Northumbria University NEWCASTLE

Professor Katy Shaw

Feb 11, 2022 11:00 GMT

Northumbria Professor to lead project that will help level up the UK through culture

Professor Katy Shaw, Director of Cultural Partnerships at Northumbria University, has been chosen to lead a £1.5 million project that will explore how culture can address regional inequality and help level up the UK.

Professor Shaw, who is a leading authority in fostering cultural partnerships across the North, has been appointed Programme Director for Creative Communities by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and UKRI.

In her new role, Professor Shaw will lead significant outward-facing research and engagement work to identity and profile examples of good partnership-working practice from across the UK's regions and develop the potential for arts and humanities in building creative communities.

The Creative Communities programme unites academic, cultural and third sector partners to co-create a new evidence base that will inform future AHRC place-based approaches to levelling up through culture and creativity.

Taking a collaborative approach to culture, the new AHRC programme will examine the capacity of place partnerships to strengthen cultural and creative opportunity. It will explore how culture can help communities level up economically, socially and in terms of health and wellbeing.

The report builds on AHRC's Boundless Creativity project - which examines the role of innovation in shaping the recovery, renewal, and future growth of the UK's cultural and creative sector – which was published in collaboration with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport in July 2021.

Speaking about her new appointment, Professor Shaw said: "Culture connects us like nothing else and the pandemic has reminded us that place and participation matters now more than ever. The challenge is to preserve what we have and create new culture, as well as ensuring that culture is by all, and for all, going forwards.

"I am delighted that the AHRC has asked me to deliver the Creative Communities programme from Northumbria University. As an institution that is committed to developing the next generation of researchers, we especially welcome the opportunity afforded by the award to offer career development through three post-doctoral roles that will be funded with the award.

"The decision to base the programme here at Northumbria is testament to our sector-leading reputation in partnership working. Collaboration in teaching and learning, research and impact, knowledge exchange and public engagement is a stylistic trait of how we take on the challenges of tomorrow at Northumbria University. We are delighted that UKRI and AHRC are joining us in realising that vision through the Creative Communities programme. I look forward to working with a diverse range of creatives, audiences and organisations across the regions and nations of our United Kingdom in the months ahead."

Professor Andrew Wathey CBE, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive at Northumbria University, said: “The creative communities programme is a vital recognition of the role that the arts and humanities can play in enabling the creative economy.

“Creativity and Culture are not just important in building economic recovery, they are vital for our national wellbeing. The pandemic, and the lockdowns we all endured to combat it, have taught us again the true value of arts and culture in our lives, and in defining what it means to be human.

“We are delighted that Northumbria University can play an important role in this project that will help shape future generations of creatives.”

Professor Shaw is a public intellectual, presenter and author. As Director of Cultural Partnerships at Northumbria University she connects a portfolio of galleries, museums, theatres and writing development organisations to university teaching, research and civic engagement.

She is the author of five monographs about contemporary culture and has authored several national reports on the creative industries, including the 2021 Case for Culture: An All-Party Parliamentary Group for Northern Culture inquiry report into post-covid cultural recovery.

She is currently researcher in residence on the Michael Sheen, Daily Mirror, New Statesman and Joseph Rowntree project A Writing Chance, which aims to enhance routes into writing for working class writers.

Northumbria is a research-intensive modern university with a global reputation for academic excellence. Find out more about us at www.northumbria.ac.uk --- Please contact our Media and Communications team at media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk with any media enquiries or interview requests ---

Contacts

Rik Kendall
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences
rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339

Andrea Slowey
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436

James Fox
Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk

Kelly Elliott
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk

Rachael Barwick
Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415

Ruth Lognonne
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
ruth.lognonne@northumbria.ac.uk
07971274253

Gemma Brown
Press Contact
PR and Media Officer
gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk