

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

**ARTS FUNDING INQUIRY**

**SUBMISSION FROM THE FRUITMARKET GALLERY**

The Fruitmarket Gallery has a long-term relationship with Scotland's arts funding bodies in their current and previous incarnations and this experience is still lodged in the organisation. We would be very happy to come and talk about what we think has worked, what hasn't and where there are opportunities to embrace innovation and learn from other sectors.

We had experience of the Scottish Arts Council's short-lived Foundation Funding model and feel it had a lot to recommend as a sustainable funding model.

Foundation Funded organisations were expected to meet standards of quality, accountability and transparency. They were offered funding over a five-year period, reducing bureaucracy on either side, and enabling them to plan meaningfully with confidence and to make commitments to artists and audiences. They were accountable against an agreed set of criteria throughout this period.

Foundation Funded organisations were funded at a realistic, mutually-agreed level and were not eligible for any additional Arts Council funding, in particular project funding – taking them out of competition with individual artists and artist-run spaces. Foundation Funded organisations were expected to have capacity to give support to the sector and share expertise. There was a level of 'flexible funding' offered for shorter periods to organisations ineligible for Foundation Funding: this again freed up project funding for artists and single-manifestation organisations, and ensured a degree of flexibility and change in the sector.

In our opinion, the adoption of an updated variant of this funding strategy could help to shift the conversation away from the competition for funds for either artists or organisations and lead to a more collegiate approach, making the funding go further.

Organisations and the expertise that they contain play a vital role in maintaining the health of the sector. As well as offering paid employment to artists (through commissioning art, paying exhibition fees and in employing artists in technical, engagement and front of house teams) organisations act as mentors to artists, offering critical and technical support to take their work to the next level, to present it to an audience and to engage that audience with it. They provide a critical framework that helps to express the value of culture more widely and to generate social and economic benefits.

Funded organisations can bear measurement against the quality of audience engagement they offer, be that numbers of people through the door, depth of engagement, impact of that engagement socially and educationally as well as financial results - jobs created, money spent.

In our view, there is a need for recognition that art costs money, but that that it represents value for that money. Artists and arts professionals should be paid fairly and equitably, with

fees for artists scaled to the opportunity rather than to the individual, in a transparent and mutually understandable manner. For example: for a commission, an agreed production budget, a fee scaled to that production budget, travel, accommodation and subsistence paid. There is a need for recognition that this is worthwhile, that this money enters the Scottish economy, returning financial and social benefits. To fund the arts sustainably, a case needs to be made widely across government for the importance of arts and creativity in creating and sustaining a successful future for Scotland.

The Fruitmarket Gallery has developed a 'How We..' programme (which has featured *How We Publish, How We Install Exhibitions..*). These public events offer artists and other creative freelancers an opportunity to access expertise and advice from our highly qualified, experienced and skilled team of arts professionals. We are often approached for informal advice, mentoring and practical help from artists in addition to those that we work with on our exhibitions programme. We are currently limited in capacity and funding in the extent to which we can support artists, though there is demand and evidence that it does help take artists at varying career stages to the next step. While this may be an exhibition at the Fruitmarket, it may also be that we can signpost and help them access other opportunities.

As we develop and expand the Fruitmarket, we will have more and more flexible exhibition space as well as technical, curatorial and administrative expertise that we could offer to artists. We don't anticipate increased programme funding from public sources, but can imagine a model whereby we could be one of a group of publicly funded organisations supporting and presenting the work of artists who have been funded to develop their practice.

We see an opportunity for Creative Scotland to operate as a development agency for artists and other creative freelancers, particularly as the amount of funding it has to distribute is unlikely to increase. It could support artists by funding and supporting a talent pool, creating a fund that artists bid into to support their practice in whatever way relevant to them (research, publication, production money – a kind of deconstructed residency model whereby artists set the agenda rather than trying to fit their professional development needs into a pre-determined set of funding strands). This would be substantial amounts that could really make a difference.

We have experience of the Freelands Award given to an organisation to support the exhibition of a British female artist at mid-career. The award was £100K, of which £50K went directly to the artist Jaqueline Donachie to allow her time and money to make new work and the other £50K was spent on presenting the work with an extensive programme of engagement activities to involve a wide range of people. We see an opportunity for Creative Scotland to become an innovative development agency, with proposals assessed by experts in the sector, matching artists to organisations with appropriate opportunities / skills / technical facilities or expertise / advice and mentoring. This would help to create a network and a culture of sharing rather than competing which would make the funding go further.

We think the Scottish Government should look at models from other sectors which are innovating and winning – i.e. technology, higher education, screen and creative industries. We as a sector need to address how can we bring businesses / the commercial sector into the conversation and encourage them to support the creativity and innovation that

ultimately benefits them – generating creative and critically aware future employees and making Scotland an exciting place to live, work and invest.