

THE SPACE FOR CHANGE

Exploring a Capability Approach to Cultural Policy in Calgary and Leeds

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own, including work which has formed part of a jointly authored publication. The contribution of the candidate and the other authors to this work has been explicitly indicated below. The candidate confirms that appropriate credit has been given within the thesis where reference has been made to the work of others.

In chapter 5 of this thesis I critique Calgary's cultural policymaking process. A version of this critique and the empirical data presented in this section is also used in the following jointly authored paper:

Lechelt, E., & Cunningham, M. (2020). The politics of Participation in Cultural Policy Making. *Conjunctions: Transdisciplinary Journal of Cultural Participation*, 8.

The empirical data and critique were my original contributions to this paper. This paper also includes an original theoretical framework for meaningful participation in cultural policymaking, this framework was established by Malaika Cunningham, and this work is not included in this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to contribute to the small but growing body of work seeking to (re) imagine cultural policy towards issues of social justice and human wellbeing. It does so by conceptualising what a (cultural) capability policy design might look like and by questioning the space available to advance such policies on the ground. This work uses two middle cities, Calgary, Canada and Leeds, UK as case studies and draws on a unique theoretical framework that combines the capability approach (Sen, 1998; Nussbaum, 2011) with Rainer Forst's (2014), little used, theory of deliberative and democratic processes of justification, to explore the practicalities behind developing and implementing capabilities-based cultural policy design. It expands on Gross and Wilson's (2018) notion of 'cultural capability', defined as "the substantive freedoms to give form and value to our experiences", by considering what processes might be needed to advance cultural opportunities as legitimate policy aims in Calgary and Leeds. In order to gain a better sense of the space available in either city to enact substantive policy change, this research evaluates both cities' existing policies and practices. In particular, it focuses on how justifications for public support of arts and culture in Calgary and Leeds (and the power relations and processes that sustain them) encourage or constrict the ability to move policy beyond dominant practices and prevailing notions of cultural value.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Project

The shift in cultural policy practices and studies over the last forty years has seen agendas and academic focus shift from what Jim McGuigan (2005: 2) has called ‘critique in the public interest’ in that “it had its eyes firmly fixed on the public good” (Turner, 2015: 539) to the entrepreneur creative industries and a reorientation of policy around the primacy of the economy. The transition away from earlier policy concerns with the nation, communities and citizens to economic benefits of the arts and the “embrace of the ‘new’ economy of ‘knowledge-led production’” (Turner, 2015: 539) has meant that “the other vital roles that culture plays in our lives and our societies [like] education, identity, spirituality, or even fun” (Bell and Oakley, 2015: 7) are at risk of being ignored or undervalued as legitimate policy concerns. This thesis is motivated by a desire to think about how we might (re)imagine cultural policy away from economic imperatives and towards human wellbeing and flourishing in the vein of social justice. Specifically, it builds upon the capability approach (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2017; Wilson et al., 2017 Gross and Wilson, 2018) to begin to conceptualise anew framework for cultural policy, one that is committed to understanding the developing nature of cultural value and that seeks to maximise people’s substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture. While this work acknowledges that cultural policy neednot serve democratic purposes (Hadley and Belfiore, 2018), it sits firmly on the belief that cultural policy could and should play a role in encouraging more just and fair practices in cultural production and value allocation, and that it should actively seek to break down issues of inequality and discrimination. It could be argued that, in liberal democratic societies, various cultural policy practices and aims have been attempting to

do just that. However, sustained critique of the normative and conceptual foundations of cultural policy over the past decades have told a different story. These works have, for example, highlighted how problematic discourses (Banks and O'Connor, 2017) around cultural value and the creative economy have resulted in potentially damaging policy interventions that have worked to mask unequal power relations, precarity and issues of discrimination not break them down (Jancovich and Bianchini, 2013; Malik, 2013; Banks, 2017; Jancovich, 2017; Belfiore, 2018; McRobbie, 2016; Nwonka and Malik, 2018).

I conducted my research before the onset of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, my work speaks directly to many of the issues raised by this current crisis, particularly concerns around the potential future path of cultural policy. The ongoing impacts of COVID-19 amplify these concerns; the continuing global pandemic has made visible many structural inequalities and underlying issues of precarity across the sector (Comunian and England, 2020; Eikhof, 2020). Alongside issues of mass unemployment, resulting from the closure of cultural sectors worldwide, the future of inclusion and workforce diversity within the sector are increasingly uncertain (Comunian and England, 2020; Eikhof, 2020). Governments have implemented interventions in various countries to support the cultural sector. However, as Doris Eikhof (2020) points out, these early responses “are focused on cultural economy institutions and businesses rather than workers” (234). While we should question the effectiveness of these responses in supporting “the substantive share of cultural workers earning their living from a precarious portfolio of self-employment and short-term employment contracts” (Eikhof, 2020: 235; Pratt, 2020), Eikhof (2020) stresses that we should concern ourselves with the lack of discussion how job losses and increased

precarity of work and employment bring varying implications for different groups of workers of. Along similar lines, Comunian and England (2020) point out that early government surveys on the impact of the pandemic, at least in the United Kingdom, fail to pay adequate attention to how more marginalised workers may “end up being the ones paying the higher price” (122). The issue here is that the current and long term pressures facing the cultural economy business model will likely render it increasingly precarious, and as a result will further deter already under-represented groups, including people from certain ethnic or class backgrounds, people with caring commitments and disabled workers, from pursuing creative careers (Comunian and England, 2020; Eikhof, 2020). In short, “the loss of jobs, opportunities and the contraction of the creative sector caused by the pandemic now risk undoing the (admittedly slow) progress that had been made” (Belfiore and Lee, 2020: 180) in the past decades to increase inclusion and diversity in the cultural sector. Furthermore, policy-makers have yet to acknowledge that “Covid-19 is an emergency that exacerbates the precarious structural conditions of the sector, and that a short-term response is not the only change that might be needed” (Comunian and England, 2020: 122; O'Connor, 2007). Emerging recovery discussions also appear to reproduce old tropes around economic growth and the social impact of the arts (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2020a; Canada Council for the Arts, 2020; Arts Council England, 2020). Alongside this, we see bolstered “resilience” rhetoric. While this is not surprising, given the sectors current state of crisis, from a critical perspective such discourse risks naturalising the potential future need for increased privatisation and corresponding public divestment by suggesting that with the right attitude and structure, the sector can, as it has in the past, adapt to funding cuts (Comunian and England, 2020: 123-124; Robinson, 2010).

Without doubt, COVID-19 will “dramatically affect the financing, management, administration and impact of the cultural and creative sectors” (Belfiore and Lee, 2020: 179) in ways with long-lasting effects on the cultural policy sphere. However, it remains unclear how cultural policy will transform as a result of the pandemic; that is, whether the cultural sector will advance policy changes and interventions to enable more fair and equitable practices or whether this crisis will further entrench the cultural sector’s already unequal and precarious nature. It has never been more critical to address and respond to longstanding structural issues that have perpetuated unequal power relations and exclusionary practices both within cultural policy practices and the sector. My research is inspired by scholars seeking new, more just, approaches to cultural value and policy practices (McGuigan, 2005; Graves, 2010; Jancovich, 2011; Stevenson, 2013; Hesmondhalgh, 2014; Belfiore, 2015; Turner, 2015; Hesmondhalgh, 2017; Banks and O’Connor, 2017; Banks, 2017; Hadley and Belfiore, 2018), including those working to understand what a revised and refashioned notion of ‘cultural democracy’ might entail and how such a regenerated concept might impact future policy change (Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018; Hadley, 2018). Beyond exploring different ways of asserting cultural value, I attempt to broadly conceptualise what a new framework for cultural policy, geared towards issues of social justice and wellbeing, could look like, and I reflect on what operationalising such an approach might entail.

1.2 Research Contribution

From the start, this research project has sought to think of new ways of (re)imagining cultural policy towards issues of social justice and wellbeing, and since very early on in this process, I have held the conviction that the capability approach to human

development offers valuable insights into how we might begin to conceptualise alternative normative foundations for cultural policy. I elaborate on the capability approach in detail in Chapter 2. However, briefly put, this approach was developed as a counter theory to, and critique of, prevailing models of international development such as those that focus on GDP, or that employ happiness approaches or resources-based theories of justice (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2017). In their place, the capability approach purports “that freedom to achieve wellbeing is a matter of what people are able to do and be, and thus the kind of life they are effectively able to lead” (Robeyns, 2017: 24). Rather than a precise theory, the approach is generally conceived as an open and flexible framework that can be used for different types of analysis ranging between “the evaluation and assessment of individual wellbeing and social arrangements, the design of policies, [and] proposals about social change in society” (Robeyns, 2005a: 93; Sen, 1992; Alkire, 2002). Over the past four decades, it has expanded beyond development economics and ethics to include a range of fields including environmental protection and ecological sustainability, education, and welfare state policies to name just a few (Robeyns, 2017). While the capability approach has been used across a number of disciplines, with a few notable exceptions in the arena of communication studies (Garnham, 1997; Couldry, 2010; Hesmondhalgh, 2014; Moss, 2018; Gross and Wilson, 2018; Scott et al., 2018), it remains underdeveloped in the field of cultural policy research.

Regardless of how it is employed, the capability approach asks “*What are people really able to do, and what kind of person are they able to be?*” (Robeyns, 2017: 9). That is, it asks what real opportunities (capabilities) people have to choose to *be* who they want to be and *do* what they value. In this context, research and policy development aim to

“expand the portfolio of the capabilities that form the shape of individuals’ freedom of ‘choice’” (Kleine, 2013: 27). We can understand the capability approach as offering an account of wellbeing and flourishing that is based on substantive freedom (Sen, 2001). Importantly, substantive freedoms — what people are actually able to do and be — are objective states, and thus the approach avoids subjective wellbeing trends, which assess quality of life based on people’s reported feelings about their lives, which may be adaptive (Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2017). It also avoids wellbeing assessments based on desire fulfilment, of income, expenditures or consumption (Robeyns, 2017; 2005a). Simply put, the approach rests on the premise that paths towards human flourishing are better thought of in terms of objectivist states of being and doing. Furthermore, it takes a pluralist but not relativist view of wellbeing (Hesmondhalgh, 2017; Sayer, 2011); that is, while it acknowledges the pluralistic nature of capabilities — that many diverse and overlapping opportunities and freedoms can lead to various forms of wellbeing — the approach avoids assuming that “just any way of life constitutes wellbeing” (Sayer, 2011: 135).

From the point of view of this project, the liberal nature of the approach and its concerns for freedom and opportunity of choice (which reflects a general anti-paternalistic commitment) offers a useful lens through which to begin thinking about how we might (re)imagine cultural policy towards issues of wellbeing and social justice. Broadly speaking, it offers alternative conceptual and normative foundations for policy practices, that move away from the dominant deficit and creative industries models currently in play across the globe. Furthermore, it creates the space to question the role of cultural policy in contemporary society. The approach is also useful for exploring alternative ways of asserting cultural value and of assessing arts and culture’s

potentially diverse links to human wellbeing. That said, a dearth of examples presented some initial challenges to operationalising the approach in my study.

In order to address this issue, my project began primarily by drawing on capability research more broadly (Sen, 1992; Nussbaum, 1997; Anderson, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 2001; Alkire, 2002; Robeyns, 2005b; 2005a; 2006; Nussbaum, 2011; Clark, 2013; Alkire et al., 2017; Robeyns, 2017) as well as on the invaluable research conducted by scholars employing the approach to investigate issues around media, communications and cultural value (Garnham, 1997; Couldry, 2010; Hesmondhalgh, 2014; Moss, 2018; Scott et al., 2018; Gross and Wilson, 2018). During the last two years of my research, Gross and Wilson (2018) published articles offering a “new account of cultural democracy” centred around the notion of ‘cultural opportunities’ or ‘cultural capabilities’. Viewing their work as a potentially fruitful, if underdeveloped, conception of how we might advance the capability approach in cultural policy research, this project, informed by wider theories and research around capabilities and perspectives of social justice, seeks to build upon and operationalise Gross and Wilson’s initial notion of ‘cultural capabilities’, which I will detail now.

Gross and Wilson (2018) argue that “the various articulations of cultural democracy (and the frameworks they critique) each contain an implicit account of cultural opportunity” (5). They stress that “as part of the process of developing new conceptual and normative foundations for policy, these accounts need to be made explicit, and contested” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 5). Gross and Wilson (2018) propose a “specific account of cultural opportunities as the freedom people have, or lack, to (co-)create

culture”, or, more precisely, the substantive freedom people have to give form and value to our experiences (5). *Culture*, in this case, is framed as follows:

[it] is emergent from, constituted by, but irreducible to all those socio-economic phenomena that are reproduced and/or transformed through people giving form and value to their experiences. Under this working definition, it should be observed that the structures and institutions that act to motivate, enable and constrain people’s cultural opportunities — thus (re)producing both possibilities and inequalities — are themselves part of what culture *is*, rather than acting externally upon something we call ‘culture’. (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 5)

By foregrounding cultural opportunities, Gross and Wilson (2018) attempt to offer “a specific conceptual framework that enables researchers and policymakers to step beyond [the] thicket of terms, causal claims and normative uncertainties” (4) that surround discussions of culture and democracy. To establish a conceptually stronger and more encompassing account of cultural opportunities, they frame the concept in two ways. The first is that cultural opportunities are *ecological* in nature, in that they are not located in a single organisation or space but instead “through the interconnections and interdependencies between cultural resources of many kinds” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 6). The second, and more central to this research, is that they position cultural opportunities within the capability approach.

By rooting the potentially unwieldy idea of cultural opportunities in the capability approach, Gross and Wilson can normatively ground the concept in a particular notion of objective wellbeing and social justice. In other words, the idea of cultural opportunities (capabilities) is underpinned by people’s substantive (cultural) freedoms

— they signify the real opportunities and freedoms people have to give form and value to their experiences. Within this approach, maximising people’s real freedoms to (co-)create culture, if they so choose, becomes the ultimate goal of cultural policy and the primary measure of wellbeing. Therefore, at its most basic, the notion of cultural capability provides an alternative framework for cultural policy, one that avoids paternalistic tendencies associated with issues of access and excellence, and reflects key principles of cultural democracy in its commitment to securing and advancing people’s freedoms and opportunities to give form and value to their experience. It also provides a clear point of evaluation with regard to wellbeing. For instance, policymakers and researchers can use the concept to evaluate how existing policy practices either advance or restrict people’s freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture.

This project takes up the concept of cultural capability because, like Gross and Wilson, I believe it offers a promising way of advancing a capability approach to cultural policy design and a strong lens through which to assess how cultural policy, institutional structures and various cultural initiatives impact wellbeing. However, theirs is only an initial account, and, as the authors are quick to point out, it needs to be explored and developed further. Within the context of cultural policy research, we need a greater understanding of how the notion of cultural capability can be operationalised, both in terms of how to ground the concept in policy practice and how to use it to evaluate existing processes and structures (Gross and Wilson, 2018). Furthermore, opportunities to (co-)create culture (cultural opportunity) are diverse, interwoven and wide-reaching; they are potentially innumerable and are interconnected to a myriad of activities and practices. Briefly put, in this early stage of developing theoretical accounts of cultural capability, the concept remains vague and broad, and there are as yet no “cultural

capability indexes”, to use Gross and Wilson’s term (2018), to inform evaluation and analysis. I believe we need to begin to identify and articulate what we mean by cultural capabilities; however, as I will explain fully in the following chapter, I oppose establishing fixed lists of “universal” cultural capabilities, which we risk when we create ‘cultural capability indexes’. Therefore, borrowing from Klein’s (2013) terminology, I suggest that we instead think about developing a ‘portfolio of cultural capabilities’ that can be used to spark debate and discussion around, for example, how cultural capabilities are identified as well as who determines which cultural capabilities matter and how to assign value.

My research develops the concept of cultural capabilities in two ways. First, I consider what a cultural policy that seeks to advance people’s substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture might entail. With no portfolio of cultural capabilities to draw from, I posit that people’s substantive freedoms to shape cultural value and guide value allocation represent a viable cultural capability. My reasoning for this is relatively straight forward. Simply put, the manner in which we decide which art forms are worthy of public support and why shapes and legitimises particular notions of cultural value. However, the processes through which value is allocated are not neutral. As Belfiore (2018) notes, “cultural value does not operate and is not generated in a social, cultural and political vacuum, but is in fact shaped by the power relations predominant at any one time, and is a site for struggles over meaning, representation and recognition” (2). Consequentially, she notes, there are winners and losers in the struggle over cultural value, whereby various social groups have “different access to the power to bestow value and legitimise aesthetic and cultural practices” (Belfiore, 2018: 2). Creating more equal opportunities for people to engage in these meaning-making processes freely is, I

argue, a valuable and essential cultural capability in advancing people's substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture if they so choose.

Although it is a start, it is not enough to offer new conceptual and normative frameworks for what cultural policy should or could be. If we hope to advance change, we must gain a greater understanding of “the obstacles, possibilities, and dilemmas” (Wright, 2010: 10) involved in transforming cultural policy practices in radical and emancipatory ways. Therefore, I offer insights into the realities of operationalising such an approach to policy on the ground. To do this, I conduct case studies of Calgary (Canada) and Leeds (United Kingdom) that seek to understand how each city ‘makes the case’ for public support for the arts, by investigating how their cultural policies, as well as their policymakers and cultural leaders, rationalise public spending on arts and culture. Here I employ Rainer Forst’s theory of justification (2011b; 2014; 2017), elaborated in more detail later in this chapter and in the next, to uncover what values, norms, ideologies and circumstances underlie arguments for public support for the arts, and what power relations steer these practices. My analysis has three distinctive aims. Firstly, I seek to understand how existing justifications for support either encourage or restrict people’s opportunities (capabilities) to shape cultural value. Secondly, I evaluate policymaking processes in both Calgary and Leeds to clarify how these justificatory practices either advance or constrict people’s freedoms to guide the allocation of cultural value. Lastly, I reflect on how existing arguments for public support, and the power relations, norms and values that sustain them, impact other possible cultural capabilities, such as opportunities to freely express oneself and opportunities to engage with and produce work in ways that are open and free from discrimination.

My research offers an initial operationalisation of the cultural capability approach. In doing so, it contributes to the development of the cultural capability theory and feeds back into theoretical accounts of how the capability approach can be used within the study of cultural policy more broadly. Additionally, it identifies some possible cultural capabilities and thus helps to generate a ‘portfolio of cultural capabilities’, which can inform studies employing the approach in the future and spark debate and discussion around the concept of cultural capability more generally.

In a broader sense, I hope with this to contribute to discussions around the future of cultural policy and its role in advancing issues of social justice and wellbeing. Without doubt, established critiques around the creative economy and industries (Hesmondhalgh, 2008; Pratt, 2011; Banks and O’Connor, 2017), cultural labour (Oakley, 2013; Banks, 2017; McRobbie, 2016), cultural value (Oakley and O’Brien, 2015; Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016; Belfiore, 2018), and policy practice (Belfiore, 2002; Gray, 2009; 2010; Jancovich and Bianchini, 2013; Turner, 2015) are invaluable for understanding the prevailing conceptual and normative foundations of cultural policy. However, increasing acknowledgement that cultural studies has lost its drive to “inform action in cultural policy” (Hadley and Belfiore, 2018: 13; McGuigan, 2005) has resulted in a call from scholars to revive and further develop critical approaches to the study of cultural value and policy practices in ways that renew its “commitment to critique in the interest of social justice and equity” (Belfiore, 2018: 13; McGuigan, 2005; Turner, 2015). Comparatively, the range of work to develop alternative conceptual and normative foundations for research and policy practice is limited. However, a small but growing body of work is beginning to speak to issues like: the need for new approaches to understanding cultural value that recognise it as a space of

power struggle and inequality (Belfiore, 2018), the need for substantive normative accounts of creative justice (Banks, 2017), the importance of ‘voice’ in establishing a culture and politics beyond neoliberalism (Couldry, 2010), the contributions media and culture can make to issues of wellbeing or other non-economic goals (Hesmondhalgh, 2014; 2017; Moss, 2018; Scott et al., 2018) and the role of art and culture in sustainable prosperity (Oakley et al., 2018). In its attempt to offer an alternative conceptual and normative framework for a cultural policy geared towards issues of wellbeing and social justice, and in its critique of how existing process and practices might inhibit substantive policy change, my study endeavours to contribute to this developing body of literature.

1.3 Research Questions

This thesis’s research questions highlight my overarching aim to begin (re)imagining a cultural policy design rooted in a (cultural) capability approach. They are also motivated by the need to gain a deeper understanding of the realities of operationalising this approach to policy on the ground. Therefore, this thesis is governed by three research questions:

1. How might we begin to conceptualise a cultural capability approach to cultural policy design?
2. How are justifications for public support for arts and culture encouraging or restricting people’s ability to shape notions of cultural value in Calgary and Leeds?
3. How are justifications for public support for arts and culture constricting people’s ability to access valuable cultural capabilities in either city?

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This research draws on two broad theoretical frameworks: the capability approach and Forst's theory of justification. Employing the cultural capability approach both theoretically and in practice, means adhering to crucial aspects of the capability approach more broadly. Therefore, alongside Gross and Wilson's (2018) work, this project explores a range of other capability studies (Anderson, 1999; Sen, 2001; Robeyns, 2005a; 2006; Nussbaum, 2011) to gain greater insight into the main principles of the approach as well as how it is employed in other fields of study. It also draws on works by media and communication scholars who have employed the capability approach (Hesmondhalgh, 2014; 2017; Moss, 2018; Scott et al., 2018; Gross, 2019). This literature provides my project with a more robust appreciation of how the capability approach can be employed to conceptualise an alternative normative approach to cultural policy design as well as how it can be used to assess human wellbeing in the vein of social justice.

While the capability approach plays a vital role in this research, it is not well equipped to deal with the evaluation of power nor can it address issues of procedural fairness (Sen, 2001; 2010; Kleine, 2013; Moss, 2018). In short, it cannot help investigate how existing arguments for public support for the arts in Calgary and Leeds are shaped and sustained through power relations, nor can it to provide insight into what more just policy processes are needed to ensure that people have equal opportunities to shape notions of cultural value at the state level.

I overcome this issue by incorporating Forst's (2011a; 2014; 2017) rarely explored theory of justifications. Forst's work proves useful to my project in two ways. To begin with, his theory of justification rests on the philosophical premise that society is the product of a myriad of justifications that draw on particular forms of reasoning, norms, values ideologies and power relations (Forst, 2011b; 2014). In other words, we can understand 'justifications' as representing spaces of struggle over meaning and value that work to define and legitimise social practices. In this way, Forst's theory allows me to frame justifications for public support in Calgary and Leeds as power struggles over the meaning and purpose of culture that ultimately work to legitimise processes of value allocation and cultural validation that help to shape institutional practices and policy aims in each city.

Furthermore, for Forst, justice "is not only a matter of which goods, for which reasons and in what amounts, should legitimately be allocated to whom, but in particular of how the structures of production and allocation of goods came into the world in the first place and of *who* decides on their allocation and *how* this allocation is made' (Forst, 2014: 33-34, italics in original). Following this premise, I must concern myself with who and/or what has the power over the justificatory processes I study, and why. I must also question who is left out of these meaning-making processes and identify the available room, or lack thereof, to challenge existing rationales and to offer alternative ways of justifying why the arts deserve public funding. Additionally, Forst outlines what just processes of justification should entail, and thus provides this research with a more comprehensive understanding of what a cultural policy seeking to secure people's equal opportunity to shape cultural value might involve.

His theory also lays out a clear framework for critique, including the prerequisite that this research project gain an understanding of the evolution of justifications for public support by mapping out how arguments for public support in Calgary and Leeds have been, and are currently shaped by broader social, political and economic structures, values, ideologies, norms, power relations and local circumstances. My aim here is to identify how arguments for public support for the arts have shifted and/or been sustained in each city, and to get a clearer picture of how dominant justifications for public support in these cities came to be. Forst's theory also allows for an appreciation of the complex and diverse nature of justificatory practices. That is, economic or social arguments for public support may appear, at times, to be universal, in that they are similarly adopted by many nations and cities across the globe. However, the values and circumstances that underpin these rationales, the power relations that sustain them, and the way they play out over time differ from place to place; understanding these nuances is a crucial step in assessing the space available to advance a cultural capability approach to policy design on the ground. Additionally, the framework encourages researchers to investigate issues of power within process of justification, which I do by evaluating how both cities developed their current co-produced cultural plans alongside Calgary's recent campaign for increased funding and Leeds's 2023 European Capital of Culture bidding process. The overarching aim of these critiques is to gain a greater understanding of the ways in which existing justifications for public support, which work to shape the landscape of cultural policy in both cities, are influenced by power relations, certain distributions of cultural authority and access to the means of symbolic representation and meaning-making. With this knowledge, we may start to grasp how and in what ways social justice and human wellbeing are inhibited by current structures

of cultural value and begin to think about what means and what resources we need to alter these existing practices to bring forward change in each city.

I was inspired to include Forst's concept of justification by Giles Moss's (2018) recent work, in which he details how this theory can be applied alongside the capability approach to, among other things, evaluate the justificatory discourses that media circulates and to consider the relations of justifications that surround the media and how these may be further democratised (Moss, 2018: 105-106). Moss's, however, is an early attempt at advancing Forst's theory in media studies, and while it offers an insightful overview of potential for future research, there is, to date, no evidence that the approach has been applied to media studies. Outside of my research, its potential as a useful theoretical framework for the study of cultural value and policy practice has not been considered. In other words, my research project represents an initial attempt at operationalising Forst's theory of justification in the field of cultural policy studies.

Forst's theory is certainly not the only theory of justifications, and there are examples of media and cultural policy studies, albeit rare, that employ these other approaches. Most notably, Boltanski and Thevenot's (2006) theory, which explores how justifications are structured by various values, reasonings and principles of justice, defined as "orders of worth", has been taken up to explore issues of media, policy and culture (Bennett, 2020; Edwards et al., 2015). However, as I will elaborate in the following chapter, Forst's work lays the foundation for investigating justificatory practices and their relation to issues of social justice and wellbeing, and, therefore, for my research purposes, it offers the most comprehensive critical theory of justification (Forst, 2011b; 2017; Azmanova, 2018).

1.5 Empirical Study

As I have stated, this research seeks in part to understand the realities of grounding a cultural capability approach to cultural policy design on the ground. More specifically, I am interested in how existing justifications for public support for the arts might encourage or restrict people's opportunities and freedoms to (co-)create culture, and how these practices might impact the potential for substantive policy change. I selected two cities, Calgary and Leeds, as case studies for this analysis. There are a few reasons why I chose these particular cities. The first is that they represent under-explored 'middle cities'. Briefly put, 'middle cities' are generally understood as having relatively large and diverse populations of over 500,000, but below two million (Kelly et al., 2016), diverse economies (although many rely more heavily on a primary economic base), and universities (often including trade and art colleges), and they are typically home to relatively varied cultural industries and institutions (Langford et al., 2009). Many urban sites across the globe fall within the parameters of this category, but they are often overlooked in creative industries, labour and cultural policy literature, which tends to instead focus on major hubs as primary sites of study (Cho et al., 2018; van Heur, 2010). That said, there is a relatively small group of creative economy scholars (Kong et al., 2006; 2011; Luckman et al., 2009; Waitt and Gibson, 2009; van Heur, 2010), who push back against assumptions that "that large cities are the cores of creativity" (Waitt and Gibson, 2009: 1233), and who focus on (more ordinary) 'middle cities' in an attempt to gain a greater understanding of how culture 'works' across cities of all sizes. I hope with my study to contribute to this body of research.

Furthermore, the benefit of assessing two cities, in two different countries, is that it allows for greater insight into the diverse, complex and interwoven nature of justifications for public support for the arts and their potential effects on social justice and wellbeing. As discussed earlier, despite similarities, rationales for public support varies from place to place, and, as a result, their effect on people's opportunities to (co-)create culture are also place specific. My analysis of Calgary and Leeds aims to make these nuances and complexities visible.

There are also practical reasons for my choice. Calgary is my hometown, and I lived in Leeds for the first three years of my study, and thus I had easy access to interviewees and necessary policy documents. Additionally, when I started this research in 2016, both cities were developing co-produced cultural strategies as well as undergoing shifts in their cultural landscapes. Leeds, for example, was making a bid for the 2023 European Capital of Culture, while Calgary City Council was in a battle with the cultural sector over public funding for the arts. Given that each city was in the process of developing, promoting and, in Calgary's case, defending their rationales for public support, I viewed them as ideal places to study practices of justification.

This research is based on qualitative approaches that rely on semi-structured interviews and an analysis of secondary sources. The fieldwork was carried out between 2017 and 2019 in both Calgary and Leeds, where I conducted 41 semi-structured interviews (20 in Leeds, 21 in Calgary) with policymakers and sector leaders, including creative directors and managers of large, medium and grassroots art institutions; philanthropists; and policy consultants. I specifically selected policymakers and sectors leaders, as these occupations are involved in practices of justification for public support for the arts and

legitimisation of certain notions of cultural value. This research method allows me to evaluate how leaders in the arts sector speak to issues of cultural value, and how they reason about why arts and culture deserve public support, and thereby offers insight into the existing justificatory practices taking place in each city.

Data collected via semi-structured interviews is further supplemented by an analysis of justificatory discourses found in cultural policy and planning documents (national and local) spanning the last 25 years as well as an extensive literature review. Combining these three areas of analysis (interviews, secondary data, literature review), helps to contextualise each city's justifications, offering insight into socio-cultural-historical development of various notions of cultural value as well as the local circumstances that have helped shape existing arguments for public support.

1.6 Thesis Overview and Structure

This thesis consists of seven chapters, including three substantial empirical chapters. The first two empirical studies focus on existing justificatory practices, including how justifications have evolved in Calgary and Leeds over the past sixty years, and issues of power within each city's justificatory processes. The aim here is to gain a deeper understanding of the ways these practices enhance or restrict people's ability to shape notions of cultural value, and how they guide the allocation of value with regard to state-funded arts and culture. The final empirical chapter evaluates how existing justifications, and the values and structures they sustain, impact the opportunity to engage with other possible cultural capabilities, like freedom of expression and the opportunity to engage with and create art in spaces that are respectful, open, and free

from discrimination. The overarching goal of all of these empirical chapters is to gain a better sense of how existing rationales for public support and the values and structures they support and sustain might impact the ability to advance radical policy change in either city.

Chapter 2 outlines my project's theoretical framework, details how I develop Gross and Wilson's notion of cultural capabilities, and outlines my approach for critique. The chapter is divided into two main parts. The first focuses on how this research conceptualises an alternative cultural policy design geared towards issues of social justice and wellbeing. This section discusses the capability approach (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2017), the notion of cultural capabilities (Gross and Wilson, 2018), and how this project builds on these concepts and seeks to operationalise them. In the second half of the chapter, I detail how my research critiques justifications for public support for the arts in Calgary and Leeds.

Chapter 3 discusses the project's methodological approach and research design. This study is underpinned by Forst's (2014; 2017; 2011b) little-used theory of justification, which is highly philosophical, and, while it outlines a potential framework for analysis, has not yet been grounded in any empirical study. Therefore, I employ Fairclough's (2012; 2014) critical discourse analysis, as well as his concept of argumentation, to operationalise Forst's theory of justification in practice. I detail the qualitative approach and data collections methods used to investigate justificatory practices, including semi-structured interviews with policymakers and sector leaders; an analysis of justificatory discourse found in policy and government documents; and an extensive literature review of previous research about cultural value and policy.

Chapter 4 presents a genealogy of justifications for public support for the arts in Calgary and Leeds. It draws on interviews, secondary data, and existing literature around cultural policy, creative industries, creative economy, cultural labour and cultural value to map out how justifications in each city have evolved over the past six decades. I thereby provide a clearer picture of how broader social, economic and political structures, power relations, norms, values, ideologies and local circumstances have shaped these justificatory practices over time. I also reflect on the space available in each city to challenge and/or change existing justifications and notions of cultural value.

Chapter 5 continues the discussion of justifications by evaluating justificatory processes in Calgary and Leeds. I assess the development of both city's co-produced cultural plans, as well as Calgary advocacy group *Creative Calgary's* recent campaign for increased funding and Leeds's 2023 European Capital of Culture bidding process. I aim here to understand who was (or was not) involved, and who held the power in these justificatory processes. I engage with Forst's (Forst, 2011b; 2014) notion of just processes of justification ("the right to justification") to explore the extent to which these processes can be considered fair and equal. The overarching aim of this chapter is to get a clearer picture of how existing processes either restrict or encourage people's opportunities to guide the allocation of value in either city.

Chapter 6 explores how existing justificatory practices, and the identified values and structures they sustain, impact access to other valuable cultural capabilities. In this way, I move beyond discussing how cultural policy may guarantee people's freedoms and

opportunities to shape cultural value, to examine how existing justifications for public support impact people's freedom to, for example, participate in and create the art of their choosing or engage in opportunities that promote affiliation and non-discrimination. I also reflect briefly on how a cultural capability approach to policy design might transform existing practices so that we may begin to gain a better sense of how this (re)imagining of cultural policy might address substantive issues in each city. As in the previous chapters, I hope to gain a better understanding of how rationales for public support encourage or restrict the possibility for future policy change.

Chapter 7 articulates the answers to this thesis's research questions. I review my conceptual and normative framework for critique and how existing justificatory practices inhibit cultural capabilities. I also reflect on the challenges that face advancing a cultural capability approach to policy. Additionally, this chapter outlines how this work contributes to the study of cultural policy, and I offer recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: DEVELOPING THE CULTURAL CAPABILITY APPROACH

2.1 Introduction

My work draws on various approaches to capability theory (Sen, 2001; Robeyns, 2006; 2017; Nussbaum, 2011), perspectives of social justice (Anderson, 1999; Nussbaum, 2003; Forst, 2011a; 2014; 2017) and more recent work around the idea of ‘cultural capability’ (Wilson et al., 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018) in order to conceptualise an alternative path for cultural policy, one rooted in social justice and human wellbeing. This chapter discusses the theoretical underpinnings of my approach and elaborates on possible paths towards more just policy practices. While strongly motivated by a desire to (re)imagine cultural policy in ways that resist the familiar mixture of post-war paternalism and neoliberal market logic, this research is keenly aware that substantive policy change is enabled and constrained by various social, political and economic factors. Therefore, this chapter also outlines my framework for critique, detailing the normative principles I use to evaluate how existing justifications for public support for the arts in Calgary and Leeds are impacting the potential to advance a (cultural) capabilities-based approach to policy design on the ground.

The chapter is divided into five parts. The first three sections detail the theories and perspectives that have influenced my particular conception of a capabilities-based design to cultural policy and outline what this alternative approach to policy entails. I begin by briefly discussing some of the key tenets of the capability approach and Gross and Wilson’s notion of cultural capabilities, both of which help set the normative foundations and aims of this research. The third section draws on capability theories, the concept of cultural capability and Forst’s theory of justification (Forst, 2011a; 2011b;

2014) to elaborate on how I construct one possible scenario for a capability approach to policy design. The last two sections outline my framework for critique. Here, I expand on Forst's "critique of relations of justification," which I will employ to evaluate whether existing rationales for public support for the arts in Calgary and Leeds constrain or enable each city's ability to advance alternative policy practices. The final section discusses how this research analyses the impacts of existing justificatory practices on opportunities to engage with valuable cultural capabilities in both cities.

2.2 The Capability Approach

Aspects of the capability approach, such as its philosophical views on human flourishing and self-realisation, can be traced back to Aristotle, Adam Smith, Karl Marx, John Stuart Mill and Rabindranath Tagore (Nussbaum, 2011). However, it was Sen (2001) who pioneered the approach now widely developed into various capability theories, capability analysis and capability application (Robeyns, 2017). At its core, the capability approach stresses that "the ends of wellbeing, justice and development should be conceptualised in terms of people's capabilities to function; that is their effective opportunities to undertake the actions and activities that they want to engage in, and be who they want to be" (Robeyns, 2005a: 100). Although the approach has been developed in myriad ways for different purposes, from empirical (Dréze, 2010) and theoretical studies (Robeyns, 2005a; Nussbaum, 2011) to policy development (De Herdt, 2001; Sen, 2001) and proposals about social change (Alkire and Foster, 2011), all those employing the approach must ask the central normative question, "*What are people really able to do and what kind of person are they able to be?*" (Robeyns, 2017: 9, italics in original). Rather than seeing income or subjective states as indicators of

human wellbeing and flourishing, the capability approach emphasises that “it is not only what people have that is important for their wellbeing, but what they can do or be” (Sayer, 2011: 234). The approach, therefore, is objectivist “in the sense that wellbeing is conceived of as reflected in how people are able to live, rather than in terms of their preferences, which may be adaptive” (Sayer, 2011: 233). It is also pluralist in its appreciation that many diverse and overlapping opportunities and freedoms can lead to various forms of wellbeing (Sen, 2004; Robeyns, 2005a) and relativist in the sense that the approach avoids assuming that “just any way of life constitutes wellbeing” (Sayer, 2011: 135).

In this way, it diverges from, and offers an alternative to, other “philosophical approaches that concentrate on people’s happiness or desire fulfilment, or on income, expenditures, or consumption” (Robeyns, 2005a: 93). Possibly one of the greatest contributions of the capability approach, upon which I will expand in more detail shortly, is that it prompts capability theorists “to ask alternative questions, and to focus on different dimensions when [making] observations or when [gathering] the relevant data for making evaluations and judgments” (Robeyns, 2017: 7).

Over the past twenty years, the capability approach has increasingly “captured the imagination of a growing number of researchers, policymakers and other public actors” (Robeyns, 2006: 352). Granted that it has made the most significant impact in areas of human development (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 1997; 2000; Dréze, 2010; Robeyns, 2017), the approach has increasingly gained academic attention in other fields as well, and theorists have applied it to a wide range of disciplines, including welfare, disability

studies, public health and gender studies (see Robeyns, 2006). With regard to cultural policy, the capability approach continues to remain largely underdeveloped.

However, there is a small but growing engagement with the approach in the field of communication studies. Garnham (1997), for example, employs the capability approach to reframe policy debates in media and communication. He notes that applying the approach to policy “leads to the conclusion that it is not access [to media] in a crude sense that is crucial, but the distribution of social resources which makes access usable” (Garnham, 1997: 25). Couldry’s (2010) work on the sociology of ‘voice’ draws on Sen’s capability approach to “develop a philosophically informed conception of media justice” (Hesmondhalgh, 2017: 212). In his book ‘Why Music Matters’, Hesmondhalgh (2014) uses the capability approach as a tool for exploring music’s potential to enhance human wellbeing and flourishing. In other work, he considers how the approach might contribute to a normative foundation for critiquing media and culture under capitalism. Here, Hesmondhalgh (2017) explores how the concept of capabilities can help ground critique “in an understanding of the potential value of media and culture in constituting to people’s flourishing” (202) and can help make the notion of wellbeing “more pragmatically applicable to political action and to debate about public policy” (215). Moss (2018) suggests that the capability approach offers a normative perspective for critical media research rooted in social justice. Within this work, he stresses “that the concept of capabilities captures important aspects of the relationship between media and equality and has advantages over other ways of thinking about this relationship, such as media-related preferences, media access and actual media practice and use” (Moss, 2018: 107). Karen Scott, Frances Rowe and Venda Pollock (2018) consider how the capability approach provides a new lens through which to explore cultural value as it

relates to wellbeing and social justice, which can be used to challenge narrowly instrumental concepts of cultural value evident in existing policies. And then there is Gross and Wilson's use of the approach to develop their notion of 'cultural capabilities', which I return to later in this chapter (Wilson et al., 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018). The multidisciplinary and 'open' nature of the approach has made it a useful tool for a number of varied studies, including my own. However, theorists wishing to employ the approach must adhere to and engage with some of its core principles, elaborated on below.

Capabilities and functionings are the most distinctive features of all capability theories. They also represent key points of analysis, because they constitute the lens through which normative comparisons of quality of life and wellbeing are made. Unlike happiness, which connotes a state of mind (Sayer, 2011), 'functionings' comprise multifaceted ways of being and doing, including, for example, enjoying adequate nutrition, appearing in public without shame, being part of a community, and engaging in a variety of intellectual, artistic, physical, social, moral or spiritual activities that one values. Not only are functionings important for wellbeing and human flourishing, they "constitute human life and are central to our understanding of ourself as human beings" (Robeyns, 2017: 39; Sayer, 2011). The plurality of potential functionings also makes clear that the preconditions for wellbeing can be social as well as economic (Sayer, 2011).

In this account of wellbeing, people's ability to choose between various functionings is central. A 'capability', therefore, refers to a person's real opportunities or freedoms "to choose between different functionings — realised beings and doings" (Gross and

Wilson, 2018: 9). In an important distinction, freedom of choice within the capability approach does not refer to the “the uncritical valourisation of choice within consumer capitalism and neoliberalism” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 9; Lewis, 2013; Salecl, 2011; Couldry, 2010). Instead, choice, opportunity and freedom are interwoven concepts intended to ensure that people have access to a wide range of valuable options (Robeyns, 2017: 105).

Alongside the freedom to choose (or not choose) between functionings that one values, freedom represents a lack of external obstacles (material resources) as well as subjective barriers (belief that access to an option is not possible) to these options (Robeyns, 2017; Pettit, 2003). To use Sen’s popular example, “a person who is starving and a person who is fasting have the same type of functioning where nutrition is concerned, but they do not have the same capability, because the person who fasts is able not to fast, and the starving person has no choice” (Nussbaum, 2011: 25; Sen, 2001). Freedom in this context also refers to the character of the options; that is, the number of accessible options, their diversity and so forth. As Anderson (1999) points out, “a person enjoys more freedom the greater the range of effectively accessible, significantly different opportunities she has for functioning or leading her life in ways she values most” (316).

In this light, we can understand that capabilities are important because they may lead to functionings, while they also have value in and of themselves, as spheres of freedom of choice (Nussbaum, 2011: 25). Importantly, promoting capabilities means promoting areas of freedom, which, as Nussbaum points out, “is not the same as making people function in a certain way” (Nussbaum, 2011: 25). Given the liberal nature of the approach and its concerns for freedom and opportunity of choice, capability theories

often reflect an anti-paternalistic commitment. That is, they argue that rather than “forcing people into a particular account of good lives” (Robeyns, 2017: 107), what societies should be advancing for their people “is a set of opportunities, or substantial freedoms, which people then may or may not exercise in action” (Nussbaum, 2011: 18). In other words, “capabilities, not functionings are the appropriate political goals, because room is thereby left for the exercise of human freedom” (Nussbaum, 2011: 25).

Another key aspect of the capability approach that helps define its notion of social justice is its normative individualism. That is, it posits “that each person counts as a moral equal” (Robeyns, 2017: 57; Nussbaum, 2011). Nussbaum (2000) has been the strongest advocate of this notion, arguing that what the capability approach strives for is the preservation of “liberties and opportunities for each and every person, taken one by one, respecting each of them as an end, rather than simply as the agent or supporter of the ends of others” (56). Here, the approach champions a form of ethical or normative individualism that postulates “individual persons, and only individual persons are the units of *ultimate* moral concern” (Robeyns, 2017: 57). This particular component has garnered criticisms from those who see the approach as being too individualistic. However, many of these criticisms arise when the idea of ethical individualism is “conflated with other notions of individualism, such as the ontological idea that human beings are individuals who can live and flourish independently from others” (Robeyns, 2017: 58). The principle of each person as an end makes no such claim. As Sen (1992) makes clear, “individual freedom is quintessentially a social product” (31). So, while the approach proposes that our ultimate concern should be ensuring that each and every person is served and protected (Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2017), it acknowledges that these political and social aims are relational in nature. With all of this in mind, we can

appreciate that the capability approach's perspective on social justice prioritises access for all to the freedoms and opportunities needed to flourish in the ways that matter to each person. To be clear, this does not mean that everyone would in fact flourish in a just world, only that any failures to do so would not arise from inequalities in the levels of capabilities (freedoms and opportunities) necessary to realise valued 'beings' and 'doings' (Nussbaum, 2011; Sayer, 2011; Robeyns, 2017).

2.3 Cultural Capabilities

Like other scholars (Gross and Wilson, 2018; Moss, 2018; Scott et al., 2018; Gross, 2019), I view the capability approach as a tool for moving cultural policy studies beyond merely critiquing the prevailing discourse of access and excellence and the creative industries, and towards facilitating new conceptual and normative foundations for cultural policy. However, it is rarely employed in this field, which leaves questions around how we might apply the approach in practice. As noted in the previous chapter, I believe Gross and Wilson's work around cultural democracy and cultural capabilities provide useful guidance here.

Gross and Wilson's notion of cultural capabilities (or cultural opportunities) seeks to re-imagine "what 'cultural democracy' might mean and look like in the present historical moment" (Hadley and Belfiore, 2018: 221-222; Gross and Wilson, 2018). At its most basic, the notion of cultural democracy serves as an alternative perspective to the democratisation-of-culture model that focuses on "access and excellence" and typically plays a leading role in cultural policy frameworks more generally. However, I want to stress that while notions of cultural democracy and the democratisation of culture have

often been set in opposition to one another, they represent two tendencies “within specifically social democratic approaches to cultural policy” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 2). In short, what unites and divides the two concepts is their different approaches to tackling the same central democratic goals; that is, they both aspire “to address problems of capitalist modernity, especially regarding inequality, freedom and identity” (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 184; Gross and Wilson, 2018). Furthermore, as Hesmondhalgh et al. (2015) note, “there are important instances in many countries in which features of both tendencies or traditions have been brought together” (20); so, in attempting to advance one tendency over the other, we cannot ignore the interconnection between the two nor their shared foundation.

The language of cultural democracy “has been employed in relation to a range of national contexts, and explicitly links between cultural democracy and broader political process” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 3), and as a result there are many articulations of what cultural democracy is and how it can or should be used. That said, it is generally “concerned with the widening or redistributing the means of cultural production — the resources and power of self-expression, voice and culture-making (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 2). Graves (2010), writing on the role of cultural democracy in America, for example, sees it as offering:

a different paradigm, a system of support for the cultures of our diverse communities that is respectful and celebratory, that gives voice to the many who have been historically excluded from the public domain, and that makes no claims of superiority or special status. It assumes a fundamental acceptance of differences” (17)

He goes on to write that “in cultural democracy, all cultures and communities are in contention, and no one possesses the skeleton key to unlock all of their codes. It means that we cannot judge another’s culture, only accept it” (Graves, 2010: 17). In the United Kingdom, “the notion of cultural democracy is most closely associated with the community arts movement” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 3; Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017) which gained popularity between the 1960s and 1980s. While it has been admitted that there was no clear agreement on what might be termed ‘community arts’ there is a sense that:

all those who became involved were at some level united in their opposition to the prevailing culture and in their conviction that new kinds of artistic and creative practice could contribute to changing it. [This included the dream] of emancipation through art, the opening of doorways to new worlds and to different ways of being. If sufficient numbers of people could be liberated in this way, then they would no longer put up with the imaginatively impoverished existence to which modern socio-economic systems had consigned them. But this revolutionary potential of art could never be realised as long as most people never experienced it; and they didn’t, because most art didn’t speak to them, and most venues for the arts alienated them, so what was needed was a new kind of art presented in different places and new kinds of ways. (Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017)

Owen Kelly, in his work on community arts, challenged established hierarchies of cultural authority and power and called for reworking how we allocate and determine cultural value. He argued that we need “many localised scales of values, arising from within communities and applied by those communities to activities they individually or

collectively undertake” (Kelly, 1985: 6, as cited in Hadley and Belfiore, 2018: 221). In this light, “the impact of cultural democracy on cultural policy becomes an issue that is less of cultural valuation and more one of cultural animation and (self-)representation” (Hadley and Belfiore, 2018: 221).

While the concept of cultural democracy can serve as a “a key counter-formulation of what [more just] cultural practice and policy should seek to achieve” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 2), it is not without issue. Kelly, for instance, pointed to the need for the concept to establish a clearer theoretical underpinning in practice, or risk having its radical intentions perpetually appropriated and politically defeated (Kelly, 1984: as cited in Gross and Wilson, 2018: 3). Similarly, Jeffers and Moriarty (2017) have questioned whether artistic practices attempting to advance cultural democratic aims unsettle unequal power relations or confirm and support the status quo. Here they point out that “there are inevitable, perhaps invisible, power relations being played out which influence and respond to what occurs” (Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017: 175) in these movements, and that in moving the concept of cultural democracy forward, we need not only to recognise these power dynamics, but to understand their impact. Graves (2010), suggests that “realising cultural democracy means instigating a revolution in ethical social conduct [and that] it is a revolution that has to permeate every level of our communities, governments, the education system, and the business establishment” (198). This must, he holds, take place from the ground up. But he acknowledges that many questions need to be considered in advancing this revolution, not the least of which, “what does it really mean to make cultural freedom accessible to all, on an equitable basis?” (Graves, 2010: 198). Belfiore and Hadley (2018) have noted that we need a revised and reconceptualised version of cultural democracy for the twenty-first

century, one that is attuned to our current historical moment. Responding to this call, Gross and Wilson's concept of cultural capabilities attempts to articulate a refashioned understanding of what cultural democracy might look like in today's world. To build a strong and encompassing account of cultural opportunities, Gross and Wilson draw on two analytical perspectives. The first is ecological, which helps them understand the complex, diverse and interwoven nature of cultural capabilities. The second is the capability approach, which infuses the notion with a particular conception of wellbeing and social justice.

