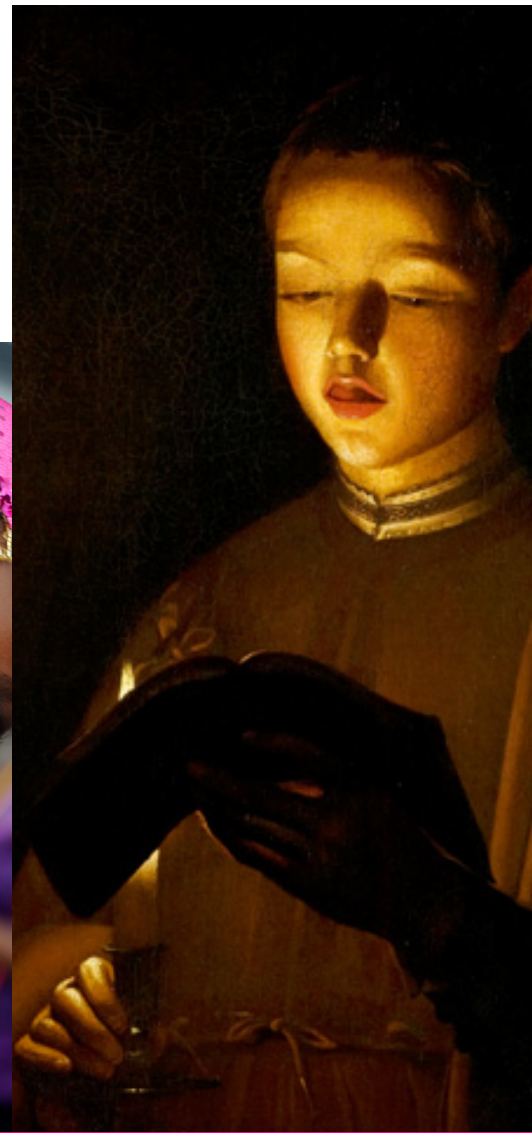


Leicester

UK City of Culture 2017



Illuminating Culture



Bid Summary
JUNE 2013

During June we heard the wonderful news that Leicester is on the final shortlist to become the UK City of Culture in 2017. This summary sets out the benefits of winning this fantastic title - and invites you to get on board and back the bid.

Out of eleven cities that submitted an initial bid, we are just one of four invited to develop a more detailed case setting out why we deserve to become only the second holder of this coveted title.

The winning city will be announced in November, and over the months ahead a partnership of dedicated individuals, groups and organisations from throughout our city and county will put the finishing touches to our final bid.

We have long known that we have one of the broadest and most exciting cultural offerings in the country, and now we are seeing this recognised nationally.

Our city has embraced cultural diversity and this, coupled with our unrivalled museums and arts venues, our theatres and our thriving music and performing arts scene, gives us a unique advantage.

To be crowned UK City of Culture would bring huge benefits by:

- Putting Leicester on the map for the UK, Europe and the World, attracting investment and visitors
- Developing a 12 month programme of events and activities to showcase the best in creativity and culture
- Celebrating our city's diversity as a beacon for the UK
- Building stronger connections between the city, its residents – especially young people - and its businesses
- Creating more jobs and more confidence, especially in the cultural sector, creative industries and the visitor economy
- Shining a light not only on our city's excellent cultural offer, but also on the county's market towns.

How you can help:

- Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/leicester2017 and like us on Facebook at facebook.com/leicester2017
- If you have a website please link to leicestercityofculture2017.co.uk
- Add the Twitter, Facebook and website addresses to the bottom of your email messages and include a message to say that 'we are backing the bid to make Leicester the UK City of Culture 2017'
- Look out for other opportunities to sign up to back the bid.

Thank you for your support.

**Sir Peter Soulsby
City Mayor**



Backing the Bid

Leicester - UK City of Culture 2017

1. What is the UK City of Culture?

The UK City of Culture title is awarded every four years: it was put in place following Liverpool's success as European Capital of Culture in 2008.

In 2013 Derry-Londonderry holds the title and 11 cities have been competing to be the UK City of Culture 2017 – of these, Leicester has been shortlisted for the final stage along with Dundee, Hull and Swansea Bay. The cities have to demonstrate why they need the title, give ideas for a 12 month programme of cultural events and describe how this will benefit their city both during the year and as a lasting legacy.

2. Why is Leicester bidding?

Leicester is a city on the up. Recent capital investment by the public and private sectors has transformed the city centre, and will be further enhanced by the city mayor's Connecting Leicester programme. Despite this transformation, Leicester's image lags behind the reality and the city has persistent economic problems.

Given its range of assets and opportunities, Leicester is simply not punching its weight. UK City of Culture will give Leicester an opportunity to show the rest of the world how it has changed for the better. It is anticipated that this will lead to stronger economic performance, more visitors, more jobs and help to tackle issues such as health, wellbeing and economic disparity within the city.

Leicester's two universities are leaders in culture and the title will also enable the city to maximise the investment in cultural facilities such as the Curve Theatre and the Phoenix. Key annual events such as Dave's Leicester Comedy Festival have already demonstrated the potential of cultural programmes in the city. The title will also give a massive boost to the emerging creative industries in the city.

