



Scottish
Opera

Scottish Opera

Business Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25



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OUR COMPANY MISSION

By speaking powerfully through all of our work, to entertain, inspire, surprise, educate, challenge and delight audiences old and new in delivering high quality opera throughout Scotland, the rest of the UK, and internationally.

OUR VALUES

Every day we aim to:

Achieve excellence in everything: rigorous, discerning, astute, demanding

Build strong partnerships: imaginative, collaborative, confident, smart, transparent, inclusive

Reach beyond the comfort zone: courageous, curious, adventurous, leadership

Work as a team: ambitious, energetic, coherent, respectful, trust, integrity

CONTEXT

- A National Performing Company funded directly by the Scottish Government and the only full-time, professional opera company in Scotland
- Scottish Opera attracts significant support from individuals, trusts, and the private sector alongside earned income from ticket sales, production hire, transport, and manufacturing
- Our artistic frame places existing audience favourites next to surprising, less familiar works and new commissions
- The Company regularly gives full-length, fully-staged opera performances and concerts in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Inverness. It tours to all four corners of the country – from Lerwick and the Western Isles, to Stranraer and Kelso, and everywhere in between
- Scottish Opera contributes significantly to Scotland’s cultural ecology, retaining artists, creatives, artisans, and other performance-related professionals in Scotland through employment and training opportunities
- The Company’s extensive, integrated Outreach & Education programme is for people of all ages, social backgrounds and abilities, contributing to the development of individuals’ personal creativity, interest in opera and health & wellbeing
- Continually dedicated to the support and development of young artists, creatives and artisans



SCOTTISH OPERA: A TIMELINE

1962	1971	1974-5	1980	1994	2002	2004	2008
Founded by Sir Alexander Gibson and inaugurated with productions of <i>Madama Butterfly</i> and <i>Pelléas and Mélisande</i> at the King's Theatre in Glasgow	Becomes the first European opera company to establish an Education Department	Scottish Opera purchased the Theatre Royal Glasgow from STV; and reopens as Scotland's first national opera house	The Orchestra of Scottish Opera was founded	Won the Barclays TMA Award – Outstanding Achievement in Opera for <i>Macbeth</i> and <i>Der Rosenkavalier</i>	Won the Barclays TMA Award – Outstanding Achievement in Opera for <i>Die Walküre</i> and <i>Siegfried</i>	Won the South Bank Show Award for Best Opera for the Ring Cycle	Won a Herald Angel Award for <i>The Two Widows</i> at the Edinburgh International Festival
2009	2013	2014	2016	2020	2021	2022	
Won the Arts and Business Scotland Cultural Branding Award	Won the South Bank Sky Arts Opera Award for <i>Ghost Patrol</i> Nominated for the Laurence Olivier Award for Outstanding Achievement in Opera for <i>Ghost Patrol</i> and <i>In the Locked Room</i>	Theatre Royal Glasgow reopens following the addition of new foyers for 21st Century audiences	Won Best Musical Group at the Sunday Herald Scottish Culture Award	After 7 years of co-productions, Scottish Opera takes on management of the D'Oyly Carte Music Hire Library	Launch of Scottish Opera: On Screen, Outdoor performances of Pop-Up Opera and Live at No. 40	60th Anniversary of Scottish Opera	



OUR AIMS

Over the next 3 years, Scottish Opera aims to:

- Enhance the cultural life of Scotland by continuing to deliver a **high quality, varied artistic programme of opera, music-making, and education work** of an international standard to **large and diverse audiences** across all of Scotland and, thereby, introduce increasing numbers of people to opera
- Ensure continued **financial stability** against a backdrop of increasing costs and inflation while working through a period of re-building audiences and box office income post-pandemic
- Embrace the use of **non-traditional spaces, particularly outdoors**, where possible to deliver smaller scale opera, music-making, and outreach to communities across Scotland
- Develop an international audience (and income) through **film distribution** of staged works and outreach, while continuing to build an international profile through co-productions and hires
- Establish a strategic basis for best practice **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** internally, including work with educational partners to develop and maintain a diverse **talent pipeline** for recruitment and personnel development across the organisation
- Develop a framework to engage with and deliver against targets for **environmental sustainability**

OUR AIMS

As we recover from the pandemic Scottish Opera's aims, objectives, and projected outcomes will inform priorities and activities over the next three years. They include a focus on work/life balance, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and the road to Net Zero alongside audience development to encourage people back into our theatres.