Their concept stresses the multidimensional ways in which people give form and value to their experiences. Put another way, it encourages us to remain open to the varied 'beings' and 'doings' involved in the (co-)creation of culture. Cultural capabilities, then, represent the interconnected freedoms and opportunities available for people to engage in these diverse meaning-making activities. Or what Gross and Wilson more specifically define as people's "substantive freedom to give form and value to [their] experiences" (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 5). Understanding how we can secure these opportunities (capabilities), as well as what might restrict people's freedom to give form and value to their experience is, for Gross and Wilson, a crucial step in advancing more culturally democratic paths and frameworks for cultural policy.

The ecological perspective does not play a role in my research, though I do embrace the multifaceted understanding of cultural value and practices that it brings to the notion of cultural capabilities. The capability approach, on the other hand, is central to how I build on the concept. Like Gross and Wilson, I see the capability approach as a useful tool for further developing the concept of cultural capability and its potential to help us

reimagine policy practices in a few key ways. The first is that “the capability approach provides a normative and conceptual framework which much more effectively meets the challenge of avoiding (or at least minimising) paternalism, whilst not disavowing the responsibility of public policy to support cultural opportunity” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 10). The second is that it helps to “analyse cultural opportunity *systematically*, rather than from the all-too-narrow perspectives of particular cultural ‘providers’,” such as publicly funded arts organisations (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 10, italics in original). Lastly, the capability approach can help us “begin to develop much fuller understandings of how cultural opportunity actually operates, and how it can be enabled and expanded” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 10). This research takes up and builds upon Gross and Wilson’s work by considering what a cultural policy geared towards supporting cultural opportunities (capabilities) might look like. While my approach hopes to contribute to wider discussions around cultural democracy, my primary aim is to consider how we might begin to conceptualise a capability approach to policy design and how, in turn, this might begin to expand the ways in which policy conceives cultural value, advances issues of social justice and works to encourage human flourishing.

2.4 Conceptualising Alternative Cultural Policy Practices

My conception of a (cultural) capability-based policy begins by framing cultural policy’s main political goal as ensuring that every person receive the freedoms and opportunities necessary to participate in the (co-)creation of culture. In doing so, I take the stance that public policy should be directed toward ensuring people’s freedoms and opportunities to *be* and *do* rather toward achieving particular *functionings* such as, for

example, skills development, employment, and social or economic regeneration. In short, this work takes up the capability approach's liberal and anti-paternalistic commitments.¹ Importantly, this position does not entail that cultural policy should assume everybody wants to or has to participate in the (co-)creation of culture. There are many reasons why people may not take up the opportunity to engage in these practices and making sure that everybody participates in (co-)creation is not the aim. Instead, policy practices are concerned with ensuring that people have the freedoms and opportunities necessary to engage in the (co-)creation of culture *if they so choose*. My approach rests on the premise that in enabling opportunities and freedoms for people to (co-)create culture, to give form and values to their experiences, policy may find ways to value different cultures equally, to appreciate the myriad ways that varied cultural experiences might bring meaning and value to people's lives and thus be better situated to help us flourish together.

My study sees capabilities rather than functionings as political ends. So, it stands to reason that I “must ultimately take a stand on substance, saying that some capabilities are important and others less important, some good, and some (even) bad” (Nussbaum, 2011: 28).² The question of how we determine what capabilities are valuable or essential in any given society is greatly debated in capability literature (Alkire, 2002;

¹ I acknowledge that even within a general policy framework underpinned by anti-paternalism and pluralist commitments, “it would be hard to argue against the view that there are a good deal of basic functionings that the state should ensure for its children and young people, including key aspects of physical health, literacy and numeracy” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 11). Similarly, in some cases, promoting functionings over capabilities is a reasonable choice; for example, in cases of people who “will never be able to make complex choices (severely mentally disabled individuals), or who have lost the ability through advanced dementia or serious brain damage” (Robeyns, 2017: 108).

² The capability approach encourages theorists to conceptualise *functionings* and *capabilities* as value neutral categories; some have positive value, some no value or some negative value (e.g. being affected by an incurable illness or engaging in acts of unjustifiable violence) (see Robeyns, 2017; Stewart and Deneuline, 2002; Nussbaum, 2003b; Carter 2014).

Sen, 2004; Robeyns, 2005b; Nussbaum, 2011; Forst, 2014). Sen, for example, does not provide a fixed list of capabilities necessary for wellbeing, because he resists “the idea that theorists can determine, in the absence of public debate, which capabilities are most important to protect and promote” (Moss, 2018: 99; Sen, 2010). He stresses that public deliberation is necessary when justifying capability selection because “even with given social conditions, public discussion and reasoning can lead to a better understanding of the role, reach, and the significance of particular capabilities” (Sen, 2004: 80). By default, insisting on a fixed list of capabilities “would deny the possibility of progress in social understanding and also go against the productive role of public discussion, social agitation, and open debates” (Sen, 2004: 80). To be clear, this does not mean that Sen believes that theorists can never point to valuable or central capabilities.³ As he explains, “the problem is not with listing important capabilities, but with insisting on one predetermined canonical list of capabilities, chosen by theorists without any general discussion or public reasoning” (Sen, 2004: 77).

Nussbaum, on the other hand, argues that if the job of government is to ensure that people can pursue dignified and minimally flourishing lives, then policy makers require a clear understanding of what basic capabilities make securing these aims possible. Nussbaum (2011), for example, offers “a list of basic capabilities that everyone should be entitled to, as a matter of human dignity” (Robeyns, 2017: 31), including “bodily health”, “sense, imagination and thought”, “affiliation”, “play” and “control over one’s environment” (for the entire list, see Nussbaum, 2011: 33-34). Her list is “influenced by

³ In his studies, Sen has signalled out certain capabilities as more important than others, such as health, education, political participation and non-discrimination on the basis of race, religion and gender (Sen, 1998; 2005; Nussbaum, 2011).

a universalist, Aristotelian conception of the human good”, which, she argues, defines the capabilities in a ‘thick, vague’ way — thick in the sense of acknowledging many elements to human flourishing, and vague in the sense of defining each capability in a manner sufficiently vague to allow different cultural interpretation (Sayer, 2011: 234; Nussbaum, 2000; 2007). For Nussbaum (2011), “a decent political order must secure to all citizens at least a threshold level of these ten Central Capabilities” (33). Nussbaum allows for some public deliberation around how capabilities may be executed. However, some have argued that she limits the role of deliberation in determining and justifying capabilities (see Clark, 2013), making it “subsidiary” to the theorist (Nussbaum, 2011: 74-80; Moss, 2018: 99).⁴

So, what is the right path forward for determining the most important cultural capabilities for advancing people’s freedoms in the (co-)creation of culture? There is, of course, no definitive answer. As cultural policy scholars explore and develop the capability approach, and the notion of wellbeing it seeks to ground, more widely, we will no doubt see many varying perspectives on how (and in what circumstances) we ought to determine what cultural capabilities matter. I will elaborate on my approach to this in due course, but first I offer a brief review of how existing media and communication studies engage with the capability approach.

⁴ Nussbaum is not the only theorist to create a list of essential capabilities. In her theory of “democratic equality”, Elizabeth Anderson (1999), for instance, outlines which basic levels of capabilities should be guaranteed to all in order to ensure that people can function as equal citizens. Here she stresses that necessary capabilities must reach beyond rights to political participation to include, for example, the social conditions of being accepted by others, such as the ability to appear in public without shame, knowledge of one’s circumstances and options, the ability to deliberate about means and ends, effective access to the means of production, freedom of occupational choice, and recognition by others of one’s productive contributions (Anderson, 1999: 317-318).

David Hesmondhalgh's book *Why Music Matters* (2014) introduced me to Nussbaum's work and indeed can, in large part, be credited with motivating me to take up the capability approach in my own work. In it, he uses the approach to explore how aesthetic value of the arts contributes to human flourishing and wellbeing, and he acknowledges and reflects upon the "social and psycho-social factors that might severely constrain the ways in which music enriches people's lives in modern societies" (Hesmondhalgh, 2014: 6). Hesmondhalgh, draws on Nussbaum's work, offering valuable insights into how the aesthetic experience of music might "contribute to the flourishing of individuals through enrichment of their emotional and ethical lives" (Hesmondhalgh, 2014: 130; 2017). He proposes, for example, that Nussbaum's (1997; 2001) approach to cultural flourishing, which suggests "how access to a rich set of artistic aesthetic experiences might help people to understand and enhance vital emotional, imaginative and cognitive capabilities" (Hesmondhalgh, 2017: 214; 2014), can help broaden our understanding of the value of arts and culture to human wellbeing. He also notes how some of Nussbaum's (2011) central capabilities, such as love, care, using the senses, imagining, laughing, playing and engaging in various forms of interaction, relate to the potential value of culture. Particular attention is paid to the capability of affiliation, which includes but is not limited to "being able to live with and toward others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of interaction" (Nussbaum, 2011: 34). Here Hesmondhalgh (2014) considers how "music might valuably enhance such interactions, and our ability to live with and towards others, to recognize them and to show concern for them" (20). He also draws attention to the ways in which the capability approach can direct our attention towards questions of social justice, as well as encourage us to explore how social and institutional arrangements might enhance or constrict music's contribution to social life

(Hesmondhalgh, 2014). In this and in later work, Hesmondhalgh (2014; 2017) expands Nussbaum's framework by suggesting additional capabilities related to popular cultural practices (Hesmondhalgh, 2017: 219). For example, he encourages us to consider how popular music contributes to human flourishing, arguing that "the provision of an adequate musical education and funding for musicians and distribution would be a vital element of policy informed by such a capability approach" (Hesmondhalgh, 2017: 13).

Gross and Wilson (2018) stress how cultural capabilities are ecological in nature, interconnected with multiple forms of cultural activity and value, including those with no direct interest in, or connection to, the state (10). They also urge theorists to consider how guaranteeing people's opportunities and freedoms to (co-)create culture may "nurture and nourish other valuable capabilities" (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 11). As an example, we may ask, "how might the freedoms to make and experience music (and other cultural products and processes) together enable agency within other domains?" (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 10). Couldry (2010), engaging more broadly with Sen's notions of political freedoms, proposes "voice" as a central capability (105). I concur that, although not directly related to culture per se, voice, as a capability, certainly might play a part in advancing people's substantive freedoms to give form and values to their experiences. Offering yet another example of the myriad of ways we might frame cultural capabilities, Gross's (2019) recent work considers how hope may be seen as a fertile functioning and an important area for cultural policy intervention. He argues that practices of care that enable individual and collective self-narration (or the ability to give form and meaning to one's experience) can help foster the freedom to "aspire", and by extension encourage human flourishing. For Gross (2019), the capability approach "provides a powerful conceptual tool for understanding the multiple (tangible and

intangible) resources in enabling human freedom and flourishing” (12), and he employs it to highlight the “potential for cultural policy to deliberately seek to enable practices of hope” (12).

In their study, Scott et al. (2018) consider empirical data from a series of in-depth interviews and focus groups against Nussbaum’s list of ten central capabilities in order to “reflect differently on the role of culture in ways that are more nuanced and complex than a simple reduction to social or economic value” (6). The study reveals a number of tensions in mapping complex social narratives onto the ten components of human wellbeing. Of particular relevance is the issue Scott et al. (2018) raise with mapping interwoven and complex narratives of ‘culture’ onto Nussbaum’s list of individual wellbeing. Additionally, the authors find the lack of attention to place, belonging and identity in the list problematic, but note that the list does “give scope to consider feelings of attachment to nature, and to be attached to ‘things’ outside oneself,” which they use “as containers for notions of place” (Scott et al., 2018: 6). Further, the researchers point to areas of Nussbaum’s list that either easily accommodate discussions on art and those that present greater challenges, and outline strategies for navigating these tensions. Specifically, they note that when issues of art do not transmit easily onto particular components of wellbeing, for example, bodily health, that this should not be seen as insurmountable, but as an opportunity to “think more broadly about the indirect ways that art can address some of these aspects of wellbeing” (Scott et al., 2018: 6).

Such theoretical accounts are extremely valuable in helping us appreciate the many different ways we might understand and approach cultural capabilities, including perspectives on how the arts can contribute valuably to wellbeing and flourishing. They

do not, however, help us answer questions such as who decides which capabilities are most valuable, once we operationalise a capability approach to cultural policy that aims to ensure people's freedom and opportunity to (co)create culture. Nor do the theoretical accounts tell us what such a process would look like. My study engages with these questions, considering what a (cultural) capability approach to policy practice might involve.

2.4.1 Determining Valuable Cultural Capabilities: Deliberation and Just Process

Concerning the debate between Sen and Nussbaum about how to justify capabilities, I follow Sen in emphasising deliberation. Developing a concrete list of central cultural capabilities would certainly help establish clear political ends for cultural policy; however, I do not believe that such a list should be or can be fully established in the absence of public debate. To be clear, I do not oppose identifying relevant capabilities and believe that this process is an important part of theorising about what we are free to do and to be. I also believe it will drive broader debate around cultural capabilities. Rather, like Sen, I oppose creating a fixed list of cultural capabilities that “could not respond to public reasoning and to the formation of social values” (Sen, 2004: 78). My motivation for taking this stance is relatively straightforward. The main aim of cultural capabilities is to create freedoms and opportunities for people to (co-)create culture, which, by its very nature, demands “arrangements of co-produced knowledge, pluralistic processes of valuation and shared decision-making” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 12). To deny people the right to share in the deliberation and reasoning around valuable capabilities negates the entire principle of cultural capabilities. Furthermore, I am unconvinced that such a concrete list, once grounded, would guarantee people's substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture.

Let's say, for example, that we developed a list of central cultural capabilities. Imagine that we allow a certain (limited) level of public deliberation in how capabilities are implemented in different political contexts, and that our list is 'thick and vague' enough to encompass the many elements of human flourishing and to allow different cultural interpretations. We still face a number of uncertainties concerning how our list might be operationalised in policy practices. For example, the concrete list may be reduced to a 'tick list', whereby policymakers evaluate communities based on what capabilities are missing (Sayer, 2011). Such an approach ignores how existing cultural capabilities may need continued support and development, and also risks under-exploring why certain capabilities are absent in the first place and how valuable cultural capabilities are interconnected, and it may overlook valuable capabilities not on the list. Furthermore, policymakers may implement any such list without considering the community itself, superimposing the list onto cultural policy practices without engaging with historical, geographical, social, political and economic knowledge of the community and thus failing to understand its existing relationship to arts and culture and its existing commitments and narratives of cultural value. Such strategies would turn "matters of practical judgment into the application of context-insensitive norms or policies that are doomed to produce undesirable consequences" (Sayer, 2011: 237).⁵

With this in mind, I argue that we must begin advancing people's substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture by considering how cultural policy can ensure people's equal opportunities to deliberate on and shape cultural value and value allocation. By its very

⁵ While Sayer points to some potential issues with the operationalisation of the capability approach, he does not take issue with the approach itself (see Sayer, 2011: 233-240).

nature, this involves asking how policy practices can guarantee people's freedom to determine what meaning-making opportunities (cultural capabilities) they believe policy should advance. Therefore, my study focuses less on theorising about *what* substantive cultural capabilities might be and more on *who* decides what cultural capabilities are valuable in a particular context as well as *how* we safeguard people's equal right to participate in the selection of these capabilities. I thereby highlight the importance of agency and just processes in capability selection.

There are major challenges in operationalising a capability approach, not least of which that its focus on capabilities and functionings means it neglects issues of procedural fairness that are key to my study. More specifically, the approach ignores not only "the collective power of individuals to deliberate and construct their own just society, but also the potential injustices taking place within existing structures and procedures" (Forst, 2011b: 8). Therefore, it is not well placed to help me deal with questions around "fairness and equity involved in procedures that have relevance to justice" (Sen, 2010: 295; Sen, 2001). I overcome this issue by incorporating Forst's (2014) theory of justifications, which I elaborate on shortly.

That the capability approach does not, in and of itself, provide a comprehensive view of social good should not be seen as a flaw. It was never Sen's intention to develop a 'total' theory, (Gross and Wilson, 2018), but rather to keep the approach open-ended and underspecified, leaving room to include alternative elements of ultimate value (Robeyns, 2017). Instead of rejecting other elements of value, the approach's openness

encourages value pluralism,⁶ including additional alternative conceptions of value, theories and objects of study as necessary for developing a more comprehensive understanding of social good.

There are many fruitful examples of how the capability approach to ‘openness’ has helped to create more comprehensive notions of social good as well as more robust frameworks for analysis. For example, Nussbaum (2011) brings in philosophies around human rights and uses the approach to develop a (partial) theory of social justice, whereas Alkire (2002) and Robeyns (2005b) bring in various participatory and deliberative democracy approaches as a means for selecting valuable capabilities. Likewise, we see media and culture studies establishing better rounded theories by combining the capability approach with, for example, moral economy (Hesmondhalgh, 2017), ecosystems and cultural democracy (Gross and Wilson, 2018), sociology of ‘voice’ (Couldry, 2010), and notions of hope, care and creative self-narration (Gross, 2019). By employing Forst’s theory of social justice to develop a more comprehensive understanding of what fair and just process in deliberation around cultural value and allocation might entail, my research aims to contribute to this growing body of literature.

As commented earlier, my inclusion of Forst’s concept of justification was inspired by Giles Moss’s (2018) recent work in which he details how Forst’s theory can be applied

⁶ There are two types of value pluralism in the capability approach. The one I am referencing is the notion of pluralism that allows for the inclusion of other forms of ultimate value in a study of capabilities. Sen (1985) has previously described this as “principle pluralism”, and at its core the concept seeks to leave space for the approach to acknowledge and include “other moral principles and goals with ultimate value that are also important when evaluating social states, or when deciding what we ought to do (whether as individuals or policymakers)” (Robeyns, 2017:55).

alongside the capability approach in order, among other things, to evaluate the justificatory discourses media circulates, to examine what is blocking the emergence of more effective mediated relations of justifications, and to consider the relations of justifications that surround the media and how these may be further democratised (Moss, 2018: 105-106). This, however, is an early attempt at advancing Forst's theory, and the application of the approach to media studies has yet to be fully developed. With regard to cultural practice and policy, Forst's theory has yet to be considered as a potentially useful theoretical framework for justice and critique. Therefore, my study represents an initial attempt at employing the theory to conceptualise just what processes in a (cultural) capability based policy might involve, and as a normative lens and a framework to assess existing cultural policy practices. The following section outlines Forst's approach and how it informs my research.

2.4.2 Forst's Theory of Justification

Forst's theory of justification rests on the philosophical premise that society is the product of a myriad of justifications that draw on particular forms of reasoning, norms, values ideologies and power relations (Forst, 2011a; 2014). In other words, justifications are not stagnant and are not generated by a socio-political-economic vacuum, and nor do they operate in such a vacuum. They are, instead, formed by power struggles over meaning and value that work to define and legitimise social practices. Given the constitutive power of justifications to shape our world, to determine value and to legitimise institutions, practices and social relations, the issue of how power operates within justificatory processes becomes, for Forst (2014), the first question of political and social justice. That is, rather than conceiving of justice exclusively from the recipient side (what people have and need), as many allocative and distributive

theories of justice do, we should instead question who has the power in processes of justification and whether they are legitimate. We should ask who and/or what has the power over value allocation and why. We should also question who is left out of these meaning-making processes and identify room, or lack thereof, for alternative forms of justification. This discursive power to “demand and provide justifications and to challenge false legitimations” (Forst, 2014: 35) is what Forst understands as effective “justificatory power”, and this understanding of power becomes central to his debate concerning issues of social justice.

Here, people’s most basic claims to justice “do not come from a desire for more resources or the capabilities they need to flourish, but from a resistance to arbitrary power” (Moss, 2018: 103; Forst, 2014). This repositioning of justice towards justificatory power is important because it implies that justice is not something that already exists, ready for application to those in need, but rather something that is generated (Forst, 2014) by the people, through deliberative methods that challenge and resist forms of arbitrary rule. In other words, people become active participants in the construction of their just society rather than merely recipients of justice. Forst’s theory of justification further builds on this idea of justice by considering how we may envision “just” processes of justification, what he terms “the right to justification”, as well as how we may critique and challenge existing “unjust” practices of justification, what Forst calls, “a critique of relations of justification”, which I return to later in this chapter.

One of the core elements of Forst’s theory of social justice is his concept of “the right to justification”, which argues that people’s basic claim to justice is that they should have

an “irreducible *right to justification* when what is at stake is whom they should obey and what they should accept — and they likewise have a duty of justification when it is a matter of their claims” (Forst, 2014: 3 italics in original). In other words, any existing or future justifications which shape social structures within a given society must, if they are to be considered just, be open to evaluation, critique and change by all people living within that space. This right then demands “that there be no political and social relations of governance that cannot be adequately justified to those affected by them” (Forst, 2014: 2). In terms of what constitutes ‘adequate justification’, Forst, following Habermas (1989), emphasises the importance of public deliberation, noting that “for any normative claim to be justified . . . it must be accepted by all those affected, as determined through inclusive discursive procedures” (Moss, 2018: 104). Specifically, he points to “reciprocity” and “generality” as “the key criteria through which justifications are assessed in deliberative processes” (Moss, 2018: 104).

In this context, reciprocity “means that no one may refuse the particular demands of others that one raises for oneself (reciprocity of content), and that no one may simply assume that others have the same values and interests as oneself or make recourse to ‘higher truths’ that are not shared by others (reciprocity of reasons)” (Forst, 2014: 6). Generality, on the other hand, “means that reasons for generally valid norms must be shareable by all those affected” (Forst, 2014: 6). To be clear, this does not mean Forst assumes “that deliberation will necessarily result in consensus and all the groups will be convinced that the best political outcomes have been reached” (Moss, 2018: 104; Forst, 2014). Indeed, in a multitude of scenarios, deliberation may result in a divide in judgments or disagreements over outcomes. However, decisions may be justified indirectly, as long as the process that generated the prevailing outcomes or judgments

“are justified and there are effective opportunities to reopen the debate in [the] future” (Moss, 2018: 104). Importantly, what underlies all these potential scenarios is “securing people’s basic right to justification and the ability to participate in practices of justification on a more equal basis” (Moss 201, p.104). With this in mind, we can appreciate that Forst’s theory is built on this “particular conception of discursive justification alone, maintaining that all normative claims be assessed via the criteria of generality and reciprocity, as determined through discourse involving all those affected” (Moss, 2018: 104). Indeed, Forst (2011a) refers to his approach to justification as a type of discourse theory.

As Moss (2018) notes, “if we accept the centrality of the right to justification, the normative priority must be to enable people to participate in practices of justification on an equal basis with others, so they are able to challenge illegitimate power” (104). Achieving justificatory equality (the right to justification) means securing a “basic structure of justification”; that is, securing the appropriate process and relations of justification that will enable “real possibilities to intervene and exercise control within the basic structure” (Forst, 2014: 36; Moss, 2018).

Forst’s theory contributes to my understanding of social justice in two key ways. First, it helps create a more comprehensive normative framework through which to reimagine more just forms of cultural policies and practices geared towards wellbeing and flourishing. As noted earlier, building on the notion of cultural capabilities, I posit that creating the opportunities for people to freely participate in the (co-)creation of cultural value and value allocation should be the one of the first political goals of cultural policies. I align myself with Sen who “emphasises the need for public deliberation to

test normative claims and arrive at more objective judgments” (Moss, 2018: 100; Sen, 2010). However, the capability approach does not offer a lens through which to consider what these cultural policy processes that advance peoples freedoms and abilities to shape notions of cultural value may look like. Forst’s (2011a; 2011b; 2014; 2017) notions of the ‘right to justification’ and ‘basic structures of justification’ fills this gap. Furthermore, his theory’s clear framework for just process highlights some of the elementary capabilities that may help advance real freedom for people to intervene and exercise control over how cultural value and location are determined. These include, but are not limited to, “being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others” (non-discrimination), “to be able to imagine the situation of others, being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one’s life”, “having the right to political participation” (Nussbaum, 2011: 33-34), “freedom of assembly and speech”, “knowledge of one’s own circumstances and options”, and “the ability to deliberate about means and ends” (Anderson, 1999). Again, the above is not meant to represent a fixed list, but instead to encourage thinking about what freedoms and opportunities can help ensure more just cultural policy practices.

The second way that Forst’s theory contributes to my understanding of social justice is by offering a pointed object of study — justifications for public support for arts and culture. Forst’s approach lets me frame justification for public support for the arts not as neutral policy practices, but instead as spaces of struggle over why and how arts and culture should be valued as a public good. In other words, I view justifications for public support for the arts as one of the spaces where cultural value and value allocation is contested and shaped, and as the processes that legitimise institutional structures and policy practices, and thus as worthy of analysis in and of themselves.

In this first half of the chapter, I have worked to further develop Gross and Wilson's (2018) notion of cultural capabilities by considering what might be involved in securing people's substantive freedom to give form and value to their experiences. Bringing all the explored normative frameworks together, I suggest two ways that cultural policy may intervene in expanding people's freedoms to (co-)create culture. The first is that it should seek to address the inequalities and limitations that characterise public deliberation around notions of cultural value and allocation in practice. The second is that it should aim at to enhance people's capabilities in relation to practices of justification for public support for the arts. By ensuring these just processes, cultural policy would help protect people's freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture. I appreciate that, at a time when the impacts of COVID-19 are yet to be fully realised, and when the rise of far right-wing politics threatens democratic processes, and discrimination, unequal power relations and socio-economic inequality persist, these aims may appear naively optimistic, or more like a utopian dream than a substantive foundation for policy change. However, I repeat Erik Wright's claim that "what is pragmatically possible is not fixed independently of our imaginations, but is itself shaped by our visions" (Wright, 2010: 6). That said, it is not enough simply to offer conceptual and normative frameworks for what cultural policy should or could be. If we hope to advance change, we must gain a clear understanding of "the obstacles, possibilities, and dilemmas" (Wright, 2010: 10) involved in transforming cultural policy practices in ways that eliminate forms of oppression and encourage the creation of conditions for human flourishing. With this in mind, the following section elaborates on my framework for critiquing and on how I assess whether justifications for public

support encourage or inhibit our ability to advance cultural policy practices geared towards wellbeing and social justice.

2.5 Framework for Critique

Adhering to the core analytical values of the capability approach, I seek with my research to understand, in the context of cultural policy practices, what actual freedoms people have to give meaning and value to their experiences. My evaluation of existing practices has two main aims. The first is to evaluate how existing practices in Calgary and Leeds restrict or encourage just processes of justification. My goal here is to gain greater insight into the potential of each city to foster justificatory practices that encourage greater freedom and opportunity for people to equally participate in shaping notions of cultural value. The second aim considers how existing practices in Calgary and Leeds impact the ability to access valuable cultural capabilities, such as the freedom to produce work of one's own choice, freedom of artistic expression, and capabilities that promote affiliation and non-discrimination. I recognise that this analysis appears to contradict my earlier refusal to provide a fixed list of potential valuable cultural capabilities, and I will address this issue in detail later in this chapter. For now, I turn to Forst's (2011a; 2014; 2017) framework for critique and how I employ it in my study of just processes of justification for public support for the arts.

2.5.1 Critique of Relations of Justifications

Justifications for public support reflect certain articulation and rationales around cultural value. They are produced and reproduced through justificatory processes wherein power relations, ideologies and values work to advance, sustain or challenge

particular notions of cultural value. In short, these justifications comprise a space for constructing an understanding of cultural value and value allocation. Therefore, I see justifications and justificatory practices for public support for the arts not only as the central object of my analysis and critique, but also as key to understanding the potential to advance policy change in the future.

I have already implied that, given our current social-political state, the right to justification (justificatory equality) is far from being realised (Forst, 2017). The just society I have detailed does not yet exist in Calgary, Leeds or elsewhere. Justificatory practices for public support for the arts do not provide the required freedoms and opportunities for people to equally participate in the (co-)creation of culture. In order to understand how we might advance substantive change in the future, it is necessary to combine normative perspectives discussed above with critical social research so that we may “turn the question of justification into a theoretical and practical one [that] seeks to analyse and transform existing orders and relationships of justification” (Forst, 2017: 2).

Forst argues that any study of justificatory practices must be a “critique of the relations of justification”. His framework for critique, which is divided into three main analytical parts, aims at exposing unjustifiable social and political relations, critiques “false” justification (those justifications that can no longer be adequately justified but continue to hold weight), and considers “the failure of effective social and political structures of justification in order to unveil and change unjustifiable relations” (Forst, 2014: 10). For Forst, the first step in critiquing relations of justification involves understanding how particular justifications emerge as well as understanding their stability and complexity (Forst, 2017). Once we have a clear picture of the evolution of justificatory practices,

we must take “a critical stance of these justifications by scrutinising their normative constitutions, and structures they justify” (Forst, 2017: 2). In other words, the aim is to highlight the wider social, economic and political structures that constitute and are constituted by these justificatory practices. After all, as Schlesinger (2017) rightly points out, “to understand how a particular form of political discourse is fashioned and disseminated, we need to explain its conditions of existence” (74). Third, the critique focuses on power, and in particular “the ability to shape and influence the justificatory discourse available to others” (Moss 2018: 105). This attention to power and discourse “presupposes an analysis of discursive positions of power in social space (positions, offices, authorities etc.) and in discursive space (hegemonic narratives of justification, counter-counter-narratives, etc.)” (Forst, 2014: 19).

Power, “which does not have negative connotations” (Forst, 2011b: 9) in this context, “consists . . . in the ability to order and influence, to occupy, and, in extreme cases, to dominate the space of reasons for others, that is, to determine the limits of what can be said and thought and, above all, of what is accepted and acceptable, of what is justified” (Forst, 2011a: 8). In this light, we can understand power as discursively created through justification. No one power over justifications exists within a given space of reason, but, instead, multiple powers are at play in a struggle to become dominant and thus hold the greatest sway over a given social sphere. While certain ‘justification narratives’ may remain dominant, there is always room to critique and counter these justifications, and a chance to surpass or alter these narratives.

The exception to this is domination, which closes the space available for alternative justifications, sustaining its rule through ideology and fear (Forst, 2011a; 2014).

Domination over processes of justification occur when certain ideologies, for instance around class, gender, the market or cultural value, become naturalised in practices of justification so that these justifications come to be seen as unalterable. When justifications for certain elements of the social become accepted as common sense, then the space for critique and challenge is shut down, and, consequentially, so is the justificatory authority of those individuals or groups who are affected by these justifications (Forst 2011a; 2014). When the opportunity to critique and participate in a given space of reason — in the construction of a particular social sphere — closes down, then the right to justification is ignored, and justice and human dignity are violated. Identifying and critiquing sites of domination so that we may challenge, and eventually change, these unjust practices of justification is, for Forst, a necessary task in advancing a basic structure of justification.

Employing Forst's framework for critique, I conduct a genealogy of existing justificatory practices for public support in both Leeds and Calgary, mapping the ways in which each city has developed its rationale for public support over the past sixty years.⁷ The aim here is threefold. First, I aim to recognise the fragility and resilience of these rationales as well as to gain greater insight into power relations, norms, ideologies and socio-economic and political structures that have shaped notions of cultural value in each city. Second, I aim to identify dominant justifications for public support and to

⁷ My genealogy spans 1960–2018. I decided on this time frame for two reasons; first, that both cities had begun to engage with cultural provisioning by the 1960s, and second, that the time frame covers important shifts in rationales for public support.

consider the ways in which they may be actively working to constrict the freedom and opportunity to (co-)create culture. Finally, I aim to highlight justifications that are no longer valid or justifiable, and to consider the context that allows them to be reproduced and advanced as legitimate rationales despite the lack of substantial evidence that they can achieve their policy aims.

Following this, I engage with Forst's notion of the "right to justification", by analysing both cities' recent co-produced cultural strategies as well as Calgary's newly established arts advocacy group and Leeds's 2023 bid for the European Capital of Culture. This evaluation seeks to explore the extent to which justifications in both cities are formed through (un)just processes. Here, I investigate who was included, how deliberation over cultural value took place and who has (and who has had) the discursive positions of power in these processes of justifications. The overarching question driving both critiques is what opportunities are available in each city to participate in the (co-)creation of cultural value. More specifically, I ask how existing justificatory practices constrict the space to participate in deliberation, challenge existing forms of value and value allocation, or advance alternative justifications for public support for the arts.

2.5.2 Defining Valuable Cultural Capabilities

Thus far, I have proposed that one way to advance people's substantive freedoms to give form and value to their experiences is to imagine how cultural policy might work to guarantee people's freedom to shape cultural value and value allocation. In this context, I have focused on *who* determines cultural capabilities and on *how* might this process work, rather than theorising about what other potentially valuable cultural

capabilities policy may seek to advance. My hesitancy to do so rests largely on my normative perspective, which insists that valuable capabilities should be determined through just deliberation and public reasoning. That said, part of the task of moving cultural policy towards issues of social justice and human wellbeing is to develop both a fuller understanding of what valuable cultural opportunities might involve and greater insight into how current social, political and economic factors might be inhibiting the potential to engage with and expand these capabilities on the ground. Therefore, the second half of my critical analysis focuses on how justifications for public support for the arts impact particular valuable cultural capabilities in Calgary and Leeds and what this might reveal about the space to advance substantive policy change.

Specifying what capabilities matter is a deeply normative question (Robeyns, 2017). These choices will determine what is observed in analysis, and, by extension, what is not observed (Robeyns, 2017: 61). My project requires defined cultural capabilities for a point of analysis while also respecting procedural fairness, and the tensions between these requirements pose a challenge to envisioning what valuable cultural capabilities might look like. On the one hand, simply relying on my intuitions and judgements about what people require to achieve human flourishing is not wholly reconcilable within the context of my research.⁸ On the other hand, as per Forst's (2011a; 2014) critique of relations of justification, the current unjust state of justificatory practices means that, at this time, just processes of justification do not exist, and therefore neither does the opportunity for people in Calgary and Leeds to decide fairly on what they deem

⁸ In that I have argued that deliberation and public reasoning is needed to determine valuable cultural capabilities.

valuable capabilities. In other words, neither city is in a position to offer up a list of capability sets that I can use in my evaluation.

To address this theoretical conundrum, I take a middle ground by developing a broad list of potential cultural capabilities based on some of the values found in my data. I elaborate on how I identified these values in the following methodology chapter, and therefore will only summarise it here. Briefly put, in my analysis of justifications for public support, I attempt, in part, to identify the norms, values and ideologies underpinning individual claims for public support. In doing so, I find a mixture of conflicting and competing norms and beliefs within many of these arguments, particularly in the interview data. In an attempt to detangle these, I find that some of the identified values broadly relate to the notion of cultural capability, that is, the substantive freedom to give form and value to our experiences (Gross and Wilson, 2018), as well as to wider capability theories (Anderson, 1999; Nussbaum, 2011). Following this connection, I review the data sets to identify any values that may relate to people's freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture. Guided by these values, and borrowing from wider capability applications, I present a list of relevant valuable capabilities for each city. So, for example, Calgary's list speaks primarily to values around freedom of expression and empowering of political voice. Thus, in defining cultural capabilities for this city, I focus on those that promote the freedom to engage with the arts and to produce work of one's own choosing, freedom of artistic expression and the capability to participate effectively in political choices made around the value of arts and culture. Leeds's value list, on the other hand, shows strong connections to what Nussbaum (2011) calls the capability of "affiliation" which promotes, among other things, being able to live with and towards one another, to show concern for others,

being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others, and non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, cast, religion, national origin (Nussbaum, 2011: 34). Therefore, my description of cultural capabilities for this city revolves around dignity, appreciation, openness and tolerance to forms of cultural expression. Essentially, I aim to create for each city a list of cultural capabilities that may be used as a clear point of evaluation, but that does not ignore the importance of place in this process. Using these lists, I assess the ways in which existing justifications for public support for the arts, and the structures and practices they sustain, impact these particular capabilities.

2.5.3 Evaluating the Impact of Existing Justifications on Cultural Capabilities

The difference between ‘capabilities’ and ‘functionings’ is “between the realised and the effectively possible” (Robeyns, 2017: 39) or, put another way, between achievements and freedoms and opportunities from which to choose. This distinction is significant because rather than seeing value as existing only in a desired outcome (functionings), the concept of capabilities encompasses freedom of choice as a core value (Moss, 2018: 97). So, while engaging in practices of meaning-making through a form of cultural production is a functioning, the real opportunity to freely express oneself is the corresponding capability. A person who does not engage in forms of cultural production may or may not be free and able to do so; the analysis of valuable cultural capabilities seeks to determine whether that person could participate in these meaning-making activities if she wanted to.

The idea of ‘choice’ within the capability approach is not neutral, but instead represents “a crystallisation of power relations in people’s lives, reflecting their relative freedom

and unfreedom” (Kleine, 2013: 43). I have explored the matter of choice in justificatory processes, positing that people should have the freedoms and opportunities to deliberate on and shape cultural value and value allocation (if they so choose), and have outlined my critique for analysing the extent to which justificatory practices allow for or constrain these capabilities. However, in a slight departure from this, the second part of my analysis considers how rationales for public support and the structures and practices they advance and sustain impact other valuable cultural capabilities. In the language of the capability approach, this critique seeks to gain greater insight into the ‘conversion factors’, that is the structures and circumstances, that might not only hinder the advancement of particular capabilities, but might also block people from achieving positive functionings even if valuable capabilities are advanced (Robeyns, 2017)

Conversion factors include several things, such as material or measurable resources (money and consumer goods) as well as non-material resources (educational degrees, cultural capital), and are typically grouped into three categories: personal, social and environmental (Robeyns, 2017). The first, personal conversion factors, “are internal to the person, such as metabolism, physical condition, sex, reading skills, or intelligence” (Robeyns, 2017: 46). The second, social conversion factors, are “factors stemming from the society in which one lives, such as public policies, social norms, practices that unfairly discriminate, societal hierarchies or power relations related to class, gender, or race” (Robeyns, 2017: 46). The third, environmental factors, “emerge from the physical or built environment in which a person lives” (Robeyns, 2017: 46) ranging from aspects of geographical location to transportation and communication. The point here is to acknowledge that when evaluating issues of wellbeing and justice, and what capabilities need to be advanced to achieve these aims, consideration must be given to the

circumstances in which people live. Like deciding which capabilities and functionings are relevant, deciding which conversion factors to engage with depends on the aims and the focus of study (Robeyns, 2017). I am concerned with conversion factors stemming from the society in which one lives (the social). Specifically, this study is interested in how justifications for public support — which I see as constituting particular norms and structures around cultural value and value allocation — restrict or enhance people's freedoms and abilities to access valuable capabilities, and from this gain to a better picture of the challenges facing radical policy change.

Understanding conversion factors helps to reveal what 'means' may be necessary to advance valuable capabilities. That is, if we want to advance cultural capabilities that, for example, would secure people's opportunities to engage with the arts free from discrimination, we need to know what means are needed to challenge current authorities, dominant practices and unequal structures. At this point, it is necessary to acknowledge the capability approach's 'means-end' distinction briefly. For the capability approach, the means are secondary in that we can only think about necessary means once we know the ends (Robeyns, 2017: 48). The focus on ends over means is what sets the approach apart from other theories of distributive justice that focus on particular means to wellbeing rather than ends (Sen, 2004; Robeyns, 2017). One of the main issues the capability approach takes with theories that focus on means is that they risk undervaluing the relevance of conversion factors and structural restraints that people face and the effects these factors have on achieving valuable capabilities and functionings. If we were only concerned with ensuring that we had the means to create, for example, more equitable practices in publicly funded arts organisations, we could end up downplaying the reality that existing norms, ideologies, political and

institutional structures potentially render these means ineffective (Robeyns, 2017). In other words, if, in attempting to create more equitable working environments, we focus only on ensuring that arts organisations advance inclusive and equal hiring practices and more diverse programming, we risk underestimating how artistic hierarchies, dominant notions of value allocation, and economic imperatives, to name only a few examples, perpetuate discriminatory practices that effectively neutralise these aims. By contrast, the capability metric that I employ identifies an objective end⁹ — for instance, the need to create environments that are open, respectful and free from discrimination — assesses the conversion factors blocking this from happening, and then begins to define the means needed to alter poor practices and unequal structures.

Furthermore, the means-ends distinction helps reinforce the subordination of, for example, economic imperatives that currently dominate existing policy practices. That is, rather than, for example, economic growth being the end goal of policy, it becomes a means through which to advance valuable capabilities. This reframing of economic value is important because it does not imply that reimagining cultural policy towards just ends must reject economic value, but instead forces a repositioning and repurposing of economic value within cultural policymaking practices.

In this analysis, I seek to gain greater insight into how justifications for cultural support, and the values, ideologies and structures they sustain and advance, are currently impacting specific valuable capabilities in each city. My focus here lies primarily with

⁹ As noted earlier, the capability metric is an objective measurement that looks at actual freedoms and opportunities people have to ‘be’ and ‘do’, in contrast to subjective metric which attempts to measure, for example, people’s levels of happiness and satisfaction.

assessing conversion factors. However, it is my hope that this work can lend itself to future study more dedicated to identifying specific means and resources necessary to push policy change further forward.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the theoretical and normative frameworks underpinning this research. The overarching aim of this project is to conceptualise a new path forward for cultural policy, one directed toward issues of social justice and wellbeing. In this pursuit, I focus on developing Gross and Wilson's (2018; Wilson et al., 2017) notion of cultural capability, which seeks to redirect policy in ways that ensure people's substantive freedoms to give form and value to their experiences. The concept offers a promising (re)imagining of cultural policy. However, cultural capability is a new perspective, and there remain many questions around how to operationalise the approach both in policy practice and in cultural policy studies.

With this in mind, I draw on wider capability theories and perspectives of social justice to consider what might be involved in securing people's substantive freedom to give form and value to their experiences. I start by reviewing the central tenets of the capability approach that underlines the concept of cultural capability, noting how such an approach helps reframe cultural policy aims towards securing people's real freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture. From here, I question who should decide which cultural capabilities (opportunities) are valuable and how they should be decided. I make it clear that I align with Sen's approach that requires valuable capabilities to be determined through deliberation and public reasoning, and that my study will focus

heavily on what just processes of capability selection might look like in practice. The capability approach in and of itself is not equipped to address important questions around fairness and equity in procedural justice, and because of this, I incorporate Forst's theory of justifications. Forst's concept of justification offers a comprehensive normative framework, through which to reimagine more just forms of cultural policies and practices geared towards wellbeing and flourishing. It also provides my study with an explicit object of study, namely "justifications for public support for arts and culture"; and his critique of relations of justification forms the basis of much of my analysis of existing practices. Combining elements from the capability approach and Forst's theory, I suggest that cultural policy can help expand and secure people's freedoms to (co-)create culture by seeking to address the inequalities and limitations that characterise public deliberation around notions of cultural value and allocation in practice, and by aiming to enhance people's capabilities in relation to practices of justification for public support for the arts. I stress that a first step in shifting policy practices towards these aims is to gain greater insight into the challenges that such a change might entail. I then review how my investigation into existing justificatory practices and processes in Leeds and Calgary, as well as my evaluation of how existing justifications impact valuable cultural capabilities, begins to identify some of these obstacles.

In developing the cultural capability perspective, we must consider ways of operationalising the approach, for example, through field studies and analysing particular cultural policies and programmes. Gross and Wilson (2018) also suggest that those using the approach should engage with "multiple scales" (11); that is, "attention must be paid to how macro conditions of political economy enable and constrain cultural capabilities, but also the meso and micro environments and processes that shape

communal and individual lives, and how they can be lived” (Gross and Wilson, 2018). My study contributes to the above points in a number of ways. To begin with, as noted above, I further develop the cultural capability approach by conceptualising how cultural policy may intervene in securing people’s substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture. Building on this, my critiques of existing justifications in Calgary and Leeds and their impact on valuable cultural capabilities offers one example of how we might operationalise a capability approach in cultural policy studies.

Furthermore, my analysis seeks to understand how rationales for public support have been shaped by broader social, political, and economic structures, norms and ideologies and power relations and the effects of these justifications on advancing cultural capabilities on the ground. So, on the one hand, I pay attention to wider constraints that may affect cultural capabilities, while on the other I root my study in the local, focusing on how justifications for public support are developed and adapted through local narratives and circumstances, as well as how these rationales affect place-specific valuable cultural capabilities.

The following chapter engages further with my chosen theoretical frameworks, particularly Forst’s theory of justification, and their impact on the methodology and research design applied to this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

My research employs qualitative methods to investigate how current justifications for public support of arts and culture in Calgary and Leeds enable or inhibit cultural opportunities, and also as a means to critique processes of justification and the space available to challenge or offer alternatives to existing justificatory practices.

My evaluation of justifications is based on Forst's (2014; 2011b) theory, which, as discussed in Chapter 2, provides my study with a philosophical lens through which to understand the notion of justification as well as a general outline for how to critique justificatory practices. However, the theory does not offer any guidance on how to go about employing these concepts in an empirical study. Indeed, to date, little work (beyond this research) has been done to develop an analytical framework with which to ground Forst's theory (Moss, 2018). The lack of precedents, alongside the reality that Forst's notions are densely philosophical, made developing a methodological approach for this study a bit more challenging. However, in the end, it did not require a big leap to make connections between this theory of justification and critical discourse analysis.

Briefly put, I see critical discourse analysis as compatible with Forst's theory in three broad ways. First, the aim of critical discourse analysis is similar to Forst's (2014) in that both seek to highlight the discursive "dimension of social and cultural phenomena and processes of change" (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: 63). Second, the approach sees discursive practices as contributing to the creation and reproduction of unequal power relations (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Fairclough, 2013), which is not unlike Forst's (Forst, 2011b; 2014) critique of relations of justifications, which aims at

understanding processes of justifications to unmask unequal power relations within them. Finally, both critical discourse analysis and Forst's theory are critical approaches committed to social change (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997; Forst, 2014).

Using a critical discourse approach as the primary way of grounding my analysis of existing justifications means that my study is underpinned by a social constructionist epistemology that emphasises cultural and historical contexts along with the active construction of knowledge through social processes and action (Schwandt, 2000). It also firmly roots my research within a linguistic philosophy that sees language as “a ‘machine’ that generates, and as a result constitutes, the social world” (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002: 9).

To adhere to these theoretical and methodological positions, I collected research data from both cities via three methods: semi-structured interviews with cultural policymakers and cultural leaders (artistic directors and managers of large, medium and grassroots arts organisations, philanthropists and consultants); a discourse analysis of contemporary and historical secondary sources (international, national and local political reports, funding strategies, cultural policy and planning documents); and a review of previous research about cultural value and policy. All three of these methods contribute to the above-outlined theory and methodology by providing insight into how public support for arts and culture is justified in Calgary and Leeds (semi-structured interviews and analysis of local documents), and the broader historical, social and cultural contexts potentially influencing these local justificatory practices (analysis of international and national documents and literature review).

I begin this chapter by considering my methodological approach. Here I discuss how I use Norman Fairclough's (2013; 2014) approach to critical discourse analysis to help ground my study of existing justifications. I also address the limitations of this approach and the need to include an additional concept, argumentation theory (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012), in order to round out my analytical framework and make it operational. Following this, I review my research design, which combines semi-structured interviews with an analysis of secondary sources. I then address the preparation and presentation of my data and elaborate on how I have used argumentation theory to identify and code existing justifications within the interviews and relevant documents. Finally, I give a brief overview of how the analysis of the data helped me select the valuable capabilities for Calgary and Leeds, as discussed in Chapter 2.

3.2 An Analytical Framework: Critical Discourse Analysis and Argumentation Theory

As noted, this study is underpinned by critical discourse analysis (CDA). Out of the varied approaches to CDA, Fairclough's (2013; 2014) perspective helped me construct, at least in part, a useful analytical framework for my study of justifications, due to its focus on normative critique and explanation that emphasises 'intertextuality' (how one text draws on elements and discourses of other texts) and power relations within discursive practices (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002; Fairclough, 2014). I want to start by broadly reviewing how Fairclough's concepts helped to ground my critique of existing justification, before moving on to consider how I used the concept of argumentation (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012) to fill some methodological gaps.

