



Scottish **Arts** Council



## Towards a Cultured, Creative Scotland

Submission to the Cultural Commission

In response to its Phase Two Pan-Sectoral Questions

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**17 January 2005**

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## 1. Introduction

*Culture isn't tidy!*

*And the challenge for the Commission, for us all, in trying to address the Commission's brief is a wee bit like trying to achieve some order amongst the rabble!*

*The invitation – to look afresh at the scope and possibility of cultural life for generations to come – is one that should be embraced, and is envied by many onlookers.*

*Further, we consider that for those of us who make our living in the cultural sector, it is our responsibility to engage in the dialogue critically, constructively, and with the public interest at heart. This, we believe, is an opportunity to work together for radical solutions, and seek consensus in their formulation.*

*And we are not starting with a blank page. We have much to be proud of and to build upon:*

*the world's best international performing arts festival; unique and still evolving traditional arts that effortlessly underline Scottish identity; a new national theatre; a huge cadre of volunteers in museums, drama societies, music groups, historical societies and more; internationally renowned individual artists, authors, composers and performers; unique and diverse languages; and strong support for arts and culture among the adult population of Scotland.<sup>2</sup> A Lucky Bag for every wean!*

*Our second submission to the Commission sees the glass as half full, and ready to be topped up.*

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<sup>2</sup> 'Taking Part, Arts Attendance, Participation and Attitudes in Scotland 2004' TNS 2004 in Appendix 2

## **2. Executive Summary**

**We would urge the Commission to facilitate the next stage of the consultative process as a dialogue between the stakeholders and interested parties, seeking consensus but pursuing radical solutions. This dialogue would last beyond the life of the Commission. There is a need for a dynamic and ongoing process of engagement between politicians, artists, public servants and the public.**

**The response from our dialogue with colleagues and partners in many and varied settings on key aspects of our first submission has been largely positive.**

**Specifically there is considerable interest in and support for;**

- **A Minister for Culture**
- **The importance of the arm's length principle**
- **Building in cultural opportunities as central to education and lifelong learning is the key to a long term shift in cultural opportunity**
- **The need for cultural bodies with national roles to work more closely together, in a radical redefinition of relationships, roles and responsibilities both at an operational and strategic level**
- **A comprehensive, inclusive definition of culture that embraces the widest range of arts and cultural interests, eschewing and rejecting false dichotomies of commercial and subsidised or 'high' and 'low' arts**
- **The importance of engaging the cultural community in cultural leadership on their own terms, as well as through the traditional models of representation and consultation**
- **A legislative commitment to cultural rights, through the existing community planning framework, would be welcome, but insufficient in itself**
- **A regional perspective on cultural planning beginning from an audience development perspective**
- **Extending the choice through a menu of opportunity is preferred to setting a level of adequate or minimum provision**
- **Pragmatic interventions which address the barriers to taking up opportunity, including poverty**
- **We have much to build on, but any advancement of cultural rights has resource implications**
- **The recognition that any 'national' companies have to be part of the national cultural ecosystem**
- **The importance of an international dimension that brings cultural and economic benefits**
- **The need to support and value artists and cultural workers in both professional and non-professional contexts**

### 3. Background

In many regards the comments made on our first submission, *Towards a Creative, Cultured Scotland*, (summarised in appendix 1) still hold true, with some notable developments that are outlined in this paper. In that sense this submission is a development and amplification of our thinking, and should be considered alongside our original comments.

The Scottish Arts Council's second submission to the Cultural Commission reflects a number of influences, which are noted below.

Firstly there has been the response to our first submission.

Many of the ideas we suggested were forthright and radical, yet the response has been sufficiently positive to indicate that in many of our propositions we have struck a common chord.

For example, from the interested outsider, Demos and Creative Communities speakers at the Scottish Arts Council Local Authority Arts Officers' Conference in November 2004 both welcomed the call to plan, think, and operate beyond the traditional sectoral boundaries, and to think from a cultural not simply an artistic perspective.

Further, we made plain a belief that our new definitions of art and culture should be comprehensive, embracing the full range of cultural expressions and the interests of all our citizens, and thus including all of the Scottish people and artists from the outset.

From those more directly involved, including the other cultural NDPBs, this principle has been similarly welcomed.

An important area of debate has been the idea of adopting a regional perspective to cultural planning, and this is a theme that will be explored in greater detail in this second submission. The arm's length principle and the role of NDPBs are also likely to be areas of continuing debate, and we believe strongly that the principle should apply.

Secondly the submission is informed by an ongoing process of debate and dialogue. Several conference events including our Arts Marketers' Forum and Local Authority Arts Officers' Conference (both held in November 2004) have taken the Commission's themes as key agenda items.

Thirdly there has been useful and timely information gleaned from our regular process of public consultation and research. We commissioned Young Scot to produce 'Expressing Themselves - National Youth Consultation on the Arts' and we also have the results of our own survey.

Of course there has also been the Commission's interim report and associated questions. We have focused on key themes from amongst the 62 questions, and given more emphasis to some than others. We have also drawn together some of the question sections that we feel we can consider more coherently as a whole.

Finally there has been the work of our Council and Committee members and staff in a series of workshops, which has included invited participants from outside the organisation. This process helped test and refine our thinking.

#### 4. Rights, entitlements and responsibilities

Throughout the many meetings and discussions on the Commission's brief, it is in this area of rights, entitlements and responsibilities which has been perhaps the most difficult – in terms of definitions, language, and assumptions.

Many have considered that 'cultural entitlement' and 'cultural rights' are terms that are difficult to define. Much time and energy could be spent trying to find a definition that works across the complex range of understandings that apply to the cultural sector.

Our inclination is to keep it as simple as possible, to remind ourselves of the starting point: how can we give more people access to the best cultural activity to the best effect?

Driven by our commitment to audience development through the Audiences Scotland project, our commissioned study, 'Taking Part, Arts Attendance, Participation and Attitudes in Scotland 2004' (TNS 2004) has for the first time looked specifically at different socio-economic groups in order to report on the targets set by the Scottish Executive for the Scottish Arts Council.

The summary table below illustrates overall levels of attendance and participation in arts and cultural activities amongst the Scottish adult population as a whole and amongst each of the adult under-represented groups (as defined recently by the Scottish Executive).

**Table A-1– Levels of attendance and participation during previous 12 months (%) March/April 2003 - 2004**

	<b>Attendance in last 12 months</b>	<b>Participation in last 12 months</b>
<b>Scottish adults</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>66</b>
Minority ethnic communities	70	60
Residents of deprived areas	67	52
Disabled people	50	58
Women	75	69
Residents of rural areas	75	69
People aged 16 to 24	87	65
People aged 65+	52	61

In addition, an estimated 72% of children aged 5 to 15 attended or participated in arts or cultural activities during the previous 12 months.

The good news, which echoes our introductory comments, is that the majority of Scottish people are already engaged in the arts and cultural activity, and that young people in particular are pursuing their cultural entitlements, often as paying customers at the cinema, music shops, book shops and so on.

But there appear to be notable differences between the national averages and some particular groups, particularly disabled people, older people and those living in deprived areas. Poverty is a fact of life for many and clearly limits opportunity in all aspects of life.

This is a timely reminder of the different circumstances that affect individual's opportunities to take up their cultural rights. In this sense the response to the Commission question: *Should cultural rights, entitlements and responsibilities reflect or link to other areas of social policy such as social inclusion or social justice and, if so, how? (question 3)*, surely must be yes.

This is not simply based on the instrumental argument that engagement in cultural activities can benefit the individual and community, but also on the cultural rights argument, that exclusion from opportunity is a fact of life for many.

If rights are genuinely universal, they should naturally include access and provision for all our citizens and any new system should state that fact as a first principle.

