



Scottish Arts Council

Reference: GB/JT/CW

30 September 2004

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Cultural Commission
Broughton High School
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Dear

James,

Cultural Review

On behalf of the Scottish Arts Council, I have pleasure in submitting our first submission to the Cultural Commission.

This sets out our vision and proposals for the future of arts and cultural in Scotland.

Yours sincerely


Graham Berry
Director

Document7

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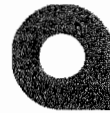
Scottish **Arts** Council

Towards a cultured, creative Scotland

A submission to the Cultural Commission

Confidential





Cultural Commission Submission
Towards a Cultured, Creative Scotland.

Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Executive Summary	3
The place of arts and culture	3
Breaking the funding mould	3
Education and Audience Development	4
The artist, arts development and arts organisations	4
Key Themes	6
Arts and culture in society	6
Entitlements and rights in arts and culture	6
Arts and culture in government	7
Arts and culture in organisational structures	8
Breaking the funding mould	10
Developing the physical infrastructure	12
Education and the arts	13
Audience development and new technology	15
The artist, arts development and arts organisations	17
The artist	17
New work and arts development	17
Traditional Arts and Crafts	18

National Companies	19
Creative Industries	20
Diversity and access	20
Arts About Scotland	23
International	24
Conclusion	26

30 September 2004

What is it we want really?
For what end and how?
Is it something feasible, obtainable?
Let us dream it now,
And pray for a possible land
Not of sleep-walkers, not of angry puppets,
But where both heart and brain can understand
The movements of our fellows;
Where life is a choice of instruments and none
Is debarred from his natural music

Louis MacNeice

Introduction

What is it we want really? For what end and how?

We want a country where the people of Scotland enjoy the benefits of arts and culture as a matter of course, where citizens are not debarred from their natural music.

We want a country where the richness of its cultural life and languages draws people from around the world to experience this cultural vitality as a visitor, to contribute to it as a resident.

We want a country that acknowledges and pursues the social and economic benefits that accrue from the strength of its ideas, its creativity, its culture. This will see creativity at the heart of the matter in schools, in public services, in the workplace, in society.

We want a country whose artists are valued, who work on an international stage and whet the appetite of an international audience.

We want a country at the forefront of using new technology to give its citizens access to cultural opportunity.

These aspirations accord with the First Minister's St Andrew's Day 2003 speech, underpin the brief for the Culture Commission, and have the Scottish Arts Council's unequivocal support.

The challenges are considerable. Nothing less than a fundamental shift in our national mindset - which moves cultural concerns from the margins to the mainstream of civic life - is required.

Centrality of the arts and creativity to education cannot be underestimated. It is the key to cultural emancipation and the benefits that will accrue for the individual and the country.

This in turn requires a shift in perspective amongst those with responsibility for the policies and resources that would drive change.

Teachers and those that train them, civil servants who set the educational agenda, parents, cultural workers and artists, local authorities (both elected members and officials) and not least the Members of the Scottish Parliament have to share these aspirations, if they are to become a reality.

And of course the Scottish Arts Council and the other cultural agencies have to look to their own views and practices and be open to change.

In recent years the Scottish Arts Council has clearly broadened its view. What we describe and support as the 'arts' has moved beyond the 'elitist' associations that sometimes unhelpfully linger in association with our work. A glance at the range of musical styles that we support now compared to even 15 years ago, when jazz, traditional music, and popular contemporary styles now confirms a far broader spectrum of support.

What we support looks much more like what the people of Scotland choose in their cultural lives.

In this regard we are not only open to change, we have often led that change.

We can continue to lead that change.

We welcome the responsibility of leadership.

We can offer a breadth and continuity of view from a national perspective that will be difficult, if not impossible, to replicate if lost.

Development and support for the arts require the ability to take a long-term view, a national overview within an increasingly international context and the detailed knowledge, professionalism and expertise required to deal with the diversity, intricacies and idiosyncrasies of a major business sector which encompasses everything from grand opera to a writer's bursary.

An organisation independent of government, which satisfies the stewardship requirements of significant public funds but which enjoys the support of the sector is a prerequisite for a healthy arts sector.

The Scottish Arts Council is in a strong position to continue to develop its role in a way which meets the aspirations of the sector, government and the people of Scotland.

We believe we have the expertise, skills, and a unique national perspective that touches on the diverse elements of the cultural landscape, and is suited to a new, enhanced, and strategic role.

Executive Summary

'To what end and how?'

This paper suggests ideas for both means and ends and covers key areas for the future of arts and culture in Scotland, and the welfare of its citizens. Many proposals ask for new initiatives. Some draw attention to deficiencies in current provision and attitudes. All tend to the benefit of the arts in Scotland, home of a major world culture, alluring to all, nationally and internationally. All address the cultural rights and the entitlements of the citizen.

The body of the report describes our proposals in some detail, this Executive Summary highlights the key ideas.

The place of arts and culture

Success in this venture requires a fundamental change in the political perspective that re-thinks where culture sits in society. One means to achieving this would be a **Minister for Culture in the Cabinet**, able to speak for cultural aspirations and heritage and provide leadership and political impact across the whole of government, and empowered through a Culture Act.

In considering legislation in relation to entitlements we would counsel against an approach that sets a **minimum level of provision**. Cultural development needs to be dynamic, not mechanistic. The Scottish Arts Council would advocate a more proactive approach; on one hand setting clear guidance for **recommended standards** and on the other **ensuring the ambition in the scope and quality** of what is on offer through **increased investment** and more effective partnerships.

The arts, as an integral part of a wider cultural landscape, must be seen as wider, and far more inclusive than the term currently allows. One means of achieving this would be a **reconfiguration of the organisational structures** which re-thinks relations between existing bodies.

A new **National Cultural Partnership**, whose members represent national cultural interests, could be an approach to the structural concerns. With policy direction set by the Minister for Culture, this new body would have an **arms length relationship** with government. This is essential for its success as **advocates for culture**, which cannot be inhibited by political intervention.

We would assert that the expertise and experience in **the Scottish Arts Council** should be deployed in **leading the National Cultural Partnership**.

There needs to be **more effective strategic planning** that recognises the need for national standards but accommodates the interests of cultural partners and reflects the cultural nuances of different parts of Scotland. We would propose the idea of **Regional Planning Fora** as a possible means to this end. The role of local authorities in this model would be critical.

Breaking the funding mould

A **new method must be found to break the mould** of arts funding along with the permanent air of crisis. An approach that should be considered would shift from subsidy to investment and manifest in the form of a **'trust' with assets** that form the

resource base of the National Cultural Partnership. Investment implies returns, and we would undertake research to assess the social and economic returns in this model.

There is a need to develop **non-Lottery investment in the physical infrastructure**, to support an investment plan with a national overview. The trust model could serve this end, and improved strategic planning provide the context for a national overview of priorities, and could be aided by a broader 'percent for arts' approach, which would look to extend opportunities for artists.