Fairclough's CDA systematically extends my evaluation of justifications into an analysis of discursive practices in four key ways. First and foremost, it anchors my study in a normative and explanatory critique of discourse. That is, "it combines a critique of discourse and explanation of how it figures within and contributes to the existing social reality, as a basis for action to change that existing reality in particular respects" (Fairclough 2014: 6). Second, Fairclough (2014) positions discourse as both "meaningful and constitutive in that it interacts, effects and shapes other social elements" (6). His emphasis on the constitutive nature of discourse reinforces this study's understanding that justifications for public support for the arts are worthy objects of critique (Forst, 2011a), as they play a role in shaping, legitimising and stabilising notions of cultural value, and that these practices impact elements of the social, such as the actual freedom people have to (co-)create culture. Third, CDA seeks to clarify the relationship between structure and agency, which includes "trying to clarify the relationship between causal effects of order of discourse and the social actors and producers of text" (Fairclough 2014: 79). In this way, Fairclough's approach to CDA provided an analytical framework with which to investigate how existing justifications around public support for the arts have emerged and are sustained through justificatory practices taking place in both cities. Finally, Fairclough is concerned with power relations between discourses and other social elements. Any critical discourse analysts should, according to Fairclough (2014), be concerned not only with the "power in discourse" (where one participant controls the contribution of the other), but also in the "power behind discourse", "which includes the power to shape and constitute the orders of discourse, or what discourse . . . are available" (26). Here, clear links can be made between Fairclough's understanding of power and my critique of existing

justifications for public support for arts and culture, which investigates, in part, the (unequal) power relations that shape and influence processes of justification and subsequently the justificatory discourses available to others (Forst, 2014; Moss, 2018).

Fairclough (2014) claims that researchers employing CDA should commit themselves “not just to analysing texts, nor just to analysing processes of production and interpretations, but to analysing the relationships between texts, processes and their social conditions, both the immediate conditions of the situational context and the more remote conditions of institutional and social structures” (58). In accordance with this assertion, my study employs his basic framework for critical analysis which consists of three stages. The first is the description stage “which is concerned with formal properties of the text” (Fairclough, 2014: 58). This initial stage is where I evaluate the discourses used in existing justifications, noting similarities across and between justifications in Calgary and Leeds and identifying dominant justificatory discourses. The second stage focuses on interpretation and is “concerned with the relationship between text and interaction — with seeing the text as the product of a process of productions, and as a resource in the process of interpretation” (Fairclough, 2014: 58). This is the point of analysis at which I engage in a genealogical critique of existing justifications discussed in Chapter 2. Here I focus on exposing power relations and unjust practices of justifications, by evaluating how these justifications emerged, how complex they are (what norms, ideologies and dominant discourses they draw on) and how stable they are within their specific social context. The third stage of Fairclough’s (2014) framework “is concerned with the relationship between interaction and social context — with the social determination of the processes of production and interpretation, and their social effects” (58). In this final stage of

analysis, I aim to understand how existing justifications for public support for arts and culture in Calgary and Leeds restrict or enhance cultural opportunities and the opportunities to engage with just processes of justification (the construction and allocation of cultural value).

To summarise, I ground my study of existing justifications in Fairclough's basic framework for critical discourse analysis. As hinted at earlier, his approach has proven an invaluable tool for my evaluation of justificatory practices. However, it does not help me identify existing justifications in texts (semi-structured interviews and policy documents), and for this part of my analysis, I turned to argumentation theory (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012).

3.2.1 Argumentation and Practical Reason

Argumentation, at its most basic, is how we reason practically, or the process of practical reasoning. Let me begin with a brief review of what I mean by practical reasoning. Practical reasoning "is reasoning concerning what to do" (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012: 35). It "arises in response to practical problems which are addressed to us as agents who are acting in particular circumstances and aiming to achieve various goals" (Fairclough, 2012: 35). In other words, "practical reasons are reasons for action" (Fairclough, 2012: 35). In this way it is different (and should not be confused with) theoretical reasoning, which is concerned with what is or is not true (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). Practical reasoning occurs in two situations: when we must ask, 'What should I (we) do?' and when we must ask, 'Should I (we) do A or not?'. How we eventually make a choice or claim for action, "involves an imaginative effort to think of

as many considerations that might have a bearing on the situation as possible”

(Fairclough, 2014: 35).

This process of reasoning about what action to take can be seen as effectively producing arguments that in turn help to establish a claim for action (a decision on what action to take). So, when a policymaker in Calgary, for example, is faced with questions around the role of arts in their city, they engage in a process of reasoning about the value of arts and culture (how do the arts contribute to society? How do they benefit their city?).

Through this act of ‘practical reasoning’, the policymaker forms an argument around particular notions of cultural value and a defense for why these notions of value are deserving of public support. This process of argumentation eventually results in a claim for action being made about arts and culture. Put another way, processes of argumentation about public support for the arts are the space in which we define notions of cultural value (the arts are valuable because they create economic growth), develop claims for specific actions based on that valuation (we need to invest public money into arts and culture because they contribute to economic growth), and supporting reasons for the legitimacy of that claim (arts and culture help develop creative skills, create jobs, attract tourists and help retain talent). Key to linking the concept of argumentation to my study’s understanding of justificatory practices is that I see processes of argumentation as acts of justification. In other words, we justify our actions and reason for public support for the arts through processes of ‘practical reasoning’ and argumentation, and because of this I see argumentation and justification as intrinsically linked concepts. At its most basic, understanding arguments as practices of justification allows me to use Fairclough and Fairclough’s (2012) argumentation framework as a means through which to identify existing justifications for public support in my data

collection. I expand on this in more detail when I discuss the preparation and analysis of my data, but briefly put, I locate existing justifications in the semi-structured interviews and policy and planning documents by identifying any arguments that relate to public support for the arts. Argumentation analysis provides the means through which to trace arguments in the texts, but does not provide a normative or explanatory critique (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). Therefore, once I have uncovered existing justifications in the data, I assess them using Fairclough's (2015) basic framework for critique discussed above.

3.3 Research Design

This research design aims to investigate and present an in-depth overview of how Calgary and Leeds justify public support for the arts so that I can critique the justificatory processes taking place in each city and evaluate existing justifications against the valuable capability sets discussed in Chapter 2. To approach this research problem, I investigate what policymakers, cultural leaders and the most recent cultural plans in both cities have to say about why arts and culture deserve public support. Additionally, I analyse justificatory discourses found in cultural policy and planning documents (national and local) spanning the last 60 years and offer a literature review that aims to map the evolution of cultural value (and value allocation) more broadly. I combine these three areas of analysis (interviews, secondary data, literature review) to gain an understanding of how policymakers and cultural leaders reason about and subsequently legitimise particular notions of cultural value in their respective cities, but also as a means of contextualising these justifications by addressing the socio-cultural-

historical development of various notions of cultural value that have helped to shape these justificatory practices.

Because there are no precedents for grounding my particular theoretical and evaluative approach to justificatory practices, my choice of research methods is guided by the theoretical and methodological requirement that I base my study in an analysis of discursive practices (Fairclough, 2014; Forst, 2014), as well as by previous research around cultural value and capabilities that have used similar qualitative methods (Alkire et al., 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018; Scott et al., 2018).

3.3.1 Interviews

One of this study's primary data-gathering methods involves semi-structured interviews with policymakers and cultural leaders, including creative directors and managers of large, medium and grassroots art institutions, philanthropists and policy consultants in both Calgary and Leeds. At its most basic, this research method unearths insights into the existing justificatory practices taking place in both cities by allowing me to evaluate how leaders in the arts sector speak to issues of cultural value, and how they reason about why the arts deserve of public support. In this way, interviews are key, because, as Seidman (2013) notes, one of the primary ways a researcher can make sense of abstract notions, (such as cultural value and processes of legitimation) is through the "experiences of the individuals whose work and lives are the stuff upon which the abstractions are built" (9).

I treat the interviewees' justifications for public support as social facts and thus as objects of analysis. As discussed in Chapter 2, my critique starts by questioning how

existing justifications arose, as well as how stable and complex they are, so that I may begin to expose power relations at play within them (Forst, 2014). Therefore, I pay attention to how interviewees draw on longstanding narratives around cultural value, but I am also aware that the narratives interviewees choose and how they employ, change or adjust them is deeply rooted in and shaped by local context. In this way, I see the interviews as emphasising the interplay between the intertextuality of justificatory discourses (that all justifications draw on previous discourses and meaning) and the social and cultural specificity of justificatory practices (Fairclough, 2014; Forst, 2014). Interviews also provide additional knowledge about the development of both cities' 'co-produced' cultural plans explored in detail in Chapter 5. Here, many of the policymakers divulge information about the struggles involved in the policies' development processes and elaborate on the intentions and motivations behind the 'co-produced' policies. Interviews with institutional leaders reveal the general sentiments towards the co-produced plans as well as the level of knowledge and involvement arts organisations felt they had in the policymaking process. In this way, the use of semi-structured interviews proves an appropriate method, given that it offers a means through which to gather existing justifications and also provides this study with additional insight into processes of justification.

3.3.2 Sampling and Interviewees' Profiles

For this study, I specifically sought out potential interviewees employed in occupations that can be seen as helping to justify public support for the arts and to legitimise certain notions of cultural value. In other words, I used "purposeful-sampling" (Patton, 1990: 52) to select a specific grouping of policymakers, policy consultants and institutional leaders, working in both cities. Due to their potential influence over justificatory

practices, I see these participants as offering the most information-rich cases and providing the greatest insight (Patton 1990: 52) for my study. My sample also attempts to engage with what Patton (1990) calls ‘maximum variation’, which aims at capturing and describing central themes and variations that cut across different participants (policymakers and cultural leaders) and geographies (Calgary and Leeds).

The initial number of interviewees was decided based upon various factors such as time-based and financial constraints as well as access to and availability of participants (Wengraf, 2001; Seidman, 2013). Because of these limitations, I chose to use a medium-sized sample of 35-45 semi-structured interviews and, in the end, conducted 20 interviews in Leeds and 21 in Calgary for a total sample of 41 interviews. In terms of categories (policymakers versus cultural leaders), the interview numbers break down as follows:

- Leeds – 6 leaders of National Portfolio Organisations (large and medium-size), 5 leaders of small, independent, or grassroots arts organisations (organisations receiving the smallest amount of funding, low number of employees), 1 leader of an inclusive arts collective which focuses on helping people with learning disabilities develop artistic talent, 4 people involved in cultural policy-making and 4 consultants who have been involved in recent cultural policy-making practices.
- Calgary – 5 leader of large or cornerstone organisations (institutions that receive top funding in the city), 3 leaders of medium-sized organisations (institutions that have smaller number of staff and receive less funding than cornerstone organisations), 3 leaders of small, grassroots or independent organisations and 1 leader of an inclusive arts collective which focuses on helping people with learning disabilities

develop artistic talent, 7 people involved in cultural policy-making, 1 consultant involved with recent cultural policy-making practices and 1 philanthropist who contributes substantial funds to Calgary's arts and culture sector.

Although my interviewees remained anonymous, I wanted to gather a general sense of the policymakers and cultural leaders who helped to justify public support for the arts in Calgary and Leeds. So, I began the interviews by asking each participant to take me through how they got involved in arts and culture. I then created broad profiles (age, years of experience, etc.), noting any patterns that emerged within and across cities, and used this data to gain additional insight into the processes of justification taking place in each city. I found, perhaps not surprisingly, that all were college or university educated, that at the time of the interviews they were between 28 and 60 years of age and had been engaged with the arts on some level anywhere between 10 and 30 years, and that the majority of them were women (28 versus 13).

3.3.3 Recruitment, Field Work and Practicalities

My recruitment strategies for both cities consisted of informants and 'snowballing' sampling. Thanks to my previous work in Calgary's cultural sector, I was able to reach out to existing contacts and access interviewees through the support of these informants. In Leeds, I cultivated connections by attending arts and cultural events over the three years of my PhD research when I lived in the city.

Key informants were groups of people, primarily ex-policymakers, artists and institutional leaders, who provided me with information about potential interviewees. In some cases, informants facilitated access to these practitioners through trusted

recommendations (King and Horrocks, 2010: 31-32). Although my network in Leeds was not as extensive as that in Calgary, I was able to gather enough informants to help me access key interviewees who were then able to introduce me to additional participants. Using one participant to lead to another is commonly known as a “snowballing” approach (Seidman, 2013). I used this recruitment technique in both cities, but because of the smaller number of informants, the snowballing approach was employed more often in Leeds than in Calgary.

I did not experience any major difficulties in the recruitment process and generally speaking found those in my sample group to be enthusiastic and willing participants. Although issues with access are expected when attempting to recruit “elite” interviewees (Ball, 1994; Seidman, 2013; Lancaster, 2017) such as policymakers or large institutional leaders, this was not a problem for my study. Despite having to follow up, in most cases I found that after communication was established, elite interviewees were receptive, with all but one candidate agreeing to participate in my research. The willingness of participants to get involved with my study was certainly aided by the efforts put forward by my informants, but, I suspect, also had to do with the timing of my research. That is, my recruitment process took place at a time when policymakers and institutional leaders in both Calgary and Leeds were eager to talk about and promote the importance of arts and culture in their cities.

During this time, the City of Calgary was launching its new cultural plan, which stresses the importance of arts and culture in diversifying the economy after the recent fall in oil prices forced the city to question its reliance on the oil and gas industry. At the same time, Council was dealing with backlash from the arts community because of its eight-

year funding freeze for the arts as well as managing public outcry over their choice of public art, which was seen to be a “waste” of public money in a time of economic downturn (Hennig, 2017). Here, I found policymakers eager to meet so that they could give their side of the story as well as promote the new cultural plan. Meanwhile, due to the funding freeze, and the precarity of many of the city’s major arts organisations, many institutional leaders were eager for any platform through which to advocate for an increase in municipal funds.

Over the past four years, Leeds City Council established its bid to be named European Cultural Capital 2023 (which, as a consequence of the Brexit vote, was later voided). They began developing their co-produced cultural policy (which was established as an offshoot of the 2023 bid), and they won the bid to become the new home of Channel 4’s national headquarters. However, on the flip side, the Council was dealing with issues around Brexit, continued austerity and massive cuts to their budget (£266 million since 2010) (Leeds City Council, 2016). My recruitment of participants in Leeds followed the revision to Leeds 2023, which scales back the project to a five-year fundraising program that eventually culminates in an arguably less renowned and less visible year-long cultural celebration in 2023. Despite this, I found that policymakers were still willing to meet up to defend as well as promote their reasons for continuing with plans for the celebration. Additionally, during this time both policymakers and institutional leaders were inclined to stress the struggles that the sector and City Council faced in trying to promote and support the arts (including the development of the cultural strategy) in a time of uncertainty and austerity.

My fieldwork was carried out in Calgary and Leeds between 2017 and 2018. I conducted my interviews in person, except for two that were conducted over Skype due to issues with timing and travel between the two cities. I created an interview guide based on an initial argumentation analysis of secondary sources (cultural policy documents and strategies), alongside a review of the literature around cultural value and policy (Belfiore, 2004; 2018; Belfiore and Bennett, 2008; Gray, 2009; 2010; Bell and Oakley, 2015), all of which indicates the potential ways in which we might go about justifying public support. From this early assessment, I found that arguments for or around the public value of arts and culture are likely to involve the following: a claim about the role of arts and culture in a city (e.g. economic, social cohesion), an assertion about the purpose of arts institutions (e.g. skills development, education, outreach, access, participation), and some form of declaration about the responsibility of local governments to their city's arts and culture sectors (e.g. funding and other forms of non-financial support).¹⁰ I then broadly structured my interview questions around these three themes, engaging interviewees in discussions around cultural value, the role of local arts institutions, and government's responsibility (if any) to their city's arts and cultural sector.

The interviews lasted between 40 and 90 minutes and were audio-recorded. To ensure understanding about the purpose of the research, I provided interviewees with a consent form and information sheet and offered them the option of remaining anonymous.

Before beginning the interviews, I provided participants with an accurate overview of

¹⁰ When policymakers reference government's non-financial support they often referred to how local councils might help foster connections between the sector and other government departments, or how they might help facilitate connections between publicly funded cultural institutions and the private sector.

the study and made clear that they could refuse to answer any questions or could answer “off the record”, in which case I would use the response for my knowledge, but would not make that information available to the public. Additionally, I let all participants know that they could contact me before or after the interviews if they had any further questions or concerns. All of my interviewees indicated on the written consent forms that they wished to remain anonymous. Only two participants contacted me afterwards, one interviewee expressing concerns that they were not as eloquent as they had hoped to be, offering to conduct a second interview if I was not happy with the transcription, while the other was concerned that some of their comments, if used, would compromise their anonymity. In the first situation, I assured them that I was not after ‘accuracy’ or refined statements but rather in their general sentiments towards the questions asked, and that I was happy with the original interview. In the second, I let the participant know that I would use their data only for general coding, and would not include any direct quotes from their interview, to ensure anonymity. I also reminded the participant that I wanted them to feel comfortable and, as per the information sheet, they could withdraw from the study before January 2019. Were this the case, all the collected data from the participant wishing to withdraw would have been destroyed. To date (November 2020), I have not had any indication that this interviewee was unhappy with my response or unwilling to continue as a participant in my research, nor have I been contacted by any of the other participants indicating their desire to leave the study.¹¹

¹¹ My research received ethics approval from the University of Leeds, and my study adhered to all the requirements of that approval.

3.3.4. Secondary Data

Aside from helping to guide my semi-structured interviews, I use both historical and contemporary analysis of secondary sources as a means through which to contextualise and critique existing justifications in both cities (discussed in Chapter 2). Therefore, my focus on policies and planning documents, as well as on various political reports, makes sense within the context of my research (Scott, 1990), which seeks to understand justificatory practices, and is also reinforced by scholars using similar secondary sources to investigate issues of cultural value (Jancovich and Bianchini, 2013; Gray, 2017; Hadley and Gray, 2017; Schlesinger, 2017).

I identified sources that provide wider perspectives on the development of justifications for public support for the arts and offer insights into the evolution of cultural justifications at the local level. Justifications for public support are often attached to and shaped by broader social and economic issues (Belfiore, 2004; 2012; Gray, 2006; Gray, 2017; Peck and Theodore, 2015), so my secondary data is not confined to cultural policy or strategy reports, but includes both municipalities' broader city plans (Leeds City Council, 2018a; The City of Calgary, 2018a; Leeds City Council, 2018d).

Additionally, I include international and national government reports concerned with economic imperatives and social integration and social cohesion (see Appendix 2). I selected these broader political reports based on an initial analysis of Calgary and Leeds's local cultural strategies, noting the main areas of policy attachment and tracing these back to wider city planning documents. I then assessed national and international documents where similar themes were present. With regard to cultural strategies and reports, I gathered data spanning the last 60 years, from national and municipal departments of arts and culture as well as funding agencies at both local and national

levels. I focus on this particular period because it spans from before the establishment of both cities' initial cultural policies (the early 2000s) through to the development of their most recent cultural strategies, and thus offers, in my view, the clearest pictures of how justifications for public support emerged, and how they have changed or stabilised. Additionally, in some instances, either interviews or the cities' recent cultural plans refer to other municipalities' cultural strategies, in which cases I also review those cities' relevant reports. Therefore, in this study, the secondary data comes from several sources including:

- The Government of Canada, Canada Council for the Arts, The City of Calgary, Calgary Arts Development, Vancouver City Council, Toronto Arts Council, The City of Austin
- The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Arts Council of England, United Cities of and Local Governments (UCLG), Council of Europe, European Commission, NESTA, Leeds City Council, Hull City Council

I analysed a total of 50 reports based in the UK and Europe and in Canada and the United States (see Appendix 2). In mapping the various documents, I sought to establish a genealogical critique of the justifications for public support in Calgary and Leeds that is both sensitive to the local context in which processes of justifications took place and aware of the broader social, political and economic issues that have influenced these localised justificatory practices. Furthermore, I supplement my analysis of secondary data with a literature review of previous research that addresses matters of cultural value and policy practices (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008; Belfiore, 2018; Hesmondhalgh, 2008; Banks and Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Gray, 2010; Bell and Oakley,

2015; Turner, 2015; O'Connor, 2016; Hadley and Gray, 2017; Hadley and Belfiore, 2018; Alexander, 2018), providing further insights into justificatory practices and a more well-rounded understanding of the evolution of existing justifications.

Concerning access, all but one of my secondary sources are available online through various government and non-government websites. The one document not obtained through an online source is a report that I requested through the Freedom of Information Act,¹² detailing Leeds City Council's expenditure on arts on culture between 2004 and 2018, including a list of organisations funded through council and the amounts granted to each. As part of my gathering of secondary sources, I wanted to obtain funding information for both cities beginning around the time they implemented their first cultural policy through to the last available fiscal year, as these funding reports offer additional insight into the arts institutions and festivals that each city deemed worthy of public spending. Although Calgary's arm's length funding agency (CADA) is required to release granting information yearly through its website, this is not the case for Leeds City Council, which is why I made this particular request for information.

I appreciate that documentary research has its limitations, particularly in that I have only 'indirect' access to most of the political documents under investigation (Scott, 1990). My analysis of secondary data, then, infers behaviours and intentions (i.e. arguments for public support for the arts) through the documentary materials, and is not informed by firsthand knowledge about the process through which these texts came to

¹² The Freedom of Information Act "gives you the right to request any information from any public authority. It promotes openness and accountability among public sector organisations so that everyone can understand how authorities make decisions, carry out their duties and spend public money" (Leeds City Council).

be (Scott, 1990). The exception is my study of contemporary justificatory processes in Calgary and Leeds, for which I combine ‘indirect’ access to secondary sources (an analysis of both cities’ recent co-produced cultural strategies, planning documents and funding reports) with ‘direct’ access to the key stakeholders involved in the development process of these texts (interviews with policymakers and cultural leaders involved in developing co-produced plans and granting decisions). Although gaining ‘direct’ access to all of my secondary sources is well beyond the interest and scope of this research, I do recognise that the documents investigated are “traces which have been left by the thoughts and actions” of particular people, at a specific place and time (Scott, 1990). Thus, my analysis of secondary sources, as I explore in more detail shortly, is sensitive to the social and cultural contexts from which these documentary sources emerged (Scott, 1990; Fairclough, 2014).

3.4 Preparation and Presentation of Data

I provide verbatim transcriptions of my interviews to ensure rigour in my analysis (Beitin, 2012; Guest et al., 2017). I prepared the transcriptions myself, encrypting both the audio and text files and letting the interviewees know that, as per their consent forms, no one but my supervisors and me would have access to either file. As all of my interviewees decided to remain anonymous, I assign them codes that can be cross-referenced to an interview chart (Appendix 1). So, for example, the reader can identify “Interview, L” as a policymaker, and so forth. I offered each participant the option of receiving a copy of their interview transcription, acknowledging that they have a basic right to this data (Seidman, 2013). However, to date, none of my participants have made

this request. I also let participants know that I would happily share with them the completed study as well as any other reports using the interview.

The in-depth interviews and secondary data generated a large amount of text, and I have reduced this data through my use of argumentation analysis, discussed in more detail below. Here, the analytical framework guided how I marked and categorised important data. This is not to say it offered any pre-determined notions of what these arguments might be, and nor did it encourage me to come to these transcriptions and documents with any such notions, but rather it provided me with a broad object of analysis (arguments) as well as with the tools to code justifications for public support for the arts once I identified them in the text. While appreciating that no researcher “can enter into the study of an interview [or document] as a clean slate” (Seidman, 2013: 120; Reason and Rowan, 1981) I did my best to approach the texts with an open mind, paying attention to what arguments for public support emerge from the transcriptions and reports, rather than deductively seeking out specific justifications. That said, I acknowledge that in the process of identifying arguments within the data, I was exercising judgement about what was significant in the text and what was not (Seidman, 2013).¹³ To ensure efficiency and accuracy in my analysis of the texts, I used the most recent edition of Nvivo, a qualitative data analysis computer software program, to organise my coding and data sets.

¹³ However, my judgments around what qualifies as arguments for public support are based on extensive evaluation of existing literature around cultural value, value allocation and cultural policy practices.

3.4.1 Identifying Justifications in Text

I coded the collection of data (semi-structured interviews and secondary sources) using argumentation analysis. I have made clear that I see practical arguments as representing practices of justification. Importantly, justification and, by association, arguments, are not simply individual acts, but rather a complex process that draws on personal experiences, normative orders, dominant narratives, particular circumstances and values. Therefore, the process is neither free from contextualised situations nor can it “occur and be valid only in a singular narrative context” (Forst, 2017: 56). Fairclough and Fairclough (2012) provide a useful analytical framework that compartmentalises the complex process of practical argumentation so that it may be more easily critiqued. They suggest that at its most basic, practical argumentation involves five identifiable elements: the claim for action and four basic ‘premises’ — circumstantial, goal, means goal and value — that support that claim (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). I broadly discussed the concept of argumentation earlier in this chapter, and will elaborate on it here in more detail and within the context of my coding.

The claim (what ought or should be done) that an argument makes is established through a process of reasoning (argumentation or practices of justification) that draws on the four premises mentioned above. In essence, a claim is the product of argumentation and represents, in terms of coding, the point of entry for analysis. In order to understand how the claim came to be, the analyst must work backwards to identify the circumstances, goals, means-goals and values from which this claim was born. In other words, when coding existing justifications in the data, my first task was to identify any claims for action made in relation to public support for the arts, and this included claims made about cultural value (arts and culture can do X and therefore

needs Y), claims made about the role of arts institutions (arts institutions should do X to get Y) and claims made about government responsibility to the arts sector (it is government's role to do X so that arts and culture can do Y).

Following this, I identified the circumstantial premises in each of the arguments. Here I was looking for what circumstances the arguer was drawing on to make the claim. To give an example, in Calgary, claims around the economic value of arts and culture made in interviews and recent policy and planning documents overwhelmingly refer to the current economic downturn in the city — that people were losing jobs and moving away, and that economic diversity was required to save the city, including the immediate need for new talent to help the city move away from oil and gas. Recent claims around the economic value of the arts made in Leeds, however, refer to issues around urban competitiveness, the state of creative industries, and the city's drive to attract talent all linked to concerns around increasing austerity and Brexit. Now, the general claim is certainly generic and indeed both cities have been making similar claims around the economic value of the arts for decades (i.e. arts and culture contribute to economic growth), but the circumstances and motivations that these recent claims draw on (the fall in oil prices and Brexit and immediate increasing austerity) are specific to a particular time and place. Understanding the circumstantial premise is important, because it highlights how existing justifications are rooted in a particular context and offers insight into the circumstantial motivation for the claims made. That is, the reality of the arguer's circumstances (the context of their action) steers the ways in which arguments develop as it “restricts the range of actions that can be thought of and the choices that can be made” (Fairclough, 2012: 44).

Once I had identified the circumstantial premises, I then located the goal and means-goal premises for each claim. The goal premise represents the imagined future; that is, where the arguer wants to end up (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). So, for example, goals linked to claims around the economic value of the arts in Calgary include having a diversified economy in the next decade, a growing creative industry, a world-class arts sector that would attract talent, a prosperous city with a good quality of life and so forth. The means-goal premise is what connects the immediate present (fall in oil prices, economic downturn) with the imagined future (diversified economy and prosperity) (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). Essentially, this premise identifies how the arguer proposes to accomplish the goal premise. Some of the means-goals identified in the above Calgary example span everything from unleashing the “creativity” inside of each citizen, to focusing on the ability of arts institutions to promote and foster creative talent, to promoting Calgary’s “diversity advantage”, to increased government spending for the creative industries sector, to “plugging” Calgary as “the Austin of the North”. In my coding, I found goal premises tended to be easily identified no matter what the claim for public support. However, the arguments’ means-goals were often vague or missing entirely. This is especially the case for non-economic value claims, such as claims made around arts and culture’s ability to promote social cohesion.

Finally, I coded the value premises for each of the identified claims. Here I sought to understand the arguer’s values, that is, the beliefs, norms, and moral obligations evident in the argument (Fairclough and Fairclough, 2012). Just as circumstances (the immediate present) help shape goals (imagined futures) so do value sets. That is, how the arguer defines social good or the good life, and their beliefs around social welfare, public spending, the value of particular art forms, the power of the arts to create social

change and so forth play a part in structuring the argument. Values proved by far the most difficult premise to code in that many, often contradictory, value sets could be identified in one claim. However, coding the value premises offered great insight into what dominant norms and beliefs are steering existing justifications, and highlighted the ‘messiness’ of justificatory practices. Additionally, as will be discussed shortly, the various value sets I identified helped guide my choices for what relevant capabilities might look like in Calgary and Leeds.

I applied this textual analysis to all of the interviews as well as the historical and contemporary secondary data, including various cultural policy and planning documents. The only data I excluded from this coding process were the broader political reports that make no direct arguments about arts and culture. The coding process itself — breaking down the various justifications for public support for the arts into claims, circumstances, goals, means-goals and values in each of the transcripts and documents — was time consuming. After performing an initial analysis, I went back through the process to ensure consistency and accuracy in my analysis of the text. That said, argumentation proved invaluable as it not only helped to ground my study of justifications in the texts, but provided my overarching critique with a nuanced understanding of existing justifications and processes of justifications. That is, it brought to light the context in which specific justifications took place, the motivating factors and aims that drove arguments for public support, and the norms, beliefs and dominant narratives that underscored these justifications.

Through conducting this textual analysis and locating the underlying values in justifications for public support, I identified and constructed the list of valuable

capabilities referenced in the last chapter. That is, while unravelling a mixture of conflicting and competing norms and beliefs, particularly in the interview data, I noticed that some of the identified values spoke to, for example, the valuable capabilities identified by Nussbaum (2011) and Anderson (1999) as well as the notion of cultural capabilities more generally. Particularly, values linked to capabilities that promote the freedom to give value to our experience — freedom of expression, freedom to live with and towards others, freedom to recognise and show concern for other human beings, freedom to imagine the situation of others, freedom to engage in various forms of social interaction, and freedom to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life (Nussbaum, 2011: 34-35; Anderson, 1999). Once I made this connection, I reviewed the data sets, specifically the recent co-produced cultural plans and the interview transcriptions in both Calgary and Leeds to identify any values related to valuable capabilities. In other words, I sought out values that could be linked to a desire to create real freedoms and opportunities for people to achieve wellbeing outcomes (Robeyns, 2017). Through this analysis, I created a list for each city, outlining the values and related capabilities found in their respective data sets, which I then used to develop the relevant valuable capability sets. In the end, I determined that the values identified in Calgary spoke to capabilities associated with freedoms of expression, creation and participation, as well as the empowering of political voice. For Leeds, I identified values linked to what Nussbaum's (2011) defines as capabilities of affiliation; the city's list of valuable capabilities includes the opportunities and freedoms to engage with culture and create art in environments that promote dignity, appreciation, openness and tolerance to forms of cultural expression and encourage nondiscrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion, national origin. I will not revisit the debates around the selection of valuable capabilities or the theoretical

challenges I faced in determining a list of capabilities discussed in chapter 2. However, I will stress that how I chose these capabilities reflects a desire to establish a list of cultural capabilities for each city that could be used as a clear point of evaluation but that also acknowledged the importance of place in the process.

3.6 Conclusion

My investigation into how existing justifications around public support for the arts in Calgary and Leeds enhances or restricts valuable capabilities, as well as the space available to challenge and offer alternatives to these justificatory practices is positioned within qualitative approaches and critical discourse analyses. I chose this paradigm based on the theoretical premises discussed in Chapter 2, as well to gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of practices of justification taking place in both cities.

This research is based on three data collections methods: 41 semi-structured interviews with cultural policymakers and cultural leaders in Calgary and Leeds; a discourse analysis of 48 contemporary and historical secondary sources (cultural policy and planning documents as well as broader political reports); and a literature review of previous research about cultural value and policymaking.

This combination of data allows me to gain greater insights into how both cities have justified public support for the arts as well as how these justificatory practices emerged over time. Employing Fairclough's (2014) critical discourse analysis grounded my study of justifications and helped to create a more well-rounded framework for critique that focuses on justifications and justificatory processes aimed at understanding the

stability of these practices and uncovering unequal power relations within these processes. The use of argumentation analysis contributes to this evaluation by providing an in-depth understanding of existing justifications, highlighting the importance of context in justificatory practices as well as bringing to light the various motivations, aims and values which guide them. This analytical framework is complemented by an extensive literature review of research around cultural value and policy which helped to create a more well-rounded understanding of how justifications for public support for the arts have evolved over the past decades. Furthermore, the use of argumentation analysis helped me to navigate and reconcile theoretical and methodological issues around creating valuable capability lists for both cities.

The following three empirical chapters offer analysis and discussion based on the research design outlined above. The first two chapters critique the justificatory practices in each city and the space available in these practices to offer alternative ways of justifying public support and defining cultural value. The last empirical chapter evaluates how existing justifications in Calgary and Leeds enhance or restrict each city's respective list of cultural capabilities.

CHAPTER 4: THE EVOLUTION OF JUSTIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS IN CALGARY AND LEEDS

4.1 Introduction

In (re)imagining possible paths forward for cultural policy, this thesis has taken a capability approach, arguing that policy should be focused towards ensuring that people have the freedoms and opportunities necessary to participate in the (co-)creation of culture, if they so choose. I take the position, then, that policy should be directed towards enabling people's freedoms to choose to *be* and to *do* what they value, seeing these freedoms and opportunities as essential characteristics of wellbeing and human flourishing and necessary elements for advancing issues of social justice. As previously discussed (Chapter 2), the breadth of potential (cultural) capabilities that enable us to give form and value to our experience, or to participate in the (co-)creation of culture, are innumerable, diverse and interwoven. This leaves questions around what cultural capabilities policymakers should seek to secure and advance. I have suggested that one of the ways cultural policy can intervene in expanding people's freedoms to (co-)create culture is for it to address the inequalities and limitations that characterise public deliberation around notions of cultural value and allocation in practice.

I remain optimistic that policy can (eventually) tackle these issues by creating more equal opportunities for people to freely participate in the (co-)creation of cultural value and value allocation. However, I recognise that the emancipatory potential of policy and its ability to enhance wellbeing is inhibited by the realities of our imperfect world. In other words, I am keenly aware that various political, economic and social factors have

resulted in, for example, imbalances in the distribution of cultural authority in society and unequal access to the means of symbolic representation and meaning making (Belfiore, 2018: 2), which severely constricts our ability to advance more just policy practices.

With this in mind, I seek with this work to gain greater insight into how existing rationales for public support for the arts are particularly impacting the potential for change. I have argued that justifications for public support reflect certain articulation and rationales around cultural value and value allocation. That is, arguments for public support produce and reproduce narratives around cultural value that legitimise institutional practices as well as guide funding and policy structures (Fairclough, 2012; 2014; Forst, 2014). Appreciating how these arguments work; what power relations, values and ideologies guide them; and what structures and practices they sustain or advance is an essential first step in understanding how they enhance or restrict people's real freedoms and opportunities to participate in deliberation around cultural value as well as their ability to engage in (co-)creation of culture more broadly. Armed with this knowledge, we will begin to have a better view of the challenges involved in dismantling, shifting and transforming these practices in the future, and an increasingly more comprehensive grasp of what policy change might entail.

This is the first of two chapters that assess the ways in which Calgary and Leeds justify public support for the arts. The overarching aim of both chapters is to evaluate how justificatory practices in each city enable or constrict people's real freedoms and opportunities to shape cultural value and value allocation. Following my framework for critique (discussed in Chapter 2), this chapter presents a genealogy of existing

justifications identified in my interviews with policymakers and cultural leaders in Calgary and Leeds, as well as in both cities' relevant policy documents. There are multiple benefits to mapping this evolution. To start, it allows me to trace how these practices have been constructed over the last sixty years and the dialectical relationship between local justifications for support and the broader structures that influence them. Explicitly, it helps to highlight the fragility and resilience of these rationales as well as to gain greater insight into power relations, norms, ideologies and socio-economic and political structures that have shaped notions of cultural value in each city. Additionally, it works to point out justifications that are no longer valid or justifiable and the context that allows them to be reproduced and advanced as legitimate rationales. Finally, this study helps draw attention to current and former dominant justificatory narratives, and to how these narratives have worked to close down the space to 'counter' or offer alternative justifications for public support for arts and culture. I have broken the chapter into two parts. The first maps out Calgary's justifications for public support over the past 60 years. The second explores the evolution of rationales for public support over the same period in Leeds.

4.2 A Genealogy of Existing Justifications for Public Support of Arts and Culture in Calgary

Calgary's dominant justifications for public support have framed arts and culture as key to growing and diversifying the city's economy. Indeed, claims around the importance of creative industries, the sector's role in 'city building', increasing tourism, and attracting and retaining talent and big business are consistent in justifications made by policymakers, institutional leaders, and policy documents. Largely, the only variation

occurs in justifications made by grassroots leaders and nontraditional arts organisations, whose arguments for arts and culture centre around freedom of expression, the importance of equally engaging and connecting through the arts, and the role arts can play in helping to understand the human condition and to appreciate different points of view. In these justifications, economic imperatives are either resisted, rejected or not mentioned at all. However, these cases represent a small portion of the overall justifications identified, only 16 per cent, meaning that less than a quarter of Calgary's documented justifications for public support counter or ignore the dominant economic narrative. Some policymakers, leaders and documents, of course, make other arguments for why the arts deserve public support. These include claims around arts and culture's ability to make the city more 'liveable' and to encourage inclusivity and diversity. However, these appear less frequently, and are often superseded or appropriated by the dominant economic narrative. To gain a better understanding of how Calgary came to predominantly value arts and culture in economic terms, I explore how justificatory practices around public support for the arts evolved over the past six decades.

4.2.1 Early Years: 1960-2000

Calgary's existing justifications can be traced back to the revision of its Civic Arts Policy in 2004. Before this, the municipal government's relationship with the arts was scattered, and arguments for public support were minimal at best. That is, little evidence suggests that, preceding 2004, Calgary engaged in justificatory processes that successfully grounded cohesive notions of cultural value. Nor did existing practices establish clear aims around the city's management or development of arts and culture. This lack of municipal interest may not seem unusual, given that the arts and culture

have traditionally been “an area of low priority in political discourse” (Belfiore, 2006: 20). However, Calgary’s pre-2004 indifference to cultural development stands in contrast to the level of municipal cultural planning that took place in cities across Canada, North America and Western Europe from the late 1950s onward. Thus, it is worth thinking about how the City’s initial lack of enthusiasm towards the arts has impacted the evolution of justificatory practices in the city.

In Canada, municipal public support started in earnest after provincial and city centennial celebrations in the late 1950s and 60s created what Woodcock (1985) calls an “orgy of civic pride” that saw local governments invest in building and supporting major arts institutions. The relationship between city governments and local arts sectors grew in the following decades, due, in part, to reform movements in municipal politics that encouraged governments to examine how the arts sector could impact citizens’ quality of life (Stevenson, 1992). Local support for the arts sector was further advanced by various arts lobby and research groups that began holding symposiums and commissioning studies on municipal arts funding. In 1976, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities passed a resolution that urged city governments to study their long-term objectives for public support for the arts, and called for municipalities to establish administrative departments to oversee cultural planning (Stevenson, 1992). A decade later, the same taskforce called for cities to triple their local funding and to establish long-term arts policies by the turn of the century, which suggests that by the 1980s, municipal arts funding was recognised throughout Canada as a legitimate and necessary public expenditure (Stevenson, 1992).

While federal and provincial levels of funding supported artistic excellence and innovation, local governments were tasked with encouraging public participation in the arts and exploring the sector's potential economic benefits (Stevenson, 1992). Canadian cities took up the charge to varying degrees. For instance, Toronto established its Arts Foundation (a precursor to the Toronto Arts Council) in 1964, developed a cultural policy in the early 70s, and invested heavily in both capital projects and local artists from the mid-80s on. Beginning in the mid-80s, Toronto also commissioned several reports on the state of the arts in the city, which involved surveying the sector's economic impact and the role of the arts in diversity and civic society (The Mavor Moore Cultural Policy Symposium, 2008). In the Western provinces, between 1970 and 2000, neighbouring cities on either side of Calgary increased public spending on the arts and engaged in various processes of cultural planning. Vancouver, for example, set up a cultural advisory board in 1973, engaged heavily with cultural planning, conducted surveys of the economic impact of its nonprofit cultural industries to attract corporate and political support (1983) and funded cross-cultural initiatives to address issues of diversity and social cohesion (1990) (Stevenson, 1992). It also developed a taskforce in the early 90s to evaluate the current state and future role of the arts in the city (1991) (Stevenson, 1992). Cultural planning in Saskatchewan municipalities in the 70s and 80s was inspired, in part, by wider urban social movements. It revolved largely around "community-level arts development initiatives, such as support for local music festivals and amateur theatre" (Jeannotte, 2010: 9), and maintained a focus on the status and rights of the individual creators. Cities in Manitoba, in contrast, began in the 1980s to develop and support their cultural industries through initiatives aimed at "increasing the ability of these [sectors] to develop and market their products" (Jeannotte, 2010 :14).

Calgary's municipal relationship with the arts was, by comparison, far more modest. As hinted above, Calgary did not invest in any major cultural capital builds in the 1960 and 1970s, leaving much of the sector to be built and sustained through private endowments. Cultural spending was the sole responsibility of the City of Calgary's Parks and Recreation department, which valued and invested in arts and culture as leisure activities. In 1969, the municipality established the Calgary Regional Arts Foundation (CRAF), an arms-length branch of the local government charged with promoting, encouraging and developing arts and culture in the region, and with annually dispersing a small quantity of funds to local artists and arts organisations both in the city and across Southern Alberta (The City of Calgary, 2001). Although the creation of CRAF suggests a municipal commitment to growing and supporting local arts and culture, the organisation's ability to impact justificatory practices, to develop the sector or to shape an understanding of cultural value is questionable. To begin with, City Council, in an attempt to keep overhead costs to a minimum, established CRAF as a volunteer-based funding agency (The City of Calgary, 1985; 2001). Therefore, the organisation received no operational support to maintain a full-time staff, and received no additional funding to engage in research aimed at developing the sector. It was not responsible for capital grants programs, which remained under the control of Parks and Recreation, and, thus, was incapable of supporting long-term investments or substantial developments. And despite CRAF's ostensible function to help to keep artistic decisions away from politicians, ten council members were appointed annually to help direct the organisation's investments in the arts (The City of Calgary, 1985; 2006). The organisation provided no clear justifications for public support, which effectively left funding structures to the whims of the assessors and city councillors. One interviewee working for City Council and involved with CRAF during this period described cultural

spending as having no obvious intention or direction, recounting that arts organisations “would all come and lobby us, and there wasn’t any sort of process for us as councillors to know whether this was a high priority for the city or not. [Funding] depended on the ability and the timing of the lobbyists” (Interview, M). As a result, over its 35 years in operation (1969–2004), CRAF’s funding followed personal preferences which privileged music, performing arts organisations and festivals, and ignored large pockets of the sector, most notably the visual arts and literature (The City of Calgary, 1986; 1991).

Aside from CRAF, other attempts to justify arts and culture help to shed light on existing justificatory practices. For instance, in 1986, years behind other Canadian cities, Calgary’s Parks and Recreation department developed the city’s first civic arts policy. The policy specifies two justifications for public support. The first speaks to an ethereal valuation of the arts, stating that artistic activity “adds to the richness of life”, constitutes the “expression of spirit”, and presents public support for the sector as “a spiritual necessity” (City of Calgary, 1986: 5456). This justification privileges an “art’s for art’s sake” argument, whereby “artistic practice represents a realm of authenticity and expression beyond the market and state and access to “transcendental truths” (O’Brien, 2014: 8). The second, states that the “arts are an economic engine”, and points to (both private and nonprofit) cultural industries’ ability to provide employment, attract talent, encourage tourism and spur economic growth (The City of Calgary, 1986: 5456).

Calgary’s economic justifications in the 1980s for public support were not unusual, but rather reflected a broader shift in cultural policy. That decade saw many urban cultural policies employ culture to help regenerate physical and local economies in response to

the global recessions of the 1970s, as well as the era's political shift towards neoliberalism and reduced, decentralised funding practices (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994; O'Brien, 2014; Bell and Oakley, 2015). Although local regeneration strategies varied, they generally employed the arts sectors to "construct an urban image able to attract tourists, skilled personnel, and investors, to diversify and strengthen the local economic base" (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994: 15). Such strategies also reflected the increase in forms of "policy attachment" (Gray, 2008), wherein public sectors with low budgets, visibility and political clout "gradually came to 'attach themselves' to other, more prominent and better resourced areas of the welfare state, in the hope of sharing in their budgets and partaking of their greater political relevance" (Belfiore, 2012: 104).¹⁴ Despite the policy's economic justifications, there is little evidence that, outside of policy rhetoric, these broader trends had any substantive impact on Calgary's approach to cultural development, nor did it appear to affect culture's political status within the city. This is particularly surprising considering that, due to the fall in oil prices in the early 1980s, Calgary was experiencing a deep recession that resulted in a decade of rising bankruptcy rates, massive unemployment and an exodus of people from the city.

That said, local government did not disregard urban regeneration strategies altogether. For example, they won the bid to host the 1988 Olympics, and with it aimed to put on "the largest winter games cultural celebration ever assembled . . . [that would] put Calgary on the map"¹⁵ (Young, 1987). However, the festival was fraught with

¹⁴ Policy attachment is both a top-down process, whereby governments impose instrumental agendas on the arts sector, and a bottom-up approach, whereby the sector "strives to demonstrate its 'usefulness' in socioeconomic terms" (Belfiore, 2012: 104; Gray 2008)

¹⁵ The festival cost ten-million-dollars and was set to host over 600 international and national performances and exhibitions (Young, 1987).

mismanagement and controversy, resulting in more negative than positive press for Calgary's arts sector.¹⁶ Although the month-long festival drew the largest arts funding the city had seen, the enthusiasm around culture's potential to raise Calgary's international status was short lived. According to City of Calgary budget requests, CRAF received only a minor increase in funding in the year following the Olympics¹⁷, and there is no indication that the Parks and Recreation department made any attempts to use the Arts Festival to push justifications around culture-led regeneration (The City of Calgary, 1985; 1986).

A review of reports submitted to council by the Calgary Economic Development Agency (the city's civic partner charged with local economic growth) shows that City Council was concerned with economic diversification and attracting business and talent, but not through culture (The City of Calgary, 1991). Its focus was on developing the local manufacturing industries and attracting industrial and technology sectors by offering a "business friendly" environment. This emphasis on business development rather than culture is emblematic of the conservative market-led "pro-business" and "pro-development" ideologies that have shaped Calgary's political and economic landscape since the 1970s (Reese and Rosenfeld, 2012). In other words, Calgary's dependence on the oil and gas sectors has anchored municipal concerns in support and development of that economic base. The city has consequently privileged policies centred around business growth and infrastructure (Brunet-Jailly, 2012), effectively pushing other public policies, such as arts and culture, to the periphery.

¹⁶ Three months before the festival was to open, the general manager resigned, and much of the programming remained unnamed or unconfirmed. In addition, unresolved land-claim disputes prompted the Albertan Cree band, the Lubicons, to urge international and national museums to boycott the event; as a result, over 26 museums refused to lend artifacts in support of the boycott (Young, 1987).

¹⁷ 69,000 CND (The City of Calgary, 1986)

In 1996, a decade after establishing its first cultural policy, Calgary's Parks and Recreation department made a second attempt to establish a statement of cultural value that could serve to legitimise and sustain cultural support. The revised policy leaves behind the ephemeral justification for public support touted in the earlier policy, and concentrates instead on economic arguments and the role of arts and culture in enhancing "quality of life" (The City of Calgary, 1996a). Justifications for public support based on quality of life focus on the ability of artistic expression and practice to develop civic identity, encourage volunteerism, develop job skills, revitalise communities through cultural regeneration projects and enhance social skills in children. This represents the first time that the department seriously engaged with the social value of the arts and the notion of quality of life, but, unlike other cities in Canada and Western Europe, Calgary's 1996 policy focuses solely on participation outcomes and shows no engagement with issues of 'access'. In short, the policy makes no arguments for public support based on the democratisation of culture, let alone issues of cultural democracy. It makes no mention of broadening access to culture, making culture available to the many rather than the few, nor does it acknowledge people's varying abilities to access participation or who might be excluded from participation altogether (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015). From a cultural democracy perspective, there is no acknowledgement of the need to encourage equal access to cultural practices, production and the construction of cultural value within the city. To be fair, justifications geared towards equitable access to cultural resources and production were not widespread at the time¹⁸, and it is not my intention to frame Calgary's lack of

¹⁸ Exceptions being some community arts movements in Western Europe, the GLC's arts policy in the 1980s and some community-based practices in Calgary's neighbouring province of Saskatchewan.

engagement with notions of cultural democracy as unusual. Rather, my reasons for pointing to it here is to stress the extent to which the city ignored a wide range of justificatory practices concerned with issues of inclusive and equitable access. There are doubtlessly many interwoven reasons why justificatory practices in Calgary neglected issues of access and decided instead to frame social benefits of arts and culture in terms of developing human capital and creating vibrant, economically successful communities. However, I suggest that a driving force behind this rationale was the city's market-led approach to social development, which tended to address social issues primarily through economic and development goals and strategies (Brunet-Jailly, 2012) rather than the equitable distribution of social goods; an approach to the social that, I will argue later in this chapter, greatly constrained justificatory practices and the ability to consider alternative notions of cultural value in the city.