The residential workshop that was part of our commissioned report, *Expressing Themselves – National Youth Consultation on the Arts*<sup>3</sup>, heard a very clear expression of the limits imposed on choice through financial constraints. This may particularly apply to taking a chance on a new cultural or artistic venture.

In considering the positive engagement of young people, according to our commissioned study, while their attitude towards the arts and culture is positive, access can be inhibited by various factors. Some pointers in this vein are outlined below.

#### ***Expressing Themselves – National Youth Consultation on the Arts***

*A third of young people surveyed have stopped taking part in arts activities for a variety of reasons, including lack of time and activities being focused on children rather than young people.*

*There is a range of factors which affect young people's decision not to take part in arts activities. The most important factors were found to be lack of activities in their local area, lack of information, and activities being too expensive.*

*Young people do not appear to have one preferred method of receiving information about arts activities/events, though the survey does show that there is a role for schools and colleges to play in distributing arts information, and a need for a national information point.*

*Overall, respondents highlighted a number of aspects which would improve the situation. This included the need for improved access, marketing, and information for young people; the need for improved facilities and youth-friendly staff; the need to improve transport infrastructure; the need to reduce the cost of arts activities; the need to involve young people in decision-making; and the need to fund young people's ideas and talent through arts centres and grants.*

*They also generated a number of ideas and aspirations of how they would like to see the arts in Scotland.*

*This included a central information point drawing together all information on arts activities, grants, training, arts agencies working together; arts centres in every local authority running taster sessions to allow everyone the chance to try arts activities; greater involvement of young people at all levels of decision-making in the arts; greater funding and support for young people's ideas and talent; greater emphasis on arts education from a young age; and touring arts activities to 'take arts to the public'.*

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<sup>3</sup> 'Expressing Themselves National Youth Consultation on the Arts', Young Scot on behalf of the Scottish Arts Council, 2004

If we use this simple illustration of the apparent discrepancy that some groups experience in their access to the arts and cultural activity, we can perhaps answer the question *Should cultural rights be enshrined in law? (question 2)*. The answer must surely depend on whether this would be the best, most effective way, to overcome this inconsistency of opportunity.

There already exists a clear statement in the United Nations Charter Article 15, 'the right of everyone to take part in cultural life'.

In other spheres of legislation, for example the Race Relations Act, the government has created a legal framework to challenge discrimination and protect individual rights and freedoms. But this may not eradicate racism.

In the same way while a legislative approach to cultural rights can set legal parameters and enhance the status and profile of culture, would it ensure the cultural emancipation that allows the people of Scotland to enjoy the benefits of arts and culture as a matter of course?

If any legislation is to be devised, the challenge is to ensure that those involved in planning, support and public policy acknowledge that comprehensive provision is covered by the spectrum of commercial, subsidised, national and supra-national means of delivery to all of our citizens.

These themes were outlined in our first submission: the critical point of intervention is in the school specifically and the lifelong learning context more generally, building the curiosity, confidence and familiarity with culture and creativity that nurtures the appetite.

The menu on offer then needs to fulfil that appetite in range, quality and accessibility. We should endeavour to respect the choices and inclinations that people already share as well as seeking to broaden the menu available and encouraging them to sample a wider range of cultural opportunities.

Improved knowledge, understanding and confidence which in turn...

Increase demand which in turn...

Require and support a wider and better quality menu of opportunity

And again it is important to acknowledge that the glass may be half full! There are theatre seats to be filled, books to be read, museums and galleries to be visited, and, it would seem, already an untapped audience that could be encouraged to engage.

Overall, in terms of potential audiences, around two-fifths of Scottish adults would consider attending an arts or cultural activity that they have never been to before (39%). Around 1 in 5 would attend a visual arts activity (20%), performance in a theatre (18%) or any music event (18%)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> 'Taking Part, Arts Attendance, Participation and Attitudes in Scotland 2004' TNS 2004 Summary in Appendix 2

Audience development and education are key in this, and while this can be framed in legislation, it may not ensure success.

If we consider the possibility that legislation may not be necessary, or may not be sufficient in itself, how can we create new and equitable opportunities for everyone?

There may be four strands to this:

### **Influencing the curriculum**

Much has been said about this in our previous submission, and in any conversation on the theme of rights and entitlements. For example the need to include subjects such as dance which is currently not taught in the majority of schools. We are also convinced of the need to improve the cultural dimension in professional training, not only for teachers, but in areas such as community education and social work.

An illustration comes from the Scottish Arts Council's Local Authority Arts Officers Conference: when groups were invited by a Cultural Commission representative to imagine their ideal cultured Scotland in 2030 comments included:

*Arts fully integrated into the curriculum and offered throughout the lifelong learning spectrum.*

*More artists in schools.*

*Everyone leaving school with a cultural certificate.*

*Friday afternoons dedicated to culture.*

*There needs to be a parallel department for the adults that these children will become, if the focus is on children at the moment.*

*Cultural creative leisure centres – places for family experiences and people of all ages.*

*Community schools could become creative hubs for the whole community – particularly in rural areas*

One of the related themes has been around the idea of creativity: many comments have been about the fundamental right of cultural entitlement developing the full creative potential of everyone, and that the education curriculum should be driven by creativity.

### **Cultural development as a requirement within Community Planning**

In several arenas there has been reference to Community Planning as an existing framework that could more fully incorporate a cultural dimension.

In the Community Planning context the priorities for most local authorities are social inclusion, education and lifelong learning. Their main priorities are not cultural facilities or cultural provision. The view, from many local authority officers, is that this situation has led to the cultural planning function being too low down in local authorities' structures.

In order to move cultural planning higher up the political agenda national government intervention may be needed, and this could be via a requirement within the existing Community Planning framework.

For example, in sharp contrast to cultural planning, Community Learning Plans have Performance Indicators, are evaluated and audited against targets and assessed by the government inspectorate. We will explore this further in section 6 'Working Better Together', but this line of thought may help us begin to address some of the questions posed by the Commission with regard to 'responsibilities'.

The Scottish Arts Council (pre-Commission) had already initiated a series of discussions with a cross-section of local authorities to see how the cultural dimension could gain a better profile within Community Planning, and this has helped refine our thinking in this area.

A final thought, again to reinforce and support the case in local authorities for the cultural theme to be higher profile, would be to replicate at local level our suggestion of a Minister for Culture at national level through a Director of Culture in every local authority.

### **More effective planning that integrates local, regional and national needs and perspectives**

Beyond Community Planning we still believe there is much to be gained from adopting a planning approach that spans local authority boundaries, that is across national sectoral interests, and is able to recognise the cultural nuances and audience needs of different parts of the country. Again this is described more fully in section 6.

### **More integrated and effective audience development and marketing**

In our series of meetings with the other NDPBs with cultural roles there has been a strong interest in working more closely in this aspect of our activity. Sharing existing data, research and best practice, and jointly initiating new research are all areas that we have agreed to pursue. We believe the audience agenda is central to the Commission's interest, and we have had a further consultative meeting with a group of practitioners, a reference group, to explore this further. Their comments we feel are worth noting, and have helped refine the comments in our first submission, and more clearly align our thinking in relation to the Cultural Commission with our Audience Development Strategy.

### **Audience development and cultural rights**

Increasing the number and broadening the range of people who attend and participate in the arts in Scotland (*as well as increasing the knowledge for critical engagement*) is a key commitment for the Scottish Arts Council and one of its priorities most closely aligned, it would seem, with cultural entitlement. Indeed, the activities of the arts marketing community have long been driven by identifying and eliminating barriers to attendance and ensuring equality of opportunity to access the arts.

To translate its commitment into action, the Scottish Arts Council published its Audience Development Strategy in 2004, which we urge the Commission to consider in conjunction with this submission.

