

LARC

Liverpool Arts & Regeneration Campaign

*Business Case
For Arts Council England
Thrive! Programme
2008 To 2010*

Executive Summary

LARC

Liverpool Arts & Regeneration Campaign.

The Bluecoat

FACT

Liverpool Biennial

Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse

National Museums Liverpool

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society

Tate Liverpool

& Unity Theatre

Foreword

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Lead partner for the Thrive!
programme on behalf of the
LARC partnership*

The eight leading cultural institutions in Liverpool have established a unique, collaborative partnership to ensure that they play a key role in the regeneration of Merseyside. This grouping was established several years ago and has grown in influence as the contribution of the arts and heritage to the City's future has developed.

The eight institutions are the Bluecoat, FACT, Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse, National Museums Liverpool, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Tate Liverpool and the Unity Theatre. They share a fundamental belief in the power of art and culture to change lives far beyond the confines of galleries, museums, theatres and concert halls. To this end they have initiated, and manage, the Liverpool Arts Regeneration Campaign (LARC), to be supported by Arts Council's England's Thrive! Programme.

In 2008, there is an international focus on the world-class artistic programme that Liverpool is presenting for its year as European Capital of Culture. LARC aims to work with partners in the cultural sector and beyond to sustain and enhance this momentum into the future.

The LARC partners are already embarked on a journey of change and development. The organisations have worked closely with the Liverpool Culture Company in addressing the huge opportunities – and the challenges – in developing the programme for Liverpool 08. Each LARC member is engaged at the most senior level in the partnership, with the Chief Executives and Artistic Directors regularly attending fortnightly meetings. This level of formal collaboration gives a unique convergence of energy, ideas and creative thinking.

The process of developing this business case for Thrive! has further strengthened the working relationships, and helped to embed the principles of collaborative working at different levels in the organisations. With the support of the Programme Facilitator, Sue Harrison, and the LARC Programme Director, Belinda Kidd, we have undertaken a series of planning workshops, involving Chief Executives, Artistic Directors, other members of senior management, Heads of Marketing and Heads of Education and Outreach. We have also met with key stakeholders and other partners, including Liverpool Culture Company and the City Council, and with the networks that represent smaller cultural organisations in Liverpool.

It has been a stimulating and empowering experience, with some inspiring discussions and the emergence of a clear way forward to achieve our goal of demonstrating the centrality of creativity and culture to the regeneration of a city-region. LARC aims to become an international model for embedding the arts and cultural sectors in the processes of social and economic renewal, and we hope to work with partnerships in other cities in the UK and internationally to share our way of working, and to learn from others.

The Thrive programme is a major opportunity to strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector in Liverpool, with a particular emphasis on social and economic impact. For the LARC partners, the core test of the success of our Thrive! programme will be if it helps to strengthen our organisations so that we can focus more resources on the core tasks of delivering high quality and high profile programmes, and engaging effectively with local people.

1. *Executive Summary*

1.1 : Introduction – The Larc Partnership And Arts Council England’s Thrive! Programme

The eight leading cultural institutions in Liverpool have established a unique, collaborative partnership to ensure that they play a key role in the regeneration of Merseyside. This grouping was established several years ago and has grown in influence as the contribution of the arts and heritage to the City’s future has developed.

The eight institutions are the Bluecoat, FACT, Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse, National Museums Liverpool, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Tate Liverpool and the Unity Theatre. They share a fundamental belief in the power of art and culture to change lives far beyond the confines of galleries, museums, theatres and concert halls. To this end they have initiated, and manage, the Liverpool Arts Regeneration Campaign (LARC), which has developed this business case for Arts Council’s England’s Thrive! Programme.

The mission of Arts Council England’s Thrive! programme is to provide a systematic approach to developing organisational performance in order to build capacity to respond to and influence a rapidly changing environment. It is supporting a number of organisations across England, including several consortia. The Liverpool Thrive! project has been offered one of the largest awards within the scheme, of £1.34 million.

The LARC partnership welcomes the opportunities that this award will bring to test out a new model for embedding the arts and cultural sectors in the pro-

cesses of social and economic renewal. It intends to work with partnerships in other cities in the UK and internationally to share this way of working, and to learn from others.

1.2 : Opportunities And Challenges

The Thrive ! programme is being developed at a time of major opportunity for the city-region. Liverpool 08, the Capital of Culture programme, has generated a significant level of international interest. LARC will work with the Liverpool Culture Company, which is responsible for delivering Liverpool 08, to build on the achievements of a range of the initiatives that the Culture Company has launched. These include the cross-sector partnerships set up by Creative Communities, the volunteer programme, and the longitudinal research programme commissioned by Liverpool City Council, Impacts 08, which is jointly managed by the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University.

