Angear Visitor Centre areas will conclude in autumn 2022. The study seeks to address physical improvements that would help us meet our business plan goals by:

- increasing footfall in the Djanogly Gallery, Museum, Weston Gallery
- increasing spend in retail and cafes
- improving overall 'invitation' to the public
- providing a digitally enabled space for the proposed digital playground area (enabled by the Children's Play Activity trust/and/or ACE NPO).

The outcome of this initial work will feed into a Business Planning exercise to be taken further within the Estates Masterplan.



The world premiere of a new opera, Take Care, a Lakeside Arts

Staff

The previously separate Box Office and Front of House teams will align under one Operations Team capable of agile working in the context of business needs but retaining key skills in CRM operation/sales and Duty Management for events. As noted under 2021-22 progress however, there are challenges in recruiting staff which we hope will be resolved in autumn 2023.

Administrative and Financial operational matters are now driven through a single route via a Finance and Administration Manager.

A Creative Programme Administrator is being appointed (August/September) following a vacancy period to provide support for the Director, Head of Business & Development, Head of Music and Learning Officer. A new role of Creative Programme Administrator (Student Engagement) is being finalised and will replace the previous Assistant to Learning Officer by December. A part-time Technical role is being introduced to reduce reliance on casual staff and to support the existing permanent Technical team of two (also by December).

A succession plan will be created working closely with Helen McNamara in HR to review the existing structure in the context of future change.

In the context of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion we have not yet been successful in recruiting Black and Ethnic Minority individuals to permanent roles, although there has been success with diversifying the casual staff team. Whilst all recruitment is anonymised and Disability Confident interviewees were shortlisted for the recent APM2 Creative Programme Administrator role (ie met

minimum criteria for shortlisting), not one Black or Ethnic Minority candidate was shortlisted (although Disability Confident individuals were shortlisted). We have requested support from the University's HR recruitment to reach more diverse candidates at all levels, and we are working as part of an EDI group citywide to encourage greater numbers of potential Black and Ethnic Minority applicants for roles at all levels.



Family participating in arts and crafts workshop at Lakeside

External Partnerships

Lakeside's Head of Business & Development chairs the University Arts Centres group, UCAN. Our Head of Music is a steering group member of the Music consultancy funded by Arts Council England.

The Director is a member of the Strategic Cultural Partnership which devised the ten-year Cultural Framework in 2018 and a member of the citywide EDI group which seeks to improve access to the sector for Black and Ethnic Minority staff; they are also a Steering Group member of Challenge Cultural Education Partnership. Our Learning Officer attends as an Operations Group member.

We are keen to build a more productive relationship with Nottingham City Council Parks and Open Spaces Officers and City Councillors in order that we can programme more collaboratively within Highfields Park in the future (pending ACE decisions).

Following completion of the three year funded OfS programme Creative Pathways Internships programme led by Lakeside and delivered in partnership with 6 cultural organisations, there is demand to continue to deliver the successful Creative Academy Event series to introduce students to the breadth of potential careers in the creative industries sector. To this end we continue to nurture links with local and national industry representatives to deliver 3 events in 2022-23 focused

on Gaming, VR/AR/Creative Technologies and Journalism, together with one new Careers in Creative Industries Event.



Manchester Collective & Abel Selaocoe performing in the Djanogly Recital Hall

Finance

Revenue Funding: The University of Nottingham remain our primary stakeholder and have committed revenue funding of £1.2m over the next three years.

The Arts Council NPO funding application (£297.35k per annum for 3 years) would provide a clear opportunity to deliver free work in the park, support emerging artist residencies and celebrate the biodiversity of the site through a series of commissions which would contribute to enabling engagement with new audiences. If the bid is not successful, it will be possible to package up individual strands, and resubmit in a phased approach under Grants for the Arts funding.

Philanthropic Giving: We will continue to work with the Campaign and Alumni Relations Office to seek other philanthropic funding, whilst also looking for other trust/foundation possibilities to support key areas of work.

We aim to grow memberships three-fold from 9 to 27 by 2025 generating £18k; to increase income from donation boxes to £6k per year over 3 years, with a minimum suggested donation of £4; and to increase online donations from £2k to £6k annually through improvements to the online ticketing journey.

Earned Income: We will continue to consider each event in turn in the context of ticket pricing, noting that audiences' pockets will be seriously stretched in the next 12 months. We will work with

our new University Finance Officer to establish whether the University will allow collection of Gift Aid on our tickets; we will also explore Museums & Galleries Exhibitions Tax Relief.



An Architects of Air luminarium at Lakeside Arts

Audience Development and Marcomms

Work is ongoing to build a deeper understanding of Lakeside's audience and those currently not attending as set out in Lakeside's Audiences Plan, which sets out a long-term ambition for Lakeside's audience to reflect the population of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Lakeside will work with Morris Hargreaves MacIntyre in autumn 2022 to agree on a model for segmenting and growing audiences, underpinned by a number of SMART audiences objectives aligning to our Business Plan.

Marketing will play a pivotal role in bringing about our audience objectives. Specific marketing objectives have been developed to guide how this is achieved, underpinned by tactics that we will continue and accelerate over the coming 12 months and beyond. Key activity to be delivered includes: defining and reactivating Lakeside's brand to develop a clear brand 'story'; developing Lakeside's digital marketing skills and capacity to enable us to deliver more agile, measurable and targeted campaigns, in addition to increasing Lakeside's online discoverability through improved SEO; create bespoke marketing approaches for each of our audience segments and refining customer journeys to build deeper relationships with our brand; refreshing messaging and branding across Lakeside's buildings and outside spaces to help drive engagement and understanding; and improve evaluation and reporting across all areas of Lakeside's work to help develop, understand and drive change.