

A Review of Touring Theatre and Dance in Scotland:

Strand 4: Literature and Practice Review



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Awarding funds from
THE NATIONAL LOTTERY®

Contents

Introduction 3

Key findings 5

2.1	Current public funding for touring across the UK is inconsistent	5
2.2	How does touring in Scotland now compare with other models?	5
2.3	Has the touring environment changed?	6
2.4	Other models of working	7
2.5	There are examples of good practice to learn from	7
2.6	International models of working	9
3.1	Creative Scotland	11
3.2	Arts Council England	12
3.3	Arts Council of Northern Ireland	13
3.4	Arts Council of Wales	13
3.5	Conclusions	14

How does touring in Scotland now compare with other models 15

4.1	Networks within Scotland	15
4.2	Has the touring environment changed?	22
4.3	Are there opportunities in new models of working?	25

Examples of Good Practice 28

5.1	Touring consortia	28
5.2	Strategically funded touring initiatives	30
5.3	Longer runs and residencies to make touring work	33
5.4	Methods venues use to approach programming	34
5.5	Automated sharing of audience analysis	35

International models of working 37

Bibliography 42

Introduction

Background

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here.

A core ambition for Creative Scotland is that everyone can access and enjoy artistic and creative experiences. This is reflected in the key priority 'to strengthen presentation, touring and distribution of work, including through digital platforms and encouraging collaboration.'

Creative Scotland funds touring theatre and dance through both Open Project and Regular Funding, supporting both producers (theatre and dance companies) and promoters such as venues and touring networks.

The Arts Strategy 2016-17 identified that 'Touring, exhibition and other means of distributing and sharing work is a concern for organisations as highlighted in the Sector Reviews. This is especially true for the performing arts (theatre, dance and music) where a growth in audiences remains a priority. This is key for increasing opportunities for access and delivering greater financial contribution to the viability of venues and producing companies. While working digitally can complement this, the live experience is still fundamental for many.'

The project

Creative Scotland attends the Scottish Touring Forum which is facilitated by the FST (Federation of Scottish Theatre). This network has voiced a number of concerns around the health of theatre and dance touring in Scotland, of which perceived diminishing financial resources for both promoters and producers is paramount.

Discussions through the forum identified a need to better understand how the sector operates, how it has changed in recent years and how Creative Scotland's funding has impacted upon it.

While this report focuses on touring within Scotland, there is a broader context within which Scottish Artists and productions also tour to international markets and networks, and a further commercial touring circuit which is not covered here. The purpose of the review was not to find and celebrate touring success stories from Scotland, but to uncover key themes and issues affecting the sector.

Through in-depth consultation with a sub group of the Federation of Scottish Theatre's Touring Forum, Creative Scotland identified research questions which were developed into a research approach with four strands of enquiry (detailed below).

Strand	Research Methodology
1. What does the touring environment look like?	Quantitative analysis of the data currently held by Creative Scotland and partner agencies. Carried out in-house by Creative Scotland.
2. What are the fees / funding arrangements?	Online questionnaire of venues and promoters using FST database. Carried out in-house by Creative Scotland.
3. Do promoters and producers think touring in Scotland is successful?	Qualitative data analysis through managed focus groups and one to one interviews with key personnel. Conducted by Lisa Baxter.
4. How does touring in Scotland now compare with other models	Desk research and feedback from focus groups - Conducted by Claire Dow.

Quantitative work was carried out in-house by Creative Scotland staff. Qualitative Research and a Literature and Practice Review were carried out by external researchers, Lisa Baxter and Claire Dow respectively, who together pulled all the findings of the Review into a Final Report.

There are five reports in the review which can be accessed on the [Creative Scotland website](#):

Final Report: A Review of Touring Theatre and Dance in Scotland

Strand 1 Data Analysis of Creative Scotland Funded Touring 2012 – 2016

Strand 2 Industry Survey of Producers and Promoters

Strand 3 Qualitative Research into Touring Theatre and Dance in Scotland

Strand 4 Literature and Practice Review

1.3 Strand Four: Literature and Practice Review

This strand comprises analysis and desk research of funding models and programme structures. It looks at how support for touring in Scotland currently compares with other models, covering regional variations of practice within Scotland, how the touring environment has changed and examples of good practice for public funding of tours from the rest of the UK and internationally.

