

Robert Palmer

Personal Information

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Nationality: UK

Languages: English-mother tongue; French-advanced/fluent

Key Experience & Skills

- **Concept and Vision:** proven track record in developing a vision and building common ownership by creating strategic alliances with a wide range of key public, private, local and international partners.
- **Direction of policy, strategic development and implementation:** leadership, planning and organisational skills and ability to manage conflicting priorities, with a proven track record of creating and managing creative organisations through periods of change and transition at local, national and international levels. Emphasis on collaborative decision-making, shared leadership and fair process methods. Development of cultural resource mapping of cities as an assessment and cultural planning tool.
- **Accountability and delivery:** business and financial planning and budgeting, human resources, team leadership, negotiation, communications and project management skills, with a proven track-record of managing multi-cultural staff teams, sponsorship and fundraising, marketing, public relations and communications, with direct accountability to Boards and governing structures.
- **Evaluation and monitoring:** undertaking mid- term, final and ex-post evaluations of cultural programmes and projects including the management of interviews,

surveys, collection of data and statistical analysis, and/or the external monitoring of projects as part of a development or evaluation process.

- **Advice, coaching and consultancy:** to local, national and international authorities, cultural organisations, foundations and NGO's and public and private sector organisations involved in international arts programmes and projects, , cultural policy and development, strategic initiatives in the arts, cultural rights and social justice issues, international networking and development, regeneration of cities with a proven ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with elected politicians and government officials, artists, cultural practitioners, operators and organisations, and local authorities.
- **Communication:** in relation to advocacy, and across a wide range of different publics, including press and media.

Work History

Director. Robert Palmer Consultants.
Based in Edinburgh, UK
July 2013 to present

Offering independent expert advice and consultancy to a range of international projects dealing with cultural policy and strategy, cultural planning, cultural events and festivals, and European Capitals of Culture. Current projects in the Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Slovenia, Armenia, Georgia, Canada and UK. Expert for UNESCO (Convention on Cultural Diversity 2005). Author and instructor of first Cultural Policy and Planning Certificate (University of British Columbia, Canada), including modules on Festivals, Events and Eventful Cities and Foundations of Cultural Planning.

Director of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage, Council of Europe. This post was expanded to become the Director of Democratic Governance, Culture and Diversity.
Based in Strasbourg, France
June 2006 to July 2012

Directing and managing programmes on behalf of the Council of Europe (membership of 50 European States) in the sectors of arts, cultural and natural heritage, creative industries, and audio-visual sector. Work also focused on issues directly linked with democratic governance, access to culture, international cultural cooperation, protection and promotion of cultural rights and social justice, intercultural dialogue, and management of diversity and minority cultures, film-coproduction, media literacy and access, and

monitoring of European standards for tangible and intangible cultural and natural heritage. www.coe.int/culture

Key roles:

- Development of vision and strategy
- Full accountability for all programmes and budget (35 million euros excluding staff costs and overheads)
- Management, recruitment and development of 120 staff based in Strasbourg and in the field
- Leadership of a major programme of change, involving staff and partners to achieve strategic priorities
- Direct accountability to advisory and formal inter-governmental committees
- Spokesman for all press and media relating to culture
- Maintaining strong relations with a wide-range of governmental and non-governmental parties (ministries, local and regional authorities, cultural operators, networks and organisations)

**International Cultural Consultant, Palmer/Rae Associates.
Independent Consultancy
Based in Brussels, Belgium
February 2001 to June 2006.**

Directing and managing all projects. Clients included European Commission, Council of Europe, Department of Culture, Media and Sport UK, British Council and 10 additional international cultural institutes, European Cultural Foundation, Bertelsmann Foundation, Interarts Foundation, European Forum for Arts and Heritage/Culture Action Europe; national governments, regional governments and cities. Projects included strategic review and development of cultural organisations and networks, cultural and creative development policies linked to national and local government cultural policies, European Capitals of Culture, World Expos, arts festivals, cultural rights issues, international cultural development, networking, programming, training, facilitation and funding negotiations. Author of the Palmer Report evaluating 40 European Capitals of Culture 1985-2006. Chair of EU jury European Capitals of Culture 2002-2005, and expert consultant to more 10 cities that successfully bid for the title. Co-author of annual reports evaluating Capitals of Culture. Member of jury of UK City of Culture: Derry (2013); Hull (2017)

Projects spanned 21 European countries, Canada, Hong Kong and Africa.

Director, Bruxelles/Brussel 2000, European Capital of Culture 2000.

Based in Brussels, Belgium

November 1997 - January 2001.

Leading a programme of over 300 international cultural activities (performing and visual arts, literature, film, new media, science, social inclusion projects, folklore, pageants, special events and community activities, as well as a programme of infrastructural development linked to Brussels as the designated European Capital of Culture

Key roles:

- Development of vision and strategy
- Full accountability for all programmes and budget (22 million euros)
- Management, recruitment and development of 60 staff based in Brussels
- Direct accountability to Board of Governors (representing French, Flemish and German-speaking communities of Belgium, national government and the private sector)
- Spokesman for all press and media relating to Brussels European Capital of Culture
- Maintaining strong relations with a wide-range of artistic and cultural organisations, governmental bodies (ministries, local and regional authorities), international networks and associations

Director of Performing Arts, City of Glasgow

Based in Glasgow, Scotland.

