



Events and Program Category



Summary

[Nuart Aberdeen](#) is an **internationally acclaimed, multi-award winning street art festival** that premiered in Aberdeen in April 2017. The festival was delivered through developing a close collaborative approach with [Nuart](#) in Stavanger, Norway where it began in 2001 and is widely considered to be the **world's premier celebration of Street Art** among its peers.

Nuart Aberdeen was delivered by Aberdeen Inspired, the Business Improvement District (BID) organisation, supported by Aberdeen City Council and partnered by **global brands**. The Festival, and its art, has had a **truly transformational effect on the city, encouraged inward investment, renewed the city centre turning space into place bringing increased footfall, interest, and commercial benefits for local businesses**. **Two of the murals** produced for the inaugural festival were recognised in the **top 15 best street art murals in the world** (Brooklyn Street Arts).

[Nuart Aberdeen](#) comprised of exhibitions, events, performances, interventions, walks, workshops, debates, talks and movies on street art by the world's leading practitioners. Aberdeen was a perfect fit for Nuart because the city provided a relatively blank canvas and as Europe's energy capital city Aberdeen has suffered significantly from the downturn in the oil and gas sector, the effects of which have permeated into all sectors of the economy. **The need for Aberdeen to diversify its events and programs to encourage inward investment and migration was critical.**

Policies of **active collaboration and the need for legacy underpin Nuart Aberdeen**, with the artists attending the Festival, amongst the most acclaimed and progressive public art visionaries in the world, taking the opportunity to pass on their skills to the next generation of artists.

Innovation

The worth of cultural development in regeneration and renewal of urban centres is well [documented](#). While street art itself is as old as civilisation, it has largely been the preserve of anonymous individuals or more recently, by celebrated artists delivered as part of a festival, [Wynwood Walls](#) being one of the most celebrated.

Aberdeen's transformational [Nuart](#) festival took three core elements of artists, communities and place and aimed to achieved total synergy by weaving together a truly integrated programme across a wide variety of sites **winning the hearts and minds and capturing the imagination** of the public at large. Through the creation of innovative street art pieces of all sizes we quite simply turned the city centre **space into place** by putting '**Beauty in the Streets**' bringing **increased footfall, interest, and commercial benefits for local businesses**.

Moreover, by involving young people from regeneration areas working with and learning from the artists, immense civic pride was instilled providing a platform for the next generation of urban innovators.

Replication

Linking communities, especially those that feature heavily on the various indices of multiple social deprivation, **together with cultural programs** fosters civic pride in the towns and cities. While culture and street art are not a panacea to solving these issues, if delivered as part of an end to end process they do act as a robust springboard to **revitalise an area, attracting inward investment and engendering increased civic pride** among the community, particularly the young and disenfranchised.

Nuart Aberdeen **redefined how we experience contemporary public art** in general, bringing it out of the museums, galleries and public institutions and onto the street into the heart of the community, **weaving the streets and sidewalks (often literally) into the cultural fabric of the city.**

Aberdeen's Nuart template therefore, provides other cities and towns experiencing these similar issues with a **route map to kickstart their own transformation and revitalisation.**

Representation

Nuart is based on the principle that **art should be part of peoples' everyday lives**, and the project saw close collaboration between the Nuart team, AI and included most aspects of the festival, especially curation, project management and marketing. **These multi-sector partnerships** included significant public and private funding from **global organisations** totalling around £200,000, buoyed also by logistical support from numerous local authority departments.

Strong local partnerships were also built with multiple local businesses for in-kind or discounted goods and services such as accommodation, catering, access equipment and venue space for events. **Local academic and arts institutions were engaged** and a volunteer support programme was delivered. Indeed, this latter element has expanded into many other significant AI projects, such as [Aberdeen Comedy Festival](#), [Aberdeen Jazz Festival](#) and [Aberdeen Restaurant Week](#) to highlight a few.

Sustainability

Fostering a spirit of civic pride, representatives from AI and the Nuart team were embedded within several schools and community organisations working with young people in **regeneration areas**. This policy, and the once in a lifetime opportunity to learn from globally renowned street artists has provided a firm foundation for the future as **Nuart returns to Aberdeen** in [2018](#) and beyond.

The artworks are semi-permanent and will gradually succumb to the weather but as they do fresh new blank canvasses will be created **providing an**

ongoing legacy for the next generation of artists. **The second part of the legacy** is that property owners, often initially slightly reticent to give consent, are now eager to be **part of future productions**.

Post-festival **we continue to see increased footfall in Aberdeen City Centre as visitors flock to discover the pieces** for themselves Interest is also buoyed by in-depth articles in [national](#) and [international](#) titles as well as leisure [magazines](#). Looking ahead to 2018 and beyond, in the same AGCC impact research **87% of visitors stated they would return for the festival**.

Execution

Nuart was a full year in planning. The festival lasted four days 13-16 April, most of the pre-production outlined [here](#), took place in situ over the preceding week, with all those involved experiencing a shared enthusiasm.

A methodical [project-focused approach](#) ensured that elements evolved logically providing firm foundations to build a multi-year initiative around a comprehensive [programme](#). **Nuart won the hearts and minds of residents and visitors alike to a level not seen in the City for almost 20 years**, as evidenced in this short [video](#).

Outcome

A need for an independent evaluation was crucial given the outlay. AGCC undertook the evaluation, which can be accessed [here](#). Almost one in five of respondents **had never before attended an arts and culture event**, providing an impact baseline.

AI's **core objectives are to increase footfall to the City Centre, boost customer dwell time and spend**. On average every visitor to Nuart spent around £25.30 (US\$35). As admission was mainly free it is difficult to quantify numbers, but taking sample figures of 5,000 and 25,000 visitors, gross economic impact was estimated as £126,488 (US\$175,479), and £632,442 (US\$877,468), respectively.

Analysis showing expenditure (that otherwise would not have been spent) estimates of 5,000 and 25,000 visitors equated with £105,733 (US\$146,714) and £528,663 (US\$733,529) respectively. Clearly demonstrating **the potential for additional economic benefits while revitalising a neighbourhood**.

Conclusion

Nuart was revolutionary and transformational for Aberdeen. People love it and engage with it every day. It is a **multi-award winning festival claiming success in the UK, European and beyond**. Aberdeen Inspired have successfully secured funding enabling the festival **to return through 2020, clear evidence of the importance of Nuart to the continued transformation and regeneration of our city centre**.