Expanding on older economic justifications, the new policy's arguments for support revolve around arts and culture's contributions to the national economy, the sector's direct contribution to local economic development through increased employment and cultural spending, and the arts' ability to attract tourism and business. The document also provides statistics pertaining to the economic impact of the arts, and suggests that, based on these impacts, financial support to the arts "is a sound investment" (The City of Calgary, 1996a: 3). Similar to the 1986 policy, the revised document indicates how the city's justifications for public support simultaneously expand and adapt in connection to wider policy practices.

For instance, the 1996 policy engages with the wider Canadian discussion around the social and economic value of the arts, but, because of Calgary's political culture, aligns

social benefits more closely to economic impact. Additionally, by framing public support as a “sound investment” and using evidence-based policymaking, the department revealed its alignment with wider neoliberal trends that, since the 1980s, had seen the ethos of new public management restructure almost all aspects of government (Belfiore, 2004; Gray, 2008; O'Brien, 2014).¹⁹ As a result, the discourse of cultural policymaking, no longer able to rely on the unquestioned importance of arts funding, shifted its language from arts ‘subsidy’ to ‘investment’ in the arts (Belfiore, 2004; O'Brien, 2014), and began relying on impact measurements as ‘proof’ that public spending on the sector was a sound investment. The department’s use of investment discourse and evidence-based policy tools in their justifications for public support are certainly influenced by these broader shifts in policy practice. However, far from being merely the product of outside policy trends, these practices also reflect Calgary’s historical approach to policymaking. That is, the city’s conservative market-led culture created a preference “for a strong professional government that should be run like a business” (Brunet-Jailly, 2012: 296), and the councillors of the day approached many of their economic and social policies through this business lens. The 1996 policy differs from the earlier version in its attempts to bring arts and culture closer to wider city agendas as well as into established political and policy practices. In spite of developing more robust justifications for public support, however, the 1996 policy, like its predecessor, offers little indication that its arguments impacted any cultural development or funding structures.

¹⁹ The public sector’s reorganisation required it to function like a business, to adopt private-sector management concerns around efficiency, effectiveness, and the economy O’Brien (2014)

4.2.2 Grounding Justifications: The New Civic Arts Policy and Calgary Arts

Development

The inability of Parks and Recreation or CRAF to root justifications in practices, and thereby to increase the political status of arts and culture, became clear in the early 2000s, when a small number of city councillors and arts sector representatives formed the Civic Arts Policy Review Steering Committee. Tasked with revising Calgary’s arts policy, the committee “undertook a two-year process of review, research [and] consultation” (The City of Calgary, 2004). The process confirmed that the local government had failed to ground any strong justifications for why or how to fund the arts. Indeed, one member recounts that the various commissioned reports “basically said we don’t have a policy, you have no idea what you’re doing, you’re just taking some money and spreading it around because the arts are good. I remember sitting in that meeting and people going, what do we do next?” (Interview, T).

What they did was to seek advice from consultants²⁰, who encouraged the committee to “start with a picture of what kind of city we want to be and the role of the arts in that [...] [to] build a picture and then build a policy into that” (Interview, T). Upon review, the members decided that “economic development [was] important in our city, tourism [was] important [and] technology development [was] important” (Interview, T), and that bringing culture into these discussions was the best chance of legitimising a policy

²⁰ In an interview with a lead member of the original steering committee, it was noted that Robert Palmer was brought in to consult on the city’s future policy plans. At the time, Palmer was an international expert and team leader on cultural projects of the European Commission, Department of Culture, Media and Sport (UK), European Cultural Foundation, Interarts Foundation, national governments, regions and cities (https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cv_palmer.pdf).

arena which had, in their view, “no credibility to start with” (Interview, T). From here, the committee, in an effort to “tap into the best ideas” and leading cultural policy practices, looked to other cities (Toronto and Montreal) and other countries (UK and Australia). Importantly, the national UK and Australian policies, and Toronto’s Creative City strategies, that the steering committee drew on were, to varying degrees, working to make links between the cultural sector and economic growth by privileging the notion of “creativity” and its role in the broader post-industrial economy.

On the one hand, ‘creative’ thinking in cultural policy circles represents expansion and stabilising of earlier justifications around arts and culture’s role in urban regeneration and ‘city building’ strategies geared towards increasing tourism, talent attraction and economic diversification, discussed earlier in this chapter. On the other, creative city and creative policies significantly contributed to culture’s role in urban and economic regeneration by advancing neoliberal assumptions around the power of creativity and the value of creative workers in a city’s economic makeup.

Simply put, the post-industrial ‘knowledge’ economy²¹ shifted employment, education and later cultural policy aims by suggesting that capitalist growth no longer rests on physical capital but instead is built upon human capital, whereby people’s skills, creativity and innovation are key to economic development (Garnham, 2005; Bell, 1973). Building on the growing importance of innovation and creativity, the cultural sector and cultural policy community developed a series of ‘creative arguments’ and creative policy strategies to establish stronger links between artists and artistic

²¹ Also referred to over time as the “information society”, the “knowledge economy”, “creative economy” or “new economy” (see Garnham 2005).

production and the esteemed ‘new economy’ (Garnham, 2005). These strategies position the creative worker as a self-directed entrepreneur whose “capacity to innovate is increasingly vital to economic development” (Ross, 2009: 38), and posit that because ‘creativity’ is an innately human characteristic, all citizens are potential economic assets in the new economy (McRobbie, 2016). Through their use of empirical evidence and by identifying creativity and innovation as sources of economic growth, creative policies have sought to establish creative industries as centres of innovation and economic growth while framing their workers as essential ‘goods’ in a city’s struggle to retain its competitive edge (Ross, 2009). In short, creative strategies have encouraged city managers to see creative workers and the industries that employ them as value generators (Ross, 2009; O'Brien, 2014), effectively attaching ‘creativity’ and by extension culture to broader economic policies.

In 2004, City Council amended its arts policy based on various recommendations made by the steering committee. Marking a shift in the political thinking around arts and culture in Calgary, the new policy stressed that civic leadership was “serious” about the role of the arts in building the city’s future (The City of Calgary, 2004). It outlines key aspirations, including encouraging Calgarians to engage in creative and innovative pursuits, appreciating the creative industries, and building Calgary’s global reputation. To show its commitment to cultural planning, the City of Calgary established Calgary Arts Development Authority (CADA) in 2005. Taking over from Calgary Regional Arts Foundation, CADA became not only the city’s arm’s length funder, but also an organisation focused on cultural development, and a vehicle through which the city could “turn the policy’s aims into reality” (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2005: 1). The authority’s first annual “Report to the Community” outlines future strategies.

These include: developing human capital; creating partnerships with other civic partners, such as Calgary Economic Development (CED) and Tourism Calgary; increasing the number of festivals in the city; promoting the creative industries; growing private sector funding; and building a vibrant and world renowned arts sector (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2005). The document also stresses that CADA, in an act of transparency and a show of accountability, would demonstrate the impact of the arts on the city's economic, social, and cultural vitality by developing a series of "aggressive" targets and cultural mapping exercises (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2005).

The effects of the steering committee's mining of 'best practices' is evident in the aims of the rescripted policy, and in CADA's subsequent cultural strategies. Calgary's revised attempts at justifying public support were doubtlessly influenced by the importance of the creative industries and innovation (Department for Culture Media Sport, 1998), notions that 'culture creates wealth' and employment opportunities (Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1994), and Floridian 'creative city' narratives that position arts and culture as necessary assets for attracting talent and increasing urban image and status in global competition (Florida, 2002). Furthermore, the influence of neoliberal 'creative' values and ideologies are clear in CADA's justificatory practices that reflect a belief in the 'merit' of evidence-based policy practices and the value of linking arts and culture to the city's economic growth strategies.

Creative industries and 'creative city' arguments have been heavily criticised for, among other things, narrowly instrumentalising arts and culture (McGuigan, 2005;

O'Connor, 2007; Gray, 2008; Peck, 2010; Belfiore, 2012; Lee, 2017) and encouraging unequal and precarious labour practices (Banks and Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Ross, 2009; Banks, 2017; McRobbie, 2016), and I address these critiques at length later in this thesis. For the time being, my concern is with how justifications rooted in the aforementioned creative argument gained prominence and stability in the city and how they have impacted the space available to consider other noneconomic justifications for arts and culture in Calgary.

The fact that the committee was able to ground the creative argument in practice, both through the development of the new arts policy, but more importantly through CADA's strategies and funding structures, marks a turning point in the power of justifications to shape cultural value in the city. Various factors assisted the committee's success in establishing the creative ethos and associated economic valuations of culture as dominant justificatory practices. To begin with, the municipality had already engaged with similar justifications around the economic benefits of arts and culture (The City of Calgary, 1986; 1996a). Even though these justificatory practices were unsuccessful in linking the arts to other more prominent policy aims, and had ultimately failed to gain greater political relevance, they were nevertheless already part of cultural policy thinking. So, the committee was not developing justificatory practices from the ground up, as they implied, but were instead working to make old arguments stronger and more politically relevant, in an effort to finally succeed in attaching culture to broader city agendas.

Additionally, municipal strategies of the early 2000s were already invested in promoting Calgary as a "knowledge city" (The City of Calgary, 2003). While the city's

focus remained on the role that the oil industries played in attracting talent and advancing information and technology sectors, Calgary's focus on new economy development nevertheless gave the steering committee an opening to build stronger links between 'creativity', 'innovation' and the arts sector within these conversations. Alongside this, the growing prominence and popularity of creative policies (Department for Culture Media Sport, 1998; Florida, 2002) was solidifying connections between the arts sector, creativity, human capital and the new economy and shifting national and urban cultural policy rationales and practices on a global scale. Even local media joined the creative bandwagon, with one article in the *Calgary Herald* stressing that "time is moving on, and Calgary is missing out on the Creative advantage" (Blakey, 2003). Further backing for the creative argument came from the CED, which had begun looking to the creative industries as a viable option for economic diversification, and was taking initial steps to attract film and television industries to the city (The City of Calgary, 1996b). Therefore, by 2004, it was becoming increasingly difficult for the municipality to ignore the 'cultural turn' that saw many national and local governments instrumentalise culture for the attainment of wider development goals (Gray, 2006).

From an ideological perspective, the creative argument complemented the municipality's market-led culture, and justifications promoting the entrepreneurial spirit of creative workers resonated with Calgary's identity as a "city of entrepreneurs" (The City of Calgary, 2003; 2008). The city has long prided itself as being "known around the world for its 'can do!' attitude" (The City of Calgary, 2008; 2018a), able to make things happen no matter the odds, because that is "the Calgary way" (City of Calgary,

2017).²² All this meant that neoliberal values around the creative worker were not only easily adopted but were reinforced by the wider narrative of entrepreneurialism in the city.

The establishment of the Art Authority marks a commitment to cultural development never before seen in Calgary, but this should not be mistaken for a municipal endorsement of culture's political importance. In the early 2000s, Calgary was economically prosperous (The City of Calgary, 2003). It was home to the country's second-largest concentration of head offices and lowest taxes, and was a growing centre for technology and research and development, all of which attracted a steady influx of talent and business (The City of Calgary, 2003; Calgary Economic Development, 2005). In other words, the municipality had little motivation to depend on creative strategies to increase its competitive advantage or encourage economic growth, and arts and culture remained on the periphery of development policies. Regardless, the influence of wider creative policies and trends had made their mark with the steering committee as well as CADA's first board of directors who were determined to make links between the sector, creativity and economic growth. Indeed, as one early board member noted, they, along with many others on the board, were followers of Richard Florida. Believing "the future bright for the creative class" (Interview, M), was a key rationale driving, at least from the board level, CADA's creative agenda, and helped establish CADA as "an arts development authority that was clearly modelled after economic development" (Interview, M). The municipality's continued indifference towards arts and culture's

²² This self-appointed identity was built both on the folklore of hardy early settlers and on a romanticised narrative of citizens living, surviving and thriving in a boom-bust economy, and it was fostered by the city's 'market culture'.

role in economic development only made CADA all the more eager to ‘prove’ that the sector could be utilised as a tool in broader city-building agendas.

Over the following decade, CADA was, according to one of its founders, “tenacious and ruthless sometimes in making sure that [arts and culture were] never a sidelined” in City Council discussions around city building and development (Interview, T). In the first eight years of operation, the Arts Authority developed partnerships with Calgary Economic Development and Tourism Calgary. It stressed that investment in the sector creates a “ripple effect,” whereby a strongly supported “cultural ecosystem” impacts the vibrancy of the city and thus thriving economic growth (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2006). Additionally, CADA engaged in series of proposed actions and funding streams directed to developing cultural clusters, increasing the number of festivals and events taking place within the city, and building a downtown that “boasts iconic, internationally significant arts facilities” (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2008: 11). Beginning in 2012, they invested heavily in cSpace, an “entrepreneurial multi-tenant arts space” (cSpace King Edward, 2020) designed to provide the conditions for creatives to remain “vital, sustainable and innovative while generating dividends for Calgarians across the city” (cSpace King Edward, 2020). The Authority argued that this public investment was essential to help build and attract creative talent to the city, to foster a vibrant community, to encourage knowledge sharing, and to help develop local creative industries. Calgary Arts Development spearheaded and won bids to host the Junos, an annual music awards ceremony honouring Canadian musicians, in 2009 and again in 2016. In partnership with the City, Tourism Calgary and the CED, it also

helped to win the 2012 bid to become Canada's Cultural Capital²³, a yearlong cultural celebration that was seen by city stakeholders as providing an opportunity to “promote the arts, boost tourism, and grow [the local] economy” (Maclean, 2011). The relative success of these strategies appeared to validate arguments for public support aimed at demonstrating the economic impact of the sector, and to sustain CADA's justificatory practices.

4.2.3 Justifications in Crisis

In 2012, the Arts Authority experienced its first drop in funding from the City of Calgary (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2013). The municipality's decision to curb cultural spending is noteworthy for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the decision came during the year that Calgary was named Canada's Cultural Capital, a time when CADA's justifications for public support should have been at their strongest. Secondly, the decision signalled the start of a funding freeze on public spending for arts and culture that would last until 2019. Economically speaking, the city was faring relatively well both at the start of and during the funding freeze. Despite a drastic drop in economic growth due to the fall of oil prices in 2014, one council member noted that “big mega projects” were “still on the table” (Interview, D). Some of these ‘mega projects’ involved ongoing investment in city infrastructure and development. However, there was also notable public spending on projects geared towards economic recovery

²³ In a similar vein as the UK's City of Culture, this is an annual designation, managed by the Department of Canadian Heritage, and municipalities compete to receive the title of Cultural Capital of Canada. Up to three communities can receive this designation annually, and it includes a financial contribution (1 million dollars was awarded to Calgary in 2012) to support special activities “that celebrate the arts and culture and build a cultural legacy for the community by integrating arts and culture into overall community planning” (<http://www.ourculturalcapital.ca/>).

more broadly. One in particular, the Opportunity Investment Fund, saw city council allocate 100 million dollars in public funding to support local businesses that could demonstrate a potential to either stimulate growth in targeted sectors of Calgary's economy, help diversify the economy or attract outside investment to the city (The City of Calgary, 2018b). Therefore, the City not only continued to invest large sums of public money during the time of the funding freeze on cultural spending,²⁴ but spent money on programs in which justificatory practices had long argued the arts sector played a pivotal role.²⁵ In this light, I suggest that the resistance on the part of the municipal government to increase support for the cultural sector was not the product of austerity, but rather points to the City's lack of faith in justifications for public support. In other words, council was unconvinced that public spending on arts and culture provided adequate returns on their investment.

On the one hand, the council's hesitance to support the not-for-profit arts sector is indicative of the municipality's history of low support and engagement with the arts, itself a product of the city's market culture²⁶ (Brunet-Jailly, 2012; Reese and Rosenfeld, 2012). So, in many ways, the lack of public support could be chalked up to the historically low political standing of arts and culture in the city. On the other hand, it can be understood as a consequence of CADA's narrow economic instrumentalism, which ultimately framed justifications for public support solely around the sector's ability to demonstrate quantifiable 'returns' as a way of securing public 'investment'. That is, the Arts Authority's instrumental policy rationale relied on arguments around

²⁴ CADA's funding for the arts at this time was frozen at 6 million dollars a year.

²⁵ CADA's justifications have been narrowly centred around economic development, talent attraction and investment.

²⁶ Whereby business interests, not social issues, drive city policies.

the sector's 'usefulness' to the city's wider pro-development strategies, which essentially rooted its value (and its right to access public funds) in its ability to 'impact' other economic policy aims. When it failed to do so, at least from the city council's point of view, it lost its only argument for public support.

CADA responded to losing its funding by investing in a two-year citywide consultation process aimed at demonstrating the importance of arts and culture in the everyday lives of Calgary residents. The resulting document, "Living a Creative Life," was meant, according to one CADA staff member who worked on the project, to highlight the "democratisation of cultural experiences [. . .] it's like every citizen has a right to live a creative life, and the arts are a way to make that happen" (Interview, T). However, rather than exploring ways to make the arts available to the many rather than the few, the justificatory practices within the document continue to advance the city's historically narrow and outcome-focused approach to the social benefits of the arts. Like earlier practices, the document puts forth the belief that Calgary has arts "opportunities for all" but does not consider the possibility that there are real barriers to cultural participation in the city (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2015). Its focus remains on the results of participation, such as the arts' ability to foster creative skills necessary for competing in the modern economy, rather than on issues of equality of access. When speaking to the ways in which the arts can contribute to local communities, it makes no mention of issues of social inclusion or cohesion — arguments for support that, as will be explored later in this chapter, were part of wider policy practices at the time — but instead focuses solely on the sectors' ability to create vibrant communities that will foster "exchange", "free thinking" and "innovation" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2015). Furthermore, a quarter of the strategy is spent outlining the ways in

which the arts play into wider city agendas. Particularly those around city centre development, tourism and talent attraction, where the Authority reiterates its belief that the arts can make the city a “creative destination for Calgarians and visitors alike” (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2015: 12). The end result of the “Living a Creative Life” strategy was advancement and stabilisation of the city’s pre-existing creative arguments, rather than any attempt to widen access, as made clear in conversations with CADA leaders (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2014). When asked how CADA measures the success of their strategy, one department head responded, “We’re definitely creating more awareness with our civic partners around the role that arts and culture can play in benefiting tourism, as an example, or economic development [. . .] so those kind of indicators to me lead me to think Calgarians are living more creative lives” (Interview, P). In other words, presumed increase in cultural spending or participation has created greater awareness with key stakeholders, which in turn validates the real argument underlying CADA’s strategy, which is that creative living generates economic growth.

In 2016, there was an uptake of justifications around diversity. As with previous arguments for public support making claims towards issues of access and participation, diversity is framed in economic terms. The aims of these arguments centres around arts and culture’s role in promoting Calgary’s ‘diversity advantage’. This links to wider policy processes meant to address and manage rising immigration rates from the turn of the century onwards. Calgary’s use of “diversity advantage” shares strong similarities to strategies promoted by the thinktank Demos, which published a guide in 2008 advising local governments on how to plan for “diversity advantage”. Presenting a bleak picture of humanity governed by market ideals, the publication argues that “money isn’t

everything, but it means a lot to many and so, unless intercultural diversity can add to the bottom line companies, cities and nations, an awful lot of people aren't going to give it much credence" (Wood and Landry, 2008: 219). Here, cities are encouraged to see migrants as having a positive economic effect, because "hybridity [is] a driver of innovation" (Wood & Landry, 2008: 219), and innovation is what drives economic growth in the new economy.

In a similar fashion, Calgary's justification sees diversity "as one of Calgary's most valued assets" (The City of Calgary, 2017: 18), and argues that the arts and culture can help to bring people together so that they may share innovative ideas, and can highlight Calgary's diverse and cosmopolitan identity. These arguments ignore issues of discrimination, racial tensions and structural inequalities in favour of promoting a celebratory narrative of race and ethnic diversity within the context of urban and economic regeneration (Malik, 2013; Mould, 2018). In this way, they serve to depoliticise issues around race and diversity, rather than encourage the advancement of social justice and human dignity. Recent conversations with policy leaders helped highlight the ways in which the celebration of Calgary's diversity advantage was more about reinforcing the creative argument and marketing the city than addressing underlying issues of discrimination. As one policymaker in the city noted, "There is huge gaps institutionally, huge, and the battle we are having at the diversity on boards conversation is still stuck in gender diversity" (Interview, K). Along similar lines, discussions with CADA revealed that addressing greater diversity in the arts sector has, until recently,²⁷ been largely ignored. Commenting on where the Authority sits now on

²⁷ CADA is still working on its diversity and inclusion statement (as of February 2020). The FNMI funding stream was initiated for the first time in 2019.

addressing these issues, one lead staff member noted that “for now, even to ask a question about who’s on your stage, and who’s in your audiences, and who’s around your board table, and who are in your head offices is kind of about as specific as we get right now” (Interview, P).

CADA did not use the precarious state of its arts funding to engage more deeply in other notions of cultural value which highlights the power and dominance that creative and economic arguments wield over justificatory practices in the city. It also reflects how the evolution of justificatory practices, particularly the lack of engagement with issues of democratisation and cultural democracy, has perpetuated a narrow understanding of the social value of the arts, thus limiting the space to consider alternative arguments for support.

To be clear, I am not implying that the city has to engage with notions of cultural democracy or democratisation of culture in order to be considered democratic. As Hope (2013) notes, both concepts of cultural democracy and democratisation of culture “have their roots in the notion that involvement in art is connected to emancipation, liberation and empowerment, but of course the political and economic frameworks of these terms vary dramatically depending on the agendas on who is using them” (39). Therefore, ideas of ‘access’ are not inherently democratic, nor have they always been employed to democratic ends (see Belfiore and Bennett, 2008). Democratisation of culture, for example, has been heavily critiqued for its manipulation of culture as a tool for social control (Belfiore, 2004; Ross, 2009), as well as the advancement of Eurocentric notions of cultural value rooted in a narrowly defined concept of excellence that, ultimately, works to mask power relations within society (Kelly, 1985). Similarly, justifications

rooted in cultural democracy are not unproblematic, in that these “perspectives have sometimes risked tipping over into a shallow populist philistinism, and, at their most well-meaning . . . have neglected the contradictions in peoples’ experiences of culture under capitalism” (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 20).

However, the lack of engagement with the wider social benefits of the arts has meant that Calgary’s justifications for support have, consistently, not been concerned with broadening access to culture “by extending the arts and heritage to those who have generally been excluded from it” (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 19). Nor have they explored the politically transformative (and emancipatory) power of culture (Graves, 2010; Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017; Hadley and Belfiore, 2018). I argue that the exclusion of wider social justifications for public support has, over time, allowed for a singular economic approach to the social benefits of the arts to take hold. Such an approach not only constricts the space to think about and develop alternative notions of cultural value, but it also impedes the ability to advance or prioritise different understandings of value when and if they do arise.

My interviews with grassroots and alternative arts organisations, for example, reveal that there is some engagement with notions linked to cultural democracy around, for instance, equality of access, where some of these leaders point out the city’s urban sprawl and lack of awareness or promotion around the arts, especially of non-cornerstone organisations (Interview, JS; PH), others perceive the city’s artistic community as “siloes” and at times closed off to various communities (Interview, K; JS). Generally, there is an overarching concern that the city is missing out on providing the opportunity for the arts to “benefit the lives of all citizens, all noncitizens, everyone”

(Interview S). Concerns and hopes are also raised around providing more opportunities for creation, creating the space where “local cultural community can come and gather and make” (Interview, S), and the “inherent right for people to express themselves” (Interview, JS). Additionally, in interviews with policymakers, there are nods to wider social benefits of the arts, such as their potential to foster togetherness and understanding, with one policymaker suggesting that the purpose of public support is to “enable [arts and culture] to be affordable and accessible for as many citizens as possible” (Interview, S). However, these values and aims are not being expanded or advanced in the City’s arguments for public support. Instead, they are appropriated and refigured to fit into the dominant, and economically driven, understanding of the social benefit of the arts. This tactic is demonstrated in the ways that ‘democratisation of culture’ is gestured to but not advanced in the “Living a Creative Life” strategy, and how diversity is used within justifications to advance an economic rather than a social justice approach to cultural differences. In short, even when justificatory practices seemingly engage with other notions of cultural value, these values are quickly brought back into the dominant creative argument and the role of culture in economic development.

CADA’s continued dependence on economic justifications for public support, even when these arguments are in crisis, demonstrates that justificatory practices are fixed in what Belfiore (2012) describes as “defensive instrumentalism”. That is, what started as a “strategy meant to enable a confident case for the arts has now become the case itself” (Belfiore, 2012: 106); while in tactics, CADA’s arguments for public support maintains its protective dimension, continuing to defend public support for the arts, it can no longer articulate a case for cultural value beyond economic justifications. Between 2012

and 2016, 127²⁸ arts organisations committed to aligning their activities with one or more of the “Living a Creative Life” focus areas (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2014), implying that a large portion of the sector has also subscribed to the defensive argument and has abandoned (at least outwardly) the option to offer alternative justifications for public support.

The continued use of economic arguments did not, however, impact the municipality’s views on public support. This was made abundantly clear in a statement by the head of Calgary City Council, Mayor Naheed Nenshi, who said that he did not believe an increase in public support should be based on “input measurements” and “arbitrary numbers” around culture’s economic impact (Perri, 2017). Although his statement suggests the need for a new rationale for public support, he did not indicate what a sufficient or alternative argument for continued or increased cultural support might be. In many ways, his statement can as easily be interpreted as a political tactic to undermine the sector’s perceived impact and thereby validate the city’s withholding of funds. While policymakers I spoke with suggested that the mayor was “an advocate” for the arts, in that he attended various arts activities in the city, they admitted that he has “not been willing to consider funding asks” (Interview, T). When asked why that was, one interviewee commented that “city council is [still] not sold on the idea that investing in the arts is going to have a return” (Interview, SI).

By late 2017, the municipal governments’ refusal to increase cultural spending had not only established Calgary as the city with the lowest per capita funding for the arts in the

²⁸ Out of 161 arts organisations funded through CADA at the time

country (Creative Calgary, 2019), but it had also left the city's arts sector in a precarious state. As one sector leader described it, "Everyone in the art scene is at the end of the rope financially [...] I mean, so many of our organisations ... we're on the edge of closing" (Interview, J). It is apparent that the persistence of justificatory practices based on economic instrumentalism had ultimately left the sector in a "rhetorically weak position" (Belfiore, 2012), with no politically legitimate argument for public support. However, rather than dwindling, economic arguments for public funding ramped up between 2017 and 2019.

Created in 2018, the advocacy group Creative Calgary aims to combat the funding freeze and argue for the fundamental importance of publicly supporting the cultural sector; however, instead of focusing on developing new justificatory practices, the group bases its messaging entirely around the creative argument and the idea that funding the arts "makes economic sense" (Creative Calgary, 2019). Calgary's recent Cultural Plan (The City of Calgary, 2017) relies on economic arguments and the 'usefulness' of employing culture in wider city strategies. CADA did not alter its justificatory practices, but, following past trends, invested in research that could back existing arguments. It recently released a series of consultation reports and surveys, including a report on "Economic Impact Assessment of the Annual Operations of Calgary Arts Organisations" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018b), a report on the "Economic and Strategic impact of Calgary Creative Industries" (The Conference Board of Canada, 2019), and a survey of the "Top 20 Creative Cities" (Haidey, 2020). Furthermore, it's reporting on 'Cultural Engagement' measures participation in the arts in terms of cultural spending, not on access and inclusion (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018a). Additionally, interviews with sector leaders show that they

consistently ‘made their case’ for increased public support based on the arts’ ability to contribute to broader city-building agendas such as image enhancement, talent attraction, tourism and economic diversification. One of the city’s major institutional leaders, for example, stresses that the city needed to appreciate “the actual economic impact of having a vibrant arts and culture community [. . .] [that] the sector is [. . .] attracting people to come here but also to stay here” (Interview, DI). While commenting on the lack of public support, another prominent member of the arts community notes that they do not understand how the municipality expects to “build a world class city without great art. How do you attract and retain global talent to your city without a creative sector?” (Interview, JT).

It is clear not only that economic justifications remain the primary argument for public funding amongst sector leaders and funding agencies, but that they remain so unchallenged. The sector blames its lack of public support entirely on the municipal government, for failing to appreciate the ways in which the arts impact the city. Granted, council has never shown a strong commitment to the sector, and has a history of privileging business development over its social policies. However, the sector never has questioned the inadequacy of economic justifications. These arguments’ effectiveness has never been challenged, and their part in creating the sector’s perilous state never considered.

In 2019, due to the threat of closure of its major arts organisations and the damage to its ‘cosmopolitan’ reputation, the City Council conceded to demands to increase public support for the arts by doubling the budget for cultural funding. However, follow up interviews with CADA indicate that this show of support is far from stable. The council

remains unconvinced of the value of publicly supporting the arts and has already reduced the funding by \$500,000. At the time of writing, it remains unclear whether the current funding will remain stable, or if there will be further reductions.

4.2.4 The Power and Domination of Justificatory Narratives in Calgary

Justificatory narratives often promote a myriad of social, economic and aesthetic arguments for public support for the arts. In these cases, power relations work to establish a “hierarchical system of thought and action” (Forst, 2014: 103), whereby certain justifications come to “rule” over other arguments for public support. For the most basic example, we may think of cases where economic and social justifications are presented as more legitimate arguments for public support than, say, justifications geared solely towards aesthetic excellence. What is key here is that although one justification may rule and organise the rest, the mere presence of multiple arguments for public support (and the associated values and ideologies they embody) means that the space still exists to challenge the ruling justification. In other words, one justificatory narrative may ‘rule’ over multiple arguments, but the power of the dominant justificatory narrative is neither secure nor guaranteed, and, therefore, it has to be regenerated, validated and renewed over time (Forst, 2014; 2017). Domination over justificatory practices, however, arises when power relations close down the space of justification, scarcely allowing for, and at times even denying, alternative arguments (Forst, 2014).

I argue that existing justifications for arts funding in Calgary have reached a “level of domination.” The justificatory practices are shaped by extremely uneven discursive power relations, whereby ideologies around the economic valuations of culture have the

power to limit justifications for public support. In other words, the justificatory space is dominated by economic ideologies that have “insulated themselves from critical challenge by distorting the space of reason and presenting [their] relations of [. . .] domination as ‘natural’ [and thus] unalterable” (Forst, 2014: 34). This naturalisation of the economic argument has enabled these “false” justifications to appear as if sufficiently justified (Forst, 2014: 34). That is, the specific type of narrow instrumentalism that CADA and the sector promote are ineffective in legitimising public support, but its ideological power shields it from criticisms and represents it as valid. Furthermore, the domination of these justificatory practices absolves those in power from the effort of continuously justifying economic arguments, because such arguments appear a ‘common sense’ defence for public support. In short, existing arguments for public support in Calgary are manifest through unequal and unjust discursive power relations that restrict the ability to offer alternative notions of value and value allocation²⁹, and, therefore, constrict the freedoms and opportunities for people to (co-)create culture.

4.3 Leeds: A Genealogy of Justifications for Public Support of Arts and Culture

Unlike in Calgary, in Leeds, justifications promoting a range of arguments have coexisted for decades, from aesthetic excellence to the social and economic benefits of arts and culture. Of course, these justifications have not existed and still do not exist on an equal playing field. As will be explored shortly, over the years ‘ruling’ justifications in the city have centred around culture-led regeneration, meaning that all other non-economic arguments for public support, by default, have ranked lower in the justificatory hierarchy. That said, the city’s existing justifications for public support

²⁹ In the context of cultural policy.

appear to lean more heavily towards claims that arts and culture provide wide-reaching social benefits, such as their ability to foster empathy, offer insights into other cultures, unite communities and address issues of human rights and inequality.

My interviews with sector leaders and policy makers, as well as recent policy documents, reveal that Leeds currently draws on the social argument more consistently and widely to justify public spending on the arts, and this raises a number of questions. In the context of this study, certainly the most relevant and essential of these is whether the shift in justificatory practices is indicative of a transition in justificatory ‘rule’? That is, are we witnessing a potential shift in power whereby social, not economic, justifications hold the greatest sway over the city’s rationale for public support? And, if so, is this an indication that justificatory practices are becoming more open to outside and alternative notions of value? Or does this merely reflect a shift in wider policy rhetoric, whereby policy trends and political agendas continue to hold sway? In the following section, I unpack the evolution of Leeds’s justifications for public support of arts and culture over the past 60 years to try to make sense of the recent turn in arguments for support.

4.3.1 Early Years: 1960-2002

In the decades following World War II, the LCC’s relationship with its arts sector was managed primarily through the Leisure Services and Education department, whose responsibilities were mainly administrative, such as dealing with regulatory matters and provisioning. Far from being unusual, the city’s minor engagement with the arts sector comprised normal urban cultural policy practices for the time. Arts and culture “were relatively unimportant, non-controversial areas of local policy-making” (Bianchini and

Parkinson, 1994: 9) in Western Europe between the 1950s and 1960s, and in Britain, they remained secondary to other policy areas such as housing and education throughout the 1970s (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994).

The low political importance of arts and culture in urban politics meant that justificatory practices in the UK were largely developed through other actors such as the Arts Council of Great Britain (now the Arts Council of England) and the national government (Gray, 2002). As a consequence, early arguments for public support centred around, for example, the Arts Council's "commitment to the traditional 'high' arts (classical music, opera, theatre, ballet and the fine arts) located in fixed buildings" (Gray, 2002: 81), as well as around claims that these arts institutions were necessary because of their role in "civilising the population and contributing to social stability" (Gray, 2002: 84; Bennett, 1995). Even though these justifications appeal to the democratisation of culture model, under the stewardship of these elite-decision makers, it was 'excellence' rather than 'access' that held the greatest weight sway in these arguments (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 4; Looseley, 2011). We also see these early justificatory practices for support taken on and advanced by national political agendas. As was the case with Jenny Lee's ambitious and progressive policy for the arts (1965), which argued for decentralised arts funding, widening the definitions of the arts and creating stronger links between arts policy and education (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015). In Leeds, national justificatory practices geared towards excellence, access and cultural education were manifest in the LCC's provisioning of traditional art forms such as local arts galleries, theatres and dance. They were also present in the establishment of English National Opera North (1977), which was framed as a "response to a demand for more opera productions in English provincial cities" (Opera North, 2020).

I have previously pointed to two wide-reaching shifts in justifications for public support. The first is the urban social movements of the 1970s. Such movements worked to widen the definition of culture by challenging traditional distinctions between high and low art as well as highlighting the inextricable links between cultural action and political action in ways that made cultural policies politically more important and controversial (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994). In the UK, these notions of cultural democracy were “most closely associated with the community arts movement, which had its heyday between the late-1960s and the mid-1980s” (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 3). This period saw an increase of artists working closely with and committed to the voices of various communities across the country, in ways which worked to change wider practices and discourse around the role of arts and culture (Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018).

The second is a shift in the 1980s, whereby justifications around cultural value and support began to stress the sector’s role in economic and physical regeneration³⁰ (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994). Such practices were reinforced in the United Kingdom by “the increasing acceptance of ‘the economic importance of the arts’ [...] amongst policy makers at all levels within the system” (Gray, 2002: 81; Myerscough, 1988). Here we see the Arts Council of Great Britain release reports that explicitly justify public support for the arts “on the grounds of economic investment, arguing that the arts not only generated employment in their own right but also served as a mechanism for

³⁰ As mentioned earlier in this chapter, this shift was a consequence of the wider political move towards neoliberalism, reduced fiscal autonomy and national government contributions, and the need to restructure urban economies after the recession of the 1970s.

encouraging tourism, with its associated expenditure, in local economies” (Gray, 2002: 81; Arts Council of Great Britain, 1984; 1986). In many ways, the shift in national arguments for public support followed wider cultural regeneration trends taking place in continental Europe and functioned as a survival tactic in light of the continued low political status of the arts in Britain, reduced government funding and emerging challenges to the traditionally accepted justificatory practices around ‘excellence’ and ‘high’ art (O’Brien, 2014).

Although in the 1970s few British cities recognised the opportunity to exploit the cultural sector, by the 1980s some local authorities were beginning to explore how arts and culture could contribute to, and could be used in the service of, wider city aims and policies (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994: 154). Between 1981 and 1986, the Greater London Council (GLC), whose approach to culture was “not unlike the cultural democrats of the 1970s” (Looseley, 2011: 371), mediated various social, political and economic aspects of the sector. In particular, they challenged traditional aesthetic hierarchies and artistic principles generally supported by central government and the Arts Council, as well as advocating for devolving the powers and resources provided to grassroots groups (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994). Other local authorities in the UK, hit by the decline of manufacturing industries and confronted with a need to diversify local economies, became more invested in the role of arts and culture in their cities. For example, Sheffield, in an “early and very daring use of taxpayers’ money to seed the development of new sectors of employment” (Moss, 2002: 214) developed a Cultural Industries Quarter in 1981, intended to stimulate employment in the cultural sector, enhance cultural provisions, and increase tourism (Moss, 2002). Bradford used its arts sector in various city marketing campaigns, linking tourism to cultural flagship projects

such as the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television (1983). In Birmingham, arts and culture played a role in wider urban design strategies aimed at regenerating the city centre and attracting businesses (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994). And Glasgow, thanks to a decade's worth of regeneration strategies and marketing campaigns designed to promote the city's artistic and cultural heritage, famously won the European City of Culture bid in 1990 (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994).

In the 1980s, Leeds also faced reduction in its textile and engineering sectors (Coleman et al., 2016) and increasing unemployment rates. However, by supporting its growing service industries, and later its retail and financial sectors, it weathered the post-industrial era better than most, and, therefore did not need to rely on culture-led regeneration strategies to bolster economic growth. This does not mean that Leeds was entirely immune to the draws of urban revitalisation. Indeed, City Council had worked to enhance the city's image through urban regeneration since the mid 1960s (Douglas et al., 2009).³¹ That said, arts and culture rarely played a role in LCC's various city-building strategies during this period, and in some cases, as with the case of Gormley's rejected Brick Man sculpture, they dismissed culture's potential for urban regeneration outright (Douglas et al., 2009; Long and Strange, 2009).³²

³¹ For example, 'Project Leeds: Leeds Motorway City of the Seventies' was a joint initiative between the City Council and the Chamber of Commerce in 1971 that sought to promote Leeds as a dynamic city (Leeds City Council, 1971)

³² To illustrate the City's attitude, in the mid-eighties they rejected Gormley's sculpture dubbed the Brick Man, a signature piece of public art that would have pre-dated the artist's acclaimed, Angel of the North in Newcastle Gateshead. Some said this decision reflected the LCC's risk-adverse nature and Leeds's general lack of 'cultural imagination' (Long and Strange, 2009).

The LCC's interest in its arts and culture sector began to change with central government initiatives such as the Leeds Development Corporation (1987-1995), and with Jon Trickett's election as Labour council leader (1989-1996). In the late 1980s, the Leeds Development Corporation (LDC) was granted sweeping powers to fast-track developments by the Thatcher government, and took control over swathes of the city centre along the riverfront. The LDC spent upwards of 76-million pounds on its riverside regeneration program over eight years (Douglas et al., 2009). The program itself met myriad criticisms, including that it lacked engagement with the arts sector, and that its development schemes were ad hoc, with little aesthetic appeal or impact on economic growth (Douglas et al., 2009). While its regeneration plans may have failed, the LDC succeeded in helping to instill "a more pro-active attitude to regeneration and the need for co-operation with the private sector amongst the Council and its officers" (Douglas et al., 2009: 38), values embodied by and advanced under Trickett's leadership. Throughout the 1990s, the LCC's political agendas focused on mobilising a new partnership approach to urban governance, encouraging 24-hour activity, and implementing vigorous place-making strategies geared towards marketing Leeds as a cosmopolitan European city (Long & Strange, 2009). Trickett also established the Leeds Initiative, a "partnership with aims such as coordinating the public, private and voluntary sector response to redevelopments, events and festivals" (Douglas et al., 2009: 39). Denoting the City's increased commitment to issues of urban development and regeneration, the Initiative's key objectives included ensuring the vitality of the local economy and developing the city as an attractive centre for visitors (Douglas et al., 2009).

In this context, we see arts and culture brought into a number of the city-building strategies in the early and mid-1990s. Under the “24 Hour Initiative”, the arts sector became part of an ambitious events and festival programme aimed at animating the city. At the same time, the LDC and the Leeds Initiative, endeavouring to increase tourism and raise the city’s cosmopolitan profile by bringing a Flagship cultural institution to the city, made a successful bid for the Royal Armouries Museum. These examples certainly suggest that the City’s notions of cultural value were beginning to shift and extend to include the sector’s potential contributions to urban transformation and economic growth. However, the initiatives did not immediately impact the political importance of the arts within Leeds, nor did they result in the development of cohesive justifications for public support. In fact, the arts were minor players in the LCC’s city-building plans. The 24-hour city strategy focused on informal leisure, such as the shops, cafe bars and nightclubs, with the arts sector “representing a very small percentage of city centre ‘cultural’ and entertainment activity” (Chatterton and Unsworth, 2004: 366). Furthermore, none of the cultural activities (events, public art, capital builds) were directly linked to culture and leisure policies, but were instead “organised on a more flexible pragmatic, annual basis through contingency funds from the Leaders in office” (Douglas et al., 2009: 6). So, while the City embraced a version of culture-led regeneration, the status of the arts within these revitalisation strategies remained low. As a result, culture continued to be an area “where the city drifted over the 1990s with policy pursued in an opportunistic and piecemeal fashion” (Chatterton and Unsworth, 2004: 367).

By the late 1990s, the LCC began to gather data around its arts and culture sector with the aim of developing its first cultural strategy. An early audit report notes an intention

to align the cultural plan with the “Vision for Leeds” (Leeds Initiative, 1999), a meta-strategy created to “join up” various sectors and agendas invested in enhancing the city’s competitive advantage (Positive Solutions, 1997). This intended cultural plan sought to advance two broad justificatory narratives. The first, and most prominent, centres around culture-led regeneration — in particular, how arts and culture could help the city “better compete in a global economy” and “ensure sustainable development”, by increasing tourism and growth through capital builds and large-scale festivals (Positive Solutions, 1997). Leeds’s ‘24-hour’ initiatives had loosely engaged with culture-led regeneration, so these arguments would not have been new to the LCC. However, they had yet to develop strong links between the sector and wider city building aims, and the report stresses that moving forward, more “specific action [was] required if the contribution of cultural organisations to the local economy was to be developed and the wider role in regeneration . . . realised” (Positive Solutions, 1997: 11). Reflecting values espoused in the democratisation of culture model, the second justificatory narrative put forward is geared towards the sector’s part in making “the most of people”, and creating “better neighbourhoods and confident communities” (Positive Solutions, 1997). Specifically, it argued that the arts sector could be used to address the growing disparity between the prosperous city centre and the deprived communities surrounding it, by promoting participation and inclusion across all areas of the city (Positive Solutions, 1997). In the end, two cultural strategies were produced. However, both “failed to make it through full council approval” (Douglas et al., 2009: 65), and it would be another five years before Leeds developed a clear rationale for public support.

4.3.2 Establishing a Cohesive Argument for Public Support

In 2002, in a move that advanced more cohesive justifications around culture's role in social and economic regeneration, Leeds developed its first cultural strategy (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002). Many interrelated factors are responsible for development of the policy and the LCC's subsequent justificatory practices for public support for the arts. However, as with Calgary, the rise of creative policies undoubtedly played a key role. As hinted at earlier in this chapter, New Labour³³ was instrumental in advancing the 'cultural turn' both at home and globally in the latter half of the twentieth century. From the start, their political agendas worked to embed arts, culture and creativity into national economic and development policies (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015). Alongside the great emphasis placed on developing the country's creative industries, New Labour continued to appeal to and reinforce longstanding values "concerning access, social inclusion and the value of education" (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 49) as well as the merits of using culture as a tool in urban regeneration. We can certainly appreciate that their justificatory practices helped to accelerate and strengthen pre-existing rationales for public support as well as validate the instrumental value of the arts. However, what makes New Labour's arguments for public support distinct is that their policies brought commercial creative industries within the cultural policy fold, and, in doing so, moved national justificatory practices closer to "the economic imaginary of the 'creative economy'" (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 124). In other words, next to justificatory practices around access, inclusion and regeneration, New Labour's arguments for public support advanced claims around arts and culture's contribution to innovation, skills

³³ New Labour formed three successive national governments in the UK between 1997 and 2010.

development (increasing human capital), employment, economic diversification, competitiveness and the creative economy more broadly.

Given that they allegedly offered a growing source of employment as well as a variety of other social benefits, Labour politicians and policy makers saw the creative industries, and associated creative arguments, as having the potential to boost regional economies (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015). And by 1999, the newly formed Department of Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) made a request that all local authorities produce “cultural plans” for their areas (Department for Culture Media Sport, 1999). The request was accompanied by a list of DCMS recommendations and guidelines, which, among other things, encouraged local governments to consider how other wide-ranging initiatives, such as social inclusion, environmental sustainability, regeneration and life-long learning could factor into their strategies, (Gray, 2002; Department for Culture Media Sport, 1999: 15). However, far from being forced on regions and local governments by distant Whitehall policymakers, many major cities, including Sheffield, Manchester and Glasgow, were eager to employ creative thinking to economic and social regeneration (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 124). Likewise, Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), whose role was “to coordinate rational economic development and regeneration to enable regions to improve their relative competitiveness and reduce the imbalance that exists within and between regions” (Jayne, 2005: 543), were embracing the creative industries concept with enthusiasm (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015).

Three years after the DCMS’s request, the LCC created the “Cultural Partnership”, a subsidiary of the Leeds initiative tasked with producing, delivering and monitoring the

city's first five-year cultural strategy.³⁴ Solidifying the link between culture and broader city aims, the policy itself was put forth as a 'sister' strategy to the initiative's "Vision for Leeds", and sought to move culture to the forefront of local policy and decision-making processes (Douglas et al., 2009). Drawing on overlapping local, regional and national agendas, the cultural plan points to six main arguments for public support.

The first three interwoven justificatory practices centre around culture-led regeneration and the creative argument, and represent the more dominant arguments for support. Here we see claims that Leeds's arts sectors (or at least its major institutions and buildings) are vital "for the city's future wealth and prosperity in promoting and marketing itself", and that investing in cultural infrastructure will help "develop the city as a distinctive destination for visitors" (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002: 22) and advance Leeds's image as an international city and regional cultural capital of Yorkshire (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002). Far from being novel, these justifications reinforce the city's longstanding belief in the value of flagship cultural development. The difference between these arguments and the LCC's previous engagement with culture-led regeneration is that these justifications are, at long last, rooted in policy, and imply a clear intention by the LCC to create stronger links between the sector and wider city-building agendas. Demonstrating the importance of connecting culture to wider development initiatives, one policymaker involved with the strategy commented that "one of our achievements was . . . getting the city to sign off on what new major cultural facilities it wanted" (Interview, D). In the end, the city, having to decide between a number of cultural facilities including a concert hall and exhibition centre, decided on

³⁴ Leeds's first cultural policy defines 'culture' as the arts, heritage, sports and the creative industries.

building a sports arena for the city. Those involved in developing the cultural policy marked the build as a sign of the LCC's "raising [awareness] of the importance of the cultural offer" (Interview, D).

The strategy also argues that arts and culture make "Leeds a vibrant place in which to live, work, learn and play" (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002: 22). Here, claims stress that the arts, heritage, sports and the creative industries can raise the city's competitive advantage by "creating an image of Leeds as vibrant, young, cosmopolitan and fun [and] a creative city . . . in which creative people choose to live and work" (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002: 22). As one policymaker noted, the development of the plan highlights that culture "was very important to [local business and major corporations], for getting top people to join firms, and that hadn't really registered with the City Council before" (Interview, D). The inclusion of these arguments speaks to the influence of Florida's strategy for economic development, which unlike creative industry policies, "is built around talent attraction . . . generally the attraction of high-tech workers and industries [and] . . . not the growth of the cultural industries themselves" (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 90). His template for creative development aligns neatly with Leeds's overarching desire to be considered a cosmopolitan and fun city. Although the strategy does not explicitly subscribe to Florida's (2002) notion, more decision makers evidently accepted culture as central to raising the city's profile and in its aim to attract and retain talent (Long and Strange, 2009).

At the time the policy was developed, Leeds housed the regional headquarters for a range of broadcast, press and film organisations (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002). However, the policy makes only a brief nod to the value of creative industries in

growing the local economy, and to the need for increased development in the sector, suggesting a low engagement with this particular argument for support. There is little evidence to show that, prior to the development, the LCC had paid much attention to creative industries, and, according to one policymaker, it was only after the plan was in place that Leeds “commissioned [its] first baseline study of creative industries” (Interview, D). The most likely reason for the city’s disinterest with these industries is that the economic stability between the 1980s and 2000s was largely due to the service, retail and financial, legal and business sectors (Leeds Initiative, 1999; 2004) and therefore, in a similar vein as Calgary, Leeds had not needed to rely on its creative industries to foster growth. That these novel justifications are included in the cultural strategy speaks to the power and influence of the creative narrative and policies circulating at the time.

