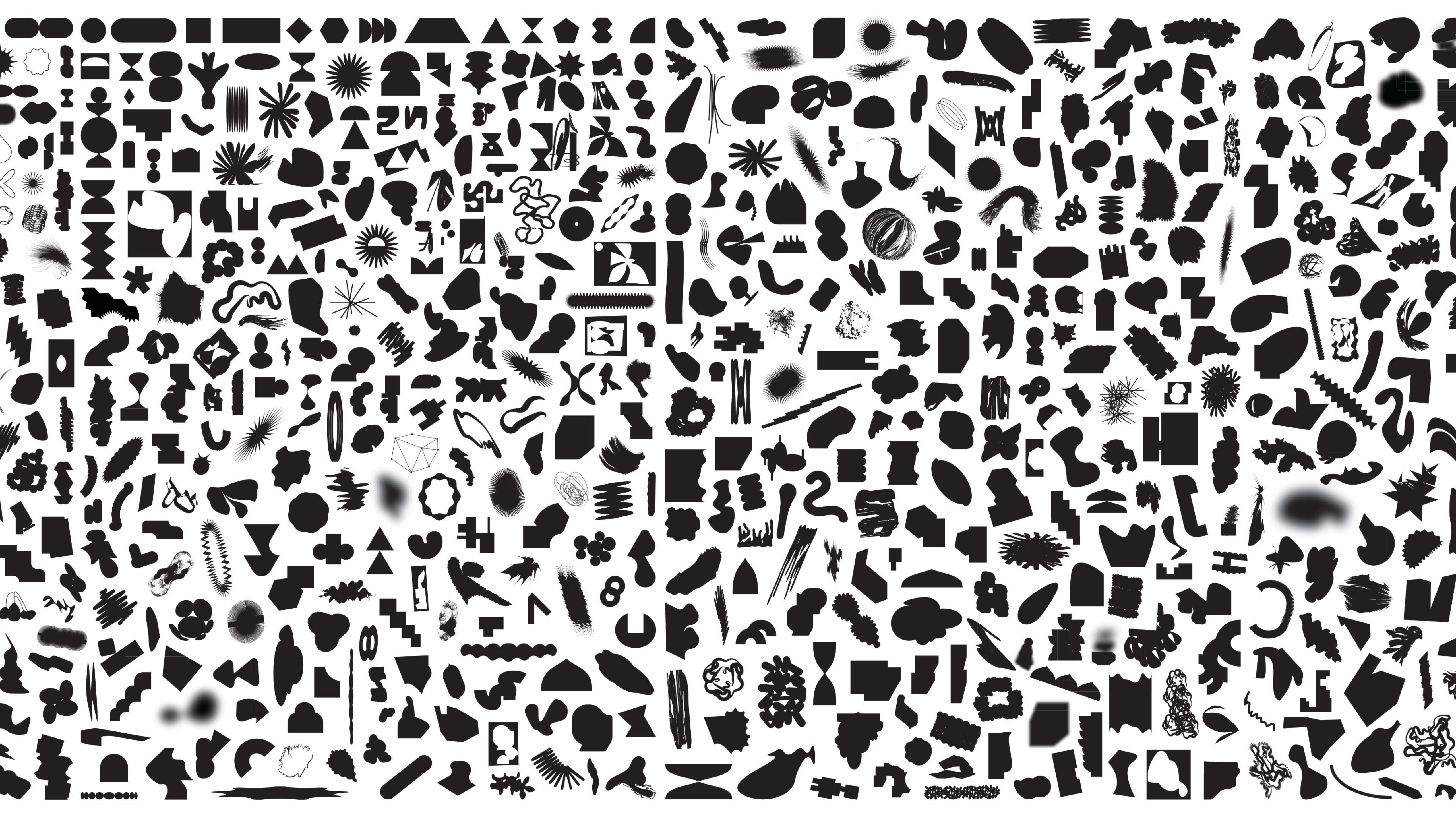


Plan for participation and diversity
in arts and culture 2021–2030







BERGEN
KOMMUNE

Planen er utarbeidet av Byrådsavdeling for kultur,
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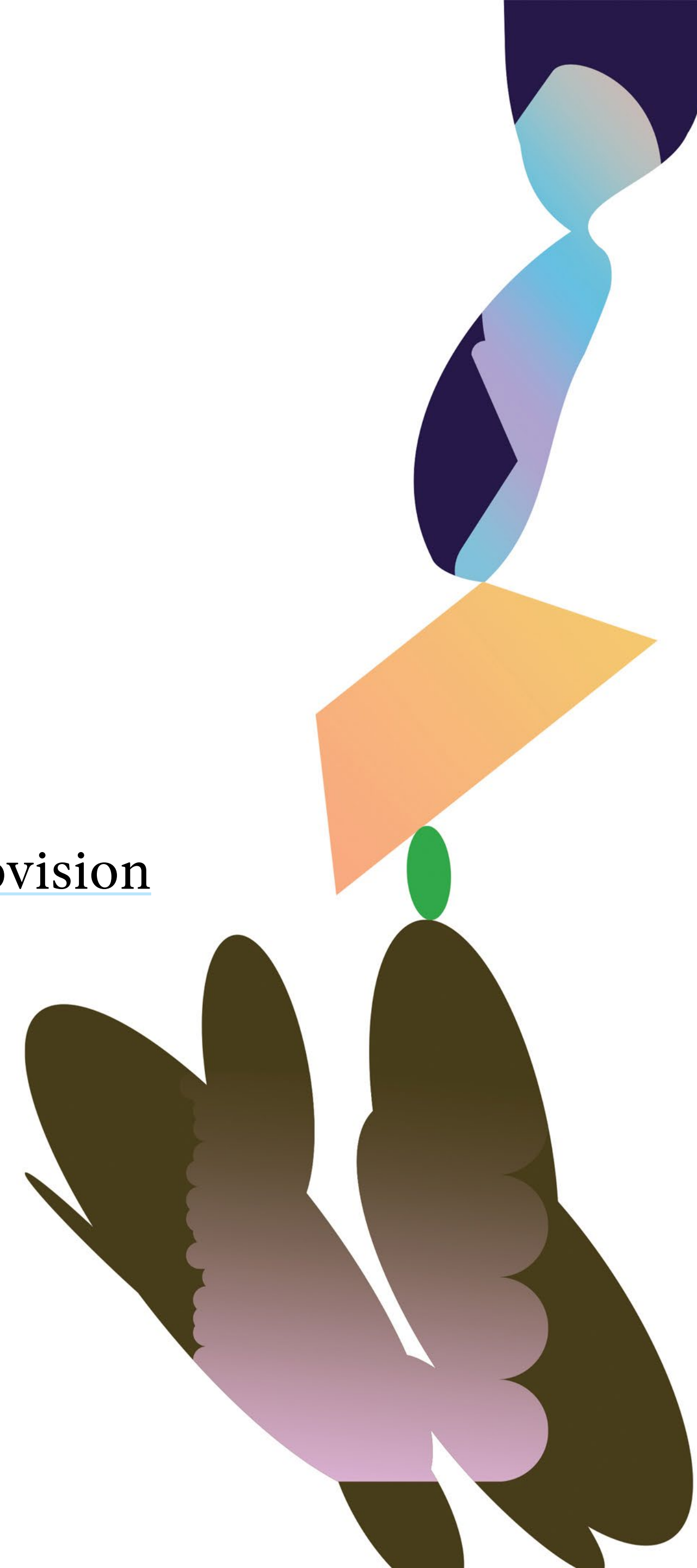
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0 Preface



Arts and culture should be available to everyone living in Bergen whether they wish to take to the stage, work behind the scenes or be part of the audience. But how do we make that happen? One obvious factor is that we must continue to ask who is taking part but also who is in a position – be it financial, physical or socio-cultural – to participate. We need eyes and ears but also policy interventions to identify the voices, the artistic expressions and discussions that exist outside the spotlight. By strengthening diversity of opinion we also strengthen freedom of expression.

The plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture 2021–2030 differs from the local authority's other plans for the arts in that it covers the full range of the arts sector. It covers the amateur arts, the professional arts sector, museum and heritage conservation, municipal services and venues, including Bergen Public Library, the Unit for Culture and Participation and municipal arts centres – all of them services that practically everyone living in Bergen will encounter at some point in their lives. Such a broad and diverse reach requires us to take into account the major discrepancies that exist between the different disciplines, between different providers and between participants and audiences. By addressing the challenges facing the different parts of the arts sector we believe we have identified a set of both ambitious and effective measures. The measures interact with and link the various initiatives already underway in the sector to make the Bergen arts scene more diverse.

The plan is divided into two parts. Firstly, we wish to create tools to increase engagement with the arts by audience groups which currently do not participate and to address imbalances in fields and genres where there are currently disparities in participation between different groups.

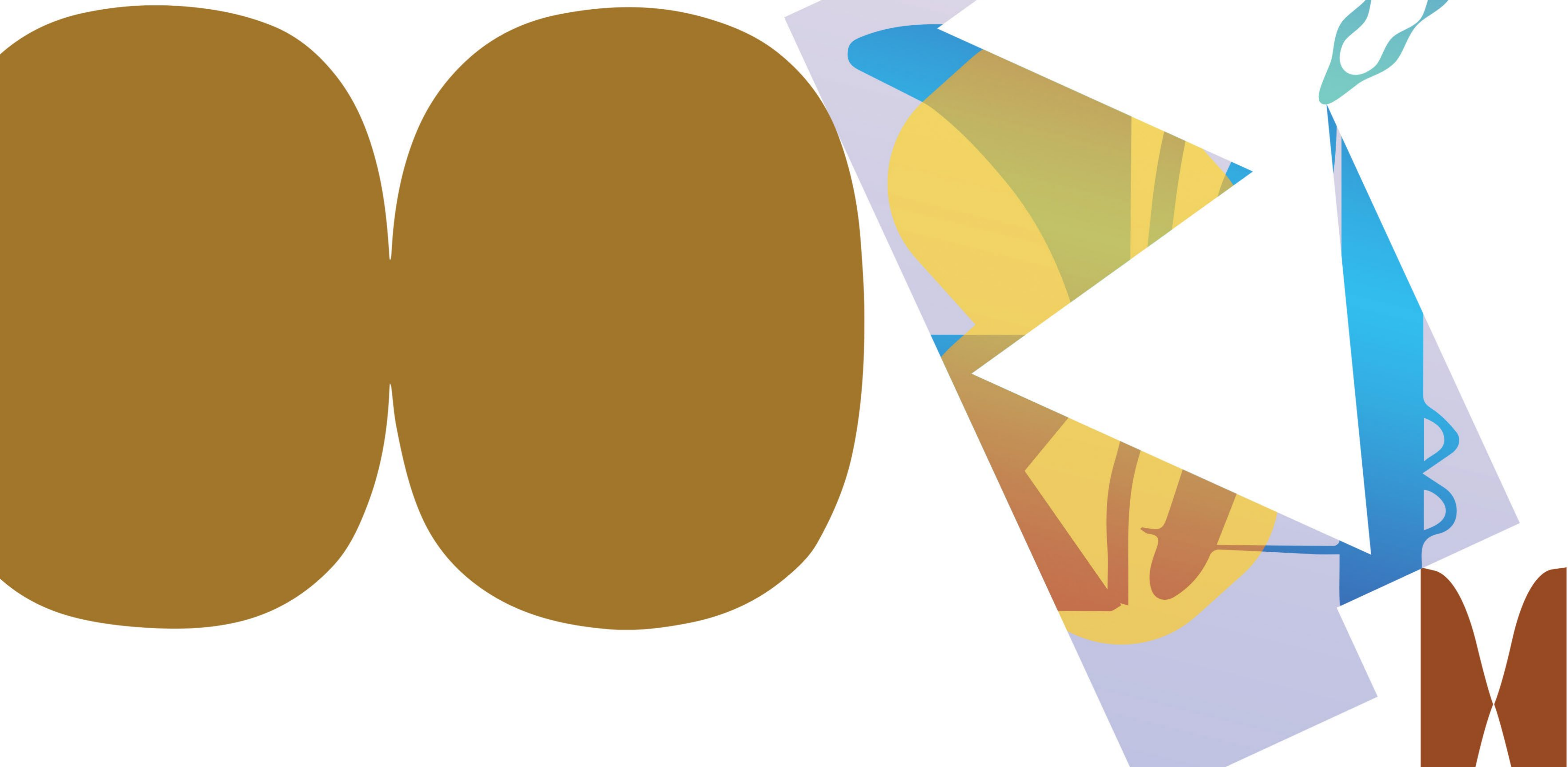
Secondly, the plan aims for the diversity of the population to be reflected both in artistic practice and in public engagement with arts and culture. The plan therefore emphasises diversity through representation of a multifaceted population in the form of a wide range of voices, opinions and artistic content. Relevance, representation and democratic participation should be the cornerstones of Bergen's arts policies.

The plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture 2021–2030 is the first of its kind in Norway. The City of Bergen sees the plan as an important, binding document which sets out a clear direction for the local authority's efforts to enable every resident to participate and express themselves on the city's arts scene. The plan is innovative as far as arts policy is concerned, and it describes a series of achievable measures which place expectations on both the arts sector and on the local authority over the next decade.

Katrine Nødtvedt, Commissioner for Culture, Diversity and Equality



1 Introduction



“Bergen is a melting pot for arts and culture in which past and present blend into a multitude of nuances and varieties and where both mainstream and niche art are welcome.”

From the City of Bergen’s strategy for culture 2015–2025.

Arts and culture are important to our individual self-esteem and self-awareness. They are also key to creating a collective identity and sense of belonging. Arts and culture encompass a great number of meeting places. These meeting places can encourage participation and enable inclusion in wider communities. However, many people feel like outsiders when it comes to the arts, meaning that the sector’s inclusive potential is not being fully exploited. This plan aims to boost Bergen’s efforts to increase participation and diversity in order to create a more inclusive arts sector.

The City of Bergen wants all citizens to have access to a variety of cultural services of a high quality, topicality and relevance. All residents should be able to create, produce, develop, participate in and experience arts and culture in a free and independent sector. Who is being heard, who is being mirrored, who is being seen? These are important questions in every part of society, including in the arts sector. The city’s future growth depends on a broad representation of its residents and a high degree of participation – in the arts as well as in society generally. Key here is the wide range of opportunities that inclusion and diversity can create, both culturally and artistically. Arts and culture concern people from every age group and every walk of life. We must therefore be proactive and methodical to be able to welcome new audiences and artists while also looking after those who are already involved.

The *Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture* forms a natural part of Bergen’s strategy for social sustainability in the coming years. The arts will be key to this form of sustainable development. The principle of democracy is already firmly established in this field, which continues to emphasise transparency, diversity, equality and participation. The adopted strategy for culture along

with the plans for the voluntary arts sector, professional arts industry and museum sector stress the importance of diversity in all of these fields and create opportunities for meeting the adopted goals for equality and inclusion amongst all demographics in Bergen. The Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture continues to build on this, highlighting the need for diversity amongst audiences, participants, artists, organisations and local communities. Such diversity would reinforce the relevance of the arts as part of our broader efforts to create a better society for all in which most people can feel they belong.

Arts and culture have precious intrinsic value. The sector's autonomy and capacity for social commentary give it a unique opportunity to set the agenda, to challenge attitudes and to highlight different perspectives. Art can help process, communicate and highlight a broad spectrum of human experiences, and topical social issues can be brought to life in a way that involves and engages the audience. Bergen's arts and culture policies should enable and encourage a greater diversity of opinions and viewpoints, and they should ensure that different voices are given constructive and diverse platforms, both physical and digital. Diversity of opinion should extend to all parts of society, irrespective of ethnic, cultural or socio-economic background, gender, sexual orientation, religion, world view, disability and age. An arts sector with a broad representation of people and groups is important to allow citizens to recognise themselves and identify relevant role models that can encourage them to participate in arts and culture. A diverse chorus of voices would also provide perspectives that we as a society would not want to miss.

Arts initiatives should be proactive and targeted and involve a high degree of self-reflection and structural awareness in order to highlight issues such as freedom of expression as well as the limits of freedom of expression. The local arts sector is one of experimentation, engagement and community, and it allows for a broader public discourse in which different perspectives are able to challenge each other. The city's diverse and ever growing arts scene provides opportunities for broader cultural participation. Visibility, accessibility and proactive communication will be key tools in reaching new audience groups in order to create even deeper engagement and ownership amongst the people of Bergen.

The *Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture* should enable the local authority and the city's arts providers to recognise the value of diversity and to actively counter exclusionary structures. Examples of such structures in this context can be language barriers or formal criteria in grant management; insufficient knowledge, imagination and resources to be able to work actively to ensure diversity in recruitment; or unconscious bias which prevents potential segments of the public from being approached. Established institutions and administrative agencies must be the first to recognise the need to counter such structures before individual artists and audiences can be expected to do the same. To achieve this, the plan will set out concrete measures developed in response to input from the providers. The plan sets a clear direction and includes diversity initiatives that must be monitored at all levels. In addition to the measures described in this plan, there will also be measurable initiatives in the form of individual action plans for the city's local districts.

Following dialogue meetings, workshops and written feedback, the plan was drawn up in consultation with members of organisations and institutions representing the full range of Bergen's arts scene, organisations and individuals concerned with diversity and inclusion, the Bergen Youth Council, the Council for Senior Citizens, the Disability Council, the Unit for Culture and Participation and Bergen Public Library. It is clear that all the parties involved wish to do more to make Bergen's arts scene more diverse and thus encourage inclusion, creativity and innovation.

The process of expanding the range of experiences in the arts has been going on for decades and is an integral part of artistic discourse at all levels. Yet we note that less progress than expected has been made in some areas during this period. Everyone involved in Bergen's arts scene, including the municipal administration, should acknowledge and challenge their own possible participation in exclusionary structures. An arts scene that welcomes additional perspectives and more varied backgrounds amongst artists, directors and administrators will in the long term produce more talent and more variety in artistic expression and artistic and curatorial platforms. This implies that there is great scope for artistic innovation and for taking a broader view of which parts of our cultural heritage should be promoted but also for maintaining and strengthening the relevance of the arts to the people of Bergen. With this plan the City of Bergen wishes to bolster the process that is already underway in the arts and to stake out a clear direction for the coming years.



2 Definition of diversity and demarcation



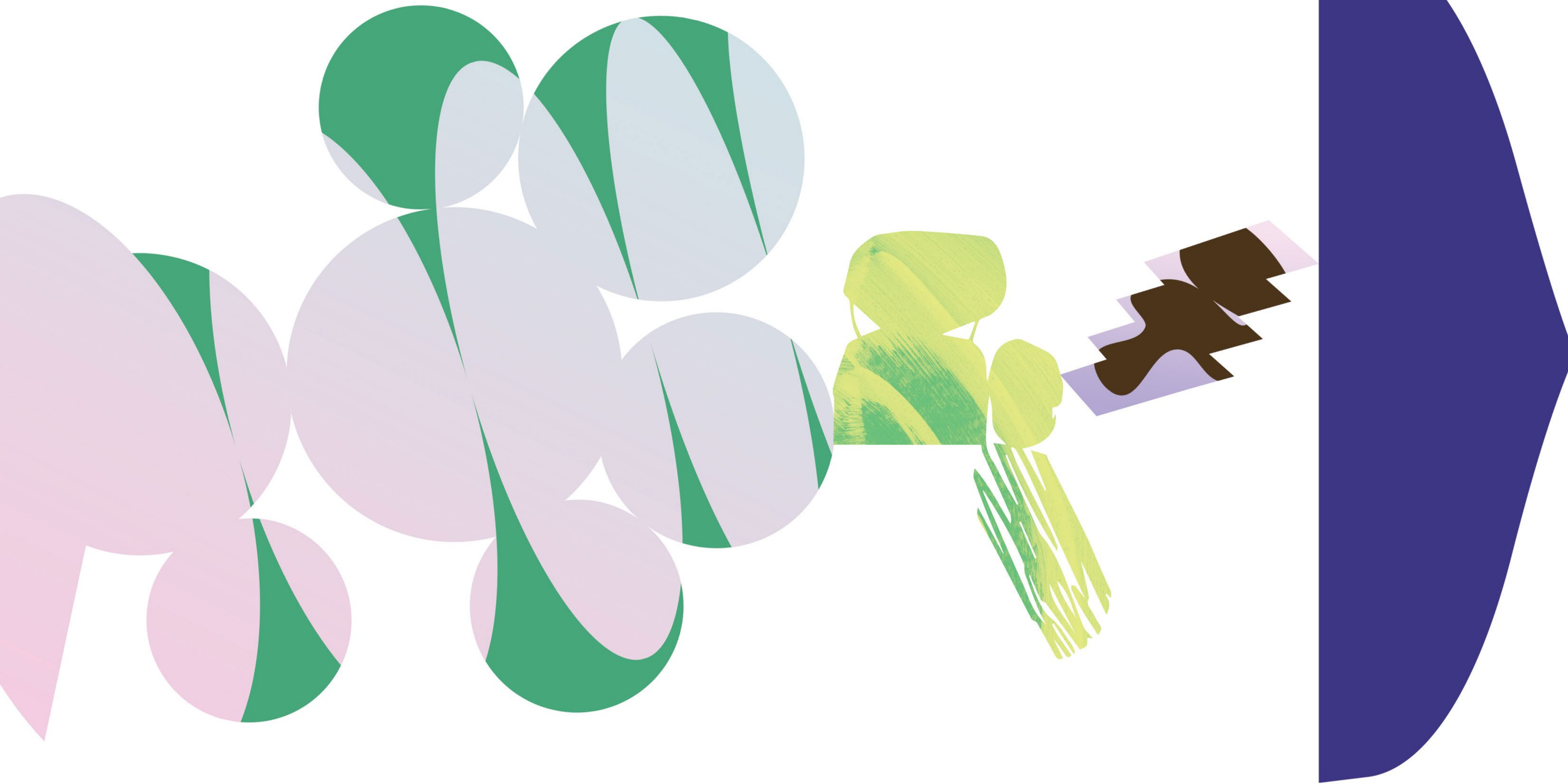
As the title suggests, the plan for increased participation and diversity involves two focus areas. Firstly, the objectives, strategies and measures described in the plan should provide direction and tools to increase engagement with the arts amongst audience groups which currently do not participate and to address imbalances in fields and genres where there are currently disparities in participation. Secondly, the plan aims for the diversity of the population to be reflected both in artistic practice and in public engagement with the services being offered in the sector. *The Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture* therefore views “participation” and “diversity” as being inextricably linked.

The concept of diversity is applied differently in different situations and can be difficult to pin down. Unesco emphasises diversity in content production and artistic expression. The project *An Inclusive Cultural Sector in the Nordics*, run by the Arts Council Norway, limited the concept of diversity to mean “people with a refugee and immigrant background and new northerners”. The City of Bergen’s plan for increased participation and diversity operates with a broader understanding and a more open approach to diversity. The plan emphasises diversity through representation of a multifaceted population in the form of a wide range of voices, opinions and artistic content. Such an approach is appropriate and illustrative of the plan’s target group: the wider arts scene in Bergen. The plan emphasises relevance, representation and democratic participation at all levels of the arts, and it incorporates factors such as socio-economic, cultural and ethnic background, religion, gender and sexual orientation, disability and age where appropriate. It also seeks to avoid unnecessary pigeonholing of people by not using categories that can impact how people perceive both themselves and

others and which may imply certain political assumptions about social groups. For that reason, the plan largely focuses on universal measures but also includes measures tailored to individual groups. Existing barriers to participation determine which measures need to be taken. The plan seeks to enable such flexibility in the measures it sets out.

The plan covers the amateur arts, the professional arts, museums and voluntary heritage conservation. It also covers municipal forums and services such as Bergen Public Library and the City of Bergen’s Unit for Culture and Participation, including the municipal arts school, the Children’s Culture Centre, the provision of municipal arts services and the running of local arts venues organising activities and experiences for different audience groups.

3 Parameters for the plan



This is the first time that the City of Bergen has produced a plan for participation and diversity in the arts. The plan continues to build on the local authority's *Culture strategy for the period 2015–2025* as well as its *arts plan for the professional sector 2018–2027*, the amateur arts plan 2018–2027, the *arts venues plan 2019–2030*, the *arts outreach plan for children and young people 2020–2025*, and the *plan for archives, libraries and museums 2012–2021*. These are general plans for developing the different policy areas with no particular focus on the potential that lies in participation and diversity. A dedicated plan is therefore needed which takes a holistic view of this potential across the arts and which sees audiences and increased participation as part of that potential.

A number of parameters were key to drawing up the plan. One of the most important is the Culture Act of 2005, whose Article 1 states that “[t]he purpose of this Act is to establish the responsibilities of public authorities to promote and facilitate a wide range of cultural activities, so all citizens have the opportunity to participate in cultural activities and experience a diversity of cultural expressions”.

The government's White Paper 8 (2018–2019) *The Power of Culture. Cultural Policy for the Future* states that

[a]rt and culture are expressions that build society, and cultural policy must be based on freedom of speech and tolerance. The cultural sector and civil society are prerequisites for an educated and enlightened public, and thus an investment in democracy. Culture must be free, based on personal involvement and voluntarism.

The white paper stresses that a rich and varied arts scene is a prerequisite for freedom of expression and a well functioning democracy. When society becomes divided up into ever smaller sub-groups, the arts can educate, shape and strengthen communities and the social

structures around us. The white paper also emphasises how increased immigration is a significant resource in itself in that it provides a source of new impulses and cultural exchanges and that variety aids innovation and creativity. The civic objective is expressed in the white paper thus: “A living democracy where everyone is free to express themselves and where diversity, creative agency and creativity are highly valued. An inclusive society in which arts and culture of the highest quality inspire, unite and teach us about ourselves and the wider world”. Chapter 10 of the white paper goes on to say that it is vital that the arts sector is relevant to all parts of society and the different communities it incorporates and for the sector to represent the entire population, not just the majority. This is a prerequisite for strengthening the community-building power of arts and culture and for legitimising public funding of the arts in the future.

The white paper adopts a broad understanding of the term diversity which includes diversity in artistic content production and variety in the population in the form of a wide range of voices, expressions, perspectives and themes, including variations in socio-economic and cultural background, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability and age. The paper stresses that the arts must work actively to remain relevant and representative. The sector must recruit from all walks of life in order to reach the goal of creating art and culture of the highest quality. Particular attention must be paid to including social groups which for various reasons are under-represented in the arts sector as practitioners, arts workers and users of the arts as well as at an institutional level as members of committees, management and boards.

The last two decades have seen a big increase in the number of studies investigating the correlation between art and health. Inter-

nationally, several reports have provided important perspectives in the planning process. In 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) published the report “What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being?”. It concludes that the arts play a key role in our physical and mental health. The WHO report looked at more than 900 publications and 3,000 studies conducted in the past 19 years. The definition of art in this context is broad and includes music, dance, literature, theatre, visual art and animation, amongst other things. One of the key points made in the report is that you do not necessarily have to be an artist to gain health benefits from art. Active engagement with art – such as taking a dance class – and “receptive” engagement in the form of watching a dance performance, listening to a concert or visiting a museum can all have positive effects, the report concludes.

Studies like these remind us of the need to work to achieve the UN’s sustainable development goals for good health and quality of life in all sectors, including culture. Other important sustainable development goals that have informed this planning process include gender equality; reducing inequality; sustainable cities and communities; and peace, justice and strong institutions at all levels.