Broadly, the issues are discussed below.

## Audience development and cultural rights – Gathering Evidence

We agree with the Commission that, despite the fact that there has never been so much data collected in the arts, this is not being consistently translated into reliable evidence about audiences for target measurement or market intelligence.

The Scottish Arts Council has already begun the process of co-ordinating the provision of market intelligence for the Council and for Scottish arts organisations. We are discussing with other NDPBs how this can be extended across the cultural sector.

Selected results from the 'Taking Part, Arts Attendance, Participation and Attitudes in Scotland 2004' TNS 2004 Survey are included elsewhere in this submission. The enhanced survey forms part of Audiences Scotland, a national research project looking into current and future audiences for the arts in Scotland, to address the fundamental gap in audience knowledge needed to inform effective policy development within the Scottish Arts Council and beyond.

In partnership with the Arts Councils of England and Wales, we fund and are members of the Steering Group of Audience Data UK. This initiative reviewed the current practice in data collection, data analysis and data usage within the arts sector. It has provided a valuable insight into the audience data needs of the arts and identified many of the limiting factors that are preventing funders and practitioners alike from making full use of the available information. A series of practical applications is being developed to minimise these factors, and these will be widely disseminated to arts groups.

In all of this the Scottish Arts Council is taking a lead in improving intelligence, initiating research, in building partnerships with the other NDPBs, and in building capacity in the organisations that we fund. We believe that this exemplifies and supports two of our key assertions from our first submission – **the need for expertise, advocacy and independence through the arm's length principle, and the leadership role that the Scottish Arts Council can play in a new configuration of the cultural bodies**

## Audience development and cultural rights – Language

A lack of clarity exists in the language used to talk about the methods required to increase and broaden attendance and participation in the arts.

We often use jargon borrowed from the business world, without taking ownership of its meaning. There is no common or consistent definition of marketing, for instance, so it can become shorthand for a collection of promotional tactics, rather than understood and adopted as a management process.

Audience development has been a problematic concept since first introduced in the early 1990s. It is often regarded as a straightforward replacement term for marketing, but has also been applied to refer only to the targeting of priority groups as part of a social inclusion agenda.

In beginning to define audience development, the Scottish Arts Council proposes the following, broadly agreed by the reference group we set up:

*A planned and targeted management process which involves programming, education and marketing (underpinned by research and evaluation) working together to deliver an organisation's overall objectives.*

## Audience development and cultural rights - Marketing

We would agree in part with the Commission's own findings. It is important, however, to appreciate the day-to-day realities of marketing and audience development activity in funded organisations.

Arts marketing *has* grown in professionalism. This is evidenced in its growth from the publicity and sales-focused 1970s and 1980s to the adoption and/or ambition of a strategic marketing planning approach. However, a history of under-investment has contributed to limited marketing effectiveness in many organisations. Long-term marketing planning is the exception rather than the norm in organisational business plans. Marketing is not usually embraced as an aid to achieving organisational objectives. Instead, the term is frequently used when publicity would be a more accurate label, and is managed as a 'bolt-on' activity once the artistic plan has been confirmed.

This under-investment is also evident among those working in the sector. A lack of training (particularly formal, specialist training), information exchange between organisations and a scarcity of opportunities to network with peer groups, have been identified. In addition, since the early 1980s, arts organisations and arts marketing professionals in England and Wales have benefited from the services and support of regional marketing agencies. This is something their counterparts in Edinburgh and Glasgow have only recently been able to take advantage of.

## Audience development and cultural rights - Organisational Development

Effective audience development needs the full involvement of the whole organisation, built around a basic marketing competence and a management approach which takes account of the audience's needs and wants. Traditionally, the way senior management teams in arts organisations are constituted and structured, means it is rare that marketing (or education) professionals are involved in the highest levels of decision-making (again, with a few notable exceptions). As described above, the marketing function becomes a reductive one of short-term tactical publicity campaigns, and the consideration of the audience far down the hierarchy.

The reference group was vociferous in its assertion that the key way forward is changing the way organisations operate to become more audience-focused, with a consideration of audience development present in the organisational bloodstream. **This shift in mindset is crucial across the cultural sector if the Commission's aspirations are to be achieved.**

The consultation with the reference group of senior arts marketing professionals and specialists reinforced that these issues were still prevalent. **There was broad agreement that the Scottish Arts Council's approach, through the implementation of its Audience Development Strategy, was the most appropriate one.** We believe that extending this approach across the cultural sector, and with a regional perspective, can be a key driver for improved access and opportunity.

This is a theme which can also bring our attention back to the many committed and skilful cultural practitioners on the ground who produce the work and take it to the marketplace.

From a wider perspective, a comment for the Marketers' Forum suggested that if we are campaigning for the arts and wanting to change attitudes, we should be promoting creativity rather than specific art forms.

The vast majority of the 100 or so Core Funded Organisations supported by the Scottish Arts Council (and their local authority partners) have a direct interest in gaining new audiences and retaining their existing customers. The same will be true of other funded galleries, museums, libraries, theatres and arts centres. Add the private sector into the mix and the call for more effective working across these sectors begins to make sense – financially and in terms of increasing opportunity for the public to enjoy the best of culture in Scotland.

In pursuing these four lines of thought we can begin to consider lines of responsibility;

- The responsibility of the theatre company to consider how best to reach and serve its audience;
- The responsibility of the local authority to integrate cultural provision into its core services
- The responsibility of the national cultural organisations to set standards, inform and develop practice, and advocate on the behalf of the cultural sector;
- The responsibility of the Scottish Executive to listen, resource, and lead this work
- The role of the Scottish Arts Council as a strategic development body with key roles in research, advocacy and facilitating cultural planning

### **The role of the artist**

*Take care of the creators and the culture will take care of itself*

Max Wyman, *The Defiant Imagination*

We would be remiss, in the midst of any comments on cultural rights and responsibilities, if we didn't consider the role of artists. We have made a commitment to meet with artists unions and representatives to explore further the idea of an artist's charter, as outlined in our first submission.

The role of artists and creative workers is central to the success of the Commission's aspirations, and in itself the cultural sector is a major employer and part of the economic lifeblood of the country:

*In 2002, an estimated 18,000 individuals were 'creative workers' in Scotland half of whom were self employed<sup>5</sup>*

We suggest in section 7 how we think artists can contribute to policy and strategy across public life.

What is clear is that all our efforts to improve structures, planning approaches, define responsibilities, inspire, enthuse and benefit the Scottish people in their cultural pursuits will come to nought if we do not value and support the creative individuals who are already recognised as vital by the wider community;

9 in 10 adults agreed that: <sup>6</sup>

*The success of Scottish artists, performers and writers gives people a sense of pride*

*Artists, performers and writers are important people who contribute to society*

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<sup>5</sup> Centre for Culutral Policy and Research

<sup>6</sup> 'Taking Part, Arts Attendance, Participation and Attitudes in Scotland 2004 ' TNS 2004 Survey

We believe that arriving at a set of principles and pragmatic means of support which reflect the vital role that our artists play in our cultural lives has to be a central concern of the Commission.

## 5. Cultural Leadership

'If more politicians knew poetry and more poets knew politics, I am convinced that the world would be a better place to live.'

*John F Kennedy*

Kennedy's call for mutual understanding and his assertion of the benefits that would result is a theme that has been apparent in the many and varied conversations that surround the work of the Cultural Commission.

Leadership, true leadership, should be authoritative, knowledgeable, taking a confident and comprehensive view of culture and its importance.

Throughout our many meetings and consultations there has been little to suggest that our original propositions in this context should change.

