

Cultural Commission Phase 1 Consultation

PRELIMINARY SUBMISSION FROM SCOTLAND'S TWO AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES – The Audience Business¹ and Glasgow Grows Audiences².

1. OVERVIEW

We endorse the First Minister's stated commitment to every citizen's 'cultural rights' as the trigger for this consultation process ("each person has rights of access to cultural activity").

We take this to mean that an onus is placed on :

- individuals across the country being able to make confident choices about the extent and nature of their involvement with culture, regardless of where they live and their social demographic profile
- cultural providers and artists working at every scale making appropriate elements of their work as engaging and accessible as possible to as wide a cross section of the Scottish public as possible
- cultural agencies, in particular funding bodies, enforcing the need for organisations to factor a robust knowledge of their current and potential audience into management decisions at all levels

We believe that strong relationships with audiences and audience development³ are inextricably linked with the creation and staging of art and with effective cultural provision, and that this issue ought to be a high priority for the Commission both during the consultation process and subsequently.

Hence the agencies' desire to make a joint submission which engages with the Commission's remit, and directly and indirectly emphasises our potential as primary agents of development and change in line with the Commission's final recommendations⁴. Many of the suggested initiatives we refer to would be best delivered by an umbrella body, working democratically across the range of arts organisations in any given area of Scotland. We believe that our two agencies and others should be resourced to deliver and develop this kind of activity.

A wealth of information exists across the UK to demonstrate that many aspects of audience development (particularly the marketing elements) are best achieved if arts organisations collaborate with each other, and if they are resourced to plan campaigns and initiatives over and above their core promotional activity⁵. This is not simply about economies of scale but also about growing skills and knowledge - vital to planning any strategy for audience growth. A network of audience development organisations constituted in a variety of ways currently exists across the UK to encourage collaborative audience development, and thus help sustain a viable business future for arts organisations as well as embedding them in the communities they choose to serve. Their success shows that wherever attention is paid to a strategic approach, real benefits accrue.

The Commission's remit embraces education, the institutional infrastructure, the delivery of services and access, marketing and promotion, and how to encourage creativity. However, if we put audiences and audience development ('the citizen first') overtly at the heart of our cultural ambitions for Scotland, a powerful yet subtle shift in priorities and decision-making across all these areas is called for – we believe both agencies have a key role to play in ensuring this change happens, and could take a lead in delivering the kind of initiatives listed below which aim to stimulate attendance and participation.

2. EDUCATION

Public opinion does not hesitate to endorse the integrity and value of sports participation as part of the school curriculum. We believe a similar emphasis and profile should be given to participation in the arts. Our 'cultural entitlement' should be expressed in a series of targeted initiatives for young people eg.:

¹ see appendix 1

² see appendix 2

³ A strategic combination of marketing, educational activity and programming in order to engage with the broadest possible audience, which should be a core objective of every arts organisation. It generally takes one of three forms : more (new) audience members, increased frequency of visits by existing audience members, broadening the range of events and venues attended.

⁴ This point is also implicit within the Scottish Arts Council's Audience Development Strategy 2004-7

⁵ see for example www.newaudiences.org.uk

- **passport to culture / the arts backpack⁶** – each child provided with vouchers to cash in against participation, required as part of the curriculum. Allows personal choice of who you attend with and what you attend.
- **free children's tickets** at all cultural venues – the Usher Hall in Edinburgh are piloting this initiative at some concerts. Could be year round, on certain days, or at specially promoted events. Could also be adapted for over 65s, low income groups, etc.
- subsidised **equipment hire** (eg. via Cultural Co-ordinators, which would become permanent required posts in each local authority area)
- subsidised **cultural trips** eg. four times a year for each pupil @ £45 per head (likewise via Cultural Co-ordinators)
- **master classes** for up to ten pupils at a time as part of the curriculum – talented students given the chance to attend Summer and Easter schools
- innovation and excellence funding awards for **educational material** provided by arts organisations, especially interpretative material at galleries and museums (eg. US museums give out a free backpack of information and goodies to each child)
- co-ordinated programme of young people's '**mystery shopper**' / **taster visits** to events and venues to help them see themselves through the young people's eyes and review their operation accordingly

Other sections of the population should be catered for by supporting organisations in running cultural projects which **use and encourage access to cultural buildings throughout the day** and evening eg. Heydays project of arts activities for over 55s at the West Yorkshire Playhouse and Byre Theatre.

3. INSTITUTIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- **dedicated marketing staff** in organisations – also dedicated **education workers** (both full or part time) paid for as part of core funding ; in some cases a joint approach may be most appropriate e.g. pilot audience development post at Edinburgh Printmakers, Stills and Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop
- funding bodies to enforce the need for cultural organisations to become accessible to a broad general audience by **changing their overall positioning and message** - without compromising on quality or range of work ; considerable work in this area has been undertaken in England via Arts Council England's *Not for the Likes of You* project⁷, undertaken by Morton Smyth Limited in partnership with individual organisations and audience development agencies (we understand that this work is likely to be extended into Scotland over the next two years).
- funding bodies to enforce the need for organisations to articulate attendance targets and priority audiences via an **appropriate action plan⁸**, thus empowering organisations to sharpen their focus and make the best use of limited resources
- **strategic marketing and audience development resources⁹** in population centres and/or regions to co-ordinate **large scale campaigns** targeting new attenders and key interest groups (eg. tourists) - likely to be beyond the resources of any individual organisation, core funded by local authorities and other public sector agencies eg. Scottish Arts Council, Scottish Museums Council.

4. DELIVERY OF SERVICES AND ACCESS TO THEM

We understand 'service' in two distinct ways. Firstly, access to cultural events. Secondly, the nature of the experience that you have when you get there.

⁶ **Cultural Passport.** National voucher scheme in The Netherlands, funded by the government, to support young people's access to a range of cultural events. In 1999 a compulsory subject, Culture and Art Appreciation, was introduced in schools. 200,000 pupils received a book of vouchers from their teachers to the value of 22.70 Euros. Teachers were provided with weekly e-bulletins of events in the local area to help them encourage their pupils to use the vouchers. Each voucher had a unique identifier to enable analysis of usage by individual, age, gender, school, location, etc. In Year One, 51% of vouchers were used and this increased to 61% after Year Two. Schools with the most proactive and committed teachers had the highest voucher take up. The project also provides an opportunity for longitudinal research into the long term impact of attending cultural events at key stages in a young people's development.

⁷ see www.newaudiences.org.uk for more information

⁸ referenced in SAC's Audience Development Strategy 2004-7

⁹ referenced in SAC's Audience Development Strategy 2004-7

Access to cultural events :

- Scotland-wide '**mapping**' of **cultural provision** by art form, scale, location, transport links, catchment areas, etc. as the basis of long term planning by funding bodies and other stakeholders
- increased **collaboration on planning and marketing of touring work** across all art forms to encourage as even a spread as possible through the year (eg. central arts touring resource to co-ordinate this)
- creative exploitation of **arts venues and community buildings as cultural centres** eg. signage, lighting, displays, public art, promotion, programming expertise, promotion, appropriate use of space and resources to ensure the best possible quality
- **liaison with transport providers** to create an infrastructure which enables and actively promotes access to a range of cultural events at the local, regional and national level
- sufficient investment and funding to ensure the **highest possible quality of work at every scale**, and therefore the best possible experience for audiences

Quality of the experience :

- ensure **access to comprehensive what's on information** via the web, library and schools promotions / distribution, published listings
- **arts call centre** to complement information services, sell tickets, advise on transport connections and transport/ticket packages
- **on line sales portal(s)** for tickets and for artists' work, allied to other existing national resources (eg. VisitScotland, The List, SAC's pilot crafts website), developing price incentives for early booking (Easyjet model), customising e-bulletin promotions and reminders according to established booking patterns (Amazon customer recommendations model)
- programme of **regular customer audits of cultural facilities** to gauge responses to service delivery, over and above the response to the 'art' itself
- **refurbishment funding** to ensure that facilities can be maintained to an acceptable standard, as well as addressing for example the latest Disability Discrimination Act recommendations to the highest possible standard rather than the minimum
- **minimum quality service standards** enforced by funding bodies and stakeholders ; also support for skills development initiatives to ensure organisations are able to engage with and address the varying needs and wants of a wide range of audiences (staff sensitised in particular to welcome first time attenders) eg. a service academy linked to existing tourism training initiatives

