



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Joan McAlpine
Convener Culture,
Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee
Europe@parliament.scot

IM/km
28 August 2019

Dear Convener

Creative Scotland Funding Review Update

I am writing to update the Committee on the public and sector engagement which has recently taken place as part of Creative Scotland's strategic update and funding review, and in response to the Committee's request in your letter of 15 May 2019:

"The Committee notes the intention of Creative Scotland to undertake regional consultations on what the priorities for arts funding should be. The Committee requests a written update, by the end of August, regarding what consultations have taken place and any findings that may have emerged from these consultations at that stage."

Public Conversations

Creative Scotland has now completed a series of 17 public conversation events around Scotland, from Shetland to Dumfries, (the full list of locations is contained in Appendix 1). The events took place between 22 May and 15 July this year and mark our commitment to engage on our work with stakeholders and the public in a collaborative way and, in this particular instance, on our future funding approach.

The events included a mix of city, rural, island and mainland locations and were hosted in cultural venues which were easily accessible by both stakeholders and the public. In order to ensure everyone who attended were afforded every opportunity to put forward their views and participate fully in the conversation, each event was designed to engage up to 40 people. This also fitted with the 'service design' methodology we used for capturing views, which has been widely used successfully by other organisations undertaking similar exercises and also has been used in our internal organisational development work. We feel very positive about the quality of the engagement and the feedback we have had from participants. The comments from those who attended the events has been very positive.

I have included a small number of quotes below on what the participants valued about their experience:

- *"Now I know Creative Scotland is human and really friendly! (was really scary before)"*
- *"Very democratic discussion and open"*
- *"Open process, liked the code of conduct"*
- *"Thank you for the opportunity and for bringing it to us rather than expecting us to come to you. This makes a huge difference to a small business in terms of the time and cost"*
- *"Getting a much better sense of the complexity and challenge you face as an organisation was really helpful"*
- *"Good for Creative Scotland to facilitate - not external"*
- *"Small groups. Every voice heard"*

Across the events we benefited from the views of 317 participants in 15 locations (we hosted two events each in Glasgow and Edinburgh in response to demand, taking the total to 17 events) across Scotland. As a result, we have had thousands of views, contributions and ideas on potential ways forward.

We were also keen to involve a broad range of Creative Scotland staff in this engagement and during the course of the events we had 35 staff from across the organisation facilitating and participating in the conversations with those attending.

In addition, we ran a parallel online opportunity to contribute to the public conversation through our web presence and have received a further 70 contributions through this channel from both individuals and organisations.

In addition to the public conversations, we have added two further events in order to ensure we have as rounded a picture as possible of views and perspectives on ways forward. We held an event at Creative Scotland on Friday 23 August to engage Culture Counts and their stakeholders, and a further event on Tuesday 27 August with other stakeholder public sector agencies.

Findings

Although I would not like to pre-empt the final conclusions and themes that arise from the analysis currently underway, I am happy to inform the Committee of some of the discussion areas that were prominent in the events. These include: continued engagement at a local level to work together in developing the arts, screen and creative industries and creative practice; establishing clear principles for funding decision making that are easily understood; support for an infrastructure that is able to respond to local needs; support for development beyond funding; the need to recognise differing needs of projects, organisations and individuals; establishing clear reasons for Creative Scotland intervention; improving and simplifying the funding process; and a call for more funding (on the basis that a great deal more can be achieved for further modest investment) and for a more sustainable basis for that funding.

This list is by no means exhaustive but hopefully this gives the Committee a sense of the feedback received.

Where we are now

We are analysing the responses from the events and the online consultation and will consider the contributions alongside the evidence from other key documents that have been generated as part of this process. These include:

- [Funding Creativity: An Internal Research and Discussion Paper to Inform Creative Scotland's Funding Review \(Jeanie Scott, Culture Radar\) – Published May 2019](#)
- [A review of consultations on public funding for creativity and culture in Scotland and Creative Scotland's sector reviews – Published May 2019](#)
- [Wavehill Evaluation of the 2018-21 Regular Funding process – Published January 2019](#)

Additionally, there are a number of external reference documents that we will take into account which have been created for other purposes (i.e. responses to the Committee's own inquiry into sustainable funding for the arts, relevant academic research, and policy developments.)

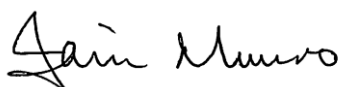
Next Steps

We will shortly commence a series of internal discussions to consider all feedback and information, establish key themes arising from the information and explore potential ways forward over September and October.

We will also inform all participants of the key themes arising from the conversations and articulate clearly the next steps and timetable for delivery (this will also be published on our website). We expect to start to communicate our future funding approach externally following our January Board meeting in the early part of 2020. Overall, we will be working to continue the positive engagement felt through the public conversations.

I hope this letter provides you with the necessary detail and reassurance that positive progress is being made on moving towards an improved funding model. Do let me know if you require any further information at this stage.

Yours sincerely,



Iain Munro

Acting Chief Executive
Àrd-Oifigear an Gnìomh
Creative Scotland

Appendix 1: Public Conversation Events Programme

1.	DCA Conference Space	DUNDEE	Wed 22 May
2.	Grassmarket Project	EDINBURGH	Tue 28 May
3.	Glasgow Womens' Library	GLASGOW	Fri 31 May
4.	Eden Court	INVERNESS	Thu 6 Jun
5.	An Lanntair	LEWIS	Tue 11 Jun
6.	Mareel	SHETLAND	Fri 14 Jun
7.	Corran Halls	OBAN	Wed 19 Jun
8.	SWG3 - Photography Studio	GLASGOW	Sat 22 Jun
9.	Theatre Royal	DUMFRIES	Tue 25 Jun
10.	Saltcoats Townhall	SALTCOATS	Wed 26 Jun
11.	Aros Centre, Portree	SKYE	Tue 2 Jul
12.	MacArts	GALASHIELS	Thu 4 Jul
13.	Aberdeen Performing Arts	ABERDEEN	Fri 5 Jul
14.	Creative Scotland	EDINBURGH	Sat 6 Jul
15.	Timespan	HELMSDALE	Wed 10 Jul
16.	Carnegie Library and Gallery	DUNFERMLINE	Fri 12 Jul
17.	The St Magnus Centre	ORKNEY	Mon 15 Jul