

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

**ARTS FUNDING INQUIRY**

**SUBMISSION FROM ANONYMOUS**

- **What are the major threats to sustainable funding of the arts in Scotland?**

I believe that the major threats to sustainable funding of the arts is the laws that allow any organisation to create their own lottery and not have to fund the arts sector. With lower lottery sales and more and more new lotterys now available will mean less funding for the arts, artists and the Scottish community going forward for the sector.

With this already happening we are seeing arts funding going to mainly central belt locations and causing a two tier of what is art happening within Scotland.

This then means that institutions will continue to use the majority of established artists and will make new artists work even harder to get access to public funding.

- **What are the main challenges for artists and cultural freelancers in obtaining funding in Scotland?**

In my experience this has been location and risk. Based in North Ayrshire and Arran where 0.3% of creative Scotland funding was distributed in 16/17 feedback to my funding applications have always been the same;

Great Idea, too much of a risk, lack of regional support within the creative sector.

- **What measures could the Scottish Government take to ensure a sustainable level of funding for the arts?**

We need to look at the arts differently and I believe that England and the arts council have led the way in terms of looking at how we support the arts more. Whilst the country is different to ours there is a lot that we can learn from them.

Firstly is it acceptable for an arts organisation to have received plus 30 years of public funding and in 2019 not be self-sustainable when it is based in our Scottish cities? Where a higher amount of audiences are based and have access to the arts? – Some of this funding can be used to support artists outside of the central belt or provide new organisations with a regular funding opportunity.

The government could look at allocating funding to the regions where there would be a set budget for funding in each area allowing local artists the opportunity of funding and in the long term create a regional growth model of arts for the long term,

Or alternatively look at how many regularly funded organisations can be funded in one region meaning if three organisations were to be funded in Edinburgh does one of the three have to be based in that locality, can they move to a different region? This would then support local skills, build audiences and support the local sector that outside the central belt requires badly.

- **How could Scotland be innovative in attracting greater funding for the arts?**

I believe that Scotland is doing funding of the arts completely wrong. At the moment we are asking for lottery money and now asking business for sponsorship to support the arts through arts and business Scotland and this doesn't include crowd funding and other current methods.

We need to look at the laws in lottery and gambling introducing a set level that all moneys from here to go into the arts in Scotland supporting the sector and regional participation.

We also lack commercial funding that England has had for a long time and now is the time to introduce these structures and think of ways that can be attractive to those supporting the arts. This could be done as a tax break as an example. This meaning that anyone no matter how much support they are providing can invest in the arts rather than donate into the arts. – And I emphasise this as we move into a digital era we will have to question is making art online a charitable cause? Supporting commercial investment will support art and make it commercial.

Lastly within this area the lack of business support in the arts is something that needs to be addressed we can discuss innovative arts funding but when small companies and very few individuals do not have the basic business skills to support the art work then arts will never be sustainable. Whilst there are organisations out there at the moment to support this very few of them have the experience of running social and cultural enterprises. In terms of both profit making and not for profit organisations.

- **How should public money be made available to support artists and cultural freelancers in Scotland, including any relevant international examples of best practice?**

This is the hardest question to solve as you mention 'cultural freelancers'

Firstly what is an artist? Is an artist a person who trained at the RCS and knows what art is? Secondly what is a arts freelancer and who should support there work? Creative Scotland, Local authority or National lottery community fund?

The problem that we have here is answering these questions, creative Scotland will say that they are an organisation to support artists only. But I would say what then is the difference between a theatre arts freelancer working with children at the citizens theatre and someone who takes classes in the Ryan centre in Stranraer? The

inconsistency here is the problem. And more importantly for anything that isn't of high artistic work would then go to the national lottery who will tell you that your application needs to go to Creative Scotland and the vicious cycle begins.

Importantly we need to look at this in three ways: organisations, existing artists and new artists.

All of which need business support from within the cultural sector. Existing government business support who would support a hairdresser is not qualified to support an artist.

Secondly, we need a way of bringing organisations to work with new artists to support them in bringing new work to the forefront of their development with more going to support artists outside the central belt. I emphasise this as I believe that the central belt will become too expensive for artists in the future and that we need to look at alternative cheaper locations where artists can work in the community to create work and build on skills that can support them further.

Sadly, I know of no examples that support my best practise.

- **What factors should be considered and how should decisions be made about which artists or cultural freelancers should obtain public funding in Scotland?**

We are faced with two problems. If I concentrate on the North Ayrshire and Arran. Firstly Creative Scotland will say that there is too much risk and not enough support, secondly those on the panel would not understand the area and how best to inject to support the creation of work.

Then with the local council there is no arts strategy or consistent long term planning to support artists meaning that it is near impossible to obtain funding. At the same time with no business support in the area artists are traveling to the other side of the country to obtain business support to help them work in the area.

Within the locality of North Ayrshire and Arran the council has set up locality funding to ask local people what funding should be distributed to which applicant, meaning that this becomes a popularity contest rather than a supportive to the arts or alienates those making the decisions as they don't understand the industry and how it can be supportive.

Factors that should be considered are regional funding in which a consortium of regional members can support artists, not community, but artists to support their work. Funding should be made available from Creative Scotland and local councils and this funding should be made available for those who live in the area only or who would be a resident of the work. I.e. theatre play about Ayrshire and director and playwright require to work in the community to make the work and understand the play.

The funding should consist of trail, growth, build up and business support. Art work needs to be sustainable in the future as the public cannot keep putting money into something that is not accessible to all. When 0.3% of creative Scotland funding is spent in a region of 395k people and most of all the funding is spent in the central belt, we much support artists and freelancers to understand business and sustainability into funding. But also provide three things:

- 1 – start up funding for an idea
- 2 – build up funding to support growth
- 3 – cultural business development in commercial business as with less funding available we will need artists to think commercial for their business to grow and develop.