The three-year pan-Nordic project “An Inclusive Cultural Sector in the Nordics” (2017–2019) resulted in multiple reports and publications relevant to this plan. The project investigated the role of the arts and volunteering in inclusion and integration and sought to find ways of creating a more relevant and accessible arts sector. The Arts Council Norway oversaw the project, which was funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Culture and the Nordic Council of Ministers. The report summarising the project presents a number of findings and recommendations on which this plan continues to build. The most important of these are some of the recommendations made by

the multicultural network Critical Friends as part of the project. It recommends that people with multicultural backgrounds should be part of all decision-making processes, that statistics should be actively used in management and recruitment, and that arts institutions should take a critical look at themselves and their cultural accessibility. The network also advocates appointing multicultural ambassadors in all arts institutions, more media coverage – whereby the visibility and voices of multicultural art and artists are given priority – and not least stepping out of our comfort zone and demanding official and institutional policies that strive for structural change and promote cultural equality and art which reflect the full range of Nordic society.

A number of parameters at a municipal level come into play when drawing up the plan. The Bergen city government’s 2019 declaration stated that its ambition is for Bergen to be a fair and inclusive city, a good place to live for everyone, irrespective of financial circumstances, social background, disability, world view and religious affiliation. The city government also states that Bergen should be a democratic and liberal city which promotes generosity, tolerance, freedom of expression and diversity of opinion. Both objectives justify the initiative to increase participation and create a more diverse arts scene.

The City of Bergen’s culture strategy for the period 2015–2025 sets the direction for cultural policy with a view to enabling everyone to access a variety of arts programming of a high quality, to participate and freely express themselves in a free and independent arts sector, and to acquire a high level of competence in art and culture. The ambition of the *Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture* is to be able to define and initiate a raft of measures to underpin the culture strategy.

The *Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture* affects a number of disciplines and therefore also multiple political planning documents for the arts as a whole. The main objective of the City of Bergen's arts plan for the professional sector 2018–2027 is to make Bergen an international city of art which invests in both mainstream and niche art, is visible, topical and forward-looking, and which dares to break new ground. The plan also contains strategies for integrating expertise in the arts into different areas of society and for encouraging open debate, differences in opinion and distinctive voices. The main objective of the amateur arts plan for Bergen 2018–2027 is that: “Bergen should be a world-leader in the amateur arts with robust creative communities based on quality, skills, participation and engagement.” Both plans contain measures that are relevant in a diversity perspective from which the plan for participation and diversity continues to build on.

The main objective of the plan for archives, libraries and museums 2012–2021 is for all of Bergen's residents to become active stakeholders in the city's archives, libraries and museums and for the different disciplines to be relevant to modern society and competitive in respect of quality and content in a Nordic context. The ambition is for the public to be more than just customers or users. They should feel ownership of their institutions, a sense of responsibility, and that they can help develop the institutions and organisations. The city's archives, libraries and museums should feel like home ground to everyone. The archives, libraries and museums plan should help develop Bergen as an innovative Nordic city of culture, as a regional centre for Western Norway, and as a good place to live and work for everyone in the Bergen region.

Arts and culture play an important part in children and young people's formative development and help them gain an understanding of citizenship, social structures and democracy. Good art experiences for children and young people should involve room for thinking and reflection and should make them want to explore arts and culture further. This can in turn help them become culturally aware citizens. The arts outreach plan for children and young people 2020–2025 is an important tool for the professional arts sector in developing good arts projects for the target group. The main objective of the plan is for the sector to “... offer children and young people arts programming of a high quality which encourages co-creation and participation, curiosity and reflection, and which helps develop their cultural competencies”.

Future planning processes must seek to develop both a lively city centre and vibrant local communities. The plan for arts venues 2019–2030 addresses the arts sector's need for space and shared premises, ongoing maintenance of existing buildings and new premises, as well as physical proximity to the users of the services. The city government's platform incorporates the plan, emphasising good production and performance venues for the amateur arts, for local arts programmes and libraries, for the professional arts sector, and for museums.

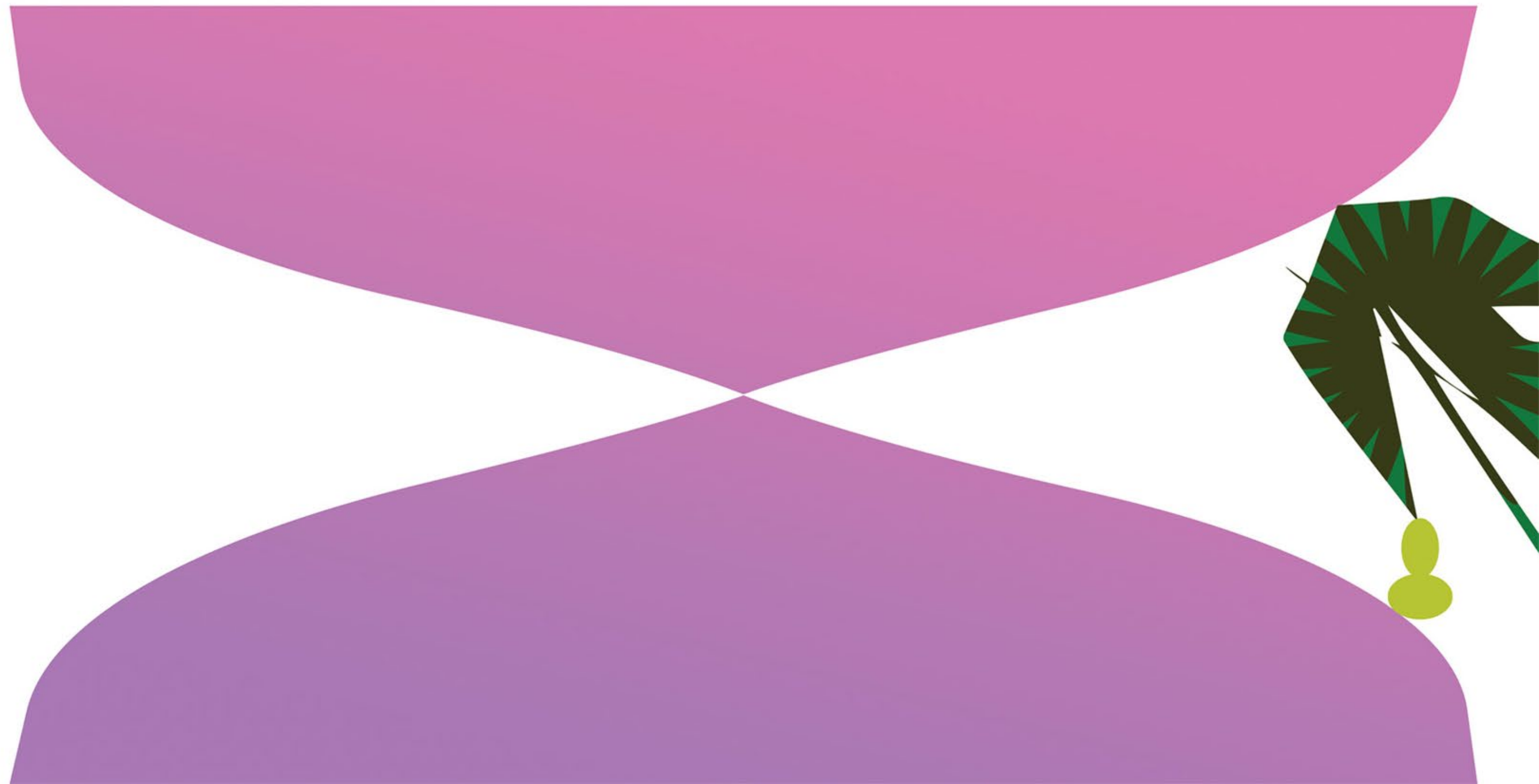
This welcome development is in line with “Bergen 2030, the social element of the municipal master plan”, which points out that the City of Bergen should be an active developer of public infrastructure. With local, co-located services, the people of Bergen will benefit from more efficient service provision in terms of better use of space, shorter distances, improved accessibility and improved coherence between services. New public services should be located where they can boost Bergen's commitment to creating a pedestrian-friendly city and public access to arts services.

The City of Bergen's plan for volunteering aims to make Bergen a model for volunteering in various community settings. The plan is comprehensive with particular focus on the autonomy of the voluntary sector. The plan addresses volunteering across disciplines, focusing on the City of Bergen's own initiatives and partnerships with voluntary organisations. Taking a broad approach to volunteering, the City of Bergen wishes to give the voluntary sector tools to develop new volunteering programmes and organisational models in the community, ensure better use of municipal buildings, and increase recruitment to voluntary roles. The volunteering plan seeks to help boost the sector's growth potential based on the needs that were identified when drawing up the plan.

The local authority has also adopted a separate, multi-sectoral plan to reflect the increasing diversity of the population of Bergen and to exploit the synergies that this could generate. "The World in Bergen – plan for inclusion and diversity 2018–2022" shines a light on how the local authority can enable people who move to the city – be it for work, love, study, seeking refuge or other reasons – to become included and live enriching lives in Bergen.

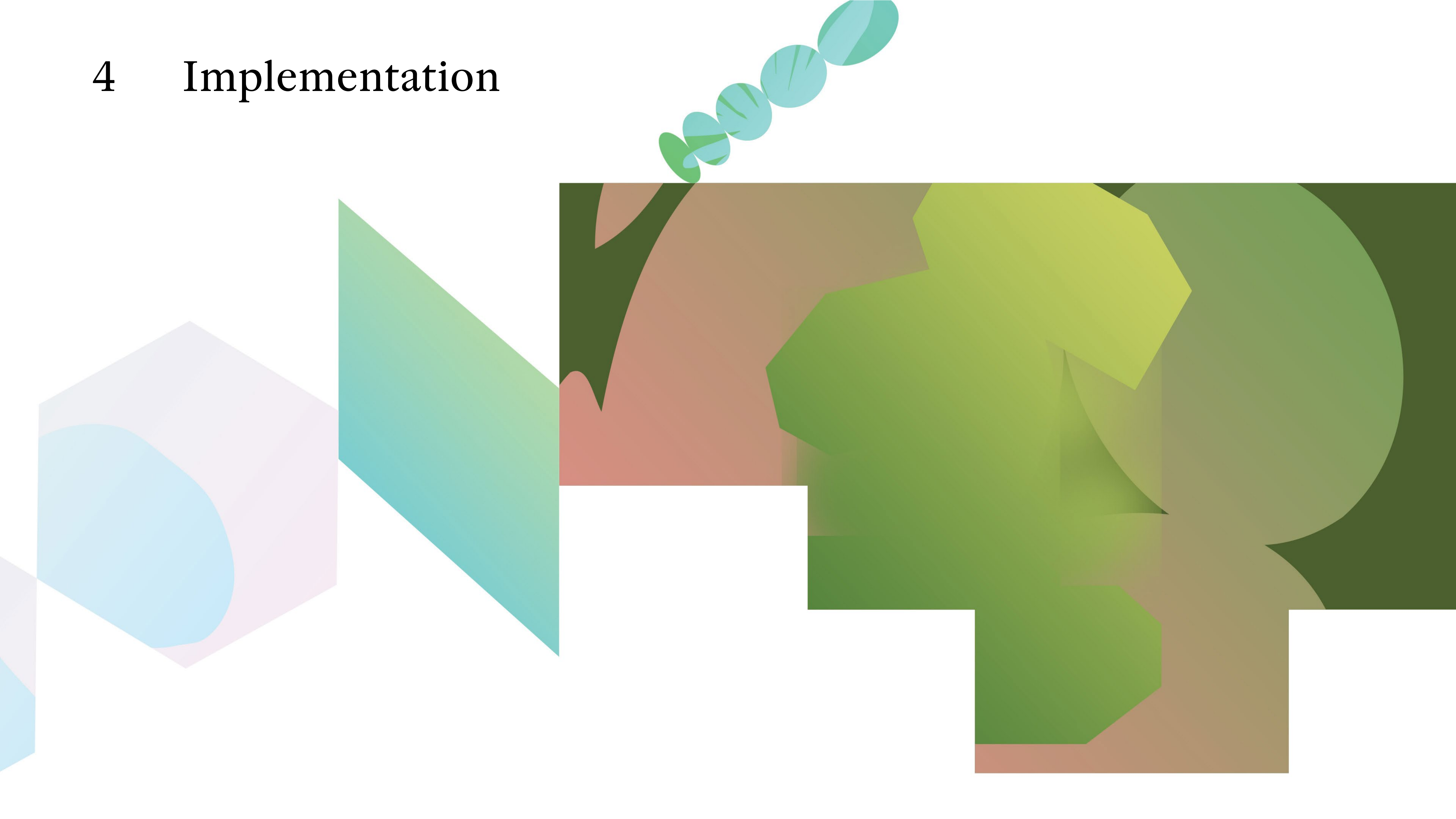
Bergen is home to a variety of different faith communities which are important purveyors of art and culture. The Church of Norway and the numerous faith groups in Bergen attract a large number of volunteers, and the city's churches can be said to be its biggest art gallery in which different art forms spanning a millennium are represented. Many people benefit from the treasure troves of culture that exist in faith communities through ceremonies and events. The City of Bergen supports art and culture programmes run by the Church of Norway and other arts providers from other religious communities.

The City of Bergen has established a panel for families with children where some 20% of all local families with children aged between 3 and 15 are taking part. The panel aims to obtain information about the full range of leisure activities enjoyed by children and young people in Bergen. The objective is to describe these families' engagement with arts, leisure and sport and to examine geographical and financial correlations with activity levels amongst children and young people. This information will be used to improve services, tailor services to specific areas and target groups and increase participation. The panel will be key to obtaining statistics for following up on specific initiatives set out in the *Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture* and could provide a good starting point for the discipline-specific action plans created to follow up on the plan.





4 Implementation



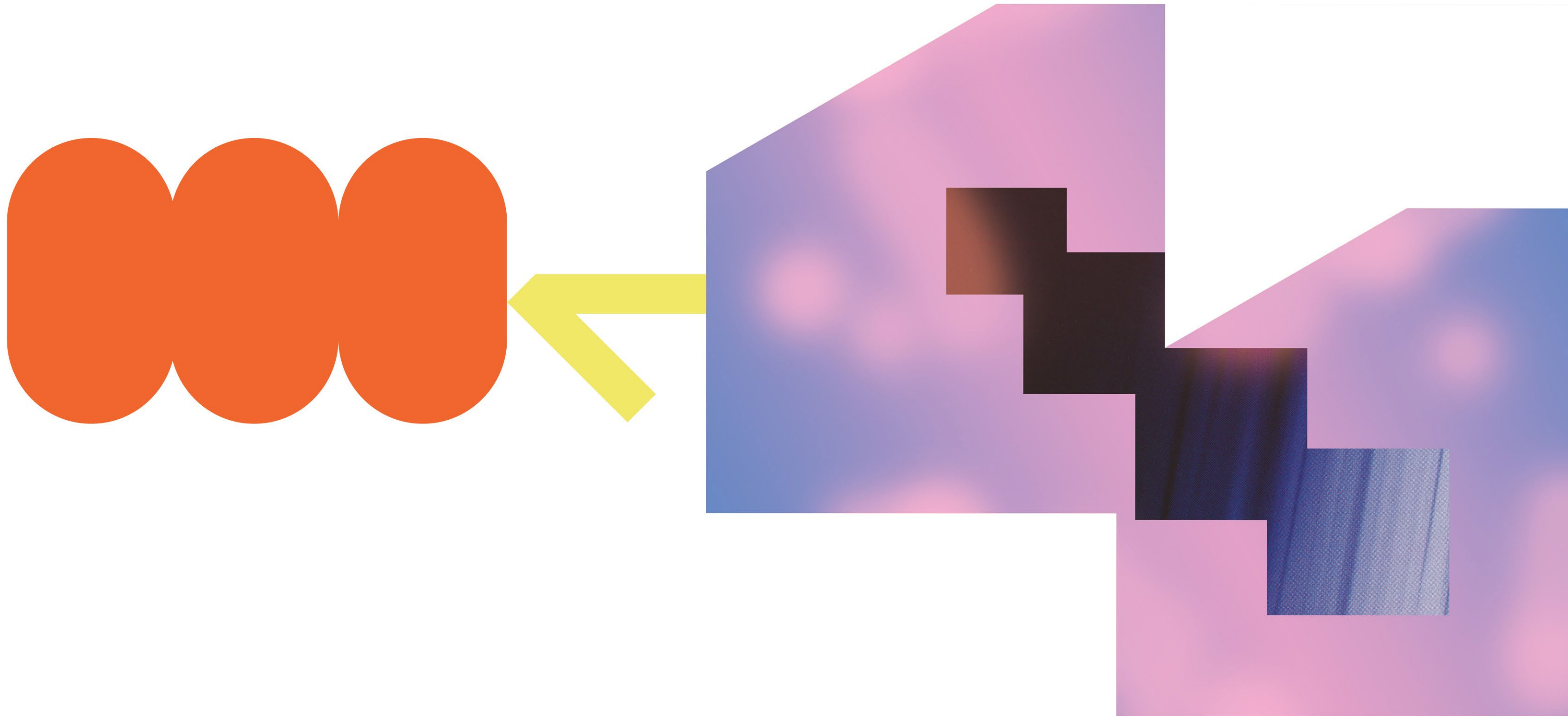
“Bergen should be a democratic and liberal city which promotes generosity, tolerance, freedom of expression and a diversity of opinion” reads the official declaration of the Bergen city government. Arts and culture policy should enable and encourage a diversity of opinions and viewpoints and ensure that different voices, from every part of society, are being heard and can benefit from constructive communication platforms. Every democracy is a community of disagreement. The arts sector is a place for experimentation, engagement, community – and disagreement. This way the sector helps reinforce a public sphere in which different opinions are heard.

Art and culture also pave the way for a frank and diverse discussion about which values impact on society. Broad public representation and a high degree of participation are therefore crucial to both local democracy and to the development of Bergen as a city of culture. The measures proposed in this plan should enable us to better exploit the combined powers of art and culture in a way that leads to more generous inclusion and greater diversity while also making Bergen’s arts scene even more relevant, vibrant and artistically innovative.

Main objectives:

Arts provision in Bergen should reflect a diverse community in which every citizen is able to practise and experience art and culture of a high quality, topicality and relevance. Everyone should be able to participate and express themselves in a free and independent arts sector.

4.1 Priority areas



Five fundamental principles play a key role in the efforts to increase participation and diversity:

- ➔ Freedom of expression and diversity of expression
- ➔ Networks
- ➔ Infrastructure
- ➔ Communication and outreach
- ➔ Organisation and management

The fundamental principles are a long-standing feature of Bergen's culture policy whereby selected priority areas are adopted in order to make systematic progress. The five principles set out in this plan will be discussed in a variety of ways in the different sub-chapters and will have varying degrees of impact on the different areas of activity. The fundamental principles will be addressed in the form of a number of common and sector-specific initiatives in the sub-chapters.

Freedom of expression and diversity of expression

Bergen has traditionally been a place for forthright speech where cultural statements capable of setting the agenda have been encouraged. From a diversity perspective, we should preserve this positive force and the democratic principle on which the culture of free expression rests. We must also continue to include more and different voices and perspectives that can challenge established notions about art and society in order to move the discussion forward. This requires us to actively track and prevent exclusionary structures in the city administration.

Freedom of expression and diversity of expression are especially important in the current media climate, where it is becoming increasingly difficult for the arts to be heard. Critique of arts and culture can help create a vibrant public sphere by placing different cultural expressions in new contexts and by engaging in a broader conversation about modern society on culture's own terms. Critique also has potential as a tool for reflection and as a mindset for children and young people, and it can encourage thinking and exchanges of ideas across age groups and cultural backgrounds. One important factor in preventing echo chambers and tendencies towards polarisation is ensuring that events are held in open forums that make everyone feel safe and acknowledged. In this perspective it is also clear that a diversity initiative will boost self-reflection in the culture sector, since arts and culture are also capable of excluding alternative voices.

Networks

Positive encounters between people are vital in supporting and encouraging public participation. Physical and digital meetings with good and interesting content create shared references and promote social cohesion across smaller, established communities. This is how networks are created and expanded. It is also important to remember that not everyone is part of such networks. It is therefore necessary to expand existing networks and create new ones in order to boost involvement and interest in cultural communities. This is just as relevant when investing in talent development, which requires diversity in order to attract new voices. This will in turn lead to even more diverse recruitment of performers and audiences. Existing and new partnerships must also be developed between arts institutions, amateur arts and local organisations, existing audiences and people who are not yet active users of culture. This is in line with the historically robust sharing culture that exists in the arts in Bergen, where experiences, skills and equipment are shared across disciplines. This sharing culture should continue to evolve by increasingly enabling knowledge and networks to be shared by the alternative arts scene and the major institutions as well as by the local authority's own arts agencies.

Infrastructure

Municipal investment in different kinds of cultural venues, both traditional and untraditional, indoors and outdoors, must ensure the necessary infrastructure for increased participation and a diversity of arts providers. The city's cultural venues must be safe meeting places with an inclusive infrastructure where everyone can feel welcome. The public must be given adequate information about practical issues as well as programmes and about how they can volunteer or participate. Young people wanting to attend arts events with an 18+ age limit must be offered guardianship where necessary. Functional, flexible and adequate venues for arts and culture production, cultural practice and outreach are important goals in the plan for arts venues and a prerequisite for diversity. Specialist production and outreach venues for the professional sector and museums, public arts venues in the city's districts, further development of the culture axis in the city centre, new arts venues, and not least investment in libraries in all city districts will create good, physical infrastructures for a diverse arts scene. It is also fundamental that the premises are accessible in terms of both universal design and being centrally located in the city centre and the districts in line with the commitment to creating a pedestrian-friendly city.

Communication and outreach

Extensive and important outreach work is already taking place at the institutions and amateur arts organisations, but many residents are still unaware of the range of local cultural services, and the bar for first-time participation may seem high. Both professional and amateur practitioners must be conscious of the communication channels, tools and language they use to ensure that as many people as possible can experience and participate in arts and culture. This need for awareness applies to every single activity, ranging from how audiences and potential participants learn of the event, how they are welcomed and the scope for differentiated pricing to how they can become actively involved, available outreach activities at the institutions, and supplementary information after their visit.

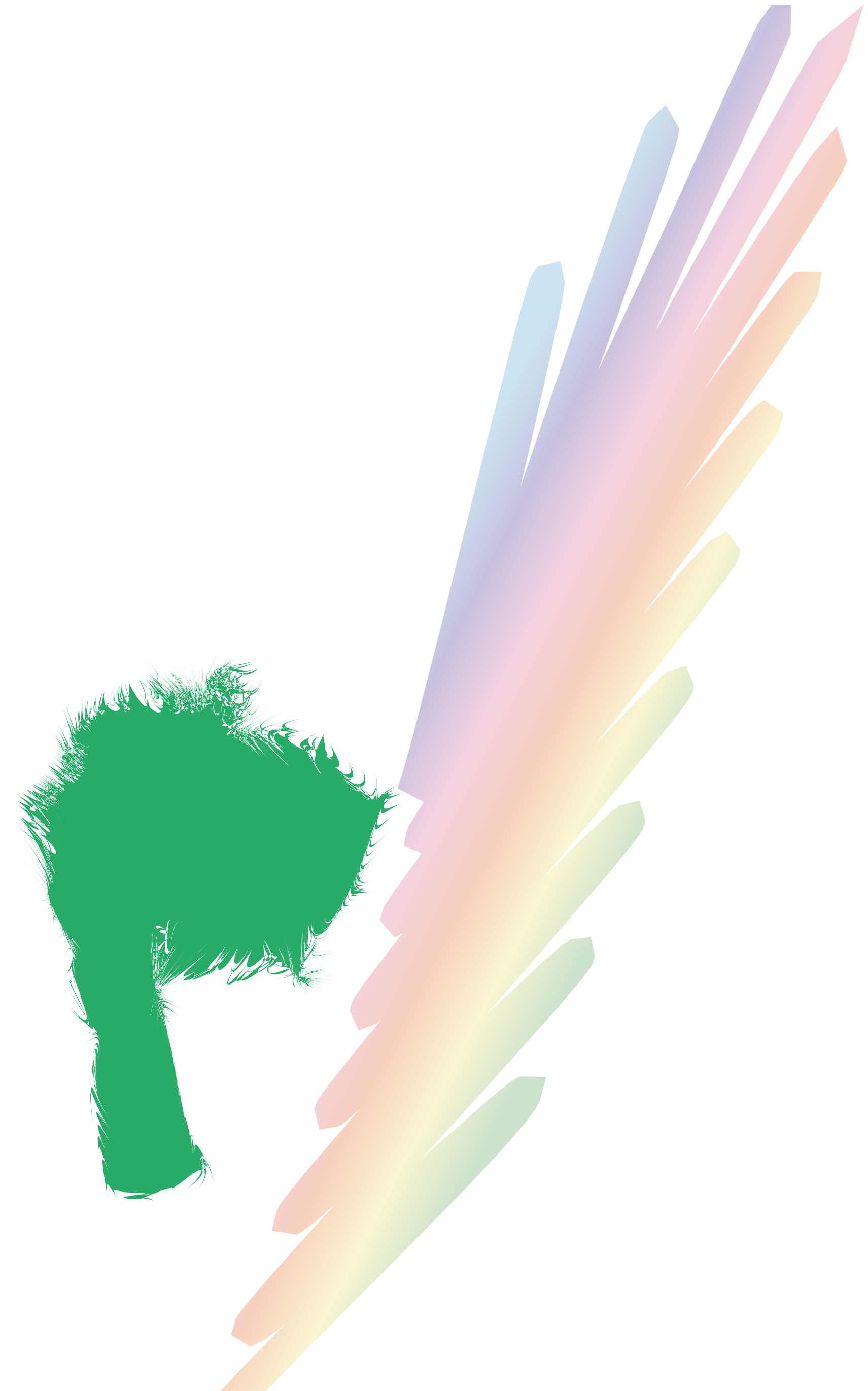
The significance of arts institutions and individuals being able to offer digital outreach as a supplement to physical arts events is obvious in the current climate. The availability of digital interaction has been vital to many amateur arts organisations as they all seek to maintain their provision and activities during the coronavirus crisis. This trend shows that technology allows us to disseminate arts and culture to groups of people in new and evolving ways. Audience groups which for various reasons do not use the physical arts institutions or do not live in the vicinity can greatly benefit from new technological solutions which allow them to experience arts and culture. However, the technical solutions require specialist digital expertise and access to equipment and digital platforms. This means there is considerable potential for information-sharing between arts providers and for networks which can serve both as communication channels and a means of identifying those who need training and access to resources.

Organisation and management

There are several good examples of individual institutions and organisations which over time have made it a priority to acquire in-house skills through appointments and boardroom roles. Yet there is a clear need for more broad-based experience amongst those in leading roles, organisations, boardrooms and management – at all levels – in Bergen’s arts sector. In order to reach a more diverse audience, the arts organisations and the services they provide must also be diverse in the form of active and continuing self-reflection around the organisational structure. Diversity must be given greater emphasis in every aspect of the arts. The Bergen arts scene must commit itself to actively combating institutionalised exclusion and to systematically developing, identifying and highlighting available professional and specialist expertise in the city.