There must be **equality of opportunity** including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and for disabled people, and more broadly in the community based sector. This work is often lottery dependent and unsustainable on existing funding models. This requires a **radical rethink of sustainable approaches**, achieved through the fulfilment of the First Minister's exhortation to the other government portfolios to invest at source in the role that the arts and culture play in fulfilling their aims.

Education and Audience Development

A long-term view is essential in these areas. As noted success in this venture requires a fundamental change in the national perspective that re-thinks where culture sits in society.

Schools form the agenda for our lives. It is crucial that **gaps in understanding and provision of the arts should be addressed**, and radical approaches considered. We propose that the first year/s of formal education should **focus on creative development** as a means of informing this agenda.

Audience development and arts promotion that identifies - and disseminates awareness of - what the arts have to offer everyone in Scotland is needed at national and regional level. Such work might be **carried out by an agency**, working to the National Cultural Partnership and ensuring that body has the skills and capacity to **act as advocates**.

Rapid advances in **communication technology** offer great opportunities for dynamic innovation in both the promotion of the arts and in new wave marketing. We propose that only a **national approach to arts and cultural marketing can assimilate these advances** and this should be a key driver of a national agency, building on existing skill and expertise. The task is to allow this expertise to engage creatively with the arts communities thereby allowing Scotland to demonstrate a leading role.

The artist, arts development and arts organisations

The Commission should consider the establishment of an **Artist's Charter**. This would set out the principles by which the nation will deal with those who come forward as artists and cultural workers, so creating the circumstances for citizens to benefit from their work.

The **national companies** should be a resource for the country and its people as a whole, and offer models of accountability and responsible governance. This may be achieved by ministerial rights of Board appointment or in the form of golden share element in the structure of the Board. Being a recognised national company should **not be a matter of scale or funding commitment**; it should be possible for

appropriate smaller companies to be recognised as 'national' because of the nature and scope of their work. The national companies should be funded through the National Cultural Partnership in order for their work to integrate with and serve national need.

The **country's traditional arts and languages must be celebrated**, nurtured and accorded a central place in its contemporary artistic life. Direct proposals for structural development in future must come from the traditional arts community itself.

In order to meet the developing needs and rights of the citizen it is **critically important that new work emerges**. Through that, new developments in the arts will extend the understanding and pleasure of people who experience it. This requires that **support and encouragement be given to artists to take risks** that may or may not succeed.

A key element in provision for the citizen lies in such areas as **touring, receiving venues, residencies and festivals**. We propose that **devolving control to promoters** is a means to shift this balance in some art forms.

An **international arts and cultural policy** should extend and support opportunities for the people of Scotland to enjoy and experience the widest range of culture from around the world. It should also support Scotland's artists and organisers of cultural activities to develop their work and profile on the international scene. The Scottish Arts Council within a **National Cultural Partnership would have a lead role** in both strands.

Key Themes

Arts and culture in society

All artistic things are the arts. They involve everyone, though not everyone calls what involves them the 'arts'. For varied historical reasons, that term has for many been associated with exclusive forms of artistic expression. Yet, it is hard to think of a major life event not involving the arts, whether marriage, death or simply a birthday party.

Everyone listens to some form of music and enjoys some form of drama, extending from theatre to major soaps. The very act of home making involves aesthetic and design choice at every level. 'Arts' is not just where public money is spent. We are involved in and have the right to develop our experience and knowledge of the arts. Most people do not experience an art form in isolation, but in relation to others and to their everyday life.

There is an unhealthy confusion in thinking about the arts: Franz Ferdinand are artists, but too often artists are thought of as a narrow group, frequently defined by Scottish Arts Council interest.

The Scottish Arts Council welcomes a broader definition that values the full spectrum of activity, only some of which requires public funding.

All arts, publicly funded or private, and all art forms are interconnected and central to everyday experience.

People enjoy the arts widely without calling them that or seeing how the publicly funded arts feed and sustain the development of non-publicly funded arts. This is a dangerous distortion of a complex and rich reality. Only a dynamic promotion of understanding of the inclusiveness and interrelatedness of the arts can save the situation.

Entitlements and rights in arts and culture

The basic premise of the First Minister's St Andrew's Day 2003 speech is that each citizen should have cultural rights and consequent entitlements, forming a blueprint for the level, location and nature of cultural provision in the country. This concept is positive and welcome. It is essential that this concept is applied to all. But even with the commitment to legislation in support of this aspiration there are real challenges.

In establishing a network of entitlements, one option is to establish a minimum provision approach for standards of cultural provision, both for formal education and for leisure and learning (professional and amateur). There is much to attract in an approach that sets clear standards, but the counter risk of such an approach is that it leads to box-ticking, the acceptance of minimum as also maximum and a dull mechanistic approach.

The Scottish Arts Council would counsel against a 'minimum provision model' that is hard to define and harder to enforce, but advocate a more proactive way with two strands.

One is clear guidance setting out recommended standards with incentives for those who meet the standard.

The second strand is a menu approach.

Under this, a mix of provision is required that would be equally applicable to individuals working in the cultural industries and those taking part for education, pleasure and leisure.

The 'menu' would involve, for example, access to workspaces, including studios and rehearsal rooms, that can be used by the professional and recreational participant.

It would involve approaches to promoting the arts that enables and encourages access. The promoter, representing audience interest, may need to be empowered in relation to the producer.

Reflecting our comments regarding lifelong learning, it would involve real opportunities for creative education, both curricular and informal, (including, for the young, residential arts camps at key stages of their education), and training, both vocational and life-long.

To achieve the fulfilment of these entitlements there needs to be development of the infrastructure to support the delivery of these citizens' rights. Above all, it is crucial that young people have access to them in order to create a virtuous circle of provision to benefit future generations.

We would suggest that the mix of a national overview (National Cultural Partnership) political commitment (Minister for Culture) and strategic, consultative planning (Regional Planning Fora) offers a framework for setting standards and ensuring a rich menu of provision.

Arts and culture in government

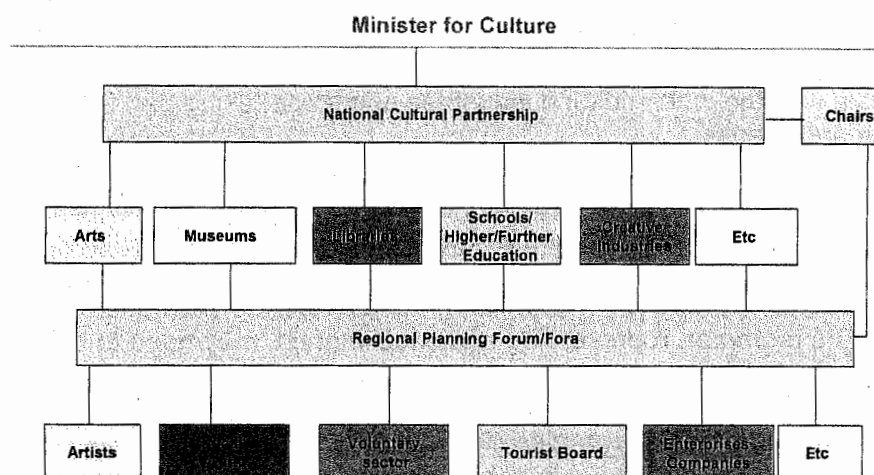
All of this suggests a shift in our national mindset, which moves cultural concerns from the margins to the mainstream of civic life.

This in turn suggests a shift in perspective amongst those with responsibility for the policies and resources that would drive change.

Given the importance and prevalence of the arts - and their high social, economic and diplomatic, as well as cultural, importance - it is readily seen why the First Minister's St Andrews' Day speech identified their importance to the work of every Scottish Executive department.

Most of the recognition and so promotion of Scotland abroad, both diplomatically and economically, depends on past and present Scottish arts, heritage and artists (and sports figures). Co-ordination of the wide variety of arts (both publicly funded and not) and related areas of cultural activity does not currently form a coherent and, so, efficient pattern.

Given this and the importance of cultural issues, there should be a Minister for Culture in the Cabinet, able to speak for cultural aspirations and heritage and provide leadership and political impact across the whole of government for the benefit of the citizen.



Arts and culture in organisational structures

A modern approach has to work across the barriers established by older definitions and institutional structures. The arts are an integral part of the cultural landscape, and must be seen as wider and far more inclusive than the term often now allows.

The Scottish Arts Council deals with only aspects of the range of the arts: literature, but not libraries; galleries, but only some, and not museums. Such specialisation can be helpful, but only if it is borne constantly in mind that organisational structures and definitions are matters of convenience. The arts flow across the remits of a wide range of bodies, some, like the Scottish Enterprise, not primarily seen as arts funding or policy bodies. Relations between such bodies must be rethought.

What has been apparent in our consultation into the *2020 Arts Vision* approach to cultural planning that we have undertaken in recent months, is that there is strong support in the sector for an arms length body with specialist arts knowledge and a national overview to be retained.

A new **National Cultural Partnership** whose members represent national cultural interests could be an approach to the structural concerns. With policy direction set by the Minister for Culture, this new body would have an **arms length relationship** with government. The arms length status is essential for its success as **advocates for culture**, which cannot be inhibited by political intervention.

We would assert that the expertise and experience in **the Scottish Arts Council** should be deployed in **leading the National Cultural Partnership**. This would build on existing partnership working within the cultural sector, for example in relation to the Creative Industries working with Scottish Screen and Scottish Enterprise.

This would not simply be a co-ordinating role, nor an attempt to replicate or absorb the other specialist areas of knowledge. This would be offering strong leadership,

breadth of experience that touches on the range of cultural activities, and crucially, a collective voice for the cultural sector.

The Ministry for Culture could work with a *National Cultural Partnership* whose members represent national cultural interests. It would provide leadership for and co-ordinate such areas as the arts, museums, libraries, film and television, Gaelic development and the creative industries, working together in a national overview, with policy direction set by the Minister.

Its brief might include setting quality standards, mapping and monitoring the national picture, brokering regional partnership agreements within the policy framework (informed by mapping and research) and supporting continuing professional development strategies.

This model can offer:

- a national overview of the arts and culture
- independence
- unique responsibility for the arts and the interests of the artist
- expertise and knowledge
- an international perspective from a national viewpoint
- long-term perspective on the arts and culture
- coherent marketing and promoting at home and abroad
- coherent research and mapping of activity
- an independent voice advocating the importance of culture

The central body could share office space and share back room staff, and have a regional presence using existing resources.

The role of local authorities in this model would be critical, involved at a national level as members of the National Cultural Partnership, possibly through COSLA and VOCAL, and at a local level through a lead role in Regional Planning Fora, integrating with Community Planning mechanisms.

The *Regional Planning Forum* would be a consultative body involving key partners in jointly planning a programme of activity over a ten-year time frame. National bodies would delegate significant levels of funding to them, managed perhaps by local authorities who have the administrative resources, but set against agreed policy priorities set by the Minister.

Priorities would be informed and interpreted by the National Cultural Partnership, and monitored by specialist departments. The relative responsibilities for funding would be a matter for more detailed consideration, but we would contend at this stage that a responsibility for dedicated budgets would cement and incentivise partnership working.

The interests and expertise of each national cultural 'department' would also be represented on *Regional Planning Fora* whose other members would be artists, local authorities, tourist boards, the voluntary sector, schools, higher and further education and enterprise companies.

The chair of each Regional Forum could be a member of the National Cultural Partnership. The Scottish Arts Council (or department), for example, would have the role of retaining resources for the support and development of artists and art forms, international activity, research, advocacy and policy development. National Companies, however defined, would also stay with the national body.

This model would allow a properly co-ordinated and integrated view of arts and cultural provision at national and regional levels, feeding from and into local provision. It would tackle 'post code' inconsistencies in opportunity and allow the different needs of rural and urban communities to be recognised and acted upon.

It would be a matter for consideration whether there ought to be sister bodies like a National Sports Partnership and a National Heritage Partnership. Such an arrangement would support lateral thinking and a vision of arts and culture that gave both proper prominence and holistic provision for the benefit of the citizen.

Breaking the funding mould

The term 'subsidy' has done damage in the arts sector.

Public money in the arts is an investment in their research and development, for the benefit of citizens and the arts as a whole. The career trajectories of J K Rowling or Brian Cox demonstrate this, both beginning by being supported by, or working in, the 'subsidised' sector and now world-renowned artists, contributing to the cultural vitality of Scotland and its image abroad.

Public investment has opened up choice, sustained the biodiversity of the arts, and supported quality (and equality), risk taking and public access to the wonderful results of successful artistic risk. All these are of clear benefit to the people of Scotland.

Arts bodies and funding councils have deliberated over new ways of supporting the arts. Over the years, many time-limited schemes have been introduced: incentive schemes, development funds, touring funds, and so on.

An unquenchable thirst for core funding simply results in these schemes being gradually absorbed into annual grant. The language has changed from *grants* to *support* to *subsidy* to *investment*. None of these terms can disguise the fact that too much activity is chasing too little resource. A new method must be found to break the mould of arts funding along with the permanent air of crisis.

In an investment model we would need to consider the returns. Recent research commissioned by the Scottish Arts Council and other partners showed evidence of the employment and income multipliers in relation to our Core Funded Organisations. The employment multiplier was estimated at 1.83, i.e. every one job in the arts supports .83 jobs in other sectors. (Scotecon.net). 'Social' returns are more difficult to quantify, but there are some examples that can illustrate the point.