The remaining arguments for public support speak to the social benefits of the arts in Leeds, and centre around the sector’s part in reducing social exclusion and improving the position of disadvantaged people and communities. These arguments are, of course, not new. Since the 1970s, arts groups had commonly held the position that the arts positively contribute to the cause of social inclusion (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994; Belfiore, 2002; Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017), just as justificatory practices at the national and local level had cited the value of making the arts accessible to all since the 1960s. However, the need to address issues of social exclusion through various means, including the arts, “has since grown in Britain and throughout Western Europe in relation to rising rates of unemployment, increasing international migration, and the cutting back of welfare states” (Belfiore, 2002: 92). Alongside these issues, shifts in the market towards ‘knowledge’ and ‘creative’ workers were increasing the divide between

‘skilled’ and ‘unskilled’, and that transition fostered inequalities and risk of social exclusion.

New Labour politics, which saw ‘regeneration’ strategies as encompassing not only economic, but social and environmental issues, advanced justificatory practices that stressed arts and culture’s role in social development, such as ensuring improved employment opportunities, increased health and wellbeing, and enhanced quality of life. Justificatory practices that are demonstrated in, for example, the DCMS’s acknowledgement that public investment in the arts will be expected to deliver outcomes related to social inclusion and community renewal (Department for Culture Media Sport, 2000; Belfiore, 2002; McGuigan, 2005; O'Brien, 2014). Furthermore, “the period up to 2005 saw a much more explicit social policy being pursued by RDAs” (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 129), where creative industries development included “a commitment to addressing issues such as unemployment and poverty” (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 129; Bell and Oakley, 2015).

Echoing wider national and regional interests, the LCC and Leeds Initiative had become increasingly concerned with issues of inequality and exclusion, acknowledging that “not everybody has benefited from the success of Leeds, and there are still unacceptable differences between different parts of the city (there is deprivation and areas of high unemployment in many inner-city neighbourhoods)” (Leeds Initiative, 1999; 2004). The rise of professional industries in the city had caused increasing disparity between high wage earners and those who had little alternative but to work in low skilled and low paid labour or service jobs, if they were employed at all. Within this context, the cultural strategy argues that the arts sector could contribute to raising social capital by

helping “individuals and communities . . . acquire the skills and knowledge to realise their full potential” as well as by helping young people develop skills necessary to compete in the new economy (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002: 28).

Linked to this were concerns that a decade’s worth of city-building schemes had turned pockets of the city into exclusive playgrounds “for tourists, students, the wealthy and the professional business class” (Douglas et al., 2009: 55), thereby excluding segments of the population not able or inclined to participate in the leisure consumption on offer. In response, the cultural strategy argues that the arts sector could help support outlying communities by creating “the conditions and opportunities for people wherever they live[d] in Leeds regardless of age, ability and economic status to enjoy better cultural opportunities [and leisure activities]” (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002: 26). It further argues that the sector’s engagement with deprived areas of the city could contribute to social and neighbourhood renewal. In short, the social justifications put forth in the cultural strategy advances and reinforces wider arguments rooted in an expanded democratisation of culture model that promotes the role of artists and institutions as directly “assisting in the improvement of public health, race relations, urban blight, special education . . . [and] welfare to work programs” (Ross, 2009: 25).

As a whole, the strategy is “dependent upon the attachment of the arts to forms of policy initiative within local government which are primarily concerned with alternative policy objectives than those of the arts themselves” (Gray, 2002). This is not unusual but rather demonstrates the stability and extension of (non-partisan) policy attachment practices increasingly evident at both the local and national levels. Furthermore, as previously discussed, justificatory practices that promote the use of the arts as “a tool for the

achievement of goals outside the arts sector itself” (Gray, 2002: 86) introduce new forms of calculation and assessment, such as the use of evidence-based policy practices that had emerged a decade before. For Leeds, we see this in the policy’s statement that “what get measured gets done”, (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002) along with the promise to “develop robust mechanisms to implement, monitor and review the cultural strategy” (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2002: 27). That said, there is no mention of what these measures might entail, nor any suggestion for how the arts sector might achieve its economic and social aims. As a result, the policy reads more like a series of intentions rather than an actual plan for development, suggesting that the strategy “was more about developing and sharing an agenda so that cultural policy was not ghettoised, than a direct implementation and delivery” (Long and Strange, 2009: 81).

In 2004, under the newly elected local coalition government, the initiative released a new “Vision for Leeds: 2004 to 2020” (Leeds Initiative, 2004). The plan reaffirms the City’s long-term ambitions to raise Leeds’s national and international profile, but differs from the original in that the arts and culture have a more prominent role. A couple of years after this, the Cultural Partnership reviewed the policy’s outcomes and concluded that “great progress has been recorded on infrastructure”, but that less progress had been made on developing or advancing priorities around image, excellence and access, and their cross-cutting impact (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2006). Revealing some of the City’s doubts around the sector’s economic and social impact, the Cultural Partnership also noted that cultural infrastructure improvements had not yet positively affected the city’s image as the LCC would have liked, and that the arts’ role in improving the city’s profile would require increased attention in order to sustain public support and “unlock other resources” (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2006) .

The five-year cultural strategy was never revised or extended after it expired. That said, the Cultural Partnership continued to operate under the Initiative, and helped guide justificatory practices. In the years following the initial cultural strategy, the partnership sustained earlier arguments for the importance of arts and culture in enhancing the city's status and its role in encouraging access and participation. However, between 2008 and 2011, the partnership's priorities for the sector made no direct mention of social inclusion, the sector's involvement within communities or its role in lifelong learning. Instead concerns revolved around delivering major cultural schemes of international significance and increasing the number of facilities receiving accreditation for quality (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2008; 2011a; Cultural Sports and Business Facilities, 2009). This shift in focus, or more accurately the side-lining of social benefits of the arts in favour of longstanding arguments around culture-led regeneration, is not unusual. Rather it reflects broader moves taking place in the later years of Labour governance which saw strategies and interventions, both nationally and regionally, become increasingly focused on 'place-based' activities such as regeneration through physical infrastructure and business support activities, rather than "'people-based' activities such as labour market and skills intervention" (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 134).

Furthermore, the election of a coalition national government in 2010 brought with it a series of austerity measures, which resulted in reduced funding and uncertainty across the arts sector. At the national level, the Arts Council responded to the precarious state of public support by reinforcing its arguments around the social and economic benefits of the arts. However, their justificatory practices, like in Leeds, appealed more heavily to the sector's role in regional regeneration and increased tourism, and to the country's international reputation and competitive advantage (Arts Council England, 2013).

In 2011, the LCC, now back under Labour control, unveiled its new ‘vision’ for the city, which aspires to have Leeds internationally recognised as “the best city in the UK” by 2030 (Leeds Initiative, 2011). The strategy’s aims rest on pre-existing goals for the city to “reduce the inequalities that exist and also compete internationally” as well as to foster thriving communities and confident, skilled, enterprising, active and involved citizens (Leeds Initiative, 2011). Unlike its predecessor, the new ‘vision’ makes few references to the arts’ role in enhancing outward image and promoting equal access to high quality cultural opportunities, suggesting that arts and culture have dropped in political importance since the first strategy. Later that same year, the Cultural Partnership was partially disbanded and brought under the remit of the newly formed “Sustainable Economy and Culture” board responsible for “achieving a raised public profile for the city nationally and internationally” (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2011b). A review of the Partnership’s meeting minutes reveals concerns the new organisation would focus too heavily on the economic agenda and ignore much-needed support for smaller arts organisations and community arts initiatives (Leeds Cultural Partnership, 2011b). However, it appears that these fears were largely ignored with justifications for public support between 2011 and 2015, continuing to centre around the arts’ role in increasing the city’s profile, regeneration and tourism as well as encouraging local creativity and innovation (Leeds Initiative, 2011).

As alluded to earlier, central government funding had drastically reduced during this period, and, unsurprisingly, this resulted in a reduction in Local Government spending across the country. Data gathered from the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) showed that spending by councils in England on arts and culture

development and support declined by an average of 16.6 per cent (Harvey, 2016), and in Leeds spending reduced by 19 per cent (Leeds City Council, 2019). Nevertheless, the average rate reduction was lower than the spending overall which, according a report by the New Local Government Network, suggested that “that councils have tried to protect these services where they can” (Harvey, 2016: 9).

4.3.3 Existing Justifications

Existing justifications for public support in Leeds appear weighted towards the social benefits of the arts more heavily than the arts’ economic value. This shift is particularly interesting given the longstanding dominance of justificatory practices in the city aimed at promoting the art sector’s role in image enhancement and competitive advantage. So, how might we make sense of this change? Although there is no one answer, I argue that the City’s decision to bid for the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2023 was a major catalyst for the turn in local justificatory practices as it forced the City to reevaluate its ideas of cultural value and rationale for public support.

The ECoC has become an emblem of sorts for ‘successful’ culture-led regeneration and is touted for letting local authorities compete for sought-after “investment resources, cultural workers, audiences, tourist streams and signature architecture” (Ross, 2009: 31). Additional resources, economic growth and international recognition no doubt offer great appeal, especially for post-industrial cities like Leeds, that continue to face austerity measures, and that have long sought to reinvent themselves. Although the campaign for the ECoC can take up to three years with no guarantee of winning, its status is such that simply participating in the bidding process is seen as “a vehicle for investment and promotion, regardless of whether the bid is successful” (Ross, 2009:

30). Therefore, it is not surprising that when presented with the opportunity to campaign in 2014, the council, while acknowledging that the bidding process was lengthy and costly, believed it a sound investment that offered the chance to “embed culture and the arts within wider development strategies”, and provided a platform to reinforce and promote Leeds’s existing aspirations to become “Best City” (Leeds City Council, 2015; 2018a). City council increased spending on arts and culture during this time (2015-2018) by 11 per cent. Although a large portion of this was dedicated to the 2023 bidding process, there were minor increases across the board, including in grants to arts organisations, festivals, the city art gallery and various museums (Leeds City Council, 2019).

The decision to invest in the ECoC bid implies a strong commitment to justifications promoting arts and culture’s role in urban regeneration. However, I suggest that the bid is significant for a couple of reasons. To begin with, it required the city to have “a cultural strategy in operation, linked to the city’s development strategy”(Leeds City Council, 2015: 3), so the LCC had to revise its outdated policy, which in turn (re)opened the space to consider why arts and culture were important in Leeds. In addition, both the bid and the new cultural plan were co-produced, meaning that while each strategy had to conform to ECoC guidelines and draw on wider national and international policy trends, they also incorporated feedback from a number of private and public stakeholders, including local businesses, developers, the arts sector and residents throughout the city. As a result, these interwoven processes allowed varied justificatory practices to come to the fore.

Given the nature of the competition and the requirement to link culture to wider city plans, both the bid and the policy refer to culture's role in addressing the longstanding aim of raising Leeds's international profile. Here we see economic arguments claiming that arts and culture deserve support and political attention because they can help Leeds gain recognition both as "a progressive international city" and as a cultural hub that encourages innovation (Leeds City Council, 2017a; 2017b), which can then help grow cultural tourism and attract and retain talent. These justificatory practices have long helped shape the city's notion of cultural value, and they also align with creative and ECoC narratives; therefore, it is not surprising to see them continue here. What is perhaps noteworthy is that the City has sustained these arguments despite trepidations that arts and culture had, up to that point, not aided substantially in building Leeds's image as a cosmopolitan and creative city (Leeds City Council, 2017a; 2017b).

Repeating concerns raised by the Cultural Partnership in the mid 2000s, the final bid booklet notes that "in many ways, Leeds is an accomplished cultural city, but our reticence to promote ourselves and to celebrate the role of arts in society have left the city, nationally and internationally underrated and under the radar" (Leeds City Council, 2017b). In the same vein, the policy claims that "the city's cultural offer has, as yet, not achieved the wide national and international recognition it is capable of" (Leeds City Council, 2017a). Similar sentiments were echoed in my interviews. One policy consultant said that at the beginning of the process, they found that Leeds "wasn't punching its weight in culture" and that it had been their job to "help find the Leeds story" and get the city "to recognise its cultural assets" (Interview, AC). Likewise, another policymaker suggested that the city has not "actively sold itself on culture [or] presented itself to the world in terms of culture" and that "it's never felt that [Leeds] has

worn its cultural attractions on its sleeve” (Interview, P). Despite concerns that Leeds has never fully succeeded in using culture to raise its international profile, the belief in and advancement of arguments geared towards culture-led regeneration remain strong. Demonstrating the stability and resilience of these arguments, one interviewee noted, “The only thing that is going to animate [the city’s] high streets is culture” (Interview, AC). Policymakers in Leeds also argued that arts and culture should be appreciated for their contributions to economic regeneration. For example, one interviewee claimed that the arts are “obviously contributor[s] to tourism and have direct economic contribution[s]” (Interview, P), while another noted that “they build international profile [and] they work to stimulate business sectors” (Interview, L). My discussions with cultural leaders also reveal that the sectors’ justificatory practices for public support often include a nod to their role in city building; as one institution head noted, “What we do is part of helping form and evolve a city’s identity” (Interview, JP). Arguments around culture-led regeneration in the city have remained stable and relatively consistent over time, suggesting that these rationales for public support have been able to maintain a level of authority in the city. However, other justificatory practices, such as those around culture’s role in tackling inequality and disconnection, have recently become more developed and central to city’s rationale for public support.

As noted earlier, arguments that rest on lifelong learning, access, community cohesion and social exclusion virtually disappeared from justificatory practices after 2004. However, they reappear within the ECoC campaign and new cultural strategy, albeit in slightly altered forms. For instance, following wider national trends (Arts Council England, 2018; Department for Culture Media Sport, 2016), there is a renewed focus on justificatory practices promoting the arts sector’s role in building human capital by

helping “increase skills, training and employment opportunities in the creative sector” and beyond (Leeds City Council, 2017a). Reinforcing the belief that the sector plays a pivotal role in increasing human capital, one policymaker I spoke to noted, “Talent development has to happen at all ages and all stages, and I think our cultural institutions have a role to play there” (Interview, L). Another stressed the “importance of cultural education for children and young people, particularly in terms of preparing them for a world where the jobs they will be doing haven’t even been invented yet” (Interview, P). It was also clear that these views were held by council members who, in conversation, pointed out that “there is a lot at the minute around big employers . . . not necessarily looking for math, English, science [but] looking for those creative skills that are around problem solving, resilience, flexibility” (Interview, D). My discussions with policymakers also highlighted the importance of creative skills building within the ECoC bid, with one interviewee noting that “part of the 2023 thing was absolutely about the notion of young people as creators and as consumers of culture, because there is a kind of genuine belief that the problem-solving tools that you develop as an artist or as a creative are applicable to a great many other things” (Interview, P).

Furthermore, we see these justificatory practices become more heavily linked to the city’s broader inclusive growth strategy. That is, the combined arguments that the arts contribute to employability, and that, by its nature, the sector is rooted in values of equal access and inclusion, feeds into Leeds’s growing interest in tackling economic and social issues through “inclusive growth” (Leeds City Council, 2018d). As one consultant noted, culture is mentioned in Leeds’s recent inclusive growth strategy because the sector is ‘open to all’ in terms of employment opportunities. They stated that the arts offer the “kind of opportunity that anybody can get onto a career ladder in a

city the size of Leeds . . . there's been that kind of sense that if you have a go at it you can become the chief executive of [for example] your own dance company" (Interview, AC). The notion of inclusive growth has been around for decades, and seeks to combine economic growth with improving equality of living standards, including by increasing investment in employment services and skills development so that "low income groups are better prepared to profit from globalisation" (Leeds City Council, 2018b). Inclusive growth strategies have been on the rise in the UK, which has shown an increasing "reorientation of public social expenditure away from compensatory social policies towards more social investment-oriented policy domains" (Morel et al., 2012: 131); so it is not surprising to see Leeds advancing similar aims over the latter half of the 2010s. On the one hand, these strategies can be seen as a positive alternative to existing neoliberal practices, because they are "based on a more positive theory of the state [and] while the state [is] portrayed as a dynamic entrepreneur, it [is] expected to have the public interest in mind" (Morel et al., 2012: 128; Giddens, 1998). On the other hand, the strategies have been criticised heavily for a number of reasons, including broad concerns "with the way social goals and social citizenship rights perspectives underpinning social investment approach[es] have been harnessed for an economic agenda" (Morel et al., 2012: 132). I address these critiques, alongside earlier claims that the sector offers equal access to employment opportunities, in greater detail further along in this thesis. For now, I only want to highlight how existing arguments for support geared towards education, skills development and employability reflect a restored focus and investment in regeneration through "people-based" activities, which, up to this point, had been largely absent from the city's justificatory practices for over twelve years.

As with the Calgary example, existing arguments for support incorporate justifications geared towards diversity. Concerns with diversity both in cultural practice and participation have gained increasing importance in the UK over the past decade (Arts Council England, 2018), so it is not unusual to see them addressed during the bidding process. Justifications in Leeds understand the issue of diversity as comprising social, moral and economic dimensions, and centre around the city's diverse cultural practices, the sector's ability to bring diverse communities together, and the importance of encouraging diverse creative and cultural skills in relation to economic growth (Leeds City Council, 2017a; 2017b). Some of these existing practices, such as arguments within the bid that promote "the economic benefits of cultural exchange" (Leeds City Council, 2017b), frame diversity in economic terms rather than as a matter of social justice, and thus reinforce the values found in the "diversity advantage" argument discussed earlier in this chapters. While others, such as justifications highlighting culture's role in helping define "diversity as a strength and migration as the future rather than an issue" (Leeds City Council, 2017b), ignore issues of discrimination, racial tensions and structural inequalities in favour of promoting a celebratory narrative of race and ethnic diversity (Malik, 2013; Mould, 2018; Nwonka and Malik, 2018). However, in a noteworthy move, existing arguments attempt to counter economically focused and shallow interpretations of diversity and inclusion with justificatory practices that centre around arts and culture's role in encouraging tolerance, togetherness and the (co-)creation of culture and identity.

Claiming to be motivated by current social unrest locally and abroad, which has seen, among other things, the rise of nationalism, Brexit, growing racism, xenophobia, isolation and fear, justifications within both the bid and the city's recent cultural policy

seek to align key principles outlined in Agenda 21 for culture — a reference document that, reflecting some of the values embodied in the capability approach, encourages cities to commit policy aims and practices that support human rights, cultural diversity and participatory democracy (Local Cities United Governments, 2004). The focus placed on cultural rights and using the arts to increase practices of co-production and non-discrimination certainly denotes a potential shift in cultural value within the city. However, the sudden attention paid to these issues did not come from nowhere. While social unrest, inequality and discrimination are motivating factors, the turn in justificatory practices can also be attributed to recent public policy trends in the UK and changes within the ECoC agendas.

Often heralded as a way of deepening democratic engagement, participatory policy-making initiatives such as participatory budgeting and citizen assemblies have been around for decades (Baiocchi, 2001b; Coleman and Sampaio, 2017; Dryzek and Pickering, 2017). At this point I want to stress that engagement with ‘co-produced’ policies does not guarantee the just processes advocated for in this thesis. Co-produced policies can be deeply flawed, and we cannot assume that they will, or even intend to, break down uneven power relations, seek to rectify imbalances in the distribution of cultural authority or create more equal opportunities for people to freely participate in the (co-)creation of cultural value and value allocation. However, I leave this critique for the following chapter; for now I am only concerned how the uptake of these practices might have contributed to the evolution of existing justification.

More recently, there has been a rise in participatory policymaking in the UK, particularly within the social care and health sectors (Needham and Carr, 2009;

Sorrentino et al., 2018), where, for example, projects like NHS Citizen aim for a system in which “the people delivering and planning services and those using them are equal partners in the design, delivery and review of services” (NHS, 2019; Lechelt and Cunningham, 2020). Alongside national attention to co-production in policy-making is the recent attention paid to citizen engagement in ECoC programming. Despite ECoCs continued focus on economic regeneration, more recently “they appear to be characterised also by a clear focus on a systematic approach to “social regeneration and participation in particular” (Tommarchi et al., 2018: 158). Here we see stronger connections made between culture and wellbeing and “the active involvement of local communities in the production culture and in the design of cultural events, in particular through the introduction of co-creation” (Tommarchi et al., 2018: 158). For example, winning cities like Turku and Tallinn (2011) emphasised links between culture and wellbeing and aimed to engage local communities and practitioners to help guide the years programming (Tommarchi et al., 2018). Similarly, Umea’s (2014) programming centred on the concept of co-creation, where Aarhus’s (2017) social impact goals “involved the ‘activation’ of citizens through volunteering, as well as various programs around audience and community participation which sought to encourage participatory decision-making” (Tommarchi et al., 2018; Fox and Rampton, 2015). In this light, we can appreciate that the city’s decision to adopt Agenda 21 for culture and its associated values of cultural rights as well as its focus on co-production as being, at least in part, prompted by its bid for 2023 and the need to address recent trends in both the ECoC programming and national public policymaking.

Building on Agenda 21 for culture, we see certain social justificatory practices in Leeds become rooted in the belief that “culture is a basic human right and everyone in the city

has the right to celebrate and create their own culture” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 9; Local Cities United Governments, 2004). These arguments for public support centre around culture’s role in “building respect, cohesion and coexistence between and within communities and individuals” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 10), and how arts and culture can be used to “challenge xenophobia, prejudice and exclusion” and to empower people who are disenfranchised (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 10; 2017b). Within these practices, claims are made that the arts can give the people of Leeds a voice and the power to engage and create culture, and that the sector will aim to create spaces where people can “breathe, interact and socialise” without fear (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 10). The argument here is that arts and culture can help acknowledge “indigenous” ways of life while leaving space for new traditions to influence culture, encouraging everyone to participate in creating culture and building and reimagining the city’s future identity, if they so choose (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 10). The aims of these justificatory practices move away from notions of socio-economic instrumentalism and towards values found in cultural democracy and social justice, a shift reinforced in my interviews with the city’s cultural leaders.

In these conversations, interviewees predominantly centred their arguments for public spending around the arts’ role in encouraging “tolerance and curiosity” (Interview, T), “positive social transformation” (Interview, JP), providing “insight into social issues” (Interview, E), resisting “unbridled neoliberalism” (Interview, W) and creating space for people “to be citizens not customers” (Interview, A). Interviewees often drew on the current socio-political climate to back these arguments, and occasionally referenced the sector’s history with activism and socially engaged practices, which developed in the 1970s and 1980s through companies like Red Ladder Theatre and Pavilion. However,

these justificatory practices were not without conflict and tension. For example, some cultural leaders were more heavily dedicated to the idea that their institutions can and should contribute to social change, as one sector head noted, “I think unless you’re actually serving a real need and actually kind of have a real [social] reason to be there, maybe, you know, [you] shouldn’t be there” (Interview, T). Others contested the purely instrumental nature of these justifications, as demonstrated by one institutional head who pointed out that while they believe in the social value of the arts “it’s the arts organisations’ job to produce art. It’s not the arts organisations’ job to change social justice” (Interview, W). Furthermore, discussions with sectors leaders suggested that there was some resistance by members of the sector to move away from economic narratives and embrace more socially driven aims, with one leader commenting that if they put all three of the city’s major institutional leaders “in a room, [they] couldn’t even with two hours and a baseball bat get them to agree that the point of subsidised arts is to allow spaces for people to be citizens and not customers” (Interview, A). Some also acknowledged that making an argument for the more abstract social benefits they seek to advance, particularly around empathy, understanding and curiosity would be challenging, if not futile. As one sector leader noted, “I think it’s a very hard thing to say, oh, yes, we must spend our money on joy and wonder” (Interview, T).

Nevertheless, every cultural leader overwhelmingly made more references to the social benefits of the arts and their part in advancing instrumental aims around health, equality, wellbeing, understanding and cohesion over the sectors’ role in advancing purely economic aims. Certainly, arguments that embrace cultural rights and human flourishing and promote the role of culture with political and social change are promising steps in reframing cultural value and policy aims, but do they signal a reversal of dominant justifications for public support for arts and culture in Leeds?

4.3.4 Leeds: Power and Justificatory Narratives

Over the past sixty years, both social and economic justifications have reached a level where they can, to varying extents, resist criticism and doubts around their legitimacy. Bolstered by the city's continued desire to compete on the international stage, economic instrumentalism, arguments around culture-led regeneration in Leeds, and interwoven creative arguments persist despite clear uncertainties around the sector's effectiveness in achieving these goals. Social justifications for public support for the arts, chiefly those around access and inclusion, appear as valid arguments for public support, despite scepticisms around the social impact of the arts and widespread concerns that publicly funded organisations are far from inclusive (Kawashima, 2006; Jancovich, 2011; 2017; Stevenson, 2013). Nevertheless, these practices do not exist on an equal playing field. Since the 1990s, economic arguments have reined over the city's justificatory hierarchy, subordinating the social value of the arts. Existing justifications suggest a shift in this rule. They also indicate an extension of social arguments to include the arts' role in resisting neoliberal orthodoxy and discrimination as well as promoting elements of human flourishing. The focus on these social arguments is a response to interwoven local, national and international policy trends and concerns. That is, these justifications speak to broader global concerns around social division and increased xenophobia associated with, for example, the rise of the far right and Brexit. They also point to local concerns around unemployment, continued deprivation and a desire to win the ECoC bid, as well as some strong beliefs within the city's cultural sector that the arts can and should contribute to advancing the social good. However, given the aims presented in justifications around access, social inclusion and community renewal these practices continue to be rooted in instrumental theories of culture that frame "investment" in the

arts as offering a cost-effective contribution to the solution of weighty social problems (Belfiore, 2002). Therefore, we should be cautious not to conflate the way these justificatory practices employ rhetoric around diversity, community growth, and social cohesion with a marked break from dominant justificatory practices or as representing a substantive desire to engage in debates around cultural democracy.

More interesting was the way in which existing justifications expanded beyond arguments for access, social inclusion and cohesion to address issues of cultural rights. I do have concerns as to whether arguments for public support geared towards cultural rights, co-production and respect can eventually alter dominant narratives around public support and help create substantive policy. Given the evolution of justificatory practices in the city, I suggest that the economic argument for arts and culture remains strong, as does the instrumental framing of social benefits of the arts and that what we are seeing in Leeds, with regard to the recent attention paid to cultural rights, suggests a first step towards challenging, but not yet reversing, these practices. I am also concerned with the stability and resilience of these justifications. Their absence from previous policy and justificatory practices reinforces their connection to the ECoC bidding process, and we cannot predict how these justifications will be advanced, at least from a policy perspective, now that the bid is obsolete. Even if Leeds had been able to bid and win ECoC 2023, capitals of culture are “temporary projects, which are generally run by temporary organisations”, and investments and enthusiasm are “concentrated in the title year and are sometimes followed by a sort of ‘cliff-effect’ that brutally marks the return to ordinary life” (Tommarchi et al., 2018: 162). The key point is that changing dominant justificatory practices away from economic and social instrumentalism and towards issues of wellbeing and social justice depends on long-term efforts (Vickery, 2018), and

it is yet unclear if the city will continue to advance, or even sustain, its arguments around cultural rights, respect, equality and understanding. Considering that the delivery plan for the strategy has been stalled since 2018, along with the city's history around cultural policy implementation and delivery,³⁵ it feels hard to be optimistic that these justifications will find the political footing they need to be sustained, at least at the policy level.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has turned the theoretical question of justification for public support into a practical one that seeks to evaluate existing orders and relationships of justification, so that we may gain a better understanding of how these practices enable or constrict people's capability to shape cultural value and value allocation, and through this gain a better sense of the potential challenges that lie ahead for future policy change (Forst, 2017). My aim for analysis is threefold. The first is to recognise the fragility and resilience of these rationales, as well as to gain greater insight into power relations, norms, ideologies and socio-economic and political structures that have shaped notions of cultural value in each city. The second is to identify justificatory hierarchies in Calgary and Leeds. The last is to point out justifications that are no longer valid or justifiable, and to gain a greater understanding of the context that allows them to be reproduced and advanced as legitimate rationales.

In the Calgary case, I demonstrate that economic valuations of arts and culture hold sway over arguments for public support in Calgary. I note that economic justifications

³⁵ Earlier in this chapter, I noted that the implementation plan outlined in Leeds's first cultural strategy read more like a series of intentions rather than an actual strategy for delivery.

continue despite their inability to offer the municipal government a convincing ‘legitimate’ reason for public support. I suggest that depending on these arguments even when they are in crisis demonstrates that justificatory practices are fixed in what Belfiore (Belfiore, 2012) describes as “defensive instrumentalism”; that is, the historical privileging and commitment to the economic rationales for why the arts matter in the city, alongside a lack of engagement with the wider social benefits of the arts, has resulted in justificatory practices that can no longer articulate a case for cultural value beyond economic arguments. Such a singular economic approach to public support has not only constricted the space to think about and develop alternative notions of cultural value, but has also impeded the ability to advance or prioritise different understandings of value when and if they do arise. As a result, I argue that existing justifications for arts funding in Calgary have reached a “level of domination.”

Briefly put, this means that justificatory practices in the city are shaped by extremely uneven discursive power relations, whereby ideologies around the economic valuations of culture have the power to limit justifications for public support. They have reached a point of dominance where they can resist challenge by distorting the space of reason and by presenting their dominance as ‘common sense’ and ‘natural’ (Forst, 2014). Because of this power, they can make ‘false’ or ‘illegitimate’ justifications appear as if they are sufficiently justified (Forst, 2014). This is reflected in CADA and the sector’s continued dependence on economic arguments even when these prove to have no impact on the municipality’s views on public support. It is also demonstrated by the fact that the Arts Authority and the sector have never appeared to challenge the effectiveness of these arguments, nor have they considered how these inadequate justifications have contributed to the sector’s current perilous state.

In the case of Leeds, justificatory practices around the social and economic benefits of the arts have co-existed for decades. Although cultural regeneration arguments have been dominant over the last three decades, I note that the city's existing justifications for public support appear to lean more heavily towards claims that arts and culture provide wide-reaching social benefits, including their ability to foster empathy, offer insights into other cultures and address issues of human rights and inequality. I suggest that this shift is linked to the ECoC bid, which has opened the space for alternative arguments for public support to emerge in the city. Existing justificatory practices suggest a shift in justificatory rule and the possibility for alternative justifications to come to the fore. However, I argue that the city's desire to compete on the international stage, economic and social instrumentalism, and interwoven creative arguments, remain strong, and that emerging arguments around cultural rights and social justice have yet to gain a strong enough political foothold needed to alter these practices. I raise concerns around the motivations and values guiding this shift, in particular questioning the extent to which current public policy and ECoC programming trends are responsible for the existing arguments around cultural rights. I also highlight the fragility of these emerging justifications, and outline my reservations about their sustainability outside of the ECoC bidding process.

With all this in mind, I argue that in Calgary, continued faith in economic arguments for public support, restricted and unequal processes of justification, and very low political prioritisation of public support for arts and culture do not paint an optimistic picture for advancing a radical policy change. Unravelling its dominant market ideology and lack of faith in public support for the arts will certainly present a challenge, as will the

dismantling of the economic argument for support that is effectively closing down the space to offer alternative notions to cultural value. Leeds, appears, at least at first glance, to offer a more optimistic picture. However, it is certainly not without its issues. Economic imperatives are still dominant, while those promising alternative rationales are vulnerable, and it remains unclear whether they can be sustained and advanced. Indeed, without proper support they may fall to the wayside or be appropriated in ways that move them away from their original aims. There is also the issue of whether the inclusion of these arguments indicates more open policy practices, whereby policy makers are more responsive to outside voices and understandings of the value of culture, something I explore in more detail in the next chapter.

In the following, I expand my critique of existing justifications in Calgary and Leeds by exploring justificatory processes. I examine *who* has the power to shape rationales for why and how arts and culture matter in either city, and whether these processes can be considered just.

CHAPTER 5: JUSTIFICATORY PROCCCESS IN CALGARY AND LEEDS

5.1 Introduction

Earlier in this thesis, I presented a conceptual and normative framework for how we might begin to envisage a cultural capabilities-based policy that seeks to secure people's substantive freedom to give form and value to their experiences. Specifically, I suggested two ways that cultural policy may intervene in expanding people's freedoms to (co-)create culture. The first was that it should seek to address the inequalities and limitations that characterise public deliberation around notions of cultural value and allocation in practice. The second is that it should aim to enhance people's opportunities to participate in justificatory processes that shape and guide cultural value and value allocation. I argue that in ensuring these just processes, cultural policy would help to protect people's freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture. However, I have acknowledged that we are far from achieving or grounding just processes of justification in cultural policy, and in order to begin to change existing practices we must gain a deeper understanding of the ways they enhance or restrict people's ability to participate in deliberation around cultural value. To this end, Chapter 4 maps the evolution of justificatory practices and seeks to gain greater insights into the values, ideologies and power relations that have shaped existing rationales for public support of the arts, and reflects on how these evolutions have worked to inhibit the space to challenge or offer alternative notions of cultural value and value allocation.

Building on that critique, this chapter investigates the extent to which justifications in Calgary and Leeds are formed through (un)just processes. Here I engage with Forst's (2011b; 2014) notion of the "right to justification" (discussed in Chapter 2), which

emphasises that the normative priority of ‘just’ process “must be to enable people to participate in practices of justification on an equal basis with others, so they are able to challenge illegitimate power” (Moss, 2018: 104). My objects of study include the processes of justification that took place in both city’s recent co-produced cultural strategies, and in the development of the Calgary’s arts advocacy group ‘Creative Calgary’ and Leeds’s 20203 bid for the ECoC. This investigation aims to question the extent to which these processes were open to evaluation, critique, and change, as well as to highlight issues of power. Specifically, I ask who has (and who has had) the power to shape and influence the justificatory discourse available to others (Fairclough, 2014) and whether these power-relations be considered fair and just. Exploring how these justificatory processes function is key to understanding the real opportunities currently available in each of the two cities to shape cultural value and value allocation more broadly.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first explores processes of justification in Calgary. Here I begin by evaluating the city’s ‘co-produced’ cultural strategy, evaluating how the plan developed, and questioning the freedoms people have, or lack thereof, to (co-)create ideas of cultural value and value allocation. I follow this by investigating issues of power and deliberation involved in Creative Calgary’s advocacy campaign for increased municipal support for arts and culture. The second half of this chapter investigates justificatory processes in Leeds. Similar to the first section, I start by assessing the city’s co-produced cultural strategy and the extent to which it was formed through just process. I conclude with an analysis of Leeds’s bidding process for the 2023 ECoC, in which I question the space to offer alternative notions of value, as

well as investigating who holds the discursive position of power in these processes and whether these relations of power can be considered fair and just.

5.2 Calgary and The Right to Justification: A Critique of Justificatory Process

5.2.1 Calgary's Co-produced Cultural Plan

Historically, Calgary's market-driven culture has meant that it takes "rational approaches to inform policy choices"; that is, policymaking is geared towards ensuring the effective delivery of quality services and thus has had "little need for a truly inclusive decision-making model" (Reese and Rosenfeld, 2012: 173). That is not to say that council is not concerned with public opinion, and it has, since 1997, "asked people what they think about city services, a first in Canada at the time" (Brunet-Jailly, 2012: 312). The municipality's reliance on citizen feedback has expanded over the years, with the council using the information for broad policy guidance. However, the survey style used by the City is structured as a tool for feedback on pre-existing city aims and agendas, leaving little room to address outside concerns or to offer alternatives to existing practices. Therefore, in this context, citizen input in policy practices is limited (Brunet-Jailly, 2012). Furthermore, the 'survey' style approaches to citizen engagement "tend to reproduce processes of consultation that position the public as individual consumers rather than democratic publics" (Paylor and McKeivitt, 2019: 3). Beyond employing public surveys, the City of Calgary has shown little interest in citizen participation and community engagement when it comes to its policy aims (Reese and Rosenfeld, 2012). Population growth over the past decade has made Calgary the third most diverse city in Canada, with 36% of the population identifying as visible and/or mixed ethnicity and over 120 languages spoken (The City of Calgary, 2017). The influx

of new voices and increased concerns around environmental and social structures have begun to challenge the municipality's traditional processes and have forced an increase in "participatory like" policymaking (Brunet-Jailly, 2012). The City was required to create a cultural plan as a result of winning Canada's 'City of Culture' in 2012. However, the development of the plan, (which concluded in 2016) and its attempts at 'co-production' represents one of the municipality's first attempts at escalating the level of civic participation in its policymaking processes.

We can also understand Calgary's engagement with participatory policy practices as reflecting co-production's growing popularity across the globe "due to its ability to promote empowerment and engagement, and to respond to ongoing and significant structural exclusions of diverse voices" (Chatterton et al., 2018: 5). Co-production and participatory policymaking have been taken up in both Calgary and Leeds, and therefore require further elaboration here. At its best, co-production and participatory policy practices seek to encourage collaboration between humans, it aims to give each citizen the equal opportunity to engage with the political discourse which governs the society in which we live, and encouraging inclusion of those who are disengaged, excluded or marginalised from democratic engagement (Lechelt and Cunningham, 2020; Young, 2002). They are also committed to "mutual respect, equality and reduced hierarchy between knowledge forms, fluid and permeable disciplinary and professional boundaries, developing shared learning, and theories that are grounded in action especially testing knowledge in the context where implementation will take place" (Chatterton et al., 2018: 7; also see Dréze, 2010; Baiocchi, 2001a). These characteristics help set co-produced policy practices apart from "tokenistic processes such as

information sharing and consultation and [are] more closely associated with developing citizens' power through partnership" (Chatterton et al., 2018: 7; also see Arendt, 2013).

The values underpinning co-production and participatory policymaking certainly share an affiliation with this work's desire to envision cultural policy practices geared towards enabling freedoms and opportunities for people to shape cultural value and value allocation. Indeed, I believe that there are potential connections between the two approaches that can serve to further develop and operationalise the cultural capability policy design advocated for in this work, and I briefly reflect on this in the concluding chapter of this thesis.

That said, while participatory policy-making initiatives hint at a route to a more democratically inclusive approach to policy, existing practices of co-production function within our current socio-political-economic reality "where a neoliberal view of democracy, which essentially casts citizens as consumers, still rules the political imaginary" (Lechelt and Cunningham, 2020: 1; Brown, 2015; 2016). In practice, there is often a gap between the rhetoric of democratic participation and the actual implementation of these policy-making initiatives. Indeed, there are increasing concerns that, in certain instances, the terms 'co-production' and 'participatory democracy' have been adopted whilst the participatory nature of policy-making procedures has, in reality, remained very limited (Jancovich and Bianchini, 2013; Jancovich, 2017; Lechelt and Cunningham, 2020). Simply put, we cannot ignore that co-production is at risk of being misused by elites as a form of control, manipulations and tokenistic power sharing, as

are many alternative practices, (Hickey, 2004; Arendt, 2013; Chatterton et al., 2018). By extension, we cannot assume that engagement with participatory policymaking equates the advancement of just practices.

The participatory policymaking process in Calgary's cultural plan suggests a level of democratic accountability and indicates the municipality's commitment to enhancing public engagement in policy practice. However, given Calgary's existing political structures and its traditionally low engagement with citizen participation, in comparison to, for example, Vancouver or Ottawa, where local government more actively promotes citizen and community group involvement (Brunet-Jailly, 2012), it is worth questioning how much actual power and agency the city's residents have in this policymaking process. Specifically, does the cultural plan's co-produced process provide citizens with the opportunities to shape cultural value and value allocation, to enact substantive policy change, or does it merely pay lip-service to ideals of just process? Therefore, in evaluating the development of the cultural plan, I ask who had the power to shape justificatory practices and question the space available in the policymaking process to challenge or offer alternative justifications for public support for arts and culture.

My interviews with city policymakers frequently spoke of the need for multiple voices to be included in guiding policy, arts programming, future cultural development, and grant strategies. One senior policymaker emphasised a desire for an "inclusive design" to policymaking, describing this as including "three principles: one size fits one; not about us, without us; and perpetuating a virtuous cycle, not a vicious cycle . . . so we're not going to design investment without actually asking the very people for whom it's

intended to serve and benefit” (Interview, P). They went on to acknowledge that the city’s understanding of diversity is often too narrow, and needs to expand beyond visible minorities to include “gender, sexual orientation, or other kinds of invisible minorities, like mental wellness” (Interview, P). They also admitted that despite there being “cultural organisations led by ethno-cultural leaders” that CADA has been “kind of remiss in building relationships with [them]” (Interview, P). That the Arts Authority does not often include various communities in its planning processes was also noted in my interviews with sector leaders. When asked to elaborate, one artistic director commented that “there’s certainly a lack of awareness . . . of all the different things that are happening to advance either the social justice message or other messages that are being brought forward by these peripheral marginalised communities. [It’s] just the same crowd, the same approach . . . so I think that’s one of the biggest hurdles we face” (Interview, JS). The cultural plan’s development process also shows Calgary’s aspiration to include many voices through a variety of different forms of participation. The various platforms for participation included 75 individual interviews, 6 community soundings, 7 topic-driven focus groups, 2 online engagement platforms, 2 cross-department workshops, 1 cultural forum, and 600 telephone surveys (The City of Calgary, 2017). However, the question is whether these claims and approaches to inclusivity and participation amount to ‘just processes’.

The development process clearly attempted to engage with many voices through various forms of participation. However, the space available for participants to reflect, challenge and offer alternatives; that is, to engage in effective processes of deliberation, was limited. For example, the 75 one-on-one interviews focused narrowly on council members; senior staff of arts organisations, educational institutions and design firms;

artists; economic development agencies; and ‘social innovation practitioners’ (The City of Calgary, 2017). The community soundings took place largely in affluent neighbourhoods, and, as one policymaker notes, “were not broadly attended” (Interview, SI). These soundings were facilitated as a presentation of the Cultural Plan by leaders from City Council, followed by an opportunity for feedback. This feedback has not been publicly documented, and it is difficult to determine whether the events had any impact on final policy decisions. The plan’s 600 randomised phone surveys were conducted across the city, using a computer-assisted-telephone-interview (CATI) system. Questions were closed, leaving no opportunity for participants to engage in alternative options. Citizens were required to answer “yes’ or “no”, or to rate their interest in the arts (The City of Calgary, 2017).³⁶ Furthermore, despite current levels of diversity in the city, there is no indication of whether these surveys were conducted in any other language than English.

The Cultural Forum was composed mostly of members from the city’s civic partnerships, along with invitees from previous engagement platforms. This suggests that it was attended primarily by those already heavily involved in the strategy’s planning process. In spite of the City’s claims that arts sector senior staff members were included in these processes, my interviews with leaders from ‘cornerstone’ medium and grassroots organisations suggests that none of these institutions were invited to participate in the forums or engagement platforms. Indeed, many were unaware of the cultural plan, let alone the opportunity to participate in its development. Only three interviewees admitted to reading (or skimming) the document itself (Interview, JS; PT;

³⁶ For example: “On a scale of 1 to 10, please state whether you are interested in any of the following events even if you are not participating in them?” (Cultural Plan 2017).

DI). The forum did not release the names of participating staff or arts organisations, so it is possible that some of the major institutions' board members were included in the planning discussions, even if staff were not.

Despite policymakers' calls to broaden the definition of diversity needs in policy development, some populations were not included, notably Calgary's disabled arts community. An employee at one of the city's largest disability arts organisations commented that policymakers focused on "diversity relating to everything except people with disabilities" and that "it's obvious . . . their definition of diversity was not taken to the fullest extent of what diversity should be" (Interview, JS). In keeping with this sentiment, no evidence suggests that accommodations were made to make events accessible for those with physical disabilities or extra learning needs. The lack of effort to include diverse groups directly violates the right to justifications, which stresses that processes of justification must rest on the basis of equality, and that no one should be excluded from justificatory processes that concern them in essential ways (Forst, 2014).

So, the Cultural Plan's authors attempted to include a broad range of perspectives, including implementing several engagement techniques from phone calls to live focus groups. However, the diversity of the participants involved was limited, there was little involvement from the arts sector and the majority of input came from 'stake holders' selected by the steering committee. Opportunities to participate were, therefore, restricted by the committee's selection of participants, and by its choice of locations for community engagement. As for the process of justification itself, there were no attempts to engage in deliberation beyond formal presentations and question-and-answer formats, and thus participants had little room to voice alternatives or to challenge the plan's

development and direction. Rather than a demonstration of “just process”, participation in the development process was simply a more robust version of the city’s earlier citizen ‘satisfaction’ surveys.

We can see that the participants offered the most power in this process were those ‘stakeholders’ invited by the steering committee. However, an investigation into two documents that engage with feedback from the forums — *Calgary Culture Plan Report Back: What we Heard, What we Did* (The City of Calgary, 2016) and *Cultural Plan for the City of Calgary: What We Heard Report* (MDB Insight, 2016) — suggests that even those participants had limited agency when it came to challenging or altering dominant justifications. The first report, drawn up by the City of Calgary, reflects on the aforementioned Cultural Forum. At this event, participants were asked to respond to four pre-established themes around the role of arts and culture in the city, and the report compiles the main responses to each theme. Respondents called for increased spaces for diverse expression, with equitable and affordable access on all levels (creation and audience); called for increased focus on reaching, connecting and including others; and criticised traditional forms of cultural programming that can be seen as exclusionary in governance and programming. These general responses deviate from the dominant justifications discussed in the previous section, most notably in their attempt to address issues of access, which have been missing from the city’s justifications for public support for decades, and in their inattention to the economic value of arts and culture, which the city’s justifications have made so much of.

The latter document, *Cultural Plan for the City of Calgary: What We Heard Report* (2016), was generated by MDB Insight, and was meant to recap the range of engagement activities used in the plan's development process, and to reflect on participants' comments and ideas. A marked shift occurred from the one document to the next in the representation of claims, goals and values. For example, claims around diversity in the first document centred on issues of equality in practise, expression and participation. However, these same claims were presented in the MDB Insight report as a desire to promote Calgary's 'diversity advantage'; specifically, to highlight the diverse voices present in the city's cultural sector in order to enhance outward perceptions of the city, to attract and retain talent, and to encourage economic growth through the mixing of diverse voices and ideas. The MDB report's interpretations of participant's feedback from the Cultural Forum transforms concerns around diversity, equality and access into concerns about city-building and branding. Consequently, alternative arguments around the role of arts and culture in the city were adjusted to align with existing justificatory practices, privileging an economic valuation of culture. The plan's narrow instrumentalism of the arts suggests that the municipality and its associated stakeholders (CADA, Tourism Calgary and CED) have the power in these justificatory practices, and play a part in sustaining dominant economic justificatory practices.

In sum, Calgary City Council failed to create adequate opportunities for alternative opinions or challenges to its views, and did not relinquish any policymaking power to the citizens who participated. Therefore, we can understand the development of the cultural plan as reflecting an unjust process of justification. The predetermined themes of the 'Cultural Forum', the restricted participation in the engagement platforms and the

reduced space for deliberation indicate a relatively closed process. Additionally, clear evidence shows that the city council cherry-picked and appropriated the Forum participants' contributions to better suit its pre-existing priorities around economic growth and city branding. Council may have looked to consultation committees and other groups in the plan's development, but those groups served as sounding boards for policymakers rather than equal players in justificatory process around why arts and culture matter and deserve support.

The power to shape (and sustain) justificatory practices around the role of the arts in the city, in this example, rests with the City of Calgary and the civic partners involved in the steering committee. Briefly put, the potential for the co-produced process to lead towards more just processes, including cooperation, breaking down of hierarchies and collective deliberation is constrained by and is subordinate to dominant policy rationales and existing power structures. As a result, the co-produced policy is underpinned by pre-determined aims and reproduces 'consultation' practices, rather than creating the space for people to participate in practices of justification on a more equal basis (Moss, 2018: 104). In sum, the opportunities and freedoms for people to equally participate in the (co-)creation of cultural value and value allocation are severely inhibited by existing processes of justification in the city.

5.2.2 Creative Calgary

In this section, I briefly consider the processes of justification in Creative Calgary's advocacy campaign. As mentioned in the previous section, this nonpartisan group was established in 2018, in response to the municipal government's persistent underfunding for the arts. Its primary goals were to increase municipal financial investment in the

sector, to increase the positive public profile of the arts sector and to ensure the sector's seat at the table for city-building initiatives (Creative Calgary, 2019). The group's main arguments are that arts organisations fuel Calgary's creative sector and deliver economic returns, and that they are essential to making Calgary "a great place to make a living and make a life" (Creative Calgary, 2019). Clearly, Creative Calgary reinforces dominant justifications for public support rooted in a narrow economic instrumentalism of arts and culture discussed in the previous chapter. However, what I question here is who had the power to shape these justificatory practices, and what space was available to offer alternatives.