It was carried out between December 2016 and February 2017 through desk research of existing reports on theatre and dance touring, online information gathering and interviews with colleagues from the sector. The strand is not exhaustive. There are many examples of practice and great efforts to support touring in new and interesting ways. This report focuses on a short time frame and links key points of interest by theme.

Key Findings

2.1 Current public funding for touring across the UK is inconsistent

There is an inconsistent picture across the UK in terms of the public funding granted to touring work.

2.1.1 Strategic funds

Support for touring work differs across the UK's arts funding bodies. Arts Council Wales and Arts Council England are the only two to have ring fenced strategic touring funds. The former demands geographic spread from large scale productions, while Arts Council England has a broader range of priorities.

Arts Council England's Strategic Touring Fund supports touring work, focusing on:

- Areas where people have low engagement with the arts
- Areas that rely on touring for much of their arts provision
- Geographically isolated areas
- Areas with a lack of local arts practitioners and organisations
- Extending the reach of high-quality work by broadening the range of venues presenting it
- Forging stronger relationships between audiences, promoters, venues, artists and producers.

2.1.2 Length of terms of support

There is long term support of 3-4 years for touring organisations across the UK, except in Northern Ireland and Wales, where the maximum term of support committed is one year. All areas offer short-term project funds on a tour-by-tour basis.

2.1.3 Support for audience development varies

The Arts Council of Wales is the only body with a distinct Audience Development fund. This supports activity which is additional to the existing requirements within project funding, that projects have robust audience development plans and a commitment to sustaining and developing audiences.

2.1.4 Creative Scotland has no specific touring strategy

Neither Regular nor Open Project Fund guidelines clearly set out strategic priorities relating to touring work beyond the aims of the ten year plan. There are no specifics regarding reach, distribution, balance of genre, or priorities for 'new' work over classics and remounts. When compared to the Scottish Art's Council's touring strategy, the information guidelines available from Creative Scotland are minimal and not specific to touring.

2.2 How does touring in Scotland now compare with other models?

2.2.1 Touring networks in Scotland

There are five key touring networks operating in Scotland- Arts nan Eilean in the Western Isles, the Touring Network in the Highlands and North of Scotland, North East Arts Touring, Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and Borders Live Touring.

All have similar aims:

- to support local promoters in taking work, and booking more adventurous and diverse programming
- to coordinate touring shows across geographical areas
- to bring work to audiences who wouldn't otherwise have access to it
- to support producing companies in touring widely.

There are key variations in funding and delivery models of the touring networks including practice around fee structures for producers, how they recoup income from box office and the timescales for producers to take part in their touring schemes.

2.1.2 Precarity

North East Arts Touring and The Touring Network are the most established schemes, delivering opportunities for promoters to develop and youth promoter schemes alongside the main programme. They are both Regularly Funded Organisations.

The other schemes are supported by Creative Scotland through Open Project Funding and in some cases by local authority support. They are at risk of discontinuing, not necessarily because of lack of funding opportunities, but because organisations involved do not prioritise network activity due to other commitments.

2.3 Has the touring environment changed?

2.3.1 The issues facing dance and theatre touring are still pressing

There appears to have been little progress in the way tours operate and many of the issues facing dance and theatre touring raised in Christine Hamilton's Review of the Theatre Sector in 2012 remain constant. These include the seasonal bottleneck of work, the feast or famine cycle of availability and the struggle to spread risk evenly between venues and producers. There is also continued reporting of under-provision of mainstream work, as previously identified in John Stalkers' Commercial Theatre Report 2012.

2.3.2 Funding has changed

There have been significant changes in the landscape in recent years in Scotland. These include the move away from artform-specific funding, and the subsequent move away from touring-specific support. This removed the clarity of information regarding funding priorities and objectives regarding touring work for grant applicants. A strategic touring fund was, suggested by Creative Scotland, in early 2013 but it was not progressed by the sector.

There has also been a reduction in local authority support for Cultural and Heritage Services which has had a huge impact on local authority venues and their ability to programme touring productions.