If anything there seems to be a growing consensus that the arm's length principle between the Scottish Arts Council (and other cultural NDPBS) and the Scottish Executive is correct.

We have seen this in the submissions from stakeholders such as the Musicians' Union and the Federation of Scottish Theatre. We have heard it from local authority officers working on the ground, and from arts organisations from all sectors and of all scales.

This is not simply a defensive reaction at a time of change. We agree that the status quo is not acceptable and change is needed. But that change needs to retain professionalism, expertise, and independence, and the arm's length principle allows that possibility.

Similarly we have heard support for the proposition that a Minister for Culture with a full place in Cabinet would give the profile and commitment to the First Minister's aspirations that they deserve.

We may not yet be able to reflect another JFK quote: 'The nation's first great politicians included amongst their ranks most of the nation's first great writers and scholars' but what is very clear is that the campaign for devolution that brought us our own Parliament after 300 years had our cultural identity and cultural figures to the fore. It would be a striking statement of national, cultural confidence to reflect this in a Minister for Culture.

This role would not simply be to look after culture, but to ensure the cultural wealth of the nation is considered in every decision, every budget, every meeting. Not so much about what can the nation do for culture, but what can culture do for the nation?

This may even reflect the popular will, as suggested by our "Taking Part, Arts Attendance, Participation and Attitudes in Scotland 2004" survey.

The 2004 survey results demonstrate continued strong support for arts and culture in many areas among the adult population of Scotland. In particular, around 9 in 10 adults agreed that:

*Arts and cultural activities give a lot of pleasure to many people*

*The success of Scottish artists, performers and writers gives people a sense of pride*

*The success of Scottish art and cultural activity gives the outside world a good impression of Scotland*

*Artists, performers and writers are important people who contribute to society*

*Arts and cultural activities help bring people together in local communities*

Around 8 in 10 adults agreed that:

*Central government has a responsibility to support arts and culture*

*Arts and cultural activity help to bring visitors and tourists to this area*

*If any local area lost its art and cultural activities, the local people would lose something of value*

*Arts and cultural activity helps to enrich the quality of our lives*

*I am in favour of lottery money going to the arts*

## **Representation and decision making**

The issue of representation (questions 11-15) in policy development and decision-making is complex. Our previous submission suggested a fairly radical shift – a National Cultural Partnership having a strategic overview could comprise the chairs of NDPBs and other key partners that could include the COSLA/VOCAL, the voluntary sector, private industry, higher education and so on.

The NDPB boards and councils could then be recruited and reconfigured to have a mix of sectoral expertise (artists) and strategic overview (marketing, finance, regional development etc). Add a regional dimension to cultural planning that integrates with local Community Plans (noting that the Community Planning framework allows for national and regional inputs already), then the place of local authorities remains central.

### **The role of artists**

This is where the theme of artists' involvement in decision making (question 13) emerges. It is of course important to invite and encourage artists and cultural workers to contribute through the traditional, formal routes of representation and consultation.

But these established routes may not always be the best way of getting the most from our creative thinkers.

They can bring a unique and important perspective to civic life, if they are engaged on their own terms, as well as the traditional models.

The 'top down' perspective of leadership is limiting, and the cultural leadership evident in the campaign for devolution saw artists, writers, musicians, actors, journalists, and academics at the helm.

Many of our artists are already recognised internationally as cultural leaders on their own terms. Encouraging and listening to consistent and intelligent discourse, a feature of the best leadership, will feed and test ideas and offer new perspectives on the constantly changing cultural scene.

This is a rich source of possibility that we need to tap. The Commission brief mentions the idea of a think tank, and certainly we would support the need for a continuous, dynamic dialogue that gets the best from the country's creative individuals and best thinkers

### **The role of the Scottish Executive**

Additional to our original propositions, there could usefully be a more detailed consideration of the relationship between the arm's length bodies and the Scottish Executive sponsoring department.

A Minister of Culture would be well served by additional expertise and knowledge amongst the team of officials, acting as the interface between government policy and its strategic implementation, translating political priorities into cultural opportunity.

This could be supplemented by a process of secondments to the Scottish Executive from the cultural sector, allowing a greater sense of partnership and understanding. This could be replicated between arts and cultural organisations and the NDPBs for the same reason.

### **The role of the business community**

A confident and coherent cultural sector, with clear leadership, we believe can help to engage the business community to a greater degree and to their mutual benefit. The key here is again opening up a dialogue that allows partners to articulate what they can contribute to and gain from such a relationship. The cultural sector needs to be clear about how sponsorship or other relationships with the commercial sector are helping to meet their business objectives (which may come under the category of corporate social responsibility).

## **6. Working better together – partnership and planning**

This section tries to draw together comments in relation to several sections of the Commission's questions including local authorities (questions 44-47), pan-sectoral planning (questions 16-21) and regional bodies (questions 48-51).

It starts with an assumption, encouraged by the feedback from our discussions with Partners, that pan-sectoral planning and partnership working can improve our ability to respond to the wider public interest.

We have already noted our increased engagement with NDPBs and plan to build on this. One example of a current active partnership can illustrate the existing commitment to this way of working.

## Pan-sectoral partnership

### The Creative Industries and the arts

The development of the Creative Industries is high on UK and Scottish policy agendas. They are widely regarded as offering strong prospects for future economic growth, and we are still some way short of understanding and quantifying the full extent of their current contribution. Nevertheless, they are recognised as key elements of a modern economy and society in which creativity and know-how are increasingly important determinants of personal and collective success.

We believe that there is no dichotomy between the Creative Industries and the subsidised sector. They are deeply inter-related and feed on another, very often sharing similar goals and interests. For example, musicians move between commercial and subsidised sectors for their livelihood; an organisation such as the RSNO has a commercial aspect in recorded music, a role in public performance and a role in education,

The most commonly adopted definition is that proposed by the UK Government 's Department of Culture, Media and Sport, in which the Creative Industries are:

*'those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property'.*

This is the definition that has been adopted in Scotland through the development by Scottish Enterprise of the Creative Industries Cluster Strategy.

The issue for the Scottish Arts Council, and partners, is to define roles and responsibilities in this area. Our assertion, in the first submission, that we could take a lead role across the cultural agencies in this area clearly requires much more detailed consideration.

We have a number of active partnership projects where the policy agendas clearly coincide. The 'IdeaSmart' project will launch this year as a scheme to provide small grants/loans to individuals and organisations to develop early stage creative ideas and their commercial potential. This is clearly of benefit to individual artists, and we believe, relevant to Scottish Enterprise's Strategic Themes; developing creative talent; supporting ideas and innovation; sector initiatives; developing the creative and cultural economy; promoting access and inclusion; and research and evaluation.

Actions in support of the Creative Industries must focus on long-term, practical activities and partnerships, including showcase programmes, support for investment plans. Actions must be carefully dovetailed to the particular needs of each industry and avoid a blanket definition or strategy approach which fails to recognise the differences between, say, music and the visual arts, or computer games and crafts.

This scheme is developing very creatively, if slowly, in development through discussions with Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Screen, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Scottish Executive, with a particularly positive partnership developed with NESTA.

## Planning

While the above is one example to illustrate the existing and proactive commitment to pan-sectoral planning (and doing!), more contentious perhaps is the proposal outlined in our first submission: that planning could further benefit from a regional perspective.

In response to the question from a representative of the Commission at the Local Authority Arts Officers' Conference - Your ideal cultured Scotland in 2030 would include?

- one response was *'A single cultural agency – encompassing all culture, supported by regional networks.'*

Meanwhile in the plenary session one voice advocated the removal of NDPBs and a direct relationship between the Scottish Executive and local authorities in cultural matters.

