



**EDINBURGH
INTERNATIONAL
FILM FESTIVAL**

EDINBURGH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL 88 Lothian Road t +44(0) 131 228 4051
FULL SUBMISSION TO THE CULTURAL COMMISSION Edinburgh EH3 9BZ f +44(0) 131 229 5501
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SUMMARY

The EIFF believes that it is a National Organisation with potential to support cinema culture, specialist cinema, moving image initiatives, the digital rollout and the cultural development of Scotland.

It is a world class event which takes place in August and a brand which exists outside August and outside Edinburgh.

Its turnover in 2004 was c£1million. It is financially vulnerable and unless the balance of funding is addressed, away from an over dependency on the corporate sector presently sitting at 50% of income, it will wither away into insignificance or die. If it were put on a secure funding basis it could make a significant and valuable contribution to the nation, culturally, economically and in the international arena.

REPORT

UNIQUE

EIFF as an international film festival is unique on the basis of:

- its exceptional provenance – high critical acclaim and running continuously since 1947
- its intimate scale making it manageable for audiences and, for film industry professionals, conducive to vital networking between creative professionals
- it being part of the Edinburgh (summer) Festivals group
- it offering a showcase for Scottish film in the context of a unique annual perspective of the British film industry

EIFF PROGRAMME AND PRODUCT

EIFF's programme is curated by an Artistic Director. All films are UK premieres.

Some are world or European premieres.

Annually, on average it selects and screens 100 feature films, 150 shorts and stages masterclasses and special events.

The theme of discovery underpins the festival curation; new films, new talent, new perspectives, new cinematic experiences. The presence of filmmakers to talk about their work is vital to the experience audiences have of the festival.

Patron Sir Sean Connery Artistic Director Shane Danielsen
Managing Director Ginnie Atkinson Chairman John McCormick

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The programme, which is constructed in sections, is wide ranging from mainstream Gala films to Reel Life, from Mirrorball (music videos) to documentary, from new directors (Rosebud) to international established filmmakers (Directors' Showcase). These plus animation, "high octane" movies (Late Night Romps), British Gala and film-as-art section Black Box reflect an eclectic curatorial range.

The film retrospective (a review of a body of work) was invented by EIFF in the 60's and continues annually. EIFF has a reputation for excellence, world wide, and is considered to be in the top twenty of international film festivals, measured by critical acclaim. EIFF also runs a schools' education programme in conjunction with Filmhouse.

PROGRAMME POLICY

To seek out good, new films which were representative examples from a wide range of movie types, seeking to form "snapshots" of nations and emergent themes of world and British cinema.

There is no token programming i.e. if a nation has a fallow period there will be no films from that nation. A recent deduction therefore would be: South Korea and Spain's cinematic voice is in good shape but Japan, Germany and Italy's are not; in 2003 there were lots of French films at EIFF and in 2004 not so many.

Festivals are judged on the features they programme so this is a priority.

The retrospective is an Edinburgh speciality.

Shorts support the policy / theme of discovery and new talent - it is a "show and tell" exercise and very much for peer groups' mutual comparison and talent spotting.

Scottish Film: EIFF are committed to it on the same basis as other programming but with a focussed flexibility; showcasing of a progressing talent is a priority e.g. Lynne Ramsay, David McKenzie.

CONSTITUENCIES

EIFF has two main constituencies: audience and film industry professionals.

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Audience:

Socio economic groups B and C1 are most prevalent making up 82%.
A is 6% and C2, D and E make up 12%.

Gender split is 50: 50.

Age: 56% are under 35 yrs and 44% are over.

Edinburgh based = 55%

Rest of Scotland = 14%

Rest of UK = 16%

Ex UK 15%

Psychographic breakdown:

Risk takers: 48% - those who will happily take a chance on unknown product

Cautious Gamblers 48% - those who will take risks but require at least one familiar reference point such as director, actor etc.

Safety First 4% - do not like to take any risks and require lots of pre-endorsement

Film Festivals are not always for the public. EIFF is.

EIFF is and has been the main instrument and influence for the development of specialist cinema going audiences in Edinburgh.