The 'Splash' programme run by the Arts Council of England last year offered arts activity targeted at areas of high occurrence of youth crime. National crime data showed that there was a greater reduction in robbery in Basic Crime Units where Splash Extra operated, than in Crime Units without Splash Extra schemes. The study also showed that many of the young people taking part developed new skills in literacy and IT and a number of young people who were involved in the programme went on to work or training. In areas such as youth justice and health the arts can support government policy, a 'return' on their investment.

It has often been suggested that the arts could be funded from an endowment which would remove the need for an annual grant from the Scottish Executive. The

arguments against such a fund are that the sum required would be so huge and the return so volatile that it would not be cost effective and the resultant income unpredictable.

The rate of growth of such a fund would also be unpredictable and would not seem to offer a solution to meeting the demand of an ever-expanding sector. The Scottish Arts Council currently invests almost £50 million a year from its 'voted' funds alone. To generate this would require a fund of close to a billion pounds, (assuming a 5% return on low risk securities).

In the longer term a significant fund could be built up and the resultant income used as part of the current funding mix rather than replacing it. It is suggested that the income from any such endowment should be used to support non-recurring activity rather than annual subvention to core activity.

If the notion of a national planning network takes hold it should lead the way towards a more effective approach to investment in the arts. The word investment has been used before, but it can be used in its correct sense if real long term support is dedicated to a range of activity and organisations and there is clarity about who supports what and for what purpose.

The majority of arts organisations are charitable companies limited by guarantee. As such they have no share capital and only in rare circumstances are they able to build any financial reserves. Real investment in an arts company would involve changing the structure of organisations to ones which have a share capital and the potential to understand the need to develop value and maximise the benefit from the investment made in them.

To start this process from the current situation each company would need to be valued and those stakeholders with a financial interest invited to buy shares to the estimated value of the fixed and working capital of the organisation. This value should include the much needed working capital including productions and exhibitions in progress as well as the buildings, equipment and so on needed to develop them. Increases in this 'investment' would be negotiated in accordance with agreed growth of the organisation and in advance of incurring further development and capital raised accordingly. The building of reserves, whilst still being difficult in not-for-profit organisations, would be encouraged through incentive schemes which would see a link between the annual grants and the maximising of the use of assets and other resources.

For any investment of the above sort to operate satisfactorily it is important to ensure that the organisation supported is able to maintain its future operations with sustainable funding on a year to year basis otherwise the initial investment would simply disappear. One proposal, again not new, is to consider splitting ongoing funding into two sections. One would support the 'core costs'; the other additional production, exhibition or whatever activity the organisation is involved in. This division needs to be explored in very great detail to consider whether it is workable and likely to deliver improved sustainability.

One of the crucial points would be to agree how 'core costs' might be defined. Earlier proposals of this sort have restricted these to the care and maintenance level of building management. This must go further to work effectively. Core costs should include a level of activity below which the organisation ceases to have any value as an arts body. It might be expressed as a number of productions with agreed ancillary activity, so many tours or exhibitions and so on. This level of funding should be

agreed for the number of bodies in which the long term investment is being made. Funding for additional activity could then be flexible, based on quality of work and other criteria to be developed and agreed.

Funding should also be available on an incentivised basis. Organisations should be rewarded for accumulating reasonable surplus, for raising income beyond what could reasonably be expected and planned for and maximising use of assets and other resource.

This model of funding could be managed within the Scottish Arts Council as an Arts Investment Trust with criteria which were more suited to major organisations.

The Commission should actively investigate the possibilities of this model and consider a phased plan of introduction perhaps starting with those companies designated as having a national remit.

One 'sector' merits particular note in relation to funding. This is the area of activity most often associated with the social inclusion agenda – where cultural diversity, arts and disability and the broader community based sector have seen a significant improvement in the scale and quality of the work that they could pursue by virtue of lottery funding.

If there is to be **equality of opportunity** for all we require a **radical rethink of sustainable approaches**, achieved through the fulfilment of the First Minister's exhortation to the other government portfolios to invest at source in the role that the arts and culture play in fulfilling their aims.

We would propose that the required step change that tackles the fragility of the project funding in this area is achieved through the other government portfolios investing at source in the role that the arts and culture plays in tackling issues ranging from health to anti social behaviour.

Developing the physical infrastructure

Lottery Capital funds have supported a wide range of new initiatives across Scotland allowing both new buildings and the refurbishment of old. This process has revitalised much of the infrastructure of the nation to the benefit of its people.

Under existing procedures, however, the process of development has been responsive, rather than subject to overall strategic guidance. This means that, while some art forms and regions have benefited to a very large extent, others have done so to a lesser extent - or even to a very small extent indeed.

Consideration should be given to whether the reactive model has served its purpose and whether in future a capital strategy is required. This may be particularly so in order to ensure a degree of equity of provision across Scotland in the light of the need for cultural entitlements and rights.

Further, as Lottery (and European) funds for the arts diminish (since income is falling and other priorities are emerging for those limited funds), it is essential that the momentum built up by Lottery provision is not lost.

There is a need to develop non-Lottery investment in the infrastructure, an investment plan with a national overview.

The shift in mind set mentioned earlier could also be encouraged in this sector where the idea of a 'percent for art' programme can bring creativity and the artists again to the fore in developing our built environment. This idea could be extended through the statutory planning process or planning gain to include other forms of physical arts provision beyond artist commissions themselves. Such as through major investment in schools, health and housing.

This should form part of a wider cultural plan or, at least, part of the processes of national cultural development. That this is necessary is clear from the gaps that still exist: there is a case, for example, for funding the IT infrastructure for a national box office and a National Centre for Youth Arts.

The existing successful projects, of course, deliver new maintenance needs. It is essential that all arts organisations recognise the need to build in adequate repair and maintenance provision in their budgets. Equally, their buildings represent a national resource and some form of non-Lottery capital plan for them is required. As part of this, there should be radical thinking about the future of existing facilities.

Many arts organisations are locked into the demands of listed buildings whose design, while beautiful and often much loved, is not well suited to modern artistic needs. In certain cities, for example, a case can be made for abandoning existing properties and developing new and more effective landmark buildings, like the Lincoln Centre for the Performing Arts in New York. The desire to maintain what is now in the historic infrastructure - however attractive, but difficult to actually work in - may inhibit the needs of the developing arts and its infrastructure to the longer-term detriment of the interests of citizens

Education and the arts

In all of this the importance of the arts and creativity in the educational context cannot be underestimated. It is the key to cultural emancipation and the benefits that will accrue for the individual and the country.

It is important to recognise that rights relate not only to the young, but also to adults of all ages. Life Long Learning is critical and life-long access to the arts must sit alongside it.

Formal education is key in ensuring that rights are understood and delivered, but we often come to the arts through chance and opportunity.

For such enriching experience to happen there must be wide availability of arts activity in all its forms and the encouragement of people to have the confidence to enjoy what is on offer.

There is evidence of parents choosing private education because they perceive the private sector to place a proper emphasis on cultural (and sports) education. This raises social justice issues.