We remain committed to the idea of further exploring the relationship between the local, regional and national perspectives. The stage we are at, however, is an interesting one. It may be less productive to conduct the discussion and debate in the pages of submissions, and better to take the opportunity of the Commission to open up the dialogue **amongst** the stakeholders.

In our first submission we offered that the Scottish Arts Council, albeit potentially in a different configuration, could take a lead role in the proposed National Cultural Partnership.

We represented this in a diagrammatic form, a misjudgement perhaps because it gave the appearance of a hierarchy. Only through face-to-face discussion with our partners could we explore, openly, these ideas, test and challenge the assumptions behind them.

Similarly the same diagram has been interpreted as suggesting the introduction of a 'regional body', a new layer of bureaucracy. This was never the intention, and again it is only through many different discussions that we have been able to outline and debate these ideas.

In answer then to the Commission question *'How should any regional bodies be constituted, governed and managed?'* (question 49), we would reply – 'with the lightest possible touch'. This approach, from our perspective, may not even require a 'body' but rather a new commitment to planning and working across geographical and sectoral boundaries.

This could take a very pragmatic starting point by looking at three areas of shared interest - audience development, facilities and the Creative Industries.

We have already suggested that a key part of enabling improved cultural opportunities is through audience development – and to be effective this would involve looking across sectoral interests and geographical boundaries.

We have prepared and are implementing a robust plan for investing in the skills base and marketing resources available to Scottish arts organisations and arts marketers, increasing opportunities for training, networking and accessing high quality expertise. Some of this will be delivered through the already burgeoning Scotland-wide network of regional audience development workers and initiatives, in partnership with local authorities and others.

Scotland now has two audience development agencies, The Audience Business in Edinburgh and Glasgow Grows Audiences in Glasgow, run by two of the most experienced arts marketing and business development professionals in Scotland. 'The Booth' website and online ticketing service run by HI-Arts and involving the welcome commitment of Highlands and Islands Enterprise to a cultural initiative is another important development. Funded by the Scottish Arts Council and the relevant local authorities, the learning from these agencies will assist in developing further audience development hubs throughout Scotland.

The same applies to the physical infrastructure that serves our cultural activities. Only through close working with local authorities, the enterprise network, other NDPBs, the private sector, and the arts providers can we get a proper sense of the needs and opportunities that relate to the facilities for producing and presenting arts and cultural activity.

In the Creative Industries we also see the need for a regional approach, demonstrated well in the Highlands and Islands Enterprise approach, and other regions of the country could benefit from a planned approach that accommodated regional needs and opportunities.

In summary, we continue to take the view that the rights agenda can be assisted through improved planning and partnership working – with a regional dimension, with strong and coherent cultural leadership, and with the expertise of all the partners involved.

But the detail needs to be debated and discussed by those involved, and while we will continue to talk and consult in that vein, we **would urge the Commission to draw together the key partners to work through their ideas face to face, and build a consensus for what can be radical new approaches.**

## 7. National companies and the arts and cultural ecosystem

### Infrastructure or ecosystem

In a world replete with jargon perhaps the last thing we need is another addition to the bureaucratic lexicon. However the recent presentation by Demos at our Local Authority Arts Officers' Conference rightly made the point that we have yet to find a language that satisfactorily describes the impact of the arts and culture on the wider policy context.

Demos's pursuit of that language has thrown up a numbers of useful ideas – for example using the terms of social anthropology to describe culture in terms of ideas and behaviour as well as artefacts. The other metaphor they suggested was a biological one – the idea of the cultural field as an ecosystem. A short section from their work on 'Valuing Culture' amplifies this idea.

*What we are looking for is a language that will allow us to express both the material benefits – economic and instrumental – that culture brings, and those other values, immaterial, but most would agree far more important, that culture is capable of expressing. Even in the hard-headed world of business they have difficulty in expressing the value of a Brand. They know it is worth something, and will spend a great deal of money trying to create it, and then defend it.*

*There are however disciplines that are comfortable with talking about value in its social as opposed to purely economic sense. One is anthropology, which explicitly recognises that non-economic values are as important to a society as the balance of payments.*

*Another group of people who bring their own take on what is valuable to us are the environmentalists. They argue that we have a duty of care in relation to finite or threatened resources in nature, because once we have lost them we can never get them back. That is why sustainability is valuable. We also have to be fair to the generations that will follow us, by not destroying that which they may wish to inherit. The language of diversity takes on a whole new meaning when you hear environmentalists argue that diversity, a plurality of species, is essential to maintain the health of the ecosystem as a whole. It is through the creativity and fecundity that comes from sustaining a rich diversity that we not only sustain our environment, but enhance it.*

Valuing Culture John Holden and Robert Hewison, Demos

## Core Funded Arts Organisations and beyond

Interestingly, and coincidentally, in a recent workshop comprising Scottish Arts Council members, Committee members and staff on the role of our 'infrastructure' (referring to the Core Funded Organisations supported by the Scottish Arts Council) we settled on the same language as the best way of framing their discussions.

The workshop group characterised the CFO portfolio as 'a unit consisting of a community of organisms and their environment.' This suggests organisations working in a co-dependent way, working dynamically, and in an inclusive environment that involves the artist as well as the audience.

This approach recognises that CFOs do not exist in isolation and any cultural infrastructure extends far beyond the 100 plus organisations that the Scottish Arts Council currently supports with core funding.

It can also help us understand and respond to the strategic role that varies across the artforms, and other cultural strands.

The other theme, again relating to our metaphor, is of growth and evolution. Growth of activity, of the number of organisations, of demand for new work, sometimes seems to be considered a problem rather than an opportunity. Yet in an ambitious agenda for creating and responding to new demands from a creative, cultured Scotland, we may need to look at the capacity and capability of an already under-resourced ecosystem to respond.

On the other side of the coin, we can't continue simply to fund the same things in the same way for all time. The dynamic nature of the sector and the need to regenerate and grow does require a much clearer set of expectations, and funding arrangements.

Again returning to earlier sections on planning for example, how the Scottish Arts Council chooses to relate in future to that infrastructure is still to be determined. It does not need to fund all parts of it but can still have a relationship with it – particularly if local and regional planning mechanisms are in place. But this type of approach requires a shift in mindset from all of those involved: the funding partners and the grant recipients, in a more dynamic relationship, which would see a continuum evolutionary funding underpinned by the following principles described by the workshop group as:

- partnership                    }
- growth                         } = evolutionary funding
- exit strategy                 }

In this context we would see the Scottish Arts Council's role is to:

- invest
- challenge
- partner
- overview
- evaluate
- develop

In summary, we have a complex and dynamic ecosystem of arts and cultural activity – in some sectors with strong artistic leadership from organisations with a national brief- but in all cases inter-related.

We believe that a change in mindset nurtured through a new approach to planning and partnership working as outlined above, which values the artist/producer while addressing the audience needs and aspirations, can evolve, and grow from the expertise and commitment that already exists in the cultural sector.

### Organisations with a national remit

The Scottish Arts Council workshop group considering the 'national' companies were similarly concerned to see their connections in the wider context.

This section tries to frame the discussion of the 'national' companies and other arts organisations in the context of the wider artistic and cultural milieu.

Outlined below are some of the workshop group's conclusions which also include specific responses to the Commission section (questions 52-58) on this national remit theme:

Why have national companies - what are they good for?

- Representing Scotland abroad and attracting artists of international merit to Scotland
- Providing a leadership and developmental role to the sector
- Artistic ambition and excellence (doesn't have to be big!)
- Profile at home, throughout the UK and internationally

What are the problems that arise from having some companies called 'national'?

