

CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

ARTS FUNDING INQUIRY

SUBMISSION FROM VIRGINIA RADCLIFFE

The biggest single factor that would enable a sustainable funding model to be created would be more substantial funding for the Arts on a par with the % of GDP dedicated by probably every other European country.

As a specialist children's artist, with 20 years' experience in Scotland of writing, directing, producing and acting for children and a 15-year professional career preceding this as an actor and producer, I would like to make the case for children's rights to become embedded in Creative Scotland's funding decision-making processes –1) in terms of consulting children about Art – what it means to them, what they like and want to see more of 2) in terms of employing at least one Arts Officer with expertise in child consultation and children 3) For there to be a Director on the Creative Scotland Board with qualifications to enable them to represent the rights, needs and views of children in Scotland 4) A commitment to make a proportionate spend per head of population of children on a) Arts that are accessible to children b) Arts that are specifically created for children by people who are expected to demonstrate an approach and level of understanding about making Art for children that reflects the importance of this work – reflecting an understanding of the obligation of adults working for children to ensure that their work is interesting, relevant and high quality in children's eyes.

Other issues I would add my voice to in order to increase the health of the Scottish Arts Sector would be:

- Limited tenures for senior Arts leadership posts in receipt of public funding to support a healthy circulation of opportunities, talent, quality and innovation.
- Limited tenures for senior Arts Officers who should have substantial practical experience of working in the Arts.
- Ring-fenced spending for each art-form.
- Departments for Art-forms led by experts who have capacity to regularly see the breadth of work being created and have a deep understanding of this art-form and the people dedicating their lives to it from every perspective including an awareness of training.
- Practising Artists with substantial track records should have sabbaticals' as Arts Officers and consultants within Creative Scotland.
- One of the major challenges for artists and cultural freelancers in obtaining funding in Scotland is the disconnect between the ability to create good art and enabling funders to understand its worth – this is a job in itself which supports a status quo where it is common for the same organisations to maintain their security because they have had a chance to develop the staff and funding to dedicate to getting more staff and funding and paid staff with time to lobby for it. This is more of an issue because of limited funding but given the current arts budget, in the interest of encouraging a thriving arts scene where new companies and artists are vital, this could usefully be

addressed, especially in relation to applications for 3-year funding. The real cost in unpaid labour for a project funded company to make an application on this scale is proportionately much greater than it is for companies already in receipt of regular funding. This lack of a level playing field limits the potential for other important companies to thrive and realise their potential.

- Children's theatre like ours is daily demonstrating the impact the Arts has on society and fostering the value of arts for everyone.
- Licketyspit for example, is delivering innovative immersive theatre as early intervention and training actor-pedagogues to facilitate intergenerational play - which is supported by robust evaluation - and also has an extensive track record of creating and touring hugely popular and high quality children's theatre. We are innovating in e.g. education, health and wellbeing, parenting, tackling the effects of poverty, integration BUT we have only been able to do this because we are fundamentally a theatre company with a body of artistic work and experience and a relationship with a specific audience. We only exist because of Arts Council Support for another theatre company, Wee Stories, which secured a Creative Scotland 3-year early years theatre initiative within that company in 2001 and then 10 years of hard-won project funding for Licketyspit – as well as great tenacity and persistence against odds with maybe one in three project applications gaining support – arguably because of lack of sufficient funding and lack of expertise in children's theatre at CS. We had a turnover of £160k last year for our instrumental art without CS support but we should still be touring our popular high quality much loved plays and we are not because the chances of securing funding for this in recent years couldn't justify the resources needed to continually apply to an organisation which isn't designed to recognise the value of our theatre.

Apologies I have had a very short time to contribute to this debate as I discovered the call-out at the last minute. I hope this is a useful addition!