

CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

ARTS FUNDING INQUIRY

SUBMISSION FROM DRAKE MUSIC SCOTLAND

What would a sustainable model of funding look like?

Drake Music Scotland is currently a recipient of Creative Scotland Regular Funding, amounting to around 25% of our current total income. Like other arts organisations our other income comes from a range of sources but we see it as a positive that we are not overly reliant on one source in particular. Although this means we are accountable to a number of different funders looking for different outcomes that have varied reporting requirements, this is more sustainable. We would welcome continuing support from Creative Scotland and other bodies to further develop relationships with a wider portfolio of income sources and explore avenues for sponsorship and earned income, including match-funding opportunities. A more collaborative approach to working with the sector by the main arts funding body would enable us to continue to identify and build relationships with those sources that are a good match for our prospective projects. We would also add our voice to concerns expressed about the future of Lottery funding for the arts.

A sustainable model of funding could be one where 'core' or 'regularly' funded organisations are awarded flexible funds to be allocated to overheads, projects and other areas according to need. An agreed framework would set out recommended levels but allow organisations accepted on to the programme a degree of autonomy to make their own decisions while still being accountable for achieving the milestones and targets laid out in their plans. It might also offer options for longer-term funding extending beyond 3 years as at present. Moving **from 3 to 5 year funding** could be done on a rolling basis with organisations applying to do this once they are on the 3-year scheme, have been meeting requirements and started devising plans for the longer-term. If organisations were afforded more longer-term security, planning horizons that were further ahead would enable them to put in the work in advance to ensure plans were more viable and the various elements in place.

DMS also works with local authorities and the one-year planning cycle also creates difficulties with budgets not being confirmed until just before the new financial year begins, and with no certainty about funding in subsequent years.

We understand the need for detailed plans when applying for funding, but it would be helpful if repetition of basic information could be minimised and processes streamlined as much as possible with options for organisations to present and discuss their work at appropriate stages.

Setting the criteria for this type of funding and the application/assessment/decision-making process has presented difficulties for Creative Scotland. It is essential that there are clear,

equitable and transparent processes, informed by appropriate expertise including external expertise, and a communications plan, so that the rationale behind any decisions can be fully explained and justified.

Mainstreaming and Partnership Working

Our disabled participants and artists tell us that they want to take part in mainstream music events and programmes (as well as enjoying the chance to work in disability arts contexts). For organisations like ourselves raising awareness and building audiences for our work - and therefore generating earned income from ticket sales - can be a challenge. We have partnered with mainstream companies, festivals and venues in the expectation that this will enable us to reach a wider cross section of the general public unfamiliar with what we do. For example this worked very well in a recent collaboration with Children's Classic Concerts and the RSNO, allowing us to reach a mainstream family audience.

Being facilitated - and funded - to work towards similar arrangements and create 'Inclusion Partnerships' with venues and national companies would benefit our sector but the process, though mutually beneficial and valued on both sides, can be time-consuming. Developing the accessibility of venues, changing attitudes and having an impact on programming decisions in order to involve more disabled artists and ensembles requires the build-up of trust, investment of time and careful planning. A mechanism for supporting 'creative inclusion' or 'creative diversity' partnerships, with the possibility of shorter-term pilots that recognise the additional work involved, would provide an incentive to organisations to come together in this way.

Capital Funding

DMS relies on digital technologies, which can be either specialised technologies developed expressly for music-making or technologies designed for other purposes which we re-purpose for music-making. A Capital funding scheme that has options for smaller scale support and periodic grants towards renewing equipment as well as purchasing new equipment would be welcome, with opportunities for match funding. It would be useful to be able to secure initial funding in order to develop bids for support in areas that are trickier to fund such as software programming and research & development.

It would be beneficial to explore ways that smaller-scale organisations such as ourselves with ambitions to impact the mainstream can be supported to widen their influence, for example when new arts venues are being designed, and have an input 'from the ground up' on new Capital projects for arts buildings.

Cross-Sector Partnerships

DMS generates earned income from the sale of Figurenotes software and other resources, as well as training, a small but developing enterprise with profits used to fund other areas of our work. We also seek to monetise our unique IP and knowhow, for example through our training offer. We lack the legal knowledge and understanding of licensing/IP issues but are aware that this expertise is available if we had the means to access it.

As a development on from sponsorship of the arts by business, a national scheme whereby cross-sectoral working with partners in the world of business and enterprise could be supported with funding would be welcome. It could support innovation and growth of new links between cultural/ arts bodies and sectors such as Digital Tech, Media & Marketing, Education and Research, Health & Wellbeing and enable the arts sector to explore new income-generation, product and service development and marketing ideas.

It would be useful to have the possibility of pairing up with partners including academic partners to carry out research and evaluation of our practical work, an area where there are many opportunities to develop joint projects to demonstrate the value of culture to other areas.

How should that funding be made available to artists?

As a responsible employer generating work for freelance artists DMS is in a position to contribute to supporting the development of careers in music including those of artists with disabilities. As a member of the PRS for Music's Talent Development Network we have an insight into the difficulties experience by musicians and music creators with disabilities trying to build and sustain a working life and work with our colleagues in and beyond Scotland to strengthen this support and encourage others to do likewise. Progression in arts careers for those with disabilities as well as other groups is uneven and many barriers are experienced by those affected by disability and other 'protected characteristics' groups.

How to support people to develop their creative ideas and access funding, such as through the recently announced Creative Scotland Create:Inclusion Fund and programmes such as Unlimited, can be more complex and challenging than it at first might appear. In this case it is important that the needs of those who may be more on the periphery are considered alongside others, and DMS would strongly advocate for disabled artists themselves to be consulted.