

# Edinburgh Festivals Forum

Edinburgh's Festival Forum is gearing up to host the second annual debate about the future of the city's festivals next month.

The Forum, the high level commission set up to ensure Edinburgh retains its position as the world's leading Festival City, will bring together festival directors, organisers, promoters, venue and accommodation providers, key public agencies, elected members, stakeholders and audiences for the Edinburgh Festivals Open Breakfast Debate on Saturday 14 August 2010.

This important event, to be held at Fringe Central at the University of Edinburgh's Appleton Tower, will be chaired by BBC broadcast Kirsty Wark, with panellists including Councillor Steve Cardownie, Deputy Leader and Festivals and Events Champion for the City of Edinburgh Council; Jonathan Mills, Artistic Director of the Edinburgh International Festival; Ron Hewitt, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and a member of the Festivals Forum; Andrea Miller, Head of Factual at BBC Scotland; Andrew Dixon, Creative Scotland's new Chief Executive; and Faith Liddell, Director of Festivals Edinburgh.

The focus of the event will be to debate the issues and opportunities facing our festivals and identify joint strategies to address these now and into the future.

Issues raised in the debate and solutions proposed will be recorded and reported back to the full Festivals Forum.

Councillor Steve Cardownie, Festivals and Events Champion for the City of Edinburgh, said: "Edinburgh enjoys international renown as the World's leading Festival City, with millions of people from across the globe flocking to Scotland's capital every year to experience the best in arts, sport, music and

culture. We simply cannot afford to be complacent, though, as there are other cities hot on our heels. This open debate will bring together key organisations and individuals who play a critical role in sustaining Edinburgh's world-leading status. By taking such a positive and proactive approach, we will ensure we are best placed to tackle whatever challenges lie ahead and harness every opportunity to continue to grow and thrive."

Festivals Forum Chair, Susan Rice, said: "The Festivals Forum was established to lead the strategic development of Edinburgh's internationally renowned Festivals. Much of our work centres on the national and international issues affecting the Festivals or concerns the UK and Scottish agencies that support the Festivals. Now an annual event, the Breakfast Debate allows us to engage the community that embraces the Festivals – the broad range of stakeholders who contribute to the success of the Festivals in myriad ways. We all share a passion for the Festivals, and a determination that Edinburgh remains the leading Festival City. It's important that every stakeholder – from theatre goer to theatre director – has the opportunity to have their say."

Tickets to the Edinburgh Festivals Open Breakfast Debate are free, available from the Fringe box office on 0131 226 0000 or at [www.edfringe.com](http://www.edfringe.com).