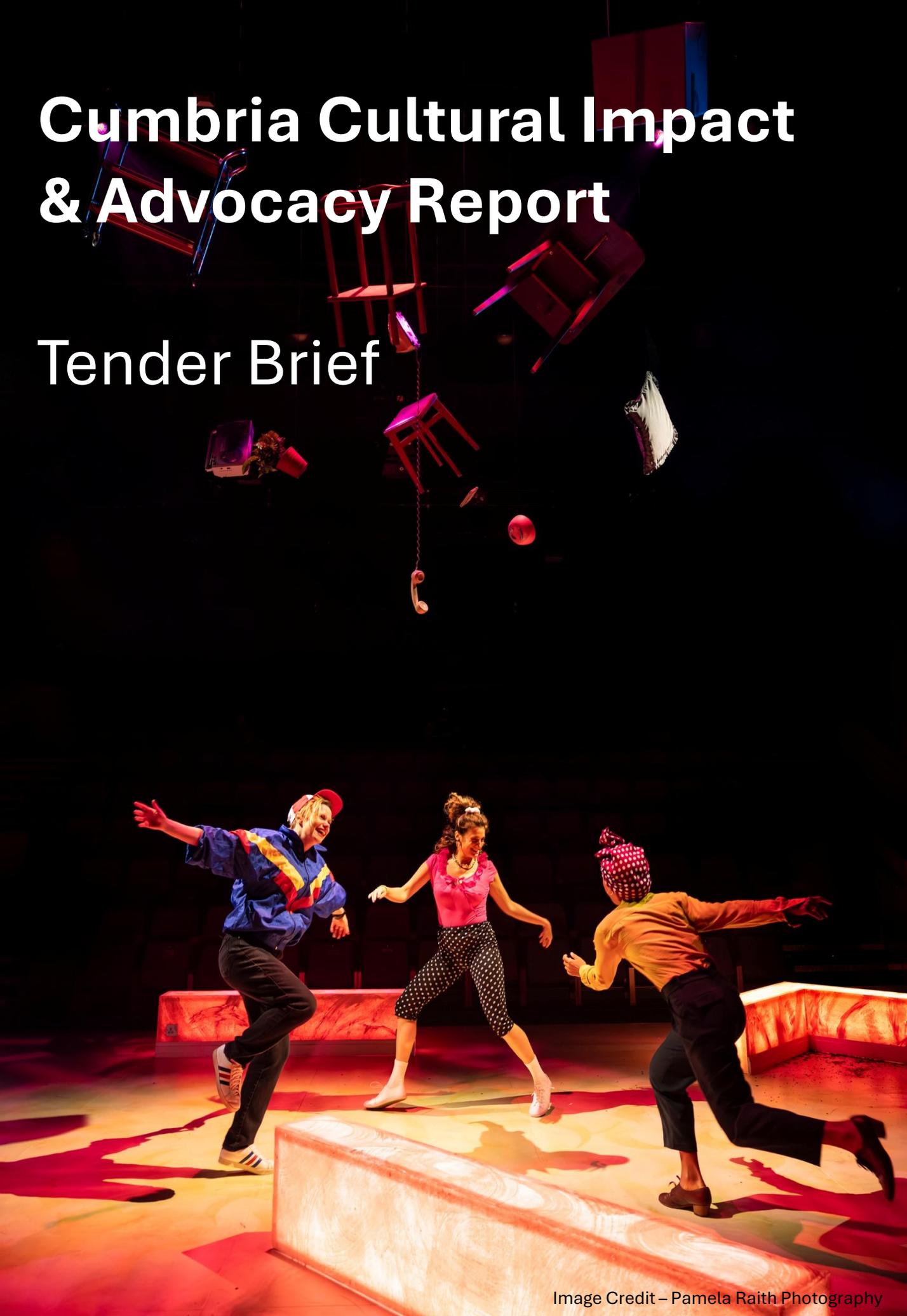


# Cumbria Cultural Impact & Advocacy Report

## Tender Brief



# Cumbria Cultural Impact & Advocacy Report

## Professional Tender Pack

**Commissioned by:** Brewery Arts | Cumbria Museum Consortium (CMC) | Theatre by the Lake | Supported by Cumbria Arts & Culture Network (CACN).

This work is supported by Arts Council England.

**Issue Date:** March 2026 | **Tender Return Deadline:** 10<sup>th</sup> April 2026 10am | **Online Interviews:** w/c 20th April 2026 | **Budget** 15 – 20K

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## Devolution Roadmap in Cumbria – Context

Cumbria is progressing through a major devolution process that will establish a new Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) for Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness, marking a significant shift in how regional priorities and investment decisions are shaped.

A shadow authority is expected to be elected in May 2026, before the new MCA comes fully into effect in April 2027 and the first Mayor is elected in May 2027.