Admissions 54,000 (in 2004 – a 100% increase in 10 years)

Film Industry Professionals:

Filmmaker guests (attached to programmed films and events) c 350

Industry delegates (registered) c 670

Accredited press c 400

EIFF is also one of the film festivals which are part of the "eco-system" of the film industry, impacting at almost every level;

- Training
- Script and project development
- Production
- Sales
- Distribution
- Exhibition

It welcomes and facilitates the working lives of film professionals from around the globe including:

- Producers

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- Directors
- Screenwriters
- Development executives
- Executive producers
- Sales agents
- Distributors
- International acquisition executives
- Screen Agency personnel
- Film Commission personnel
- Film Schools
- Talent Agents
- Cinema owners and programmers
- Film festivals
- Film funders
- Film Education personnel
- Media lawyers
- Home entertainment distributors

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What the film industry want from festivals and EIFF by implication, includes:

- a launch pad for films with UK distribution prior to general release- this is the premiere screening and press coverage is essential
- a showcase for films without UK distribution but with an international sales agent ie seeking distribution in UK – they need to meet distributors and get them to see the films they are selling
- a showcase for films without sales agents – the producers will be seeking a sales agent
- to be able to gauge audience reaction to the films which assists with their strategies for release or for choosing distributors
- press and film critic/ reviewer reaction to their film
- a showcase for talent – available on screen and in person
- a form of market environment – which is described above

EIFF provides an arena for all of this within the context of the type and breadth of product that is the basis of its identity and its brand strength.

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EIFF reputation is based on a long history of an ethos being applied to the curatorial process; one that has debate, discovery, confidence, trailblazing, quality and internationalism at its core.

For Scottish filmmakers it offer a world class event on their doorstep; a place where they can see and be seen in the wider world of film and mix with their international peers.

The scale of EIFF enables Scottish filmmakers to be "bigger fish in a smaller pond", while appreciating the larger global context.

NETWORKING

A hackneyed phrase but accurate about the meetings that happen between businesses and creative practitioners, which can be benevolently interventionist in the work process.

FILM UK

This is the label applied to any event or product which pertains to the (promotion of) the British film industry;

Guide to British Film – a product guide listing all fiction features and shorts made in the UK in the last 12 months (given to delegates, downloadable from the website and distributed around the world)

Film UK videotheque – video library and viewing facility of as many of the above films as can be sourced

Industry events with particular relevance to the UK industry

INDUSTRY SERVICE

EIFF provides a comprehensive service to delegates and filmmakers in the form of the videotheque, the industry office with staff to facilitate business connections and a networking and social space.

Over twenty Industry Events are staged each year; targeted at film professionals at all levels of experience, these events offer an opportunity to gain more information and insight in to the diverse areas of the film industry with subjects ranging from special effects to deal-making.

A PROFESSIONAL TESTIMONIAL

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"...the festival selection was an optimal blend of intelligent curatorship and innovative programming...I was most often happily surprised at premieres of films I had not known about as well as being rewarded by the proper positioning of some great new films that had been over-shadowed by hyped competition elsewhere...the mood and environment of the Edinburgh event was a real boon to prospective acquisitions -the organization of screenings, the video library and the availability of market information made my job as a buyer easier and more pleasurable, without the pressure cooker of a full blown market sidebar...finally, I must say that I have never read more literate and insightful festival catalogue entries anywhere - made me want to see many more films than time allowed...keep it up and keep them coming...hope to be back next year..." Richard Lorber, Fox Lorber Films (major US acquisitions executive)

AWARDS

EIFF hosts seven awards each year. These are important for the promotion of particular types of film. Most have cash prizes.

The Michael Powell Award for the Best New British Feature Film
Standard Life Audience Award
Guardian New Directors Award
Kodak/UK Film Council Award for Best British Short Film
The McLaren Award for New British Animation
European Short Film Award/Prix UIP
Saltire Society Grierson Award for Short Documentary

THREATS

These may be considered under the ensuing report entitled Thundering Hooves, commissioned by Scottish Executive, SEEL and SAC, which is designed to gauge the threats to Edinburgh as a city of festivals in a world where economic impact can be effected in one stroke of the investment funding pen (e.g Manchester). Edinburgh has taken 59 years to build to this point of pre-eminence and is the source of inspiration and imitation.

