



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Fiona Hyslop MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture  
Scottish Government  
Edinburgh

The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Direct Tel: 0131-348-5234  
(RNID Typetalk calls welcome)  
(Central) Textphone: 0131-348-5415  
E-mail: [europa@parliament.scot](mailto:europa@parliament.scot)

## **BY E-MAIL**

26 February 2020

### **SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT BUDGET 2020-21**

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Congratulations on your recent appointment to the role of Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture. The Committee recognises the exceptional circumstances regarding the timescale for scrutiny of the Scottish Government budget for 2020-21. In this regard, I am responding to your letter of 6 February 2020 and seeking further information with regard to a range of issues raised in your letter.

#### Cultural Youth Experience Fund

In your letter, you note that the Scottish Government's budget will enable the Cultural Youth Experience Fund (CYEF) to be introduced in 2020-21 to support the priority of widening cultural participation amongst young people. The Committee would welcome further information on the amount of funding which will be allocated to the fund in 2020-21, what the priorities for fund will be, the age groups which the fund will focus on and how funding will be distributed.

#### Sistema Scotland

The Committee notes that the budget allocation for Sistema Scotland will be £0.85m in 2020-21 which remains the same budget allocation, in cash terms, as that for 2019-20. The Committee would welcome clarification as to whether Sistema Scotland will be expected to deliver the same range of activities or an expanded range of activities compared to those supported by the 2019-20 budget allocation. The Committee would also welcome details of the content of any discussions you have had with Sistema Scotland with regard to their proposed 2020-21 budget allocation.

Furthermore, the Committee notes that the Board of Creative Scotland approved the 2019-20 ring-fenced grant of £0.85m to Sistema Scotland in October 2019. At the same time, Creative Scotland Board Minutes<sup>1</sup> indicate that the Board requested a discussion with the Scottish Government on a clearer strategic role for Creative Scotland in relation to Sistema's work. The Committee would welcome more information on the content of any discussions that have taken place with Creative Scotland in this regard and what this may mean for Sistema Scotland's 2020-21 budget allocation.

### National Lottery Funding

The Committee notes your response to issues raised in our pre-budget scrutiny letter with regard to National Lottery funding and, in particular, that the Scottish Government will consider the longer-term future of declining levels of national lottery income upon Creative Scotland's budget as part of the 2020 Spending Review. The Committee also notes that we raised this issue as part of the Committee's report into arts funding and we look forward to your response to this issue and the report in the near future.

### Screen

As you will be aware, the Committee has taken a significant interest in the performance of Scotland's screen sector. The Committee therefore welcomes your new portfolio which combines Culture with Economy and Fair Work. The Committee, in its report of June 2018, raised a series of concerns with regard to the division of responsibilities between Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise in terms of the provision of support to the screen sector. Notably, the Committee stated that it considered that Scottish Enterprise's support model is unsuited to most screen businesses. In this regard, the Committee considers that your new portfolio provides an ideal opportunity to re-consider the means via which public agencies provide support to the screen sector in Scotland.

The Committee reaffirms its recommendation from its screen sector report that the sector would be best supported via the creation of a stand-alone agency. The Committee notes that Scotland continues to lack a purpose-built studio.

The Committee looks forward to continued dialogue with you on the issues raised in this letter as well as across the culture aspect of your remit in the coming months.

Yours Sincerely,

Joan McAlpine  
**Convener, Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee**

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<sup>1</sup> Creative Scotland Board Minutes, 4 October 2019:  
[https://www.creativescotland.com/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/82707/Minutes-4-October-2019.pdf](https://www.creativescotland.com/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/82707/Minutes-4-October-2019.pdf)