4.1.1 Diverse audiences

Access to art and culture is a fundamental value in a free society. A broad audience base is also necessary for arts providers, both in order to ensure the widest possible reach for different genres and services and because many of these providers are reliant on the revenues they generate. Art can also be reflected in the response and feedback from both general and expert audiences, and a diverse audience can thus encourage artistic inspiration and development. Bergen's strategy for culture, which describes how "art and culture as important aspects of the city and its residents' identity are reflected in good audience figures and audiences interested in quality, diversity and accessibility", has perhaps never been more important.



Subsidiary goals

All residents, irrespective of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, geographical affiliation, disability or socio-economic background, must be able to experience and participate in the city's arts scene.

Status and challenges

Bergen's arts institutions have significant potential to reach an even more diverse audience than they do today. The scope for fulfilling this potential varies from institution to institution, however, and many small providers have limited resources available for marketing and outreach. The local authority wishes to make better provision for a communication and visibility infrastructure, to highlight the varieties of services on offer, and to ensure that the larger institutions make reaching out beyond their core audiences a priority.

The arts and public health

Recent research clearly demonstrates the positive effects of art and culture. Numerous studies from multiple countries have shown a clear correlation between children's exposure to art and culture and school performance. Art and culture aid the children's motor, cognitive, creative, social and emotional development and allow them to feel a sense of achievement by expressing themselves and practising how to receive both constructive criticism and praise. Experiencing and practising art and culture can reduce stress amongst all age groups and in turn improve health. The obvious health benefits of engaging with art and culture demonstrate the considerable impact of easy access to art and culture on people at all stages of life and from all

socio-economic backgrounds. This makes it even more important for arts provision in Bergen to widen its reach further, including by boosting the Activity Card and seeking to increase the uptake of activities offered by the card (see Unit for Culture and Participation – local arts activities).

Reasons for under-representation amongst different audience groups could be that the provision is not deemed relevant due to either scope or format, that there is a lack of representation amongst the stories or performers, that the audiences and stage performers are perceived as homogeneous. Nor is art and culture necessarily a priority activity for many potential participants and performers. Other challenges include lack of physical and practical adaptation at venues and for productions, such as universal design, accommodation for people with visual/hearing impairments and those with cognitive challenges such as various types of dementia, performance times not suitable for target audiences, complicated non-plain language in communication and outreach, and programmes not available in different languages. The financial circumstances of some audience groups must also be taken into account. It is therefore important to know who is not making use of the arts provision, and why. The City of Bergen's panel for families with children will be able to inform this process through its surveys.

Audience flow

Audiences may experience art and culture physically or digitally, and both formats can be used to create good and enriching experiences. Arts providers are generally concerned with audience development, and many local providers are working methodically to reach out to a wider audience in new ways, focusing on creating meetings between people and art. Yet it is also clear that many of them continue to address the audiences they already know and instantly appeal to. All local arts institutions must be challenged to think new when it comes to audiences. What a greater diversity of audiences would entail in practice would vary from institution to institution, however. Feedback on the planning process has generated an impression that some people feel a sense of disengagement with individual institutions and genres, but strong affinity with others. The relatively new funding scheme Open Doors, which supports outreach work with the potential to attract new users to the institutions and which could serve as a door-opener to the more niche arts, has quickly been able to demonstrate important effects and consequences in terms of audience flow between different institutions and across genres. The scheme shows that it pays to enable co-operation on audience measures across institutions and disciplines. There is potential for even more collaboration between large and small arts institutions in the city, and they should be encouraged to design extraordinary outreach projects. A local version of Black History Month, reflecting the circumstances and history of the city of Bergen, could be a significant contribution by highlighting our immigration history through outreach and debate and could bring together different groups both on stage and in the audience.



Inclusive venues and events

Painstaking and ambitious work has taken place in Bergen recently to create safe and inclusive cultural events. The aim is to lower the bar for people to seek out new venues or expose themselves to new artistic genres. In March 2020 the Borealis Festival issued a policy statement in which it described a range of concrete measures it was taking to create safe spaces and ensure accessibility for all. One of the initiatives was the concept “A New Friend” for people who did not want to attend events alone or who were looking to meet responsible, inclusive and sober adults at events. Many venues have now established various types of guardianship arrangements for young people under the age of 18, but more organisers need to follow suit. Young people are also calling for more concerts for the under-18s, the likes of which the venue Kulturhuset Østre has organised with great success.

Bergen International Festival has been working actively to increase diversity amongst its audiences for a number of years. Its concept “Festspillkollektivet” aims to develop programming for people with limited access to arts events such as residents in retirement homes and places of detention. The festival is also working more generally on targeted communication and adaptation for different groups through initiatives such as “Festspillbroen”, which addresses immigrant groups in multiple languages. The Bergen National Opera has developed a programme for people with visual and hearing impairments and is the first opera company in Norway to offer universal design for this audience segment in the Grieghallen. Bergen Assembly has been working with the organisation Papillon, Vuma Projects and interest groups for deaf people and people with mental illness or autism on its outreach programmes.

The Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra has created the streaming service BergenPhiLive which aims to reach a wide audience digitally, including those at day centres and residential institutions across the municipality. The “Kunstkompis” programme at the KODE museums is one example of audience inclusion whereby volunteers accompany older people to the museum. The programme is part of the KODE Åpen project, which sees KODE working with institutions such as the Dignity Centre, the Norwegian Correctional Service, The Bergen Clinics, Robin Hood Huset, the Red Cross and the Church City Mission on a wider range of guided tours, courses, workshops etc. Another approach, taken by the Bergen City Museum, is to make information available in several different languages. The museum also has a volunteering co-ordinator, and its work with volunteers is an important part of its diversity and inclusion efforts. The museum organises tailor-made tours and activities on request.

Bergen Public Library has also become an important social meeting place for many of the city’s residents and stands out in a diversity perspective with a varied offer of free events both in the main library and at the local branches. The library also serves as a venue for external practitioners such as nyMusikk’s weekly Library Music events. The Cultural Schoolbag programme lowers the threshold for participation in the arts by reaching out to every child and young person of school age.

Digital outreach

Research into the health benefits of art largely centres around physical visits to arts institutions and direct encounters between audiences and art – and in the case of children the tactile aspect of being able to create something with their hands. With research clearly demonstrating the positive benefits of art to human health, it is essential that we exploit digital advances in a constructive way. New technological solutions can be important tools in reaching audience groups which for various reasons do not – or cannot – visit physical venues. For the past three years the City of Bergen has held various iterations of the “Bergen Now” showcase in partnership with Bergen International Festival, local art producers and municipal agencies in order to generate enthusiasm around digital arts provision and to trial ways in which to use digital tools to bring art and culture to even more people.

Digital outreach can serve as both a marketing tool and a distribution channel for the productions in question. Streaming is often used to broadcast a range of arts disciplines such as music, theatre, interdisciplinary and performance art etc. but also events such as artist talks and seminars. Streaming services make it easier to bring music and theatre events to a wider public. For example, the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra has streamed its concerts to care homes and schools as well as people in their own homes who are unable to visit the concert venue in person. Digital platforms can also attract new audience groups to music and theatre as they can be accessed through a medium which sees more active users than the city’s physical arts venues. This way innovative and niche art is made accessible to a wider audience. There is potential in making

art available to patients in hospitals and other health institutions via screens. Streaming also benefits kindergartens, schools and day centres for older people as a complement to cinema trips. It makes it easier to expose specific groups to art and culture and can be integrated into teaching activities or settings where art can provide stimulation.

Art and culture also contain latent educational and activity-inducing potential that enables two-way communication between artists, arts institutions and audiences. These factors can help boost participation and result in bigger, more diverse audience groups. Arts providers such as Transiteatret extend the physical confines of the stage by streaming performances online or to listening stations in different cities in real time. Kompani 13 specialises in interactive theatre for young people by allowing pupils to comment on the action via smartphones.

Technological tools in the visual arts often involve digital museums and exhibitions. Museums and voluntary heritage conservation groups also benefit from digital outreach, including in situations where universal access is not possible, in certain historical buildings and townscapes and on vintage boats, trains and buses. Museum Vest is one example of an institution reaching new audience groups thanks to its digital outreach work. DigitaltMuseum is a joint, open database of collections held in Norwegian and Swedish art and history museums. The challenge of using these tools is to ensure adequate information for different target groups.

The film and TV industry was an early adopter of new digital channels and tools that provide new ways of reaching specific target groups. Like the other arts disciplines, streaming provides a vital channel for broadcasting films to audience groups which are

unable to make it to the cinema and to schools, kindergartens and day centres for older people. Computer games engage a number of groups and individuals who may otherwise not consider themselves users of art and culture. Their creators also possess knowledge of alternative communication methods which could benefit the other arts disciplines.

Technologies such as audiobooks, podcasts and streaming services have helped make the arts available to a wider audience. They have also inspired and lowered the bar for participation in amateur arts and attracted more diverse audiences to physical events. Podcasts extend the lifespan of arts events and allow them to become part of the public discourse. The events are also made available to audiences who for various reasons are not able to attend the physical event. Many of the city's museums, festivals, art institutions and literary promoters make their events available as podcasts after the event has concluded. Podcasts are a particularly important and sustainable alternative for more niche events as they can help establish an audience base within a greater geographical radius.

Pathways to the arts

Irrespective of whether they use physical or digital channels, arts providers must place their audiences at the heart of everything from programming to outreach. They should seek to gain a better understanding of who their potential audiences are – and what interests them – in order to create attractive routes into their artistic programmes. By working with other providers with different target audiences, institutions and organisers can gain a better understanding and communicate relevant and meaningful events to the target groups they wish to reach. In this respect it is important to adopt and make use of tools for audience surveys and to enable collaboration and knowledge-sharing through network meetings in order to expand beyond traditional audience groups. Establishing a forum for sharing knowledge about the plan's target groups would be a beneficial initiative for the amateur arts, the professional arts sector – including the commercial arts sector – and municipal services.

Good information about available services in plain language and ideally multiple languages is key to both recruiting and including new audiences in the amateur arts, professional arts and museum sector. The measures set out in the arts plan to develop the website kulturbybergen.no as a comprehensive database of arts events in the city will also be significant to reaching the goals described in the plan. Old-fashioned physical posters still play an important role in reaching the public where they work and live, and the local authority will enable more physical noticeboards in all of Bergen's districts and provide information about where they are located. LittFestBergen runs a dedicated youth programme, LittFestUng, which works closely with schools in Bergen to organise

meetings between schoolchildren and authors from all over the world. The initiative, which encourages active participation by the children, should be extended in the coming years.

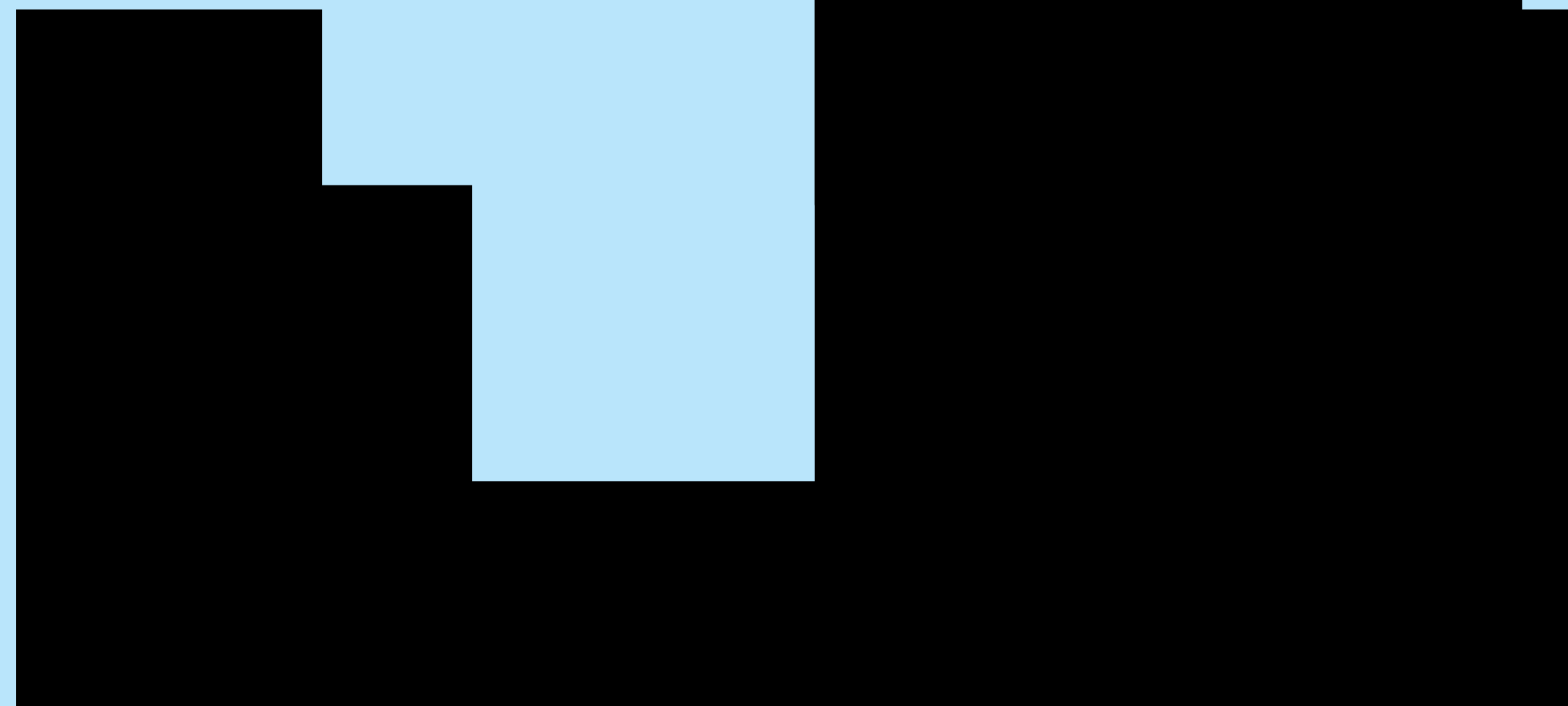
The collaboration between the arts institutions, the adult education service and the inclusion programme for newly arrived refugees is an important point of entry into the arts for many of Bergen's new residents. The collaboration is running smoothly but has much potential for expansion, especially in periods when schools wind down their teaching. Targeted audience development by the city's arts institutions and successful integration initiatives in the world of sports show that human interaction is the single most effective tool for reaching new audience groups. To support this process, the local authority will provide funding for new "Arts Guides", who will use their personal experience to bring together groups of people from different cultural and social backgrounds. The Arts Guides scheme will work closely with professional institutions and organisations, both publicly funded and commercial, with amateur arts organisations and with the local authority's arts agencies in order to create more diverse audiences in arts and culture in general. During this process it would also be relevant to exchange information with sports organisations and the Council for Religious and Life Stance Communities in Norway (STL).

The local authority will also continue to build on the innovative artistic work that has gone into creating projects tailored to comply with coronavirus restrictions during the pandemic. In addition to the large number of good, digital projects where audiences were given ample opportunity to visit, watch, experience and participate in arts events from the comfort of their own homes, there has also been a string of interesting arts projects using alternative venues or

outreach methods which observe the restrictions without impairing the experience. Bodil Rørtveit Lunde and Benedicte Maurseth (and others) created a multidisciplinary concert experience with the audience relaxing in hammocks on Mount Fløyen. As part of a project with a collective dimension which reinforced the sense of community and the gallery's local presence, the Hordaland Kunstsenter sent 3,000 postcards with motifs from the exhibition Old Tree along with the words "Dear neighbour. What do you see in this artwork?" to residents in the district of Nordnes. There have been a number of recent examples of hybrid interactive theatre productions set in urban and suburban spaces. In terms of music and interdisciplinary arts, there have been online radio shows broadcasting new music, performances and discussions involving local, national and international artists. Projects which see artists invite small groups to join them, physically or digitally, in their respective working environments – where they give masterclasses, present their work or demonstrate their artistic processes – also have the potential to generate knowledge of and interest in art and culture. Continued funding for these types of projects remains essential if the alternative arts scene is to reach new audiences.

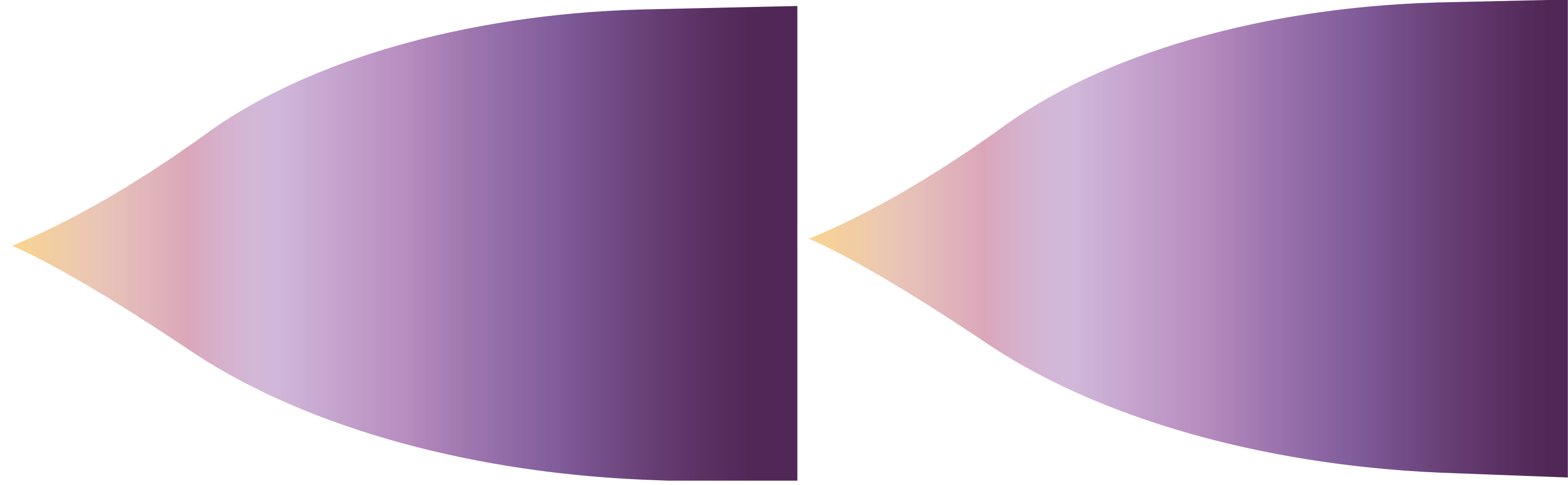
Strategies

- Put participation and diversity at the centre of development in the arts sector
- Try out, reflect on and enable participation when seeking to reach out to new user groups
- Challenge established truths and share knowledge that allows others, especially vulnerable groups, to participate in the community
- Create safe, accessible and inclusive spaces for bringing art and audiences together
- Enable an inclusive and accessible outreach culture
- Help create ownership of the city's arts scene among all residents through increased knowledge and awareness of available arts and cultural services



- ➔ Use the municipal budget to require grant recipients to have in place concrete plans and goals for increasing audience diversity
- ➔ Establish and enable broad-based co-operation on the implementation of the “Arts Guides” scheme
- ➔ Reinforce the “Open Doors” funding scheme to be able to support events that help promote and discuss diversity and related, relevant issues in a contemporary perspective and on local terms
- ➔ Establish a partnership between the arts institutions, Nygård school and Bergen Inclusion Centre for refugees on extended arts provision for participants in the inclusion programme during periods with restricted learning activities
- ➔ Extend the Activity Card scheme with additional providers
- ➔ Initiate more guardianship schemes for children and young people under the age of 18 who wish to attend arts events in venues with an 18+ age limit
- ➔ Establish a forum to disseminate information about the plan’s target groups to the sector and its employees; organise meetings in partnership with network groups to reinforce existing and new networks across disciplines and institutional levels; and enable skills and experiences to be shared
- ➔ Develop and launch tools for audience surveys, including by the panel for families with children, and initiate and facilitate collaborations to allow the sector to expand beyond traditional audiences
- ➔ Enable marketing and promotion of arts activities through Kulturbybergen.no and more physical posters in all of Bergen’s districts
- ➔ Enable arts provision at times suited to specific target groups, e.g. children and older people
- ➔ Ensure that accessible language is used in all audience communication
- ➔ Encourage the different disciplines to promote their activities in the local communities

4.1.2 Diversity in arts and culture



The City of Bergen aims to boost sustainability in the arts by enabling inclusion of new providers. Greater diversity will be encouraged at all levels: amongst artists, in arts production, in museums and heritage conservation, and in amateur arts. This chapter addresses the professional arts sector, museums and heritage conservation, and amateur arts.

Subsidiary goals

The City of Bergen should work to make art and culture in the city reflect the diversity that now exists in society in a way that ensures relevance and representation for all groups.

Strategies

The City of Bergen aims to make the professional arts sector, museums and heritage conservation and amateur arts reflect their communities and ensure increased participation and diversity through the following strategies:

- ➔ Enable a diversity of talents, practitioners, producers, institutions and organisations to participate in the process of developing content and relevance in the arts sector
- ➔ Recognise diversity as a driver of increased innovation and quality, reflected in the organisations' goals, recruitment, talent development and communication

General measures

A number of general measures will be introduced across the professional arts sector, museums and amateur arts. As a source of funding for art, culture and voluntary organisations in Bergen, the local authority must commit itself to taking concrete steps to dismantle exclusionary structures and encourage diversity. This will be done by introducing a set of criteria for grant recipients and by making diversity a priority when considering funding for the different disciplines.

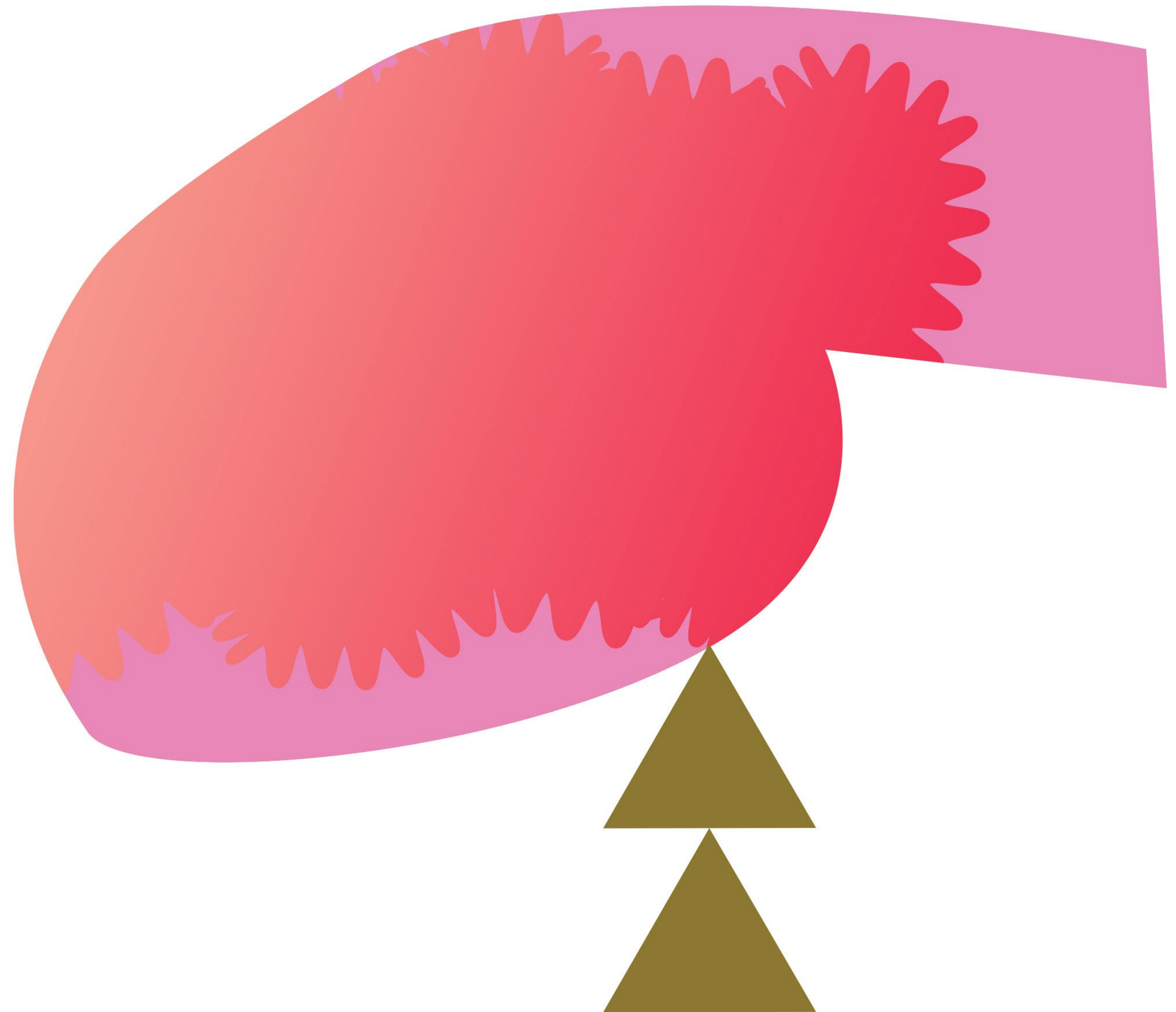
The big institutions hold considerable power of definition by virtue of their role as employers. The City of Bergen will use the municipal budget to require grant recipients to demonstrate concrete plans and goals for increasing diversity and equality within their organisations and boards. This will apply to amateur arts organisations as well as the professional arts sector and museums. Professional consolidated museums, larger arts institutions and municipal investment funds will be subjected to stricter requirements for diversity and participation than voluntary heritage conservation groups, the amateur arts and the broader alternative arts scene.

A number of measures will be taken to ensure accessible and inclusive procedures in grant management as well as diversity in funding allocations. Diversity will be a key factor when considering any application. Unambiguous criteria for diversity will be included in the guidelines accompanying all open funding schemes. Concrete targets for each funding scheme will also be drawn up based on existing weaknesses in the field in question, and the funding awards will be monitored over time to provide information for targeted measures to be taken. Funding will be provided for new voices in

all the discipline-specific funding schemes to ensure freedom of expression and diversity of expression in content production. The discipline-specific funding schemes will also give priority to qualified projects where diversity is an integral part of the project.

Established structures can prevent inclusion at several levels. The funding schemes should accommodate a variety of professional applications, and the local authority should regularly evaluate its funding schemes with a view to identifying exclusionary structures. Individual artists can sometimes find it difficult to get a foot through the door, find their bearings and get used to writing applications. In addition to targeted information campaigns and awareness around the use of language, it may also be a good idea to trial alternative application formats and introduce English as an alternative language in the funding portal. It is also important to encourage inclusion by introducing a third gender category on grant application forms and actively use statistics on gender distribution to inform gender-balancing in the different disciplines.

The closure of public meeting places during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 led to a shift in arts provision which is likely to have lasting consequences for the sector and for the public's use of art and culture. It is vital that the arts sector reflects on who is falling by the wayside and how the experience of the sudden shift from physical to digital arts provision can translate into a positive trend that improves access to arts and culture for all in safe and inclusive settings.