5. MARKETING AND PROMOTION

- **on-going public relations strategy to reposition 'arts' and 'culture'**
Aiming to encourage the public to include the arts on their personal entertainment and leisure 'menu', and to accept the value of / connections to the arts and creativity in everyday life¹⁰ eg. national sustained **advertising campaign** to challenge stereotypical definitions and 'look behind the scenes' (parallels other public sector **awareness campaigns**, eg. HEBS which has successfully raised awareness of key aspects of public health policy). Such sponsored campaigns, working closely with appropriate media partners and ideally fronted by high profile Scottish champions / opinion formers, would play a key role in raising general awareness and increasing interest in the arts, which can then be reinforced by individual organisations' campaigns around specific events and programmes.
- **www.what'son.com**
The fewer the barriers to participation; the greater the participation. Effective marketing and promotion rely on circulating persuasive information and making it as easy as possible to 'close the deal' with a sale. New technology, the internet in particular, provides cost effective tools to do both at a time most convenient to the consumer – especially given the government commitment to universal access in the years ahead. A pilot on-line listings and sales facility for the Highlands and Islands (The Booth, launching January 2005) and the City of Edinburgh Council's commitment to developing a city arts portal¹¹ could both provide models for Scotland-wide services.

¹⁰ The ArtsMap research project in Dumfries and Galloway (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre 2002) established that a significant proportion of the local population did not consider themselves to be arts attenders, yet were regular attenders within their local communities eg. attending a traditional music gig at a local pub.

¹¹ CEC Theatre Strategy 2004

- **market research**
Audience development begins with a clear understanding of the attitudes and perceptions (positive and negative) of attenders and non-attenders¹². Agencies can provide organisations with the **qualitative and quantitative information** they need, work collectively to maintain a **national picture of arts attendance and participation**, and co-ordinate marketing action eg. up to date market intelligence, setting realistic targets, benchmarking, up to date information on customer profiles mapped against participation, detailed exploration of barriers to attendance.
- **targeting new audiences**
A range of effective campaigns to encourage first time attendance and increase frequency have been delivered around the UK¹³. Individual organisations rarely have the resources to target non attenders in a systematic and sustained way. The local / regional audience development agencies could provide leadership and campaign management in targeting key non attending groups.
- **festivals and events**
Ensure full integration of arts events into the VisitScotland and Event Scotland strategies to maximise the potential for public engagement and involvement. Agencies to co-ordinate developing programme of city / region mini festivals eg. targeting hinterland to attend events in a key population centre (eg. ArtsFest¹⁴), attracting urban populations to specific locations for arts events (eg. NVA's rural projects), Proms season of all venue seats at a fixed price for a week, national focus on a particular area's arts programme including high profile UK and international residencies (eg. St Magnus Festival).

6. ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

This aspect is closely linked to our comments on Education. Additionally we understand it to embrace a particular focus on the creation of art, and on supporting artists and performers through their working lives by on-going investment in nurturing talent, in realising potential, and in supporting the development of artists' business skills. A particular emphasis would be placed on establishing a high level career structure to encourage high fliers to continue to work, and deploy their skills, in Scotland.

- **cultural academies / fame schools** providing elite training across both performing and visual arts eg. a working building linked to an existing FE institution
- centrally managed **investment funds** fostering access to business angels and investment / development funds
- **bursaries** eg. competitive funding to support new talent and new ideas that are rooted in and to be further developed in Scotland
- artistic and business **mentoring schemes** targeted at key stages of career development ; also a cultural / creative industries networking infrastructure, particularly to offer entrepreneurial business training and advice and to foster informal and formal collaboration
- **job search**, using cultural venues for FE and apprenticeship training as part of an accredited intern scheme, plus briefings for career advisors to ensure that the arts and creative industries are considered as viable options for school leavers
- **subsidised studio and venue spaces** available at key centres across Scotland to enable 'creators' to work together and share costs, risks and knowledge (eg. WASPS studios) ; also to have working relationships with education centres to ensure that young people and others increase their understanding of the creative process

September 2004
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¹² referenced in SAC's Audience Development Strategy 2004-7

¹³ eg. www.newaudiences.org.uk

¹⁴ **Audiences Central - ArtsFest** This is now an annual event which takes place over a weekend in Birmingham showcasing 350 free half hour arts events, co-ordinated by the regional audience development agency. The festival aims to involve people in all types of art form activity and increase future arts attendance. In 1999, 110,000 had direct experience of an arts event via the festival. The festival was inspired by the Utimarkt festival in Amsterdam. 67.5% of ArtsFest attenders went on to make independent visits to at least seven new arts events. 44% of attenders said that ArtsFest had prompted them to visit arts events again.