By working in partnership, the LARC organisations are better able to work collaboratively with key sectors such as health, higher education, housing, tourism and regeneration. LARC can also play a role in linking up the cultural sector by working with the networks of smaller arts organisations in Merseyside, and using its influence to work on behalf of the sector as a whole. The partnership also offers greater scope to bid for major new government initiatives, given the greater resources and organisational strength that results from working in a consortium.

Liverpool’s economy is growing with new developments such as Liverpool One, a major new retail and leisure centre, the Liverpool Arena and Convention Centre and the redevelopment of the

football stadia. There are, however, many remaining economic and social challenges, particularly in areas such as North Liverpool. In addition, the cultural sector needs to develop its ability to advocate for the public value of its work, to increase its research capacity in order to provide robust evidence of its achievements, to increase its ability to develop and retain new audiences and participants, and to diversify the range of people entering employment in cultural institutions.

1.3 : Vision For Liverpool Arts Regeneration Campaign (LARC)

The LARC partnership believes that the cultural sector needs to take ownership of its own future, based on a range and depth of partnerships that will enable it to grow and flourish in a changing environment. The sector must demonstrate its ability to provide leadership that is outside of political and governmental structures, and to prove that a thriving cultural life is vital to the continuing social and economic health of a city-region. If the cultural sector is strong, well networked and confident in expressing its public value, it will be in a better position to hold its own in a changing economic and political climate.

The LARC organisations consider that regeneration is achieved through releasing the creativity and aspirations of the people of Merseyside. They aim to enable people of all ages to fulfil their own potential and to play a full role in the social and economic renewal of Merseyside. Liverpool's thriving cultural life is its major asset, and LARC will work to ensure that this artistic vitality gains the highest possible profile both in the UK and internationally.

Values And Aims For The Thrive! Programme

- The LARC partnership will develop the capability and capacity of each of its organisations to:
- Be adaptable, flexible and respond to change
- Be efficient, particularly through mutual self-help, sharing information, resources and expertise to the greater good
- Shape and lead in the development of policy, both locally and nationally, rather than just responding to it
- Research and develop new work and ways of working, with the ability to handle and mitigate risk
- Build sustainable business models for the future; and
- Articulate the value of culture.

Three aims will be addressed through the Thrive programme:

- i) To develop the role of the cultural sector in civic leadership*
- ii) To create a more audience and people friendly city centre*
- iii) To research and develop new models of delivery in arts-led regeneration, with a focus on North Liverpool*

Aims two and three are seen as supporting the achievement of aim one. These secondary aims will develop two types of intervention in City-region planning: regeneration and community develop-

ment, bringing tangible benefits, including new resources, to the partners, their audiences and local communities.

1.4 : Development And Implementation

LARC has developed a programme of advocacy, research and strategic projects to address each of its high level aims. Several of these initiatives are ready to start immediately, but others will be further refined and developed over the period up to Autumn 08, prior to delivery from early 2009 onwards. Under each aim, the programme will include:

Aim 1:

To develop the role of the cultural sector in civic leadership

- An advocacy campaign to win support and improved understanding for the role of culture within regeneration, supported by high quality documentation and research that demonstrates the public value and impact of the cultural sector on Merseyside. The communications strategy for this aim will include a high level annual seminar with an international speaker, aimed at leading figures from the public, community, business and faith sectors. As part of this campaign, the LARC partnership will establish and increase dialogue with higher education institutions, the health sector and housing agencies, aiming to establish joint planning mechanisms and to secure funds to test out new ways of working together.

- A programme of research to support the advocacy campaign, including regular updates on key data on the cultural sector, an economic impact study

and a series of initiatives to build research capacity in the sector. The overall research programme will be supported through a research partnership with Impacts 08. In addition to focusing on social and economic value, the research and evaluation programme will also consider how new approaches to assessing artistic quality can be developed, including a system of peer review.

- An approach to continuous professional development across the cultural sector, from addressing issues such as the lack of diversity in the workforce, e.g. through a national pilot for the Creative Apprenticeships scheme, to courses for emerging leaders, to support for senior management. Within this programme, LARC will also review the potential for shared services, for example to improve HR management (human resource) within the cultural sector.

Aim 2:

To create a more audience and people friendly city centre

- The establishment of a new approach to providing a co-ordinated service for audience development on Merseyside, which was lost when TEAM closed in June 2007. LARC will work with Arts Council England North West to pilot a new approach during 2008/09, while ACE NW reviews the overall regional structure for 2009/10 onwards.

- Regular dialogue between the cultural sector and city centre management and visitor services, in partnership with the retail and hospitality sectors.

