

FST strategic framework from 2025

Vision

A thriving performing arts sector that is integral to a vibrant, diverse, and equitable Scotland.

Mission

To advocate for, connect across, and lead necessary change within the performing arts in Scotland.

FST is the membership and sector support body for professional dance, opera, and theatre in Scotland. It advocates, connects across, and leads necessary change within the performing arts, enabling a thriving sector that is integral to a vibrant, diverse, and equitable Scotland.

Values

Collaborative

- Respectful of, and responsive to, the needs of the sector and the people who engage with it. Listen and build trust through dialogue.
- Lead by example on current best practices in equalities and inclusion and in responding to the climate emergency.
- Retain valuable members, expand the breadth and diversity of our networks and our membership, and deepen their engagement.
- Work in close partnership with many other organisations and individuals who are invested in the future of the performing arts within the cultural sector and beyond.

Informed

- Stay highly informed and up to date with the composition of the sector and the ongoing changes that impact it.
- Forward-thinking
- Use and share our insight to make the strongest case possible for a sustainable performing arts sector.
- Share information widely, accessibly and encourage transparency.

Bold

- Confident in our ability to influence, based on strong evidence, insight, and overview.

- Find innovative ways for urgent needs to be met whilst securing a sustainable long-term future for the performing arts.
- Achieve maximum impact with our activities, ensuring that we raise the profile of the sector and increase the understanding of the many ways it brings value to Scotland.
- Evaluate our work thoroughly to ensure that we are making impact.
- Are honest about the difficulties the sector faces.
- Facilitate difficult conversations that move us towards a more sustainable future, without imposing one-size-fits-all solutions.
- Find ways to agree across difference and embrace multiple perspectives and approaches within our strategies for change.
- Embrace and are highly aware of the complexity of our dual roles as membership organisation **and** sector support body, understanding that we cannot serve everyone, all the time.
- We have been mandated and empowered by our members and board to manage our resources wisely and to be focused and transparent in our approach. Sometimes, this will mean making hard choices.

Policies and priorities underpinning our work

As well as these values, all FST's work is guided by strong policies addressing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, the Climate Emergency and Fair Work. Our work is also underpinned by the four principles of the wellbeing economy - pre-distribution, purpose, prevention, people-powered.

Strategic objectives and outcomes 2025 – 2028

Objective	Outcomes
1. Significantly increase our capacity to gather and analyse data and develop evidence-based insights that inform our advocacy and action.	We have a greater understanding of the realities of the sector; its true composition, the challenges it faces and opportunities it has. We can quantify the value that the performing arts bring to Scotland's culture, economy, society, and wellbeing. We can identify the key drivers of change in the sector and how to best support them.
2. Be a more informed, vocal, and effective advocate, speaking up for the sector with boldness and conviction, highlighting its contributions to Scotland's culture, economy, society, and wellbeing.	We have built closer and more constructive relationships between the performing arts and the political, policy, and public spheres. We have raised awareness of the value of the performing arts and the need for sustainable support. We have mobilised support for policies and initiatives that benefit the performing arts. The quality of cultural strategy in Scotland is improved and, ultimately, funding for culture is increased. The conditions for everyone who works in the cultural sector are enhanced.
3. Improve the diversity and enhance the participation of our members by transforming our membership model and the ways we connect and engage with one another.	We have created a more welcoming and accessible membership experience for all. The widest range of perspectives, ideas, and experiences are included and are influential in discussion and decision-making. Members are more connected to one another.

Objective	Outcomes
	A stronger sense of community and belonging among members is fostered. Members have built skills and resilience to adapt to change.
4. Amplify our impact by developing more innovative and effective ways to drive change for people in the sector.	Conditions are improved for everyone working in the performing arts. The performing arts is a more attractive and sustainable career choice for people at every stage of their lives. The sector is more equitable and just.
5. Forge stronger, long-term alliances with key stakeholders and external partners to meet the evolving needs the sector, encouraging shared responsibility for sector support and development.	Stronger networks and support systems for members and the sector overall are built. The use of resources and expertise within the performing arts sector are maximised. Ultimately, increased resources (services, people, money, and time) are available both within and beyond the arts and its funding systems. The sector can engage more effectively with civic life in Scotland.