



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

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Convener
Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

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IM/KF

Dear Convener

CREATIVE SCOTLAND AUGUST UPDATE

I hope this latest update from Creative Scotland continues to find yourself and the Committee safe and well.

I am writing to provide the Committee with another monthly update on our work to support the sector during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Funding Response to Covid-19

As stated elsewhere, we fully recognise and do not underestimate the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on both the work being produced and, critically, on the lives of everyone working in all parts of the creative and culture sector.

In the interests of brevity and in the knowledge that the Committee is already informed through previous updates, I will focus this update on significant actions taken to address the ongoing impact of Covid-19 since the previous communication provided in July.

A key ongoing consideration is how the £97m announced in July by the UK Government, for the Scottish Government to provide emergency funding for culture and heritage, will be applied. So far, the Scottish Government has publicly announced the following:

- £4m for Museums & Galleries through MGS
- £2.5m to supplement the previously announced £10m for the Performing Arts Venues Relief Fund through CS
- £2.2m for the Grassroots Music Venues Stabilisation Fund through CS
- £10m to support events and associated supply chains through EventScotland
- £3.8m for the National Trust for Scotland

At time of writing, this means there is £74.5m still to be allocated. To help with this, we, alongside other agencies and bodies, continue to work closely with the Scottish Government to help determine how the funds are to be spent and Creative Scotland is playing its role in ensuring support flows to artists, other freelancers and organisations as soon as possible.

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Performing Arts Venue Relief Fund

A significant development since our last update to the Committee has been the progress with the Performing Arts Venue Relief Fund (PAVRF).

Full details on the PAVRF, including fund guidance, can be found [here](#). Allocation of this fund, as agreed with Scottish Government, is as follows:

- £7.5m targeted funding for performing arts venues in Scotland currently in receipt of Regular Funding through Creative Scotland. More information about the Regular Funding Network 2018-21 can be found [here](#).
- £5m open fund for application from Scotland based performing arts venues not currently in receipt of Regular Funding. This open fund has been developed with input from the Federation for Scottish Theatre

As a reminder, the first Scottish Government announcement that there was to be a fund for Performing Arts Venues was made on Friday 3 July 2020. On Wednesday 15 July Creative Scotland announced Strand 1 of the PAVRF for organisations in the RFO network. Eligible RFOs were then emailed to provide them with the guidance for the fund and the application form for completion, should they choose to apply.

On 29 July, an additional £2.5m for Performing Arts Venues was announced by the Scottish Government making the total available through the open element of the PAVRF £5m. This open element of the fund also opened to applications on that date.

On 05 August, we announced the 20 venues to be in receipt of the £7.5m from the first strand of this fund:

Venue	Local Authority	Award Total
Aberdeen Performing Arts	Aberdeen City	£750,000
An Lanntair	Na h-Eileanan Siar	£100,000
Beacon Arts Centre	Inverclyde	£114,000
CCA: Centre for Contemporary Arts	Glasgow City	£214,500
Citizens Theatre	Glasgow City	£100,000
Comar	Argyll and Bute	£119,000
Dance Base	City of Edinburgh	£256,200
Dundee Repertory Theatre	Dundee City	£480,907
Eden Court Theatre and Cinema	Highland	£750,000
Horsecross Arts	Perth and Kinross	£749,900
Macrobert Arts Centre	Stirling	£485,213
Pitlochry Festival Theatre	Perth and Kinross	£400,000
Platform (Glasgow East Arts Co)	Glasgow City	£75,400
Royal Lyceum Theatre Company	City of Edinburgh	£750,000
Shetland Arts Development Agency	Shetland Islands	£247,582
The Barn	Aberdeenshire	£105,000
The Storytelling Centre/TRACS	City of Edinburgh	£213,000
Tramway	Glasgow City	£549,000
Traverse Theatre	City of Edinburgh	£500,000
Tron Theatre	Glasgow City	£499,849

The proposals from the 20 RFOs in receipt of the £7.5m funding indicate that at least 423 jobs will be saved from redundancy, 167 people will be brought back early from furlough and there will be 1,037 commissions for freelancers.

Decisions on the £5m open fund element of the PAVRF will be made and published no later than 24 September and details on this will be included in a future update to the Committee.

Grassroots Music Venues Sustainability Fund

On Thursday 9 July 2020, the [Scottish Government announced £2.2m funds](#) specifically aimed at helping grassroots music venues.