- The title can breed a feeling of superiority and cause them to rest on their laurels
- The title can also lead to 'playing safe' and being boring
- Possibility of drawing away funding from smaller bodies
- Currently those designated 'national' only cover one corner of arts and culture - this needs to change to reflect the true diversity that we wish to embrace

What should the designation 'national' mean and what criteria should be applied when awarding a company national status? Do these relate to:

- Scale – not necessarily – they don't have to be the largest organisation in the sector
- Quality – yes, they must be funded to produce world class work of which Scotland can be proud
- Reach – yes, they must have a national reach throughout the country
- Specialisms/uniqueness
- Internationalism

How should national companies relate to or reflect Scottish contemporary culture and cultural history? What artistic expectations (standards of performance/production) should we have of our national companies and what commitment to Scottish work (both new and revised) and Scottish talent should the national companies have?

- Not necessarily Scottish but world class work of which Scotland can be proud
- Produce work that reflects Scotland but not necessarily Scottish
- Driven by artists not needing to represent Scottishness
- Culturally specific but universal
- Able to support the development of strong, creative, artistic voices in Scotland.

What privileges/special considerations and responsibilities should apply to national companies and what responsibilities should accompany these privileges? Should they behave differently and be treated differently to other companies or individuals? Why should any company have special privileges?

- No special privileges, it should be a privilege for them to represent the sector at a national level
- Responsibility to provide leadership and development within the sector and for the sector
- Imperative that national companies should be governed and answerable in the same way as any other arts organisation so that they are seen as an intrinsic part of the sector and not something separate

To whom should the national companies report and who should be responsible for measuring their performance against agreed standards and objectives?

- Should be responsible to the Scottish Arts Council
- More chance of the 'National' body working strategically with the rest of the sector if they all report to the same body

What should be the operational relationship(s) between the national companies and the local/regional authorities in whose areas they may reside or tour?

- There was a suggestion that they might need to be careful to maintain their distance from local authorities to allow them to maintain their national role.
- Acknowledged that many companies, and particularly the national companies are still suffering from the drop in income that came about as a consequence of local government reorganisation in the 90s and the loss of regional funding.

How can we **practically** achieve greater consistency in the constitutions, governance and funding arrangements of national agencies?

- Need for flexibility (not enshrined in legislation)-this is important as the needs of a particular sector may change over time and the appropriate designation of a national **remit** may also change over time
- Artistic independence is essential

What is the scope for further co-operation, both strategically and operationally, between the national agencies (shared development, shared services, shared facilities, shared resources, etc) and how should such co-operation be advanced?

- Need to be under one body (Scottish Arts Council) to give strategic overview
- National title not immutable
- Collaboration is a requirement
- It is possible that some of the 'national' functions could be delivered more effectively by a number of arts organisations that undertook to deliver a range of activity on a collective national basis.
- There is an argument that technical competencies and capacity, knowledge and relationships could be more effectively pooled within key strategic organisations. Only the Scottish Arts Council - or lead national cultural body - can move this forward and ought to be pro-active in promoting action on this front.

- Additionally, there are organisations that currently occupy key strategic roles but are not currently recognised as ‘national companies’. The term ‘national’ is not necessarily helpful and a term such as ‘Key Strategic Arts Organisation’ might be more useful in designating those that have a unique national role

### **What would success look like?**

- Key organisations of strategic and national importance in each artform/sector that are producing significant work, provide leadership and a commitment to the development of the artform
- A range of organisations with a national remit but not necessarily a ‘National’ title
- A range of organisations producing world class work, engaging with international artists and representing Scotland abroad
- A range of organisations that touch all areas of Scotland and provide real opportunities for engagement, at a number of levels, with the widest population
- Raising Scotland’s international reputation
- Providing leadership and support to the sector

In summary the group suggested that some organisations had a role to fulfil in terms of artistic quality and excellence that would be characterised by –

- Leadership within the sector
- A commitment to the ongoing development of the artform
- A commitment to education and audience development
- Examples of good practice in terms of governance, management and accountability
- Being a key and intrinsic part of the sector – not separate

This is consistent with the comments made in our first submission, and more specifically suggest that the funding relationship with such companies needs to remain with the arm’s length body, **because these companies are part of the ecosystem, not separate from it.**

## **8. Funding arrangements**

Funding is finite, ambition, we hope, infinite! One thing is becoming clear, that there are resource implications that have to be addressed in a cultural rights agenda.

The Scottish Arts Council struggles daily with competing funding demands. For example we have been looking at the huge proportion of our Scottish Executive grant (over 75%) that is linked to revenue funding of over 100 organisations.

This could be seen either as limiting our ability to respond flexibly to development opportunities, or as an acknowledgement of the vital role these organisations play across Scotland. We have looked at how we can change this.

For example, if we ceased to support organisations that primarily serve a ‘local’ audience (implying that this was the remit of the local authority), not only would we ‘save’ a mere £350,000 (0.8% of our voted grant), but we would be failing to recognise their role in the national or regional cultural ecosystem. And it would be by no means certain that local authorities would wish to or be able to pick up the tab.

We see a need for increased investment, the case made by a Minister of Culture in Cabinet expressing the value of culture to our national wellbeing. This may be channelled through local authorities, NDPBs and the education sector as appropriate.

But the starting point has to be a **realistic assessment of what is needed** to fulfil our ambitions. It may be less than we think in some areas of activity, and our ambitions would for example include:

- ❑ Revenue streams to consolidate the successful lottery funded projects in areas of deprivation and with excluded groups
- ❑ Core funded organisations with audience development and education functions built into their core revenue
- ❑ Companies with a national remit with the budgets that allow them to achieve their artistic ambitions and leadership roles nationally and internationally
- ❑ Development funds for growth areas including traditional arts and international working
- ❑ Development funds for arts education extended beyond Youth Music in Schools to other cultural enterprises such as crafts residencies in schools
- ❑ Improved professional development opportunities and support for individual artists that reflects the principles being explored in our proposed Artists' Charter
- ❑ A cross-sectoral review of the needs of our physical infrastructure and a 25 year investment plan to ensure our cultural facilities are fit for purpose and meet our ambitions

## 9. Standards and Evaluation

This is another important but complex area.

The Scottish Arts Council deals on a daily basis with the fundamental challenge (questions 34 – 36) of relating public investment, policy priority and standards without imposing a bureaucratic straitjacket that stultifies the creative dynamic that is central to a healthy culture. We would agree that standards are necessary, but would propose, from our experience of revenue funding organisations, that the following considerations need to be addressed:

- **One size does not fit all**

Each cultural venture will have its own dynamic and its own vision. In Edinburgh during the month of August we have the world's premier mix of arts festivals. Their collective impact is enormous, but in their birth and growth they have not been defined by outcomes and outputs, but have been driven by artistic and cultural aspirations. The standards required then of the Fringe, the Edinburgh International Festival, the Edinburgh International Book Festival, the Edinburgh International Film Festival, and so on, will differ in some respects of their activity.

In relation to our Core Funded Organisations we apply three main categories for monitoring their work – artistic, strategic and managerial. The emphasis will vary according to the organisation's aims and vision, their stage of development, and to a large extent we negotiate performance in relation to each characteristic accordingly. Where there will of course be a required standard will be in areas such as financial probity and legal matters.

- **A menu of choice, as opposed to minimum provision**

The question of standards in the wider context, particularly in relation to local authorities, this has already been touched in the theme of 'adequate provision'. We continue to believe that offering a menu of choice rather than a minimum standard is the most effective and realistic approach. Education and audience development become key in this approach, and we believe that the existing community planning framework would be the legislative route that requires cultural plans and strategies, and that these are both published and assessed.

Who would assess these plans? The idea of a government style inspectorate – 'an Offcult', has merit, but requires further detailed exploration. We have to recognise that the capacity within some local authorities to develop and deliver ambitious cultural plans may be varied, and the **resource required to implement these plans presents another challenge**. In question 47 the Commission asks, What is the justification and practicality of insisting that local authorities 'ring fence' resources for cultural provision?