2.3.2 Balance of risk is still a concern

Based on the literature, there is little evidence of change in the balance of risk between programmer and producer. The Dance Sector Review and Theatre Sector Review 2012 both highlighted the issue, typified in a perceived decrease in guaranteed production fees and more box office split arrangements.

2.3.3 New networks of support have been established

There have been new organisations welcomed to the network of supporting agencies with the addition of Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival, Glasgow Arts Community Touring and Borders Live Touring to the touring networks. These are expanding the provision of help for local promoters who want to bring shows to their area, and also supporting touring companies who are keen to get their work out to audiences.

2.4 Other models of working

There appears to be scope for models of working that move away from reliance on public funding.

2.4.1 There are opportunities for subsidised and commercial theatre to work together, with models based on investment return, and further exploitation of successful work

It may be possible to get commercial producers to take on the 'second life' touring of work where a production has shown box office success; or to invest up front in the original production of work with a view to lucrative West End or large scale touring transfers.

2.4.2 Consortium working models are a positive way of working collectively

Consortia allow organisations to come together to pool their resources and share the risk of touring. They can:

- build around a shared scale of operation
- build around a shared interest in the genre they are working in
- attract international or interesting work through a critical mass of dates they are able to offer, or through a geographical cluster of dates
- work through organisations to mutually benefit marketing, technical and outreach departments with shared collateral and resources.

2.4.3 Charitable Trusts are funding touring consortia

There are opportunities to look outside public funding for financial support for strategic touring initiatives. In the UK, Charitable Trusts are supporting touring consortia and networks in order to address social equality issues and strategically reach audiences who have a lack of provision in their local area.

The Farnham Maltings Greenhouse Programme and Battersea Arts Centre's Collaborative Touring Network both receive substantial support from trusts. These programmes enjoy a clear alignment of values and purpose which is socially impactful, audience focussed, and has a strong socially engaged agenda.

2.5 There are examples of good practice to learn from

Across the UK there are examples of successful touring supported by public funding and trusts, pooled resources, deep audience engagement programmes and networked systems of data sharing.

2.5.1 Touring consortia working for common goals

There exist several examples of consortia or networks pooling resources to tour work across specific regions or to targeted audiences.

These include large theatres working together to amplify their buying power and consortia of shared interests developing genres. These consortia build capacity, skills and expertise in their own organisations and artforms.

2.5.2 Strategic touring funds can address gaps

Support from strategic funds allows networks to examine gaps in provision and to address them. There are examples of such funds addressing gaps in provision and access in England and Wales. The dance sector in particular is employing planned strategies to reach audiences.

2.5.3 Using longer runs and residencies creates more meaningful encounters

Developing deeper engagement with locals through longer stays in communities allows companies to create work with specific local context which has a deep relevance, and which resonates with and attracts new audiences.

Deeper local engagement - There are positive advantages for audiences where companies adopt a slower rate of touring with a deeper local engagement. Both Fevered Sleep (England) and Performing Lines (Australia) have set examples of ways of working which more deeply engage with the areas they visit, by spending more time in the local venues and hosting workshops and activities with communities over a period of time. Particularly for dance, this helps in finding points of relevance and opportunities for participation that don't rely on an understanding of the artform or predisposition towards attending.

Audience development through residencies - Hosting a producing company within a venue to make work that will then tour is one method of creating around a venue's audience. Both Battersea Art Centre's Collaborative Touring Network (London) and Creu Cymru's Dance Buddy (Wales) employ this method. Artists and audience build their relationship with the work and then share it in the wider world, creating work with specific local context which has a deep relevance, and which resonates with and attracts new audiences.

2.5.4 Very little is shared about the methods venues use to approach programming

There is very little written or shared about the process of putting a season together by venues, and this can lead to a lack of understanding which can disadvantage everyone involved in tour booking conversations.

2.5.6 Good practice in sharing audience analysis

The Audience Agency's Show Stats system in England is working to address the reporting needs of touring organisations, allowing them to access demographic information about their audiences, and to develop a shared language with venues. This will contribute to more meaningful conversations about markets and audience development for touring productions.

2.6 International models of working

There are interesting international models of developing relationships with audiences, selling shows, getting work out of the cities and supporting work to tour in an economically viable way.