The creation of an informed child leads to a life-long process of learning and potential fulfilment; provision across the country is variable; many of our children are missing out at this point. Talk of cultural rights and entitlements is empty if the role of arts in the education of children is not properly attended to.

The arts are known to raise attainment and develop creativity in children. Beyond schools, they support social inclusion and help regenerate communities. While all of

this sees the arts as having an instrumental purpose and so raises suspicion among some 'purists', the facts are incontrovertible.

Yet, many schools seem to see the arts as not being 'useful' or 'academic' subjects. The difficulty is that much of the research revealing the facts is relatively recent, while educational curricula and structures and the training of teachers are based on older models of understanding.

Teachers often are uncertain of their ability to deliver the arts, while specialist teachers know that the arts are not being supported, but rather eroded, in school provision. Even when a major art form like literature or creative writing is taught prominently in school, it often appears not to be thought of as an art form.

Schools form the agenda for citizens' lives. It is crucial that these gaps in understanding and provision of the arts should be addressed. More teachers with better training and status are essential.

The expressive arts are currently not a priority in Teacher Education; they need higher priority and professional artist input. Schools need more interaction with professional artists and arts organisations on a consistent basis across the nation: at present there are models of good practice that remain isolated. This means involving the young in meaningful cultural experiences such as exist in the Netherlands for post-15 school students, or in Norway, where every school has regular visits from professional musicians.

At present, despite a number of exciting initiatives, there is real inconsistency in the provision of cultural entitlements to young people, especially in schools.

The Cultural Coordinators are a useful starting point but already there is evidence of variable practise, but practise seems most effective where the 'Creative Links' post supported by the Scottish Arts Council is in place. The Commission should interrogate this model and test its wider applicability.

The provision of 'magnet' schools with strong arts facilities, while in itself admirable, runs the risk of masking poor provision across the board.

Music and Drama can be the basis of all education, but particularly in Drama there is a national teacher shortage, especially severe in a number of regions.

Funding of Drama posts is in many schools not the priority it should be, while employment of specialist instrumental teachers is improving through the Scottish Executive's Youth Music in Schools initiative. The strategic approach that has emerged through this is building links with the informal sector such as the Fèisean.

Issues lie within the arts providers themselves. Some arts organisations identify educational work as outside their core operations, while others are world leaders in arts outreach.

This inconsistency should be resolved by a raising of the game of the less integrated organisations and a levelling up of activity through the consolidation of the educational activity in core funding.

Many universities and colleges have high quality arts provision, but often based in specific departments or by chance of donation and development rather than as a

result of conscious establishment of an arts policy. SHEFC and every university and college should have a policy for the arts.

As part of that, they should contribute to the Life Long Learning that is a critical part of the citizens' rights. Thus, the foundation given by a proper school education will be developed throughout our lives. The capacity exists, but is underdeveloped.

In summary, every school of the future in Scotland should be a creative school where:

- the arts and creativity are valued as intrinsic to the education of all pupils and this should be reflected in the curriculum;
- the innate creativity of all children and young people is recognised, accepted and nurtured and the curriculum reflects this;
- the first year/s of formal education should be focused on creative development as a means of influencing this agenda.
- there is a creative cultural infrastructure within every local authority;
- teachers, particularly in primary schools, will have confidence in dealing with curricular imperatives in the expressive arts;
- teachers have opportunities to keep up to date with philosophy and practice through good quality CPD;
- the arts curriculum reflects contemporary art practice alongside the historical;
- there is an available pool of accredited, able and skilled artists and arts organisations working in education settings on a regular basis.
- Scottish history and culture, for example our Gaelic heritage, should be an important aspect of the curriculum, aided by a national online resource. The Irish example, where all Irish plays are available online, illustrates the point.

Every child in school in Scotland should have as an entitlement at least one engagement with the professional arts and culture sector in each year of his or her schooling. This aspiration could build on the opportunity for artists to work in schools.

Schools should be 24/7 resources for the community, offering access throughout life to creative facilities and cultural development.

Consideration should be given to a national centre, building on the approach of the National Youth Orchestras of Scotland, offering young people from all over Scotland the opportunity to meet and work with artists in a residential setting, housed in a building of iconic status and exceptional capability.

Audience development and new technology

Through participation and attendance, people are at the heart of the arts.

They are, however, deprived of their rights when they do not even know what is available to them. There is a danger when a perception exists that the arts 'aren't for the likes of us' that preventable barriers reduce access to those rights.

Audience development and arts promotion that identifies - and disseminates awareness of - what the arts have to offer everyone in Scotland is needed at national and regional level. Such work might be carried out by an agency, but, if it were, it would be important that this was not simply a token response to the need to ensure widespread knowledge and understanding of the arts potential for the individual. It should also not be simply city-based, but must have regional centres.

It requires raising of awareness through grassroots, and less through national campaigns, and consultation, although there is a case for national promotion of the arts by sectors of interest.

The accessibility of the arts once their potential is revealed is critical. For this, development toward national on-line ticketing is an avenue. Such a system could allow entitlement to be obtained through a swipe card, perhaps using existing approaches such as a National Insurance card. The Dialogue Youth infrastructure being developed with Young Scot should be explored in this vein.

There is a need to share data so that ways to reach the individual can be better understood (in this marketing and education are potential partners). With an ageing population, the rights and needs of senior members of the community must be addressed. Above all, citizens' rights require advocacy that leads to the expansion of the arts market through the sharing of information with cultural partners and the public at large.

Rapid advances in communication technology offer great opportunities for dynamic innovation in both the promotion of the arts and in new wave marketing. The potential for innovation covers awareness raising in Scotland but clearly it can also bring Scottish arts to a much wider audience internationally.

While the Council will develop its thinking and application further in this area over the next couple of months there are some significant aspects of communication technology we would wish to highlight at this stage.

Mobile is an increasingly interactive medium particularly for young people and can be used to take information on events to people including location based arts services. It can also be used to gain feedback almost instantly from audiences and to build up clearer segmentation on niche demands. In addition it is a developing ticketing medium as some operators are demonstrating with cinema ticketing.

Of even greater significance is the growing penetration of broadband which will soon be available to almost 100 per cent of communities in Scotland. Broadband offers all the above - excepting location based services- and even greater opportunities for interactivity whether that is with groups, segments or the individual citizen .

With the emergence of rich media platforms we have the potential of bringing all kinds of art, especially music, film, animation and the performing arts to a much wider audience. This has tremendous capacity for nurturing and developing talent. Next in line will be wireless which will allow a great flow of information of an interactive nature to flow around our cities which, for example, could enhance the festival experience for both the performer and the consumer.

And there is also the growing phenomena of blogging¹ which allows for the sophisticated presentation and experiential sharing of many forms of art but particularly the written word. It is important that initiative is shown in the applications for blogging so that new channels are created.