Everything is set against the financial backdrop of anticipated cuts or at best a stand-still grant in aid along with increased costs of materials, labour, national insurance and shipping.

We do however anticipate there will be a gradual rebuilding to our levels of pre-pandemic sources of earned income.

An absolute priority is the financial stability of the organisation, as it has been for the last 16 years, and to ensure we present as much opera we can from the available resources.

A major challenge in meeting our aims will be to balance artistic ambition with the business and audience reality post pandemic. In a climate of widened austerity in public funding, a higher than normal turnover of staff combined with a volatile recruitment market, and a sharper focus on environmental sustainability, Scottish Opera must seek to deliver any growth through a wide range of new partnerships and initiatives.

We may need to adjust our touring model to accommodate available funding, while ensuring we continue to tour mainstage productions to Edinburgh and Glasgow a minimum of three times a year, with visits to Aberdeen and Inverness twice per Season.

We also need to maintain momentum for the Built Estate Strategy agreed with the Board in 2018 with the minimum outcome of consolidating HQ, Rehearsal, and manufacturing requirements on one site – New Rotterdam Wharf.



OUR WORLD



OUR REACH

WORKFORCE

146 permanent staff – full time equivalent headcount of 127 people

Includes **53** person orchestra and **c.150** seasonal contracts per annum

Includes many specialist artisan skills from century old craft traditions to contemporary and future digital technologies, as well as specialist finance, HR, planning, marketing and fundraising staff



FREELANCE COMMUNITY

Creative Teams :

- Directors
- Designers
- Lighting and Video Designers
- Choreographers
- Movement / Fight Directors

Singers, Chorus, Actors, Dancers, Animateurs, Touring Crew, Artisan Makers – costumes, wigs, scenery & props



TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

In total the Company provides employment for approximately **700 individuals** each year, bringing vital creative industry to Scotland

DEVELOPMENT AND PIPELINE

- Continue to attract the highest quality of singers and artists
- Highly successful Emerging Artist programme
- Maximise opportunities with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the Higher and Further Education sectors and Skills Development Scotland, and develop Young Person's Guarantee
- Offer artisan training for the skills sector, esp film & TV
- Support staff development
- Health & wellbeing

PEOPLE / HR

- Managing work / life balance for the home team as well as visiting artist and creatives
- Maintaining a family friendly policy
- Uphold a culture of mutual respect
- Management of employee welfare and morale to maintain strong levels of resilience
- Training to have the skills to deliver EDI objectives
- Provide development opportunities for all staff
- Staff training including further integration of digital into scenography
- Implement succession planning, and adjust the workforce post-pandemic



Behind the scenes of *Falstaff*, 2021

OUR OPERA PRODUCTION

Scottish Opera believes that music and singing, combined with the dramatic, theatrical and many visual elements that constitute opera, provide a magnificent art form that unequivocally contributes to the richness of cultural life in Scotland. The artistic programme centres on delivering a carefully curated annual season of opera that aims to ensure that, both within an individual season and over adjacent seasons, Scottish Opera delivers a wide range of opera. It does so through four established strands of work.

MAINSTAGE

- Mainstage opera of an international standard is the powerhouse of the Company.
- Deliver as many opera productions as possible with all the required musical, artistic, and orchestral forces.
- Popular top 10 repertoire, balanced by lesser-known works including 21st Century repertoire with consideration of the digital ecology.

TOURING AND OPERA IN CONCERT

- Smaller scale opera enables the Company to bring high quality performances within the reach of most of Scotland's geographically dispersed population via a strong commitment to touring across the nation.
- Opera in Concert allows the Company to offer a broad range of surprising, lesser-known repertoire to Scottish audiences.

COMMISSIONS

- World and UK premieres
- New digital work, e.g. Opera Shorts
- New short pieces for Opera Highlights

OUR OPERA PRODUCTION

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Education & Outreach helps to break down perceived barriers to the art form, connects communities and inspires people of all ages, creating meaningful and transformative experiences as well as associated benefits to health & well-being

Schools

- Commission new titles and revive previous titles for Primary Schools Project
- Create suites of digital materials based on the new blueprints for *The Last Aliens*, *Brasketeers* and *Tiny Chef*
- Launch Secondary Schools Cross Curricular project based on *L'Elisir d'amore* materials
- Work across all 32 local authorities in the business planning cycle

Health & Wellbeing – in line with Scottish Government manifesto

- Dementia programmes – restart these post-pandemic to rebuild the much needed work
- Breath Cycle – Long Covid patients receive vocal exercises and techniques that aim to help enhance lung capacity and promote core physical strength
- Sweet Sounds in Wild Places – a creative cross-artform exploration for females who have faced challenges to their mental & physical health and spiritual well-being during the pandemic using the character at the heart of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* as inspiration

Creative Ageing

- Develop the Young Company and Gateway programmes to open up access
- Continue to create and programme Opera for Babies

NEW WORK

Contributes to the development of opera as a contemporary art form, helps the Company connect with a wide array of new audiences, and enhances Scottish Opera's wider reputation through live and digital platforms.