- ➔ Use the municipal budget to require recipients to demonstrate concrete plans and goals for increasing diversity and equality within their organisations and boards
- ➔ Require institutions and organisations to include diversity as a development factor in their action plans and articles of association while leaving room for different interpretations of diversity
- ➔ Highlight boardroom equality and diversity when the City of Bergen appoints board members to arts institutions
- ➔ Instigate a broad and informed discussion on quotas and incentives as cultural policy instruments through active use of statistics to raise awareness of imbalances or unequal representation
- ➔ Encourage increased co-operation across the entire arts sector on joint festivals and events that promote diversity and the understanding of diversity in the community
- ➔ Encourage the professional arts sector to design high-quality offerings with a diversity perspective for Den Kulturelle Bæremeisen, The Cultural Schoolbag and Den Kulturelle Spaserstokken programmes
- ➔ Set unambiguous criteria for diversity in the guidelines on the open funding schemes and make diversity a key factor when considering any application. Concrete targets for each discipline will be set and allocation trends monitored over time
- ➔ Encourage freedom of expression and diversity of expression in content production by awarding grants to new voices and giving priority to qualified projects where diversity is an integral part of the project through all the discipline-specific funding schemes
- ➔ Regularly evaluate the local authority's funding schemes with a view to identifying exclusionary structures
- ➔ Create a pilot for alternative application formats for the funding schemes
- ➔ Add an English language option to the funding portal

The image features a white background with several abstract elements. In the top-left corner, there is a cluster of overlapping circles in shades of green and yellow. To the left, a large, irregular, multi-colored shape in shades of red and pink is partially visible. In the bottom-left corner, a solid brown triangle points upwards. On the right side, there are several large, rounded, purple-to-blue gradient shapes, and a smaller, textured, light purple sphere. The text 'The professional arts sector' is centered in a black serif font.

The professional arts sector

Subsidiary goals

As a city of culture, Bergen must be open to impulses and embrace bold ideas and encounters between people and art. The city must ensure diversity and originality in the arts and amongst artists and arts institutions.

Status and challenges

The professional arts sector is a driving force in making Bergen an innovative and leading city of culture in a Nordic context with a bold arts scene noted for experimentation and a high degree of artistic diversity. The providers generally take a reflected approach to the need for and significance of enabling greater diversity amongst practitioners, administrators and producers. The vast majority of them have adopted dedicated strategies for increasing audience participation. There is still room for improvement when it comes to ensuring that a wider range of voices are able to create art and culture in Bergen and are empowered to define which artistic programmes are given a platform. In this particular context, the professional arts sector includes music, visual art, theatre, film, design, literature, art and culture criticism, and interdisciplinary art – including electronic art. It is a varied field ranging from large and medium-sized institutions to smaller, artist-led spaces and network groups and individual artists in every discipline. *The City of Bergen's arts plan for the professional sector* states:

An innovative and internationally relevant city of art must offer a variety of artistic genres and practices, room for experimentation, artistic innovation and specialisation, a wider range of exhibition

spaces and engaging communication and professional criticism of topical artworks. (From p. 95 of the arts plan)

The fundamental principle for the local authority's arts policy, including for a diverse arts scene, is to make room for alternative and independent art and to allow artistic freedom to thrive an arm's length away from the city's political system. The local authority's job in this context is to ensure a good framework for art production and outreach in the form of varied venues, unrestricted project funding for art production, and grants to cover running costs.

Freedom of expression and diversity amongst providers

According to the report "Art and Freedom of Expression", published by Fritt Ord in 2015, one in three Norwegian artists report that they have had their freedom of expression curtailed as a result of a lack of understanding of artistic freedom of expression among the general public. This goes to show how society needs to embrace a greater diversity of voices and expressions in the arts, including in inclusive settings that promote cultural diversity.

A survey conducted by the Art of Balance project in 2018 found that women were severely under-represented in the formal and organised music industry in Bergen. This was particularly true for technicians and producers but also for certain artistic genres such as jazz. The Borealis Festival has been working methodically for a number of years to ensure a balance in its programming in terms of both gender and diversity in general and has attracted both domestic and international attention because of its explicit equality targets.

The way in which Borealis has adopted a critical perspective on its organisation and festival over time – resulting in concrete results – is exemplary and shows that change is possible and in many cases more dependent on willpower than on resources. The Norwegian and West Norwegian film industry has been focusing on gender balance for a number of years and has been able to redress the imbalance thanks to statistics and moderate use of quotas. By seeking to achieve greater diversity in their portfolios, the municipal investment funds Buzz AS for the music industry and Mediefondet Zefyr for the film and gaming industry can provide incentives for change. One prerequisite for that to happen is broader recruitment at all levels, from musicians and actors, producers, game developers and directors to boardrooms and company administrations.

In every arts discipline the connection between stage and auditorium or work and audience is closely linked to how the performers, repertoire, programme and curation reflect a diversity of groups and individuals in a way that is relevant so that audiences can familiarise themselves and identify with performers and artistic themes. As an example, the 2019 edition of Bergen Assembly encompassed a wide range of artistic approaches linked to exclusion, human dignity, refugee migration, physical and mental challenges, diversity and representation, and not least the multicultural backgrounds of many young people in the city. The theatre world has historically been reluctant to embrace diversity both in terms who is allowed to create and practise theatre and which audience groups it seeks to target. There has been a more accepted tradition of diversity in alternative theatre. Bergen has a vibrant avant-garde scene in the form of BIT Teatergarasjen, and there is considerable diversity in international programming. The only national company

for contemporary dance, Carte Blanche, has also had a major impact on Bergen theatre and helped inject diversity in the form of performers from different cultural backgrounds and through its artistic expressions. Like BIT, Carte Blanche has an express aim of challenging established thinking. Carte Blanche has also produced several important independent dance artists who have gone on to innovate, set up their own companies and enable more artistic diversity.

Diversity on the national and local visual art scene has centred around three different initiatives over the past decade: the focus on including Sami artists and art, spearheaded by the Office for Contemporary Art, has helped generate national and international interest in art that has been overlooked or not fully appreciated. The second initiative is about closing the gender gap in the museums' collections. Several major Norwegian art museums, including KODE, have adopted new acquisition policies whereby they give priority to female artists. The alternative sector, such as exhibitions held by artist-led galleries, is also focusing its attention on equality in exhibition programming. The third initiative concerns diversity in the sense of cultural diversity. The three-year-long pan-Nordic project "An Inclusive Cultural Sector in the Nordics" has been central to this initiative. Bergen's galleries have always had a strong international element, but in the past year a number of institutions have launched major exhibition programmes with artists from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America. Kunsthall 3,14 is in a unique position in this respect as a platform exclusively dedicated to artists with a global outlook, although Bergen Kunsthall and Entrée are also running international and multicultural programmes.

The City of Bergen is a member of ICORN (International Cities of Refuge Network) and is also looking to become a refuge for artists from other disciplines in partnership with relevant international organisations. The cities of refuge programme is described in further detail in chapter 4.1.4 Bergen Public Library.

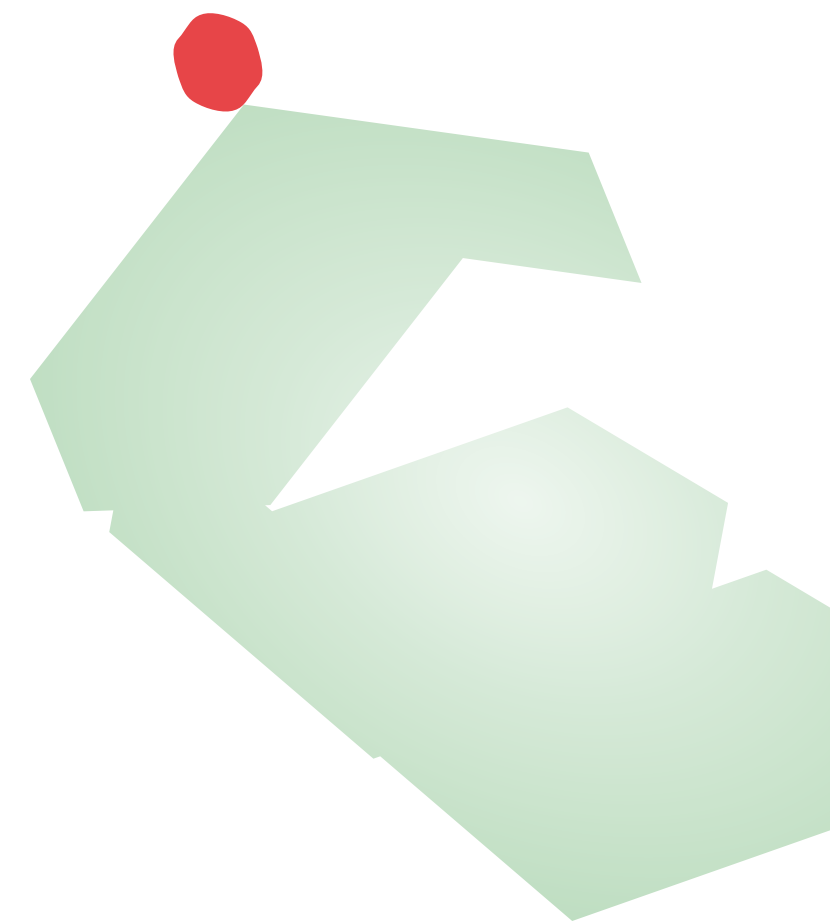
Diversity of genres

When it comes to diversity of genres and styles, the Borealis Festival once again stands out with its wide range of programming, all tailored to reflect its own unique artistic identity. However, challenges sometimes arise when genre, tradition and diversity intersect. For example, classical music and the classical music tradition are very much centred around Western and European music. The level of specialisation in classical music leads to even higher levels of professionalism in performance – something which both the repertoire and the genre demand. The local authority wishes to accommodate specialised and niche art in Bergen in partnership with initiatives designed to increase diversity in respect of styles, performers and audiences. The big classical institutions, such as the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra and the Bergen National Opera, are working hard to attract a more diverse audience, and local music organisations are continuing to create projects that help move the boundaries of their own genres. Classical music also holds untapped potential for continuing to introduce its core audiences to different traditions and repertoire, to develop new collaborations and projects across genres and styles, and to work systematically to recruit musicians to instrument groups where interest has been declining.

There is a long way from BIT Teatergarasjen and Carte Blanche to the private theatres and commercial theatres in terms of artistic direction, something which reflects the range of the field in a positive sense. Somewhere in between alternative and commercial theatre are the established institutions Den Nationale Scene and Det Vestnorske Teateret, which aim to give audiences a bit of both – both popular and alternative drama. Herein lies a potential for more bridge-building between different communities, which would in turn enable greater diversity across the full range of definitions adopted in this plan. As the city's biggest producing theatre, Den Nationale Scene has a particular responsibility for reflecting diversity in society in its core activities. The theatre's management is working to adopt a more conscious strategy to increase diversity in casting, artistic and administrative roles, content and performance. Det Vestnorske Teateret, too, aims to ensure more diversity amongst both performers and audiences at the Nynorskens Hus venue. This involves concrete plans to promote a greater diversity of stories and to reach more young people with projects that place linguistic ownership and minority languages at the centre.

In the world of literature, the newly established Bergen International Literary Festival has already distinguished itself by working actively and methodically to ensure more balanced representation in its festival programme. Like Borealis, it has made a commitment to diversity in its programming where other international literature festivals are often dominated by authors and moderators from the Anglosphere.

The regional film scene boosts diversity at a national level by its very nature by allowing voices which would otherwise not be heard to tell stories that would otherwise not be told. As well



as working methodically to increase production in our region, we must also adopt a more conscious strategy to encourage diversity at all levels of production and in the content being created. Mer Film is one example of a local production company focusing on diversity, innovation and social relevance every step of the way. Arabisk Filmfest is a small, inclusive film festival in Bergen which invites audiences to watch quality films from the Arab region and to participate in debates on topical issues covered in the films and which may be difficult to discuss. Bergen International Film Festival takes a broad approach to its programming, and every year the festival programme ranges from Checkpoints – a separate programme with documentaries detailing human rights breaches – to the Climate Festival in partnership with climate experts in the city.

Inclusive venues

Bergen's music venues, including concert halls, theatres and clubs, have been at the heart of the emerging local music scene in the past four decades. The venues are also important meeting places in the local community, and they can serve as a refuge for people who may otherwise feel excluded. Acting on an initiative by the music industry itself, the local authority is now working on a major partnership project that will see the city's performance venues come together to obtain the skills and tools they need to welcome a more diverse group of audiences and artists. The project will draw up measures and guidelines to ensure that live music can be enjoyed in a safe social environment where issues such as sexual harassment, universal design, health and safety are actively addressed. The venue Bergen Kjøtt is fronting efforts to create an extended network for the arts

sector in which providers actively share knowledge and experiences around how to create safe and inclusive arts venues.

For example, Papillon is a meeting place for girls and young women with cross-cultural or multi-cultural backgrounds. It has become an important partner to numerous organisations on the Bergen arts scene, including Borealis, Bergen Kunsthall and Bergen Assembly. Many of the initiatives launched by the Borealis festival can be transferred to other organisations.

Balansemerket is a certification scheme against sexual harassment in the arts offering training, guidance and tools to help arts organisations create safe and inclusive working environments. Balansemerket is the brainchild of the Art of Balance project, a partnership between more than 90 Norwegian arts organisations working to ensure equality and diversity in the arts. The City of Bergen encourages all organisations to work together to obtain the Balansemerket label.

Diversity in talent development

Popular and rhythmic music is noted for its extensive mixing of different styles, genres and cultures, and its strong culture of sharing and collaborating makes it easier to be accepted into the scene. One of the most conspicuous characteristics of the genre is that it continues to borrow elements and ideas from other fields and traditions. It also has a strong international outlook and long-standing traditions of network-building and cultural co-operation across national borders. Recent years have seen artists create international careers for themselves by distributing their music online and getting discovered either directly by audiences or by being signed by record labels or producers.

This route into the profession is less common in the other art disciplines, but the undergrowth of performers on Bergen's alternative arts scene is still helping to create an environment with many and varied opportunities for trying out new artistic approaches and styles, be it in theatre, film, art criticism, design or music. nyMusikk is one example of a professional outfit focusing on talent development, including in the field of composition through the Lydbruket schools project as well as its own project which sees young musicians and composers over the age of 12 get involved in multidisciplinary concerts. Such initiatives are building important bridges into the professional field.

Many venues serve as important platforms for new talent. For more than twenty years, Prøverommet has provided an important forum for fledgling artists and experimental art, while Kunsthuset Wrap offers flexible, low-cost premises for production and try-outs with an audience. Bergen Centre for Electronic Arts is an accessible resource centre for art and technology used by both new and established artists and arts workers. Landmark is the city's biggest multi-disciplinary platform, offering a wide range of concerts, clubbing concepts, art projects and debates. Local authority project grants and subsidised, artist-led shared studio spaces are important for recruitment in the city. Vacant studio spaces are widely marketed through the network organisations Brak, Visp, Proscen, Tekstallianse, Bergen Dansesenter and Design Region Bergen, which all help artists just starting out and more experienced artists looking to develop their skills. They play a key role in supporting the professional sector make Bergen an attractive location for artists to establish themselves in.

The main challenges in the professional theatre sector in Bergen concern the lack of relevant training or other forms of

talent development at a professional level. The field as a whole has untapped potential when it comes to co-operation and recruitment across specialisms and genres and between alternative organisations and established institutions. Ole Bull Scene and Stand Up Bergen contribute to diversity with their commercial comedy shows, especially in respect of talent development. Entertainment and comedy have often been more inclined than producing theatres to embrace diversity around talent development, but they too need to adopt more conscious strategies to ensure diversity in their recruitment processes and when promoting artists.

Film is a highly competitive, project-based and financially unpredictable industry. It is therefore important to highlight the opportunities that exist for those who choose to enter the industry. The Western Norway Film Centre plays a key advisory role for film talent amongst minority youths and other under-represented groups in the film industry. The film accelerator company BAKOM, run by the film centre, is designed as a meeting place where young talent can receive guidance from professional film-makers and producers.

The House of Literature in Bergen is an established platform for a wide and varied range of literary events that welcomes new perspectives and voices. LittFestBergen has in a short space of time become a driving force for international non-fiction with a wide range of activities aimed at young people in particular. The Skrivekunstakademiet plays an important role in developing new writing talent and new text-based communities. As for professional writers, the membership organisation Norwegian Writers' Centre promotes local and national contemporary literature while offering networking, writing courses and outreach work to both new and established authors.

Bergen is also home to a small yet dedicated community of art critics. There is currently no formal training available for critics in Norway, which means that the future of the discipline relies on a strong professional network capable of recruiting new and independent voices. Local journals have long played an important role as unofficial training establishments, but it ought to be possible to extend their reach by creating more specialised writing courses and workshops in the coming years. One priority measure will be to improve critical thinking amongst secondary school pupils in the form of a workshop-based pilot project inspired by the Norwegian Critics' Association's attempts to create a module on art criticism for schools along the lines of the The Cultural Schoolbag programme. This would give young people greater ownership of both the public discourse and of their own art experiences while developing a language for reflecting on things they have heard or seen that could be transferred to other settings. The initiative is in line with the new primary and lower secondary curriculum (LK20), which describes how schools should encourage pupils to be curious, ask questions and develop critical thinking skills and a capacity for reflection.

An international city of culture

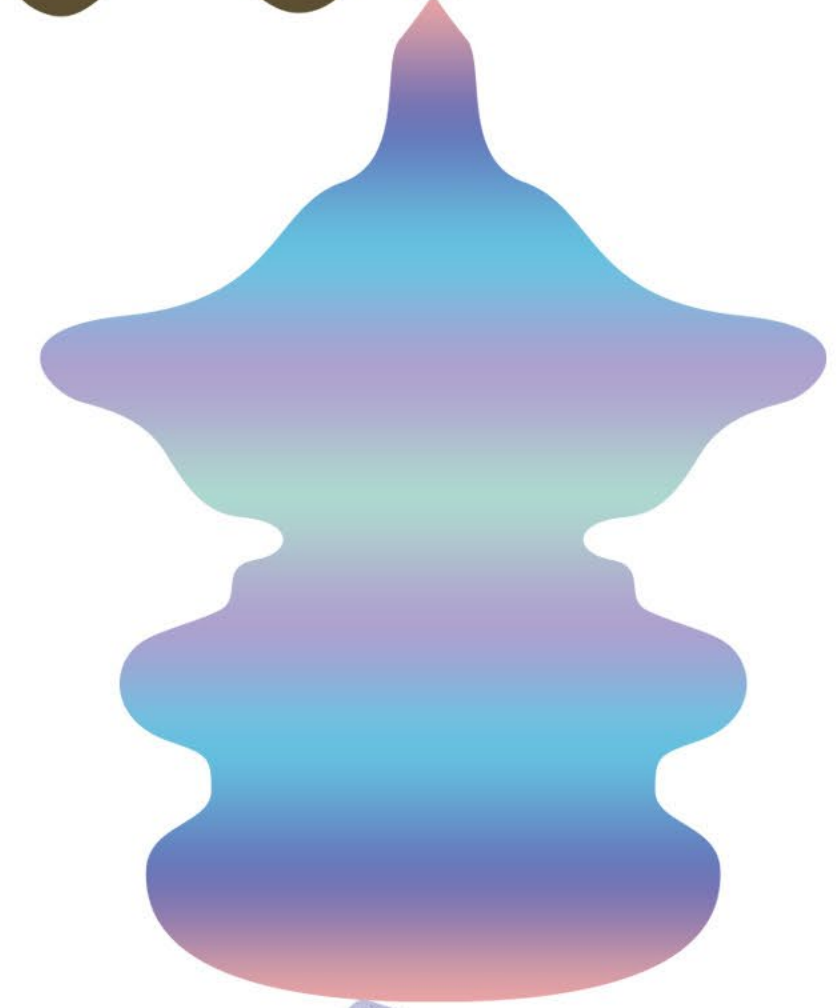
The Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design at the University of Bergen (formerly the Bergen Academy of Art and Design and the Grieg Academy) has for many years played a leading role in developing the arts sector in the city. The faculty is highly cosmopolitan with a large number of international students and staff. Yet few people from non-Western backgrounds apply to its art, music, design, film, theatre or creative writing programmes and choose to become professional

artists or arts workers. The same is true for theoretical courses. On the other hand, a significant proportion of international students choose to practise their art in Bergen upon completing their studies, thus making a major contribution to Bergen as a vibrant city of art and culture. Start-up grants and project funding play an important role in this respect. Many international artists are also opening galleries in the city. This helps boost diversity in the arts and can be developed further in the form of mentoring programmes, assistant schemes and talent development programmes with an integrated diversity perspective. Although English serves as an adequate working language in the arts, this group of artists needs to be offered Norwegian language training to become better integrated in other aspects of the local community and to be able to communicate their artistic practice to a wider public.

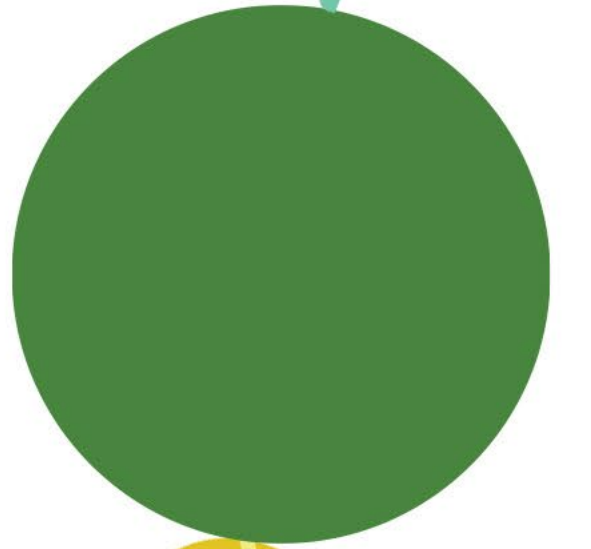
Institutions at all levels can sometimes seem closed to new artistic impulses and collaborations. The professional networks are robust, and Bergen's culture of sharing is one of the most prominent factors behind the level of activity and diversity that exists in art production in the city. However, much of the burden is falling on individuals and small groups, and it will be crucial to maintain and strengthen this sharing culture in the coming years. The local authority can help by facilitating more meetings and seminars across the different groups and disciplines. The network organisations Brak, Visp, Proscen, Bergen Dansesenter, Tekstallianse and Design Region Bergen along with the Bergen Centre for Electronic Arts will be key partners in this process.

The following measures will be implemented in addition to the general measures during the plan period:

- ➔ Encourage the institutions – as the biggest employers and arts programmers – to open up their venues to more multi-disciplinary and socio-cultural meeting places and collaborations
- ➔ Establish a pilot project for club and music venues with a view to creating safe settings for music performance and experiences
- ➔ Encourage all organisations to obtain the Balansemerket label
- ➔ Establish a development programme for theatre with emphasis on increased co-operation across the full range of the field and of academia on recruiting artists and supporting roles, on investing in talent development amongst performers, and on professional skills development at the institutions in a diversity perspective
- ➔ Extend investment in art criticism to make room for projects particularly aimed at specific fields, providers or audience groups. Establish module on art criticism for schools
- ➔ Launch training and inclusion initiatives for professional artists and arts workers with minority and multicultural backgrounds in Bergen
- ➔ Develop Bergen as a refuge for persecuted artists from more arts disciplines



Museums and voluntary heritage conservation



Subsidiary goals

The City of Bergen should help make museums and voluntary heritage conservation more relevant and inclusive through themes and approaches that reflect a diverse society.



Status and challenges

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The museum sector extends the full range from professionally run museum institutions to private collections and voluntary heritage conservation groups. White Paper 49 (2008-2009) *Tomorrow's museums – management, research, outreach, renewal* states that “[i]t is an overreaching goal for museums to reflect the society they are part of. Museums are important beacons in a modern democracy and should play an active role in society.” This principle is especially relevant to the first objective for museums in the archives, libraries and museums plan for Bergen 2012–2021: “The museums should bring together the entire population with programming that reflects their needs and identity.” To achieve this, the plan highlights the need for participation in the sense that “everyone in Bergen should be active co-owners of the city’s archives, libraries and museums.” As well as being audiences, the ambition is for the public to feel a sense of ownership and to be able to help develop the institutions and organisations.

The challenges arising from this objective and how to solve them will vary. Generally speaking, the museum sector should increasingly acknowledge diversity in both past and present and ensure that the institutions are accessible to everyone and are seen as inclusive meeting places. Continued reflection is needed on which stories to tell, how to position them within a greater whole, and how to best reach out to the public.

The goal of ensuring that everyone has access to, feels ownership of and can participate in a varied range of museum services poses a challenge to both content production and accessibility. Our cultural monuments are where they are, and in some cases it will be difficult to provide universal access to everyone everywhere. Boarding a heritage

vessel or ascending the steps to the top of the Rosenkrantz tower are examples of such challenges. The museum sector should therefore seek to offer a minimum of their services in alternative settings or by combining them with other communication channels such as digital solutions. In most cases this will be a matter of cost, in other instances it is more about attitudes and choices. When the Hanseatic Museum reopens in a few years' time, only parts of the building will have universal access. However, the overarching goal is for its Hanseatic storytelling to satisfy every visitor's need to experience and learn about history.

Voluntary heritage conservation groups are often affiliated to a particular cultural monument, local history or type of intangible cultural heritage. These are predominantly pieces of traditional Norwegian cultural heritage. The bar to getting involved in these organisations can therefore be high for people of a different ethnic and cultural background unless they take a particular interest in the subject. Yet many of the groups still hold regular family events with outreach activities for children which could serve as entry points to the field.

It is important to encourage the voluntary heritage conservation sector to increase its focus on diversity and participation. Many heritage conservation groups struggle with recruitment. Combined with often inadequate documentation of many older crafts techniques, this means part of our cultural heritage could disappear. It is therefore important to also increase focus on knowledge transfer. Some specialised heritage conservation groups are highly male-dominated, while women may be in the majority in others. As such, they reflect interest in the field, but not necessarily wider society. The membership of voluntary heritage conservation groups is also ageing, and there is often limited recruitment of

younger members. This is confirmed in a report by students from the University of Bergen who were undertaking work experience at the City of Bergen's department for arts and culture development in spring 2020 which looks at recruitment and knowledge transfer in the voluntary heritage conservation sector. Tangible and intangible cultural heritage must be seen in context, including when it comes to recruitment. Conservation is not merely about physical preservation but also about retaining knowledge and keeping the craft forms alive through practice. Norway signed up to the Unesco Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2007. Intangible heritage is often referred to as practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as associated objects and cultural spaces. Oral history is another field where private individuals make a considerable and valuable contribution both as informants and as collectors, especially in the areas of local history, corporate/vocational history, coastal culture, ship preservation and genealogy. Bergen has a strong oral culture and oral history, including the organisation Memoar, and there is considerable activity in the voluntary sector. The field takes an interest in subjective experiences of and stories about events and changes in society. Allowing a variety of voices to contribute to such oral storytelling is important in order to create a collective identity and sense of belonging amongst the people of Bergen.

Participation and diversity are linked to human rights and democracy, and learning from history can be a valuable, mind-changing process. One example of a heritage conservation group trying to do just that is Stiftelsen Espeland Fangeleir og Gestapohuset at Veiten 3. The organisation is seeking to create a compact, independent and cross-disciplinary research community specialising in didactics around human dignity, human rights, democratisation and

active citizenship in schools while actively using our cultural heritage as an historical backdrop. The Rafto Foundation is already involved in this process and is responsible for the nationwide DEMBRA programme in Western Norway. By creating a permanent structure around these programmes and conducting visits to cultural heritage sites as part of the Cultural Schoolbag initiative, the field will be made more accessible to children and young people.