In all of these communication technology areas there is already considerable skill and expertise. A major part of the task is to allow this expertise to be creatively engaged with the arts communities thereby allowing Scotland to demonstrate a leading role .

¹ A blog is a journal available on the web. The activity of updating a blog is "blogging".

The artist, arts development and arts organisations

We do not begin with a blank page. There is much to celebrate in what has been achieved in the arts and culture over the last 20 years, there is much to build on. Our artists and arts organisations share the First Minister's aspirations for our cultural well being, and have contributed greatly to it, with or without quangos, strategies and commissions. It is important to recognise this as a starting point and to celebrate the successes and achievements of our cultural sector to date.

Central to this is a concern for the support of the creative individual.

▪ The artist

The Commission should consider the establishment of an Artist's Charter. This would set out the principles with which the nation will deal with those who come forward as artists and cultural workers, so creating the circumstances for all people to benefit from their work. These principles also address artists' rights as citizens themselves. Recommended entitlements might be as follows:

Principle 1: artists' activity should be regarded as professional, legitimate, vital to a civilised society and deserving of due recognition, recompense and presentational support;

Principle 2: the means to create work (space, time, and opportunities to collaborate, experiment and take risks) should be adequately provided;

Principle 3: access to world class training to support artists' practice, mechanisms to enable lifelong learning, and opportunities for working across borders, whether those of art form, region, or nation should be available;

Principle 4: artists should be able to participate in forming and developing policies for support of the arts at local, regional, national and international level;

Principle 5: freedom from censorship and the right to choose to engage, or not to engage, with social, economic and political agendas set by others must be guaranteed.

▪ New work and arts development

In order to meet the developing needs and rights of the citizen it is critically important that new work emerges. Through that, new developments in the arts will extend the understanding and pleasure of those who experience it. This requires that support and encouragement be given to artists to take risks that may or may not succeed,

Sometimes this has been called - self-indulgently - 'the right to fail': what it truly is, is 'the right to experiment'. Without experiment, any culture will soon fail utterly. Innovation in all fields depends on it. It should be acknowledged that new work and experiment may at first have a limited audience. This is the norm. From it develop new forms that achieve new popularity. Further, the creativity of the artists should be seen as a stimulus for people working in other fields of creativity and the life of the country and beyond.

Scottish artists should be encouraged to work with their peers from other disciplines and from other countries. This will enable learning and teaching in both directions.

Support for new work is whatever allows artists opportunity to develop their practice and test it in appropriate, sometimes more private, contexts, removed from the need to serve large numbers. This may take the form of funding or facilities. Funding may be linked to commission fees, but sometimes will need to be independent, allowing the individual artist to develop new ideas.

Experienced creative producers also may deserve support to work with artists in new ways, perhaps across art forms or exploring new media, including digital media. Facilities may mean access to space: studios, rehearsal rooms or other such means of creation. They may take the form of a permanent facility available to artists on a rolling basis. Retreats like Cove Park are one example. Another would be the Creation Centre whose feasibility is being studied by Falkirk Council.

Funders and development agencies must have the expertise, constantly refreshed, to keep pace with artist-driven development. In any case, experiment should be enabled for the benefit of all.

Of course the nature of producing new work will vary in the different art forms, affecting scale, the development time taken, and the costs involved.

Opportunities should exist for the ambitious creation of large-scale new work that will not necessarily fit with social and political agendas, but can result in defining moments for generations.

▪ Traditional Arts and Crafts

The Scottish Arts Council believes that the country's traditional arts and languages must be celebrated, nurtured and accorded a central place in its contemporary artistic life. A living and changing part of every Scottish citizen's heritage, they illuminate aspects of Scotland's peoples and cultures, encompassing and carrying Scotland's languages, history, politics, stories, verse, dance, crafts, music and song.

Tradition is a continuum and the traditional arts are constantly evolving and playing an important part – often a leading one - in developments in contemporary art and culture. They speak to and through contemporary Scotland.

Traditional artists respond to and reflect the world around them. Such examples as the recent Off Kilter production by Dancebase, composer Martyn Bennett's recordings or the fertile seedbed of the Distil professional composers' workshop project all demonstrate the special relevance of Scottish traditional arts in the work of today's creative artists. They are increasingly popular and attractive both to us and to audiences visiting Scotland.

Tourism benefits (and could do more) from the attractions of genuine and living traditional music, song, dance, storytelling and crafts. Publishing finds greater opportunities in work in language and literature unique to Scotland. The importance of Gaelic, Scots and other languages is a central concern. Educational benefits from work in and through traditional arts are increasingly recognised.

Yet, only relatively recently were these arts recognised and supported by the Scottish Arts Council. Direct proposals for structural development in future must come from the traditional arts community itself. Proposals worthy of support are likely to include:

- a central place for traditional arts and culture in the curriculum;
 - expansion of special education and training for emerging talent (centres of excellence such as Plockton High School and more degree-level opportunities);
 - establish a National Centre for Crafts
 - archive and research development to conserve, understand, learn from and use the past;
 - recognition and a place in national celebrations and ceremonial;
 - more opportunities to experiment and take traditional arts forward, responding to and reflecting a changing Scotland in a changing world.
- **National Companies**

A series of companies designated as 'national' should be instituted to act as a resource for the country and its citizens as a whole, reflect the nation as it is and aspires to be and offer models of accountability and responsible governance.

In England, four out of six national companies were set up ultimately by Parliament or the Arts Council; in Scotland the title remains much less clear, being essentially assigned to very large companies and those which have Scottish in their titles (but not all of the latter). Historically, one of the characteristics which marked them as 'national' was not a national role set by their establishing agency, but the fact they were partly funded by COSLA formula.

The title 'national' now is more a mark of scale in Scotland than of an agreed national role. The Scottish Museums Council seems to experience a similar challenge of definition. Yet, these companies, though often the subject of abuse, can be said at their best to fly the national flag, try to meet nationally set commitments for participation, fulfil a national and international role, add to national prestige, and be capable of work of international aspiration, engagement and quality.

When a national company is so defined, there should be a clear recognition of its standing, perhaps as in the case of the Royal National Theatre by ministerial rights of Board appointment or at the least a form of golden share element in the structure of the Board. There should be a clear signing up to national commitments (indeed a guaranteed level of grant might be clearly tied to commitment to an agreed range of work).

There should be a clear commitment to working with the rest of the sector in developing citizens' provision and art form development.

Being a recognised national company should not be a matter of scale or funding commitment; it should be possible for appropriate smaller companies to be recognised as 'national' because of the nature and scope of their work.

For example the international reputation of Scottish crafts is reflected in North Lands Creative Glass and could be enhanced by a major new National Centre for Crafts. In literature all of the organisations currently core funded, such as the Scottish Publishers Association, have a national brief.

In ensuring the national company's commitment to its art form and the nation, it is crucial that the developing role of the Scottish Arts Council should continue to provide skills in monitoring, evaluation and contextualisation rather than that there be a regression to a directly funded model. Such a model in England saw the Treasury fund national companies into the third quarter of the twentieth century.