The discovery of King Richard III has provided a timely boost to the awareness of Leicester's heritage and potential as a destination. With 2,000 years of continuous occupation since Roman times there is a great deal more to the city than many people know and the 2017 year of culture will build on the 'KR3 effect'.

With its diverse population, and as the UK's first plural city, Leicester has an opportunity to show the way forward for the UK as a whole as the country moves into the next decade of the 21st century. The city's unique array of festivals from its many communities presents a real strength upon which to build a programme of cultural excellence to firmly put Leicester on the map.

3. What is in Leicester's bid?

Our vision for Leicester 2017 is Illuminating Culture. The concept of illumination is very apt for Leicester.

Two of the biggest outdoor community events, Diwali (the biggest Diwali celebration outside India) and Bonfire Night relate directly to the concept of illumination.

Dazzle – will contain the **major events** of our 2017 artistic programme. This will incorporate new commissions, outdoor spectaculars and our festivals, both existing and new. A series of **public art** commissions will also support this strand.

Shine – will be our **talent, children and young people** strand. We will also use this strand to support the development of new cultural, creative and community leaders.

Radiate – will be our **community strand**. We will deliver a major participatory community scheme based on the concept of cultural brokerage in response to individual communities. **Radiate** will also include activity for our **culture market towns** which will showcase the distinctiveness and special qualities of Leicestershire's market towns.

Spotlight – will focus on our exciting music, film, theatre and literature offer, which will deliver enhanced activities during the course of the year.

Transmit – will showcase our digital technology strand, connecting the cultural programme with young people through social media and also creating a stronger platform for digital and creative industries and connecting these with the universities and FE colleges.

Reflections – This strand will feature **heritage and architectural trails** with a special twist to reflect the heritage of the broader footprint of the city and not just the city centre. Throughout the year, the city will host a range of **debates, discussions and lectures**, bringing the universities closer to their city.

In addition we will use two sub-themes to animate and inform the above programme components. The first theme of **Stories and Journeys** will enable us to reflect on the city's past, present and future and provide a coherent narrative to tell the story of our year.

A second theme of **Markets** reflects the important relationship between the city and the county and will reference both our famous covered market and the wonderful market towns that are situated in the county.

4. What will happen in 2017?

The proposed programme is in an early stage of development but we can confirm that it will feature diversity, cultural excellence, celebrity and well known cultural figures with Leicester connections, and participation and grassroots activities to make sure everyone is involved. The programme will build on current events, programmes and venues with quality and capacity improvements across the board. These enhanced regular events will be joined by new activities of international quality and significance, bringing the best artists in many art forms to the city. The next phase of the bid will allow artists, organisations and the public to produce ideas for what they would like to see in the year of culture.

5. Who is involved?

The bid process has been led by a wide range of stakeholders led by the city mayor, including the Culture Partnership Board, arts and community organisations, the city and county councils, the two universities, local business and media.

Over 250 stakeholders have been involved in the development of the bid so far.

6. What will it achieve?

Four step changes will be the main outcomes of our year. They will address the areas for improvement and deliver a positive legacy. They are:

Step change 1 – A strong and unifying civic identity for a Leicester that is owned by residents and recognisable to the rest of the UK, Europe and the world. A more connected city - physically, organisationally, and between and within our communities. This includes a closer and mutually beneficial relationship with the county, and a more outward looking city which is highly attractive to visitors and investors.

Step change 2 – Realise the inherent potential of the cultural infrastructure in Leicester and maximise the opportunity it presents to **build capacity, inspire new leaders and increase cultural participation** across all groups and from the wider county of Leicestershire.

Step change 3 – Significant long term economic impact, allowing residents to benefit from increased opportunities for skill building and educational attainment, with key growth in creative industries and the visitor economy.

Step Change 4 - Given the fact that the city has a very young population with 30 percent of its residents under 30 and 25 per cent under 20, we want to make **a huge step change in the way young people connect with culture and become engaged with the city.** Within these four identified step changes a huge range of positive economic and social outcomes have been identified for the city.

7. How much will it cost and how will it be financed?

The overall additional cost is likely to be in the region of £10 million. The bid has already been supported by the city and county councils and the two universities. It is likely that these partners will continue to contribute with other sources such as private sponsorship coming on stream. During the bidding phase we have seen huge support for the city's candidacy from businesses and can be confident this will evolve if Leicester is successful.

8. How will we know if it works?

As part of our bid we have committed to putting in place a research and evaluation programme to monitor the social, community and economic impacts of the City of Culture title; work on this has already started.

9. What happens next?

Now we have been shortlisted, we will have until the end of September to submit a final bid and the decision on who will be UK City of Culture for 2017 is expected in November.

“Leicester is an amazing city at the heart of the UK. A city which is accessible, welcoming and ready to deliver a programme which the UK will be proud of and which will reflect our incredible combination of diversity and heritage with flair and imagination.”

Sir Peter Soulsby - City mayor