This new structure will introduce substantial responsibilities across economic development, skills and health and wellbeing—areas that closely align with the strengths of Cumbria’s cultural sector. As these priorities evolve—spanning growth, placemaking, net zero and rural inclusion—there is a vital opportunity for culture to position itself not as an add-on, but as a central driver of regional prosperity and social renewal.

The Cumbria Cultural Impact & Advocacy Report will provide the robust evidence base needed to demonstrate culture’s contribution within the devolved framework and to inform future investment and policy influence.

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## Project Aim

Produce an evidence-based report demonstrating how arts and culture contribute to Cumbria’s economic, social, educational, environmental and placemaking goals, aligned to Combined Authority priorities.

This evidence-based report will be required by **21st September 2026** and provide a foundation for policy influence and strategy development.

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## Strategic Alignment: Devolution in Cumbria

The priorities listed below reflect the current emerging themes of the Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA). These remain in development, consultants should therefore:

- Work to the priorities as known at contract commencement
- Expect these to evolve
- Ensure alignment can be updated as part of the early scoping phase

<b>MCA Priority</b>	<b>Cultural Link / Expected Evidence</b>
Skills & Employment	Creative workforce development, talent pipeline, apprenticeships, freelance economy
Economic Growth & Place	Town centre regeneration, tourism, night-time economy, capital projects
Health & Wellbeing	Social prescribing, creative mental health programmes, community cohesion
Education & Youth	Early years literacy, school partnerships, creative skills pathways
Net Zero & Sustainability	Climate leadership, green building standards, cultural engagement in public behaviour
Rural Connectivity & Inclusion	Cultural access in isolated communities, transport barriers, mobile and digital provision

The report should show how culture leverages investment, drives shared services and supports statutory outcomes.

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## Required Outputs

### A. Evidence & Impact Report

This is the core deliverable and should draw together robust economic, social, educational, environmental and placemaking evidence demonstrating:

- **Economic & Financial Impact:** Gross Value Added (GVA), turnover, employment, indirect revenue (tourism, hospitality, retail), national benchmarking
- **Social & Health Impact:** Wellbeing, social prescribing, inclusion, Social Return on Investment (SROI) modelling
- **Education & Skills:** Early years, school and Higher Education / Further Education (HE/FE) partnerships, talent pipeline
- **Placemaking & Civic Leadership:** Town centre renewal, cross-sector case studies

- **Creative Economy & Workforce:** Freelance networks, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), entrepreneurship, rural barriers
- **Environmental Leadership:** Contribution to Net Zero, sustainability modelling, best practice case studies
- **Asset Audit:** Mapping cultural infrastructure and creative assets across the area, identifying existing, unused and under-used assets.

We welcome consultants' professional recommendations on:

- What should be included beyond the areas already listed, and
- The most appropriate structure and methodologies

## **B. Advocacy Pack**

Building on the impact report, the advocacy pack should clearly communicate how culture contributes to MCA priorities and act as a practical tool for influencing policy and decision-making.

The form and content of the advocacy pack will be developed through the consultation process and should be suitable for presentation to:

- Mayoral candidates
- Combined / Local authority leadership
- Health, education and business partners
- The cultural sector

Consultants should expect to propose impactful options for format and narrative tone, based on sector insight and stakeholder engagement

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## **Methodology Expectations**

- Mixed-methods: quantitative surveys, economic modelling, qualitative interviews
  - Consultation with the sector across Cumbria
  - Analysis of existing data
  - Case studies across museums, heritage, performing arts, festivals, literature, visual arts, creative media
  - Benchmarking with national and international exemplars
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## Skills & Experience Required

- Economic analysis of culture (GVA, tourism impact)
  - Social impact measurement and Social Return on Investment (SROI)
  - Knowledge of UK arts policy and devolution
  - Experience with rural/isolated communities
  - Strong facilitation and stakeholder engagement
  - Ability to produce technical and accessible advocacy outputs
  - Details of team members and individuals
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## Assessment Criteria

- |                                  |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|
| • Cost                           | 20% |
| • Skills, knowledge & experience | 30% |
| • Methodology                    | 30% |
| • Ability to meet timeframe      | 20% |
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## Phasing

Phase	Description
Scoping & Design	Framework & stakeholder mapping
Data & Research	Surveys, interviews, case studies
Analysis & Drafting	Economic modelling, SROI, narrative
Approval & Final Report	Final document & professionally presented advocacy pack by September 21st 2026

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## Budget & Procurement

- Competitive tender process for consortia or specialist agencies
  - Budget £15-20K - to include consultancy fees, travel/workshops, economic modelling, report production
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## How to Apply

Applications should be submitted to [jobs@theatrebythelake.com](mailto:jobs@theatrebythelake.com), with the subject line *Cultural Impact Report*. Submissions should include:

- A description of your approach to delivery of the project brief, including sector consultation (2-3 pages)
- Proposed timeline with delivery for completion by 21<sup>st</sup> September 2026
- Details of experience of working on similar projects including at least two testimonials and examples of similar deliverables
- A breakdown of costs