OUR PEOPLE



- Touring - build on the success of visits to London's Hackney Empire
- Release 2 filmed operas
- Create and release two Opera Shorts (*Josefine* and *Aiding and Abetting*)
- Increase in production hires
- Continue co-productions
- Continually improve the artistic and technical quality of digital work for scenography and films
- Pursue funding and distribution of films
- Present early years works

- Between 9 and 12 fully-staged titles over 3 Seasons, including outdoor and site specific performances, with 2 filmed for international distribution, and include matinee and Sunday performances
- Continue to perform large-scale events in Glasgow and Edinburgh up to three times per Season, and twice in Aberdeen and Inverness
- At least 4 Access performances per Season
- Add a populist concert series to maintain presence in Aberdeen, Dundee, Inverness and Perth
- Continue to support the development of new writing and composition in Scotland
- Include intersectionality of wider health and education agenda and manifesto pledges
- Young Company – development of mentor programme to increase access

- Pop-up new commissions alongside shortened classic operas
- Wide repertoire represented in each Opera Highlights production
- Commission new composer and librettist works
- Deliver performances the length and breadth of Scotland (minimum 35 per annum)
- Maintain productions with community involvement
- Introduce audiences to a wider array of lesser-known works
- Ensure every community is no more than a 30-minute commute from an opera
- 60/60 in 2022/23 through mainstage, Pop-up and Opera Highlights
- Increase digital schools programmes and resources as well as continuing in-person presence

OUR AUDIENCES

PARTNER:

Corporate Sponsors, Syndicate, Scottish Opera Endowment Trust,
Trusts and Foundations
Scottish Government (as a National Company)

ADVOCATE:

Influencers (high-end donors, industry peers, online influencers),
partnership working, corporate partners, media partners

SUPPORTER:

Individual donors and supporters (Alexander Gibson Circle, Friends)

CLIENT:

Regular attenders, press critics

CUSTOMER:

Ticket buyers – Pop-up, Opera Highlights, main stage, creative ageing
(*Bambino* to Memory Spinners programmes) (where data capture is possible)
Engaged digital audiences

PROSPECTS:

Database sign-ups, social media users, website visitors,
film viewers, advertising viewers.
Prospect donors are ticket buyers, film viewers and outreach participants



OUR AUDIENCES – TARGETS

Continue to nurture a life-long relationship with opera in Scotland, extending audiences in number and diversity.

MAINSTAGE, TOURING, OPERA IN CONCERT, OUTREACH EVENTS

- Develop a pool of Prospect attenders to mainstage – data capture at events such as pop-up and Opera Highlights. Rebuild audience attendance by reassuring **existing** audiences it is safe, offering a refreshed discount model to regular attenders, alongside attracting **new** audiences
- Ensure audience development in target groups such as U26
- For Mainstage, encourage repeat attendance and advance sales through pricing and discount models

DIGITAL

- Grow Scottish Opera: On Screen viewers as well as those who engage through social media through social, search and display campaigns
- Develop Instagram and YouTube channels – looking for growth in channel reach from (insert numbers)
- Database growth from 10,000 contactable people
- Continue production of digital content for promotional campaigns including further animation work

ADVOCATES – CORPORATE

- Develop relationships to increase influence in **funders, press and industry peers**
- Positive news stories to enhance awareness of both the health and wellbeing agenda and artisan skills within the company

INDIVIDUAL GIVING

- **Develop loyalty** through strong stewardship of individual giving programmes, growing financial support by 5% year-on-year
- **New donors** through new online giving module, increased personal contact to ticket buyer data
- **Existing donors** to keep giving, make more asks for one-off donations related to specific project
- **Build awareness** for Gifts in Wills and Scottish Opera Endowment Trust

TRUSTS

Supporting avenues of work, particularly education and outreach.