The advocacy group was initially just a gathering of CEOs and board members from the city's major 'cornerstone' organisations. Roughly three months after the group began deliberating about strategy, they put out an open call stating "that this [was] an advisory committee that anyone could join" (Interview, DI). The cornerstone organisations, which receive the bulk of the city's arts funding and that the City presents as key to building cultural tourism, have a contested relationship with the rest of the sector. Justifications for these organisations has usually positioned them as 'mentors' to smaller organisations and artists, a designation that the grassroots community resists and that the cornerstones rarely engage with. Indeed, collaboration between these institutions and medium and grassroots organisations is minimal, with a general sense that "they are doing different things" (Interview, PH). Likewise, there was a similar sentiment around the presumed mentorship role the cornerstones play in the sector, with one small organisation leader noting "just the general focus of what they do . . . like performing arts or their museums . . . [makes] it really hard to look to them for any kind of guidance in terms of how we should be shaping what we're doing, because what

we're doing is an entirely different practice" (Interview, PH). Interviews with policymakers and non-cornerstone members of the arts community also suggested in a wider sense that these larger organisations were becoming increasingly irrelevant, and that perhaps those that were no longer financially sustainable should be allowed to 'die out' (Interview, PH). As one sector member put it, "Cornerstone organisations are facing financial turmoil, and there's a reason behind that, and it's because people don't access culture in the ways they want them to" (Interview, JS)

In a response to financial difficulties and waning reputations — and in a demonstration of authority and strength — the cornerstones took the lead to advocate for increased funding for the entire community, hiring campaign managers and using the political clout of board members to gain access to City Council. However, the extent to which this represented an inclusive and community-centred project is questionable. As one member of the group noted, the idea that they were advocating for everyone was "just sort of a whimsical statement" (Interview, JS). The reality, according to one advisor, was that the cornerstones "had the foresight to sort of bankroll what they wanted the community to see as a grassroots campaign, but it really wasn't" (Interview, JS).

Certainly, opening the group up to other members of the community months after strategies had begun speaks to the low level of interest in outside perspectives.

Interviews further suggested that the few grassroots and medium-sized organisations that joined the cause felt that their voices had little to no impact. As one DIY leader involved in the process noted, they had felt that their opinions were listened to, but thought that their "voice doesn't necessarily lead to any actual concrete outcomes" (Interview, PH). In other cases, some grassroots organisations "haven't felt like they've had a voice in the process because a lot of the framings [of cultural value] are [still]

things that they don't necessarily agree with. So, like the fact that things are discussed in terms of economic output" (Interview, PT). Indeed, many of these non-cornerstone members resisted the economic justifications that Creative Calgary was pushing, wanting to include other arguments around issues of increased access and the role of the arts in making communities more inclusive (Interview, PH; S; JS). For example, one member would have liked to see the conversation more focused on how "to just kind of make people aware of how broad of a spectrum of art is out there, and to give them the chance to explore it in a way that lets them find the ones that actually resonate with them" (Interview, PH).

The lack of power grassroots organisations had in these discussions was reconciled by interviewees in two ways. The first was by the reality that, in comparison to the cornerstones, their smaller cohort lacked the political capital to push for increased funding, and thus it made sense, in their minds, for those with the most influential board members and, generally, influence with City Council, to take the lead (Interview S; PH). The second was that the economic argument would probably hold more sway; as one interviewee commented, "I do take some issue with the ways that they [Creative Calgary] frame the argument in terms of the economic value of the arts, [but] they feel it will be what gets through to the majority of the councillors" (Interview, S). In the end, the majority (namely the board and executives of the cornerstones) ruled, and the advocacy group pushed ahead with an economic valuation of the arts that many (despite evidence to the contrary) still believed would resonate with City Council.

The process indicates that, outside of CADA and the municipal government, power over arguments for public support for the arts is largely controlled (or sustained) by

traditional arts organisations, or perhaps more accurately by their influential board members. Calgary's cornerstone organisations and their executive boards notoriously lack diversity. On average, over 95 per cent of cornerstone board members work primarily in investment, banking, oil and gas, or law; 55 per cent are men; and they are overwhelming (86 per cent) white. The cornerstones represent only 15 per cent of visible minorities, which "is less than half the representation of visible minorities in Calgary (36 per cent)" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018c).

The lack of diversity in those leading the campaign, alongside the group's general lack of interest in listening to outside voices, clearly reflects an unequal process of justification. The process further demonstrates a restricted space for deliberating or offering alternatives, with those who did decide to challenge the dominant discourse feeling that their concerns were ignored. As one member of the group's advisory committee succinctly observed, Creative Calgary was "a great example of an opportunity for major people to . . . think about how [to] actually create a grassroots campaign to get the arts out to the forefront, but in the end, it just got the big guys out [front]" (Interview, JS). That economic justifications were assumed the most valid by those with the most power within the group, while other, alternative justifications were ignored, suggests a lack of 'reciprocity' in this process. That is, recourse was made to a 'higher truth' (that economic justifications for the arts are common sense) that were not shared by others, and that ultimately closed off the space for people to offer alternative justifications for public support (Forst, 2014).³⁷ The advocacy group's

³⁷ That economic justifications remained dominant is not surprising, given that I have argued they have reached a level of domination in the city. However, it is a noteworthy example of the power of these justifications to inhibit the space for change, even outside a policy context.

campaign reflects an imbalance of power and an unwavering adherence to existing justifications in the city, both of which have severely reduced the right to justification and the opportunities and freedoms to (co-)create cultural value and value allocation within this process.

5.3 Practices in Co-Production and Just Process: Advancing the Right to Justification in Leeds

Similar to the Calgary case above, this section investigates who has the power in justificatory processes for public support in Leeds, and whether these processes can be considered just. Using both the city's current co-produced cultural strategy and their bid for ECoC as points of analysis, I ask if those affected by justifications for public support were given the opportunity to develop and challenge existing arguments.

5.3.1 Exploring Leeds's Co-Produced Strategies

Leeds's decision to co-produce both its cultural policy and ECoC bid was motivated and guided by a number of interrelated factors. The heightened interest in participatory approaches to policymaking, particularly within social and health sectors in the UK (Needham and Carr, 2009; Sorrentino et al., 2018; NHS, 2019), as well as increased engagement with notions of 'co-production' in ECoC programming (Tommaschi et al., 2018), certainly played a key part. However, we cannot ignore the influence of the city's existing approaches to policymaking, which has historically revolved around consultation and attempts to "bridge departmental boundaries within council and engage other interest in the city" (Douglas et al., 2009: 74).

Since the early 1990s, the LCC had practised forms of ‘joined up’ government, as demonstrated through the Leeds Initiative and its work to open up dialogue between council and the main economic interest groups in the city (Douglas et al., 2009). Around the millennium, New Labour, which championed partnership and participation (Williams et al., 2014) applied pressure to reorganise local authorities around a cabinet-style administration, and Leeds’s governance shifted to a more corporatist approach that “leant greater significance to partnership between different sectors with the view of reaching beyond the council and engaging other key players in culture provision” (Douglas et al., 2009: 74). Such strategies are reflected in how the Cultural Partnership’s developed its first cultural policy through city-wide consultation with arts sector leaders, the business sector, developers and other key stakeholders. The election of the Coalition government in 2010 brought with it the notion of ‘Big Society’, a flagship policy in Conservative Party general election manifesto, that “was subsequently reinforced in the Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition agreement” (Williams et al., 2014: 2799).

Broadly speaking, Big Society “envisaged devolution of power to enable local communities and individuals to take an active role in their communities” (Williams et al., 2014: 2799). Its core tenet included public service reform; decentralisation and community empowerment; and encouragement of coops, mutuals, charities and social enterprise (Williams et al., 2014). In response, the LCC proposed their concept of “civic enterprise”, which suggests “a new leadership style for local government whereby council becomes more enterprising, businesses and other partners become more civil and citizens become more engaged in the face of challenges” (Leeds City Council, 2013: 1; Douglas et al., 2009)— a governance proposition that again reinforces the

city's pre-existing ideologies around partnership and joined-up government.

Furthermore, "in 2015, the city council identified a number of 'breakthrough projects' where gains could be made through more collaboration" (Chatterton et al., 2018: 15). In this context, it is not unusual that the bid and the cultural strategy both sought to engage numerous partners and stakeholders in their development; but they differ in their level of engagement and attempts to actively listen and use citizen voices to help steer the processes. However, as with Calgary, the question remains, are these merely tokenistic approaches to co-production or do these strategies represent real attempts to advance more just policymaking processes?

5.3.2 The Co-Produced Cultural Strategy

While the first cultural strategy used various forms of consultation, the new strategy expanded beyond older policy practices, becoming "the first of its kind in Leeds having been co-produced with the residents, artists and businesses of the city" (Priestley, 2018: np). The process began with "more than 200 interviews with cultural sector representatives", followed by extensive meetings, focus groups, presentations and workshops in various communities throughout the city (Priestley, 2018: np).

Throughout this process, the planning team attempted to meaningfully engage a broad and diverse range of citizens, reaching out to migrant groups, people with learning disabilities, LGBT forums, black and minority ethnic communities, business clubs, health and wellbeing providers, city council teams, faith leaders and the voluntary sector (Priestley, 2018). In addition, some team members worked with community leaders to connect and meet with members of the Chinese, Kashmiri, Polish and Roma communities, while others held workshops with elderly groups, children and young

people. In the end, over 2,000 people took part in the various engagement platforms (Leeds City Council, 2018b).

The motivations behind engaging with such a wide range of voices was, according to one lead policymaker, “to study and really find out about how other people quantify the value of culture in their own terms” (Interview, L). It was, according to this interviewee, also meant to encourage deeper citizen investment in the arts, and to show the LCC and other investors what the city valued (Interview, L). Arguably, the greatest (tangible) contribution these engagement platforms made was to help establish a broader definition of culture within the policy. While acknowledging the many definitions of ‘culture’ around the world, the policy states that “Leeds has created its own definition following a year of conversation with people from across the whole city, incorporating a vast range of perspectives” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 2). Therefore, drawing on the information gathered through various forms of citizen participation, Leeds now (rather vaguely) defines culture as “what we do and who we are, encompassing a broad range of actions and activities which have the capacity to transform challenge, reassure and inspire, giving a place and its people a unique and distinctive identity” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 2).

In comparison to the Calgary case, the development of Leeds’s co-produced cultural strategy attempts to engage with a far greater number of residents and communities.³⁸

³⁸ Calgary’s participation platforms failed to engage a wide range of communities. While they performed 600 automated phone surveys, the six community soundings took place largely in affluent neighborhoods, and although the City did not monitor attendance, according to one policymaker involved, they were sparsely attended, versus the over 2,000 people that took part in Leeds’s engagement platforms. Unlike in Leeds, there was no attempt to engage with specific communities, such as LGBTQ+ or the disabled arts communities, faith groups, Aboriginal communities, various community leaders and so forth. Seventy-five interviews were conducted with stakeholders in Calgary versus 200 in Leeds.

Unlike Calgary, it uses the information gained by citizen participation to help shape an understanding of cultural value. In addition to offering extensive citizen engagement platforms and resident feedback, conversations with cultural leaders suggest that, for them, the “consultation was actually way more integrated” (Interview, MA), and that “everybody was consulted . . . like everybody [could] get involved” (Interview, W). Similar sentiments were echoed throughout all of my interviews with members of the arts sector, implying that from grassroots to major institutions, cultural leaders had felt included and listened to within the process. The desire to incorporate the arts sector’s multiple perspectives of cultural value in the development process is evident in the plan itself.

The strategy itself incorporates multiple perspectives of cultural value, in that it not only references longstanding justificatory practices geared towards raising the city’s international status and competitive advantage, but also includes arguments that seek to advance notions of cultural democracy, cultural rights and other non-economic arguments for public support. From this perspective, we might appreciate that the development of the cultural strategy was attempting to move towards a more just process of justification whereby people are treated as agents of the policy rather than recipients (Forst, 2014). That said, the process also points to some of the limitations of co-production and participatory policymaking practices, most notably the challenges involved in attempting to shift longstanding policy practices and rationales around cultural value through a singular case of co-production.

The development of the co-produced strategy represents an initial attempt to widen the space of policymaking and the opportunities available for people to shape cultural value

and value allocation. That said, my discussions with policymakers and cultural leaders made clear that there is still a long way to go in grounding these alternative practices and views. As one cultural leader observed, “This is kind of quite a radical proposal, and I’m not sure how much support it’s having across the board . . . what I think is quite interesting about this new [cultural policy] is that there seems to be a desire expressed to be more holistic in threading culture into every conversation and then the pragmatic resistance in actually doing that” (Interview, W). Another noted, “I think it [the cultural strategy] was an example of how you have a couple of individuals trying to do something that’s radically different, [but] even when they present it in a sort of . . . nice warm handholding experience, [they are] going to get all the forces of stasis up against it” (Interview, A). Echoing these concerns, one policymaker suggested that, despite having support from council members, including the mayor, “There are resistances elsewhere in actually making [the cultural plan] happen”, both within council departments and from outside sectors (Interview, L). They go on to comment that “there is an internal culture shift that needs to happen” (Interview, L) in order to create the type of change the policy aims at. These remarks are pointed reminders that co-produced policies “exist within the constraints of the present” (Paylor and McKeivitt, 2019: 3) and have to contend with established social, political and economic structures, as well as with existing narratives around cultural value and allocation.

From the perspective of ‘the right to justification’, the co-produced cultural policy falls short in that it may allow for people to engage in justificatory processes, but does not give them the power to change these practices or values. However, as Forst (2014) notes, some of the first steps in developing more just structures of justification are challenging dominant powers and identifying unjust relations of power within

processes. So, from this perspective, we may view the strategy's process in a slightly more favourable light. That is, it did attempt, if only briefly, to loosen authority over justificatory practices by allowing a number of sectors and residents to put forth their notions of cultural value. The subsequent resistance and limitations erected against alternative views of cultural value helped to highlight, both to the sector and policymakers, the unequal power relations that persist in defining and attributing cultural value. From a scholarly perspective, this example emphasises the realities of co-produced policymaking and the existing constraints on people's freedoms and opportunities to shape cultural value and value allocation.

The new cultural strategy for Leeds 2017–2030 was formally adopted by Leeds City Council's Executive Board in July 2017. The strategy's co-produced process has attracted local and international interest "as far as Scotland, Italy and Iceland" (Priestley, 2018). However, little has been done to implement the strategy since then. The delivery plan was designed to be "collectively created" over time, but the last "building the development plan" workshop took place in June 2018, and there have been no updates to the website since (Leeds City Council, 2018c). As it stands, the delivery plan appears stalled, with no indication of when or if it will resume. Besides, the policymaker who was leading the process has since left the LCC with no clear leader taking up the charge. There is, therefore, significant uncertainty around whether or not the alternative notions of cultural value will be grounded in practice, if justificatory processes will remain open or if more just practices will continue to be developed or advanced. As noted in the previous chapter, dismantling existing practices and dominant rationales around why arts and culture deserve public money is an ongoing process (Vickery, 2018; Baltà Portolés and Dragičević Šešić, 2017). In short,

alternative justifications and justificatory processes must be sustained and promoted over time in order to gain a foothold. At this point, Leeds's co-produced cultural strategy is a singular event, and, as such, it is unlikely to gain the power or political backing needed to produce a substantive change in policy practices or impact the dominant narratives around cultural value and value allocation.

5.3.3 The European Capital of Culture 2023 Bidding Process

The ECoC bidding process was guided by an independent steering group (ISG), including cross-party representation, outside consultants and leading members from the arts. Over the entire bidding process, the ISG conducted a variety of engagement work, including focus groups with young people, research on external perception of the city, studies on visitors profiles and audience records, and a consultation with over 3,000 people from varying communities (Leeds City Council, 2017b). In another notable move, the ISG, instead of bringing in a high profile institutional leader from outside the city to guide the bid's arts programming, hired three local cultural leaders from the local independent and DIY arts sector, each with strong connections to the city and experience working with issues of inclusivity and diversity. Although this move signalled what one programmer described as "a really good sign of how much [the LCC and ISG] value the voice of independent makers" (Interview, EB), the co-programmers were hired late in the process, and by the time they came on board, the steering group had already completed two years of consultation. That consultation had resulted in a number of themes geared toward raising the city's international profile, and, appreciating how its cultural assets could help accomplish this, and the programmers had to respond to these (Interview, A; EB). Furthermore, members from the steering committee suggested that the ISC was restrictive, made up, as one interviewee

described, of “the usual suspects” of artistic directors from major institutions, and “not the most interesting group” in terms of diversity. The steering committee members acknowledged that the ISC attempted to give the DIY sectors more capacity to make their voices heard, and to present them as level with the larger institutions in the city, but cited some initial resistance and suspicion from the DIY sector towards the bidding process, including fears that their existing community work would be appropriated with little reward, proper acknowledgement, or support for the artists. However, as the member of the ISG noted, “They did rally around it, in the end, a bit more than people in the institutional sector did” (Interview, EB).

In the end, some felt that while the bidding process attempted to include a wide range of artistic perspectives, and while the organisers were allowed “to be a bit wild about the programme” (Interview, EB), larger arts organisations and those in charge of dispersing the funds remained restrictive and risk-averse. For example, it was suggested that “80 per cent of those projects [in the program] that were led by the [major] institutions were concepts that [the programmers] had to come up with because [institutional leaders] could not think beyond the boundaries of what their own structures allow them and enable them to do” (Interview, EB). Furthermore, there was a sense that despite being encouraged to “think outside the box” and include a variety of artistic practices, that ultimately funding streams would remain the same with the bulk going to traditional institutions and to high profile events. The fear was, according to one of the programmers, that the unwillingness to alter spending structures or to invest more equally or fairly across the sector would mean that DIY and community projects would remain low priorities with little chance of receiving enough funds to create large-scale projects with lasting impact (Interview, EB). The programmers’ lack of power to alter

existing structures led them to feel that the process was “completely pointless”, because “the people making the decisions about the money are not the people who were really and truly invested in a more equitable landscape” (Interview, EB). Discussions with one interviewee, a lead consultant for the bidding process as well as a member of the ISG, confirmed some of these trepidations. When asked about program aims for 2023, the emphasis was placed on culture-led regeneration, such as how the bid “will grow the economy” and “raise the city’s ambitions” to participate on the international stage (Interview, A). Moreover, while acknowledging that there is a place for both DIY and established institutions within cultural programming, the interviewee thought that bigger organisation were more likely to “create a moment everybody [would] remember for the rest of their lives” and give others their “first exposure to something of real quality” (Interview, A).

On the one hand, the bidding process, with its various engagement platforms and inclusion of the DIY sector and community interests, can be seen as an attempt at offering space for those affected by the bid to challenge existing justifications and to provide alternative notions of cultural value and value allocation. On the other, the process ended up privileging the values, justificatory practices and political agendas embodied by policymakers or consultants, demonstrating a continued imbalance of power over who had the right to justifications. Rather than collaboration and ‘sharing of power’, the bidding process reflects major concerns around co-production and the barriers to advancing just processes of justifications. In particular, it highlights how dominant logics and power structures, such as pre-existing notions of cultural value, established paths of value allocation and wider political agendas “tend to give rise to

narrowly defined and ‘thin’ forms of involvement that curb how the public can be involved and what they can say” (Paylor and McKeivitt, 2019: 4).

The process did involve various citizen engagement platforms, and the final bid booklet does point to a desire for “active civic engagement in the development and delivery of cultural programming” (Leeds City Council, 2017b: 13). However, interviews with consultants and programmers, as well as an analysis of the final bid booklet, gave little indication that citizen involvement led to any substantive co-creation or practices of participatory decision-making within the bidding process. The DIY and independent sectors were brought into programming discussions, but the programmers themselves had little power to alter existing funding structures or the bid’s overarching aims. All of which led to questions around the actual level of power these alternative sectors would be given in the delivery of the plan, had Leeds bid for and won the 2023 ECoC.

I argue that in this instance, the term ‘co-production’ has been adopted whilst the key elements of participatory policymaking, particularly those around equality, reduced hierarchies and citizen empowerment, have, in reality, remained very limited. The motivation behind the co-produced bid appears to have little to do with actively devolving decision-making power and encouraging the (co-)creation of cultural value and value allocation. Instead, the rhetoric around co-production appears merely to pay lip service to the notion, and thus serves more as a tokenistic process of information sharing and consultation. With this in mind, I suggest that the discourse around co-production was likely employed to show the ECoC’s independent panel of reviewers that Leeds was “ready to connect” (Leeds City Council, 2017b: 2) and willing to

engage, if only shallowly, with current ECoC programming trends around co-creation and citizen engagement. The process did attempt to include multiple voices, but as with the other cases explored in this chapter, inclusion of more perspectives does not, in and of itself, produce more just practices. Enabling people's freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create cultural value and value allocation not only involves guaranteeing people's basic right to justification and the ability to participate in practices of justification on a more equal basis" (Moss, 2018: 104) but also requires securing real possibilities for people to intervene and exercise control within justificatory processes (Forst, 2014: 36; Moss, 2018). In this case, narrow forms of participation and unequal power relations ultimately constricted the ability for all those affected by the bidding process to impact or shape notions of cultural value and rationales for public support in Leeds.

In November 2017, Leeds learned that, as a consequence of Brexit, the city was no longer eligible to compete for the European Capital of Culture in 2023. However, the LCC decided to continue with a revised version of the planned 2023 celebration, aimed at transforming the city's "identity locally, nationally and internationally", to "create a lasting legacy of economic and social impact" (Leeds 2023, 2020). The CEO and artistic director of National Theatre Wales was appointed to organise and direct programming for the amended year of culture, and as one policy maker noted, "projects may look different", but the programme will still attempt to find a balance between local communities and international artists (Interview, L). How this intention will play out over the next two years remains to be seen.

5.4 Conclusion

Following Forst (2014), I understand justice not as something that already exists and can be applied to those in need, but rather as something that is generated (Forst, 2014) by the people, through deliberative methods that challenge and resist forms of arbitrary rule. Therefore, just process in cultural policy practices requires that people be given the right to challenge, evaluate, critique and change how the state rationalises why and how the arts matter to society. This chapter has explored the extent to which four examples of justificatory processes in Calgary and Leeds can be considered just.

In the first half of this chapter, I explore the development of the cultural plan and the Creative Calgary campaign. Each reflects two different types of justificatory processes, as well as different aims and participants. However, I argue that both failed to recognise individuals' rights to participate in the (co-)creation of cultural value and value allocation. Calgary's co-produced plan attempted to include a broad range of citizens through various engagement platforms. However, these attempts were narrow in the sense that they took place in affluent neighbourhoods, were not well attended and served merely as a review of a predetermined plan rather than a deliberative process. Furthermore, cultural forums included members of elite groups but not many members from the city's arts sector or marginalised communities. The lack of effort to include diverse groups, the clear cherry picking of participant feedback and the lack of power given to citizens to challenge or alter pre-determine agendas around arts and culture clearly demonstrates the ways in which this process can be seen as unjust.

Likewise, the co-produced cultural plan Creative Calgary campaign tried to include multiple voices, primarily from different areas of the arts sector. While they succeeded in getting some members from the DIY sector, these participants did not feel that their voices held weight and thus felt that they were not equals in the deliberative process. Those in charge of the campaign were largely board members from the city's 'elite' arts organisations whose rationale for why the arts matter reflect the city's longstanding and dominant view that arts and culture can and should contribute to economic growth. Far from basing themselves in peoples' equal rights to participate and influence justificatory practices, these processes demonstrate exclusion and unequal power relations that systematically thwart the practise of justification itself (Forst, 2011b; 2014). Rather than providing the space to challenge, or even deliberate around, the legitimacy of existing justification, justificatory processes in Calgary, from both the sector and the municipality, reinforce and sustain arguments rooted in narrow economic instrumentalism of arts and culture.

Leeds's development of the ECoC bid, and its co-produced cultural plan, reflect more robust engagement platforms and evidence that, in some cases, those involved felt that their voices were heard. However, neither was successful in achieving just process.

Leeds's co-produced cultural strategy shows signs of attempting to advance opportunities for people to shape cultural value. However, the resistance it faced by members of the LCC and the sector helped help halt the policy from, at least to date, effectively implementing its values and changing policy practices on the ground. While this helps to highlight how exercises in co-production exist within and are constrained by established political and economic structures as well as dominant understandings of cultural value and allocation, the process itself falls short. That is, it may have enabled

more opportunity for people to engage in justificatory processes but failed to give them the power to change existing practices or values. For its part, the ECoC bid processes hired members from the local arts sector to direct programming, gave them a certain rein over who and what art forms to include in future cultural festival, and provided opportunities for members of the cultural sector (professional and DIY) to participate in bidding process. Consultants and policymakers, however, remained in control of process and the narrative around cultural value and allocation of funds. In this case, narrow forms of participation and unequal power relations constricted the ability for all those affected by the bidding process to substantively impact or shape notions of cultural value and rationales for public support in Leeds.

This chapter reveals the imbalance of power in justificatory processes, a resistance to relinquishing power to citizens who participated in processes of justification and existing failures in either city to create adequate opportunities for alternative opinions or challenges to dominant rationales. While each city remains far from enacting just process of justification, this study helps to highlight some of the challenges and roadblocks that face attempts to advance more just policy practices, such as the one advocated for in this research. The following chapter shifts away from concerns with just processes of cultural policy and instead explores how existing justifications and the structures, practices and values they advance and sustain currently encourage or restrict other valuable cultural capabilities in Calgary and Leeds.

CHAPTER 6: JUSTIFICATIONS AND THE IMPACT ON VALUABLE CULTURAL CAPABILITIES

6.1 Introduction

The struggle against the dominance of neoliberal ideologies requires alternative approaches to public policy that engage with notions of policymaking “that are collectivist without being conformist, liberating without simply breaking social ties” (Gilbert, 2017: n.p). This thesis has posited that the capability approach, with its focus on increasing the portfolio “of the capabilities that form the shape of an individual’s freedom of choice” (Kleine, 2013: 23), represents just such a policy model. In the context of cultural policy, a capabilities-based design aims at providing people with real freedoms to engage with the (co-) creation of culture, if they so choose. Such an approach attempts to effect social and political change that moves cultural value away from ideologies and rationales that work to constrict people’s opportunities to participate in meaning-making processes (Gross and Wilson, 2018). I have suggested two ways that cultural policy should intervene to help ensure people’s freedoms to (co-)create culture, both of which seek to enable and expand people’s freedom and opportunities to shape cultural value and guide value allocation. I have suggested that in securing these capabilities cultural policy will be better situated to advance issues of social justice and human flourishing.

Advancing and developing this alternative conceptual and normative framework for cultural policy requires, in part, an understanding of the myriad ways that existing justifications may be blocking the opportunity to push new policy practices forward. To this end, the previous two chapters review the history of justificatory practices and

processes in Calgary and Leeds. More specifically, they explore the ideologies, values, power relations and political and social structures that shape and sustain rationales for why arts and culture matter, as a means of gleaning more significant insights into how existing arguments for public support block opportunities for people to shape cultural value and value allocation freely and equally. I focus on *who* determines cultural capabilities and *how* we might ensure just processes of selection, rather than theorising about what other potentially valuable cultural capabilities may be. However, this provides only a partial picture of how justificatory practices are constricting people's freedom to give form and values to their experiences.

In order to establish a more well-rounded analysis, this chapter investigates how existing justifications, and the structures, practices and values they advance and sustain, might be blocking or enhancing the valuable cultural capabilities identified earlier in this thesis. That is, I move beyond discussions around how policy may guarantee people's freedoms and opportunities to shape cultural value to examine how existing justifications for public support impact people's freedom to, for example, participate in and create the art of their choosing, or impact opportunities for publicly supported arts and culture to promote affiliation. In the language of the capability approach, this critique seeks to gain greater insight into the 'conversion factors', that is, the social structures and circumstances that might not only hinder the advancement of particular capabilities, but might block people from achieving positive *functionings*, even if valuable capabilities were advanced. To put this another way, the idea that securing more freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture will encourage human wellbeing and flourishing needs to be balanced by the recognition that the world is severely marred by injustice, inequality, alienation and oppression. Understanding how broader

social dynamics constrain the potential for human flourishing helps us gain greater insight into the challenges facing a cultural capabilities-based approach to policy design.

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first is dedicated to the Calgary case study, and I begin this section by exploring how existing justifications for public support in Calgary impact capabilities that promote the freedom to produce work of one's own choosing, freedom of artistic expression and freedom to engage with the arts. I follow each analysis by reflecting on how a capability approach might reframe and transform policy rationales, and the potential effects of these transformations on wellbeing. I end this section by discussing some possible repercussions of Calgary's justificatory practices on people's capability to participate effectively in political choices made around the value of arts and culture. In many ways, this final section is a continuation of the evaluation of just processes discussed in Chapter 5. The second half of this chapter centres on the Leeds case study. Here, I start by considering how the city's existing justifications for public support might impact the potential for affiliation, that is, the opportunities to live with and towards one another in ways that are open, and free from discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion or national origin (Nussbaum, 2011: 34). I follow this by assessing how justifications are enabling or constraining the potential for people to participate in the creation of state-funded arts and culture in ways that are open and free from discrimination. As with the first half of the chapter, I end each analysis by contemplating how a capability approach to cultural policy might work towards altering existing practices. Lastly, I reflect on those justifications that make claims towards culture as a human right. This final study aims to take a closer look at how the city's

recent justifications geared towards ‘cultural rights’ are influencing or advancing real opportunities to promote affiliation on the ground.

6.2 Calgary

As noted in the previous chapters, Calgary’s existing arguments for public support for the arts represent narrow economic instrumentalism and pay little attention to issues of equality in access to culture. That said, some values within these justificatory practices suggest a desire to advance more inclusive practices of cultural production, participation and creation, as well as opportunities to participate effectively in political choices made around the value of arts and culture. It is, therefore, worth questioning how dominant rationales for public support currently restrict or encourage capabilities centred around these values. I begin by exploring what actual freedoms and opportunities are available to create art and culture in Calgary.

6.2.1. Freedoms and Opportunity to Engage in Artistic Creation

In Calgary, rationales for public support have, over time, narrowly centred around how the arts can contribute to social and economic regeneration in the form of skills building, raising the city’s competitive advantage, and attracting talent and tourism. In this section, I explore how arguments bound up in notions of ‘creativity’, particularly those advancing claims around creative labour, creative skills and innovative talents, are affecting cultural capabilities encouraging engagement with artistic creation. More specifically, I ask how these justifications, and the structures and values they sustain and advance, currently enable or inhibit the potential for these capabilities to foster wellbeing and flourishing.

As discussed earlier in this thesis, Calgary's emphasis on creativity as a necessary element of economic growth stems from the rise of the creative economy, which saw governments and corporate managers making connections between the self-directed work mentality of artists, designers, writers and performers and the knowledge economy (Ross, 2009: 16). Whereas in the past, creative work was, at least in part, associated with resistance and counterculture movements, neoliberal ideology, including market-driven ideas of competition and entrepreneurialism have been folded skilfully into the mix (Banks and Hesmondhalgh, 2009). The alignment of neoliberal market values with the powerful and resilient notion of artistic autonomy, and the associated rise of the creative economy, have effectively positioned cultural work "as the new face of neoliberal entrepreneurship" (Ross, 2009: 17) and established creativity as a necessary resource for cities wanting to increase economic prosperity and maintain their competitive edge.

Creative labour practices do not merely exist within a market-based regime, but actively engage in the process of restructuring how contemporary society "does work" (Ross, 2009; McRobbie, 2016). Much as notions of creativity help serve as a blueprint for the new economy, so do its workers serve as role models for new conceptions of labour. Aspects of creative work are instrumentally valuable to those pushing a neoliberal agenda of assumed freedoms, individuality, entrepreneurialism and market competition. Particularly, "the carry-over of coping strategies, developed over centuries, to help endure a feast-or-famine economy in return for the promise of success and acclaim" (Ross, 2009: 34), as well as romantic notions of autonomous artists (Banks and Hesmondhalgh, 2009), make the foundations of creative labour easily pliable to those

seeking to fit it into a market regime. Indeed, these traits are employed as key attributes of the modern entrepreneurial spirit, an embodiment of which has the ideological effect of giving people “the feel of being middle class and aspirational” (McRobbie, 2016: 11), while at the same time stealthily constructing a normalcy around inconsistent and uncertain labour. In this sense, it is no wonder that the creative worker, with their coping mentality, entrepreneurial spirit and self-sufficient autonomous work style, is held up as “the new model worker for high skills, high reward employment” (Menger, 2002: as cited in Ross, 2009: 34), while also serving as a “future template for being middle class and learning to live without welfare protection and social security” (McRobbie, 2016: 11). Beliefs around the power of the ‘enlightened’ artist are extended to ‘creatives’ of all types, in the sense that being creative is seen as a self-actualising, autonomous act that results in innovative ways of thinking about and addressing myriad corporate, economic and social issues (O'Brien, 2014; McRobbie, 2016). To this end, creativity is positioned as “something inherent in personhood (childhood, adolescence and young adulthood; less often, old age), which has the potential to be turned into a set of capacities . . . [such that] the resulting assemblage of ‘talent’ can subsequently be unrolled in the labour market or ‘talent-led economy’” (McRobbie, 2016: 11).

As they pertain to freedoms and opportunities to engage in artistic creation, existing arguments for public support advance a flawed understanding of creative labour as inherently positive and equally available to all. As Ross (2009) points out, “job gratification, for creatives, has always come at a heavy sacrificial cost — longer hours in pursuit of the satisfying finish, price discounts in return for aesthetic recognition, self-exploitation in response to the gift of autonomy, and dispensability in exchange for flexibility” (18). That is, the precarious nature of cultural work results in a duplicitous

workplace that on the one hand promotes freedom, inclusivity and self-actualisation for its employees while on the other hand becoming “less just and equal in its provisions of guarantees” (Ross, 2009: 35). As Banks and Hesmondhalgh (2009) note that creative work tends to be:

project-based and irregular, contracts tend to be short-term, and there is little job protection; . . . there is a predominance of self-employed or freelance workers; . . . career prospects are uncertain and often foreshortened; . . . earnings are usually slim and . . . creatives are younger than other workers, and tend to hold second or multiple jobs; and . . . women, ethnic and other minorities are under-represented and disadvantaged in creative employment. (420)

In short, the shift towards creative labour as an ideal also marks the onset of a decline in job security (Ross 2009), encouraging masses of society to bypass “mainstream employment with its trade unions and its tranches of welfare and protection in favour of the challenge and excitement of being a creative entrepreneur” (McRobbie, 2018: 11). Additionally, academics have noted that the boundaries between work and leisure time are rapidly diminishing. In his early study of media tech companies at the turn of the twentieth century, Ross (2003) noted the changing frontier of the workplace as one that endorsed a sense of freedom and play, and actively promoted social events after scheduled work hours. However, he cautions that these seemingly liberating additions to the workplace were still a part of a business plan, and thus tactfully considered and monitored in ways that would encourage the greatest employee output (Ross, 2003). Furthermore, the field gives the impression of having an “egalitarian and anti-elitist dimension because ‘everyone is creative’” (McRobbie, 2018: 62), when, in reality, creative work tends to be performed by a middle class who can not only afford to pay

for the education necessary to participate in the creative economy but also the financial stability to endure the precarious nature of creative employment (McRobbie, 2016; Oakley, 2011).

The precarious and unequal nature of work in Calgary's cultural sector is made clear in a recent survey put forth by CADA (2018). The report indicates that the majority of artists working in the city make less than 35,000 dollars a year; that is, 53 per cent less than the average income in Calgary (67,741 dollars/year). To compensate for the income gap, many of Calgary's 'creative' workers report that they have to work in more than one occupation. Far from being open and diverse, 83 per cent of sector workers identify as being white, in comparison to 67 per cent of Calgary's population who identify as such (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018c). Furthermore, the survey shows that gender and ethnicity relate to lower wages in the sector, with females and those who identify as a visible minority being more likely to report earning less than \$35,000 per year (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018c). Additionally, "females (52%) are more likely than males (40%) to report they have neither the time nor the money to advance their artistic skills and a lack of opportunity to show their work." (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018c: 33). What is striking is that there is no attempt in the city's existing justifications around skills building, talent creation, innovation and knowledge sharing to address issues of precarity or to argue for more fair working practices.

When policymakers gestured in our interviews to concerns with the lack of diversity and inclusion in the sector's hiring and programming practices, which was rarely, these concerns were often framed within the 'diversity advantage' narrative discussed in

previous chapters. As a brief reminder, the main claim advanced in the ‘diversity advantage’ argument is that, if the city encourages a myriad of cultures and socio-economic backgrounds to work together, it can maximise opportunities for innovation. The goal here is to foster intercultural exchange, as well as to shift local, national and international perceptions of the city by showing how Calgary has “evolved to be more cosmopolitan, diverse, and open to all” (The City of Calgary, 2017). Cosmopolitanism in this case is detached from “the ethical meaning of the concept, as attributing equal moral standing to all people” (Hesmondhalgh, 2014: 154), and instead promotes the vernacular use of the concept as “having characteristics suited to or arising from an experience of many countries” (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary quoted in Hesmondhalgh, 2014: 151). In this light, we can then understand Calgary’s promotion of its ‘diversity advantage’ as an extension of broader political tactics that seek to put a positive spin on potentially problematic issues of multiculturalism, social exclusion and inequality (Malik, 2013; Mould, 2018). This championing of what Malik (2013) refers to as “good diversity” attempts to strategically manage problematic social issues in ways that also serve alternative agendas; in Calgary’s case, this includes treating its increasingly diverse population as a tool for economic development and ‘city-building’.

The effects of this approach were demonstrated in my conversations with policymakers and sector leaders who acknowledged the lack of diversity in the sector but struggled to address the issue in terms of social justice. For example, one interviewee, a lead policymaker, noted that “the first priority [of the new cultural plan] is maximising the diversity advantage, because Calgary is a very diverse city, but you wouldn’t know it from a whole bunch of things . . . you wouldn’t know it from [its] stages, you wouldn’t

know it from its topics” (Interview, SI). However, they did not expand beyond the idea that the sector had to “show” its diversity. A member of CADA admits that,

right now, what we know from reporting is that the current . . . group of organisations that we invest in do not meet the demographic levels of our city. And it’s not to say that it has to be right spot on, but I think it has to be pretty close. And so, for example, our organisations only reflect 16 per cent visible minority. Well, we know that as a city, we’re closer to 36 to 38 per cent visible minority. So, you know, it’s one thing if you were in the 30 per cent range, even the high 20s, maybe, but to be over half missing, that says something.

(Interview, P)

When asked how CADA or Council would help advance opportunities for all people to freely and equally participate in creative labour (if they so choose), the policymaker appeared hesitant to take a clear stance on the issue and on their role in advancing change. They did not address how, for instance, the lack of diversity in the sector reflects exclusionary practices that perpetuate issues of inequality and discrimination, and nor did they offer a potential path toward more inclusive hiring practices. Instead, they responded by saying that, while they certainly want to encourage organisations to embrace Calgary’s diversity advantage, they “don’t want to be a gatekeeper [and that it] isn’t about Calgary Arts Development pointing a finger and saying you’re a bad company because you’re not representative” (Interview, P).

The advancement of ‘good diversity’ strategies “originates from an emergent post-racial discursive politics . . . not from post-racial time” (Malik, 2013), and Calgary’s management of differences through the diversity advantage narrative is a reflection of

how such strategies ultimately work to depoliticise race-based policy (Malik, 2013; Nwonka and Malik, 2018) and replace the pursuit of justice itself.

As noted earlier in this thesis, policymakers around the globe have shown growing interest in subjective measurements of wellbeing, and, indeed, Calgary is not immune to this trend. As Davies (2015) notes, “the hope is that a fundamental flaw in our current political economy may be surmounted, without confronting any serious political-economic questions” (9-10). It is, therefore, important to scrutinise how and why these measurements are being utilised in the city. For instance, the same survey that highlights the precarious and unequal nature of creative labour in Calgary also argues that:

Arts professionals are happy with their lives. Despite the financial situation of many arts professionals, 78% agree that they are satisfied with their life. Beyond general satisfaction, 57% agree with the statement that their life is close to perfect, and 72% agree that they have the important things they want in life. (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2017: 2)

The message here is that, despite the issues of exploitation, non-standard employment, perpetual competition, habituated self-reliance and acceptance of high levels of risk (De Peuter, 2014), creative workers in Calgary are generally satisfied with their lives. Not only does referencing levels of satisfaction divert critical attention away from issues of inequality and precarity present in the city’s creative sector, it also works to bolster ‘creative’ arguments and validate the belief that creative work is inherently gratifying. It also allows policymakers to acknowledge issues of precarity and inequality without having to disrupt the status quo.

CADA's use of satisfaction surveys demonstrates the ways in which "questions of mood, which were once deemed 'subjective', are now answered using objective data" (Davies, 2015: 5). However, as Sen (1983) argues, the concern is that preferences and satisfaction are socially malleable; they are not set in stone but adapt to social situations (Nussbaum, 2011). Put another way, "when society has put some things out of reach for some people, they typically learn not to want those things" (Nussbaum, 2011: 54), forming what Sen (2001) calls "adaptive preferences". Adaptation can manifest in two ways. The first form occurs "after the person wanted the thing initially" (Nussbaum, 2011: 54), as in the example of a creative worker getting paid less than what they believe they deserve, but justifying the loss of wages as a sacrifice they must pay for doing what they love. It can also happen when "people learn not to want the goods in the first place because these goods are put off-limits for people of their gender, or race, or class" (Nussbaum, 2011: 54). We might see this, for instance, when people choose not to apply for jobs in Calgary's cultural sector or do not participate in (primarily European) cultural events because they do not feel that they have a place in these creative practices. Furthermore, in relying on 'happiness' and 'satisfaction' measurements, existing justifications assume that human experience can be located on a single scale and thus deny the complexity of human emotions (Davies, 2015; Nussbaum, 2011).

With all this in mind, I argue that existing justifications around 'creativity', and the structures and values they promote, are constricting opportunities (capabilities) to engage in creative work in ways that foster wellbeing and flourishing in a number of ways. To begin with, CADA, the municipality and the sector are ignoring the evidence

of inequality and precariousness in Calgary's art sector in favour of advancing and sustaining justifications that promote dominant (and false) understandings of creative labour as beneficial, open and equal to all. Moreover, I suggest that existing narratives around more inclusive participation in cultural production are doing little more than acknowledging that the sector lacks diversity, with no real indication of how CADA, City Council or the sector plans to address and advance more equal opportunities to engage in artistic creation. As a result, there is little discussion about how public funding can help to substantively create more equal opportunities for people to participate in artistic creation. Furthermore, CADA's focus on subjective satisfaction surveys is not an accurate nor a meaningful way of assessing wellbeing. Rather, the approach ignores the issue of adaptive preferences and the range of human emotions, which may create barriers to people's actual ability to participate and engage with artistic practices. This type of subjective surveying also works to discount clear issues of inequality, discrimination and precarity at play in Calgary in favour of highlighting creative workers' job satisfaction, which serves to further mask how these issues are inhibiting the potential for these pursuits to encourage wellbeing and flourishing.

So, how might taking up the capability approach to policy work to address these issues? By contrast, it would prioritise policy aims around people's objective freedoms to (co-)create culture. That is, it would seek to identify the freedoms and opportunities, or lack thereof, to engage in artistic creation, and would actively work to fix objective inequalities regardless of people's subjective feelings about the opportunities offered to them (Sen, 2001; Robeyns, 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018).

6.2.2 Cultural Expression

Exploring how existing arguments for public support impact people's freedoms and opportunities to engage with artistic creation must also consider what types of cultural expression these justifications promote and support. I have suggested in earlier discussions that arguments for public support of arts and culture in Calgary have not effectively engaged with notions of cultural democracy. Because of this, these rationales have sidestepped alternative, non-economic understandings of cultural value. For instance, they have not advanced the role of the artists working within communities as a means of promoting and supporting the voices of community members (Vestheim, 2012; Jeffers and Moriarty, 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018). Nor have there been challenges to artistic hierarchies or encouragement of the power of the arts to affect political or social change (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1994; Graves, 2010; Hadley and Belfiore, 2018). Instead, existing justifications have centred narrowly on the role of the arts in image building and innovation, which privilege those art forms most likely to give a return on investment in terms of branding power, audience numbers and cultural tourism. I argue that this narrow instrumental approach has greatly constricted what types of artistic expression funders deem worthy of public support and, by extension, the opportunities available for artists to explore and express themselves freely.

Restrictive practices are demonstrated by, for example, the funding streams in Calgary, which show a preference towards major festivals, cultural hubs and cornerstone organisations. We see the same phenomenon at work in the city's recent promotion of the 'music mile', a campaign which has CADA, Calgary Economic Development and Tourism Calgary heavily focused and invested in supporting the music industry in an attempt to market the city as the "Nashville of the North" and the "music hub of

Canada” (The City of Calgary, 2017). Instead of seeing that privileging marketable artistic practices is potentially detrimental to the opportunities available to encourage and support new or alternative art forms, a few policymakers and institutional leaders in our interviews (either directly or implicitly) suggested that “a rising tide lifts all boats” (Interviews, MR, LA, SI). The use of this kind of neoliberal logic to imply that the rewards garnered by raising the profile of the sector and the city’s image as a cultural hub would eventually trickle down to the sector as a whole speaks to Calgary’s market-oriented relationship with publicly supported arts and culture. Briefly put, it highlights how Calgary’s dominant economic logic results in treating public spending like a free-market enterprise, assuming that proper investments in the arts will ultimately pay off for everyone. For one thing, these arguments surmise that the market will help balance out inequalities in the sector, rather than viewing inequalities as issues of social justice that need to be identified and dismantled. They also help reinforce an artistic hierarchy within the city that privileges those forms of artistic expression with the greatest potential to create economic growth. In short, I argue that these justificatory practices work to narrow the opportunities for Calgarians to freely and equally take part in cultural expression of their choosing by creating an environment where forms of artistic expression that do not generate income are undervalued and underfunded.

Alongside this, the sector is made up of predominately white artists and institutional leaders, which leads to concerns around the level of diversity in programming and the real opportunities available for people working in non-European artistic practices to receive public dollars. To begin with, the doubling of cultural spending in 2019 did little to alter existing granting processes. The majority of funding remains channelled towards the operating grants of major ‘cornerstone’ organisations, and these institutions

are eligible to receive increased funding between 2020 and 2023. When asked why, aside from tourism and talent attraction, the cornerstone organisations are worthy of public spending, one policymaker stressed that “30 per cent of all the jobs in arts and culture in Calgary are in those ten organisations, [and they have the] ability to nurture new work” (Interview, SI). While these organisations’ contribution to employment stands, their involvement in guiding and supporting the grassroots and emerging artists is, as highlighted in the previous chapter, greatly debated. Furthermore, this dedicated funding stream has meant that no new organisations can apply for operating funds during this period; that is, only organisations who received operational dollars in 2019 are eligible to continue to receive these funds through to 2023 (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2020b). Therefore, the stability and maintenance of existing (traditional) organisations take precedence over public support for emerging arts organisations in Calgary, at least for the next three years. Conversation with the grassroots arts sector revealed the communities’ concerns that these funding practices would do little to support new forms of artistic expression. As one leader noted, “CADA is taking [funding practices] from the view that what this is about is how we sustain the organisations that are there, and to me, it’s not the role of the city and not the role of the funder to make sure that every organisation is around forever. That is not a healthy ecosystem” (Interview, PH). To be clear, these non-cornerstone artists strongly expressed that that they would continue to create and experiment with alternative forms of expression regardless of existing funding trends, but they are resigned to the reality that these artistic practices are unlikely to be supported through public funding.

Further demonstrating the exclusionary nature of CADA’s funding practices is the consistently low levels of funding allocated to the city’s disability arts organisations.

Responding to the lack of support, one member of the disability arts community commented that in CADA's current funding structure, they "don't even have the opportunity to compete for [public] dollars" (Interview, JS). CADA acknowledges this lack of funding, and they admit that no member of the disability arts community has ever been part of their assessment panel for funding allocation (Interview, P). That said, they suggested that their focus on bringing attention to Calgary's 'diversity advantage' would work to fix this. To date, there is no indication of these practices are changing and no clear plan of action for how these issues will be addressed in the future.

Moreover, it is hard to imagine how the city's diversity advantage narrative, which ultimately works to depoliticise race-based politics and shows little interest in pursuing issues of social justice, would help create more equal distributions of cultural authority and deliberation around funding allocation. In addition, artists and project grants are for "individual artists and artist collectives in Calgary who pursue a professional practice" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2020b), with no direct funding committed to community-based or educational arts activities.

That said, CADA has recently introduced funding explicitly dedicated to First Nation/Métis/Inuit (FNMI) communities, geared towards "art-based projects that are supported and validated by FNMI artists, community, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2020b). The recent emphasis on the city's Indigenous past needs to be understood within the context of a broader national campaign around recognition and reconciliation that encourages municipalities to emphasise support for Indigenous groups in public policy practices.³⁹ In this context,

³⁹ CADA awarded 42 FNMI artist grants in the first year the funding stream was in operation (2019). However, to demonstrate the lack of funding prior to this, 18 grants to FNMI artists were awarded in

the new funding is part of a broader policy trend and cannot be attributed to the singular motivations of local policymakers. Furthermore, the funding comes with the stipulation that only those FNMI artists working to preserve and revitalise FNMI art are eligible for the grant, a prerequisite that serves to limit the room for free expression and creation of works by these artists. The addition of a designated funding stream suggests a step forward in creating equal opportunities for cultural practices and creation. However, the gap in funding, alongside the restrictions to what types of artistic expression are acceptable, raises questions around CADA's dedication to advancing claims that Indigenous policy frameworks will "focus on reducing barriers to public participation and support economic, social and political advancement of indigenous people" (MDB Insight, 2016: 21).