These isolated national companies, deprived of the expertise of contextualised monitoring led to a loss of connection both with their sectors and with audiences. It was, therefore, abandoned as retrogressive and damaging to the companies themselves.

The interconnectedness of the national companies, the nation and the art forms should be emphasised. In this, attention should be given to means of linking the national performing arts companies with such institutions as the national galleries and museums, while linking the latter's work as appropriate to, for example, the Scottish Arts Council's visual arts role.

▪ Creative industries

Scotland's artists contribute significantly to the country's economic well being and, in many varied ways, to the Creative Industries. These are 'those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent, and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (DCMS).

They are critical to the welfare and economic health of the culture and communities of Scotland. Many of them are already independent and strong, but attention must be paid to the sector's development needs. Specific projects like the Writers' Factory screenwriting project or Music Industry Forum should be offered sustained support. Existing organisations like the Scottish Publishers Association should have an expanded role. The sector requires an expanded development support structure.

We propose that this can be achieved through the expansion of the remit and resources of the Scottish Arts Council in a lead role within the National Cultural Partnership, in collaboration with Scottish Enterprise, the Enterprise Department at the Scottish Executive, and Scottish Screen.

This would link and integrate the arts, including the independent music and computer games industries, and the publishing sector, with government, tourism, the retail sector, sport and sustainable development as the priority areas. This would build on our recent Creative Industries Strategy which already involves these partners.

▪ Diversity and access

The arts are for everyone and funding, development expertise and networks must continue to make sure that geographic, physical or social barriers do not disadvantage communities.

People must have the right to enjoy the arts wherever they live and whatever their circumstances. This means, among other things, that there must be equality of opportunity for those from minority ethnic backgrounds and for disabled people. The diversity within our communities must be embraced and celebrated as part of the rich diversity of ethnic origin, language, sexuality, ability and gender amongst our people.

Celebrating diversity in this way means parity of esteem, having diversity embedded in our thinking for everything, and an openness to different cultural meanings embedded in, for example, the inter-relationship of culture and religion or differing perceptions of artists and their role and status in society. When such parity is in place the impact of work of great quality and power, as in Theatre Workshop's production of *The Threepenny Opera*, can be immense.

Despite this last example, all too often work by 'minorities' is confined to community settings where it does not reach wider audiences nor have the kind of investment that allows the highest production standards. It is important to encourage different scales of work. It is also crucially important not simply to showcase, and so exoticise work, or ring fence funds.

A national cultural diversity strategy for the arts has to support a holistic approach that sees culture and equality in a broad perspective. Language recognition including Gaelic and Scots would be a vital strand of this work.

More broadly the community based sector is a vital part of the spectrum of arts practise and provision, and has an international reputation for the quality of the work.

Many who work in the fields have at times been frustrated by the profile of community arts held in some quarters. It is sometimes pigeon-holed into what is perceived to be lower quality or less important than the recognised professional art forms.

In reality, art in the community is very different to this perception and the boundaries between 'community' and 'professional' art are by no means clear. There has been a growing trend of an overlap between the community and cultural sectors. Professional artists work with communities in a variety of ways and professional companies embark on extensive outreach programmes.

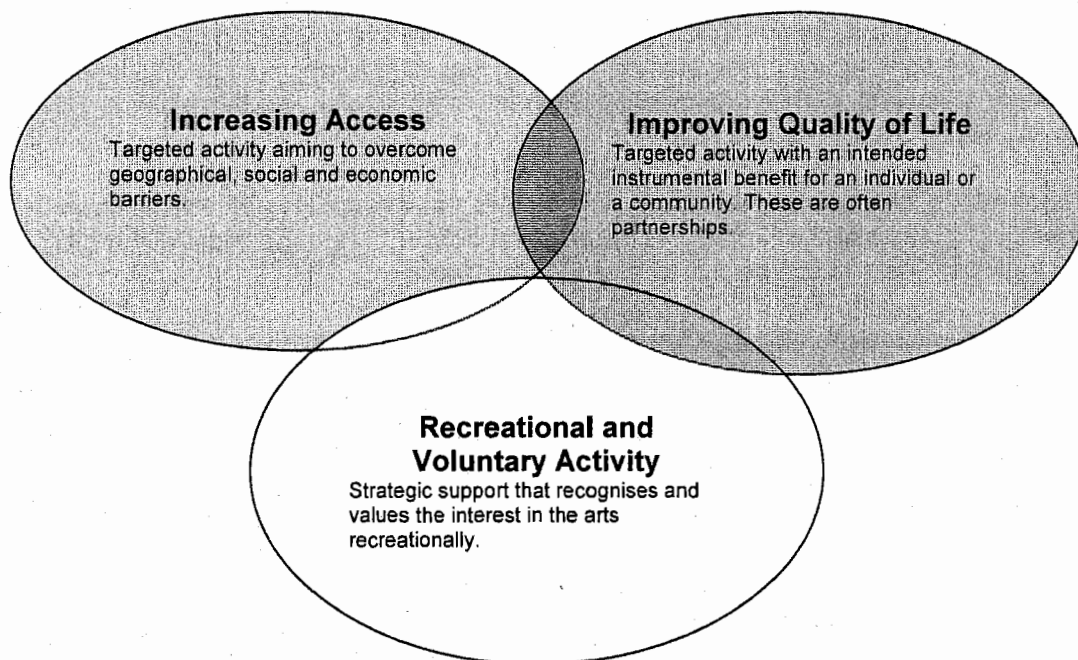
The Scottish Arts Council has encouraged this trend which benefits the community, the artists and contributes to the development of the art form.

All arts projects expect an audience and to some extent have an intended outcome. Some arts are simply to entertain and provide enjoyment, or to challenge and inspire. Other projects are designed to provide access or engage with excluded groups and others still have more tangible outcomes.

Although many, if not most, projects cover more than one of these outcomes, arts in the community projects can be broadly defined into these three themes, and of course each of these areas will overlap in both impact and intent.

The importance of the voluntary sector in this, and throughout our discussion of access, rights and entitlements, cannot be underestimated.

The diagram below serves to illustrate this perspective:



Many arts projects could arguably serve more than one if not all of these purposes – for example an elderly person who is involved in recreational arts may not only enjoy the pastime but also see it as beneficial to their health and wellbeing; providing better access to the arts for people from economically or socially deprived areas may lead to a decrease in crime levels. To some extent all three groups are principally about access or providing access.

The developments in this sector, in both urban and rural settings, have been nurtured through National Lottery funding, but remains precarious because of this dependence on project funding. Projects such as Northern Rock in Glasgow and WHALE in Edinburgh suffer the blight of short term funding, and this requires serious attention.

