

AHA-MK is an alliance of 39 member organisations working together to:

- Promote Milton Keynes’ unique cultural identity to local, regional and national audiences
- Advocate the impact of culture to businesses, stakeholders and strategic bodies
- Inspire through a development programme for members, staff and volunteers
- Encourage and facilitate collaboration by spearheading projects that achieve joint aims

The impact our members had on Milton Keynes in 2016-17:



- Developed *Discovering MK* smartphone app for MK50, showcasing 50 heritage and culture gems across the city with funding from Heritage Lottery Fund, MK Community Foundation, Santander and MK Council. The app encourages families to explore their local environment and has had nearly 10,000 users since it was launched in summer 2017. It has attracted considerable national news coverage. See the app website here discoveringmk.com
- Lead for setting up the MK Cultural Education Partnership (MKCEP), a key national initiative of Arts Council England with support from the [Artswork](#), the South East bridge. The MKCEP supports the cultural wellbeing of Milton Keynes’ children and young people by joining up the cultural and education sectors. Collaboratively we are developing a Cultural Education Strategy.
- Through the MKCEP, secured £112,000 from Artswork in combination with match funding from various organisations across Milton Keynes towards pilot cultural education projects that use culture and creativity to help and support young people in the city to live healthier, happier lives. For more information see our [web page](#).
- Developed an ambitious £1.5m application to the Great Place Scheme (collaboration between Arts Council England, Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic England). Made the shortlist of three for the South East. Process developed networks, partnerships, our strategic thinking and ambition.



- Supported the development of MK's European Capital of Culture 2023 bid during the engagement and development phase.
- Represented members and the cultural sector at [South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership \(SEMLEP\)](#) meetings, City Club meetings and European Capital of Culture Steering Group Meetings.
- Delivered four Forum sessions for members to network and exchange ideas, as well as hearing from nationally and internationally renowned speakers. Topics included European Capital of Culture, The English Baccalaureate and its impact of the school curriculum, IF: International Festival and MK Festival Fringe overview, meanwhile spaces, and the What Next? movement with guest speakers including Neil Peterson (European bid consultant), Monica Ferguson (Artistic Director IF), Jessica Rost (Artistic Director MKFF), Henry Vann (Incorporated Society of Musicians), Clare Thurman (What Next?).
- Initiated a CPD member working group to invite speakers and plan 'Go and See' visits to learn from other cities and cultural venues.
- Continued to build our charity board and governance and increased AHA-MK membership, ensuring an effective, representative voice and a wide pool of talent for the benefit of Milton Keynes.
- Said a very warm thank you and good bye to Euan Henderson (Chair of AHA-MK for 5 years) and welcomed Francesca Skelton to the role of Chair of AHA-MK at the AGM November 2016.

Images: workshop at Milton Keynes Arts Centre, Festive Road dragon, MK City Orchestra concert, CultureConnect's Art in the Park 2016, children enjoying MK Museum, young people at Milton Keynes Arts Centre