I argue that CADA's funding streams, which have worked to bolster existing and traditional cultural practices at the expense of supporting new forms of expression, are constricting the opportunities for freedom of expression in publicly supported arts and culture. A cultural capability approach to policy design would arguably work to dismantle hierarchies and restrictive notions of cultural value in a couple of ways. First, the conceptual framework put forward in Chapter 2 would require more deliberation around value and value allocation, meaning that CADA's funding practices would have to include the many voices and communities it is currently neglecting. Interwoven in this would be general acceptance by policymakers and the sector of the many different domains of cultural production and the recognition of a range of cultural activities that contribute to people's wellbeing and flourishing. Such an approach to policy and

2018, and only eight grants to FNMI artists were allocated in 2017 (Creative Calgary <https://www.creativecalgary.org/sustainable-arts-sector>).

funding practices does not eliminate the potential for arts and culture to contribute to economic growth (as this may be a means to wellbeing), but it does remove the possibility of viewing income generation as the chief aim of artistic production. In this way, a capability approach to cultural policy would work to highlight the many ways in which cultural infrastructure supported by public money do — and could further — constitute a crucial part of the overall environment enabling people’s freedom to (co-)create culture (Gross and Wilson, 2018: 7).

6.2.3 Freedom to Participate and Equal Access to Arts and Culture

While economic arguments for public support are dominant in the city, there has, since 2017, been an increase in justifications referencing matters of inclusivity and equity. Indeed, in an interview with CADA, my subject stressed that the funding agency “see[s] issues of diversity, inclusion, [and] community engagements as being key” (Interview, P). Likewise, in my discussions with sector leaders, they often presented equity and inclusion as priorities. However, claims that the sector and CADA want to ensure that the arts “benefit all Calgarians” (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2014; 2018c) also tend to assume that as long as the arts are present in the city, all citizens can participate. This presumption is problematic on many levels. To begin with, Calgary’s publicly funded arts sector, including its festivals, arts institutions and performing arts organisations, charge admission,⁴⁰ and therefore are not equally accessible to all Calgarians. Although some organisations try to negate this by offering subsidised tickets to certain communities, it is generally acknowledged that these are often one-off

⁴⁰ Visual arts museums charge on average 12 to 18 dollars, performing arts between 45 and 180 dollars; and festivals between 10 and 190 dollars.

attempts to diversify existing audiences, and do little to address issues of access more broadly. As one interviewee put it:

I do feel that there are initiatives like sliding scale admission, or maybe like a section of free tickets that are given out through Calgary Public Library or Calgary Immigrant Women's Association. Do I think that it's representative of the 30 some per cent of the diverse population in Calgary? No. I [also] think that there's a fairly large wage gap in the city. It is not just an energy sector here. There's a bunch of people who live and work here to support the energy sector, and they're making 15 dollars an hour now. That is very prohibitive [in terms of what arts and cultural activities you can access]. To be honest, I'm not as familiar with the performing arts, and they're the ones that are generally ticketed. But the reason I'm not as familiar is because I can't afford to go to those shows. I can't afford season tickets. I can't even afford one ticket. So, I think [admission fees are] prohibitive to having diverse audiences" (Interview, S).

I also heard concerns that the larger arts organisations tell stories both narrow and Eurocentric, that thus do not appeal to Calgary's diverse population (Interview, SI; K). Meanwhile, there are tensions over who is responsible for increasing diversity in participation. As one a sector leader commented, "I've sat in a meeting with people from cornerstone organisations where the conversation came up about, you know, no one east of Deerfoot comes to your events, and they said why should that be on us to reach out? That should be on CADA to try to make those [things happen]" (Interview, PH).

CADA and the sector's claims of interest in making sure they engage all residents are further undermined by their focus on sustaining and increasing cultural consumption over concerns with equal access to participation. In a recent "Engagement Survey", CADA emphasised increasing attendance of the "youngest and newest community members with families", which were presented as "important groups" for the sector to engage with (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018a: 5). These residents, defined as Calgarians "immersed" or "engaged" with the arts, have high levels of cultural spending. Here, the sector was encouraged to combat low attendance numbers by "redefin[ing] how it connects and communicates with [these] consumers" and to "better relate to audience motivations" so that they can encourage and sustain healthy levels of cultural spending (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018a: 5).

Those residents with the lowest cultural spending, classified as people who are "Merely Connected or Disengaged" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018a: 8) with the arts, were largely ignored, as were the issues that may prohibit their engagement. The report notes that this group of "disengaged" residents have the lowest incomes of those surveyed. However, instead of addressing this as a potential barrier to participation, the report equates their lack of interest to their feelings about arts and culture, describing them as having "attitudes towards the arts [that] tend to be tepid — not necessarily negative, but generally lacking any passion or engagement" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018a: 8). The assumption that this group of low-income earners (and spenders) does not engage with the arts because they 'just don't like it' grossly ignores the social and economic barriers that restrict people's real opportunities to engage with arts and culture, such as taste, gender, ethnicity, disability, age and sexuality (Oakley and O'Brien, 2015).

Given Calgary's historical approach to issues of access and inclusion, it is fair to say that these justificatory practices, which measure engagement based on degrees of cultural consumption, are more concerned with income generation than with advancing equal opportunities. The lack of concern around equitable access is even more apparent in CADA's claim that "free or open events work well to engage Calgarians and increase interest but not to drive revenues" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018a: 4).

The potential impact that providing more affordable or free access to the city's cultural activities would have on engagement levels was made clear in my conversations with sector leaders. Describing a privately funded initiative that allows for free entry to one of the cornerstone organisations on the first Thursday of every month, the institution's leader noted, "Over 25,000 people have come [over the past year] who never would have come before because of that, and they're coming from every postal code in the city . . . so there is a huge appetite for that" (Interview, DI). However, dominant justificatory practices that encourage consumption as a means of income generation do not seek to find ways to make public programming more affordable or accessible. Instead, they aim at encouraging 'uninterested' residents to increase their spending on existing cultural offerings. They also suggest that, to overcome economic barriers, the sector must engage more effectively with its consumers through "increased innovation and experiential messaging" (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018a: 4) as opposed to dealing with the real financial constraints that inhibit many Calgarians — barriers that could potentially be addressed through more equitable and affordable programming.

Justifications for public support have also argued that CADA and the sector aim at encouraging more inclusive and diverse participation and practice, by, for example,

providing “increased support to Calgary-based artists who are new to Canada” as well creating more opportunities for new immigrants to engage with the sector (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2018c; The City of Calgary, 2017). However, there is little evidence that these aims have taken root. For example, despite the close to “120 languages spoken as mother tongue in Calgary” (Calgary Economic Development, 2016), performances, visitor information, websites, artwork descriptions and education programs offered by these organisations are communicated primarily in English, with the odd exception made for French. I am not suggesting that the sector or CADA attempt to accommodate all spoken languages. Instead, I want to highlight that there have been few attempts to make the sector more accessible and inclusive to all residents, by, for example, including other widely spoken languages in the city, including Punjabi, Chinese and Spanish, in educational programs, or, at the very least, on institutional websites. I argue that this neglect of potential barriers to participation and access indicates CADA and the sector’s disinterest with advancing real opportunities for residents to freely and equally engage with Calgary’s public arts sector.

For the most part, when justifications for public support speak directly to issues of access, they are referring to geographical barriers to participation. This is due, in part, to Calgary’s massive urban sprawl, resulting from the over two decades of municipal focus on development and infrastructure. To give this some scale, by 2008, Calgary was the size of New York City for a population eight times smaller (Brunet-Jailly, 2012). The focus on suburban development means that the majority of the population is dispersed among the city’s four quadrants, significantly reducing the core’s population density. Issues of accessibility have, therefore, centred on engaging the majority of the

population living outside of the city centre with the arts and cultural activities, which are primarily located in Calgary's core.

Even here, issues of equality of access struggle with the dominant economic argument for the arts. I have suggested that justifications for public support in Calgary found city-building arguments to offer one of the more legitimate paths to funding. This has created unresolved tensions between policy aims that seek to decentralise cultural activities and those (more dominant) ones that focus on raising Calgary's national and international image by centralising the arts activity, festivals and creative hubs in the city's core (Calgary Arts Development Authority, 2014; The City of Calgary, 2017; 2018a). So, while arguments exist for inclusion and access aimed at making the arts more geographically available to all communities, they remain peripheral, with little support or attention put forth by the municipality, CADA or the sector to achieve these goals.

In short, existing arguments for public support that make claims to increase access to arts and culture are based primarily in economic and market-driven values that seek to raise consumption practices, not to advance equal opportunities to participate or engage with artistic practices. While discussions take place around the importance of inclusion, in the absence of action, these claims merely pay lip service to these issues while ignoring how policy might create real opportunities for all Calgarians to engage with state funded culture. If we replaced existing policy practices with a cultural capability approach, we would in theory begin to see people's (un)freedoms to engage in cultural activities take precedence. Understanding the barriers to participation and how to break down those constraints would become a crucial part of policymaking and integral to the

aims and practices of publicly funded arts organisations. Calgary's focus on cultural consumption as part of an economic growth imperative would be reduced, taking a back seat to the overarching aim of making sure that as many freedoms and opportunities to engage with cultural activities of one's own choosing were equally available to all.

6.2.4 Political Voice and the Opportunity to Shape Cultural Value

I argue that while CADA failed, ultimately, to provide a stable political argument for public funding, it effectively normalised an instrumental understanding of arts and culture that positions them firmly as a means to an end rather than an end in themselves. This is evident in the 2016 Cultural Plan, and in the city's "One Calgary" strategy, which outlines how the municipality will administer public services over the next ten years (The City of Calgary, 2018a). Both strategies engage with existing justificatory practices in ways that reinforce and support a narrow economic instrumentalism of arts and culture. Rather than indicating an increase in the arts' political status or a clear reflection of the municipality's belief that the arts deserve public support, I argue that including these justificatory practices in these documents demonstrates a move towards what Hadley and Gray (2017) have identified as hyper-instrumentalism. The following section considers how this shift towards hyper-instrumentalism might impact people's opportunities to engage with and exercise political power over issues of cultural value.

For the most part, the cultural plan advances this change in policy practices under the guise of 'planning culturally', meaning that the municipality will appreciate that "cultural resources add value to existing or proposed plans, policies, [and] programs" and thus should be involved in "all facets of planning and city-building" (The City of Calgary, 2017: 5). The plan argues that "planning culturally" will help "to integrate . . .

cultural resources and opportunities across all aspects of planning and decision-making”, and help to advance “mutually beneficial cultural and economic agendas” (The City of Calgary, 2018a: 70). Rather than advocating for a separate cultural policy aimed at supporting the sector, these justifications for the arts move away from arguments for public support, and towards situating arts and culture more deeply within other (non-cultural) policy areas.

The notion of “cultural planning” coincides with, and is reinforced by, the city’s new long-term strategy, “One City” (The City of Calgary, 2018a), which highlights five key areas that future city planning and policies will focus on. These include encouraging a prosperous city, ensuring safe and inspiring neighbourhoods, growing public transport and infrastructure, building a healthy and green city, and being a well-run and efficient administration. In order for the municipality to “efficiently deliver” on these priorities, they have restructured city administration and civic partners, placing each under their appropriate “service line” (The City of Calgary, 2018a: 70). Through this restructuring, the city claims it can better “effectively identify and measure key results of the services provided” (City of Calgary, 2018a: 71). ‘Arts and Culture’ (which includes the Parks and Recreation Department, and CADA) have been put under the “prosperous city” service line, which is principally concerned with economic strategies and policies. Here, arts and culture are explicitly tasked with attracting new businesses and growth industries to Calgary, spurring job creation, attracting talent and contributing to tourism programs (The City of Calgary, 2018a: 35, 92, 93). Thus, arts and culture, according to the principles of the “One City” strategy, will be evaluated based on its results in this service line. Here the policy conversation is no longer about how artistic outputs can contribute to wider ‘city-building’ aims, but instead is about how the arts will be tasked

with and measured on specific (economic) outcomes (City of Calgary, 2018a: 72, 91-93).

Over the past decades, CADA and the arts sector have promoted an economic instrumentalism that positions arts and culture as a means to accomplishing city-building ends such as image enhancement, talent and tourist attraction, economic diversification and so forth. However, it is still the case that it is the cultural content of the policy that provides these justifications with meaning. Deliberately using attachment strategies to generate various forms of support for cultural policy outputs is predicated on demonstrating how culture can contribute towards the policy goals and intentions of other policy sectors, regardless of whether it succeeds in this or not (Gray, 2002). These strategies have often encouraged “a feeling of empowerment through enhanced political visibility for the sector” (Hadley & Gray, 2017: 98).

As Hadley and Gray (2017) suggest, “the value of these arguments rests on the proposition that the relationship at stake is one where cultural value is prior to instrumental value” (98). This positioning of cultural value over instrumental ensured the “potential reversal of this position . . . that is, that instrumental value is given priority over cultural value . . . is at least reduced if not entirely denied” (Hadley and Gray, 2017: 98). Thus, this form of instrumentalism, at least in principle, effectively maintains the status of ‘culture’ as something with greater meaning and value than other areas of policy (Gray, 2008; Hadley and Gray, 2017). Within this context, cultural policy is “still able to function within its own sphere of action, with its own control of inputs, outputs and resource allocation” (Hadley and Gray, 2017: 104). It has been made clear that CADA and the sector rely on instrumental justifications, and that the use of

these arguments in various advocacy campaigns and reports suggests they feel ‘empowered’ by these tactics. I have demonstrated that the use of instrumental justifications has narrowed the space to offer alternative justifications for cultural value. Nevertheless, CADA continues to exist as a separate entity, and cultural policy remains an autonomous policy sphere. Thus, in theory, the chance to alter practices and offer real opportunities for people to have equal power over the construction of cultural value (separate from central political agendas) prevails.

However, the municipality’s ‘cultural planning’ and positioning of arts and culture under the ‘prosperous city’ focuses on ‘results’ that suggests that the arts and culture are better situated within the remit of economic policy and a move towards “hyper-instrumentalism”. According to Hadley & Gray (2017: 102), hyper-instrumentalism policy appraisal

shifts away from questions of inputs, outputs and intentions and places it firmly on policy outcomes. This undercuts the traditional grounds upon which cultural policy is expected to function and denies the validity of culture as an independent policy sector in its own right.

The Cultural Plan and the city’s long-term strategy focus on specific policy outcomes; that is, each is concerned with the ways in which arts and culture can be tailored to meet policy ends, such as talent attraction and increased tourism. Therefore, (non-cultural) policy outcomes determine (cultural) outputs, contrasting with previous policy practices where (cultural) outputs contributed to social and economic outcomes. This moves policy away from simple instrumentalism of culture and towards a re-making of the whole point of cultural policy’s existence. If this restructuring is advanced, the

municipality's justifications for arts and culture, and the goals and intentions that these justifications embody (economic growth through tourism, talent and corporate attraction) will be transplanted 'wholesale' into the sector. As a consequence, generating support for the sector would be much more related to their actual ability to achieve targets, such as increased tourism or attracting talent, and less to do with claims of their potential to contribute to these aims. Funding the arts based on their economic impact would have disastrous effects on the cultural capabilities discussed earlier in this chapter. However, this policy shift is equally as harmful to capabilities seeking to advance the political power of voice and equal opportunities to shape cultural value. In this scenario, the people in control over cultural value and justifications for public support are political actors. The municipality and its market-driven ideologies and agendas would hold the dominant power over definitions of value as well as the justifications for why (or why not) the arts deserve public support. Furthermore, as noted in the previous chapter, the chances that the council would meaningfully engage with citizens or relinquish their control over policy practices and notions of value is slim.

This shift also implies that the argument that culture and the arts "need protection from ideologically committed political actors" (Hadley and Gray, 2017: 104) becomes irrelevant, and, thus the arms-length relationship between the arts and the municipalities is no longer required. In other words, rather than being (arguably) free from political influences, with control over funding practices, inputs and outputs, CADA would simply become a vehicle for City of Calgary agendas — that is, if arts and culture are not simply placed under the remit of the policy agendas they serve (economic and tourism). This means that one of the critical institutions with the power to offer (again,

in theory) alternative versions of cultural value and to advance opportunities for people to engage in this process becomes obsolete.

The “One City” strategy and the justificatory practices that encourage and support its restructuring of policy frameworks have potentially devastating effects on the ability to advance alternative understandings of the role that arts and culture can play in society outside of economic value. Political actors, not CADA, the sector or Calgarians in general, take priority over determining cultural value. Cultural policy in itself becomes only as important as the ends to which it is directed, if indeed the need for a separate policy sphere can be maintained in this context (Hadley and Gray, 2017). Therefore, space for people to engage in the construction of cultural value separate from political agendas and priorities of political actors in Calgary is greatly reduced. The new political structure has yet to be fully implemented, so there may still be room to advance opportunities for people to participate in the creation of cultural value and to offer alternative justifications for public support for arts and culture. However, considering the existing justificatory practices, and their impact on cultural capabilities, the space to do so in Calgary is already limited.

6.3 Leeds

Historically, Leeds’s focus on cultural regeneration and economic growth has, for the most part, sidelined policy and institutional concerns aimed at advancing community engagement initiatives and inclusive practices. However, growing local government concerns around unemployment and deprivation, and heightened xenophobia and discrimination, in tandem with massive reductions in the LCC’s budget and the ECoC

bid, has made arguments around arts and culture's social benefits more prevalent and more demanding. Previous chapters highlight how existing justifications now lean more heavily towards social rather than economic arguments for support, and that many cultural leaders see it as their responsibility to deliver in terms of inclusion and access. While this shift suggests a positive step in advancing a policy design aimed at addressing issues of social justice and human flourishing, we should be cautious in assuming that enthusiasm equates with just practice and wellbeing. It is, therefore, worth exploring how justificatory practices in Leeds geared towards the social value of the arts are impacting cultural capabilities associated with affiliation. Specifically, I explore how justifications geared towards access and inclusion, inclusive programming as well as 'cultural rights' are impacting people's freedoms and opportunities to engage equally in artistic practices that are open, and that are free from discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion and national origin (Nussbaum, 2011: 34).

6.3.1 Justificatory Practices and Affiliation

This section questions how justifications around access, inclusion and participation, and the values, practices and structures they sustain and/or advance might be impacting the potential to encourage affiliation in Leeds. More specifically, it considers how justificatory practices currently enable or constrict opportunities to live with and towards one another in ways that are open, and free from discrimination on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, caste, religion or national origin (Nussbaum, 2011: 34). One place to begin is by exploring the values, beliefs and assumptions that underpin Leeds's understanding of the importance of access and inclusion, and of 'cultural participation'.

As I discuss in Chapter 4, justificatory practices continue to maintained the importance of access to arts and culture through arguments centred around what is often understood as the democratisation of culture, a strategy that seeks to make “the best available to the many, not the few” (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015; Stevenson et al., 2017). In other words, the approach maintains that the arts and heritage should be extended to those who have generally been excluded, notably the working class, (and in later iterations) ‘ethnic minorities’ and the disabled, because culture represents the highest achievements of civilisation and has the potential to enrich human experience (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 19). It also carries with it longstanding tendencies towards an ‘elite’ aesthetic value and an underlying assumption that there is something of universal value in arts and culture that everyone should benefit from (Kawashima, 2006: 61).⁴¹ However, the aim to democratise culture is also affiliated with a European model of the redistributive welfare state, and with social democratic politics in the UK that “pursued general progressive goals of equality and solidarity, via principles of Keynesian state investment” (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015: 16). Therefore, it takes the position that “the ‘culture’ that is contained or produced in the museums, theatres and concerts halls that receive public subsidy is . . . part of the intangible wealth of the nation and should not therefore be the preserve of any one group” (Stevenson et al., 2017: 99).

⁴¹ Liberal Humanistic tradition of British and European cultural policy frame culture as the product of individual talent and an “expression of the noblest aspects of human nature” and “the best that has been thought and said in the world”, and then to attribute cultural and artistic value to material objects of “fine” or “high” art, invariably the work of men, often from European backgrounds and from a privileged class (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008; Harrington, 2004). A crucial principle of this thinking is that ‘culture’ has a universal potential to educate and cultivate people through its ability to speak to every human being, whatever their social and educational background, as long as they can gain access to it (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008; Stevenson et al., 2017).

One of the results of these interweaving values and beliefs is an approach to access and participation that is heavily focused on the removal of ‘barriers’ that might inhibit people from participating in arts and culture. In other words, removing ‘barriers’, which are typically conceived as demographic, environmental, socioeconomic or psychological, is often presented as the primary intervention cultural policy should focus on, and the main issue that any organisation receiving public funding should address (Kawashima, 2006). We certainly see this reflected in justificatory practices in Leeds that make claims around “ensuring culture can be created and experienced by anyone” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 11) and in conversations with policymakers where it was stressed that “what we are saying to the larger [professional arts organisations] [is to] . . . tell us which two of three audiences you are going to work with . . . and change your working processes and be more genuine about that connection. It’s not a tick box; it is a very important part of your business” (Interview, L). The same phenomenon is evident in the ways that publicly funded arts organisations engage in various interventions from subsidising theatre tickets for certain demographic groups to limited outreach and engagement with target communities throughout the city. Leeds Playhouse, and, more recently, Opera North, for instance, are designated ‘theatres of sanctuary’, meaning that they are publicly recognised for their “commitment to being a place of safety, hospitality and support for refugees and asylum seekers” (Opera North, 2020; Leeds Playhouse, 2020). Both organisations offer free or heavily subsidised tickets to various shows, talks and workshops. Leeds Playhouse puts on “dementia-friendly performances” (Interview, JP) and provides “creative skills development”, such as set-building classes, while Opera North, has “positioned [itself] first and foremost as a charity for the education of music” (Interview, L). In an attempt to “explicitly invite people . . . that live in areas of deprivation who normally wouldn’t come to see

contemporary performances”, Yorkshire Dance has developed a “mini-festival” that includes food, dance and talks with pay-as-you-can ticketing (Interview, W). Northern Ballet “works with Education and Community groups to encourage interest and enthusiasm for dance and theatre” and have also worked with “children and adults with learning disabilities to encourage freedom of expression and to enhance communication skills through creative arts.”(Northern Ballet, 2020).

More recent justificatory practices have increasingly focused on the cultural and social dynamics of inclusion, and have promoted a view that the arts can make a positive contribution to the cause of social inclusion and cohesion (Belfiore, 2002: 93). Briefly put, in a time when we are experiencing increasing diversity, multiculturalism and inequality, and dissolution of a ‘common’ or ‘shared identity’, arguments for public support claim that participation in arts and culture has the potential to connect people as communities, societies and nations (Stevenson et al., 2017: 99). We see this demonstrated in Leeds’s cultural strategy, which champions arts and culture as the catalyst for “bringing communities together and resolving tensions”, “resolving disconnect between communities and reducing poverty and isolation” and “build[ing] respect, cohesion and coexistence between communities and individuals” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 11). This framing of arts and culture equates participation with inclusion, and ‘non-participation’ is often conceived as evidence of ‘exclusion’, which reinforces the view that ‘non-participation’ is a ‘problem’ that needs to be fixed (Kawashima, 2006; Stevenson, 2013; Stevenson et al., 2017). The connection between ‘culture’ and ‘exclusion’ is alluded to in the city’s cultural plan when it notes that “while some in the city do enjoy . . . social mobility, and *access to high quality cultural*

activity, better jobs and high-quality housing, others live in deepening poverty” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 5, emphasis added). The solution to the ‘problem’ of ‘exclusion’, then, is often presented in terms of increasing attendance at, or interactions with, publicly supported organisations. We see this demonstrated by, for example, the community outreach programs mentioned above, where arts organisations in the city target those most likely to be considered ‘excluded’, such as refugees, people with disabilities, people from deprived neighborhoods and those suffering from debilitating illnesses. So while arguments around arts’ role in social inclusion are distinct in their own right, they nevertheless help to sustain and reinforce both the idea of a ‘common culture’ that can transcend boundaries and the perceived need to break down ‘barriers’ that might inhibit participation in publicly subsidised arts and culture.

In Leeds, there have been calls to broaden the recent policy’s understanding of ‘cultural participation’ by having it acknowledge that culture encompasses “a broad range of actions and activities” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 2) and recognise a widening definition of ‘culture’. However, what counts as ‘cultural participation’ in these justificatory practices, as has been made clear in the city’s funding structures and various forms of intervention, remains narrowly related to ‘the arts’, and in particular to attendance at professional state-funded cultural organisations.⁴² By extension, ‘non-

⁴²The city’s recent cultural policy certainly appears to move beyond one monolithic notion of culture by expanding its definition of culture to include, for example, parks, woodlands and green spaces, film, television, sport, gastronomy, design, literature, architecture, history, heritage, science, technology and nightlife (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 6). The policy also highlights the importance of the amateur arts sector, praising its participants’ entrepreneurial spirit and ability to create innovative work that engages local communities in ways that respond to the cultural plans aims to “empower . . . those who are disenfranchised” (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 9). In spite of all of this, however, funding remains directed solely to the ‘arts’, with a clear preference to subsidise large-scale professional organisations. That is, over 50 per cent of the city’s arts grants (1,850,000 pounds) is allocated to the Northern Ballet, Opera

participation’ in subsidised arts and culture is problematised, and a binary is created between those who do ‘participate’ or ‘engage’ and those who do not. Given the potential of arts and culture to foster inclusion and cohesion and improve quality of life, ‘non-participation’ is viewed as a deficit on the part of the public, who need to be coaxed into valuing, celebrating and engaging with state-supported arts through various activities and interventions, rather than as a deficit on the part of the cultural offer (O’Brien, 2014; Jancovich, 2017: 4). As noted in Chapter 4, state expenditure on arts and culture has always been in question and has been increasingly challenged in the market oriented, liberal individualistic, neoliberal society of the twenty-first century. So, we must also appreciate that the focus on cultural participation, and all the practices imbricated with it, is a result of this, as policymakers and cultural institutions aim to show “increasing rates of participation, and thus by inference, popular support for the ‘culture’ they subsidise” (Stevenson et al., 2017: 102).

These interwoven rationales come together to establish justificatory practices that promote a belief that “it is unproblematic to understand any and all ‘cultural participation’ as beneficial both for the individual and the society in which they live” (Stevenson et al., 2017: 100). Bound up in this are a couple important underlying assumptions. The first is that the focus on removing ‘barriers’ (to primarily ‘elite’ arts organisations) implies that “these are impeding people from ‘participating’ in the sort of culture that unimpeded they would ‘naturally’ want to” (Stevenson et al., 2017: 98). The

North and Leeds Playhouse, leaving the approximately forty other successful applicants from medium to small-sized institutions and the amateur arts sector to compete for the remaining funds (Leeds City Council, 2019; Interview, L). Regardless of a widening definition of culture, and acknowledgment that other types of artistic practices matter, historic funding practices that privilege ‘elite’ art institutions prevail.

second is that these practices render ‘the problem’ of non-participation as technical and, therefore solvable whereby ‘barriers’ can be removed through rational actions based on objective evidence (Stevenson et al., 2017).

Despite decades of attempting to democratise culture, the social stratification between those who do participate in the arts (the wealthy, the better educated and the least diverse segments of the population) and those who do not (typically those from less affluent backgrounds and migrants) remains (Oakley and O'Brien, 2015; Jancovich, 2017; Stevenson et al., 2017). This reality draws attention to what many sociologists (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Boudier-Pailler, 1999; Warde et al., 2007) have already noted, that unequal participation in arts and culture is far more deeply rooted and complicated than barriers to access. However, justifications geared towards access and inclusion are so heavily bound up in the ‘problem’ of participation, and the values and practices that this approach sustains and advances, that there is little room left to consider and address how arts and culture might divide people rather than bringing them together, or how arguments for support might enable rather than reduce discriminatory practices.

For instance, policymakers and primarily professional cultural organisations focus on removing barriers to access because they assume that doing so will encourage social inclusion and, by extension, enhanced quality of life. But, as Kawashima (2006) suggests, “if the problem of social exclusion is interrelated between the economic, social political and cultural dimensions, then it is possible to argue that the cultural dimension contributes to the *perpetuation* and *exacerbation*, if not generation, of social exclusion” (66). To be clear, Kawashima is not implying that museums, theatres, opera

or ballet have caused poverty, but rather that “by being culturally exclusive, they have helped to institutionalise the socially excluded in a pernicious way” (Kawashima, 2006: 66). We see glints of this demonstrated in one of my conversation with a cultural leader working in one of the city’s more deprived neighbourhoods, who pointed out:

If we walked around Holbeck now, we wouldn’t see a poster for a single thing in this city, and yet the city has an opera company, ballet company, a producing theatre, and we would be able to walk to any of those three things within a fifteen-minute stride. But you won’t see any of that. There won’t be any posters, and there won’t be any advertising, because they know they’re not coming. They are not going to waste their marketing budget. (Interview, A)

So despite justificatory adherence to a belief in a ‘common culture’ that can transcend social divides and bring communities together, along with the right for all to benefit from the ‘universal’ value of arts and culture (primarily state funded culture), in practice these fall to the wayside. Appealing to those (more affluent) people who are most likely to attend may be good business sense and even necessary given the increased pressure on subsidised arts organisation in Leeds to become more “resilient” and “sustainable” in the face of continued austerity (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 12). However, such practices also perpetuate social stratification in cultural participation and actively exclude groups of citizens. Additionally, they highlight how class divides continue to impair access to heavily subsidised “high” arts organisations.

There is also little room in these justificatory practices to consider how interventions and activities meant to break down ‘barriers’ might work in the opposite direction, or

not at all. For example, in an interview with a member of a black-led production company, it was noted that:

The first thing that marketing departments will say to me about black audiences is, “Okay, we will need to discount X amount of tickets, and we’ll need to give these number of tickets away for free”. You are making an assumption here that people — that black people — don’t have money. That’s not true. They just know where they want to spend it, and right now they don’t want to spend it with you . . . because your offer isn’t good enough. [These organisations will] call them up in October because it’s Black History Month, and they’ll say why don’t you come to our event looking at black history? And people aren’t stupid; they know when they’re being used. And you walk into a marketing department, and everybody looks the same [and says the same things]. “Oh, we asked them, but they didn’t come”. What did you ask them? How did you speak to them? What were you asking them to come to? If you’re going to throw a party you got to go meet the people first before you send them an invitation. You can’t just expect them to show up. That is it. That’s the relationship in reality. (Interview, EB)

In a similar vein, when discussing various community outreach initiatives, one of the city’s cultural leaders also suggested that the sector is “still in a transition of going from ‘doing to’ people that are poor to ‘doing with’ people that are poor” (Interview, W). These observations draw attention to how interventions that aim at breaking down ‘barriers’ can work to reinforce discriminatory assumptions and practices, generating further division between subsidised arts organisations and ‘non-participants’. They also hint at a problem with this approach to cultural participation, which is “that many of

those who are counted as being excluded on the basis of their lack of participation in high culture don't consider themselves to be so" (Miles and Sullivan, 2012: 321). This itself reminds us that non-participation is not necessarily a problem for citizens as much as it is a problem for publicly supported arts organisations and activities that need to demonstrate increased attendance numbers in order to justify support (Stevenson et al., 2017).

Furthermore, justifications geared towards inclusion and access seem to ignore the ways in which rhetoric around 'exclusion' and the problematisation of cultural participation might work to reinforce discriminatory assumptions that perpetuate, rather than break down, exclusionary practices. I witnessed the effects of this in some of my conversations with policymakers and sector leaders. In an interview with a leader of one of the city's top-funded arts institutions, it was suggested that:

some [Muslim people] have no interest, have no knowledge [in participating in established art practices]. It is not part of their culture. Now, our job is to make sure that if there is somebody from within say [the] Muslim community who might want to do, that we should give them that opportunity to . . . [but] you can't force people to do what they're not interested in doing (Interview, JP).

In another discussion, a head policy consultant proposed that cities with diverse populations struggle with their cultural offerings and audience development because black, Asian and Muslim populations "wouldn't naturally . . . go to a theatre or classical music" (Interview, A).

What all of these observations help demonstrate is that enthusiasm for increasing cultural participation should not be equated with the overcoming of social barriers, just as a lack of enthusiasm towards participating in state-funded arts and culture should not be automatically equated with social exclusion. In this section I have considered how existing justifications are shaped by particular notions of cultural value and approaches to access and inclusion that help to maintain, and, in some cases, exacerbate discriminatory practices and forms of social exclusion, thus narrowing the potential to promote affiliation. The view that ‘cultural participation’ is beneficial both for the individual and the society in which they live, and that culture should and can be made accessible to all people, may appear, at least on the surface, to share similarities with the view advocated in this thesis. However, while there are similarities, such as a belief in the potential of arts and culture to contribute to society, there are some marked differences. To begin with, the approach to ‘cultural participation’ promoted in existing justifications is rooted in a flawed notion of ‘common culture’ that, despite gestures made towards expanding the definition of ‘culture’, remains deeply reliant on artistic hierarchies and a narrow view of cultural value.

In this context, ‘cultural participation’ does not refer to a wide breadth of experiences, but instead is primarily centred around engagement with the ‘arts’ and ‘participation’ in professional cultural institutions deemed worthy of public support. Justificatory practices in Leeds are not interested in what might be blocking people from engaging in their preferred culture, but are instead concerned with legitimising existing arts institutions, and thus they overlook the diverse and multifaceted cultural values that make up their citizenry. In this context, “access continues to be privileged over relevance, and quantitative equality continues to trump qualitative equity” (Stevenson et

al., 2017: 103). Ignoring the artistic hierarchies that have shaped it, the notion of culture promoted in existing justifications is also presented as autonomous, in that it can transcend social, political and economic divides. In doing so, that notion ignores the reality that arts and culture help constitute and are constituted by the society in which we live and, therefore, are not free from issues of inequality, division and discrimination. It closes off the space for policymakers and institutional leaders to seriously consider and address how, for example, existing justifications have gone about encouraging access and inclusion in ways that work to create binaries rather than practices that encourage us to “live with and towards others” in ways that are open and free from discrimination.

The cultural capability approach that I advocate in this work focuses on enabling opportunities and freedoms for people to (co-)create culture, to give form and values to their experiences, and rests on the premise that enabling these capabilities can help us flourish together. In no way does my approach require rejecting “high” art (as there is doubtless value in these art forms) but instead seeks to find ways to value different cultures equally, to appreciate the myriad ways that varied cultural experiences might bring meaning and value to people’s lives. One advantage of this approach in addressing issues of affiliation is its strong link to theories of social justice; it encourages policy aims to pay closer attention to how social and institutional arrangements might allow for openness and nondiscrimination as well as to identify and seek to alter those that do not (Nussbaum, 2003; 2011; Hesmondhalgh, 2014).

6.3.2 Justifications, State-Funded Cultural Production and NonDiscrimination

As I have highlighted throughout this thesis, the persistent and widespread lack of diversity across publicly funded cultural organisations (Arts Council England, 2019; 2018) has increasingly become a more central policy concern in Leeds and beyond. This section explores how these concerns exist within and are constrained by structures and practices that have state-funded (professional) arts organisations operating primarily like businesses selling valued cultural commodities. Specifically, I briefly reflect on how notions of ‘risk’ have been linked to diverse artistic practices in the city, and how this association constricts opportunities to engage in state-funded cultural production in open and respectful ways that are free from discrimination.

I have already discussed the interrelated values, ideologies, and rationales that encouraged publicly supported arts organisations to function more like businesses. However, in a nutshell, we can understand existing justifications, structures and approaches as shaped by the retreat of the welfare state, the rise of neoliberal logic that encouraged “the spread of market logics into previously noncommercial spheres and work cultures” (Saha, 2018: 100) and the subsequent rise of New Public Management. They were further bolstered by austerity measures, which left publicly supported arts organisation in perilous states that meant sourcing out other forms of income and private sponsorship, by justifications around culture-led regeneration, and later by the creative industries emphasised the economic potential of cultural production. The continued, and often dualling, pressure for arts organisations in Leeds to operate as efficient, resilient and sustainable businesses while also contributing to the city’s economic growth is evident in existing justifications and policy practice. For example,

arguments for the sector position them as helping “Leeds to be recognised as . . . a thriving, internationally connected cultural hub open to collaboration”, and at the forefront of innovation by demonstrating “curiosity”, “bravery” and a “willingness to experiment and explore new cultures.” Existing justifications also claim the sector is expected “to grow and increase its contribution to Leeds’s economy”, and to find new funding models that will help support it and make it more resilient in the future (Leeds City Council, 2017a: 11). These pressures, and the understanding that the arts organisations should function like businesses, are further reflected in how the LCC describes their relationship with the sector. For instance, one lead policymaker commented:

We [the LCC] have been seen as just a funder as opposed to a business partner and an investor . . . we are a sponsor, and, yes, you fill out a grant form, but we are still sponsoring you and expect benefits back . . . you have to give your sponsor benefits back . . . So it’s not unreasonable for a local authority to ask you to tailor what you’re doing and focus what you’re doing, especially when they are offering you help to do it, and they are offering you a potential second income stream . . . We are their business partner . . . and I think having [a] relationship that is much more of a partnership helps us to understand their business [and] understand their needs. So we’ve changed the relationship with those larger organisations. (Interview, L)

The primary issue here is that in their current corporate form, these arts organisations adopt bureaucratic practices and rationalisations that result in applying ‘business common sense’ to their decisions about what type of cultural commodities get produced and how (Saha, 2018). Cultural production is inherently risky (Garnham, 1990;

Hesmondhalgh, 2008; Saha, 2018), and within this context, creative managers often act conservatively, looking to produce what they believe will have the broadest reach in terms of audience and the most significant return on investment. However, as Saha (2018) notes, “the risk-averse nature of the cultural industries invariably has a negative impact upon black and brown cultural producers in particular, who are seen as a dangerous investment” (Saha, 2018: 101-102; Fuller, 2010; Molina-Guzmán, 2016).

This attention to ‘risk’, and the related impact on nonwhite cultural producers, was demonstrated in my discussions with sector leaders. For example, various interviewees made clear that changes in programming and attracting more diverse audiences will take time and money. As one major arts leader noted, “we’re really committed to [diversity], but it takes time, and it takes investment . . . it takes resources at a time when resources are shrinking” (Interview, JP). Some people working in these institutions, the interviewees argued, naturally consider the “risks” involved in showing certain alternative programming, because they must think constantly about issues of artistic excellence as well as ways to increase yearly profits and sponsorships in an atmosphere of austerity (Interview, JP, W, T). The argument goes that the need to ‘keep afloat’ leaves little room for these organisations to experiment with and advance diverse and alternative practices, no matter how much they may want to, or how important they believe it to be. Nevertheless, how major organisations in Leeds approach the ‘issue’ of cultural differences is far more complex than wanting more diverse programming that they would indeed have if funding allowed for it.

While I do not deny that change takes time, or that cultural institutions face decreased funding, I do find problematic the suggestion that additional funding is required to

support diverse artistic practices. That position implies that diverse programming and practices are naturally separate from regular programming, that they cannot be incorporated into existing funding structures. By extension, diversity and diverse artistic practices and programming simultaneously become framed as ‘other’ or ‘niche’, and as ‘risky’ investments requiring additional funding in order to cover potential losses and ensure sustainability. Indeed, these views were reflected in my conversations with practitioners working with diverse and non-traditional art forms; it was often remarked that established organisations tended not to want to show their work because it presented too much of a ‘risk’ in terms of return on investment. One interviewee, whose work addresses a woman of colour’s struggle with mental illness, commented that their performative work regularly meets the response, “Oh, no, we can’t pay that much of a guarantee, because we don’t think it’s going to sell more than 50 per cent of the box office, because we don’t have a black audience here, and so it is a risk” (Interview, EB).

The belief that nonwhite forms of cultural expression do not have wide audience appeal or are ‘risky’ investments has complex roots in ideologies of empire, myth/lore, lack of knowledge, and racial governmentalities that attempt “to steer, direct and shape the production of racial meaning, and sustain the absolute difference between European and nonwhite” (Saha, 2018: 143; Ahmed, 2012; Nwonka and Malik, 2018). Unfortunately, there is no room to unpack all of these here. What I want to stress is that regardless of whether arts organisations believe their own claims, these assumptions greatly restrict the ability to produce work in open, respectful environments that are free from discrimination. That is, not only do such assumptions work to reaffirm the ‘otherness’ of nonwhite cultural productions and frame them as niche markets to preferred, wide-reaching and profitable forms of culture, but they also disguise the “racial logic”

guiding decisions of what should and can be produced as common business sense (Saha, 2018).

Despite clear desires to increase diversity, both at the policy and institutional levels, major state-funded arts organisations in Leeds approach cultural production in ways that appear rooted in corporate rationales around return on investment and risk that are bound up in discriminatory racial logic, aesthetic hierarchies and economic priorities of growth and sustainability. The key point I want to make here is that concerns around diversity and inclusion in cultural production are bound up with and constrained by other dominant policy rationales that require publicly funded arts organisations not only to grow and increase their contribution to Leeds's economy but also to have sustainable business models that allow them to address challenges around reduced funding (Leeds City Council, 2017a; Arts Council England, 2019). A capability approach, with its focus on creating real freedoms and opportunities for people to flourish, could offer an alternative to such structures.

To begin with, a capability approach would immediately reframe institutional aims away from the economic imperatives that currently drive and shape decisions about what type of cultural commodities get produced, and toward securing and advancing people's freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture. No longer having to function as a business seeking to increase its income, an organisation would, ideally, cease to look at publicly supported cultural production in terms of profitability and risk. Rather than privileging commercial criteria and economic imperatives that work to sideline and silence alternative forms of expression, institutional aims, now rooted geared towards issues of social justice, would, theoretically, be geared towards addressing the moral

and political arguments needed to tackle issues of inequality prevalent in state-funded culture. Furthermore, a cultural capability approach works to appreciate the many ways in which we engage with and value the arts and seeks to find ways for policy to value cultures equally. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a capability approach to policy design understands that every person is worthy of human dignity (Nussbaum, 2011), and recognises that part of its job in ensuring this involves securing opportunities for people to create work in environments that are free from discrimination. Placing human dignity as one of the ends of policy eliminates the possibility of economic imperatives subverting issues of social justice and human wellbeing and flourishing.

6.3.4 Cultural Rights

As noted in the last two chapters, Leeds's approach to the bid process and policy development engaged with recent ECoC program trends by attempting to form "connections between culture and wellbeing and the active involvement of local communities in the production of culture"(Tommarchi et al., 2018). We see the desire to strengthen links between local arts and wellbeing most strongly demonstrated in the cultural strategy incorporation of values promoted by the Agenda 21 for culture. To begin with, the aims of Agenda 21 for culture, like those of a capability approach, promote culture as the ends of development rather than "as a *means* or *resource* for the achievement of economic growth and other development goals" (Baltà Portolés and Dragičević Šešić, 2017: 160), which suggests that the city is attempting to engage with alternative ways of measuring cultural value. The policy also draws on Agenda 21 for culture's notion of cultural rights by arguing that arts and culture should help to foster respect and curiosity, and that everyone has the right to culture. That the policy attempts to advance justificatory practices for public support geared towards issues of human

flourishing and social justice is a promising first step in redirecting cultural policy away from economic imperative. However, I argue that the idea of cultural rights is not yet a powerful or sustainable concept in Leeds, and this raises concerns as to its ability to affect substantive policy change. With this in mind, I want to briefly reflect on how existing arguments for cultural rights impact the ability to advance cultural capabilities around affiliation and freedom to co-produce culture and identity.

One of the most significant issues is the lack of understanding in Leeds around what is meant by culture rights. This reality is clear in a 2018 review of the cultural plan, which reveals that many policymakers and representatives of larger cultural institutions in Leeds were confused “as to what was meant by ‘cultural rights’ as this was not a term often used in the city” (United Cities and Local Governments, 2018: 6). This confusion is also prevalent in existing justifications, which make claims towards the LCC’s desire for arts institutions to advance cultural rights through greater community engagement and more inclusive programming, but stops short of outlining expectations or providing a framework detailing the measures institutions must take to ground these aims. To be clear, ‘measures’ in this context does not refer to the dominant market-driven evidence-based policy practices currently used to assess arts and culture’s return on investment. Instead, it connotes the instrumental measures needed to anchor cultural rights in practice, such as “the existence of forums or spaces for participation in decision-making and management, the decentralisation of cultural resources and the identification of obstacles and factors which hinder participation in cultural life” (Vickery, 2018: 170). Leeds has yet to develop a delivery plan that would have, in theory, established a framework around cultural rights, meaning that the notion, at least from a policy perspective, remains vague and rudderless. As Vickery notes, this is not an uncommon

issue, as “the integration of cultural rights in cultural policies and in sustainable development strategies has traditionally been hampered by a limited understanding of the concepts of cultural rights and the vagueness of their policy implications” (Vickery, 2018: 170).

Failing to clarify and cement necessary processes to advance cultural rights in Leeds risks rendering the notion stagnant and largely ignored, so that it could eventually disappear from policy considerations or could be appropriated in ways that steer it away from issues of social justice. This is a concern because the notion of cultural rights has the potential to play a role in shifting policy aims in the city’s away from economic imperatives and towards issues of social justice and human flourishing. However, it needs to be further developed, strengthened and operationalised in policy practice in order to initiate this change. Unfortunately, few signs indicate that necessary steps are underway to ground the concept and the values it embraces. Importantly, none of the cultural leaders I interviewed called upon the term, implying that the concept lacks recognition and weight within the sector. Furthermore, there is no indication of when a delivery plan will be produced, which suggests that the initial enthusiasm around the ECoC bid and the process that propelled the co-produced cultural strategy has died down, and with it the chance to raise the political profile of cultural rights.

The issue of appropriation comes to fruition in, for example, the politically hollow discourse around diversity and inclusivity demonstrated both in policy and institutional practices. It is also evident in the city’s inclusive growth initiative, which, as discussed in Chapter 4, makes claims towards people’s ‘right’ to gain creative skills for employment, so that they may partake in the global market. Policy aims and notions of

cultural rights grounded in inclusive growth have been criticised on a number of levels. For example, Cantillon (2010) has argued that such approaches to social investment “focus on investing for future returns by rechanneling expenditure from “passive” social security benefits to activation and spending in the fields of family-oriented services and education has . . . meant that today’s poor have been left aside (Morel et al., 2012: 132). Another related critique is that in its focus on “activating” citizens, the approach offers both a justification “for cutting back on benefits that have previously allowed certain groups to remain outside the labour market (such as lone parents or people on long-term sickness leave) and signals that the quality of work has been sidelined in favour of ‘any job’” (Morel et al., 2012: 132). In other words, it reflects more of a promotion and sustaining of neoliberal “workfare” policies than a shift towards upskilling and the development of “more and *better* jobs” (Morel et al., 2012; Bonoli and Natali, 2012). Furthermore, feminist scholars have argued that the focus on increasing women’s employment largely has been motivated by economic objectives rather than a real concern with women’s aspirations (Stratigaki, 2004). Moreover, children are often treated within inclusive growth strategies as “citizen-workers” rather than “citizen-children”; for example, the emphasis on skills development focuses on what they will become, rather than treating them as “beings” with social rights in and of themselves (Lister, 2003; Morel et al., 2012). All of these critiques feed into broader concerns that an economic rationale has replaced those values underpinning inclusive growth and social investment perspectives. Leeds’s inclusive growth strategy was just released in 2018. Therefore, it remains unclear whether interventions will be driven by economic imperatives that, for example, understand unemployment as holding back the city’s economic growth and as costly for the public sector, and thus that ‘any job’ will do as

long as employment is increased, or if they will work to ensure that people have the opportunities needed to gain employment in fair and just working environments.

With all of this in mind, I suggest that, at this point, rhetoric around cultural rights evident in the policy docs are doing little to substantively advance cultural capabilities geared towards creating opportunities for people to engage with the arts in ways that are equal, open, respectful and free from discrimination. Indeed, until the concept is developed more thoroughly, and grounded in ways that hold institutions to account, it is unlikely that it will have any power to advance issues of wellbeing and social justice in the future.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored how existing justifications in both Calgary and Leeds currently impact valuable capabilities in each city. For Calgary, this means looking at how the city's rationales for public support have affected opportunities to create work, freedoms of artistic expression and engagement with the arts, and people's ability to participate in the (co-)creation of artistic value. Here, I argue that existing justifications uncritically promote the creative ethos and the merit of creative work in ways that mask inequality and precarity in practices of artistic creation. Along these lines, I suggest that existing narratives around inclusive participation in cultural production do little more than acknowledge that the sector lacks diversity, and show no clear path to advancing more equal and fair opportunities to engage in cultural production. With regard to artistic expression, funding streams are heavily geared towards marketable forms of artistic expression and creation, and protectionist granting practices shield existing and

traditional art forms while limiting the space for alternative and new forms of artistic expression to emerge. Additionally, I demonstrate that existing arguments for public support around increased access to arts and culture are based primarily in economic and market-driven values that seek to raise consumption practices, not to advance equal opportunities to participate or engage with artistic practices. Furthermore, the sector itself remains undiverse, and has shown few signs of encouraging open and equal engagement. I also note that policy shifts suggest a move towards hyper-instrumentalism, which would position arts and culture firmly under the remit of economic policies and close the space for people to freely and equally engage with meaning-making processes around the role and value of the arts and culture in their city.

