

## **CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

### **ARTS FUNDING INQUIRY**

#### **SUBMISSION FROM REALLY INTERESTING OBJECTS CIC**

Really Interesting Objects CIC (RIO) was launched in 2009 to develop exciting new ways to engage audiences with quality craft. Tina Rose has also worked as a cultural freelancer for 15 years.

The focus when discussing Creative Scotland funding is always about regular funding and which organisations get funding. This focus has meant the rest of the arts sector, the thousands of individual artists and cultural freelancers and small organisations, has not had the same attention. Targeted funding is only for particular purposes and/or one specialism. This means open project funding is for the majority the only option open to them.

It is good to have an option that is open to everyone; however, only having this one main fund means every art form is competing for the same funding. This does not support strategic art form development. Each art form should have a budget of their own to strategically develop and support initiatives which benefit that art form.

The position for craft is further complicated as craft sits within the creative industries and so does not have a portfolio manager, unlike other art forms. As all art forms are part of the creative industries there should be a portfolio manager for craft and design.

The increasing amount of information required for applications means a significant amount of time goes into developing the whole project before it is possible to make the application which is all unpaid work.

Financial pressures on funding means many cultural freelancers (who are often also artists) are working at a rate of pay which is lower than the rates paid ten years ago. This is evidenced in the recent Art Professional UK research on pay which also shows that pay and fee rates in Scotland are lower than the rest of the UK with a freelancer in Scotland averaging £11,481 a year compared to a UK average £16,000 a year

[https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/sites/artsprofessional.co.uk/files/artspay\\_2018\\_report.pdf](https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/sites/artsprofessional.co.uk/files/artspay_2018_report.pdf)

In a wider context, the biggest threat for sustainable funding is the diminishing budgets not just for funding bodies such as Creative Scotland but also for the wider infrastructure. The recent cuts in funding for local authorities will impact on local arts funding.

The increased needs for funding make it even more important that public funding is managed well with a strategic approach that support artists and ambitious new projects which showcase their creativity.