January 1991 - November 1997

Directing and managing a service department of Glasgow City Council, and member of the senior management team of the Council. Responsible for 12 venues including 1800 seat theatre (Kings Theatre), 1200 seat concert hall (City Halls), 800 seat industrial venues (Tramway and Old Fruitmarket, which I personally developed). Also leading arts regeneration and arts development and creative industries policy and strategy for Glasgow City Council during this period, including decisions of all grants to the arts and arts organisations in Glasgow.

Key roles:

- Development of vision and strategy for the department
- Full accountability for all programmes and budget (18 million pounds)

- Management, recruitment and development of 125 staff based in Glasgow
- Leadership of a major programme of change resulting in the creation of a new Department of Glasgow City Council
- Direct accountability to a committee of elected members and to the Council itself
- Spokesman for all press and media relating to performing arts, cultural regeneration and creative industries in Glasgow.
- Maintaining strong relations with a wide-range of artistic and cultural organisations in Glasgow, across Scotland and internationally

**Director, Glasgow 1990, European Capital of Culture.
Based in Glasgow, Scotland
*May 1987 – January 1991***

Leading a programme of 400 city-wide and international cultural activities (performing and visual arts, literature, film, sport, science, social inclusion projects, special events and community activities, as well as infrastructural development (Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Tramway, Kelvingrove Museum, etc) linked to Glasgow as the designated European Capital of Culture

Key roles:

- Development of vision and strategy
- Full accountability for all programmes and budget (15 million pounds)
- Management, recruitment and development of 85 staff based in Glasgow
- Direct accountability to the Leader of Glasgow City Council and to the Council itself
- Spokesman for all press and media relating to Glasgow European Capital of Culture
- Maintaining strong relations with a wide-range of artistic and cultural organisations in Glasgow, across Scotland and internationally

**Director of Drama, Dance and Touring, Scottish Arts Council.
Based in Edinburgh, Scotland
*January 1980 – May 1987***

Directing and managing a department of the Scottish Arts Council responsible for policy and all professional performing arts activity in Scotland (14 theatres, 3 dance companies), and touring across Scotland.

Key roles (as an art form Director):

- Development of vision and strategy related to drama and dance across Scotland
- Representative of Scottish Arts Council on Boards of all theatre and dance companies and large-scale touring theatres
- Recommending and managing grants, guarantees, bursaries, etc.
- Direct accountability to the Drama, Dance and Touring Committees and to the Council itself
- Spokesman for all press and media relating to drama and dance
- Maintaining strong relations with a wide-range of artistic and cultural organisations, artists and others across Scotland
- Representing Scottish Arts Council on the Boards of the British Council and Edinburgh International Festival

**Director, Theatre Workshop Edinburgh
Based in Edinburgh Scotland.
*February 1975 - January 1980.***

Directing and managing a small-scale theatre, arts centre and arts development team working in local communities across the Lothians, with special projects for disadvantaged communities, people with disabilities and minorities.

Key roles:

- Development of vision and strategy
- Full accountability for all programmes and budget
- Management, recruitment and development of 45 full-time, part-time and free-lance staff based in Edinburgh
- Leadership of a major programme of change resulting in the move to Hamilton Place, Stockbridge
- Direct accountability to the Board of Trustees
- Spokesman for all press and media relating to Theatre Workshop
- Maintaining strong relations with a wide-range of artistic and cultural organisations in Edinburgh across Scotland and internationally.

**Free-lance Theatre Director and Writer.
Based in London (Cockpit Arts Centre, Covent Garden Festival and British Drama Centre), Bristol (Bristol Old Vic Theatre, Arnolfini Gallery), Stirling (MacRobert Arts Centre) and other venues across the UK
*1971 -1980***

Other roles:

Chair of the Board of Trustees of Visiting Arts (UK). 2009 to present. Promotes intercultural understanding by promoting artistic projects, residencies by artists and cultural exchanges. Current programmes in Asia, Africa, and Middle East.

Member of the Board of Archa Theatre, Prague (CZ). 2007 to present.
Produces and presents international theatre, dance and music, with an emphasis on new work and experimentation.

Member of the International Advisory Committee for Tourism and National Task Force on Tourism for Singapore. 1999 to 2003. Overseeing policy and operations of the Singapore Tourism Board.

President, Network of Cultural Cities of Europe. 1991 - 2001.
This is a network of 35 cities. Chaired all meetings. Secretariat based in Luxembourg.

Board Director, London International Festival of Theatre. 1991 - 2008. Annual festival and producer of theatre, dance, music in London

Board Member, Welfare State International. 2001 - 2006

Member of various European and International Juries, Panels, Committees, Recently Chair of the jury for the Routes Award for Cultural Diversity (European Cultural Foundation), Chair of the European jury for the selection of European Capital Culture (European Commission), Member of the jury for UK City of Culture (DCMS) 2013, 2017, 2021, and Chair of International Jury for Eurocities Awards on Innovative Urban Strategies (Barcelona).

Academic Background

Diploma in Arts Administration, City University London. 1974

Bachelor of Arts Degree (distinction), York University. 1969

Teaching Certificate, Royal Society of Arts. 1971

Awards

Order of Leopold. 2001. Awarded by the King of Belgium for distinguished service to Belgium. Citation for making an outstanding contribution to cultural development

Lord Provost's Award for the Arts, Glasgow. 1997.

British Award for Regeneration of Cities through the Arts.

International Theatre Institute Award for Excellence. 1991

Fellow, Royal Society of Arts (FRSA), London. 1991

Other Information

Contributor to numerous publications, journals, seminars and conferences. Acts as chairman, facilitator and speaker. List available on request.

Author of "Eventful Cities: Cultural Management and Urban Revitalisation" (with Greg Richards). Published by Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann (2010).

Signed

Robert Palmer