CORPORATE

Re-imagine corporate support



OUR FUTURE STAFF – PIPELINE

TRAINING AND DEVELOPING A NEW GENERATION

An EDI policy was written in 2021 and an EDI development group is being established to work on individual issues and policies. In addition to this, there are corporate actions to complete. Namely:

INTERNAL PIPELINE ACTIONS

- Extend and further implement leadership development for succession planning and internal promotion across the organisation, particularly at senior management level
- Review fair work practices and maintain the Scottish living wage
- Introduce a cross company mentoring scheme
- Diversity and inclusion training for all
- Ensure there is time in the daily schedule to allow for training and support of others

EXTERNAL PIPELINE ACTIONS

- Continue with the Emerging Artists programme
- Take a leading role in training the next generation of artisans
- Reintroduce work placements, internships and work experience days and taster sessions in partnership with Higher and Further education sectors
- Consider an apprenticeship scheme for postgraduates
- Develop a partnership with Skills Development Scotland to raise awareness of opportunities
- Sign up to the Young Person's Guarantee
- Maintain close relationships with the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland and National Opera Studio
- Offer careers advice by helping young people write a CV and have a mock interview

INCREASE DIVERSITY

- Introduce “screened” auditions in 2022 to promote fairer opportunities for singers and instrumentalists from all backgrounds to earn a position in the orchestra and freelance chorus
- Continue to support National Opera Studio *Diverse Voices* programme
- Further broaden our casting policy (favouring diverse backgrounds)
- Widen recruitment advertising placement

OUR FINANCES

FINANCIAL

- Ensure continued financial stability
- Deliver a balanced budget at the beginning of every year yet include as much work as possible
- Retain reserves at a minimum of £500k
- Delivering the budget through out the years by closely monitoring costs and income
- Maintain constructive dialogue with Scottish Government
- Sustain and build new business partnerships
- Explore new third party commercial producing partners to compensate for withdrawal of Cross Border Touring thereby enabling the company to perform across the UK
- Key budgetary targets detailed on budgets attached to this business plan
- Reduce marketing spend by improving understanding of ROI through digital tracking and stronger direct communications
- Increase pricing and introduce dynamic pricing when sales have sufficiently recovered

NET EARNED INCOME

- Maximise productivity – production hire (especially across Europe and USA), transport, set and costume construction and buildings
- Secure at least 3 co-production partnerships, with a total reduction in costs of at least £300k
- Total Net Earned Income target: £100k per year (from transport, hires and external fabrication)
- Rebuild overall box office yield to 70%
- Restore ticket income by 24/25 per performance to pre-pandemic levels
- Monetise full length films by experimenting with different distribution models
- Growth of Individual Giving by up to 5% year on year
- Sustain total fundraising income at 2021/22 levels, particularly in the 60th Anniversary year



OUR AMBITIONS – CONSOLIDATION OF BUILT ESTATE

In 2018 the Board of Scottish Opera completed a review of the company's built estate. It was agreed to consider proposals for the development of a consolidated headquarters for Scottish Opera **bringing together our administrative, production and rehearsal facilities on one site.**

A comprehensive options appraisal identified **New Rotterdam Wharf** as the preferred site for the new facility, lying immediately adjacent to our existing Production Studios on Edington Street and between the production studios and the Maryhill spur of the Forth to Clyde Canal.

The proposals include new **dedicated rehearsal space** for the Orchestra of Scottish Opera along with musical and vocal **practice rooms**, break out space, storage and flexible office spaces. This consolidation will allow the Scottish Opera team to collaborate more closely and easily leading to significant artistic developments, organisational efficiencies and environmental benefits.

We have also identified an opportunity to bring any available time (c 75%) in the **orchestra rehearsal room to market** – especially the Film and TV sector as a sound stage – due to the planned size and capacity of this room. Further, the Scottish Film and TV sector has identified **significant skills shortages** as the key limitation to further **growth of this sector**. In response to this challenge, and in partnership with the Further Education sector, we are exploring the idea of **adding a Creative Campus** that provides additional capacity for the FE sector to deliver additional (and much needed) short form courses. This could include additional small studios, rehearsal rooms, classrooms and production office space.

In addition, the remaining c40% of the site could be taken to market to **explore interest from private developers** including residential developers who might design and build a scheme that ties into Glasgow City's requirements for additional inner city housing – both build to sale and rent alongside some social housing. A proportion of this accommodation could be added to the short term letting market including 'digs' for visiting artists and creatives.

