

**XpoNorth 2016**  
**MEDIA INFORMATION**  
**Wednesday 27th January, 2016**



[LINK TO FREE-TO-USE IMAGES](#)

## **CREATIVE INDUSTRIES TAKE THE HIGH ROAD**

**AN Inverness-based conference and showcase event devoted to fostering creative careers across the Highlands and Islands is set to demonstrate to the wider world that a remote location is no bar to forging a career in the creative industries.**

Announcing programme headlines for this year's XpoNorth on 8th and 9th June, XpoNorth director, Amanda Millen, said: "Creativity is a big part of who we are in the Highlands and the digital age has been a game-changer for creatives in the Highlands.

This year, for the first time, the conference element of XpoNorth – the only event of its type in Scotland to focus solely on the creative industries – is to be based at Eden Court Theatre in Inverness.

XpoNorth will contain over thirty panels covering topical subjects in the fields gaming, design, fashion, textiles, screen, broadcast, writing and publishing, not forgetting XpoNorth mainstay; music.

Millen also announced that this year, XpoNorth's hotly-contested showcase platform will be open to writers, as well as musicians and filmmakers.

Millen said: "XpoNorth is famous for being the place where creative industry insiders spot 'the next big thing'. Competition is always intense and our music and short film showcase sessions are always incredibly popular.

"This year, we are looking for writers to pitch completed works to a panel of publishers and agents.

"I'm delighted to say that the window for musicians, filmmakers and writers to showcase their work on the prestigious XpoNorth stage is now officially open."

Submissions should be directed through the XpoNorth website and the deadline is midnight on Friday 1st April."

The role of architecture in the creative industries is also celebrated as part of this year's Scotland-wide Festival of Architecture, part of Year of Innovation, Architecture and Design, 2016. XpoNorth is the Festival's delivery partner for the Highlands and Islands.

### **CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:**

- **Making your Location your USP; selling designs to worldwide audience**

- ❑ **The positive impact Music Festivals have had on Highlands & Islands economy**
- ❑ **News Gathering, BBC-style – the apps and add-ons we can all use**
- ❑ **The dark art of Crafting and Writing a Long Running Soap**
- ❑ **21st century Magazine Publishing in Scotland and beyond**
- ❑ **Virtual Reality - Go Beyond The Frame (and blow your mind...)**
- ❑ **Children's Media Grows up in Scotland**
- ❑ **Keynote by Professor Irene McAra-McWilliam, head of The Glasgow School of Art's School of Design and the GSA's Institute of Design Innovation in Forres**
- ❑ **Are Tech Companies the New Powerhouses of the Creative Industries?**
- ❑ **Meet the all-important Music Supervisors who place music in films, TV, advertising and video games**
- ❑ **Getting to grips with Google Garage – a major new skills programme from Google**

Attendance at XpoNorth is free on registration. Registration, via [xponorth.co.uk](http://xponorth.co.uk) is also now open.

Running alongside the conference will be a succession of networking, gaming playground, free training, parties and receptions round Inverness.

XpoNorth is offering free placements to anyone interested in working on its brand new live *XpoNorth Live!* television station. A host of workshops and hands-on training aimed at under 25s is on offer. These will focus on digital media, lyric and song writing.

Other training initiatives include a hands-on Hit the Ground Running course, which gives people a no-nonsense taster of what it's like to work behind the scenes in TV drama.

The window for musicians, filmmakers and writers/publishers to submit their work opens today (Wednesday 27th January, 2016) and the deadline is Friday 1st April.

Last year, XpoNorth attracted more than 1400 delegates and key international decision makers in the fields of screen, broadcast, craft, fashion, writing, publishing and music.

The short film showcase attracted an unprecedented number of submissions at just under 3,000 from home and 34 countries around the globe. There were 104 films screened, including a short shot on a GoPro in the waters around Orkney by local filmmaker, Mark Jenkins.

The all-important evening music showcases, which allow emerging talent to be seen and heard by all the right eyes and ears, saw applications continue to grow.

Last year, over 2,000 applications were whittled down to 64 slots and delegates were treated to sets from the likes of Scottish Album of the Year winner, Kathryn Joseph (before she won the accolade) and up-and-coming Inverness band, Spring Break.

Amanda Millen, a former BBC producer who also heads up ScreenHI, the screen and broadcast wing of XpoNorth, added: “This year, I think XpoNorth has come of age. There is so much creative activity going on in the Highlands and Islands and the digital era has opened up possibilities which means that it’s a fantastic place to make work and to do business.

“We look forward to welcoming all our delegates to the Highlands capital in June.”

Link for people to register for FREE as a delegate at this year's XpoNorth:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/xponorth-scotlands-leading-creative-industries-festival-registration-20857169355>

## **EDITOR’S NOTES:**

Formerly known as goNORTH, XpoNorth is devoted to boosting creative careers in the Highlands and Islands and beyond and takes place this year in Inverness on Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th June.

The only event of its kind in Scotland devoted to crafts and designer fashion, gaming, publishing, screen and broadcast, design and music, XpoNorth is also attended by leading creative industry insiders, who take part in workshops, panels and masterclass sessions over the course of both days.

XpoNorth, is funded by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

*The genres under the collective banner of XpoNorth are:*

### **XpoNorth Screen and Broadcast**

ScreenHI is XpoNorth’s screen and broadcast network. Led by former BBC producer, Amanda Millen, it operates all year round and supports businesses and individuals working in film, television, radio and video games across the Highlands and Islands.

### **XpoNorth Music**

Led by Alex Smith, XpoNorth Music is the industry network established to support the development of musicians and music businesses across the Highlands and Islands.

### **XpoNorth Design**

Recently established to support flourishing design community in Highlands and Islands. Hosted by Creative Futures Partnership, a collaboration between The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) and HIE. Led by the Institute of Design Innovation (InDI), a research institute within the GSA.

### **XpoNorth Writing and Publishing**

The sector head of Emergents Writers is Peter Urpeth. His role is to nurture creative talent in the field of writing and publishing across the Highlands and Islands.

### **XpoNorth Craft, Fashion and Textiles**

The sector head of Emergents Makers is Pamela Conacher, who leads a team which provides a programme of advice, training and support for the craft, fashion and textile sector in the Highlands and Islands.

**Website:** [www.xponorth.co.uk](http://www.xponorth.co.uk)

**Twitter:** @XpoNorth

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/xponorth](http://www.facebook.com/xponorth)

**Instagram:** [www.instagram/xponorth](http://www.instagram/xponorth)

**Hashtag:** #xponorth

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