

The participatory process

Overview

From March to July 2019, we held seven cultural mapping events inviting people from the cultural sector to offer their perspective on the city's cultural assets– the places they value and consider vital community hubs. We hosted three organised workshops and also brought print-outs of an 'itinerant map' to seven community events. While the interaction with the map was the same at all events, the three workshops also included exercises asking participants to reflect on cultural production and community participation. Participants contributed a total of 211 cultural assets during workshops and itinerant mapping events. We added another 453 assets based on categories that participants suggested.

Base map

The base map was the principal foundation of the cultural mapping process. We designed the base map in QGIS, starting with cartographic data of 95 cultural assets. The City of Edinburgh Council provided data on community centres, libraries and schools, while we scraped data from Google maps on museums, main galleries, theatres, and music venues. Originally the map was at a scale of 1:15,000, but later the scale increased to approximately 1:10,000 in order to include more places. The map for the workshops was printed on paper and placed on tables; groups from 5 to 8 people gathered around it and marked it with colour stickers and pens. For the Itinerant version of the map, which we brought to community events, we used a cardboard surface to place the map vertically and asked people to follow a set of printed instructions about how to interact with it using coloured pins and pens; people could come and go, participating with the itinerant





map for as long as they wanted.

The map developed dynamically. With each event we collected more data, which was included in the next event's map version, with the final map containing 759 spaces.

Mapping instructions

Individually we will invite attendants to participate in the construction of Edinburgh cultural map. A facilitator will guide the participant through the instructions:

1. Place yourself on the map. Use a black pin for home and a white pin for the place where you spend most time rehearsing and/or working for your cultural sector. (The facilitator will add a correlative number to identify both places identifying the same participant and the organisation is representing)
2. Can you identify important places for performance/making/digital production missing on the map with yellow pin. (The facilitator was taking notes on the place and why is valuable)
3. Which are the most significant and/or indispensable organisations/places/infrastructures for your cultural sector (blue)?
4. Can you identify with a red pin where cultural infrastructure no longer existing in the city and/or any other obstacle for your cultural production?

5. Does your organisation is related with any community within the outskirts of Edinburgh and/or deprived communities? If so, could you please locate them with a green pin. (The facilitator was taking notes on the community and the institution/organisation that works with them)

Questions for further discussion

Finally, the group should discuss the following topics:

1. What is a cultural asset? Each participant should write two words on a post it and freely discuss about them.
2. What is a hub? Each participant should write two words on a post it and freely discuss about them.
3. Have we identified hubs on the map? If so, which ones are? The facilitator should mark on the map with post its which places are cultural assets.
4. Can you agree on a list from 1 to 10, the most valuable places for your cultural sector? (The group should discuss for 5 minutes and give the facilitator the final list)
5. Can you agree on a list from 1 to 10, the most urgent challenges that your organisations are facing? (The group should discuss for 5 minutes and give the facilitator the final list)



Activities and events chronogram

25th January 2019

Meeting with institutions and managers

25th February 2019

**Itinerant map Performance group – Articulation
(National Level)**

19th March 2019

Itinerant Map Creative Edinburgh - Creative circles

23th April 2019

**Community Mapping Workshop 1 at Story telling
centre**

16th May 2019

Itinerant map at Edinburgh sculpture

3rd June 2019

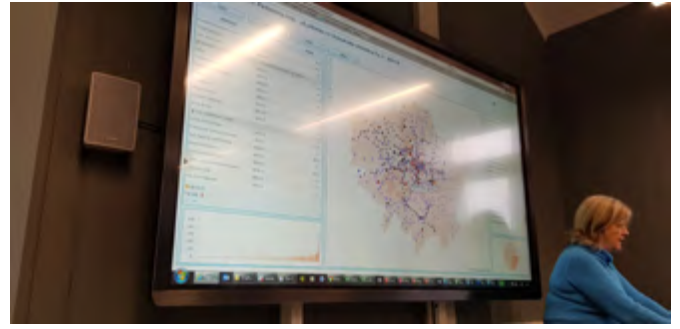
**Community Mapping Workshop 2 at Out of the Blue
Drill Hall**

13th June 2019

**Community Mapping Workshop 3 at WHALE Art
Centre**

2nd July 2019

Itinerant Map at North Edinburgh Art



Meeting with institutions and managers

To begin we held an information-sharing session on culture-related digital mapping initiatives with Council cultural department members, Creative Scotland, Festivals Edinburgh and University of Edinburgh academics from the Living Lab and the Edinburgh Futures Institute. We presented one principle reference, the Neighbourhood Arts Profile project from Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, and showed a series of maps we created of the city's neighborhoods characterised by social statistics, cultural spaces, and schools. The intention of this meeting was to test the research proposal and expectation of the cultural sector regarding an online map. Researcher Orian Brook also presented on a major cultural mapping programme she had developed in London. Attendants were invited to share any existing efforts on their city projects looking for a mutual understanding of the programmes in progress.