Museums are tasked with providing relevance and communicating knowledge and stories that give meaning to people today and in the future by presenting society as it is and used to be. Culture and history concern us all, including those people who currently do not make use of the museums' services. Knowledge of history and cultural understanding also provide important tools to be able to create a better society and put the modern day and our challenges in perspective while showing respect for each other. Aspects of the museum sector must therefore reflect the complexities of our time better than they do today. The sector must also ensure that it identifies and communicates historical diversity. Narrow interpretations of the past must be challenged. Museums will face new challenges when opening up to new groups and stories. New ways of involving a diverse audience with participation as an element in their outreach work can result in improved quality and a greater sense of ownership.

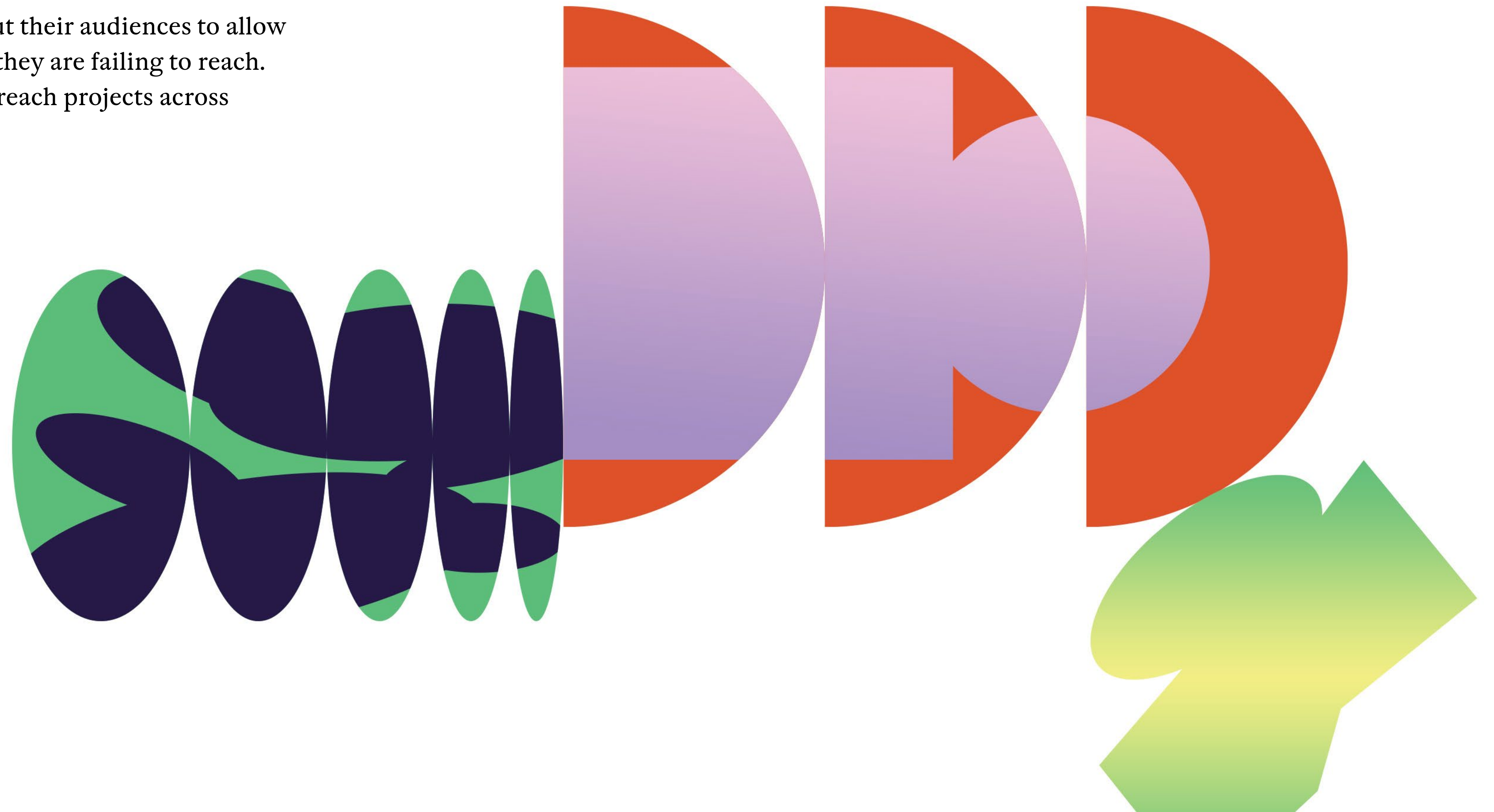
In order to implement the diversity perspective in all aspects of the museums' activities, these efforts must not be limited to individual projects, however. In 2017 the Norges Museumsforbund was awarded a NOK 3 million grant by Sparebankstiftelsen DNB for its *Inclusive Museums* project. The intention was to enable applicants to carry out small or large inclusion projects, to strengthen or further develop programmes already in existence, or to develop brand

new schemes. The Vestnorsk Utvandringscenter and KODE were two of the museums awarded funding, and many of the supported projects involved varying degrees of co-production, participation, communication and flexibility. Many of them reference the dialogue method, which is described as a kind of transfer of power in the sense that the target groups for the exhibitions, activities or programming are invited to join the projects at an early stage and become active co-creators. This method holds further potential for making exhibitions relevant and representative.

The doctoral thesis *Changing Practices: A Qualitative Study of Drivers for Change in Norwegian Museums and Archives* (Åshild Andrea Brekke, 2018) investigates why programmes that promote “new” thinking around the civic role of our museums only take place at project level. What is preventing museums from adopting and institutionalising new ideas in their institutional practices? The thesis concludes that despite clear guidance in official museum policy, there is little to suggest that the main focus of Norwegian museums is shifting.

Issues that must be addressed when integrating the diversity perspective across all aspects of the museum sector are linked to the make-up of the museums' boards, who defines the stories being told, and which expertise is requested when making appointments. We must also ask whether the general public – and volunteers affiliated to the institution – feel a sense of ownership of the institution, what development opportunities exist, and whether the museum sector is encouraging public debate about what and whom the institutions are and should be for. All parts of the museum sector must acquire awareness around these issues, and relevant development initiatives must be launched.

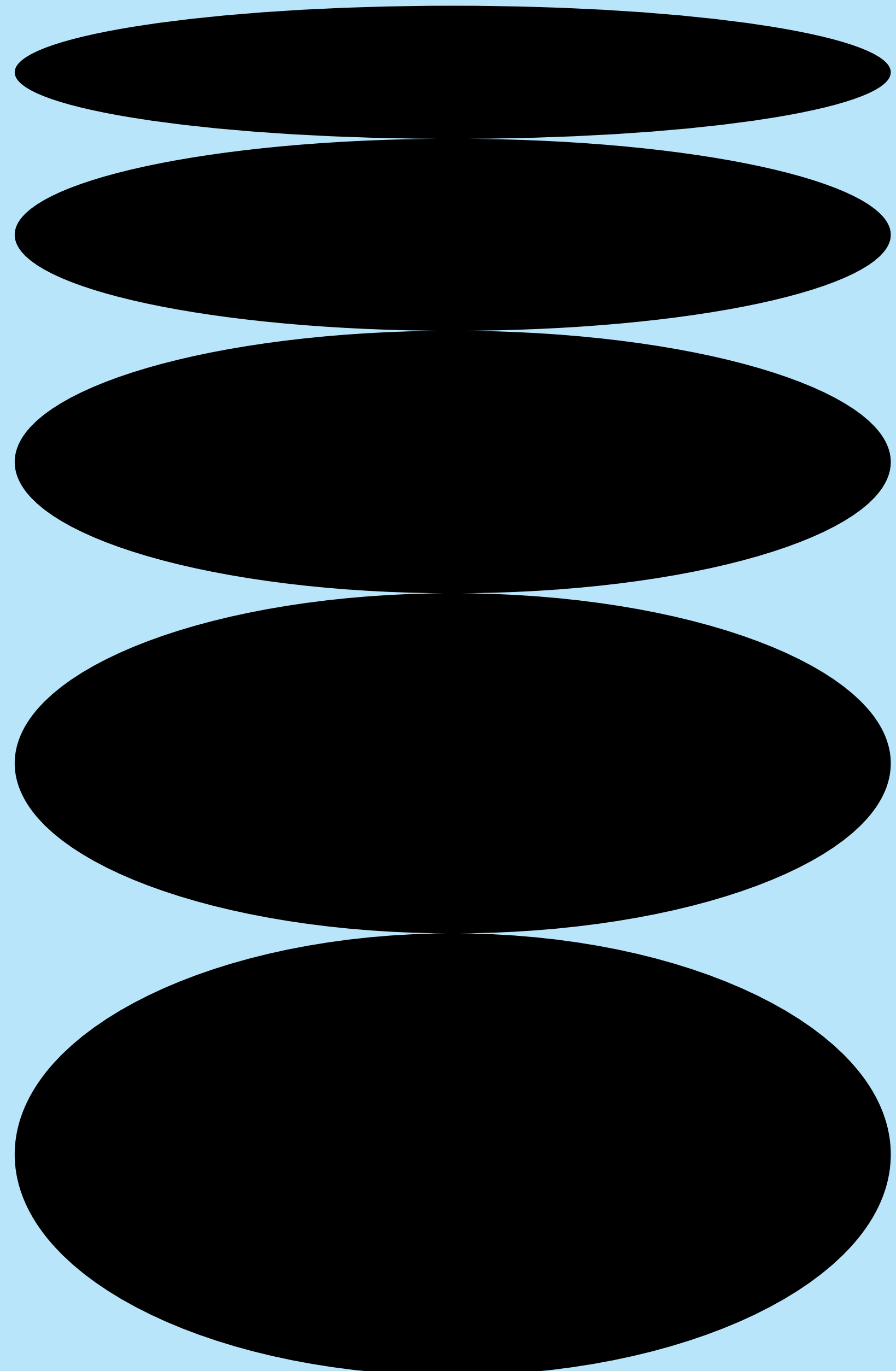
An important part of the museum sector’s civic mandate is to enable and encourage a diversity of opinions and expressions. As important meeting places in the community, museums can set the agenda by highlighting different historical perspectives and by challenging attitudes amongst themselves and others. As well as striving for quality, authenticity and relevance, museums should also ensure and promote critical thinking and learning. Museums should not merely be stewards and communicators of history; they should also be proactive contributors in the present. New ways of working, such as adopting new technologies, can help the institutions reach a bigger audience but also new user groups. Several museums are reporting that they need to learn more about their audiences to allow them to identify which audience segments they are failing to reach. Digital tools can also enable innovative outreach projects across institutions and disciplines.



Measures

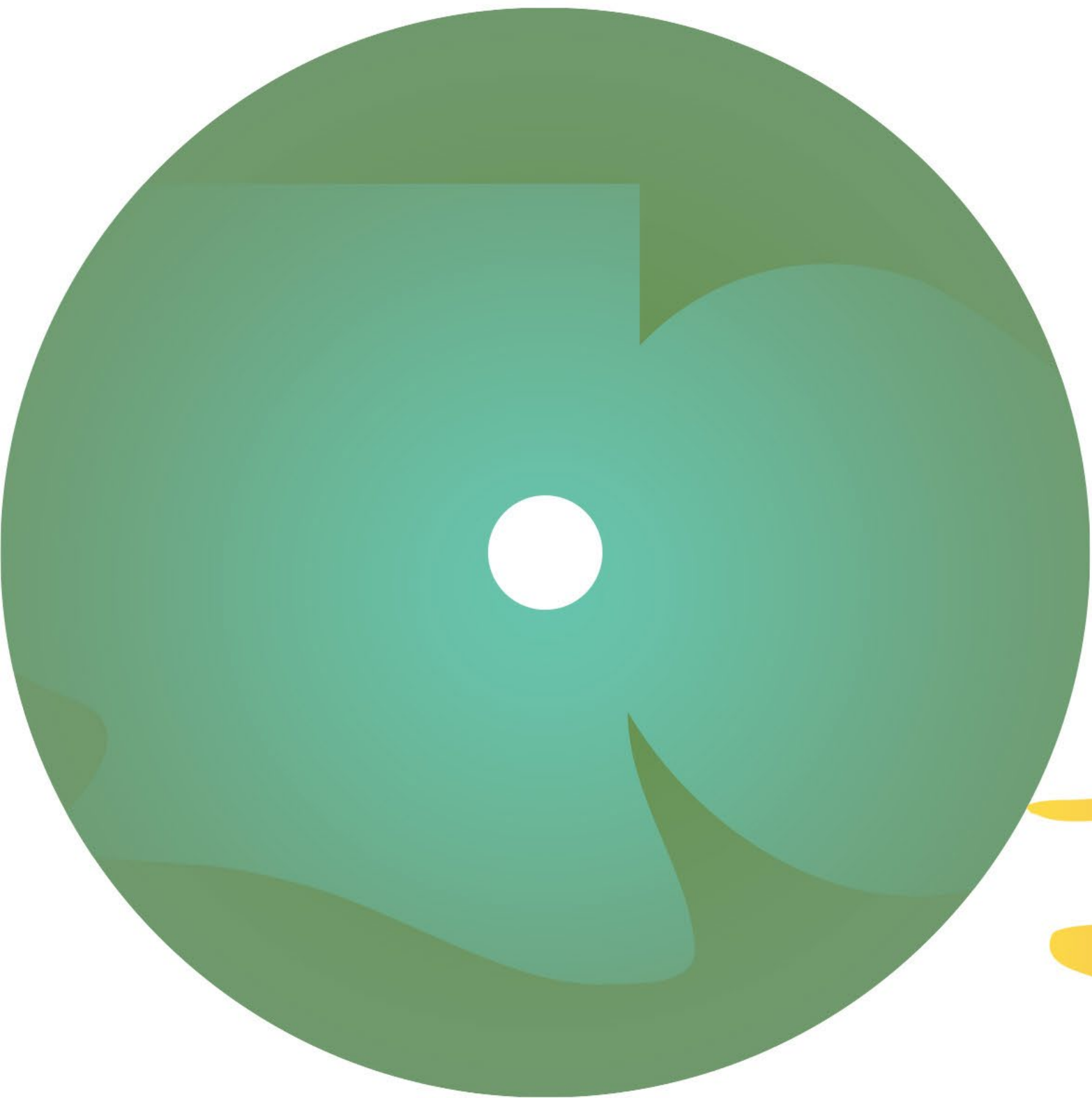
The following measures will be implemented in addition to the general measures during the plan period:

- Require museums to have in place plans to realise exhibitions and permanent collections for different audience groups beyond their core audiences
- Require museums to ensure that the diversity perspective is considered when recruiting volunteers
- Require the sector to attempt to recruit from all communities when seeking to transfer knowledge of tangible and intangible cultural heritage
- Enable criticism of exhibitions and outreach in the museum and heritage conservation sector through targeted information campaigns around the local authority's criticism and theory funding scheme
- Encourage all organisations to obtain the Balansemerket label





Amateur arts



Subsidiary goals

The wide range of amateur arts organisations should serve to encourage activity and a sense of community for all people of Bergen.

Status and challenges

The voluntary arts sector is often described as the glue that holds local communities together. Participation in or experience of the arts encourages public engagement and create new and bigger communities locally. A forward-looking local community has qualities that invite individuals and groups to participate in the community at various levels.

It is important for our perceived quality of life that every citizen feels a sense of belonging, recognition, achievement and development. Participation in small and large communities therefore plays an important role. Participation is an obvious decision for many, while others find it more difficult. If we can come to understand what makes it difficult, and then do something about it, we will be better placed to give everyone the same opportunities to participate. Recent research shows that many people do not know how to participate in their local community. More people still have never participated in any form of local voluntary work, even though they wish to get involved in their local community. Broad participation and dialogue strengthen and develop local democracy. Open processes should help create good solutions, promote creativity and engagement and ensure that all participants get a say.

The arts are a shared arena which people can unite around regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, disability and social background.

The amateur arts unite people around a common interest where they create their own experiences. There is almost no limit to the number of genres which can be placed under the umbrella of amateur culture. Music, dance, song, theatre, games clusters, role-playing, open social spaces and public workshops are but some of the genres and initiatives that fall within the amateur arts. Folk music and folk dance, crafts and intangible cultural heritage are equally important disciplines. Bergen is home to a rich and vibrant amateur arts scene which provides an important setting for education and learning.

Bergen should be a city where there is room for diversity, where everyone can find a space for their interests, and where its people can work together and use their creativity to make Bergen the kind of city they want to live in. A forward-looking local community has qualities that invite individuals and groups to participate in the community at various levels. To build expertise, develop talent and generate engagement, it is important to start early and think long-term. Bergen's undergrowth of new voices and its creative and talented children and young people are the very foundation of the city of Bergen's continued development and growth. Many of the measures described in *the amateur arts plan for Bergen 2018–2027* are aimed at schools and after-school programmes where every child in Bergen can participate. By investing in arts and culture in schools and after-school programmes, all children and young people will be able to develop both as creative human beings and as consumers of culture.

Amateur arts organisations for adults and older people are important factors in participation and often provide a gradual transition to the professional arts scene in Bergen. Like the amateur arts sector in Bergen in general, organisations whose members are aged 26 and over are very much concerned with quality. We note

that organisations are frequent employers of professional musicians, directors, conductors and others. Amateur arts organisations are thus helping to make Bergen a rich and diverse city in which to live and work for professional artists.

The main objective of *the amateur arts plan for Bergen 2018–2027* is that: “Bergen should be a world-leader in the amateur arts with robust creative communities based on quality, skills, participation and engagement.” A survey of participants in the amateur arts has found that around 11% of Bergen’s population is involved in some form of regular cultural activity organised by voluntary groups and organisations (2016). This is an increase of 2% compared with the same survey in 2006. These are good figures nationally, but they also show that Bergen has much potential for even higher public participation in the arts. However, figures from the panel for families with children (2019) show that there are disparities in participation across Bergen’s eight local districts, with the most central districts scoring the highest. The City of Bergen operates funding schemes to help realise ideas and cultural activities created by the public and which will strengthen the identities of local communities. Through dialogue and interaction with umbrella organisations, local groups and individuals, the local authority is looking to discuss the development of programmes, projects and measures to recruit more people to the amateur arts.

In order to reach the goals set out in the amateur arts plan, which puts participation at the centre, it is essential that the amateur arts are seen to be accessible to all groups irrespective of where they live and regardless of socio-economic factors. A recurring challenge in many parts of the amateur arts is that many services, activities, courses etc. are seen as closed, internal and only available to a

specific community or group. When groups, neighbourhoods or local communities have a tradition for participating in specific activities, recruitment from the same demographic will only continue. Instilling a sense of ownership of activities, groups and organisations would be ideal, but this must be balanced against accessibility. If potential new participants feel that the services are aimed at an existing group that they are not part of, it may prevent new recruitment.

In such situations it is important to be conscious of the language we use – how we formulate challenges, strategies and measures – and of how the dialogue plays out between representatives of the local authority, organisers and participants in the amateur arts. While it is important to avoid categorising people in ways that can seem stigmatising, a methodical effort to reach out to specific groups or areas is sometimes necessary in order to enable and encourage increased participation.

Bergen has one of Norway’s most vibrant brass and wind band scenes, and the Norges Musikkorps Forbund – the biggest arts organisation for children and young people in the country – has a number of active members in the city. NMF Hordaland wishes to include people of all ages in its activities. The *Brasslek* project is an introduction to brass music for schools and kindergartens which lets the children choose an instrument and receive continued instrument and band tuition. *VinterPULS* is a free entry-level programme taking place in the winter holidays for children in primary and lower secondary schools where they are invited to put together a performance with rhythm, dance and music from all over the world. The event is open to all children and young people, both with and without band experience, and features coaches from the South African Field Band Foundation. The organisation is planning

to expand the programme with *FeriePULS* for children, young people and parents who are unable to go on holiday. *HelgePULS* is a continuation of *VinterPULS*, but in a smaller format. The programme is free of charge and aimed at children aged 8–16 with or without band experience. One key focus of the recruitment process is on children from families on permanently low incomes, children from language minority backgrounds, and children who feel excluded for other reasons. The Norges Musikkorps Forbund is also planning to launch a band course under the auspices of the Bergen adult education service. A band project for older people is also in the planning and will see both younger and older generations come together. School bands in Bergen will be invited to apply to join the project. Professional musicians will also be part of the project, and the aim is to involve several of the city’s districts. The aim of these programmes is to include children, young people and adults in the band movement and to encourage a sense of solidarity, trust and belonging in the local community amongst immigrants and the wider public. The idea is to offer more information about Norwegian society and Norwegian cultural traditions, to provide immigrants with skills for work or education, and to give immigrants a gateway to Norwegian society through activities that can generate lasting connections and inclusion. “Bergen Sings” and participation in the project “Singing Municipalities” are other examples of initiatives that have done much to increase participation amongst different groups, resulting in greater diversity in the genre. For example, a multi-ethnic choir was established in Møhlenpris as part of the project.

One of the measures detailed in *the amateur arts plan for Bergen 2018–2027* is the setting up of public workshops in all of the city’s districts. Public workshops are communal spaces which seek

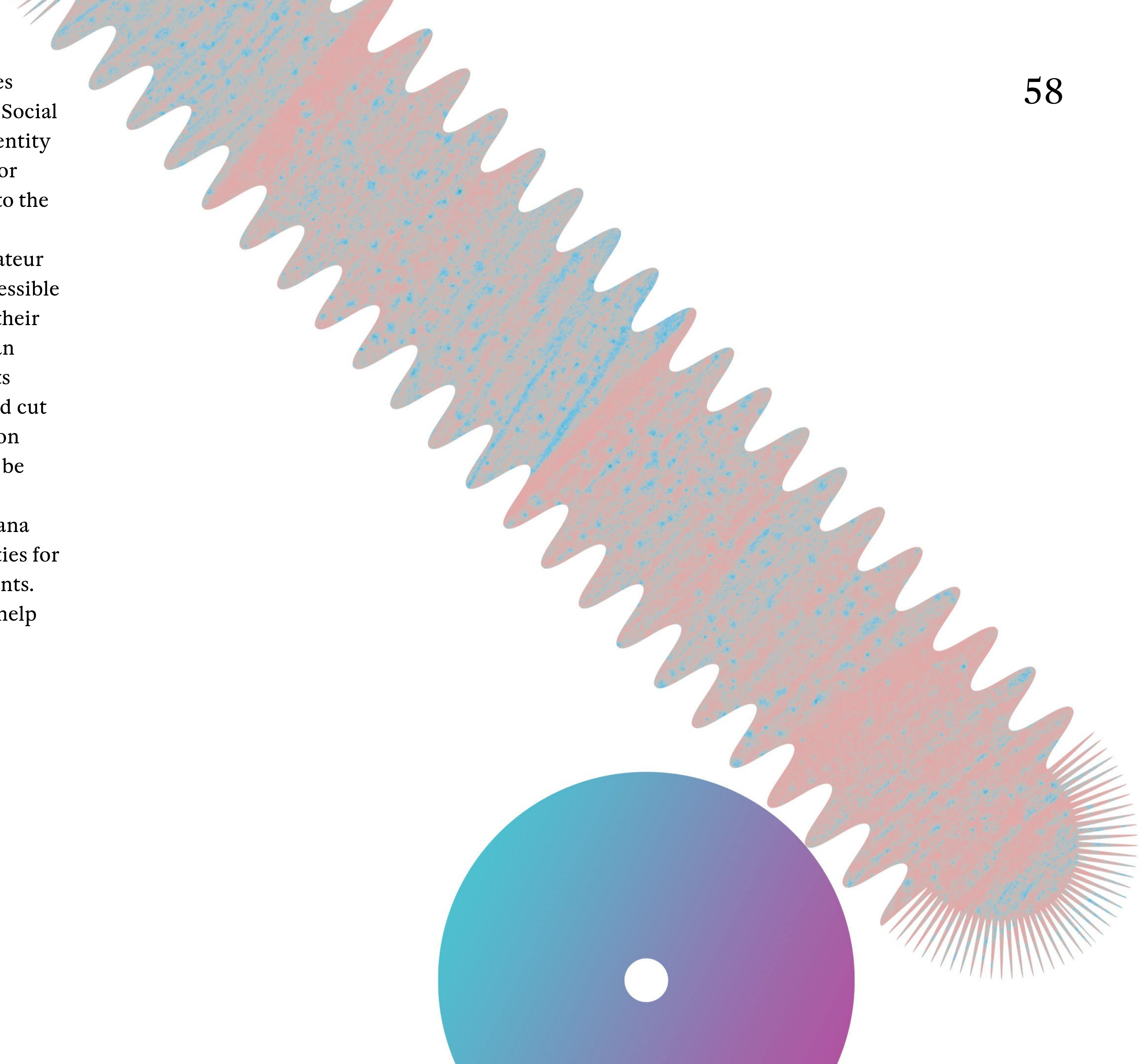
to bring together a network of creative individuals, organisations, companies etc. in strong communities. The workshops are also informal meeting places where people can learn, make contacts and engage in creative activity with others across cultures, disabilities, genders, ages and organisations. Such sharing projects are often developed from the grass roots up, frequently without much official involvement. The authorities can still play a key role in allowing socially beneficial sharing projects to develop and gain even broader support. Particularly interesting in a city with short distances is the scope for sharing tools, equipment, spaces and buildings. There is potential in further developing schools to become meeting places for the local community and in looking at what is needed in terms of spatial design to create public workshops in schools.

Bergen’s amateur arts council will be able to provide useful information to its more than 350 member organisations on how to succeed with recruiting people from different social backgrounds. The council can also encourage and develop collaborations, create alliances and share experiences across genres between “local” and “international” amateur arts organisations.

An amateur arts guide on the topic of *Diversity and Participation* available in multiple languages would be highly useful to most amateur arts organisations. A guide with information, tips and advice to help increase the proportion of members from different social and ethnic backgrounds in the amateur arts would make a positive contribution to new recruitment. Another known fact is that financial circumstances can be a barrier to participation. Many umbrella organisations are well aware of this and are trying out different pricing models and methods to ensure access for all.