Appendix 1

THE AUDIENCE BUSINESS

The Audience Business (TAB), based in Edinburgh, is Scotland's first audience development agency. It was launched five years ago with funding from the City of Edinburgh Council and the Scottish Arts Council's National Lottery fund, as well as the annual subscriptions, vision and commitment of a network of arts organisations across the city.

"TAB's aim is to help develop audiences for the arts, for the mutual benefit and enjoyment of local communities, visitors and arts organisations."

Our works currently focuses on the marketing and audience development needs of 30 key arts organisations in and around Edinburgh, including most theatres, galleries, festivals and large scale touring companies.

We do this in a range of ways :

- planning and delivering a range of audience development campaigns (which have successfully targeted a wide range of people, from disadvantaged young people and taxi drivers, to contemporary arts attenders and tourists).
- undertaking and disseminating market intelligence on arts attendance across Edinburgh, as well as customised research projects for individual subscribers
- fostering collaboration and partnerships
- facilitating training, information exchange and skills development opportunities for subscribers

With a new Chief Executive in post, TAB is engaged in a strategic review of its aims and activities which will be articulated in a new three year action plan 2005-2008. Future priorities are likely to include :

- increasing our research capability to establish a clear demographic profile of current and potential audiences for the arts in Edinburgh and its catchment area
- developing and implementing an audiences and audience development plan for the city
- a strategic focus on cultural tourism, ethnic minority audiences, family friendly initiatives, and encouraging independent visits to the arts by teenagers.

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Appendix 2

GLASGOW GROWS AUDIENCES

GGA is the new audience development consortium for Glasgow, one of a UK-wide network of agencies set up to offer a regional resource supporting arts and cultural organisations in developing the size and diversity of their audiences

GGA has been founded as a result of a feasibility study undertaken in late 2003 which aimed to gauge how far the challenges in the Glasgow marketplace could be addressed by an arts marketing and audience development initiative. The study demonstrated the benefits of a collaborative approach to audience development, and the working party approved the implementation strategy in January 2004.

constitution

GGA was constituted as a not-for-profit consortium, registered in July 2004 as a limited liability company with recognition by the Inland Revenue in Scotland as a charitable organisation. It is effectively owned and controlled by the member arts organisations who will be paying an annual subscription. It is envisaged that around 30 arts organisations will join the Consortium paying one of four categories of membership subscription, based on a range of criteria including organisational turnover.

aims and role of the consortium

The Consortium is intended to be a strategic resource, creating a more favourable environment in which organisations can market their products, and deliver audiences for the long term benefit of the arts as a whole. The activities of the Consortium will be focused in three areas :

- market intelligence/research. The Consortium aims to develop its understanding of the Glasgow market by the end of the first year. This will include compiling and collating information on current audiences, and commissioning or undertaking research with potential attenders.
- audience development and collaborative marketing campaigns.¹⁵ A strategic plan for audience development will be written in Year One as a result of the market information gathered and analysed.
- practical support for organisations, including training and networking events.

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¹⁵ Typically, audience development projects might address under-represented audiences such as the family audience, teenagers, black or Asian communities, or elderly people. They might involve such schemes as *Test Drive* (getting people to try an art form or venue for the first time for free), *Ambassadors* (asking core attenders to help promote to other people like them), or *Pick and Mix* (asking people to subscribe to a variety of events in return for a large discount).

Ian

From: Ros Lamont [Ros@tab.org.uk]
Sent: 27 September 2004 11:36
To: info
Cc: julie@gga4arts.co.uk; Ros Lamont
Subject: submission from The Audience Business and Glasgow Grows Audiences[Scanned]
Importance: High

Please find attached a joint submission from Scotland's two audience development agencies. We look forward to discussing its content in more detail.

27/09/2004