The day's agenda:

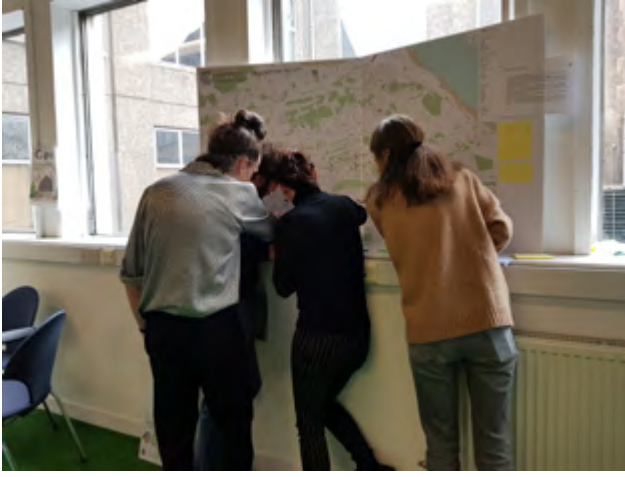
Welcome and Introductions

Mapping activity to date undertaken on behalf of CEC Culture Strategy Service

London Cultural Mapping Project

The purpose of the meeting is to establish: an overview of current projects; existing and potential synergies; and separate related strands of mapping ambition and activity

Conclusion & Next Steps



Itinerant map Performance group – Articulation

This activity was conducted at the national yearly event ‘What can we do to make great physical performance in Scotland?’, hosted this year in Edinburgh in an open space format. Sixty participants from around Scotland attended, and 15 of them participated in the mapping activity. Participants came from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Stirling and Sutherland; they highlighted significant spaces for performance not only for the city but for the whole country.

This first participatory experience allowed us to test the map structure and its readability. The scale of 7500 worked okay in terms of reading buildings, but it suppressed important places in the north of the city and towards south and east, which we considered for the next activity.

Findings:

- Participants identified valuable places for music, such as Quaker meeting spaces, Leith Depot, Cellar bar, Skylight bar and Sneaky Pete’s.
- The community highly values well-known, centrally located spaces for performance such as The Storytelling Centre, the Traverse Theatre, Summerhall and the puppets festival. North Edinburgh Arts, Lyra theatre and Vision mechanics are valuable multi-artistic spaces located outside the City Centre.
- The community values education centres, including Edinburgh stage management school/ Edinburgh Lighting & Sound school, which works with Queen Margaret University; Napier University, which teaches acting, playwriting and directing; and Leith School of Arts at St James church. There is also value to high schools, which allows students to take extra activities in the performative arts and music.
- Community centres are significant not only because of their contact with communities but also the courses they offer. Tollcross Community Centre, Priestfield Church and Church Hill Theatre (or Merchiston Church), are high-value community centres at risk of disappearing. Aerial house is an interesting new community centre that aims to be accessible to deprived communities, as circus can heal people with anxiety issues, among other benefits.
- Participants identified two institutions as obstacles to their work: First, Creative Scotland is an obstacle to the many artists it doesn’t support. Second, Pleasance 2 is seen as an obstacle for circus development because it opens only during The Fringe and the rest of the year is used as storage space for installed circus infrastructure.
- During this session we were able to identify a grade of fragility in spaces that the community values and uses intensively. Edinburgh University has sold important spaces such as the Old forest Cafe and the Big Red Door. Teviot Depot and Edinburgh Palette are at risk of disappearing.