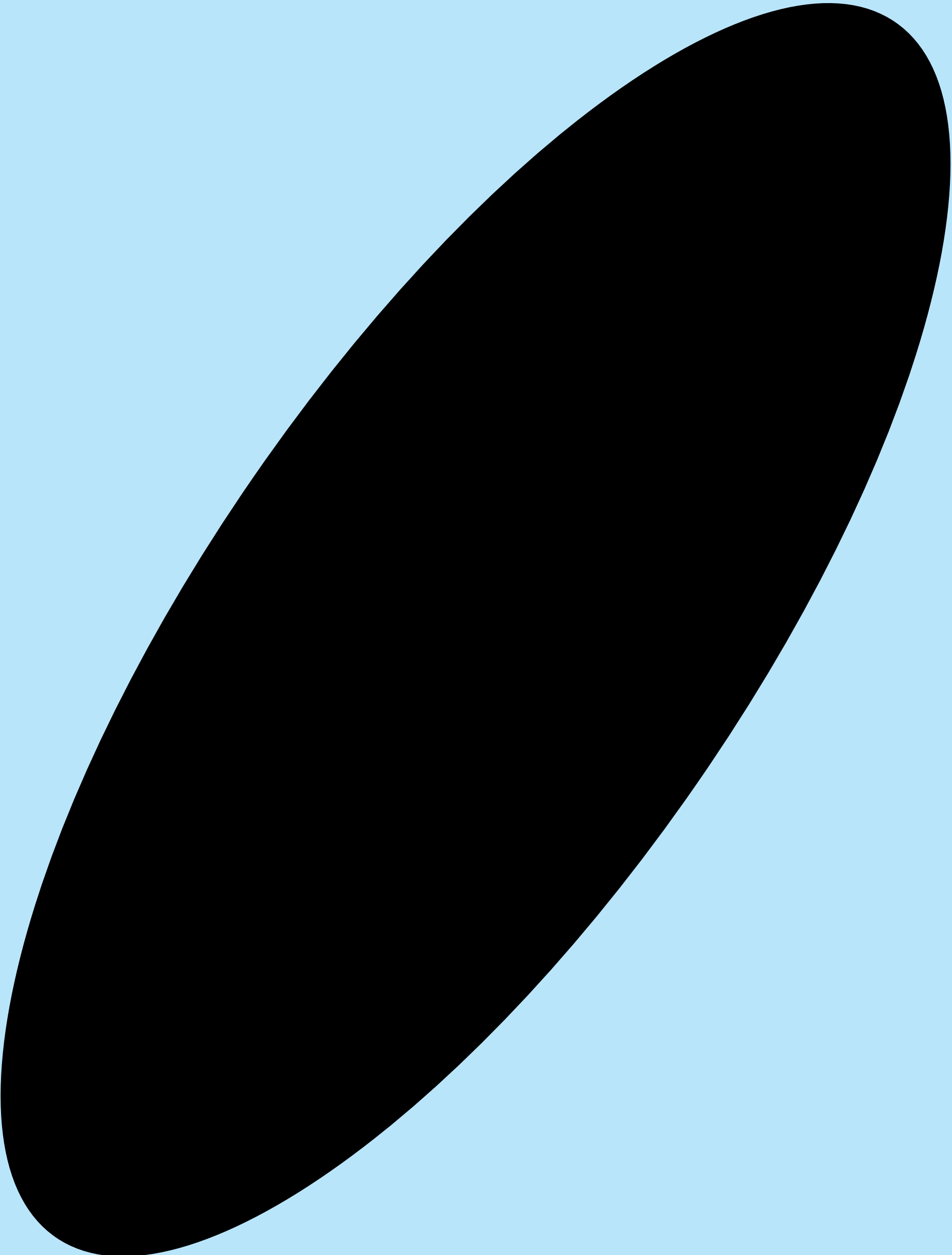
The social element of the municipal master plan describes densification of city districts and development of local centres. Social and cultural meeting places are crucial to developing a local identity in this process. This means highlighting the arts sector's need for premises and shared spaces as well as their physical proximity to the users of the services.

Production and exhibition venues are an issue for all amateur arts organisations. It is a stated aim for arts centres to be as accessible as possible and for voluntary arts providers to be supported in their efforts. To put Bergen's numerous voluntary organisations on an equal footing, the city government wants to allow voluntary arts organisations to use municipal arts venues rent-free. This would cut costs, which in turn aids increased participation. NOK 1.7 million was earmarked for this purpose in 2020, and the allocation will be continued. New arts centres have been in the pipeline in Åsane and Fyllingsdalen in recent years along with an expansion of Fana Kulturhus. This will give the districts much-wanted opportunities for increasing participation amongst even more of the city's residents. The new arts centre in Åsane opened in autumn 2020 and will help increase participation in the arts amongst the local population.



The following measures will be implemented in addition to the general measures during the plan period:

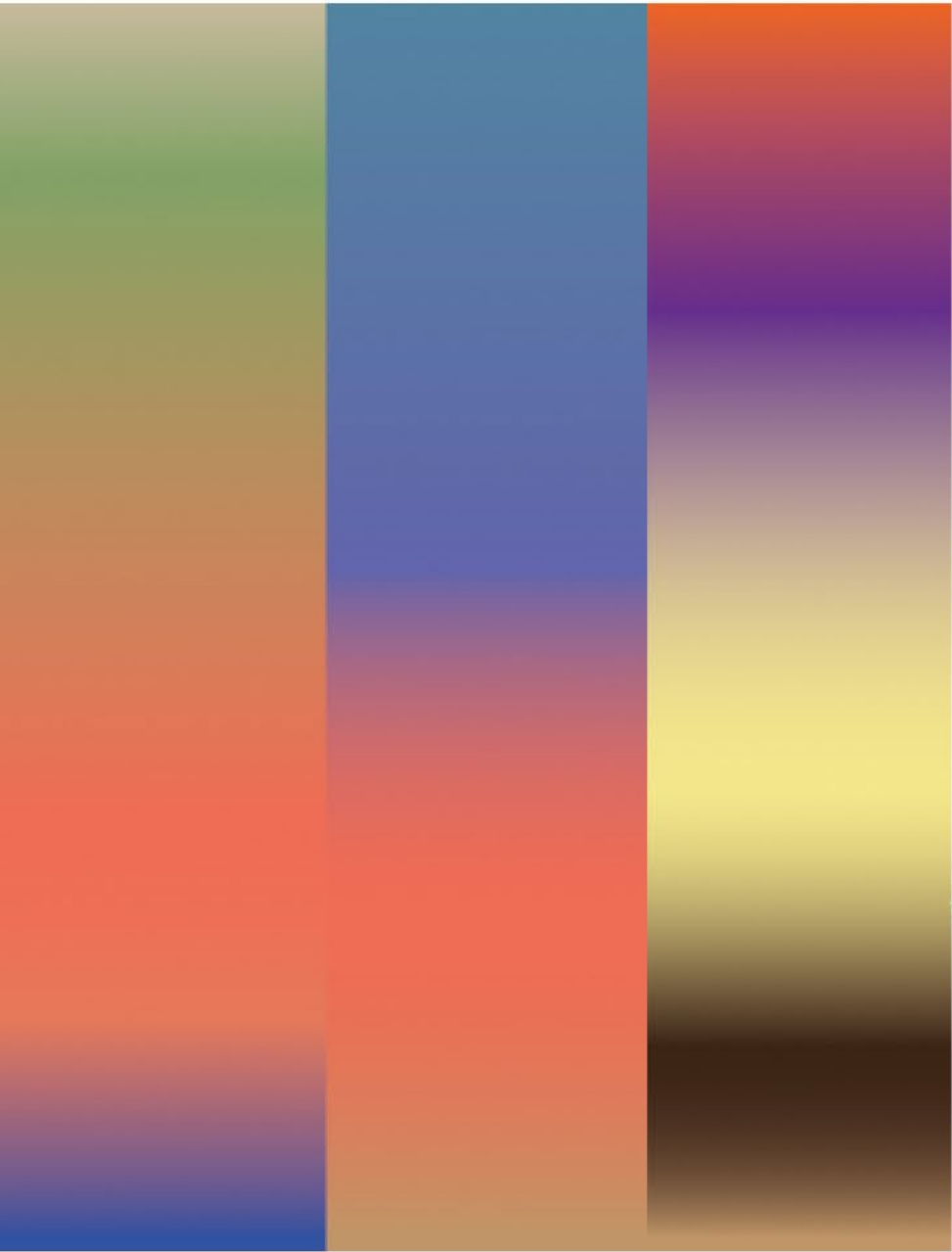
- ➔ Increase allocations to the public workshops programme in every city district and make special equipment or resources available to borrow in order to meet the needs of different groups of participants
- ➔ Encourage diverse representation on boards, panels and committees in the amateur arts sector and regularly facilitate seminars, courses and other skills development initiatives around diversity in local communities
- ➔ Draw up a guide for the amateur arts on the topic of *Diversity and Participation* for use by amateur arts organisations
- ➔ Encourage all organisations to obtain the Balansemerket label





4.1.3

Unit for Culture and Participation – municipal arts provision



Subsidiary goals

The people of Bergen should live in an active and inclusive local community which enables solidarity across social and cultural groups. They should be recognised as active citizens who create solutions together with public and private entities in the local community through debate, dialogue and participation.

Status and challenges

The authorities should facilitate activities which create solidarity across social and cultural groups. Co-operation can enable more people to participate in small and large groups and encourage solidarity in the local community. Meeting places that attract residents to join in cultural activities can help improve social relations and networks. Meeting places provide a framework for social and cultural interaction between people who do or do not know each other. Municipal arts provision in the local community includes institutions overseen by the City of Bergen's Unit for Culture and Participation such as the work taking place at the local arts offices, the activity team, Bergen municipal arts school and the Children's Culture Centre.

Research shows that active and inclusive local communities have a positive impact on children and young people's development, on physical and mental health, on increased participation in the community, and on mitigating social inequalities. Such local communities are socially sustainable. People with different backgrounds, resources and challenges must be given equal opportunities to participate in society, join social and cultural communities and experience a sense of achievement and development. The City of Bergen must enable people of all ages and from different social and cultural backgrounds to actively voice their opinions and participate in cultural activities.

Moving outside their comfort zone can be challenging enough even for arts providers but also for audiences, neighbours and the city's population in general. Municipal arts venues play a key role in creating meeting points and welcoming different groups, including minorities, children and older people. It is also important to exploit the role played by schools in the communities as arts venues and partners in this process.

Strategies

Municipal arts provision should reflect our diverse society and ensure increased participation and diversity through the following strategies:

- Enable a variety of voices to express themselves through art and culture in different settings
- Recognise diversity as a prerequisite for increased innovation and quality as reflected in the organisation's goals, recruitment processes, provision and outreach
- Share knowledge that enables under-represented groups to participate in important conversations in society
- Initiate an open dialogue on content development that is relevant to a diverse society
- Create safe, accessible and inclusive spaces for participation





Unit for Culture and
Participation – local arts activities

Subsidiary goals

The people of Bergen should live in active and inclusive local communities where there is solidarity across social and cultural groups. They should be active citizens who create solutions together with public and private entities in the local community through debate, dialogue and participation.

Status and challenges

The two local arts offices play an important role as facilitators and motivators of participation in arts activities and in society more broadly. They should serve as a hub for people in the local community and be open for everyone to seek help, advice and guidance on how to maintain active lives. Personal face-to-face meetings are an important way of building a vibrant arts scene and city districts. Through meaningful meetings, observation and active participation, the arts offices represent the local authority in the community. They run local arts centres, which are important venues for the arts scene as well as social meeting places that boost diversity in the city's districts.

Inclusive provision

The authorities have a duty to highlight how diverse our communities are. There is significant potential in increasing diversity and participation in events such as Kulturdagene, Fun Palaces, local festivals etc. These events and meeting places are good arenas for participation and for systematically introducing “each other to each other” in an informal setting. This is an important step in creating a sense of identity in the various local communities. Promoting a local community’s qualities and activities can instil pride and boost its reputation. Using arts and culture when communicating with residents should be a priority in order to increase participation in general. Using arts and culture to communicate can also encourage engagement and innovation.

The Unit for Culture and Participation, schools and local development initiatives continue to work well across different municipal departments in order to meet different needs and create varied provision in the city’s districts. Rothaugen school and the Unit for Culture and Participation are now working together on a pilot project to develop a better model for the partnership. There is a shared ambition to see children and young people in a holistic perspective – both at and outside school. In the short term it has proved beneficial to all parties to create provision for young people immediately after school as the afternoon transitions into their own leisure time. Homework help provided by the school will therefore be integrated with a youth club which offers cookery as part of its services.

One important levelling measure for increasing participation amongst more of the city’s residents is the Activity Card, which began as a trial scheme in autumn 2016. The aim of the card is to enable

children and young people aged 0–17 from low-income families to participate in a wide range of interesting and relevant activities and arts events just like their peers. The card is designed to prevent income-based exclusion from important local arenas, thus promoting integration and participation in a longer-term perspective. In practice, the card provides free admission to a number of activities and experiences for the cardholder and one companion. To ensure an even greater reach, there is now information about the card available in Norwegian, English, Arabic, Tigrinya and Congo Swahili. The Activity Card will also be digitalised both in order to find a more flexible solution for the users and to benefit the providers offering cultural content through the card.

Barnelørdag is a Saturday theatre programme for kids operating in all of Bergen’s districts. Ten theatres in all eight districts are inviting families with children to attend children’s theatre productions and concerts of a high quality. Barnelørdag became free in 2020, allowing all families to visit the theatre irrespective of their household income, and demand for the programme is increasing.

“Kunst, Kultur og Psykisk Helse” is a citywide arts, culture and mental health programme which works with professional artists from different disciplines to offer activities, participation and experiences adapted for people with mental health issues. KKPH focuses on the participants’ interests, resources and abilities and is especially aimed at those who for various reasons find it difficult to attend and participate in ordinary arts events. KKPH has shown that good dialogue and preparation can significantly boost the number of people being actively creative and starting to attend open arts events. The programme is being continued.

People with learning difficulties are offered 16 specially adapted arts activities on a weekly basis. The activities cover a wide range of cultural expressions relating to dance, theatre, musical theatre, choir, band, sensory stimulation with music and leisure clubs with varied activities. To increase participation, it would be worth looking at whether to allocate additional resources to companion schemes in connection with leisure activities. A new plan for people with learning disabilities is also needed.

Information and communication

Municipal service production of arts and leisure activities for children and young people has evolved in recent years from courses on different art forms and cultural expressions involving registration, course fees and a limited number of places to open meeting places where children and young people can come and go as they please and where it is free to take part. These open schemes have shown that there are still differences between the city's districts and that registration and more "closed" events can in some instances be key to increasing participation amongst under-represented groups. At the same time, POP LAB is a very popular, free and easily accessible service delivered in local shopping centres and not requiring registration where children are invited to try out a wide range of creative activities.

This open meeting place has become an arena for cultural exchanges, and children and young people are being introduced to new cultural expressions. It all happens in a setting with highly professional adults who are flexible in their response to the children and young people's needs. Ownership, democracy and a sense of belonging amongst the users of the club are key to ensuring diversity and

increased participation. Off the back of these open arenas, performers are being recruited for local UKM young talent competitions, which are in themselves important recruitment grounds for young participants in the arts.

A broader challenge when seeking to increase participation and diversity in municipal arts provision is linked to people's awareness and knowledge of existing municipal offerings. In the future we must acquire even more experience and knowledge of the local population's needs, wishes, interests and barriers to participation. Good and up-to-date analyses are an essential tool in ensuring a targeted approach using effective methodologies. Together with ongoing knowledge-sharing within the unit, analytics play a key role in identifying and reaching people who are currently not making use of the services. The panel for families with children has provided a more exhaustive insight into participation amongst children and young people, including in areas where participation rates are low. The panel is also providing pointers as to where the efforts should be targeted.

Co-operation and participation

It can be difficult to co-operate horizontally and develop methods for including all available local resources. Participating in public conversation and debate does not come naturally to everyone. By bringing together different groups, it is possible to develop new ideas and learn more about each other. Open processes can in themselves strengthen the principle of democracy. The idea is to create platforms and meeting places where residents, organisations and the public sector can work together to identify new solutions for

the benefit of everyone. The focus here is on supporting innovative projects and initiatives driven forward by residents or others outside the public sector. The Unit for Culture and Participation will therefore facilitate innovation labs in the local community.

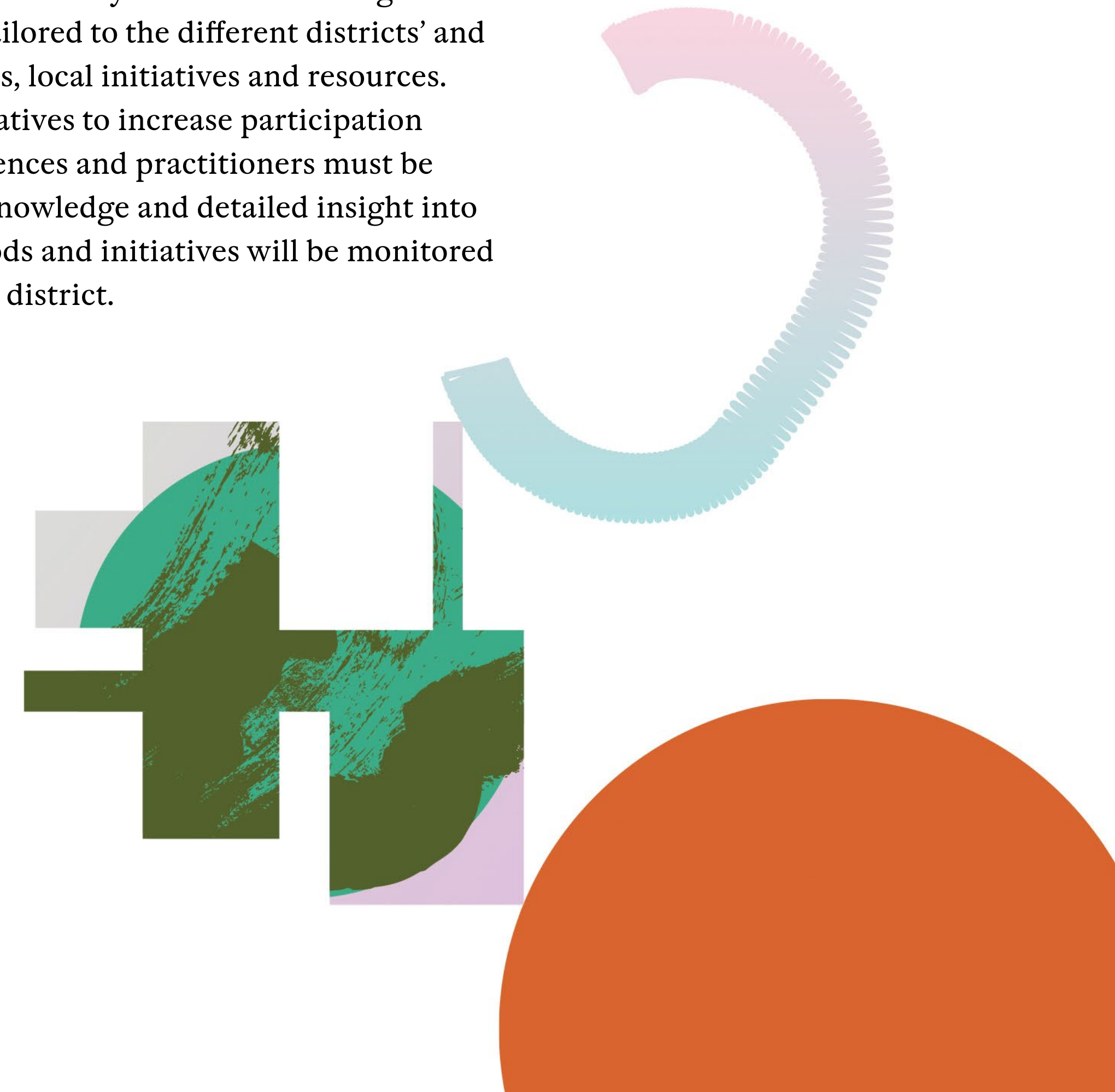
Municipal services should have a wide reach, but does the local authority have adequate knowledge of the different target groups, and do municipal arenas allow everyone to be themselves? Awareness of the use of symbols, language, open activities and exclusionary structures surrounding activities and provision must be addressed in the ongoing process. Broader awareness of recruitment policy and a commitment to booking course tutors, employees and practitioners who reflect the diversity that exists in the target groups will be important.

Limited universal access can also create barriers for people with disabilities. Good lighting, safe road access and public transport services can have a positive impact on participation amongst many groups.

Marketing and promotion is generally challenging for both municipal and private providers. One approach could be to develop marketing initiatives in partnership with under-represented groups and to focus on target group methodology. Participation and co-creation by different target groups around what they want and an open dialogue on how to work together to create content and inclusive environments for the various services are important in order to encourage a sense of ownership and engagement in the local communities. A greater degree of participation can help improve the content of the arts provision so that it is felt to be more relevant to the participants and to the public.

Bergen's districts are all different, each of them with its own identity, resources and challenges. Gaining a better understanding of which factors have an impact on community participation in

the different districts will allow us to create more inclusive local communities. An in-depth analysis is therefore needed of the parameters and potential of each district in relation to factors that impact participation in and support for both municipal arts services and activities provided by various organisations. The analysis must cover both practical challenges and more structural barriers and should take existing local initiatives into consideration. For example, grant sizes and participation fees can pose a barrier for many people living in the city's regeneration areas. Any new services and grant schemes should be flexible and tailored to the different districts' and local communities' characteristics, local initiatives and resources. Good methods and targeted initiatives to increase participation and diversity amongst both audiences and practitioners must be developed based on qualitative knowledge and detailed insight into the different districts. The methods and initiatives will be monitored through the action plans for each district.



- ➔ The City of Bergen will draw up action plans for increased participation and diversity in Bergen's different districts
- ➔ The City of Bergen will draw up an action plan for arts provision for people with learning difficulties
- ➔ The Unit for Culture and Participation will develop knowledge of and implement target group methodology in local initiatives
- ➔ The Unit for Culture and Participation will prepare a dedicated marketing strategy and ensure ongoing development of marketing tailored to different target groups
- ➔ The Unit for Culture and Participation will ensure skills development amongst staff, awareness around language, and participation training in order to create a safe setting for participation
- ➔ The Unit for Culture and Participation will help create awareness of recruitment policy in respect of different activities and roles
- ➔ The Unit for Culture and Participation will provide resources when collaborating on the implementation of the Arts Guides scheme
- ➔ The Unit for Culture and Participation will help increase the range of services available through the Activity Card
- ➔ The Unit for Culture and Participation will facilitate open innovation labs in the local community
- ➔ The City of Bergen will ensure that POP LAB and other free services are available in all city districts
- ➔ The City of Bergen will ensure that the Barnelørdag events continue to be provided



Bergen municipal arts school



Subsidiary goals

Bergen municipal arts school should be an inclusive arena where all children in the city are given the opportunity to feel joy and a sense of achievement through a varied range of programmes.

Status and challenges

The arts school is an important bridge between school and the world of arts for many children and young people. It gives them an opportunity to develop their own cultural expressions and discover their passion at an early age. The arts school's mandate involves working with different providers, including the city's amateur arts scene. The municipal arts school supports recruitment and quality development in the arts by providing tuition, training and active skills-building. The main objective of Bergen municipal arts school as stated in the action plan adopted by the city council in 2018 is for "Bergen municipal arts school [to be] at the forefront nationally and a distinctive training institution for children and young people which upholds traditions while also being innovative and experimental". The plan, which is divided into 10 planning areas, builds on the national framework plan which states that "[t]he training should aid children and young people's formative development, promote respect for other people's cultural affiliations, raise awareness of their own identity, develop their capacity for critical reflection and enable them to develop life skills". The arts school should provide a varied range of services with entry-level, core and specialised programmes.

Kulturkarusell is Bergen municipal arts school's entry-level programme and a partnership between the school and the city's

after-school (SFO) programme. The aim is to enable all children attending SFO in Bergen to participate in the programme in various ways. Kulturkarusell involves a wide-reaching collaboration with professional artists from a number of disciplines. Kulturkarusell has participated in the Europeiske Kulturbarn project (2015–17) and ArtEqual (2017–19), an Erasmus+ partnership between Bergen municipal arts school and four other nations focusing on children excluded from other activities.

A number of different nationalities are represented amongst the children enrolled in the school's core programme. Since their or their parents' origin is not recorded by the school when registering, it is difficult to say exactly how many participants there are from different ethnic backgrounds. The municipal arts school offers free places to children from households with a gross annual income of less than NOK 380,000 (2020, adjusted annually) and to children with an Activity Card. The school attracts children from most of the city's poorer districts in all disciplines and is working actively to continue its provision and roll out new services in these areas. The school supports the voluntary music sector for children and young people by offering conducting and/or coaching services to organisations such as bands, choirs and orchestras. These organisations are important arenas where children and young people in all districts can feel a sense of achievement and be included.

The municipal arts school has no entry requirements for pupils wishing to enrol on the core programme, and it welcomes pupils with special needs and different backgrounds. Coaches in all disciplines – but especially theatre and dance – are particularly concerned with letting everyone be themselves and express their real selves in front of others.

Bergen Musikkterapisenter is affiliated to the municipal arts school and offers places to children and young people of school age. It also sells services to various organisations such as kindergartens, schools, day centres and residential communities. Its services are aimed at everyone who wishes to express themselves musically and who may need more time and support to be able to develop. These pupils face various challenges and have different diagnoses. The service is adapted to both individuals and to groups through various interactions such as ensemble play, improvisation, singing, songwriting, listening to music, dance and movement, musical games and adapted music tuition. *Scenedrøm* began as an integrative musical theatre project and was initially an in-house collaboration between the music therapy centre and the specialised programme at Bergen municipal arts school. The project launched in spring 2017, and the aim was to create new cultural services and inclusive meetings for arts practitioners with and without learning disabilities through a staged production containing elements of dance, theatre, song and music. Bergen municipal arts school and the music therapy centre are continuing to work on *Scenedrøm* with a smaller and more uniform group but have concrete plans to widen the group in step with improving finances and levels of participation. The pupils at the music therapy centre have traditionally represented a wide range of nationalities, although only a few of the current cohort are from non-Norwegian ethnic backgrounds. The arts school's offerings for kindergartens, schools and day centres for people with disabilities give a wider variety of children, young people and adults from different ethnic backgrounds an opportunity to participate.

Access to subsidised courses and so-called cultural capital in childhood are a privilege not available to everyone. Bergen municipal arts school is there for all children and young people in Bergen. It gives them access to experienced and accomplished teachers in the various artistic disciplines, and they can find pleasure and feel a sense of achievement through music, dance, theatre and visual art. The school is also an important arena for recruitment and talent development with the potential to achieve an even greater reach. It would benefit the arts school if its advisory board were to include a resource person from one or more communities which are currently not users of the school's services in order to boost the board's expertise and insights.

Cutting waiting lists is another priority, as is offering alternative services to those on the waiting list to enable the children to join the school at an early age. A user-friendly, transparent application process must also be designed along with details of waiting lists and available places. Going forward, the arts school must actively promote its services to all primary school children and their parents, and one priority is to provide good information in schools and at SFO. Statistics show that girls are more likely than boys to use the school's services, and targeted efforts will therefore be made to attract more boys. Steps will also be taken to give children from multicultural backgrounds better information about the services, including information in multiple languages and in different communities. An initiative will be launched to give priority to children and young people with an Activity Card and those who fall below the income threshold even if they are currently being referred to the waiting list.

Other challenges are dropout rates amongst slightly older children and young people when standards begin to increase and competition takes priority over the joy of music-making. Services should be established to retain these young people and other new services tailored to the age group and to different city districts where participation rates are low. The bar for joining the arts school may also seem higher for slightly older children and young people who did not have the opportunity at the primary school stage. Age-appropriate entry-level services should be provided for groups of older children and young people who wish to enrol in the arts school. Good information should be provided to older pupils showing an interest in the arts about creative programmes in upper secondary and higher education as well as career opportunities. Such a targeted information drive could have a positive impact by helping to mitigate social inequalities in the professional arts sector in the long term.