It is in the community based sector that we have seen the new partnerships in relation to arts and health come to the fore, and the growing interest in this area **needs to move on from precarious project funding** for the real benefits to the individuals involved to be widespread. The involvement of Health Boards in the Regional Fora could offer a context.

Signs that such a holistic approach for everyone's benefit was in place would include:

- **establishing secure funding streams for the community based sector;**
- seeing well qualified minority ethnic Scots running major cultural institutions;
- theatre productions, as have existed elsewhere in the UK for decades, where there is integrated casting and parallel good practice in music and dance;
- arts training institutions' recruiting more widely from ethnic minority and disability communities within Scotland;
- international exchanges through which Scottish based companies host visiting companies in residence rather than simply hosting brief visits;
- more board members from the diversity of ethnicity and disability that constitutes Scotland;
- establishing an Institute for Community Cultural Development to undertake research and disseminate good practice.

▪ Arts About Scotland

This theme essentially pursues an approach that improves the match between distribution and production. A key element in provision for the audience lies in such areas as touring, receiving venues, residencies and festivals.

The organisation of these varies significantly from art form to art form and in all art forms questions arise about the relationship between the artists who make the work (and are sometimes called *producers*) and those who promote or curate it (who are also confusingly sometimes called *producers*).

These include the nature of the work developed and its appropriateness to the needs of promoters and their audiences. In drama and dance, though the work of Scottish companies is often of a very high standard indeed, promoters sometimes feel disempowered in their desire to meet the needs of citizens. Often cutting edge drama and dance development takes place in touring and festivals.

Nonetheless, not all touring and festivals properly seek cutting edge work. The issue is not of quality, but of matching provision to need. New relationships with those who make the art should lead to a new enfranchisement. Music promoters are often more in control of their programmes, selecting them and using overseas groups. For visual arts, exhibition provision does not offer easy parallels with the performing arts situation, although there are clear deficiencies in visual arts touring provision, particularly with regard to funding support of smaller local authority galleries.

The issue of arts provision throughout Scotland, then, is a complex one in which the dynamics differ between art forms.

In the interest of audiences, then, certain key principles must be addressed. The area is at present vexed by a confusion of activity. This falls into:

- art form development (artist-led, experimental, high in resource demand, low in box office income);
- presenting (audience-focused, accessible, high cost, but with moderate income);
- access and participation (audience/ participant-focused, not necessarily professionally led, often very localised).

Issues also arise between the demands of urban and rural touring. For the performing arts at least, a clear national policy of provision must be developed, probably based on networks of promoters working with a regular group of producers.

This again could be informed by Regional Fora where the distinctive cultural interests of that community could be better met, and address issues of where funding should be directed needs considered within this policy.

Options range from channelling all funding through promoters who would then commission new work (but this might damage art form development) to channelling all funding through creating organisations and individuals (but this might reduce responsiveness to audience need). In any case, it is likely that it is necessary to devolve control to promoters to design their own portfolio of programming more than is done at present.

▪ International

The arts represent the identity of any nation and Scotland is fortunate in having a number of artistic icons which are recognised the world over. The arts can represent Scotland as a confident, cultured and open society.

A comprehensive international policy as outlined here is essential to demonstrate and foster our creative spirit. Many nations make an impact abroad by funding cultural agencies to work outside the home country, best examples are the French Institute and the Goethe Institute.

The creation of a series of cultural institutes of Scotland in major cities such as New York and Paris is one which the commission should examine. In the long term such facilities could form a base for demonstrating commercial as well as cultural expertise.

A virtuous circle of opportunity and cultural and economic benefit can be created by artists who live in Scotland and undertake work abroad.

Leading Scottish arts organisations produce work of good international quality that is toured abroad. Such companies (and individuals) represent Scotland and develop understanding of other cultures. Equally, there should be regular access to the best international work by its being presented in Scotland. Broadly our international work falls into three general categories: incoming, outgoing and collaborative work.

International arts and cultural policy should extend and support opportunities for the people of Scotland to enjoy and experience the widest range of culture from around the world. It should also support Scotland's artists and organisers of cultural activities to develop their work and profile on the international scene. The Scottish Arts Council within a National Cultural Partnership (or equivalent) would have a lead role in both strands.

The chief benefits of developing and supporting such a policy will be to:

- help broaden and deepen opportunities for enjoyment, knowledge and understanding of, and interaction with, the wider world;
- help individuals and groups of people to prosper in the wider world from a supportive base in Scotland;
- encourage artists and cultural entrepreneurs to live and work in and from Scotland.

People will benefit from a richer environment of cultural opportunities and the increase in well-resourced, successful Scottish artists who continue working at home. Further, the economy of the country will benefit from overseas earnings retained in Scotland, while enhanced and positive images of Scotland will help to attract tourism and inward migration. Developing relationships with and in other countries will allow the use of culture as a bridge to other social, political and economic partnerships.

The practical enactment of such a policy should be underpinned by a number of key principles. Examples of these include:

- the need to eschew false dichotomies between cultural and commercial activity;
- development through a growing understanding of other countries and a series of relationships with agencies and organisations from those countries;

- recognising mutuality, the sharing of benefits from the actions of individual countries with others, especially over the long term;
- potential for an international touring agency supporting the 'export' of Scottish art and artists.

It is essential to draft a longer list of such key principles to support an inclusive and open international arts policy for the nation.

Conclusion

The central concern of the Cultural Commission brief and the First Minister's St Andrew's Day 2003 speech is one shared by the Scottish Arts Council; to ensure a rich and diverse cultural life for all of the people of Scotland and have the nation benefit as a consequence.

This is an agenda for change, and change for the better. The Scottish Arts Council, its staff, Council and Committee members, are committed to that process, and wish to contribute to it as active partners. We have a lot to offer, albeit in a new configuration of relationships.

In this regard we are not only open to change, we have often led the change in the sector, and championed a broad view of the arts, the interests of the audience, and the role of the artist. This has required partnership working, strategic thinking and advocacy.

We can continue to lead that change.

We welcome the responsibility of leadership.

We can offer a breadth, and continuity of view from a national perspective that will be difficult to replicate if lost.

We believe we have the expertise, skills, and a unique national perspective that touches on the diverse elements of the cultural landscape, and is suited to a new, enhanced, and strategic role.

This first outline statement to the Commission offers some radical ideas that acknowledge the reality that the status quo is not an option, and that applies to the Scottish Arts Council as well as other elements of the structures that currently support arts and culture in Scotland. Many of the ideas, we acknowledge, require further exploration.

We believe we can offer leadership, expertise and a national overview in key aspects of the agenda for change, whatever the structural configuration.

We have offered some ideas of a new configuration in this paper that are born of experience and evolved through consultation. Importantly the call from many in the sector is to retain an independent arms length body with expertise and a national overview.

While we agree with this principle, we welcome an active role in developing new approaches that reflect new circumstances, new aspirations and create real opportunity for all people of Scotland.

**The Scottish Arts Council
30 September 2004**