Importantly this report must pay attention to the risks to the festivals from those of similar art form. In the same way that the question must be asked "Is Hay a threat to the Book Festival", so must Sarajevo, Cambridge and Copenhagen be assessed, amongst others, as threats to the EIFF.

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Underfunding is a serious threat. A common cry but with scrutiny of the operational economics and the business environment, EIFF stands as an example in the manner of a lean, fit athlete held back by lack of training facilities i.e. the bedrock for growth, or even survival, in an international arena. Comparisons with European film festivals show a high level of government support – to a level of between 40 and 60 % of income. The argument that “the UK doesn’t do it that way” is self defeating. Now is the time to examine these funding habits particularly in the light of the example of 2005 when EIFF has found it hard to raise income from the corporate sector at the level of previous years.

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ANCILLARY BENEFITS, CO-OPERATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Filmhouse: EIFF is currently involved in business planning towards a merger with Filmhouse where the ambition is to become a centre of excellence in the sphere of the moving image, the creative industries and the digital media sector. This could have a national delivery.

Filmhouse are key practitioners in screen education and there is collaboration on the Festival education programme.

Staff: EIFF acts as training ground for those who want to work in the film industry or the arts. Fifty percent of the 200 staff in August are volunteers but receive an excellent work experience with structure, training and experience on offer. Many have gone on to careers in film. The positive work experience is the compensation for the near minimum wage that the paid temporary workers receive.

Creative Industries: EIFF is a celebratory, networking and discovery focal point for those working in the creative industries in Scotland.

Both as delegates and paying public, those working in design, photography, animation, advertising, music, the games industry, etc. are engaged with and by the Festival.

Scottish Enterprise: EIFF has a strong relationship with S.E. in relation to the creative industries and in particular the animation sector.

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Specialist Cinema Exhibition Sector: EIFF is a keystone of this sector which includes the subsidised cinemas in Scotland and the independent commercial cinema circuit. The Festival provides a key opportunity for exhibitors in the UK (and internationally) to see films in advance, which assists them with their programme planning, negotiations with distributors and networking with peers.

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Scottish Screen: EIFF works with Scottish Screen to provide a world class professional environment for filmmaking in Scotland via: showcase, inspiration and example, business connections, information gathering, creative connections, training and more.

There is an expectation that Scottish Screen will have an up to date strategy for the exhibition sector in the next few months ie. Summer 2005.

Event Scotland: partners with whom we will work on international marketing for the benefit of the nation and Edinburgh. Film has a universal appeal and as such is an excellent mechanism for the promotion of Scotland as a destination for visitors. EIFF is engaged in an initiative to attract high profile individuals as a keystone in an international profiling exercise.

Skillset: partners in training for the industry. Skillset are the national agency for film training.

Embassies and Cultural Institutes: vital partners in the delivery of international cinema – current and retrospectives. Many institutes from French to Japanese are involved in the delivery of national cinema through festivals.

Broadcasters: as inherent supporters of the film industry EIFF has a longstanding and productive relationship with BBC (UK and Scotland) and with Scottish Television. Both are involved in film production schemes which EIFF support.

Corporate Sector: Sponsorship relationships provide business benefits and audience development opportunities for companies in Edinburgh Scotland and the UK. At some points the majority of sponsors/ business partners can be London based, it being the

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hub for national media and communications companies such as a telephone
national newspapers and broadcasters. This is advantageous for Scotland.
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Schools, Further and Higher Education sectors: EIFF has relationships with all of these education sectors and plans to expand these as part of the Partnership with Filmhouse.

EIFF supports the Scottish *Screen Academy* bid. As a specialist cinema exhibitor there is a unique opportunity for *seeing* films, particularly classic or non contemporaneous seasons in a cultural and evaluative context.

Ends.

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