- ➔ Ensure that the advisory board of the municipal arts school includes a resource person from one or more communities which are currently not active users of the school
- ➔ Reinforce the work to promote services in schools and SFO, including in partnership with the parents' working committee (FAU) in each school and specifically to communities in the city with low participation rates amongst children
- ➔ Develop a more user-friendly application process for enrolment and waiting lists for the arts school
- ➔ Strengthen the financial framework for buying and lending instruments and extend the scheme for families who cannot afford their own instruments with additional and more varied offerings
- ➔ Conduct multiple partnership projects internally at the Unit for Culture and Participation, focusing on selected districts and poorer areas, in order to strengthen co-operation between the municipal arts school, activity team, arts offices, library and arts centres
- ➔ Develop services for young people that reflect their cultural interests and level of ability
- ➔ Continue to prioritise children and young people with an Activity Card and those who fall below the income threshold
- ➔ Strengthen collaboration with the health service and the child and adolescent psychiatry outpatients departments (BUP) for priority admission of children and young people with mental health issues
- ➔ Strengthen the music therapy section
- ➔ Inform older pupils about the opportunity for upper secondary and higher education as well as career opportunities in the arts
- ➔ Initiate collaboration with the Røst project and the film accelerator company BAKOM on creating arenas for including under-represented groups



Children's Culture Centre

Subsidiary goals

The Children's Culture Centre should be an inclusive multi-disciplinary activity centre offering entry-level services of a high artistic quality to everyone.

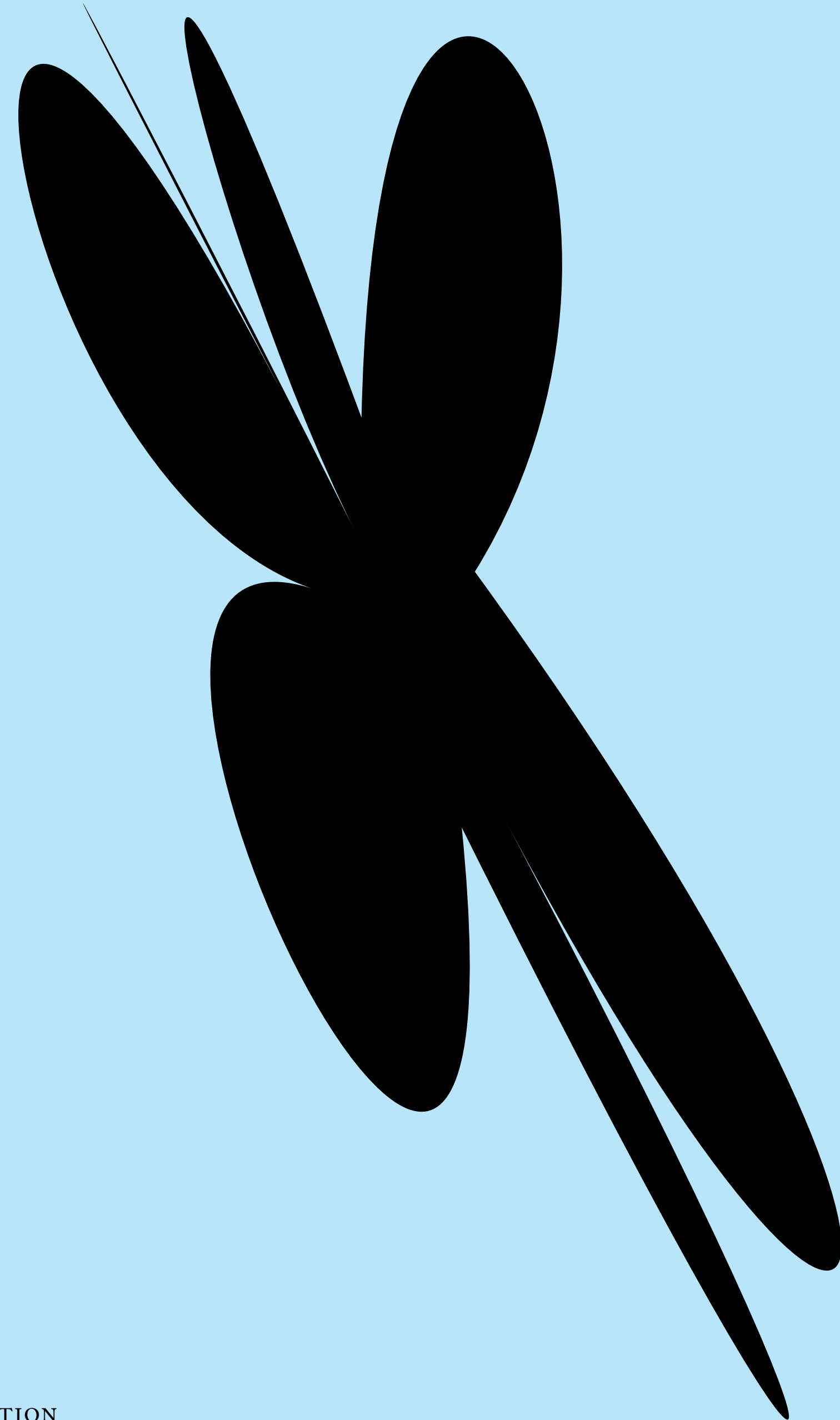
Status and challenges

Located in central Bergen, the Children's Culture Centre is already welcoming diverse audiences with visitors coming from every part of the city. It is a multi-disciplinary activity centre offering entry-level services to all social groups. Its artistic programmes are usually subject to an advisory age limit set by the participating artists or outreach workers, but they are in principle available to everyone.

Although the services provided by the Children's Culture Centre are open and designed for the wider public irrespective of background, there is still potential for bringing its unique services to even more people. To improve recruitment amongst audience groups which currently rarely use its services, the Unit for Culture and Participation will organise partnership projects in order to boost the relevance of the centre's services and provide targeted information about its activities. The Children's Culture Centre is also an important provider of high-quality programmes to the city's kindergartens. Kindergarten is the first communal arena for all children in Bergen. In line with the City of Bergen's arts outreach plan for children and young people, the Children's Culture Centre should offer free arts activities to all kindergartens in Bergen.

Measures

- ➔ Additional partnership projects should be conducted internally and externally in order to ensure equitable provision with relevant content for all groups in the community
- ➔ The Children's Culture Centre should offer free arts activities to all municipal and private kindergartens in Bergen in order to reach a greater number of children irrespective of their parents' background



4.1.4 Bergen Public Library



Subsidiary goals

Bergen Public Library should be an independent meeting place for the people of Bergen and an arena for public conversation and debate.

Status and challenges

Bergen Public Library is one of Norway's most outward-looking and visible libraries with annual visitor numbers of around 1.4 million. In this day and age libraries are more than just a place to borrow books: Bergen Public Library is also a bastion of democracy, an open and inclusive arena for debate, culture and knowledge, and an important meeting place for local people. Bergen Public Library is also part of the human rights city Bergen and co-ordinates the programme for international authors seeking refuge in the city.

The main objective for libraries as described in the prevailing archives, libraries and museums plan states:

Bergen Public Library should be an inspiring source of knowledge and a literary and artistic stimulus for all parts of the population. As a non-commercial venue, the library should encourage integration, information literacy and cultural and social capital amongst the people of Bergen. Including and providing services to disadvantaged people is a priority in the plan period. Its role as a partner to numerous organisations and institutions should be developed further.

For many people, the library is an important gateway to participation in society. As well as being an open and non-commercial meeting place for people of all ages with different needs and interests, it also

offers the people of Bergen a vibrant centre for learning with a wide range of regular weekly activities and inclusive, free events.

It is an express political goal for public libraries to be easily accessible and open to everyone. Libraries should enable everyone to participate in society and have access to information and culture. They should provide public education and allow people to develop their literacy and digital skills. Access to information is key to being able to participate in the community, and it prevents inequalities in the population. When organising events, the aim is therefore to offer varied programmes which seek to engage all groups in society with different topics and activities.

According to the arts venues plan, there should be a public library in every district in Bergen. There are currently local libraries in every district with the exception of Arna and Ytrebygda, although not all of the libraries are satisfactory in terms of universal design. The main library is operating beyond full capacity, and the listed parts of the building are far from universally accessible. Better physical accommodation is therefore needed so that everyone can make use of the library's services.

Language, learning and reading

The library regularly offers various types of learning activities in close collaboration with voluntary organisations and other providers in the arts and knowledge sectors. Many projects and activities are designed to make the public more self-sufficient in terms of digital skills. Initiatives include IT cafés where young people help older people. Children and young people are an important target group for the library, and a series of concrete measures have been launched to allow children to discover the joy of reading and improve their language comprehension from an early age.

Language training is a key initiative in the city's libraries. Bergen Public Library organises weekly language cafés and reading groups for Norwegian language learners both in the main library and at the district libraries. The events are designed to bring together participants and volunteers as equals. Since the autumn of 2019 the main library has been running a pilot scheme with language cafés for young people with a greater element of games and play. The library also makes its premises available to the Red Cross for its homework help and Norwegian language training sessions.

The library also wishes to allow minority language participants to share their languages with Norwegian library users. The main library hosts a Chinese language café one evening a week run by a Chinese volunteer, and every Saturday some 20 participants attend a language café to play the board game *New Amigos*. Each board has two languages so that Norwegian speakers and minority language speakers can play together and learn each other's languages in an informal setting.

The *Språkvenn* programme launched in 2017 and has since welcomed more than 900 participants. The library matches pairs of participants who then share their languages with each other by meeting in the library or elsewhere with a little initial help from the library. This is known as tandem language learning. *Rom for Møter*, a collaboration with Vestland Innvandrerråd and the county library, aims to create good and inclusive meeting places where different groups can meet as equals, often through shared, practical interests. The programme has been extended with a new project period, which will focus on technology and gaming in the context of inclusion.

A new and more local scheme introduced in 2020 is *Språklek* at the district libraries in Loddefjord and Fana. The scheme is designed for children not enrolled in kindergarten and their parents. The sessions see two-year-olds and their parents come together for song and play with language, sounds and rhythms plus light refreshments, all rounded off with a period of informal socialising.

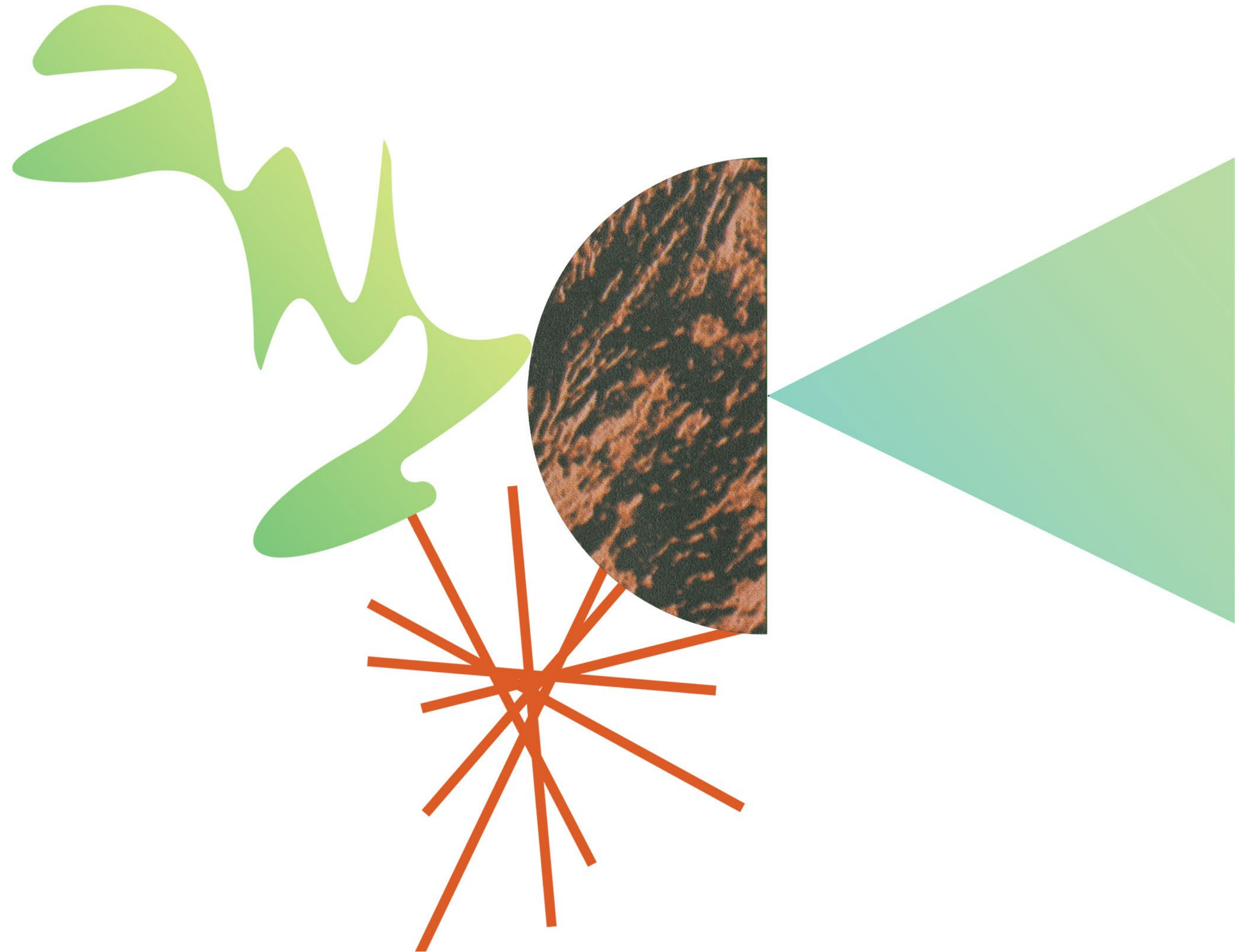
Lesefrø is an outreach project for language stimulation in kindergartens with many bilingual children. The kindergartens are given a mini-library with books in the relevant languages as well as in Norwegian, and the children are read to. Children's librarians and kindergarten teachers are working together to further develop the reading project. The project encourages early language learning, and extending it to more kindergartens should be considered, especially in regeneration areas but also in other parts of Bergen where there are many foreign language speakers.

The multilingual collection for children and adults contains books in around 40 languages. The most commonly spoken languages are given priority, e.g. Arabic and Polish. The library's children's

section has a small specialist collection of books in both Norwegian and a minority language presented in so-called “language bags” to encourage reading both in the children’s mother tongue and in Norwegian. The learning centre has a collection of dictionaries and language courses in many languages, and the library also provides access to Verdensbiblioteket.no, a free multilingual portal with e-books in Arabic, Bosnian/Croat/Serbian, Persian, Somali and Tigrinya as well as audiobooks in Arabic and Persian.

The library is also a member of Leser Søker Bok, an organisation working to improve access to literature for people who for various reasons struggle to read ordinary text. Dedicated literature groups for children, young people and adults with special needs have also been created in partnership with Dysleksi Norge. The library is also aiming for its website and digital services to be easy to use for blind and visually impaired people. The library website contains information about library services for people who require especially adapted provision to allow them to use the services.

The City of Bergen is a member of ICORN (International Cities of Refuge Network), and Bergen Public Library co-ordinates the scheme on its behalf. Every two years the city invites a new author (writer, publisher, artist) who is either a refugee or has had to leave their home country to be able to continue to express themselves. The collaborations with the authors often lead to increased contact with their respective ethnic communities in Bergen, opportunities to raise awareness of the author’s culture and homeland amongst the people of Bergen, and new events and activities that create inclusion. In 2019 the main library hosted a well visited Uigur festival for both Uigurs and the broader Norwegian public.



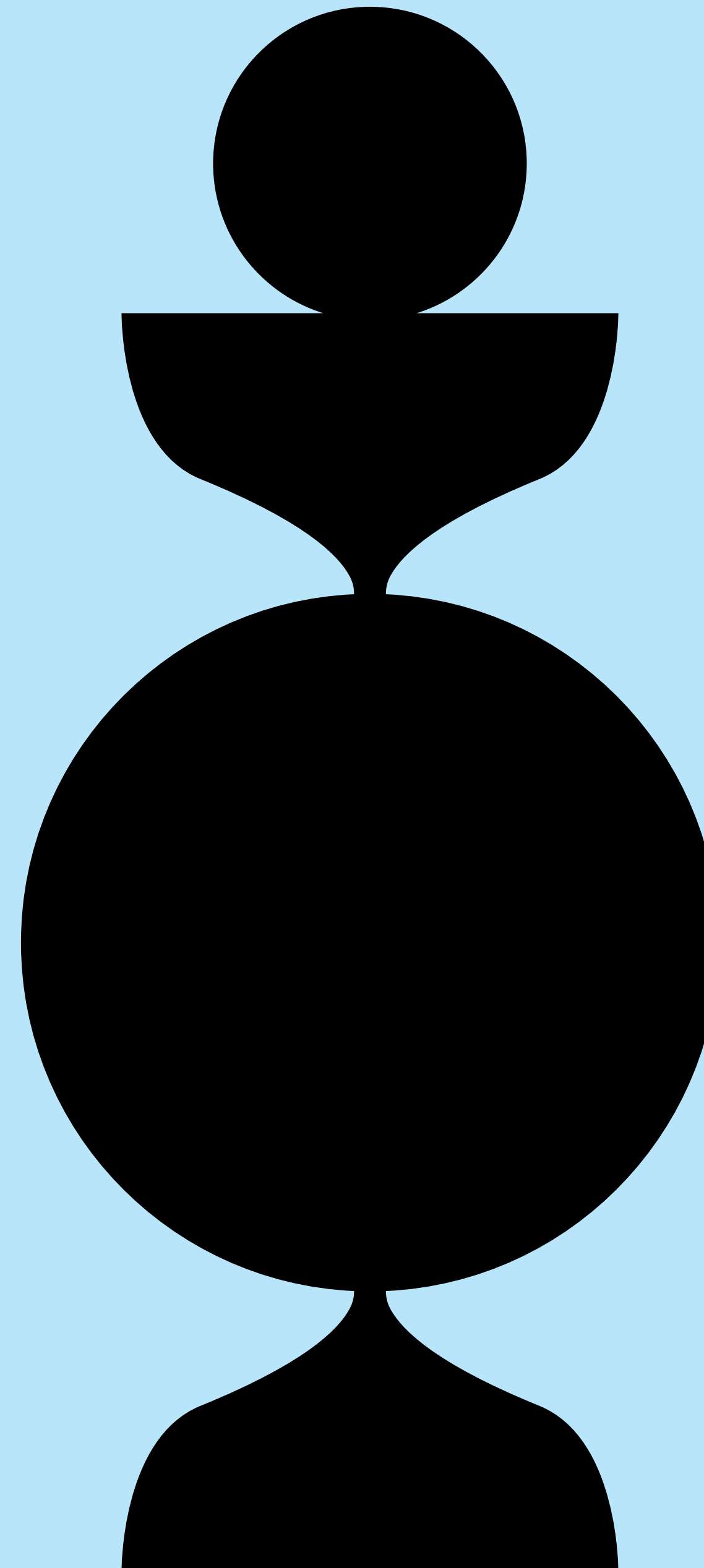
Strategy

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- Share knowledge that enables under-represented groups to participate in important conversations in society

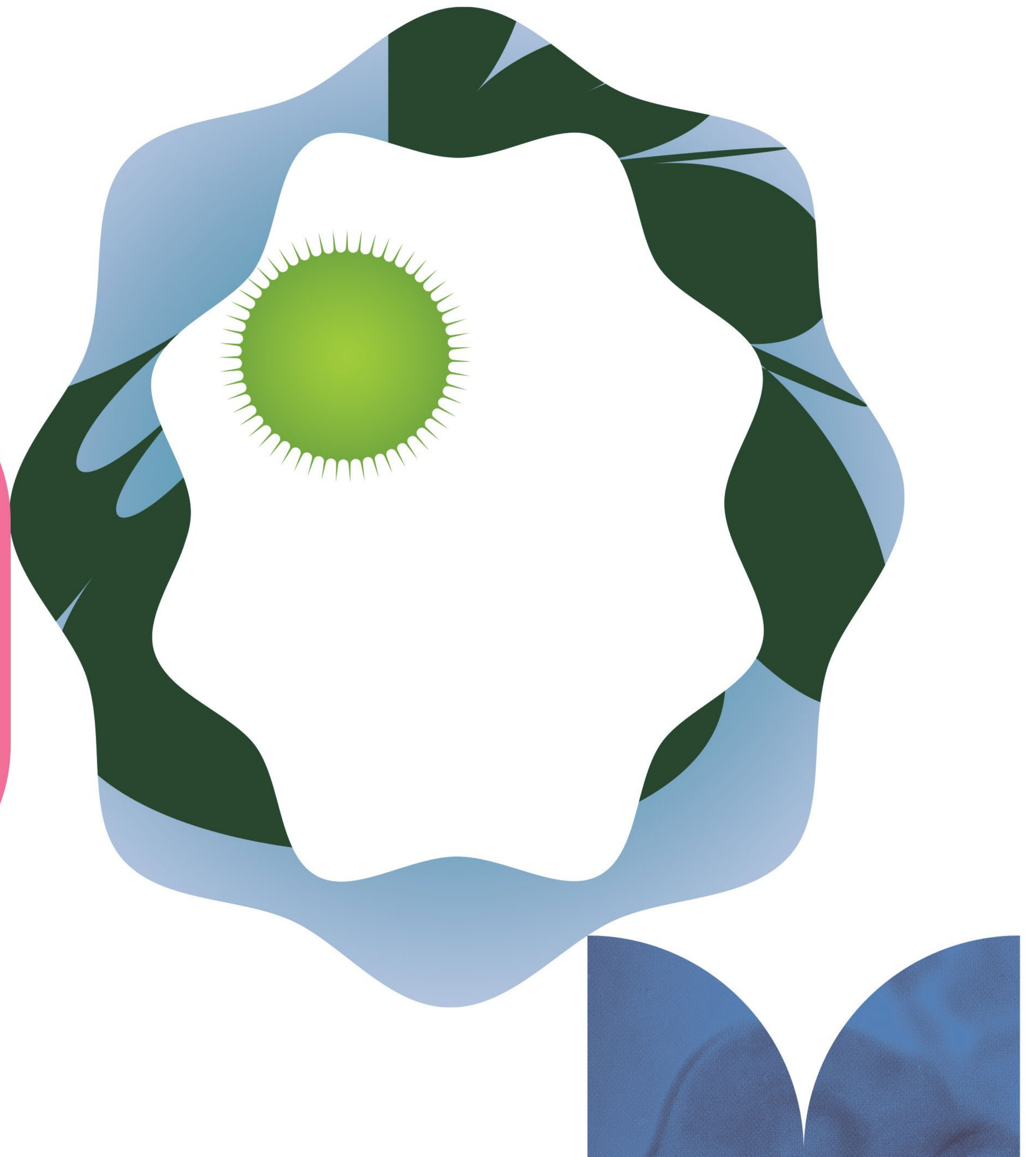
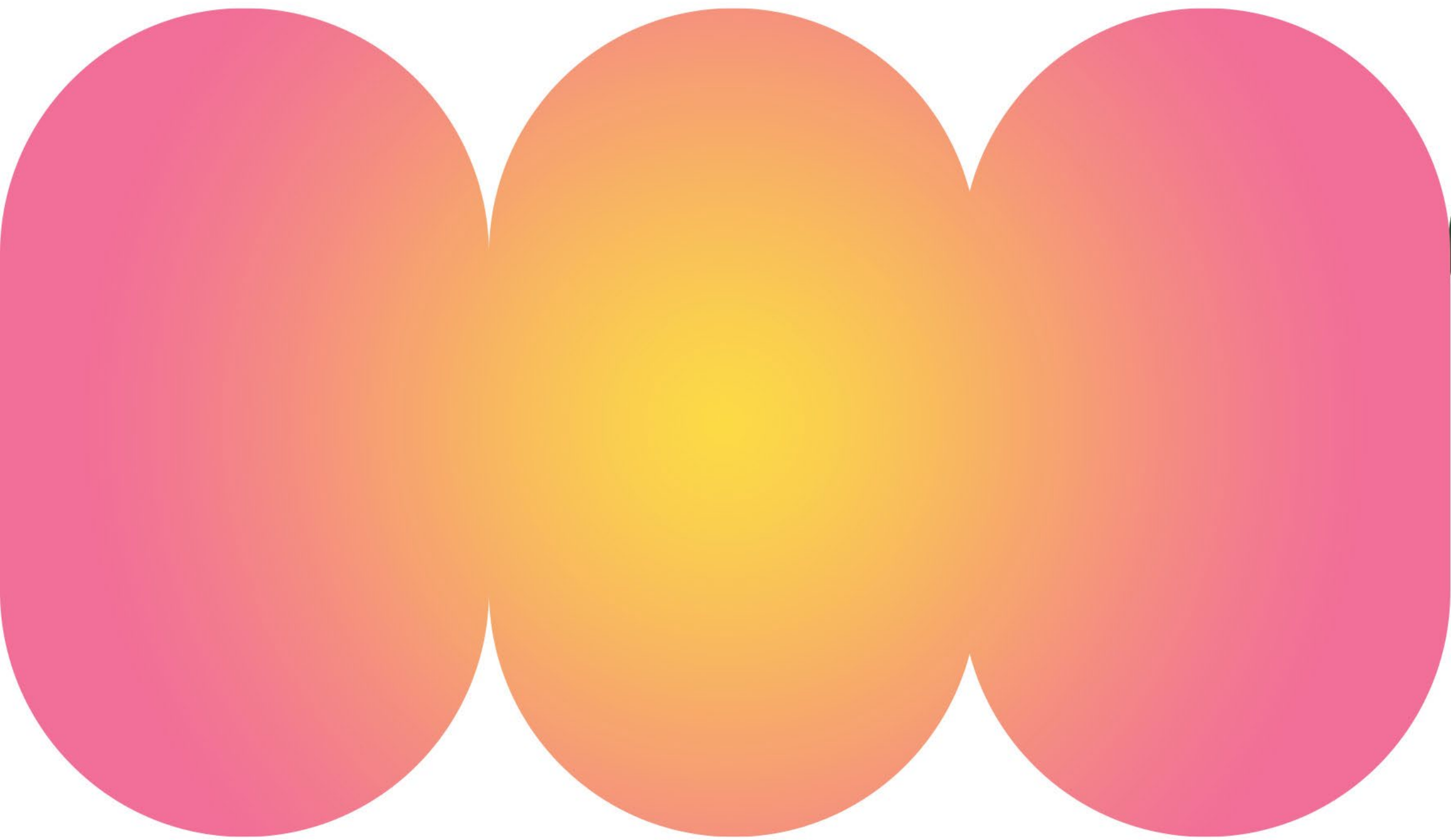
Measures

- The library should generate interest in literature, reading and learning amongst everyone in Bergen by further developing its existing services
- The City of Bergen will develop Bergen as a refuge for persecuted authors
- The City of Bergen will strengthen library content and library access in the districts, and it will extend opening hours
- The library should provide resources when collaborating on the implementation of the Arts Guides scheme



4.1.5

City venues



Subsidiary goals

Everyone in Bergen should be able to attend events, both as practitioners and audiences, at the different arts venues irrespective of disability. The arts venues must be designed and tailored to different needs. The city should offer public, open and welcoming outdoor and indoor venues to the entire population.

Status and challenges

An arts venue can be more, and something other, than just a landmark building. The city's *allmenninger* (public squares), small exhibition venues at street level, basement concert venues, schools and local arts centres are but a few examples of places where arts and culture are practised in the city.

The local authority's culture strategy for the period 2015–2025 adopted by the city council states that a good urban development strategy for Bergen would emphasise arts and culture as vital elements in the city's development. Bergen has a long-standing tradition of investing in good public spaces which encourage outdoor life, socialising and participation. Non-commercial and sustainable use of public spaces makes residents take notice of their city, and art in public spaces helps reinforce both the quality of the different spaces and the residents' affiliation with them. Another adopted strategy is to ensure better use of municipal property for arts and culture activities.