Timescales for the launch of the fund are as follows:

- Publication of fund Guidance and Application questions – **Wednesday 19 August 2020**
- Applications open – **Wednesday 26 August 2020**
- Deadline for Applications – **Thursday 3 September 2020**

Decisions and awards will be made before 24 September. Further details of the fund can be found [on our website](#) and via our accompanying [news release](#).

Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development

Creative Scotland's revised Open Fund: Sustaining Creative Development has been open for applications since April. Up until week commencing 17 August 2020, the fund had received 423 applications from individuals with a total ask of £5.2m and 207 applications from organisations, with a total ask of £5m. Since the start of July, have made 145 awards totaling £2.3m through this fund. Assessment of applications continue and successful awards [are published on an ongoing basis](#).

Digital Pivot Programme

The second round for expressions of interest for the Digital Pivot 1-1 have now closed. The Fund attracted 27 requests for the 10 spaces which were available and the 10 successful participants will work with specialist Suzy Glass over the coming months supporting the transfer of activity to a digital environment in the context of Covid-19. The awardees are:

Magdalena Schamberger; Take Me Somewhere Festival; Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival; Strange Town Theatre Company; Birds of Paradise Theatre Company; The Good Life Group; Visible Fictions; Naomi O Kelly; North Edinburgh Arts; and North Lands Creative.

This group are in addition to the first round of awardees, which included: Ruxandra Cantir and Sarah Rose Graber; SEALL - Skye Events for All; The Village Storytelling Centre; Right Lines Productions; Panel; North Light Arts; H-arts; Room 2 Manoeuvre; Scottish Book Trust; Hanna Tuulikki; GAMIS (Glasgow Artists Moving Image Studio) and Alice Cooper.

In addition to the above work, we are bringing together some digital peer-support and strategic mentoring programmes with The Space to form a coherent single digital support programme. The Space is a digital agency established by Arts Council England and the BBC to help promote digital engagement across the arts and cultural sector. The Space works regularly with Creative Scotland, the Arts Council of Wales and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, supporting organisations by commissioning projects, building digital skills and capacity, and helping organisations reach wider audiences using digital content, media and online platforms.

Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Funds/Creative, Tourism & Hospitality Hardship Fund

In April 2020, the Scottish Government made available additional grant funding for vulnerable Scottish SMEs that are vital to local, regional and national economies and for tourism, hospitality and creative industry businesses that are experiencing hardship as a result of COVID-19.

Scotland's enterprise agencies delivered this funding, with input from Visit Scotland and Creative Scotland, via two short-term Funds:

- A £30 million ***Creative, Tourism & Hospitality Enterprises Hardship Fund*** for small creative, tourism and hospitality companies not in receipt of other COVID-19 business grants. The fund was designed to support companies in tourism, creative industries and hospitality that were experiencing immediate hardship, because they are ineligible for other COVID-19 Government grant support.
- A £120 million ***Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund*** for viable but vulnerable SME firms who are vital to Scotland's economy. The fund was designed to support companies with working capital to help them continue trading or to come out of hibernation and the focus was on firms that are vital to local, regional or national economic prosperity and those who can help to kick start the recovery.

As at 6 August, the Creative, Tourism and Hospitality Hardship Fund had provided £5.7m to 552 businesses in the creative industries, while the Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund provided a further £12.5m to an additional 154 creative industries businesses. More detail on these awards can be found [here](#).

Engagement with the Sector

We continue to regularly convene meetings with the Sector Development Bodies and the Scottish Government to map the ongoing impacts being felt and discuss the needs of the sector to help manage the challenges.

The sector bodies involved in these meetings are:

- Arts and Business Scotland
- Craft Scotland
- Cultural Alliance
- Culture Counts
- Federation of Scottish Theatre
- Festivals Edinburgh
- Literature Alliance
- Publishing Scotland
- SCAN
- Scottish Music Industry Association

In addition to these regular meetings, we are planning a series of sector led events, involving the above organisations, but open to the creative and culture sector, partners and public more widely, with the aim of contributing to future policy, holding visible and open debate, and increasing understanding of the challenges faced by the sector amongst policymakers. These events are currently in development and more information will be shared in due course.