Community Mapping Workshop 1 at Story telling centre

The first workshop was called ‘How do we ensure equitable and accessible culture in Edinburgh?’ The invitation said:

We invite cultural producers in Edinburgh to take part in a Community Mapping exercise to understand cultural and artistic spaces of the city, looking at the challenges, opportunities and networks. Artists, designers, performers, and cultural makers broadly are welcome to participate. Using maps, posters and post-its, we will ask participants to help us clarify the value and significance of a diverse range of city venues. The outcome of this activity will be an online and co-created map that will include city cultural assets, hubs and flexible spaces. We want to look at the city through the cultural producers’ eyes, understanding their mental maps of the city. By doing this exercise we will be able to compose a map that can be used for discussing equity, accessibility to art and culture, gentrification issues, among other topics.

For this workshop we received 29 participants from different cultural sectors, including representatives from Drake Music Scotland, Festivals Edinburgh, Granton:Hub, Broomhouse Centre, Science Festival, Napier University, Creative Scotland, TRACS & the Storytelling Centre, Craft Scotland, City Art Centre, UoE’s Edinburgh College of Arts, Red Note Ensemble, Art Link Edinburgh, Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh Art Festival, Assembly rooms, and independent visual artists. This was the first workshop exploring qualitative information through discussion.

Findings:

- Participants identified several new categories to include in the map: open spaces, community gardens, mosques, historic landmarks, youth centres, theatres, pubs, parks and non-Council owned community-based centres that address social and cultural inclusion. A relevant missing category noticed by all was festivals.
- Groups identified the following places as cultural hubs: WHALE Arts, Summerhall, Out of the Blue, North Edinburgh Arts, Storytelling Centre, Craigmillar Community Arts, St. Margaret’s House, the Royal Society, and National Galleries and Museums of Scotland. Participants questioned the definition of a ‘hub’, so after this activity we decided to provide one: a hub is “an accessible space for artists, performers and digital producers that engages with local communities.”
- Participants defined culture in terms of its value to residents and local communities, not to tourists, and in terms of financial and physical accessibility – listed spaces should be open to the public.
- Participants had different perspectives on how to reach diverse audiences. Community centres use traditional means, such as word of mouth, noticeboards or newsletters. Other institutions, such as festivals, have programming opportunities with schools. Both schools and community hubs are essential infrastructure for reaching more diverse audiences; cultural institutions can work with these community hubs to reach people at local scales.



Some participants emphasized the importance of highlighting spaces that are free to the public. It was a general concern that some local communities of Edinburgh are underrepresented. Deprived communities are difficult to reach, though targeted interventions that addresses financial and transport barriers, as done by the Science Festival, show results. One participant declared the challenge of reaching native Scottish populations, in contrast to some immigrants' groups that visit community centres more actively.

- Participants thought the online map could become a networking tool and include contact

information, ideas we are considering for the future development of the map. Some suggested the map give greater visibility to free public spaces. Many thought it should continue to be participatory in its online form, or else the data could go stale. One group thought the map could show whether schools are culturally engaged; the map now includes information on which schools are reached by Council-funded cultural organisations. Finally, people thought the map could be a way for artists to find office, rehearsal or practice spaces.

Chart showing 'hubs' identified by each group:

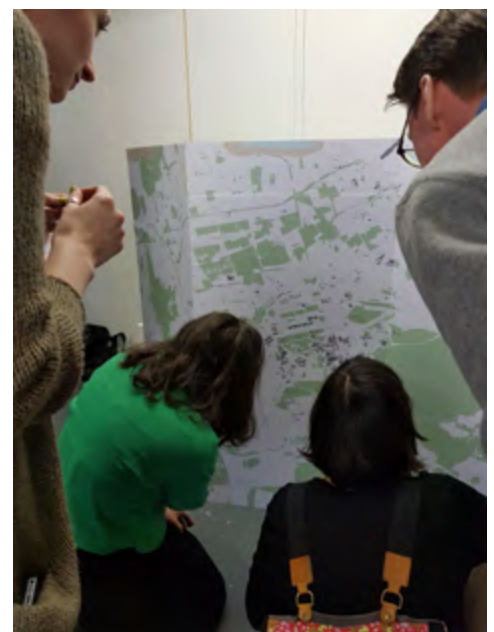
Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Summerhall	Whale Art	Summerhall	Summerhall
Out of the Blue	North Edinburgh Art	Out of the blue	Out of the Blue
Storytelling Centre	Out of the Blue	Space in Craigmillar	National Galleries of Scotland
North Edinburgh Arts Centre	National Museum Scotland	North Edinburgh Arts	National Museums of Scotland
Museums	Summerhall		North Edinburgh Arts Centre
Galleries	Canongate Youth		Storytelling Centre
Royal Society	Meadows Festival		St Margaret's House
	Storytelling Centre		RSA



Itinerant Map Creative Edinburgh at Creative circles

This event was organised by Creative informatics and the Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop. The Creative Informatics programme is a partnership between the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, Codebase and Creative Edinburgh that supports creatives and cultural organisations in relation to data-driven technologies.