- A research programme that will prepare the ground for the delivery of a series of audience development projects, including a major emphasis on

encouraging further engagement by new audiences and participants who take part in the arts and culture for the first time during Liverpool 08; a shared campaign to counter the health and public order problems posed by excessive alcohol consumption; a family friendly programme; and a series of action research projects to address key issues identified in existing visitor perception research.

Aim 3:

To research and develop new models of delivery in arts-led regeneration, with a focus on North Liverpool

- A co-ordinated planning approach, establishing a new model for cultural organisations to work together in contributing to the regeneration of a specific geographic area. This will be supported by the engagement of a Learning and Engagement Co-ordinator who will work across the LARC partnership, and with other cultural organisations working in North Liverpool.
- Regular dialogue with key agencies operating in North Liverpool to ensure a clear understanding of their priorities and how the cultural sector can address these
- A research programme to draw together key findings from existing social and economic research, and to map current cultural activity in North Liverpool. At a later stage in the Thrive! programme, research will be commissioned to consider another area of focus for the collaborative approach piloted in North Liverpool, either looking at another geographic or another thematic area.
- The delivery of a series of capacity building initiatives with cultural and community practitioners working in the area, and the creation of a skills

development programme for local people, through cultural activity. There will also be a shared evaluation programme, aiming to provide useful evidence on the social impact of cultural engagement, and also to develop evaluation skills within the cultural sector.

- In developing this approach in North Liverpool, LARC will be mindful of the need to add value to existing activity rather than to jeopardise current provision and relationships.
- LARC will also address new opportunities for a collaborative approach to culturally led regeneration and learning initiatives, such as the new Find Your Talent scheme to offer every child 5 hours of culture each week, and will develop proposals for these as appropriate.

1.5 : Management And Delivery

Overall responsibility for the management of the programme will be led by the LARC Chief Executives group, with lead responsibility for delivery of each the three aims assigned to specific partners within LARC. A small central LARC team will co-ordinate the operational delivery of the programme, including the Programme Director, Learning and Engagement Co-ordinator and an administrator, supported by the Project Facilitator. In order to ensure long-term sustainability, each LARC partner will assign staff to work on specific projects, so that the ownership and benefits of the programme are directly felt by each organisation. The programme will also be supported by the various groups of LARC staff, including the Heads of Marketing and Heads of Education and Community groups. These groups and the Chief Executives meet regularly, with staff demonstrating a strong commitment through sustained attendance and active engage-

ment in the discussions at each meeting.

The Chairs of the LARC organisations' boards also plan to meet on a regular basis, up to three times per annum

It will be vital to the success of the Thrive programme that each organisation within LARC takes responsibility both for the overall achievement of the Thrive objectives, and for the delivery of the specific projects that they have undertaken to lead on.

LARC intends to consolidate existing partnerships and to build new ones in order to deliver this programme of work. Current partners include Liverpool City Council, Liverpool Culture Company, the University of Liverpool, Liverpool John Moores University and Arts Council England North West, plus the networks of smaller arts organisations in Liverpool, the Arts & Culture Network, and the Small & Medium Arts Collective. New partnerships to be developed include Liverpool First (the Local Strategic Partnership), The Mersey Partnership, North West Development Agency, Culture North West, and other tourism, regeneration, higher education and health sector bodies.

An external evaluation of the programme will be commissioned, building in regular opportunities for reflection during the lifetime of the Thrive! programme, in order to ensure that the learning opportunities are maximised and that the programme can be kept under regular review.

1.6 : Financial Management

The financial management will be led by Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Society (RLPS), as the lead partner for the Thrive! programme, accountable to Arts Council England on behalf of the LARC partnership. RLPS will also be responsible for the employment of the core LARC team.

The overall budget for the Thrive! programme is estimated to be £1.81 million, through to December 2010. This includes support of £1.34 million from Arts Council England, with the balance of the income to be raised from other partners.

1.7 : Sustainability And Exit Strategy

The issue of sustainability has been carefully considered in the development of the business case. LARC is already an established partnership and it is vital that it should not become dependent on having a central staffing resource in order to function in the long-term. Hence, the programme has been designed to ensure that the staff of LARC organisations are fully engaged in project delivery, particularly once the Capital of Culture programme is complete, from 2009 onwards. However, the Thrive programme gives the option that should the core staff team demonstrate that a higher level of income generation or cost savings can be achieved through their work, then the LARC partnership could decide to continue the operation. This could be partly funded through contributions from LARC partners, and partly through achieving full cost recovery on management costs through external partnership funding.

Sustainability will be achieved in other terms through building the capacity of the cultural sector, and in particular of the LARC partners, to enable it to be more robust and better able to demonstrate the centrality of culture to the international reputation and social regeneration of the city region. This includes increased advocacy skills, research capacity, and evaluation skills, and an increased ability to access public sector funding in order to deliver against regeneration objectives.