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UK FILM | COUNCIL

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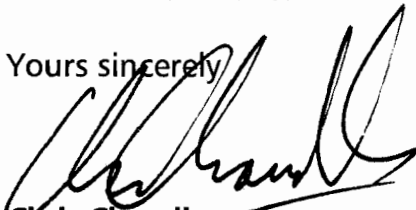
Dear Brian

Cultural Commission in Scotland

Following our meeting back in October, I am delighted to enclose a short submission from the UK Film Council to the Cultural Commission. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries regarding this submission or if the UK Film Council can in any way support or assist the work of the Commission.

With all best wishes

Yours sincerely



Chris Chandler
Head of Strategic Partnerships

The Cultural Commission UK Film Council - Response

The UK Film Council welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Cultural Commission in Scotland.

Summary

A film and moving image agency for Scotland will need to respond to the following factors:

- the wide range of moving image activity; film, broadcasting, digital media and games and the inter-related nature of these business sectors and value chains;
- the economic value and potential for regeneration and business growth through job creation and inward investment;
- and the cultural and creative importance of film and moving image production, distribution, exhibition and education.

Based on these factors, the UK Film Council urges the Scottish Executive to maintain a structure which:

- provides strategic vision and investment - both industrial and cultural - across the film and moving image sectors;
- has the expertise and dynamism to represent and promote Scotland coupled with a strong commitment to partnership working at local, regional, UK and international level;
- Implements a vigorous and realistic economic strategy across the value chain;
- recognises the important cultural value of film in developing a sense of community and promotes (and invests in) the role of film projects in engaging people and communities – and the social benefits which will result from this;
- has a genuine commitment to developing audiences for a range of Scottish, UK and world cinema and is capable of maximising audience growth and diversity;
- supports media education both within the curriculum and out of school through life-long learning.

Background

The UK Film Council was established by the Government in 2000 as the UK's lead strategic agency for developing the film industry and film culture, underlining the importance of film as a key part of the UK's creative industries, which collectively have a turnover of close to £60 billion a year.

The UK Film Council aims to stimulate a dynamic and successful British film industry and culture, and to promote the widest possible enjoyment and understanding of cinema throughout the nations and regions of the UK.

Scottish Screen is one of the UK Film Council's key partners. This partnership is essential to the development and delivery of a vibrant film industry and culture on a UK-wide basis. It also delivers joint working between the UK Media Desk and the MEDIA Antennae in Scotland.

Currently the UK Film Council and Scottish Screen work together in a broad range of areas including exhibition, skills training, film heritage and moving image education. The two agencies also collaborate as co-developers and co-funders of features including the critically acclaimed *The Magdalene Sisters*, *Morvern Callar* and *Young Adam*.

Value of Film and Moving Image

Film and moving image offers a huge opportunity for sustainable economic growth along with enormous social and cultural benefits. Film is a powerful creative and commercial medium. Moving image in all its forms touches people lives and profoundly affects their world-view. Cinema and television are proven to be amongst the most successful ways of engaging young people and powerful media to work with the most excluded communities and individuals in urban and rural areas.

Production (of films, television programmes and digital content for games) is already a crucial driver in regional economies. There is huge scope for further growth, with economic activity and employment in the moving image sector in the UK running well ahead of average rates of economic growth. However production is only one part of a value chain which includes: animation, digital effects and post-production; international sales and distribution; cinema exhibition; and retail DVD sales, all bringing employment and added economic value. Life-long learning, training and the development of skill and talent are central to the viability and success of all of these sectors.

National Network for Strategy and Delivery

Over the past decade, a UK-wide network of agencies responsible for film and moving image strategy and delivery has been created: Scottish Screen has been a key part of that network. There is and will continue to be a vital role for a specialist film agency in Scotland to support moving image activity and to act as an advocate for film and the moving image within Scotland.

Whatever structural solution the Cultural Commission arrives at, it will be important that the role which Scottish Screen currently plays as part of the UK-wide network of screen agencies is maintained or strengthened. The network is beneficial to film in Scotland for a number of reasons:

- The film industry – especially sectors such as film financing, distribution and sales – operate only at a UK-wide level, largely from bases in London. In order to influence or intervene in those areas it is therefore important that the screen agency for Scotland is strongly networked at the UK level – primarily via a strong partnership with the UK Film Council.
- Similarly, certain areas of strategy can only sensibly be delivered at a UK level, for example: co-production treaties; tax; EU issues such as State Aids. The relationship with the UK Film Council provides Scottish Screen with a voice on these issues whilst maintaining unanimity of approach to Government (Treasury, Foreign Office), the European Commission and the global film industry.
- The UK Film Council works with its partners in the nations and regions to gather data and build market and cultural intelligence on film issues in the UK. This is used by, and to the benefit of, all of the partner agencies. Conversely, the UK Film Council relies upon the network of national and regional screen agencies to build and maintain regional intelligence and networks of regional and local delivery: without these twin functions, the ability of all of the screen agencies (including the UK Film Council) to operate effectively and efficiently will be impaired.

Film Culture, Diversity and Access

The UK Film Council has a commitment to ensuring access of opportunity in all film activity and believes that, to ensure meaningful cultural entitlement, not only should there be opportunities for making and watching films but that a diverse and representative range of people must be involved. This is a core value which the UK Film Council believes should be central to film strategy in Scotland.

The components of this strategy should include:

- A strong commitment to partnership working – with communities and local organisations as well as professional bodies.
- Investment in opportunities for individuals from all backgrounds to both make and watch films.
- The active championing and celebration of the diversity of film, filmmakers and audiences for film in the UK.
- Working creatively and effectively with a wide range of partners within Scotland, in the UK and internationally to create and deliver strategic initiatives to support and promote access and opportunity.

- A management culture and ways of working that support equality of opportunities.
- Ensuring that diversity and equality are integral to all parts of the agency's working and activities create clear and accessible paths of entry into the UK film sector

Integration with other public sector bodies and strategies

Strategy and strategic delivery for film and the moving image do not operate in a vacuum. To be fully effective and to maximise the synchronicity between film and other cultural and economic arenas, the following options might be implemented

- As part of its cultural plan, the Executive should commission a distinct strategy for film and the moving image in Scotland from the national screen agency (or structure supporting moving image). The strategy should provide a framework for all economic investment in film and the moving image.
- The Executive should encourage Scottish Enterprise and regional enterprise agencies to consult with the National Screen Agency on how the strategy for film and the moving image can contribute to the regional economic strategy.
- The Executive – and its functional bodies - should consult the national screen agency (and via the NSA, the UK Film Council) in matters directly relating to all strategies affecting film and moving image culture and industry.

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