These include:

2.6.1 Slow touring with local engagement

Australia's call for slow touring and deeper engagement with local communities has led to some successful experiments in audience development. Spending time in a town and working with groups to explore the themes of the performance beforehand can effectively engage an audience. In one example, the tour was contemporary dance, but the workshops were not exclusively so, focussing on the theme of the work – loss – which created authentic points of resonance between audience and art irrespective of form.

2.6.2 Varieties of showcasing and pitching possibilities

There are exciting variations available in the way performances are pitched to venues and promoters, and the stages they are at when those conversations take place. In Western Australia, there seems to be a healthy variety and range of opportunities to start those conversations.

2.6.3 Joined up dance touring with full recovery fees

Over ten years, Sweden's Dancenet has successfully taken touring dance out of cities and spread it over the regions and towns of Sweden. They promote meetings across all levels of their member and partner organisations, including technical staff and marketers, to discuss the programmes. They pay full cost recovery fees to the touring companies, which supports economically viable tours.

2.6.4 Economically viable touring

Denmark's Touring Network offers a full cost recovery approach to paying producers fees. Once accepted into the curated programme, producers are able to tour with confidence that they can afford it.

Organisation	Funding Route	Funding Available	Description	Time frame	Deadline
Creative Scotland	Regularly Funded Organisations	Min £50k/year application, over 3 years	Includes touring orgs, venues and networks		Fixed deadline
	Open Project Funds	£1,000 - £100k per application	Includes touring orgs	8 wk turnaround on < £15k	393
12 wk on >£15k	Rolling deadline	24	247	32	311
	Made in Scotland Onward Touring	Total fund £100k	Costs directly for international travel- freight visas etc	8 wk turnaround on < £15k, 12 week on >£15k	Rolling deadline
Arts Council England	National Portfolio Organisations	Minimum £40k/year application over 4 years	Include touring orgs, venues and networks		Fixed deadline
	Grants for the Arts	£1,000 - £100,000 per application	Include touring orgs	6 wk turnaround on <£15k, 12 week on >£15k	Rolling deadline
	Strategic Touring Fund	Total fund £35million between 2015 and 2018. Minimum £15k application	All orgs including NPOs can apply	8 wk turnaround	6 deadlines through year
Arts Council Northern Ireland	Annual Funding Programme	No upper or lower limits, one year support	Includes touring orgs and venues		One deadline per year
	Lottery Project Funding	£10,001 - £100k			
Up to one year duration	Includes touring orgs		One deadline per year		
	Touring and Dissemination Fund		For work crossing border to Republic of Ireland only		
Arts Council Wales	Arts Portfolio Wales	Annual awards	Includes touring orgs and venues		Annual renewal
	Small/Large Grants	£250-£5k / £5k - £30k	Includes touring projects		Four deadlines per year
	National Touring	Up to £100k			Two deadlines per year
	Programme Support for Venues and Galleries	Small/large projects £250-£5k / £5k-£30k	Includes programming		Four deadlines per year
	Audience Development	Small/large projects £250-£5k / £5k-£30k	Can include touring		Four deadlines per year

3.1 Creative Scotland

Creative Scotland has two main programmes which support theatre and dance touring, and administer one for solely international activity.

Regularly Funded Organisations include both touring companies and venues which are supported for a 3-year period for a minimum of £50k per year. Organisations must demonstrate their role in achieving the aims of Creative Scotland's 10 year plan¹:

We want Scotland to be a country where:

- Excellence and experimentation across the arts, screen and creative industries is recognised and valued
- Everyone can access and enjoy artistic and creative experiences
- Places and quality of life are transformed through imagination, ambition and an understanding of the potential of creativity
- Ideas are brought to life by a diverse, skilled and connected leadership and workforce
- Scotland is a distinctive creative nation connected to the world.

Source: Unlocking Potential: Embracing Ambition, Creative Scotland Ten year Plan 2014 - 2024.

The RFO application guidance 2015-18 specifically refers to touring companies under Balancing the Portfolio, where size and type of company will be taken into consideration when making funding decisions.

The Open Project Fund also answers to the aims in the 10 year plan, above, and is open to projects across any art form including touring performance.

Open Project Funding will support:

- Projects that develop skills or artistic practice
- Projects that create something new and of high quality
- Projects which either present work to audiences, or which try to develop and reach new audiences
- Projects which encourage more people to get involved in artistic and creative activity.