Participants interacted with the map between talks. In this instance we were able to identify missing places and spaces valued by the digital sector

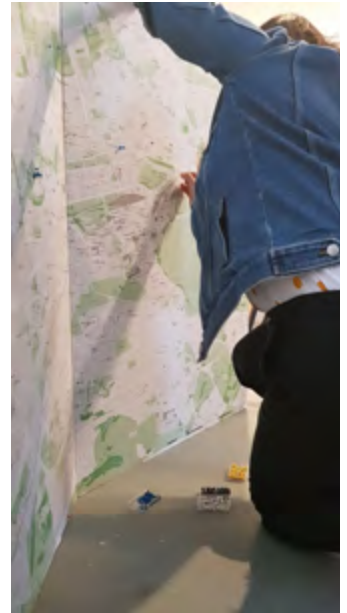




Itinerant map at Edinburgh sculpture

This was an event organised by Creative informatics and the EWS – CI Studio and CI Land. The Creative Informatics programme is a partnership among the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, Codebase and Creative Edinburgh that points to support creatives and cultural organisations in relation to data-driven technologies and how can be a benefit for their work.

We had a participatory slot between talks. We had a space in one room where people could visit and interact with the map. On this instance we were able to identify missing places and valuable spaced by the digital sector mostly.





Community Mapping Workshop 2 at Out of the Blue Drill Hall

The theme for this event was: 'What are the opportunities and challenges facing cultural spaces in Edinburgh?' In this workshop we delved more specifically into the theme of culture and communities. It was a smaller workshop, with 8 participants at two tables.

Findings:

- Participants suggested the category 'places of worship', rather than 'churches' and 'mosques'. People also suggested adding data on accessibility from Euan's list, which is now available as a layer showing accessible toilets.
- Participants suggested including pop-up and ephemeral art, open spaces, hot desking spaces, open studios and festivals such as Art Walk Party, the Art Colonies and Edinburgh Mela - small festivals that are becoming much relevant among local communities. We created a new layer, 'Festivals,' which maps temporal events, in reaction to comments from the two first workshops.
- Participants discussed the distinction between organisations vs spaces. Organisations can exist across multiple spaces and have more reach than a space. This point helped us clarify that this map focuses on the unit of a space, though it can show organisations at a specific location.
- Participants identified similar hubs as participants at the previous workshop, though Granton Hub was added this time. Regarding valuable places, the discussion started at the conceptual level of defining 'valuable' in terms of being inclusive and accessible, with an emphasis on grassroots initiatives.

- Some cultural providers have trouble connecting with certain communities. Participants revealed a key finding about communities in deprived areas – people often feel that cultural events happening in the city centre (which also concentrates most of festivals) are not relevant to their lives. This feeling is exacerbated by a lack of resources to travel, cost of access, and social barriers, such as feelings of not belonging ('this is not for me' or 'what should I wear?').

- As an opportunity or a coping strategy to reach diverse audiences, participants mentioned actively going out in the street and visiting community groups. WHALE Arts, for instance, hosts street engagements, and in Granton, 'they realise of the social benefit of being creative'. The Fringe society hosts 'Fringe day out', offering transportation to any show chosen by a family or group – 'they create their own experience,' says the representative of that initiative. Another case is in Gracemouth, where they take children to the city centre, as 'some kids had never seen the castle before'. The organisers of this activity declared that by doing these kinds of actions, 'you can expand someone else's world'. Artlink and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra are other examples of spaces that perform outreach activities to reach more inclusive audiences.

- Again participants thought the map could be useful for networking and creating 'human connection'; they suggested like and dislike buttons,



videos, and user participation. Participants saw the map as a ‘nice collective thing’ that is ‘about looking at an area [to] see what is in there’. They suggested the ability to select particular layers, then produce a report reflecting user’s interests.