The second half of this chapter explored how existing justifications in Leeds, and the values and practices they promote, impact opportunities to promote affiliation. I began by reflecting on how justificatory practices geared towards issues of access, inclusion and cultural participation are enabling or constricting the opportunities to encourage affiliation. Here I suggested that notions around the democratisation of culture and social inclusion and cohesion has helped justificatory practices to frame ‘non-participation’ in subsidised arts and culture as a problem, and, as a result, has worked to create a binary between those who do ‘participate’ or ‘engage’ and those who do not. I argued that these practices constrict the space to consider how interventions and activities meant to break down ‘barriers’ might work in the opposite direction, or not at all. Additionally, I suggested that in their concern to legitimise existing arts institutions these justificatory practices overlook the diverse and multifaceted cultural values that make up their citizenry.

The issues of diversity and risk in state-funded cultural production were also discussed. Here, I argued that, despite their desire to increase diversity in cultural production, policy and cultural institutions are guided by corporate rationales related to return on investment, which perpetuate discriminatory racial logic and biased aesthetic hierarchies in decisions around what gets produced by these institutions and why. I noted that the city's current cultural policy included arguments aimed at cultural rights and issues of social justice. While this inclusion is encouraging, I argued that without a better developed understanding of what cultural rights entails or how it will be grounded in practices and policy aims, attempts to address matters of social justice will remain hollow policy rhetoric at risk of being ignored or appropriated.

In sum, this chapter has demonstrated how both cities' existing justifications for public support constrain valuable capabilities. Calgary's narrow economic instrumentalism and market mentality restricts people's ability to freely participate in artistic practices, expression and creation, and curtails their opportunities to participate in the construction of cultural value. Put another way, matters of access, inclusion, artistic expression and value are shaped and guided by economic imperatives and dominant 'creative' arguments that actively work to close down the space to consider, let alone advance, real opportunities for people to freely engage with the (co-)creation of culture. While Leeds's justificatory practices engage more heavily with social issues of access, inclusion, diversity and cultural rights, these practices' concerns remain bound up in values and ideologies that encourage, rather than reduce, social inequalities. That is, despite aims to create wider access to and more diverse production in state-funded culture, these desires are subverted by dominant notions of cultural value, support of the 'deficit' model, corporate and economic imperatives, and racial biases. I reflect on how

matters might be different by pointing to the various ways a capability approach to policy design might help to transform existing practices. For instance, I consider how the approach would break down artistic hierarchies and encourage deliberation around cultural value in order to appreciate the myriad ways we engage with and produce culture. I also highlight some potential effects of redirecting of policy issues away from economic imperatives and instead towards creating real freedoms and opportunities for people to engage, if they so choose, in arts and culture in ways that bring meaning and value to them. However, the issues and concerns raised throughout this chapter are powerful reminders of the realities and roadblocks that face a (re)imagining of cultural policy. I reflect on these challenges in the following concluding chapter, and discuss some potential next steps for cultural capability research which can help build a more comprehensive understanding of how we may advance a capability approach to cultural policy design on the ground.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Research Findings

My overarching aim in this thesis is to consider how we might begin (re-)imagining cultural policy away from economic imperatives and towards issues of social justice and human wellbeing. More specifically, this work has sought both to suggest a possible alternative conceptual and normative framework for cultural policy and to explore the realities that would affect and contextualise advancing such an approach to policy on the ground. I approach this investigation through a synthesis of theories, including the notion of cultural capability (Gross and Wilson, 2018), the capability approach more broadly (Sen, 2001; Robeyns, 2017; Nussbaum, 2011) and Forst's theory of justification (Forst, 2011b; 2014; 2017). This thesis is governed by three main research questions, the answers to which I articulate below.

7.1.1 Conceptualising a Cultural Capability Approach to Cultural Policy Design

In this thesis, I argue that the capability approach is a useful tool for moving cultural policy studies beyond critique and towards new conceptual and normative foundations for cultural policy. Since it has been rarely employed in this field, I address questions around how I might apply the approach in practice. My solution is to build upon Gross and Wilson's notion of cultural capability (Wilson et al., 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018a) and to draw on Forst's theory of justification (2011b; 2014; 2017), each of which provides guidance for my operationalisation of the approach in this study.

In my theoretical chapter, I discuss how Gross and Wilson's new account of cultural democracy foregrounds the broad idea of 'cultural opportunities', and how the

capability approach further develops this concept to eventually frame it as the notion of ‘cultural capability’. Firmly grounded in the capability approach, Gross and Wilson define ‘cultural capability’ as the interconnected and interwoven opportunities available for people to (co-)create culture, or, more precisely, the freedoms people have to give form and value to their experiences, if they so choose. The notion offers some insights into how we might ground the capability approach in critique and policy practice. That is, identifying what might currently block these freedoms, as well as understanding how we might expand these capabilities, is a crucial step in developing alternative paths forward for cultural policy, ones that are sensitive to the interconnected and interwoven ways in which people draw meaning and value from cultural experiences and have the potential to encourage flourishing.

However, the notion of cultural capability requires further development. In particular, we need a fuller understanding of how cultural opportunities (capabilities) actually operate, and how cultural policy can work to enable and expand them. I believe that the notion provides a strong starting point for (re)imagining cultural policy as well as a foundation for assessing issues of wellbeing, and my research expands upon the concept. While I hope this work can contribute to broader discussion around cultural democracy (Graves, 2010; Gross and Wilson, 2018; Hadley and Belfiore, 2018), my focus in developing the idea of cultural capability centres around how we might conceptualise a capability-based design to cultural policy, one concerned with advancing issues of social justice and human wellbeing. I root my project firmly in the capability approach and adopt its general liberal and anti-paternalistic commitments (Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2017), taking as a basic premise that capabilities, meaning people’s freedoms and opportunities, rather than functionings, meaning what people

actually achieve in doing or being, ought to be political ends. In other words, I analyse my research through the lens of my conviction that an alternative approach to policy should seek to advance people's substantive freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture, if they so choose. That policy should strive to enable freedom of choice and broaden the options available for people to give form and value to their experiences. That it should recognise the current and potential diversity of cultural activity and value rather than, for example, focusing too narrowly, as existing practices do, on achieving specific functionings, such as skills development, employment, and social or economic regeneration.

When exploring how researchers and policymakers might go about identifying valuable cultural capabilities, I argue that we cannot fully determine what (cultural) freedoms and opportunities matter most to people without fair deliberation and public reasoning. I do not oppose identifying relevant cultural capabilities, as these theoretical exercises can help spark debate and inform our ideas of what it means to give form and value to our experiences. However, I am opposed to creating a fixed list of cultural capabilities that would not be able to respond to public reasoning and social values (Sen, 2004: 78). It is my position that to deny people the right to debate what cultural capabilities are valuable is incompatible with the cultural capability approach, which seeks to advance, not restrict, people's freedom to give form and value to their experiences. That is, the idea of cultural capabilities is to create freedoms and opportunities for people to (co-)create culture, which involves the co-production of knowledge and pluralistic understandings of value and shared decision making. To deny people the right to share in the deliberation and reasoning around valuable capabilities negates the entire principle of cultural capabilities.

Indeed, this position around the importance of deliberation plays a key part in my development of the idea of cultural capability and its potential for future policy change. I suggest that one way of advancing people's substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture is to think about how cultural policy might ensure people's equal opportunity to deliberate on and shape cultural value and value allocation. By its very nature, this includes asking how policy practices can guarantee people's freedom to determine what meaning-making opportunities they believe policy should focus on advancing. Because of this stance, I am less concerned with theorising what cultural capabilities policy might advance, and more with who decides what cultural capabilities are valuable and how we safeguard people's equal right to participate in the selection of these capabilities. Put another way, in attempting to conceptualise a capability-based approach to policy, my focus centres largely on what the process of cultural capability selection might involve.

However, the capability approach is ill-suited for developing a more comprehensive understanding of what just processes in capability selection might entail (Sen, 2001; Robeyns, 2017), and it is necessary to incorporate Forst's (2014, 2017) theory of justification to fill this theoretical gap. Forst's theory proves useful to this study in a couple of ways. The first is that it allows me to frame justifications for public support for the arts as meaning-making processes and as spaces of struggle over cultural value and value allocation that shape and legitimise institutional structures and policy practices. Thereby, it makes existing justifications, as well as justificatory practices and processes, key objects of study in how cultural policy might secure people's substantive freedoms to shape and guide notions of cultural value.

The second is that it offers insights into what policy processes seeking to secure people's freedoms and opportunities to shape cultural value and guide value allocation might look like. Specifically, the theory provides the concept of the "right to justification", which argues that people's basic claim to justice is expressible as an "irreducible right to justification when what is at stake is whom they should obey and what they should accept—and they likewise have a duty of justification when it is a matter of their claims" (Forst, 2014: 3). In short, this right demands "that there be no political and social relations of governance that cannot be adequately justified to those affected by them" (Forst, 2014: 2). In terms of what constitutes 'adequate justification', I outline how Forst, following Habermas (1989), emphasises the importance of public deliberation in justifying normative claims that affect our lives, and I note the importance of "reciprocity" and "generality" as key attributes of just deliberative processes. At its most basic, we can understand the concept as seeking to counter potentially unjust processes of justification, where unequal power relations dominate and constrain the space for fair and equal deliberation.

Bringing together the capability approach, the notion of cultural capability and Forst's theory of justification, I conceptualise two ways that cultural policy may intervene in expanding people's freedoms to (co-)create culture. The first is that it should seek to address the inequalities and limitations that characterise public deliberation around notions of cultural value and allocation in practice. The second is that it should aim to enhance people's capabilities in relation to practices of justification for public support for the arts. I argue that, in ensuring these just processes, cultural policy would work to protect people's freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture.

7.1.2 How Current Justifications for Public Support for Arts and Culture Encourage or Restrict People's Ability to Shape Notions of Cultural Value

Throughout this thesis, I stress the need to begin thinking about how we might (re)imagine cultural policy and also to investigate the space available to advance substantive policy change; alongside offering a possible alternative conceptual and normative framework for cultural policy, this research adheres to the core analytical values of the capability approach, seeking to understand, in the context of justificatory practices, what actual freedoms people have to give meaning and value to their experiences. More specifically, this investigation aims to gain greater insight into how justifications for public support for the arts, and the structures and values they support and sustain, enable or constrict people's opportunities to shape cultural value and value allocation, and by extension how they impact the possibility for future policy change.

Using two middle cities, Calgary and Leeds, as case studies, and Forst's (2014) framework for critique, I offer a genealogy of existing justificatory practices for public support, mapping how each city has developed its rationale for public support over the past sixty years. In addition, my critique of justificatory practices engages with Forst's (2014) notion of the "right to justification". Here, I analyse both cities' recent co-produced cultural strategies as well as Calgary's newly established arts advocacy group, Creative Calgary, and Leeds's 2023 bid for the European Capital of Culture, reflecting on the extent these processes of justification can be considered just.

While both cities draw on similar global trends, particularly those centred around the creative economy, the power relations, values and circumstances that structure these

arguments, and how they have played out in each city, differs. Justificatory practices in Calgary, for example, are shaped by extremely uneven discursive power relations, whereby ideologies around the economic valuations of culture have the power to limit justifications for public support. The genealogy makes clear how economic justifications became the primary argument for public funding amongst sector leaders and funding agencies, and it reveals the ideologies, values and circumstances that help sustain these arguments. I demonstrate how, over time, narrow economic justifications have been bolstered by the city's market-led ideologies and the exclusion of a wider understanding of the potential social benefits of arts and culture. That is, I observe that the city has historically ignored a wide range of justificatory practices concerned with issues of inclusive and equitable access, and has instead framed the social benefits of arts and culture in terms of developing human capital and creating vibrant, economically successful communities. I posit that a driving force behind this rationale was the city's market-led approach to social development, which tends to address social issues primarily through economic and development goals and strategies (Brunet-Jailly, 2012), rather than the equitable distribution of social goods — a form of governance that, I argue, has helped to perpetuate a narrow understanding of the social value of the arts and limited the space to consider alternative arguments for public support. Given the demonstrated dependency on economic justifications, even when these arguments are in crisis, I argue that rationales for public support in the city can no longer articulate a case for cultural value beyond economic arguments. Building on this observation, I suggest that justificatory practices in the city have reached a level of 'domination', whereby the justificatory space is dominated by economic ideologies that are presented as natural and unalterable. Because of this, economic arguments for support are able not

only to insulate themselves against critical challenge, but also to close down the space of reason and shut down alternative notions of cultural value.

The city's justificatory processes also reveal power imbalances and restrictive practices. In the co-produced plan, the power to shape and sustain justificatory practices around the role of the arts in the city rests with the City of Calgary and the civic partners involved in the steering committee. In this case, the potential for the co-produced process to lead towards more just processes, including cooperation, generalised reciprocity and collective deliberation is constrained by and is subordinate to dominant policy rationales and power structures. Likewise, the advocacy campaign reflects an unjust process of justification, whereby those in power reinforced the dominant economic justifications and actively worked to close off the space for people to offer alternative justifications for public support (Forst, 2014).

In Leeds, justificatory practices are more varied, in that arguments around the social and economic benefits of the arts have co-existed in the city for decades. However, I argue that these arguments continue to be dominated by economic arguments linked to culture-led regeneration. Current circumstances, including social unrest over Brexit, rising unemployment, increased austerity measures, and the ECoC bid have resulted in a potential shift in the city's justificatory hierarchies. They have, I suggest, also prompted social arguments for public support to extend beyond prevailing issues of access and cohesion to include the role of the arts in resisting neoliberal orthodoxy and discrimination and encouraging elements of human flourishing. However, changing dominant justificatory practices away from economic instrumentalism and towards issues of social justice depends on long-term efforts (Vickery, 2018), and it is yet

unclear whether the city will continue to advance, or even sustain, its arguments around cultural rights, respect, equality and understanding in the future. In short, without further development of these justificatory practices, they may fall to the wayside.

Furthermore, the space, opened through the bidding processes, to consider alternative notions of cultural value may close down now that the bid is obsolete. Justificatory processes in Leeds appear to offer more robust examples of co-production than those Calgary, in that they have a wider reach in terms of the number of engagement platforms and opportunities for exchange; however, they also reveal some serious challenges facing attempts to change or even shift dominant justificatory practices. In particular, both processes reveal how dominant logics and power structures work to curb how the public can be involved and what they can say in these processes.

Furthermore, the resistance to grounding alternative notions of cultural value, by both the established arts sector and city council, demonstrates in stark relief that attempts to alter existing practices are always constrained by the prevailing power structures and political agendas as well as pre-existing notions of cultural value and established paths of value allocation.

My exploration reveals the power relations, norms, ideologies and socio-economic and political structures that have shaped notions of cultural value in both cities, while helping to highlight the complex, diverse and place-specific nature of justificatory practices. Moreover, my analysis identifies dominant justifications for public support and power relations in justificatory processes, highlighting how these have constricted the space to participate in deliberation, challenge existing forms of value and value allocation, and advance alternative justifications for public support for the arts.

I also draw attention to issues with participatory policymaking practices, specifically to gaps in the rhetoric of democratic participation and in the implementation of these policy initiatives. Put another way, at their best, co-produced policies seek to advance equal opportunity to engage with the political discourse that governs the society in which we live, and this includes enabling the inclusion of diverse perspectives in policymaking, encouraging openness and ensuring that those who are disengaged, excluded or marginalised from democratic engagement are included, as well as working to break down of unequal power relations in public deliberation (Chatterton et al., 2018; Lechelt and Cunningham, 2020). However, my investigation helps to highlight that these practices exist within a flawed society marred by inequality, dominant power relations and political ideologies that work to both constrict and alter the possibility for these policymaking processes to achieve their aims. Certainly an affiliation exists between some of the underlying values of participatory policymaking and the capability approach to cultural policy design advocated in this thesis, and that affiliation that centres around just processes of justification. Because of this, the failures evident in both cities' attempts to co-produce their cultural plans, most notably the persistent dominance of existing notions of cultural value and value allocation, unjust power relations in justificatory processes, resistance to relinquish policy making power from the local authority to the participants involved resulting in tokenistic forms of citizen empowerment, help to shine a light on some of the challenges that a cultural capability policy design would have to overcome. While my investigation into justifications for public support suggests a severely restricted space, in each city, to advance the alternative policy practices presented in this research, I remain optimistic that, with the aid of future research, we can re-open the space not only to consider what more just

policy practices seeking to encourage human flourishing and wellbeing should look like, but also to find ways to develop and implement these practices on the ground.

7.1.3 How Justifications for Public Support for Arts and Culture Constrict People's Ability to Access Valuable Cultural Capabilities

The last empirical chapter of this thesis moved beyond discussions of justificatory practices, in and of themselves, to examine how existing justifications for public support, and the values and structures they sustain, currently impact people's freedom to participate in a range of other identified valuable capabilities.

For Calgary, this meant looking at how the city's rationales for public support have affected opportunities to create work, freedoms of artistic expression and engagement with the arts, and people's ability to participate in the co-creation of artistic value. With regard to how justifications are affecting the opportunities for people to create artistic work, I argue that existing justifications uncritically promote the creative ethos and the merit of creative work in ways that mask inequality and precarity in practices of artistic creation. I demonstrate how the municipality and the sector ignore evidence of inequality and precariousness in Calgary's art sector in favour of advancing and sustaining justifications that promote dominant (and false) understandings of creative labour as inherently beneficial, open and equal to all. Furthermore, I suggest that existing narratives around more inclusive participation in cultural production do little more than acknowledge that the sector lacks diversity, and I observe that neither CADA, City Council nor the sector have offered any clear plans to address and advance more equal opportunities to engage in artistic creation. As a result, there is little discussion taking place in the city around how cultural policy can help to substantively

create more equal opportunities for people to participate in cultural production. I also argue that CADA's focus on subjective satisfaction surveys ignores the issue of adaptive preferences, and does not adequately address the myriad potential barriers affecting people's actual ability to participate and engage with artistic practices.

Concerning artistic expression, I observe that arguments for public support of arts and culture in Calgary have not effectively engaged with the democratisation of culture model or notions of cultural democracy. Instead, existing justifications centre narrowly on the role of the arts in image building and innovation, which privilege those art forms most likely to give a return on investment in terms of branding power, audience numbers and cultural tourism. I argue that this narrow instrumental approach has greatly constricted what types of artistic expression funders deem worthy of public support and, by extension, the opportunities available for artists to explore and express themselves freely. I argue, that is, that existing funding streams that privileged major festivals, and cornerstone organisations, are working to bolster traditional cultural programming at the expense of supporting new forms of expression and thus are constricting the opportunities for freedom of expression in publicly supported arts and culture.

Furthermore, I observe that the cultural sector consists of predominately white artists and institutional leaders, which, I argue, raises concerns around the level of diversity in programming and the real opportunities available for people working in non-European artistic practices to receive public dollars.

Additionally, I argue that existing arguments for public support around increased access to arts and culture are based primarily in economic and market-driven values that seek to raise consumption practices, not to advance equal opportunities to participate or

engage with artistic practices. I demonstrate how CADA and the sector's alleged interests in making sure publicly funded arts engage all residents have been undermined by their focus on sustaining and increasing cultural consumption over concerns with equal access to participation. I argue that while some discussions are taking place around the importance of inclusion, in the absence of action, these justificatory practices merely pay lip service to these issues, and, moreover, ignore how policy might strive to create real opportunities for all Calgarians to engage with state-funded culture.

Furthermore, I highlight how the sector itself is not diverse, and shows few signs of encouraging open and equal engagement. I also note that existing justificatory practices have helped to push policy practices towards hyper-instrumentalism, which risks severely constricting the space for people to participate effectively in political choices around the role and value of the arts and culture in their city.

Moving on to Leeds, I explore how existing justifications, and the values and practices they promote and sustain, impact capabilities linked to affiliation, including opportunities to encourage people's ability to live with and towards others, openness, and non-discrimination. I also reflect on the potential for discourses around cultural rights to advance substantive policy change in the city.

I began by reflecting on how justificatory practices geared towards issues of access, inclusion, and cultural participation are enabling or constricting the opportunities to encourage affiliation. Here, I suggest that existing justifications draw on the democratisation of culture model and rhetoric around social inclusion and cohesion, all of which helps to frame 'non-participation' in subsidised arts and culture as a problem. As a result, the justificatory practices have worked to create a binary between those who

do ‘participate’ or ‘engage’ in arts and culture and those who do not. I note that despite a widening definition of culture and acknowledgment that other types of artistic practices matter, historic funding practices that privilege ‘elite’ or professional arts institutions prevail. Therefore, what counts as ‘cultural participation’ in these justificatory practices remains narrowly related to ‘the arts’, and in particular to attendance at professional state-funded cultural organisations. I argue that these justificatory practices constrict the space to consider how interventions and activities meant to break down ‘barriers’ might work in the opposite direction, or not at all. Specifically, I point out that arguments around access and inclusion can help perpetuate social stratification in cultural participation, that they can work to reinforce discriminatory assumptions and practices, and that they can ignore the ways in which rhetoric around ‘exclusion’ and the problematisation of cultural participation might work to reinforce discriminatory assumptions that perpetuate exclusionary practices. Additionally, I suggested that in their concern to legitimise existing arts institutions, these justificatory practices risk overlooking the diverse and multifaceted cultural values that make up their citizenry.

I also reflect on how notions of ‘risk’ have been linked to diverse artistic practices in the city and argue that this association constricts opportunities to engage in state-funded cultural production in ways that are open and free from discrimination. I note that despite clear desires to increase diversity, both at the policy and institutional levels, the ways in which major state-funded arts organisations in Leeds approach cultural production is rooted in corporate rationales around return on investment and risk that are bound up in discriminatory racial logic, aesthetic hierarchies and economic priorities of growth and sustainability. I also discuss the city’s current cultural policy and its

inclusion of arguments aimed at cultural rights and issues of social justice. I suggest that the inclusion of these justificatory practices is encouraging. However, I argue that without a more developed understanding of what cultural rights entails or how it will be grounded in practices, attempts to address matters social justice will remain hollow policy rhetoric at risk of being ignored or appropriated.

The purpose of this investigation is to demonstrate the ways in which existing justifications limit other possible valuable cultural capabilities, and, in doing so, to highlight some additional challenges that advancing a capability approach to cultural policy must address. I consider how the cultural capability approach to policy that I advocate for in this work could help to address some of these issues. In particular, I consider how the approach would aim to find ways to value different cultures equally, to appreciate the myriad ways that varied cultural experiences might bring meaning and value to people's lives, and, equally, how, with its strong link to theories of social justice, it could work to encourage policy aims to pay closer attention to how social and institutional arrangements might allow for openness and non-discrimination as well as to help identify and seek to alter those that do not (Hesmondhalgh, 2014; Nussbaum, 2003; 2011).

7.2 Research Contribution

This doctoral thesis provides both a theoretical and empirical contribution to cultural policy research, and specifically to those studies seeking to explore alternative paths for cultural policy and understandings of cultural value. In this work, I demonstrate that the capability approach (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 2011; Robeyns, 2017; Gross and Wilson,

2018) is a useful tool for (re)imagining new conceptual and normative frameworks for cultural policy, ones that move it away from economic imperatives and towards issues of social justice and wellbeing. I also show how broader economic and socio-cultural contexts and local circumstances have shaped justifications for public support, and how these rationales have impacted the space to advance substantive policy change.

Firstly, this thesis provides a contribution to the study of cultural policy by exploring and operationalising the capability approach to consider alternative paths forward for policy and to critique of existing policy practices. The capability approach reflects a commitment to social justice and freedom of choice, and offers an objectivist and pluralist account of wellbeing (Nussbaum, 1997; Sen, 2001; Robeyns, 2005a; Nussbaum, 2011). In this way, it can serve as a valuable lens through which to reframe questions around cultural policy and cultural value more broadly. It can also be extended and built upon to articulate new frameworks for cultural policy. However, with a few notable exceptions (Hesmondhalgh, 2014; Gross and Wilson, 2018; Scott et al., 2018; Gross, 2019), the capability approach is underexplored in the field of cultural policy. This thesis addresses these gaps in research by drawing on broader capability research, alongside theories of social justice (Forst, 2011b; 2014; Nussbaum, 2011) in order to further develop the notion of cultural capability (Robeyns, 2017; Gross and Wilson, 2018), a concept that seeks to enable and expand people's substantive freedom to give form and value to their experiences, or, more broadly, to secure and promote opportunities for people to (co-)create culture, if they so choose. The work and findings presented in this thesis not only advance the potential of a cultural capability theory to contribute to cultural policy research as well as the possibilities for it to inform future

policy change, but also feeds back into how we might operationalise a capability approach in the study of cultural policy more broadly.

Secondly, this research has explored and developed an alternative conceptual and normative framework for cultural policy. This work builds upon the notion of cultural capability (Sen, 2001; Nussbaum, 2011) and draws from wider capability research (Anderson, 1999; Robeyns, 2005a; 2006; Gross and Wilson, 2018) to consider how cultural policy might avoid paternalistic tendencies and maintain the responsibility of the state to support arts and culture while it also appreciates and supports the multifaced and diverse ways that people engage with and find value and meaning in arts and culture. I suggest that policy should seek to create more equal opportunities for people to shape cultural value and guide value allocation, and that in doing so it would help to advance people's substantive freedoms to (co-)create culture. Advocating for these policy aims involves considering what just process in these policy practices might entail, something the capability approach, in and of itself, is ill-equipped to deal with. I overcome this by incorporating Forst's (2011b; 2014; 2017) little-used theory of justification to develop a more comprehensive idea of what procedural fairness could look like in my cultural capability-based approach to policy design. Employing Forst's theory, in particular his notion of 'the right to justification' and his understanding of justificatory practices as spaces of struggle over value and meaning in society, I suggest two ways that policy might begin to expand people's freedom to (co-)create culture. Both are focused on breaking down inequalities and limitations in public deliberation around cultural value and enabling people's freedoms and opportunities to shape cultural value and guide value allocation.

While there has been much invaluable critique around prevailing conceptual and normative foundations of cultural policy (Belfiore, 2002; Bell and Oakley, 2014; Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015; Turner, 2015; O'Brien, 2014; O'Connor, 2016), the range of work to develop alternative frameworks for cultural policy is limited. There is, however, a small but generative body of work that is starting to address this issue (Banks, 2017; Hesmondhalgh, 2017; Scott et al., 2018; Gross, 2019), and this thesis adds to this work in a number of interwoven ways. To begin with it furthers the theoretical development of the concept of cultural capability and contributes to debates around how we might employ a capability approach to rethink policy practices. It also adds to discussions around how we might begin to move policy beyond the dominant deficit and creative industries models. Specifically, in its focus on ensuring substantive freedoms and opportunities to shape cultural value and guide value allocation, the policy framework offered in this thesis strives to provide one example of how cultural policy might begin to expand its understanding of cultural value, advance issues of social justice and work to encourage human flourishing. Finally, this work represents an early application of Forst's theory to the study of cultural policy, demonstrating how it can be grounded and used to consider how we might envision more just policy practices in the future.

Finally, this thesis brings together three perspectives — the notion of cultural capability, Forst's theory of justification, and the capability approach — to critique existing policy practices. More specifically, it assesses how justificatory practices in Calgary and Leeds, and the values and structures they support and sustain, are impacting the potential to advance substantive policy change. I develop the framework for critique in two parts. The first explores justificatory practices and process, seeing both as places of struggle of the meaning and value of arts and culture in either city. Employing Forst's

‘critique of relations of justification’ and ‘right to justification’, I show the complex nature of justificatory practices in both cities, demonstrating how they have been shaped through various norms, ideologies, power relations as well as wider social, political and economic structures and local circumstances. I also consider how these practices and process limit people’s freedoms and opportunities to challenge existing justifications, offer alternative notions of cultural value or guide value allocation. While there have been limited examples of cultural policy work engaging with the idea of justification (Bennett, 2020; Edwards et al., 2015) this critique of justificatory practices and processes represents an initial attempt at employing Forst’s theory to investigate issues of cultural policy and the construction of cultural value within these practices. Therefore, it not only offers a novel approach to this field of study, but also feeds back into broader discussion around the benefit of investigating justificatory practices in future research.

The other half of my critical framework explores how existing justifications for public support for the arts, and the structures and values they advance and/or sustain, are impacting valuable cultural capabilities that promote the freedom to give value to our experience, such as freedom of expression, freedom to live with and towards others, freedom to recognise and show concern for other human beings, and freedom to participate effectively in political choices that govern one’s life. In short, I reflect on how justifications in Calgary and Leeds affect people’s freedoms, or lack thereof, to engage with capabilities that have the potential to foster wellbeing and human flourishing. This analysis also serves to emphasise that when evaluating and assessing issues of wellbeing, freedom and justice, and what cultural capabilities might help achieve these aims, consideration must be given to the circumstances in which people

live. While there has been, in recent years, a small uptake of the capability approach in the study of media and communication (Garnham, 1997; Couldry, 2010; Hesmondhalgh, 2017; Moss, 2018), its use in cultural policy research remains limited, and many questions persist around how we might operationalise it in practice. My investigation represents one example of how we might use the capability approach to assess the impact of cultural policy practices on issues of social justice, wellbeing and human flourishing. It, therefore, not only adds to cultural policy research more broadly but also contributes discussions and debates around how we may employ the capability approach in empirical study. Furthermore, my empirical study investigates two middle cities and thus contributes to those seeking to broaden where cultural policy research take place (Kong, 2006, 2011; Luckman et al., 2009; O'Brien & Miles, 2010; van Heur, 2011).

In conclusion, this thesis provides a theoretical and empirical contribution to the study of cultural policy. This research adds to important discussions around how we might (re)imagine cultural policy in ways that direct it more firmly towards issues of social justice and human wellbeing. Through its various theoretical perspectives and critiques, it enriches academic understanding of what future policy paths might entail, including what challenges face substantive policy change.

7.3 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the development of this research project, I present two broad directions for future research with regard to the concept of cultural capability. These recommendations are directed towards establishing a more comprehensive

understanding of cultural capability and its potential role in future policy practice and critique.

7.3.1 Just Process and Cultural Capability Selection

The notion of cultural capability and the capability approach more broadly have the potential to offer great insights into how we might advance policy change. They can help us to (re)imagine cultural policy in ways that are open to recognizing the current and potential diversity of cultural activity and value, and that seek to enable freedoms and opportunities available for people to give form and value to their experiences.

Furthermore, they can help us envision a cultural policy directed towards social justice, one that aims to help us flourish together. However, much work needs to be done to further develop these approaches in cultural policy study, and, as such, the possibilities for future research are innumerable. In this thesis, I offer one possible route that policy could take, one that specifically seeks to guarantee people equal opportunities to shape cultural value and value allocation. Put another way, I suggest that policy should work to ensure fair and just capability selection, to ensure that people are free to help choose which valuable cultural capabilities policy should seek to advance, and through this process shape notions of cultural value and value allocation. Mine is an early attempt to consider how cultural policy might ensure and expand people's freedoms and opportunities to shape cultural value. More investigation is needed to further develop a framework for a cultural capability approach to policy design, to determine what operationalising it might entail, and to assess its possibility of success.

Given my focus on just justificatory processes and securing people's freedoms in cultural capability selection, I believe that future research around cultural capabilities

and its potential to offer substantive policy change can learn much from engaging with existing research around co-production (Baiocchi, 2001a; Coleman and Sampaio, 2017; Dryzek and Pickering, 2017) as well as assessing examples of participatory policymaking practices through the lens of the capability approach. That is, future cultural capability research would benefit from assessing empirical examples of co-produced policy practices, including but also expanding beyond those specifically focused on cultural policy. The aim here would be to critique the real freedoms and opportunities people have in these practices to shape political processes, and to assess the relative success of these participatory policymaking practices at breaking down hierarchies and empowering citizens. The knowledge gained could then feed back into further developing what a cultural capability approach to policy design might entail, including the challenges and risks involved in attempting to enable people's freedoms to (co-)create culture and contribute to conversations around how to enact substantive policy change.

Future studies seeking to broaden our understanding of democratic processes of cultural capability selection might also involve researchers working with particular communities or institutions to initiate processes of capability selection, and observing potential issues and challenges within these processes as well as what capabilities come to the fore.

Wider cultural capability studies could be used to help outline what this type of fieldwork may entail (see Alkire, 2002). They may also work to investigate what functionings communities, policymakers, institutions and workers deem important, in order to get a sense of what cultural capabilities might be valuable. These studies could, for example, follow broader capability research where scholars have sought, for example, to identify which capabilities were important to assess wellbeing by

interviewing disadvantaged people as well as ‘experts’ dedicated to improving their quality of life, and asking them to identify their top three functionings (see Robeyns, 2006). Therefore, in a similar vein, researchers could conduct interviews with various communities and examine which functionings they deem important to get a better sense of what valuable cultural capabilities matter most in particular assessments of wellbeing.

7.3.2 Exploring Conversion Factors

Further developing a cultural capability approach to policy design must also engage in research around what might be blocking people’s freedoms to give form and value to their experiences and how a (re)imagining of policy might address these issues. In other words, future research and employment of the cultural capability perspective should also seek to gain a greater understanding of how various ‘conversion factors’ are impacting cultural capabilities as well as what means and resources are needed to help advance people’s freedoms and opportunities to (co-)create culture. As previously discussed, ‘conversion factors’ represent the structures and circumstances that not only hinder the advancement of particular capabilities but might also block people from achieving positive functionings even if valuable capabilities were advanced (Robeyns, 2017). The aim here is to recognise that when evaluating and assessing cultural capabilities, consideration must be given to the circumstances in which people live. Within the capability approach, conversion factors are typically grouped into three categories: personal, social and environmental (Robeyns, 2017). This research project focuses on social conversion factors: that is, “factors stemming from the society in which one lives, such as public policies, social norms, practices that unfairly discriminate, societal hierarchies or power relations related to class, gender, or race”

(Robeyns, 2017: 46). Certainly, more study needs to be done around what social conversion factors might be inhibiting cultural capabilities. This includes more studies in a similar vein as this one, that work to assess cultural policies or government practices in accordance with their performance in delivery of cultural capabilities, that is, how they work to enable or constrict opportunities to give form and value to our experiences. It may also involve studies assessing cultural institutions practices in the same way. For example, such studies could explore what potential cultural capabilities are impacted by hiring and recruitment practices in established arts organisations (Gross and Wilson, 2018), or how specific outreach programs impact cultural capabilities in particular communities.

I also suggest that future study seeks to engage with how environmental factors affect cultural capabilities. Future research in this area may consider, for example, how the geographical location (city vs rural), or segregation between affluent and deprived areas impact people's opportunities to (co-) create culture. The benefit of advancing studies around conversion factors is that we start to get a clearer picture of the realities behind grounding capabilities in a particular place/context. By extension, such studies help researchers and policymakers gain a better understanding of what resources and means may be necessary for future intervention (Robeyns, 2017). All of these studies would help build our understanding of what cultural capabilities might entail and the ways in which various cultural capabilities might overlap and intertwine.

While functionings and capabilities are of ultimate concern in capability research, studies are not excluded from interrogating what resources and means might be needed to advance particular capabilities (Robeyns, 2017). Future studies could, for example,

build on the work advanced in this thesis by exploring what political means are available to improve people's opportunities to shape cultural value and guide value allocation at the state level. So, for example, these studies may ask whether people have real avenues for political participation. Do people have access to forums or town-halls where they can engage with and challenge justificatory practices? Perhaps researchers may start to conceptualise what some of these means and resources entail.

Investigations along these lines would greatly benefit and inform discussions around future policy practice and the possibilities of advancing substantive change.

7.4 Concluding thoughts

This work is driven by my belief that, as a form of public policy, cultural policy could and should seek to advance issues of wellbeing in the vein of social justice. However, prevailing normative and conceptual foundations for cultural policy continue to narrow notions of cultural value linked to excellence and access and creative industries discourse. I argue that the cultural capability approach allows us to reframe our understanding of cultural value, not as something that is predetermined or concretely defined, but as an ever-evolving system of meaning-making. With this understanding in hand, we can begin to conceptualise new avenues for cultural policy, where its aims become about securing people's freedoms and opportunities to engage in these meaning-making processes and the (co-)creation of culture.

I appreciate that in our current state — in which we are witnessing, among other things, the rise of the far right that threatens democratic processes; the enduring (zombie or otherwise) march of neoliberal doctrine steadily working to restrain labour rights and

demonise the social state and the political (Brown, 2016; 2015; Davies, 2016); the climate crisis; and issues of discrimination, unequal power relations and socio-economic inequality not only persisting but made all the more obvious in our collective responses to the COVID-19 crisis (Eikhof, 2020; Comunian and England, 2020) — these beliefs may appear naive, utopian or both. However, as Erik Wright (2010) notes in his work on real utopias, radical notions of change need not be separated from what is pragmatically possible as long as we have a clear and grounded understanding of how these designs “can inform our practical tasks of navigating a world of imperfect conditions for social change” (6).

This research seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of what alternative paths to cultural policy, ones that are rooted in issues of social justice and wellbeing, might entail. Specifically, I offer a possible conceptual and normative foundation for a cultural policy geared towards securing people’s substantive freedoms to shape cultural value and guide value allocation. Employing such an approach to policy would mean that cultural activities, practices, institutional agendas and state responsibility become centred around issues of social justices (Robeyns, 2005; Nussbaum, 2011) and a shared obligation of enhancing equal opportunities for people (co-)create culture (Gross & Wilson, 2018). While arguing that there is an urgent need to develop more just policy practices, ones that are concerned with actively dismantling inequalities, and broadening policies appreciation and support of the myriad of ways people gaining meaning and value from arts and culture, I highlight some of the challenges we face in advancing more radical and emancipatory policy change. Any attempts to alter existing practices will come up against, and have to overcome, existing unequal power structures, sustained political practices and deeply entrenched notions of

cultural value that are, implicitly or explicitly, working to block, resist or alter the path towards change. Nevertheless, we need change in cultural policy, no matter how arduous the journey. This work endeavours to shine a light on how we may begin to conceptualise more just policy practices in the context of our imperfect world, and contributes to a renewal of cultural studies committed to critique in the public interest (McGuigan, 2005; Belfiore, 2018; Turner, 2015).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

LEEDS Interviewee Code	LEEDS Occupation	CALGARY Interviewee Code	CALGARY Occupation
P	Policymaker	D	Policymaker
O	Independent Artist	P	Policymaker
H	Leader of Large Arts Organisation	K	Policymaker
A	Leader of Middle Sized Arts Organisation	J	Leader of Medium arts organisation
SH	Policy Consultant	PT	Leader of Medium Arts Organisation
KW	Leader of Major Arts Organisation	BF	Independent Artist
MA	Leader DIY Arts Organisation	S	Leader of Small Arts Organisation
D	Policymaker	J	Leader DIY Arts Organisation
L	Policymaker	KC	Leader of Cornerstone Arts Organisation
JP	Leader of Major Arts Organisation	CS	Leader of Cornerstone Arts Organisation
T	Leader of Middle Sized Arts Organisation	SI	Policymaker
B	Leader of DIY Arts Organisation	JS	Leader of Inclusive Arts Organisation

JP	Leader of Inclusive Arts Organisation	LA	Policymaker
AD	Policy Consultant	PH	Policy consultant and Leader of a Small Arts Organisation
E	Independent Artist	M	Policymaker
EB	Policy Consultant and Leader of Small Sized Arts Organisation	MS	Leader of Medium Sized Arts Organisation
VP	Independent Artist	T	Policymaker
W	Leader of Major Arts Organisation	EOC	Leader of Large Arts Organisation
AI	Policy Maker	DI	Leader of Cornerstone Arts Organisation
AC	Policy Consultant	JT	Member of Cornerstone Arts Organisation
		MR	Philanthropist for the Arts

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF CODED DOCUMENTS

	Documents Coded to help Inform Genealogy of Justificatory Practices
1	Calgary Arts Development 2019-2022 Strategic Direction
2	Calgary Arts Development Accountability Report 2018
3	Calgary Arts Development Accountability Report 2012
4	Calgary Arts Development Accountability Report 2016
5	Calgary Arts Development Accountability Report 2017
6	Calgary Arts Development Accountability Report 2015
7	Calgary Arts Development Accountability Report 2011
8	2006 CALGARY ARTS DEVELOPMENT: intersections moving forward together
9	Calgary Arts Development: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: A Demographic Profile of Calgary's Arts Sector 2017
10	Calgary Arts Development: Operating Grant Program 2019 Guidelines
11	MDB Insights Inc: Cultural Plan for the City of Calgary What We Heard Report
12	City of Calgary: Calgary Culture Plan Report Back // What We Heard, What We Did March 2016
13	Calgary Arts Development: Economic Impact Assessment of the Annual Operations of Calgary Arts Organisations, June 2018
14	Calgary Arts Development: Calgary Engagement Survey, 2018
15	Canada Council for the Arts: Moving Forward Strategic Plan 2008-11
16	Canada Council for the Arts: 1st Annual Report 1958
17	Canada Council for the Arts: 29th Annual Report 1985-86
18	Canada Council for the Arts: 36 th Annual Report 1992-1993
19	Canada Council for the Arts: 42 nd Annual Report 1998-1999
20	Canada Council for the Arts: Annual Report 2004-05
21	Canada Council for the Arts: Shaping a New Future Strategic Plan 2016-21
22	Canada Council for the Arts Equity Policy
23	Cultural Plan for Calgary
24	Calgary Economic Development: Calgary in the New Economy--The Economic Strategy for Calgary
25	City of Calgary: One Calgary 2019-2022 Service Plans and Budgets
26	City of Vancouver: CULTURE PLAN STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS 2014-2018
27	City of Vancouver: Culture Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture Vancouver Culture Plan 2020-2029
28	Toronto Arts Council: 2011 ANNUAL REPORT
29	Toronto Arts Council: 2016 ANNUAL REPORT
30	Toronto Arts Council: 2018 ANNUAL REPORT
	LEEDS/UK
31	United Cities and Local Governments - Committee on culture Agenda 21 for culture, 2004
32	United Cities and Local Governments - Committee on culture

	Agenda 21 for culture, 2015
33	United Cities and Local Governments: REVIEW OF LEEDS' CULTURE 21: ACTIONS SELF-ASSESSMENT MARCH 2018
34	Centres for Social Change: Museums, Galleries and Archives for All Policy Guidance on Social Inclusion for DCMS funded and local authority museums, galleries and archives in England M A Y 2000 DCMS: Creating Opportunities Guidance for Local Authorities in England on Local Cultural Strategies, 2000
35	Leeds City Council: Leeds Culture Strategy 2017-2030
36	DCMS: The Culture White Paper, 2016
37	Home Office: Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018 - 2025 Inclusive by Instinct
38	Arts Council England: Equality, Diversity and the Creative Case A Data Report, 2016-2017
39	European Commission: E U R O P E 2 0 2 0 -- A European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth
40	Arts Council England--Your health and the arts: a study of the association between arts engagement and health, 2005
41	Cultural Commissioning Programme: The art of the possible A quick guide to commissioning arts and cultural providers for better health and wellbeing. 2017
42	Arts Council England: GREAT ART AND CULTURE FOR EVERYONE 2010 -2020 10-YEAR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
43	Leeds 2023 Bid Book: WEAVING US TOGETHER
44	Leeds City Council: LEEDS INCLUSIVE GROWTH STRATEGY 2018 – 2023
45	NEF: The Art of Commissioning How commissioners can release the potential of the arts and cultural sector, 2016
46	A policy For the Arts: The First Steps
47	Arts Council England: Developing a New Strategy for Arts Council England 2020-2030
48	DCMS: UK City of Culture consultation document, December 2014
49	DCMS: UK CITY OF CULTURE 2021 Guidance for Bidding Cities
50	Leeds Initiative: Leeds 2030 Our vision to be the best city in the UK Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030

APPENDIX 3: INFORMATION SHEET



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Participation Information Sheet

Title: **What is culture for in everyday cities? The case of Calgary and Leeds**

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Who am I? And what is the purpose of the project?

My name is Elysia Lechelt and I am a PhD candidate at the University of Leeds in the UK. I am currently studying culture's relationship to the city, especially how the arts connects to city life. I am hoping to involve 50 people working in cultural policy and public arts institutions in a research project that explores the how we think and talk about the arts. The project will look at the arts connection to the city in two transnational cities, Calgary in Canada and Leeds in the UK. The hope of this project is to gain a better understanding of how middle cities, that is cities that are neither large metropolises like London or New York but are not small either, think about and help to build a connection between the arts and the city. Middle cities have been largely overlooked in major cultural policy discussions and I believe it is time to start working towards an understanding of how these cities understand and support the arts. In this way my project hopes to contribute to larger cultural policy discussions about the arts and the city taking place around the world.

Why you and what will you have to do?

Because of your relationship with culture and the arts I would like to talk to you and hear your thoughts about the arts and the part it plays in your city. Interviews will begin taking place in the fall of 2017 and run through to the end of summer of 2018. Generally speaking, we will only meet up once for an hour to an hour and a half interview. However, you may be asked to participate in a follow up interview after our initial meeting, or I may need to contact via phone, or Skype to gain any additional or missed information. The interview style will be informal, and I will ask mainly open ended questions. You may think about the interview as more of a discussion rather than strictly a question and answer scenario. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed at a later date. The audio recordings made during the interviews are used for analysis and no other use of them will be made without your written permission, and no one outside of the project will be allowed to access them. Before we start the interview you will be asked to sign a consent letter, you may take time to read, think about it and ask questions before signing. You do not need to say yes and I will in no way mind if you do not want to take part. You may also change your mind at any point before the final submission and/or publication of

the project. That is, you may withdraw from the study with no questions asked before January 2019. Additionally, if you would like, I will keep you informed of any additional earlier publications made based on my research findings.

Where will we meet?

If you decide to take part in the project we will arrange a time and public place that best suits you. The majority of my time is spent in Leeds. However, I will be conducting interviews in Calgary from February 2018- July 2018. For interviews, or any follow up interviews, where we are not able to decide on a time or place due to scheduling conflicts I am happy to arrange for Skype interviews if necessary, but ideally all interviews will take place in person.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

While there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, the aim of this research is to consider new ways of thinking about cultural policy in the city, and in this way your insight is contributing to broader discussion on how contemporary society is thinking about the arts and artistic activity and how it connects with and is involved with the city.

Will my taking part in the project be kept confidential? What will happen to the results of the research project?

Everything you say will be kept confidential. It will be stored and used in relevant future research. Your identity will be anonymized and protected at all times. In other words, I will use pseudonyms and will not refer to your institution or place or work directly. Further, all information will be securely stored as per the university of Leeds and Calgary data protection guidelines. If you are interested, I would be happy to keep you informed with how the project is advancing and when it is complete.

Who is organizing or funding the study.

I am sponsored by the University of Leeds, and am a student of the school of Media and Communication in the Faculty of Performance, Visual Arts and Communication School of Media and Communication. This project is supervised by Dr. David Lee and Professor Kate Oakley.

Contact information:

Please feel free to contact me at anytime via email at meektl@leeds.ac.uk.
Elysia Lechelt, School of Media and Communication,
The University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT, UK

APPENDIX 4: CONSENT FORM

Faculty of Performance, Visual Arts and Communication
School of Media and Communication



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Consent to take part in 'What is culture for in everyday cities? The case study of Calgary and Leeds'

	Add your initials next to the statements you agree with
I confirm that I have read and understand the information letter dated June 5, 2017 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	
I agree for the data collected from me to be stored and used in relevant future research in an anonymised form.	
I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study, may be looked at by auditors from the University of Leeds or from regulatory authorities where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my records.	
I give permission for the researcher (Elysia Lechelt) to have access to my responses. I understand that I will not be identified or identifiable in the published writing that results from the research unless I give written permission to that effect.	
I agree to take part in the above research project and will inform the lead researcher (details on the information sheet) should my contact details change during the project and, if necessary, afterwards.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time during the conducting of interview and may withdraw up until January 1, 2019. I can withdraw without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences.	

Name of participant	
Participant's signature	
Date	
Name of lead researcher	
Signature	
Date*	

<i>Project title: What is culture for in everyday cities? The case study of Calgary and Leeds</i>	<i>Document type</i>	<i>Version #</i>	<i>Date</i>
	Consent form		

Faculty of Performance, Visual Arts and Communication
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*To be signed and dated in the presence of the participant.

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant will receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, and the letter information sheet. A copy of the signed and dated consent form will be kept with the project's main documents which are kept in a secure location at the University of Leeds.

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	Consent form		

