



Jim Hollington

Arts & Culture Consultant

Helping cultural organisations develop strategy, build partnerships & tackle challenges

Contact

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Services

Strategy Development & Partnership Building

Developing new strategies alongside effective funding & delivery partnerships

Government & Funder Advocacy

Building effective relationships between government and the cultural sector and securing support

Leadership Support Through Crisis & Change

Providing practical guidance and interim leadership to support organisations in transition

Financial Analysis & Sustainability Planning

Analysing and redesigning financial models to deliver organisational sustainability

About Me

At 14, performing at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe ignited my passion for the arts.

After an early career in sales and marketing, I joined the British Council, supporting creative individuals and organisations globally to connect.

In the last few years I have brought this experience to the Edinburgh International Festival, Dance Base Scotland and Creative Edinburgh and since April 2025 have been working as a specialist consultant.

I've shaped organisations, developed strategies, led teams through change, and fostered relationships between the public and private sectors in the UK and internationally.

My Approach

I've always been curious and am never happier than when I'm in a new environment with a problem to solve.

I'm collaborative by nature, combining this with an analytical approach to bring in the voices of staff, clients, partners and funders to help understand the challenge and identify ways forward. I'll always aim to build consensus but I am confident to make well reasoned recommendations where there are different views.

I like to see practical results, and have built a track record of leading project teams from diverse backgrounds to implement change on tight schedules.

I focus on embedding the results of my work in the organisations I support with leadership confident to take the work forward. For me success is best measured in long term impact, not short term delivery.



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Consultancy Highlights

● 2026

Dance City Newcastle

As Interim CEO I led the organisation for six months, supporting and developing the team, dealing with significant financial issues, and working with stakeholders and funders to update strategy and prepare for new CEO arrival.

● 2025

Cumbernauld Theatre Trust

I secured the future of this theatre after the loss of all core funding from Creative Scotland through leading a task force to address challenges, bring in new interim leadership and negotiate £400,000 of new public sector support.

● 2025

Parents & Carers in Performing Arts (PiPA)

I led the development of a new five-year strategy for Scotland based on research I conducted with the sector, and built funding and delivery partnerships across the country.

● 2020

Austrade, Australian High Commission UK

I created a strategy and practical plans to use a planned UK-Australia cultural year to facilitate increased trade and investment between the two countries.

Other Clients and Partners

I have worked for or partnered with organisations that include BBC, BFI, Scottish Government, City of Edinburgh Council, DCMS, Cabinet Office, Creative Scotland, Arts Council England, Arts Council Wales, Arts Council Northern Ireland, Creative Ireland, Glasgow Life, Manchester Museum, CCA Glasgow, Glasgow Jazz Festival.

Board Experience

Board Member (2018 - 2020) and Chair (2020 - 2023) of Creative Edinburgh and Board Member of Rich Mix London (2012 - 2017)



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Work History

2020 – 2024

Chief Executive – Dance Base Scotland

Leading Scotland's National Centre for Dance, helping dance to flourish and change lives. This includes:

- setting and delivering strategy to support professionals and engage public
- leading and developing a team, including managing the succession for the founding Artistic Director
- advocacy and partnership building, including relationships with Scottish Government, City of Edinburgh Council and Creative Scotland
- collaborating with Edinburgh's festivals, including as a significant venue for Edinburgh Festival Fringe
- financial and operational management, including redesigning the financial model and systems to respond to significant challenges

2017 – 2019

Head of External Affairs – Edinburgh International Festival

Developing the festival's long-term relationships with public sector funders and partners across the world to drive income and impact, including:

- core funders in Scotland (City of Edinburgh Council, Creative Scotland and the Scottish Government)
- UK Government (including DCMS, Scotland Office, Cabinet Office, and Foreign Office)
- foreign affairs departments and cultural agencies from around the world, through offices in the UK and home countries (including Canada, Italy, France, Netherlands, Ireland, China, Japan)
- British Council, the University of Edinburgh and the BBC

2015 – 2017

Director Arts South Asia – British Council

Leading the British Council's work in the arts across Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, including:

- developing regional and country arts strategies and agreeing activity in the region and the UK to deliver this
- leading a dispersed team of arts specialists across eight countries in the region and the UK
- developing regional partnerships, including with the Goethe Institut for cultural leadership development
- developing new multinational partnerships between cultural organisations in the region and the UK, securing major new funding from Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England



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Work History

2011 – 2015

Director Operations & Communications – British Council

Supporting Director Arts in London to design and deliver a global programme, including:

- managing strategic relationships including Arts Council England, DCMS, the British Library and the BBC
- leading the development of major global projects, including *Shakespeare Lives* on the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death in 2016
- ensuring that human, financial and other resources were in place worldwide and working effectively to deliver the British Council's strategy in the arts

2009 – 2011

Deputy Director France – British Council

Leading the design and delivery of the British Council's work in the arts, education and civil society across France.

2006 – 2009

Director South China – British Council

Leading all British Council activity across five provinces of South China, including:

- developing strategy and leading a delivery team of 60 full time and 60 part time staff
- developing networks at senior levels with Chinese government officials, education and arts sector organisations across South China
- managing relationship with the British Consulate-General and other UK partners present in South China
- spending six months as Interim Director Beijing leading over 200 staff

2002 – 2006

Director Arts China – British Council

Responsible for developing and delivering arts strategy for the British Council across mainland China and Hong Kong including:

- recruiting and developing a team of arts specialists across five Chinese cities
- supporting the development of arts leadership in China, through a multi-year programme of placements
- managing the relationship with Arts Council England to deliver a multi-year collaboration supporting professional development of English artists
- designing and delivering the cultural elements of *Think UK* campaign