As an opportunity or a coping strategy for the latter difficulty, participants mention actively going out on the street and visit community groups as a solution. As an example, Whale Art performs street engagements and in Granton ‘they realise of the social benefit of being creative’. Another case is conducted by the Fringe society during the ‘Fringe day out’. This consist in transportation to any show that the family or the group decides to go, by this ‘they create their own experience’ says the representative of that initiative. Another case is in Gracemouth where they have created a long-standing relation where in one of the first instances was with kids taking them to the city centre, as ‘some kids had never seen the castle before’. The organisers of this activity declare that by doing this kind of actions ‘you can expand someone else world’.

At this event we also discussed the opportunities of having an online map. We had discussions about data and the fact that we should not map private residencies. Opportunities of networking were identified and suggestions such as likes, dislike buttons, videos, updating were received. About the map itself people commented they find interesting to see where things are, as a ‘nice collective thing’. Is ‘about looking at an area and see what is in there’. They identified opportunities such as defining people’s interest, by selecting what layers you want to see and then having reports on people’s interests. Or creating a ‘human connection’ through the map.

Community Mapping Workshop 3 at WHALE Art Centre

The theme for this event was: ‘What are the opportunities and challenges facing cultural spaces in Edinburgh?’ This workshop had eight participants at two tables, all of them cultural producers involved in arts programming at WHALE Arts.

Findings:

- Participants suggested the map could include unused spaces that could be converted into cultural venues, such as bingo halls. Participants also pointed out that care homes and hospitals have cultural activity coordinators; in response, the map now includes the category of ‘care homes’.
- Participants questioned how this project is representing ‘culture’ and how its definition relates to class. Said one, “Art is for the top one percent. We spend so many resources as a society, including education, servicing this one percent.” One participant pointed out that nail salons, beauty salons, and tattoo parlours are aesthetic working-class outlets: “through the eyes of anthropology, rather than art history, these are human creative impulses that predate western European art history.” Another argued that places where people entertain themselves, such as bingo halls, dockers clubs, and pubs, should be included. Participants also pointed out that the internet is a cultural institution where people find information and entertainment.
- Participants asked about our definition of ‘risk’, which could include lack of funding, loss of housing, and, related to these, gentrification as artists are priced out of a place. Participants also asked what we mean by community: do we mean communities of interest or geographic communities?
- Hubs chosen at this event include WHALE Arts, Summerhall, and Out of the Blue, all of which are multi-artform, versatile and have a café space for creative people to meet. The architecture of their buildings encourage a sense of collaboration; they are accessible year-round, versatile, democratic and open to many artists, not exclusive or curated. While participants selected Summerhall, they pointed out that it’s a for-profit enterprise, rather than being a social service.
- Participants also spoke about access to culture by certain communities. There was agreement that geography of a local area influences access. Just as in the second workshop, participants identified communities who are intimidated by ‘art’ and respond with hostility to a sense of elitism and its commodification by prominent ‘high arts’ organisations that promote art in an elitist way. Participants also pointed out that working in deprived areas is not easy for some artists, who wouldn’t make money this way. Working in such areas also requires a different set of skills beyond the artistic. Youth work training, for instance, is very useful for this outreach. Some spaces, such as WHALE, facilitate interactions between art practitioners and local communities, though most often the artist/practitioner is somewhat removed from community.
- Participants also pointed out the importance of art education and schools and that collaborations between schools and cultural institutions are also often based on geography. Drawing on this insight, we are analysing the geographic links between schools and cultural spaces.
- In terms of the map’s functionality, participants suggested having a link to the List to show what’s going on where; a way to find cheap space and to reach audiences and fellow artists, and underscored its value for research. Participants also asked about the ease of updating it and keeping it relevant.



Itinerant Map at North Edinburgh Art

This event consisted on a “Summer Open Day” on the 8th of July with activities for local children, families and residents. Our map was inside the main building while the activities such as face painting and a DJ took place outside. The map at this moment was at its largest size to show all the places incorporated after the participatory events. Despite this, the size allowed people to point out more missing places, such as a mosque, the Leith police box, The Edinburgh Remakery, the Edinburgh Took Library, and a new category which we named ‘mobility’ consisting of scooters that can be rent for disable visitors or residents who want to explore the city and its cultural spaces.