We also continue to issue regular updates, including directly from myself, via our social media channels and through our website. Some recent updates that will be of interest to the Committee include:

- [Monthly newsletter for July](#)
- [Chief Executive Update](#)
- [Performing Arts Venue Relief Fund update](#)
- [Covid-19 Emergency Funds update](#)

Audience Intention Research

Following an open tender process, we have appointed researchers to undertake an ongoing programme of research to understand the intention of the public to re-engage with cultural activity. This includes the extent and pattern of recovery, considering when and how people will participate

and attend, and how this will vary between different types of activity and socio-demographic characteristics. The research will also consider what will help enable people to engage, including identifying potential barriers and incentives. The first set of findings from this research has been delivered by the researchers and is currently being analysed prior to publication shortly.

Screen Scotland Funding

Single Project Development

While production ceased across the screen sector on the start of lock-down, work on the development of projects continued. To support the sector to deliver COVID-viable activity, Screen Scotland launched parallel Single Project Development funding routes for both film and TV in March. These routes allowed for greater flexibility and faster assessment of applications.

The two funding routes were resourced to jointly provide £1million of ringfenced funding for Scotland's independent film and television production companies to support them to develop creative and ambitious projects across film and television in scripted and unscripted genres, for live-action and animation. Single Project Development Funds closed at the end of June, with 71 applications across film and TV. Awards with an aggregate value of £766,862 have been funded to date. Assessments are ongoing and it is expected that the full commitment of £1m will be reached.

Safe Working Guidance

As lock-down started, Screen Scotland commenced work with the BFI co-ordinated Screen Sector Task Force on two fronts: 1. to devise, with industry, safe working guidelines and protocols for production and exhibition; and 2. to support the sector's work with DCMS and HM Treasury to secure a re-insurance system that would enable a production to start filming despite the pre-existing risk of COVID-related impacts. We conducted this work in consultation with the Scottish Government. These safe working guidelines are [available on our website](#).

The Screen Commission within Screen Scotland provides support to productions which intend filming in Scotland. As a result of the prompt work of the BFI Screen Sector Task Force agreeing the Guidelines, the Screen Commission has helped support location scouting and related activities ahead of production restarts, safely and in accordance with the Scottish Government's Phasing under the COVID-19 Framework for Decision Making.

Covid-19 safety training for film & TV production has commenced to facilitate safe return to production.

Screen Scotland, led by Screen Scotland's Head of Audience Development, has been working with the UK Cinema Association to ensure Scottish Government input, approval and sign-off of safeguarding guidance for Scottish cinemas and for drive-in events. A key barrier for cinemas to reopen is the 2m social distancing regulation. At this level, the capacity of reopened cinemas will be significantly reduced; likely 25%-50% of usual capacity which means many independent sites will not be able to reopen without additional financial support.

Studio Update

Following the appointment of First Stage Studios as the operators of 31 Bath Road, many production enquiries have been fielded during lockdown. In the meantime, work to update the map of Scotland's experienced and up and coming craft and technical crew has been undertaken by the Screen Commission.

New and emerging film talent development: Short Circuit and Little Pictures

Screen Scotland has developed two new initiatives to identify new talent and support emerging talent:

Short Circuit is a film talent development programme run by Film City Glasgow and Glasgow Film that aims to support fiction filmmaking talent in Scotland who have yet to make a first feature. The initiative has announced 16 shortlisted films that will be supported through the short film scheme - **Sharp Shorts**.

Short Circuit has confirmed that of the 16 filmmaking teams short-listed for Sharp Shorts 65.6% are women, 40.6% BAME and 43.8% identify as coming from a socio-economically disadvantaged background. 21.9% of the filmmakers identify as LGBTQ+ and 15.6% have declared a disability or long-term health condition (including mental health). Please note, the data collected includes filmmakers who opted to “prefer not to say”.

Under *Sharp Shorts* nine short film projects produced from this short-list will be awarded a maximum of £15,000. Awards will be determined in late August. Five feature length projects will also be developed through the programme.

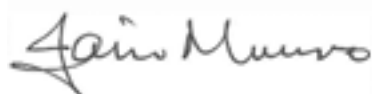
Screen Scotland has also worked with GMAC in Glasgow on *Little Pictures*, a new 3-year micro-budget commissioning scheme for people from target groups with little or no filmmaking experience to be delivered by GMAC Film. *Little Pictures* has been initiated to encourage new filmmakers to develop their voice, take creative risks and will help to develop filmmaking talent from under-represented groups in Scotland.

To conclude

I trust the Committee finds this update useful and we will continue to keep the Committee updated on progress, with a further update in September.

If there are any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Your sincerely



Iain Munro
Chief Executive
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