In response we would suggest that the fact that ring fencing is raised at all is a defensive response to the apparently strategically weak position of cultural budgets in many local authorities, the idea that these budgets are seen as expendable in competition with social work, education and so on. The solution we would suggest emerges from the idea of a Minister of Culture at a national level, cultural requirements in Community Planning at a local level, and a change in mind set at all levels, that together move us from a defensive point of view.

Here we can usefully return to the audience development theme.

A cultural plan for a local authority area (and a region) could start from what we know about the audience we aim to serve.

European models include the idea of a 'cultural backpack' which is broader than a reductive model of minimum standards, and allows for flexibility.

This approach can also add a **best value** theme, avoiding duplication of resources and more effective planning of our physical infrastructure. For example in terms of drive times to a venue we are likely to see audience movement across local authority boundaries.

So we believe that standards and plans need to be aspirational rather than prescriptive, and our experience is that local authorities share that ambition. In the Youth Music in Schools Initiative, many local authorities went further than the Scottish Arts Council guidance because of their own commitment to cultural opportunity and a healthy civic pride.

The role of a national agent, whatever its configuration, can be to guide and assist in the development of the plan, provide audience intelligence to inform it, support the artists that contribute to it, and ensure national resources, such as touring companies, can contribute to it appropriately.

We believe the Scottish Arts Council and its cultural partners (the National Cultural Partnership) could work together to develop this approach. The new part of the mix would be an independent body to critique and report on the plans that have been proposed and monitor their implementation.

- **Evaluation**

Improved practice and standards will of course be enhanced through better evaluation. It is another area where working across the cultural sectors is vital. A national resource that informs the regional and local picture will offer the best value and suggests that any new configuration of the national structures needs an enhanced and coordinated research function that includes evaluation, as a tool for improving practice, as central to its role. This could also involve the Higher Education sector as active partners.

## **10. Operations and administration**

In response to this group of questions (39 – 43) we would return to our proposals for a National Cultural Partnership. We absolutely agree that the areas discussed – technology, cultural property, efficiency in relation to operational costs - all merit detailed discussion.

Our view at this stage however is that this requires face-to-face discussion amongst the partners including the Scottish Executive and local authorities. Our initiative in bringing together the cultural NDPBs is already a setting for such a dialogue. We would welcome a brief from the Commission to respond to these themes in the required detail.

The brief needs to be challenging – starting again from a presumption of improvement of the status quo, as well as a means of challenging some of the possible preconceptions – e.g. that cultural bodies are profligate in their operational costs. The Scottish Arts Council has a well established commitment to maintaining our operating costs at 8.5% which compares well with other similar bodies.

One of the areas in this section that does merit specific comment is in relation to international activity.

We see international arts and cultural activity as vital both to practicing artists, to our international profile, to our audiences, to our economy, to our place in the world.

We have recently appointed an International Officer, a position shared with the British Council, improving our partnership with them and our effectiveness in this policy area. But much more needs to be done not only in relation to other cultural agencies but, critically, **to clarify the strategic priorities that are being pursued by the different Scottish Executive Departments with an international brief.** This will help clarify responsibilities, strategic priorities, and resource needs.

## **11. Final thoughts**

What is it we want really? - For What End and How?

The initial submission from the Scottish Arts Council made in September 2004 provided some answers to the above questions. Those answers were aspirational, but with appropriate mechanisms and more importantly the will to succeed, they can be achieved.

The arts are a central part of culture and development and support of the arts cannot be viewed in isolation. Knowledge of, participation in and understanding of the arts plays a huge part in people's lives. In order to maintain momentum in embedding the arts in aspects of public life such as education, health and economic development, the Commission should be regarded not as an end but as a journey towards a change in society. This change in the national mindset is needed to achieve the long-term objective, outlined in the First Minister's speech on St Andrew's day 2003, of creating a cultured and confident Scotland.

Structures need to be dynamic and able to recognise and respond to change.

The proportions of contribution from public and private sector funders within the already plural funding systems need to take account of local, national, artform and strategic priorities. This can only be wholly effective when planning is dynamic, long term, independent of political direction, takes into account the international context within which our culture and arts operate and involves all interested parties.

Leadership in the arts comes from artists. They need to be valued at the highest political levels and their contribution to society recognised. Artists and thinkers can provide solutions to issues which go well beyond the perceived boundaries of their field of activity.

To take advantage of this creativity requires the strength to engage with the often unstructured and unorthodox networks through which artists work.

The challenge for everyone in public life is to value the arts and artists and recognise the often unconventional way in which both contribute to the future of Scotland.

**Scottish Arts Council**  
**17 January 2005**

## Appendix 1 Towards a Cultured, Creative Scotland - Submission to the Cultural Commission, Executive Summary

### 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 of our 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 advocates 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 broader 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 **arm's length relationship** with government. This is essential for its success as an **advocate for culture**, which must not 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 is a requirement for **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 Forums** 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. A new approach should be considered which 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**, and to support an investment plan with a national overview. The 'trust' model could serve this end, and improved strategic planning could 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, disabled people and the broader 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 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 are hugely influential in shaping 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 early 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. 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 areas such 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.

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

## Appendix 2 'Taking Part, Arts Attendance, Participation and Attitudes in Scotland 2004' TNS 2004 - Executive Summary

### Attendance

- Some 75% of respondents indicated that they had attended an arts or cultural activity within the previous year.
- Around half of Scots had been to a cinema in the previous year (52%), 30% had visited a museum, 25% visited an art gallery and 24% went to a rock or pop music event.
- When asked to indicate their main reasons for attending, over a third of respondents stated that they wanted to see a specific performer or event (36%), 12% said they liked to see that type of event, 11% attended as a social meeting with friends and 10% stated that it was something to do on a special occasion.
- Overall, in terms of potential audiences, around two-fifths of Scottish adults would consider attending an arts or cultural activity that they have never been to before (39%). Around 1 in 5 would attend a visual arts activity (20%), performance in a theatre (18%) or any music event (18%).
- In terms of the types of arts and cultural activities last attended when it was necessary to pay to get in (excluding visits to cinemas), the most popular activities mentioned were rock or pop music events (18%), pantomimes and variety shows (9%) and plays (9%).
- When asked how they would rate the value for money they obtained at the most recent paid-for event or activity they attended, 2 in 5 respondents stated that it had been better value for money than expected (39%). A further 50% stated that value for money was as they had expected while 4% thought that the value for money was less than expected.
- Respondents who had attended an event in the last year were asked to indicate what factors had influenced their choice of where to go. Half had been influenced by the personal recommendations of friends or family (50%) while 41% were influenced by reviews in the press or on television, etc.

- The most frequently mentioned way of finding out about events generally was from advertisements in daily or evening newspapers (58%). This medium was also suggested most often as being the single most effective communication channel (35%).

### **Participation**

- 67% of Scottish adults stated that they had participated in arts or cultural activities during the previous year.
- When asked how frequently they took part in different activities, reading books was the one most frequently undertaken with just over half of Scottish adults having undertaken this activity in the last year (54%).
- Other activities undertaken by more than a fifth of the population during the last year were buying a work of fiction/poetry (24%) and buying other types of book (21%). In contrast, 1% or less of the population had taken part in contemporary dance, ballet, opera, printmaking, sculpture or making films during the previous year.
- Relatively small proportions of respondents took classes or were in clubs or groups relating to any of the activities they undertook. The activities most likely to involve a class or group were playing a musical instrument (3%), painting or drawing (3%), Scottish traditional dance (3%) and singing in a choir (3%).

