WHALE ARTS wins prestigious Creative Regeneration award

Community-led arts charity WHALE Arts won top prize at SURF Awards 2019 for Best Practice in Creative Regeneration on 5th December at Glasgow’s Grand Central Hotel.

Edinburgh, Dec 6, 2019 (Issuewire.com) - Community-led arts charity WHALE Arts won the top prize at SURF Awards 2019 for Best Practice in Creative Regeneration on 5th December at Glasgow’s Grand Central Hotel.

WHALE Arts was announced the winner of the Best Practice in Creative Regeneration at SURF Awards 2019 for its long-term and innovative approach. Founded by local community members in 1992 WHALE Arts centre offers a range of ongoing art activities, events and creative opportunities available to the South West Edinburgh community which impressed SURF judges.

The SURF Awards are delivered each year by SURF, a regeneration forum with over 300 cross-sector member organizations across Scotland, in partnership with the Scottish Government. The purpose is to highlight, celebrate and share the achievements of initiatives that address physical, social and economic challenges in communities across Scotland.

Representatives of the five category winning initiatives for 2019 were personally congratulated on their inspiring work by the Scottish Government’s Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Communities, Aileen Campbell MSP.
Aileen Campbell MSP, Scottish Government Cabinet Secretary for Local Government and Communities said:

“These awards are a great platform for recognizing and showcasing successful community regeneration. With each passing year, the exceptional standard of applications and shortlisted projects are even higher. This year’s shortlist demonstrates what is possible when communities are empowered to work hard, meet challenges and develop projects to shape their own futures.”

SURF judges noted the scale of individual and collective partnerships launched and developed over time and the five winning projects all demonstrate the value of a long-term approach to regeneration. Long-running activities and events at WHALE Arts include Street Arts for youth, smARTies art club for children and smARTcraft for adults with additional support needs.

Leah Black, Chief Executive of WHALE Arts, said:

“We are honored to receive this award. We will continue to work alongside our wonderful community in Wester Hailes to become creative agents for change. It is an exciting time working with local partners, City of Edinburgh Council and The Scottish Government on what might be the first Local Place Plan in Scotland, focusing on Wester Hailes and driving creative regeneration.”

Chief Architect for the Scottish Government, Ian Gilzean, is currently in residency at WHALE Arts to explore how an arts centre can inform and drive creative regeneration. A new Wester Hailes Place Plan is currently under development.

Ian Gilzean, Chief Architect for the Scottish Government said:

“Congratulations to WHALE Arts on their well-deserved award, WHALE Arts has been a fantastic base for facilitating the Wester Hailes Local Place Plan while on secondment working for City of Edinburgh Council. It’s been great to work with the wider local community, including partners of WHALE Arts such as Wester Hailes Community Trust and Prospect Housing, to develop creative regeneration possibilities.”

WHALE Arts is a social enterprise and charity launched in 1992 as Wester Hailes’ community centre for Arts, Leisure, and Education. In 2000 the WHALE Arts centre opened and includes an arts workshop, performance space, community kitchen, crèche and board room that local community groups and organizations use. Local artist practitioners support and lead art programmes with partner organizations including Edinburgh Art Festival and local residents in Wester Hailes.

For more information about current projects at WHALE Arts contact: info@whalearts.co.uk or visit http://www.whalearts.co.uk
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