

MEDIA INFORMATION

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Bradford's bid for UK City of Culture 2025 gathers pace with appointment of Bid Director

Bradford's bid for UK City of Culture has taken a major step forward with the appointment of full-time Bid Director, Richard Shaw.

Richard is an experienced arts and media professional with a strong track record in public engagement, broadcasting, management and marketing. He has held prominent positions at several of the UK's leading arts, cultural and media organisations including the British Film Institute; the National Theatre; English National Ballet and Lion Television.

The new role sees Richard return to his roots, having been born in Yorkshire and attended the University of Hull before starting his first full-time job at Hull New Theatre. Over the last 30 years, Richard has built a wealth of expertise in a career which spans the performing arts, theatre, dance, film and broadcasting. In January 2019, following a multi-million pound refurbishment programme at BFI Southbank, he left his most recent full-time role to fulfil a publishing contract and work freelance in independent television production.

In welcoming Richard's appointment Mary Dowson, Interim Chair of the Bradford 2025 UK City of Culture bid, said: *"Richard brings a wealth of national experience to help Bradford on its journey and we are delighted to welcome him to Team Bradford. With the enthusiastic support of our steering group and the backing of strategic partners including Bradford Council, the University of Bradford and a wide range of regional arts and community organisations, we will continue to build on our early momentum. We plan to recruit further local expertise and begin a programme of community engagement in early 2020 to get the whole district working together on the bid."*

Commenting on Bradford's bid for UK City of Culture 2025, Richard Shaw said: *"The bid for the UK City of Culture title is a huge opportunity for Bradford to shout proudly about its extraordinary cultural heritage and to celebrate the new generation of artists, musicians, writers, performers, producers, entrepreneurs and businesses that bring this great city to life today. I'm enormously excited to be coming back to live in Yorkshire and to help work on a bold, distinctive and genuinely inclusive bid. We need to capture as many voices as we have across the district to find themes and stories about Bradford, its people and its place in the UK, to make a compelling case to the judges. And as Europe's youngest city, Bradford's young voices will be instrumental in helping to shape our vision."*

Richard will head up the Bradford Culture Trust bid executive team, working with the steering group which includes Alex Croft, creative director of Bradford intercultural arts hub, Kala Sangam; Anne McNeill, director of Impressions Gallery; Kamran Rashid, Director of 30 Chapel Street, an upcoming hub for arts, enterprise and tech in the heart of the city's historic Little Germany district, and artist Nabeelah Hafeez. He will also work closely with the recently formed Cultural Place Partnership which includes Bradford-based live arts company, The Brick Box; University of Bradford; Bradford College, further representatives of the cultural sector and national funders.

Kamran Rashid, steering group member said: *“Richard’s appointment is an important step as Bradford takes forward its ambition to win the City of Culture title for 2025. The city has so many of the ingredients to make a great socially inclusive City of Culture. It was fantastic to see Bradford University named the UK’s University of the Year for Social Inclusion* earlier this year, and we want to build on this reputation. Richard will strengthen our national links and help us build the case that Bradford deserves this bid.”*

Richard’s appointment comes hot on the heels of Bradford being named “the most-improved city in Britain” for jobs growth, skill levels and quality of life in The Good Growth for Cities 2019 index, published by professional services giant PwC.** The city will be competing against a number of cities and areas that already have announced their intentions to bid for the UK City of Culture title, including Lancashire, Medway, Southampton and Tees Valley.

The UK City of Culture status has had a transformational impact on previous host cities, securing millions of pounds of investment and acting as a catalyst for creative place-making and culture-led regeneration. City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council has already pledged £400,000 of support towards the bid.

Added Richard: *“The economic and social benefits of winning are enormous; generating new investment, bringing new jobs, resources and more visitors to the region and offering new skills and opportunities for people who live, work and study here. Just last week, Hull revealed that £676m worth of new public and private investment has been injected into the city between 2013 and 2019 – an incredible legacy from its UK City of Culture year. There’s no reason why Bradford can’t reap the same benefits, if not more. The final Hull evaluation report*** makes incredibly impressive reading.”*

The Bradford Culture Trust currently is making plans for a district-wide roadshow where organisations and members of the public can come along and find out more about how to get involved. Taking place in spring/summer 2020, further details will be announced in the new year. Programme development for the bid will start once the vision and themes are in place later in 2020. The final bid has to be submitted in 2021 and the winning city will be announced in December 2021.

To help back the Bradford bid, members of the public attending arts and cultural events across the district over the next few months are encouraged to post about their experience on social media and to tag in @Bradford2025 and use the hashtag #Bradford2025.

For further information visit: www.bradford2025.co.uk

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<https://www.bradford.ac.uk/news/archive/2019/bradford-named-uks-university-of-the-year-for-social-inclusion.php>

** <https://www.pwc.co.uk/industries/government-public-sector/good-growth.html>

<https://www.hull.ac.uk/work-with-us/research/institutes/culture-place-and-policy-institute/cultural-transformations/final-evaluation-report.aspx>

Twitter: @Bradford2025

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Website: www.bradford2025.co.uk

Key facts UK City of Culture

- This is the 4th UK City of Culture Competition
- The previous winners were Derry Londonderry in 2013, Hull in 2017 and Coventry 2021. Hull engaged more than 90% of its residents in the year and has seen a major boost to its economy.
- The competition is run by the Department of Culture Media and Sport
- There is an independent panel of judges chaired by Phil Redmond
- The bid is driven by the newly formed Cultural Place Partnership
- The final bid has to be submitted in 2021
- The winning city will be announced in December 2021
- Other places who have declared an interest in bidding include Lancashire, Luton and Southampton

Why is Bradford bidding?

Bradford is the 6th largest city in the UK. It is a city of great architecture and rich cultural heritage, but some 60% cent of the population live in the poorest 20% wards in England and Wales, with 32% of its children living in poverty. Its population will be more than 50% BAME by 2025. The city has multiple challenges – not least in its urban renewal of a place built for the industry and population of a different century. It is often misunderstood as a city and stereotyped by the media. It needs to change perceptions and to rekindle the pride of its people.

Winning UK City of Culture would accelerate regeneration and bring major social and economic benefits to the city. Bidding itself will help bring the city together as part of a longer-term cultural strategy.

Who makes the bids?

A new Bradford Culture Trust – will be set up to manage the bid for UK City of Culture and the delivery of the year if successful. Similar structures were put in place in Hull and Coventry where the trust was successful in securing significant external funding even before its award of the title

Initial work has been led by the Council working with a newly formed Cultural Place Partnership and in consultation with others. Bradford Culture Trust will crucially involve the creative sector and community voices. The interim chair of the bid will be Mary Dowson of Bradford Community Broadcasting, a project driven by local grass roots organisations. She will work with others to identify the chair and team to make the bid on behalf of the city.

Cultural Place Partnership – is chaired by Leader of the Council and currently involves Bradford University, Bradford College, 2 representatives from the cultural sector (nominated by the Bradford Cultural Voice) Arts Council England, National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Bradford Cultural Voice – is an emerging forum for the independent cultural sector in Bradford and district. It involves professional arts companies, individual artists and agencies engaged with culture. It will be coordinated by the agency The Brick Box and is funded by a grant from West Yorkshire Business Rates fund via Bradford Council.