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**From:** June Edgar [June.Edgar@scotnet.co.uk]  
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**Subject:** Comments for Phase 1 of the Consutation process[Scanned]

#### Education.

I think the major issue is that children learn what their parents teach - and parents who have no association with pleasure through cultural and creative pursuits won't direct their children towards them. However, for example, I think the Bank of Scotlands Childrens Theatre festival is superb - seems to be many times over-subscribed and the work shown is incredible. Even if it were only middle-class Edinburgh children who benefitted (and I've no reason to think it is) it seems to me to be an excellent example of the PRIVATE sector promoting culture. Examining the Bank's motives and encouraging, and perhaps helping to fund, such initiatives would go a long way. The Book Week promotion of enabling children to buy books at pocket-money prices - and giving free vouchers to school children - was a superb way of making sure that every child can read and own books, even if their parents have no interest. Maybe libraries could give away free books - cheap editions of out of copyright titles - to get people in in the first place. ( I believe there is a promotion somewhere which supplies free books to Drs surgeries, stations, buses, hospitals etc, which people read and then leave for the next person at the next drop-off point)

#### The institutional infrastructure.

I think the infrastructure in Scotland is excellent, thanks to the lottery windfall of the last few years. Every small town has a performance space and somewhere to display art-work. They do need marketing support and knowhow to promote themselves to new audiences. Where there might be failure is not having culture on every organisations agenda - Scottish Enterprise maximising the economic benefits of a cultured population (cultural industries, creative industries, international connections etc) , the NHS promoting the mental health benefits and so on. This would have to be a clear Scottish Executive policy directive on this - I'm not sure that this is the case.

#### The delivery of services and access.

As I said, I think the infrastructure is superb for such a small country, and access is only an issue as it is for all services - issues of transport, language, disability, ageism etc.

I wonder if there might be tax incentives for companies investing in cultural undertakings and events ? The film industry in Ireland was apparently built on tax breaks - on a smaller scale, could the Scottish Parliament support schemes like Percentage for the Arts, or reward sponsors of initiatives like the Edinburgh festivals in relation to their attraction of e.g. pensioners, people from rural areas, SIP residents, teenagers, first-time participants ?

#### Marketing and promotion

I would say this is the crucial issue. I live in a city, and keep an eye on the online and periodical publicity of the theatres, libraries and galleries in the area. There is a wealth of free events - often with a glass of wine and some social networking thrown in. However, I'm both privileged and appreciative.

We need a bulletin which ISNT aimed at the young and trendy, or the middle-class and educated, or even the economically and socially excluded, but is readily accessible to pensioners, children, people living in the country and small towns and stressed working people. Theatres such as the Edinburgh Playhouse attract huge audiences, at very expensive prices, whereas theatres run locally, and certainly gallery events, don't seem to attract nearly such a wide audience. I'm not sure that money is an important issue - there are free previews, sponsor promoted tickets etc. Transport may be - every ticket sold or piece of marketing material should spell out how to get to the venue cheaply and easily - and home again. Pensioners are unlikely to go out at night if they are likely to have to stand around waiting for a bus afterwards. We also need to define what we mean by Culture - certain art forms or groups seem to get along without much public recognition or support (pop music, club scene, ethnic festivals, amateur dramatics) Would it be better if we did support them ? Or can we encourage others to follow their path and free up public subsidy?

Maximising creative potential.

It seems to me that to allow everyone access to culture and creativity, we need to encourage participation in art forms such as writing, drawing, dance, crafts and acting which do not require big initial investments. People can become painters, film-makers, animators etc once their initial creative talents are developed - and hopefully the commercial sector will fund this further development. Culture needs to be seen as accessible, and not elitist. Perhaps if access to culture were promoted as a RIGHT, and something we as taxpayers spend a lot of money on and should know enough to vote on, we would have more people keen to participate.

However, I think we also need a definition of Why Culture is a Good Thing - those who despise opera might support bigger budgets for attracting film location work to Scotland, and those who don't support subsidies for visual artists might believe in helping to fund disabled theatre for example. Perhaps we need a document like Smart, Successful Scotland which relates to Creative, Dynamic Scotland

Cultural rights of the Scottish citizen and those of its creative community My only comment would be that these are one and the same - everyone is creative whether they participate as performer or audience, and to define a few as the "creative community" is to turn off the majority. I feel quite strongly about this - little point having artists and galleries if no-one goes to see the work.

Key issues for Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian, in my opinion :

Definition of Culture and its economic benefit to Scotland Clear guidelines as to the priorities of cultural development and promotion Proportionate resources to support and exploit if necessary. Incentives to help the commercial sector support Culture.

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