There is also **potential for a canal side café** or bar to complement our occupancy and to add colour and character to the local public realm.

At this stage we are exploring the development of a scheme that explores how the various occupancy ideas can be accommodated on the site.

OUR CORPORATE PLEDGES

GREEN INITIATIVES

- Develop a framework and report internally to form engagement in environmental sustainability across the business
- Develop a company-wide understanding of what Net Zero means to Scottish Opera, its people and its audiences and how best to achieve it
- Continue to create story telling through the education programme – help audiences understand the national objective of net zero
- Fleet renewal at the moments of end of life with green vehicles and tie to fundraising opportunities
- Carry out a business carbon audit
- Substantially recycle costume, props and scenery into new productions

GENDER PAY GAP

- Alter our recruitment policies to actively address traditional gender biases in artisan and backstage teams
- Continue with reporting

FAMILY FRIENDLY

- Continue to work on becoming as family friendly as possible, balancing visiting artists and creatives needs with resident company members work/life integration requirements

FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23: KEY ACTIONS

PEOPLE

- Devise and implement policy for blended working post pandemic
- Review the contracting procedures for seasonal employees and, where possible, change temporary terms and conditions of employment to permanent terms for the proportion of each year that seasonal roles are required
- Introduce screened auditions for Orchestra and Chorus roles- Promote the performing arts sector as an exciting and diverse employment sector, provide young people with insight into the range of roles and career opportunities that exist
- Develop new talent and diversify the Emerging Artists programme

AUDIENCES

- Kick off audience development campaigns for Access performances and Under 26.
- Grow the database from 10,000 records by 2,500 records
- Story telling in the press to tackle awareness of Scottish Opera's role in Health & Well-being agendas, to enhance brand awareness

OUTREACH

- Become a signatory of the Young Person's Guarantee initiative which connects 16-24 year olds to opportunities for training and employment within the Scottish creative industries sector
- Develop and roll out a revised framework for Young Company to encourage inclusion and equality
- Develop and digitally distribute resources to enhance learning across Primary and Secondary levels. Includes a new project 'It's all about Choices' designed to enhance critical thinking & analysis skills for Secondary 1-3 learners in the fields of creative design, language, literature and music.

FINANCIAL YEAR 2022/23: KEY ACTIONS

REPERTOIRE

- Deliver the 22/23 agreed repertoire plan (next slide)
- Evaluate the breadth of EDI matters in operas and apply analysis to specific repertoire and the planning model
- Development of Opera Shorts
- Sustained partnerships with Lammermuir Festival, Citizens Theatre, Opera Ventures and a co-production with WNO

EARNED INCOME - BOX OFFICE, FUNDRAISING, HIRES

- Review Ticket Pricing Model and Box Office Splits
- Launch digital fundraising strand and sustain overall fundraising at 2021/22 level



KEY TIMESCALES

MAY 2022	Season Launch 2022/23
JUNE 2022	Possibility of hearing if 3-year funding model will be adopted by Scottish Government (8 June) First board report on Year 1 actions progress and Board Away Day
SEPTEMBER 2022	Half year report on Year 1 actions and fleshed out Year 2 action plan September 2022 – EDI update
DECEMBER 2022	Scottish Government funding confirmation, Year 2 action plan updated and budgets solidified
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MARCH 2023	Repertoire and Budgets for 2023/24 approved (and possibly 24/25 depending on funding)
MAY 2023	Season Launch 2023/24
DECEMBER 2023	Scottish Government funding confirmation, Year 3 action plan updated and budgets solidified
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MARCH 2024	Repertoire and Budgets for 2024/25 approved
MAY 2024	Season Launch 2024/25
DECEMBER 2024	Scottish Government funding confirmation

KEY REPERTOIRE

SEASON 2022/23

Outdoor

Candide (Bernstein) directed by Jack Furness

Mainscale

Don Giovanni (Mozart)* directed by Sir Tom Allen (revival)

Ainadamar (Golijov) directed by Deborah Colker (new)

Il trittico (Puccini) directed by Sir David McVicar (new)

Carmen (Bizet)* directed by John Fulljames (new)



Administration Offices: 39 Elmbank Crescent, Glasgow G2 4PT

Production Studios: 40 Edington Street, Glasgow G4 9RD

Orchestra Rehearsal Studio: Silver Cloud Studio, 39 Gordon Avenue, Hillington Park, Glasgow G52 4TG

Scenery Store: Barclay Curle Complex, 719/739 South Street, Glasgow G14 0SY

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