A number of studies show that arts and culture have a positive effect on people's general health, mental health, feeling of well-being and perceived quality of life. A city with a busy and vibrant arts scene has every chance to become a better, more democratic, more tolerant

and more interesting place to live. Investing in arts and culture has also been shown to be highly impactful for other important civic goals such as integration and inclusion, learning and health. Keeping active is therefore important for everyone, since participation generates solidarity, knowledge, well-being and good public health. Participation in arts events can help reduce mental stress and emotional pain and increase social functioning and vitality.

In a good and inclusive society it is crucial to create good arenas where different people can meet and make contacts. Arts centres play a key role as social meeting places and can therefore be important contributors to creating communities and shared references and as drivers of cultural and social capital in society. To ensure a diversity of providers, the City of Bergen is making premises available for hire through the Aktiv Kommune portal. Ny-Krohnborg and Damsgård schools are good examples of school buildings with facilities adapted to be able to host various events and arts activities. They also have sports halls available for people of all ages.

To some people, arts venues and the community they represent can be important gateways to the world of arts and culture and provide a source of personal development, artistic experimentation and innovation. Ensuring that the city's arts venues are safe and relevant meeting places is therefore an important goal for the local authority's culture policies, which primarily involve attracting the right expertise and attitudes at the venues and amongst staff. Skills development, collaboration and a common understanding and value base are examples of steps that can be taken to create safe meeting places.

Universal design

A diverse arts scene also means accommodating varying levels of functional ability. According to nationwide figures, it is estimated that between 15 and 18 per cent of people in the 16–66 age group have some form of disability (Bufdir). The proportion of disabled people in employment is lower than amongst the wider population, although there are no specific figures for the arts sector. To ensure inclusive arts venues where everyone can participate, it is crucial that all venues are universally designed and adapted to accommodate the varying levels of functional ability amongst both audiences and practitioners.

Universal design describes how products and physical environments are designed in a way that allows everyone to use them, in so far as possible, without the need for additional adaptation or special designs. (The Ministry of Climate and Environment 2007) Universal design is a goal in itself in respect of social sustainability whereby good and inclusive design enables participation and has a positive impact on health, quality of life, freedom and education. Such inclusive design also helps remove or reduce man-made barriers that people with disabilities encounter on a daily basis, resulting in a more inclusive society with full equality and participation for all.

Universal design in arts venues grants people with disabilities the same opportunities as non-disabled people to participate in the arts both as audiences and practitioners. A universally designed building must be easy to move around in and navigate irrespective of physical ability. For people with physical disabilities, it is therefore important that the city's arts venues are designed for wheelchairs. This means access to ramps, lifts and adapted facilities for wheelchair

users as well as reserved spaces for wheelchairs in auditoriums. Universal design also has significant potential in terms of audio descriptions at arts exhibitions and in museums. Hearing loops improve clarity of speech in noisy settings and over greater distances between the speaker and listener. Auditory information materials, including digital audio guides, are in great demand at venues such as KODE and something that both the wider public and people with visual impairments can benefit from. Alternative outreach activities can make the arts even more accessible. For example, the inherent nature of sculptures means that they can be “read” by visually impaired people. For people with hearing impairments it is vital that arts venues are fitted with audiological equipment. For those unable to benefit from spoken information it is essential to provide good visual information such as signage, labels and on-screen text. For the benefit of people with visual impairments, it is also best to avoid level differences and thresholds. Programmes and other information in Braille should be provided for the benefit of those unable to view ordinary text and pictures. People with cognitive disabilities are a complex group which is often excluded and under-represented. Creating safe settings for these people is a complex task.

A survey is currently underway of municipal buildings in respect of universal design in a broad sense, ranging from accessibility to other qualities that support universal design. These are important elements in promoting diversity in participation amongst both practitioners and audiences. If the process were to uncover any shortcomings in the city's arts venues, it will be necessary to rank them with a view to mitigating the problems.

Tilgjengelighetsmerket is a certification system for arts organisations managed by the Norwegian Live Music Association and

designed to improve accessibility in arts venues for people with disabilities, provide relevant information, and promote venues that offer good access for people with disabilities. The City of Bergen encourages all of Bergen's arts organisations to work to obtain the certification.

Open venues

Bergen is in great need of indoor arenas where curious audiences can experience art and culture informally and spontaneously. This need became especially clear in the wake of the success of Bergen Assembly, Carte Blanche, BIT Teatergarasjen and Borealis when taking up residence in KODE 2's street-level premises by Lake Lille Lungegårdsvann in 2019 and 2020. Bergen Assembly used the opportunity to invite people to freely use the premises for their preferred activities, something which resulted in the creation of several new initiatives, including dance groups for young people and multicultural groups such as Bergen's first African-Norwegian student society. Young people in Bergen were also able to experience contemporary art of a high international standard and to participate in the art projects. This resulted in lasting connections, open exhibitions and a range of activities aimed at a diverse audience. It would be beneficial to enable this kind of use in suitable public or private premises.

Accessible urban spaces

Bergen has numerous public and shared spaces, and many of them are already being used for art and culture. Yet there is still a need and a desire to create alternative or new urban spaces as demonstrated by the Kunstallmenninger project described in the city's arts plan. The purpose of such public spaces is threefold: to ensure increased use of alternative or new spaces; to give the city's artists an arena for spontaneous or temporary artistic activity; and to make art visible and accessible to as many residents as possible. The final objective must be seen in the context of art's role in society. One key factor in shaping society is the way in which we come together around art and the questions and challenges it poses. Bergen's allmenninger – public squares – can therefore be seen as a starting point for discussion and as an arena for reaching audience groups which art and its associated discourse usually fail to reach. They would also provide a platform for young artists and new voices.

More ground-level spaces should be made available to create public, open and welcoming indoor and outdoor venues for the benefit of the people of Bergen. The spaces could combine food culture, crafts, art and food markets, public workshops and training venues, exhibition spaces, second-hand shops and other for-hire premises for various locally initiated events and as informal arenas for people to meet in. Exhibitions, concerts and food culture which reflect the city's diversity can help create new meeting places for the public and between different cultures. The ambition should be to create public spaces full of culture and where small and large events can be held throughout the year. Well thought out infrastructure with sound, lighting and flexible staging should be created. Environmental con-

siderations must be made, and adequate power points should be fitted to avoid the need for diesel generators etc. Opportunities for integrated furniture that can accommodate different types of art displays would be desirable. This could take the form of a musical sculpture park, for example. This is an adventure park for children and their families with solid sculptures designed around musical instruments.

Urban spaces and parks should plan for using flexible furniture which can accommodate large numbers of people and ensure good flow during events. New arts spaces in permanent public squares and in other outdoor spaces can give audiences unexpected meetings with art and culture. New and established art forms also need new kinds of infrastructure. Artists and arts workers often create their own venues where audiences can combine different cultural and social experiences. They provide a boost for street life, ensure social safety and link identity to specific parts of the city and its districts.

Fortellerbenken (the storytelling bench) is a permanent installation in a natural meeting place. At fixed times during the week, children and families can congregate around the bench to hear stories from near and far and/or enjoy staged events. The bench has a carefully thought out design and serves as a sculpture in its own right while enabling communication with the audience and between the visitors themselves.

Bergen's outdoor spaces can be made even more attractive and better integrated in the urban environment through public art. Digital culture trails via apps using QR codes or other digital solutions can be informative and fun and encourage families to engage in activity. They can also allow the people of Bergen to learn more about art. Such trails can be designed around the history, functions and heritage

value of the city and its buildings and spaces, but they can also serve as art projects that highlight different voices or shine a light on power structures and stories about exclusion.

Art in public spaces

The local authority's programme for art in public spaces and public buildings could also benefit from its equality and diversity policies. Residents encounter public art in the communities where they live, work and study and in parks and public spaces. Its immediacy makes public art a very good way of introducing all citizens to art, irrespective of whether or not they are active users of culture. This is especially important for children and young people, who are otherwise reliant on adults taking them to visit the art institutions, but also for adults and older people who may not be inclined to seek out the city's art and culture venues. The fact that the art is public means that it will constantly be exposed to a variety of people. Art in public spaces must therefore be relevant to the local community and the general public, and it must actively address its site specificity and its architectural, social and cultural contexts. Public art should help define local communities, enrich the city's districts and create ownership and identity, new meeting places and good outdoor spaces. Art in public spaces must therefore represent a multitude of artists and artistic expressions and allow for different interpretations of reality and perspectives. This means addressing diversity – in terms of age, background and experience – when curating public art, when nominating art consultants, and when choosing artists for the projects. It also means reflecting carefully on the city's existing, older sculptures, which in some cases may represent attitudes that are not

acceptable today. Raising awareness of the historical circumstances at the time the sculptures were erected can be an important step towards gaining a better understanding of both the past and the present while preserving important historical artworks for posterity.

One such historically conditioned context is the fact that in the centre of Bergen there is only one single full-body statue of a named woman, Amalie Skram, along with some 70 men. The other female sculptures represent the woman as a gender, not a real person. One concrete measure by the City of Bergen to rectify this historical neglect of women's actual significance in society is the "Kvinner på Sokkel" initiative. Over a period of ten years, the local authority will erect five permanent sculptures of named, important, real-life women in central locations in Bergen. The initiative is an equality project and will be significant to future generations who will grow up with lasting representations of immortalised strong women in the cityscape.

- The City of Bergen will ensure that there are good physical and structural frameworks in place for displaying and experiencing art and culture in the city, both indoors and outdoors

Measures

- Aim for universal design in all municipally owned and supported arts venues
- Inform the public of universal design in municipal arts venues and premises through the City of Bergen website, Kulturbybergen.no and Aktiv Kommune
- Encourage providers to work to obtain the Tilgjengelighetsmerket certification
- Facilitate IT solutions and physical tools to support universal design
- Work to ensure functional arenas and infrastructure for arts and culture
- Work to ensure that no one in Bergen has to travel more than 1 km to their nearest activity centre or meeting place
- Establish and facilitate more public, open and accessible outdoor and indoor spaces where the people of Bergen can experience arts and culture
- Help ensure that the arenas welcome participation by maintaining and encouraging good communication through conscious use of language, communication in multiple languages where appropriate
- Ensure a vibrant city centre through artistic activity in empty premises at ground level
- Help create good art experiences in public buildings and spaces by investing in diversity in public art and historically informed and topical communication around the art



5 Budget



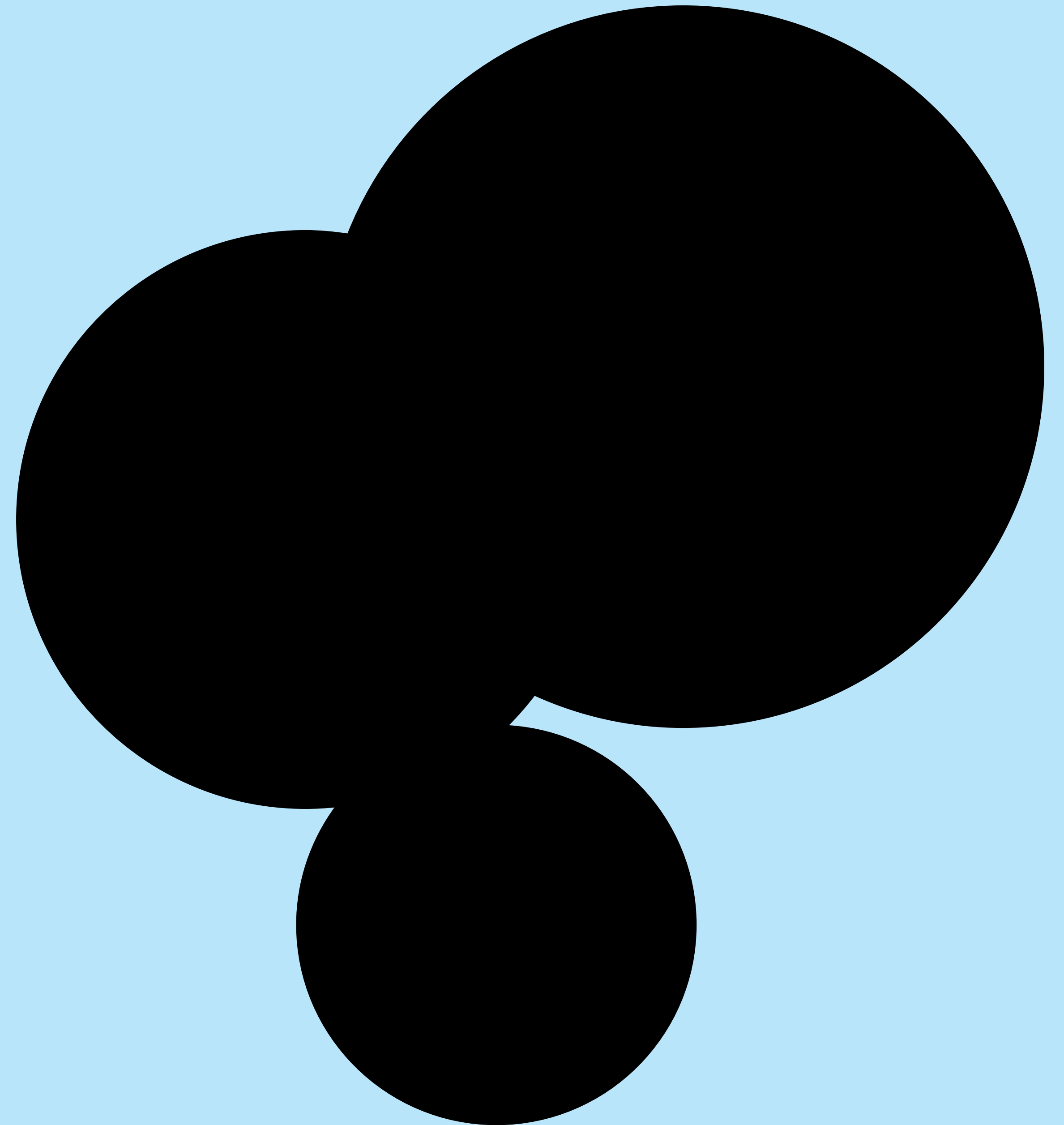
The budget requirement for the plan is NOK 10 million over a period of ten years. The funds needed in the first year will be spent on the planning process in the form of reallocation. In the following years the plan will require an increase in the allocation in the culture budget to cover different initiatives and recurring running costs. The realisation of the different measures will be dependent on funding being available or on being given priority in future budget / financial planning processes.

In the first year the local authority will focus on structural changes in organisations and administrative units in terms of representation and on rolling out the Arts Guides scheme, establishing a forum for sharing knowledge, boosting the public workshops programme, launching a pilot project for safe venues/clubs and a project for cultural content in empty premises at ground level. The Open Doors scheme will also see a 100% increase to its budget. The guidelines on the open funding schemes will also be strengthened and amended for all disciplines in order to boost diversity on the various projects.

The new action plans for each city district on increasing participation and diversity and the plan for arts provision for people with learning disabilities will probably require an increase in the budget for local arts programmes above and beyond the budget requirements stipulated in the *Plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture 2021–2030*.

6 Summary of measures

All measures must be seen in the context of the goals, strategies and descriptions of the different disciplines set out in Chapter 4.



- Use the municipal budget to require grant recipients to have in place concrete plans and goals for increasing audience diversity
- Establish and enable broad-based co-operation on the implementation of the “Arts Guides” scheme
- Reinforce the “Open Doors” funding scheme to be able to support events that help promote and discuss diversity and related, relevant issues in a contemporary perspective and on local terms
- Establish a partnership between the arts institutions, Nygård school and Bergen Inclusion Centre for refugees on extended arts provision for participants in the inclusion programme during periods with restricted learning activities
- Extend the Activity Card scheme with additional providers
- Initiate more guardianship schemes for children and young people under the age of 18 who wish to attend arts events in venues with an 18+ age limit
- Establish a forum to disseminate information about the plan’s target groups to the sector and its employees; organise meetings in partnership with network groups to reinforce existing and new networks across disciplines and institutional levels; and enable skills and experiences to be shared
- Develop and launch tools for audience surveys, including by the panel for families with children, and initiate and facilitate collaborations to allow the sector to expand beyond traditional audiences
- Enable marketing and promotion of arts activities through Kulturbybergen.no and more physical posters in all of Bergen’s districts
- Enable arts provision at times suited to specific target groups, e.g. children and older people
- Ensure that accessible language is used in all audience communication
- Encourage the different disciplines to promote their activities in the local communities

4.1.2 Diversity in art and culture

General measures

- Use the municipal budget to require recipients to demonstrate concrete plans and goals for increasing diversity and equality within their organisations and boards
- Require institutions and organisations to include diversity as a development factor in their action plans and articles of association while leaving room for different interpretations of diversity
- Highlight boardroom equality and diversity when the City of Bergen appoints board members to arts institutions
- Instigate a broad and informed discussion on quotas and incentives as cultural policy instruments through active use of statistics to raise awareness of imbalances or unequal representation
- Encourage increased co-operation across the entire arts sector on joint festivals and events that promote diversity and the understanding of diversity in the community
- Encourage the professional arts sector to design high-quality offerings with a diversity perspective for Den Kulturelle Bæremeisen, The Cultural Schoolbag and Den Kulturelle Spaserstokken programmes
- Set unambiguous criteria for diversity in the guidelines on the open funding schemes and make diversity a key factor when considering any application Concrete targets for each discipline will be set and allocation trends monitored over time
- Encourage freedom of expression and diversity of expression in content production by awarding grants to new voices and giving priority to qualified projects where diversity is an integral part of the project through all the discipline-specific funding schemes
- Regularly evaluate the local authority's funding schemes with a view to identifying exclusionary structures

The professional arts sector

The following measures will be implemented in addition to the general measures during the plan period:

- ➔ Encourage the institutions – as the biggest employers and arts programmers – to open up their venues to more multi-disciplinary and socio-cultural meeting places and collaborations
- ➔ Establish a pilot project for club and music venues with a view to creating safe settings for music performance and experiences
- ➔ Encourage all organisations to obtain the Balansemerket label
- ➔ Establish a development programme for theatre with emphasis on increased co-operation across the full range of the field and of academia on recruiting artists and supporting roles, on investing in talent development amongst performers, and on professional skills development at the institutions in a diversity perspective
- ➔ Extend investment in art criticism to make room for projects particularly aimed specific fields, providers or audience groups. Establish module on art criticism for schools
- ➔ Launch training and inclusion initiatives for professional artists and arts workers with minority and multicultural backgrounds in Bergen
- ➔ The local authority will develop Bergen as a refuge for persecuted artists from more arts disciplines

Museums and voluntary heritage conservation

The following measures will be implemented in addition to the general measures during the plan period:

- ➔ Require museums to have in place plans to realise exhibitions and permanent collections for different audience groups beyond their core audiences
- ➔ Require museums to ensure that the diversity perspective is considered when recruiting volunteers
- ➔ Require the sector to attempt to recruit from all communities when seeking to transfer knowledge of tangible and intangible cultural heritage
- ➔ Enable criticism of exhibitions and outreach in the museum and heritage conservation sector through targeted information campaigns around the local authority's criticism and theory funding scheme
- ➔ Encourage all organisations to obtain the Balansemerket label

Amateur arts

The following measures will be implemented in addition to the general measures during the plan period:

- ➔ Increase allocations to the public workshops programme in every city district and make special equipment or resources available to borrow in order to meet the needs of different groups of participants
- ➔ Encourage diverse representation on boards, panels and committees in the amateur arts sector and regularly facilitate seminars, courses and other skills development initiatives around diversity in local communities
- ➔ Draw up a guide for the amateur arts on the topic of *Diversity and Participation* for use by amateur arts organisations
- ➔ Encourage all organisations to obtain the Balansemerket label

4.1.3 Unit for Culture and Participation – municipal arts provision

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Unit for Culture and Participation – local arts activities

- The City of Bergen will draw up action plans for increased participation and diversity in Bergen's different districts
- The City of Bergen will draw up an action plan for arts provision for people with learning difficulties
- The Unit for Culture and Participation will develop knowledge of and implement target group methodology in local initiatives
- The Unit for Culture and Participation will prepare a dedicated marketing strategy and ensure ongoing development of marketing tailored to different target groups
- The Unit for Culture and Participation will ensure skills development amongst staff, awareness around language, and participation training in order to create a safe setting for participation
- The Unit for Culture and Participation will help create awareness of recruitment policy in respect of different activities and roles
- The Unit for Culture and Participation will provide resources when collaborating on the implementation of the Arts Guides scheme
- The Unit for Culture and Participation will help increase the range of services available through the Activity Card
- The Unit for Culture and Participation will facilitate open innovation labs in the local community
- The City of Bergen will ensure that POP LAB and other free services are available in all city districts
- The City of Bergen will ensure that the Barnelørdag events continue to be provided

Bergen municipal arts school

- ➔ Ensure that the advisory board of the municipal arts school includes a resource person from one or more communities which are currently not active users of the school
- ➔ Reinforce the work to promote services in schools and SFO, including in partnership with the parents' working committee (FAU) in each school and specifically to communities in the city with low participation rates amongst children
- ➔ Develop a more user-friendly application process for enrolment and waiting lists for the arts school
- ➔ Strengthen the financial framework for buying and lending instruments and extend the scheme for families who cannot afford their own instruments with additional and more varied offerings
- ➔ Conduct multiple partnership projects internally at the Unit for Culture and Participation, focusing on selected districts and poorer areas, in order to strengthen co-operation between the municipal arts school, activity team, arts offices, library and arts centres
- ➔ Develop services for young people that reflect their cultural interests and level of ability
- ➔ Continue to prioritise children and young people with an Activity Card and those who fall below the income threshold

- ➔ Strengthen collaboration with the health service and the child and adolescent psychiatry outpatients departments (BUP) for priority admission of children and young people with mental health issues
- ➔ Strengthen the music therapy section
- ➔ Inform older pupils about the opportunity for upper secondary and higher education as well as career opportunities in the arts
- ➔ Initiate collaboration with the Røst project and the film accelerator company BAKOM on creating arenas for including under-represented groups

Children's Culture Centre

- ➔ Additional partnership projects should be conducted internally and externally in order to ensure equitable provision with relevant content for all groups in the community
- ➔ The Children's Culture Centre should offer free arts activities to all municipal and private kindergartens in Bergen in order to reach a greater number of children irrespective of their parents' background

4.1.4 Bergen Public Library

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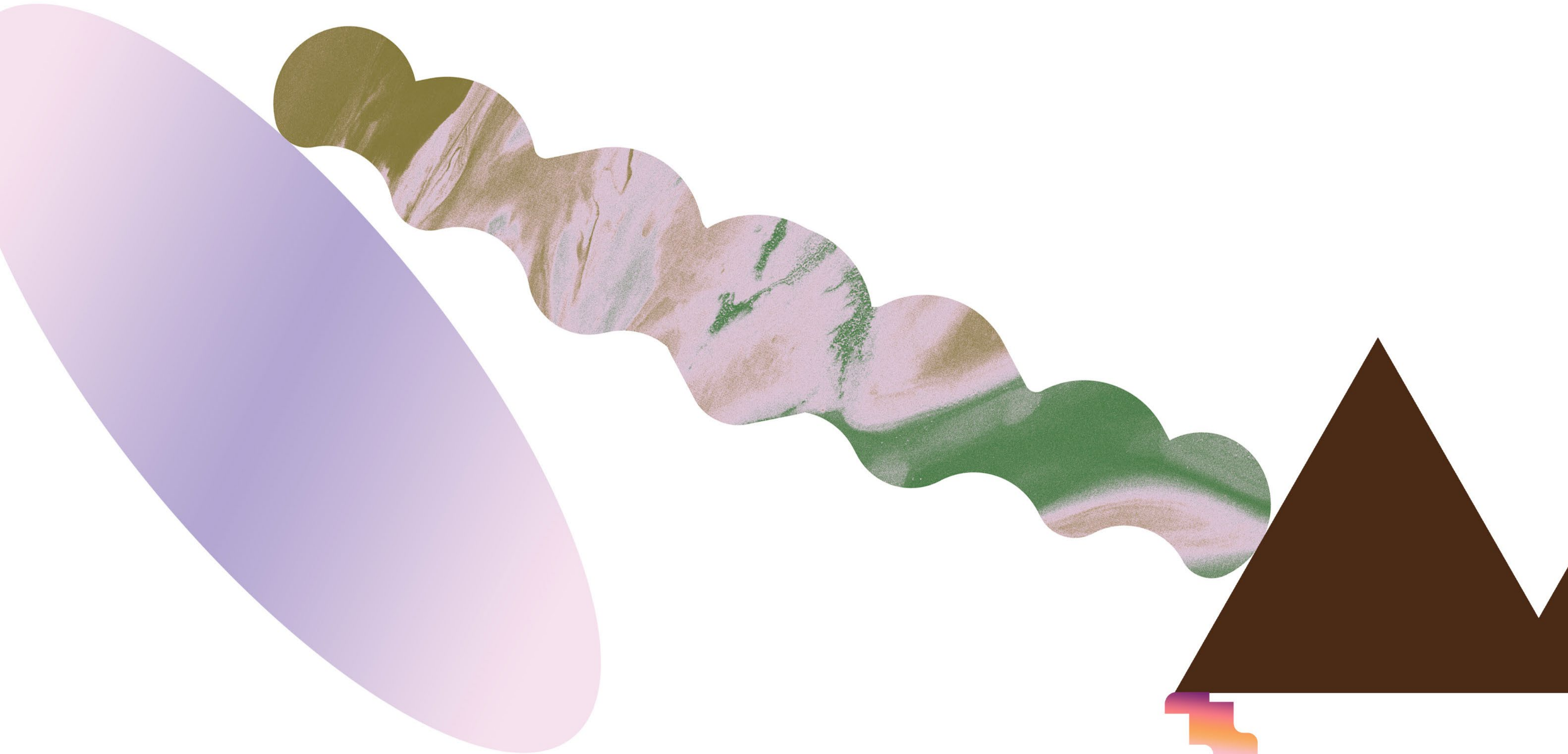
- The library should generate interest in literature, reading and learning amongst everyone in Bergen by further developing its existing services
- The City of Bergen will develop Bergen as a refuge for persecuted authors
- The City of Bergen will strengthen library content and library access in the districts, and it will extend opening hours
- The library should provide resources when collaborating on the implementation of the Arts Guides scheme

4.1.5 City venues

- Aim for universal design in all municipally owned and supported arts venues
- Inform the public of universal design in municipal arts venues and premises through the City of Bergen website, Kulturbybergen.no and Aktiv Kommune
- Encourage providers to work to obtain the Tilgjengelighetsmerket certification
- Facilitate IT solutions and physical tools to support universal design

- Work to ensure functional arenas and infrastructure for arts and culture
- Work to ensure that no one in Bergen has to travel more than 1 km to their nearest activity centre or meeting place
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7 Decision



Bergen City Council considered the case in a meeting on 27.01.2021 (case no. 9/II) and has made the following decision:

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- ① The city council adopts the plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture 2021–2030.
- ② The city council asks the city government to include the plan in the priority section for the rolling financial plan and budget.
- ③ The measures and associated grant schemes described in the plan for participation and diversity in arts and culture 2021–2030 shall as a general rule be available to both the professional and the amateur arts sectors. Exceptions should be limited to instances where it is clear that the measure can only be executed by professional arts organisations.

