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14 January 2005

Dear Mr Boyle

**Cultural Commission Public Consultation Phase 2: Pan-sectoral Questions**

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this consultation.

The University Collections Committee, which has a remit to recommend policy in relation to the University museum and archive collections, has offered feedback on the following questions:

**Q1. How should cultural rights and accompanying entitlements and responsibilities be used to develop both cultural policy and appropriate standards for the provision/delivery of culture in Scotland?**

As a first principle, it is important to take a holistic approach, not regarding culture as a separate 'sector' but as an integral and enriching part of everyday life. The definition of "culture" should be similarly holistic –from contemporary art to archives. Involvement as participants, rather than simply as consumers, is essential. Culture cannot simply be 'bought in'. For instance, children and young people in Scotland need opportunities not just to experience performing arts of national quality but to have home grown role models to aspire to: e.g., Scottish national opera, theatre, orchestras, and ballet companies.

**These comments are also relevant to questions 52 to 58 on the national bodies**

**Q11 What role should the universities, colleges and other centres of artistic/academic excellence play in the defining of Scotland's cultural strategy and how should they be represented in the cultural leadership of Scotland?**

The HE sector has an important place in the cultural landscape. It is disappointing that the sector is not listed as a provider in the Cultural Commission's document: 'What we need to deliver' because universities and colleges make a vital contribution to our cultural provision in a myriad of ways, including

- Nurturing and training the cultural practitioners of the future from musicians, artists, craftspeople, architects and authors to teachers, philosophers, historians, archivists, curators and conservators
- Creating and commissioning work from fashion, film, sculpture, music, and literature to landmark buildings

- Contributing to a vital and vigorous Scottish intellectual tradition, from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the present
- As a hub for community cultural activity from extra mural classes and heritage volunteers to musicians and artists in residence. For example, the Heriot Watt University Musician in Residence, Scottish Chamber Orchestra viola player Steve King, has brought together a harmonious partnership of community, students and staff in a choir and orchestra performing traditional and new music, including specially commissioned work, in venues from Orkney to the Borders.
- Preserving and promoting public enjoyment of our cultural heritage in HE museums, archives and art galleries

For all of these reasons, the HE sector should be involved in defining cultural strategy and providing leadership, through consultation with sectoral bodies such as Universities Scotland, University Museums in Scotland and the Scottish Universities Special Collections and Archives Group, and through HE participation in membership/representative bodies such as the Scottish Museums Council and the Scottish Council on Archives.

**Q12 What role should the private and commercial sectors play in the cultural leadership of Scotland?**

The private and commercial sectors should have an acknowledged place in the cultural leadership of Scotland as creators, promoters and sponsors. It would also be valuable to explore the benefits to be gained from extending tax incentives for companies to contribute to cultural provision e.g. by preserving and provide public access to their art, archive and museum collections or donating them to public authorities.

**Q15 How can we ensure the appropriate strategic and operational alignment between Scottish cultural agencies/organizations and UK cultural agencies operating in Scotland?**

The current anomalous situation disadvantages Scottish organisations. In England and Wales the portfolio of the Museums, Libraries and Archive Council (MLA) includes archives. As a result, some £379,000 was spent on archive sector development in the two years prior to March 2004. Scottish archives do not have access to this funding. Nor are various cross sectoral initiatives, such as the recent broadening of the MLA Designation scheme to include library and archive collections, available in Scotland.

Finally, as a general point it is noteworthy that none of the above questions appear in the abridged version of the Pan-sectoral Questions document. The summary questions appear to be narrowly focused on a definition of cultural practitioners as 'artists' at the expense of a more genuinely inclusive pan-sectoral overview. This does not appear to reflect the Commission's stated remit "...to comment and advise on the wider cultural sector including: the arts (including drama, dance, literature, music, the visual arts, crafts, film and all branches of these); the creative industries; museums and heritage; libraries; archives; architecture and relationships with events, festivals and sport."

Yours sincerely

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