

ARTS

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From: rebecca marr [scotland@engage.org]
Sent: 27 September 2004 17:30
To: info
Cc: Rebecca Marr
Subject: engage Scotland response to the Cultural Commission[Scanned]

Dear Cultural Commission

Please find attached (and in body of email) the **engage** Scotland response to the Commission. Please contact me with any queries you may have.

engage look forward to future involvement in the work of the Commission.

Yours

Rebecca Marr
engage Scotland

Cultural Commission: engage Scotland response Sept. 04

What is engage Scotland?

engage Scotland is part of engage, the professional gallery education association promoting access to and enjoyment of the visual arts in the UK and internationally. engage Scotland represents the Scottish body of engage members, responding to training and networking needs within gallery education with a Scottish focus.

engage has over 1200 members who in turn work face to face with at least 2 million citizens annually. Scotland holds a tenth of the UK and international membership with over 120 members and over 40 organisations, all active and engaged with delivering access to the arts for wide and diverse audiences.

This document is the result of consultation with our members and colleagues.

engage Scotland supports and advocates those working in education in the visual arts in galleries and arts organisations across Scotland including freelance artist educators. engage Scotland offers a programme of events including an annual conference – this year in Dublin examining contemporary community arts.

engage supports the sector through advocacy, in the UK and beyond, and through consultation with national organisations. engage Scotland has produced reports on Addressing disability in galleries in Scotland and the good practice guidance manual Creative Collaborations and now manages the engage Scotland Visual Arts Education Awards.

Action Research projects have been carried out throughout England and are now planned for Scotland. engage has been consulted by the DCMS and DfES and was one of three sector representatives on England's new Museum and Gallery Education Strategy.

engage Scotland, committed to increased enjoyment & involvement in the visual arts, is an excellent resource of arts professionals working to deliver cultural entitlement to the people of Scotland.

engage Scotland is funded through the Scottish Arts Council.

28/09/2004

Contacts:

engage Scotland Coordinator: Rebecca Marr - Wednesdays & Thursdays

T: 01592 563 110 E:

engage Director: Christopher Naylor

T: 0207 244 0110 E:

W: / www.engagescotland.org.uk

We believe that the arts are vital to quality of life

Visual arts and galleries offer:

•Distinctive opportunities for participation

Visual arts and galleries offer distinctive opportunities for personal and group participation for the people of Scotland: for schoolchildren, for communities, for all

•An integral part of cultural identity

Visual arts and galleries are an integral part of what the public identify as their culture, and make a key contribution to the nation's cultural life and identity

•Exploration and debate

Visual arts and galleries are particularly important in enabling us to explore and debate individual responses to contemporary life through image and visual language

•Ways to unlock responses

The visual arts and galleries, through education and outreach work, offer a creative way to unlock responses to culture from those traditionally outside of cultural provision – it can tell us about how the people we want to involve can involve themselves

•A Championing and embracing of diversity

Visual arts and galleries through their variety of individual expression champion and embrace diversity

•Respect and recognition for artists

Visual arts and art galleries are a key part of the creative community which recognises and respects practising artists as vital contributors to the life of our nation

In the next generation engage would like:

A stimulating, vibrant, valued and challenging cultural life for Scotland with demanding, thirsty, culturally confident citizens

All visual arts audiences - and potential audiences – to have access to exciting and inspirational gallery education provision - that is, provision to promote visual literacy and cultural access – as part of a cultural commitment to appropriate education and access initiatives across the arts

Implicit in this next generational aim is the recognition of a diverse body of participants and audiences, practitioners and cultural provision staff – disabled people and people from different cultural backgrounds, a gender balance, a reflection of the social mix of Scotland.

In order to support this vision engage would like:

All visual arts venues and programmes to be resourced to offer and sustain appropriate gallery education provision – recognised as an essential core function within their missions, objectives, and budgets – empowering people to take up and enjoy their cultural entitlements

All visual arts venues and programmes to be supported to adopt an ethos of ‘integrated practice’ -that is, to integrate education, in its widest sense, at the outset in all planning of exhibitions, displays, programmes

A risk taking in the visual arts both by audiences and organisations and crucially by funders

A strong body of documentation of arts in the community and in-house gallery education programmes, a record of this work and a parity of esteem for community and artist collaborative practises

An ongoing Scotland-wide programme to promote good practice, including community programmes and partnership working, through training and professional development, peer networking and dissemination to visual arts professionals

Gallery education, artist educators and outreach staff to be involved in policy making and organisational planning - They are key people in reaching and keeping new audiences and offering a quality engagement for the public

Key actions now to realise this:

•Addressing of the dire need for arts education and outreach staff

The arts need proper resourcing for staffing and maintaining education programmes in arts venues. Education staff act as the audience champions actively seeking new ways to engage different audiences, professionals who use their own creativity to offer new ‘ways in’ Education and Outreach staff are key individuals in making the Scottish Executive’s vision of a culturally active nation happen and we need more of them.

•Education programmes which offer sustainability

Arts education and outreach projects are too often short term. One off projects are very successful in raising aspirations, but we need to be able to build up the hunger for creativity knowing that it can be fed.

•Resourcing artists and the arts

Convinced of the beneficial nature of the arts, that its creative processes are restorative and life changing, government must trust art practitioners and professionals. Funders and government must nourish the arts and learn to engage with them – artists and arts organisations – in a way that allows them to reach excellence, in a way that strengthens their skills and does not hinder creativity.

With appropriate funding and government policy support and working with partners, engage would seek to realise these aspirations through:

- Research in action

Ongoing action-research programmes to broaden access and entitlement with galleries and visual arts programmes:

- exploring and identifying good practice
- demonstrating effectiveness of 'integrated practice'

- Demonstration & delivery

An immediate cross arts sector education fund available to cultural organisations

- to demonstrate the role of education in supporting cultural providers to
- deliver on cultural entitlements
- to resource and support cross arts initiatives in education work
- to research ways of engaging with those currently outside of cultural activity

- Building future diversity

Working with partners, including formal education and nursery providers, to encourage and support diversity within a future workforce

- Dialogue & Exchange

The development of and committed support for local cultural users groups, to encourage dialogue between providers and users and to advise providers / government on cultural matters

- Development & training

Five year strategy to support expanded access and entitlement by developing and embedding relevant training and CPD (continuing professional development) provision with Higher Education Institutions and other agencies

- Education at core

Long term strategy to work with directors, curators, trustees and senior staff to allow them to explore and embrace commitment to education as a core function in enabling them to promote the cultural rights of the nation

- Raising the profile

Continued advocacy to raise the profile of the good work in visual arts education in Scotland, in supporting individuals to find relevancy of culture in their lives

- Working with the workers

Continued response to and respect for the views of the engage Scotland membership who represent those working to deliver on cultural entitlement

- Promoting change

Seeking a commitment to core (rather than project) funding for engage Scotland to take a significant development role in promoting change with key partners

engage Scotland 27/09/04

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engage Scotland response to Cultural Commission September 3

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