### **Viewing and listening habits**

- As in 2001, the most popular type of entertainment to view or to listen to on the radio or a pre-recorded format was rock and pop music. Overall, the most popular types of output to listen to or watch were as follows:
  - *Listening to rock or pop music on CD/Record/Cassette or through the Internet (58% overall)*
  - *Listening to rock or pop music on the radio (51% overall)*
  - *Watching rock or pop music on TV/Video/DVD or through the Internet (44% overall)*
  - *Watching plays on TV/Video/DVD or through the Internet (34% overall)*
  - *Watching musicals on TV/Video/DVD or through the Internet (29% overall)*
  - *Listening to country and western music on CD/Record/Cassette/MP3/Internet (20% overall)*

## Attitudes towards the arts

- In 2004, 49% of respondents indicated that they were 'very or quite interested' in arts and cultural events generally, a slightly higher proportion than recorded in the 2001 (45%) and 1998 (44%) surveys. Some 42% stated that they were 'not very or not at all interested'.
- Respondents in the AB social classes (72%), people aged 45 to 54 (56%), residents of the Grampian area (56%) and women (52%) were most likely to be interested in the arts. Conversely, the groups most likely to state that they were 'not very or not at all interested' included people aged 65 or over (44%), residents of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire (44%) and those in the C2 (39%) and DE (35%) social classes.
- The 2004 survey results demonstrate continued strong support for arts and culture in many areas among the adult population of Scotland. In particular, around 9 in 10 adults agreed that:
  - *Arts and cultural activities give a lot of pleasure to many people*
  - *The success of Scottish artists, performers and writers gives people a sense of pride*
  - *The success of Scottish art and cultural activity gives the outside world a good impression of Scotland*
  - *Artists, performers and writers are important people who contribute to society*
  - *Arts and cultural activities help bring people together in local communities*

Around 8 in 10 adults agreed that:

- *Central government has a responsibility to support arts and culture*
- *Arts and cultural activity help to bring visitors and tourists to this area*
- *If any local area lost its art and cultural activities, the local people would lose something of value*
- *Arts and cultural activity helps to enrich the quality of our lives*
- *I am in favour of lottery money going to the arts*

## The Scottish Arts Council

- Respondents were asked whether they had ever heard of the Scottish Arts Council. Overall, some 72% of respondents were aware of the organisation. Respondents classified as ABs, those aged between 45 and 54 and those who were interested in the arts were most likely to be aware of the Scottish Arts Council (88%, 84% and 82% respectively) while less than half of those aged between 16 and 24 had heard of the organisation (42%).
- In order to prompt attitudes towards the Scottish Arts Council's supporting of events, respondents were shown the Scottish Arts Council logo and then asked which of a series of statements best matched their opinions. Amongst respondents who had previously heard of the Scottish Arts Council, the highest levels of agreement were with the positive statements that an event supported by Scottish Arts Council would be:
  - *Well run (44%);*
  - *Worth supporting (33%);*
  - *High quality (28%).*

### Under represented groups – key findings

The summary table below illustrates overall levels of attendance and participation in arts and cultural activities amongst the Scottish adult population as a whole and amongst each of the adult under-represented groups.

**Table A-1– Levels of attendance and participation during previous 12 months (%)**

	Attendance in last 12 months	Participation in last 12 months
<b>Scottish adults</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>66</b>
Minority ethnic communities	70	60
Residents of deprived areas	67	52
Disabled people	50	58
Women	75	69
Residents of rural areas	75	69
People aged 16 to 24	87	65
People aged 65+	52	61

In addition, an estimated 72% of children aged 5 to 15 attended or participated in arts or cultural activities during the previous 12 months.

### **Appendix 3    Expressing Themselves – National Youth Consultation on the Arts - Summary of Young Scot report**

The survey clearly shows that most young people have a positive view of the arts, with 59% believing they are fun and 60% believing that they are creative. The survey does, however, show some evidence that young people have a lack of understanding of the breadth of 'the arts', with some believing it includes sport and leisure activities.

The survey shows that young people take part in a wide range of arts activities, including 36% of young people who play a musical instrument. It also shows that the vast majority of young people attend some form of arts performance/venues, including 87% who go to the cinema. Taking part in and attending arts activities provokes a range of feeling in young people, with key findings including the social aspect of involvement and the feeling of emotional release that it provides.

A third of young people in Scotland have stopped taking part in arts activities for a variety of reasons, including lack of time and activities being focused on children rather than young people. There is a range of factors which affect young people's decision not to take part in arts activities. The most important factors were found to be lack of activities in their local area, lack of information, and activities being too expensive. Young people do not appear to have one preferred method of receiving information about arts activities/events, though the survey does show that there is a role for schools and colleges to play in distributing arts information, and a need for a national information point.

Young people clearly have a huge number of ideas and aspirations about how money could be spent to improve the arts in Scotland, including youth marketing, taster courses, arts centres and grants to develop talent and ideas.

The focus groups carried out with young people involved in dance show that some young people are very focused and committed to pursuing a career in the arts. It also shows that talented young people make great sacrifices to pursue their goals but receive little encouragement at school. Many also appear to believe that there is a lack of funding and support in Scotland and as such they will have to move away from Scotland to pursue their ambitions.

The residential event held with young people generated a great deal of discussion and highlighted the strong views held by young people on the arts. It also demonstrated that young people believed that their views were broadly represented by the survey results.

#### **Barriers**

The young people identified that there is a wide range of complex factors and barriers to young people's involvement in the arts. Overall they highlighted a number of aspects which would improve the arts for young people. This included the need for improved access, marketing, and information for young people; the need for improved facilities and youth friendly staff; the need to improve transport infrastructure; the need to reduce the cost of arts activities; the need to involve young people in decision-making; and the need to fund young people's ideas and talent through arts centres and grants.

They also generated a number of ideas and aspirations of how they would like to see the arts in Scotland. This included a central information point drawing together all information on arts activities, grants, training, arts agencies working together; arts centres in every local authority running taster sessions to allow everyone the chance to try arts activities;

greater involvement of young people at all levels of decision-making in the arts; greater funding and support for young people's ideas and talent; greater emphasis on arts education from a young age; and touring arts activities to 'take arts to the public'.

### **Overall conclusions**

- The majority of young people in Scotland believe the arts are creative and fun
- There is some misunderstanding amongst young people in Scotland of what is included in the arts.
- The vast majority of young people in Scotland take part in or attend arts activities.
- A third of young people in Scotland have stopped taking part in an arts activity for some reason.
- There are a number of complex factors influencing young people's decision not to take part in arts activities.
- Young people do not have one preferred method of receiving arts information.
- Young people have a huge number of ideas and aspirations about how to improve the arts in Scotland.

### **KEY MESSAGES:**

- There is a need for improved access, marketing and information for young people.
- There is a need for improved facilities and youth friendly staff.
- There is a need to improve transport infrastructure and subsidise transport for young people as it makes it more expensive for young people to access arts activities.
- There is a need to reduce the cost of arts activities.
- There is a need to involve young people in decision-making.
- There is a need to fund young people's ideas and talent through arts centres and grants.

### **ASPIRATIONS AND ACTION POINTS:**

- There should be a central information source drawing together information on all arts activities, grants, and training.
- There should be an arts centre in every local authority area running taster sessions to allow all young people the chance to try arts activities.
- There should be greater involvement of young people at all levels of decision making in the arts.
- There should be greater funding for young people's ideas and talent.
- School curricula should be more creative and reflective of the broad nature of the arts and primary schools should play a bigger role in educating young people about the arts.
- There should be more touring arts activities to 'take arts to the public' and provide access to arts activities for people in rural and deprived areas.
- There should be more local activities and consultation to find out what people in local areas actually want.
- A range of information channels should be used to market arts to young people.