Explicitly, the Open Project Fund helps artists *“explore, realise and develop their creative potential, widen access to their work, and enrich Scotland's reputation as a distinctive creative nation connected to the world”*.²

Support is available for activity and projects of different size and scale – and for up to two years in duration. Companies can apply for £1,000 - £100,000, on a rolling deadline, with an eight week turnaround for applications less than £15k, and 12 weeks for applications above £15k.³

¹<http://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/ambitions-and-priorities>

²Creative Scotland Help wit your application over £15k, 2015-16, <http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/open-project-funding>

Neither Regularly Funded Organisations nor Open Project Fund guidelines clearly set out strategic priorities relating to touring work beyond the aims in the ten-year plan. There are no specifics regarding reach, distribution, balance of genre, or priorities for 'new' over classic and remounts of work.

Made in Scotland Onward Touring is also available for international touring. It's funded by the Scottish Government, managed by Creative Scotland and administrated by the Federation of Scottish Theatre. The Made in Scotland showcase raises the international profile of Scottish artists through the promotion of Scottish work at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Following inclusion in the showcase, companies can apply for Onward International Touring. This can support additional costs associated with touring abroad such as freight and visas. The total allocation for Onward Touring varies but is approximately £100,000 with a rolling deadline and an 8-week turnaround.⁴

3.2 Arts Council England

National Portfolio Organisations include both touring companies and receiving venues. The minimum application is for £40k over four years (£160k).⁵

Grants for the Arts is an open project fund with awards from £1,000 to £100,000 to support a wide variety of arts-related activities, from dance to visual arts, literature to theatre, music to combined arts, including touring work, or programming an event.

Strategic Touring Fund

This supports bringing art and culture to everyone, particularly those outside London or who haven't taken part before.

This programme funds touring work, focusing especially on:

- Areas where people have low engagement with the arts
- Areas that rely on touring for much of their arts provision
- Geographically isolated areas
- Areas with a lack of local artists and arts organisations
- Extending the reach of high-quality work by broadening the range of venues presenting it
- Forging stronger relationships between audiences, promoters, venues, artists and producers.

Touring that does not fully meet these criteria can be supported through Grants for the Arts – ACE's open fund.

³<http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/open-project-funding>

⁴Made in Scotland Onward International Touring Guidelines - <http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/targeted-funding/made-in-scotland>

⁵Introduction and essential information <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/national-portfolio-2018-22/our-investment-2018-22-helpful-documents>

The Strategic Touring Fund particularly encourage applications for international work visiting England and mid-scale theatre. The fund is worth £35 million for 2015–18, including £750,000 a year from the Olympic Lottery Distribution Fund to support inbound international touring.

Any individual or organisation can apply, including National Portfolio Organisations, Major Partner Museums, libraries and partnerships, networks or consortia. There are 6 deadlines through the year.

An evaluation of the Strategic Touring Programme (Jackson, 2015) , concludes that *“The Strategic Touring Programme is an important and successful programme. Even with two-thirds of projects still to finish, we can already see a strong and sustainable impact. The Programme has had a wide reach, it has led to widespread and sustainable changes of practice in the sector. It has provided an opportunity for experimentation and learning.”*⁷

Despite the positives, Jackson noted that the projects involved in the Strategic Touring Programme Evaluation had not reached the audience targets they had hoped to engage. This was supposed to be because of the *“difficulty of forecasting audience figures for new productions and relationships, partly because of low capacity in some venues and possibly because applicants have wanted to present their proposals in a positive light”*. In terms of timescales needed to achieve an impact on audience development, *“overall the evaluators found that the Programme could do more to match the realities of audience development.”*⁸

3.3 Arts Council of Northern Ireland

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has three main programmes for which touring work is eligible.

They have an **Annual Funding Programme** which supports some touring companies for a 12-month minimum of organisational activity. One deadline per year, no published upper or lower financial limits.

The **Lottery Project Fund** supports one-off projects, £10,001 to £100,000, which can include touring. One deadline per year.

Touring and Dissemination of Work – funds for tours that cross the border into the Republic of Ireland, administered by Arts Council Ireland, and jointly funded by both organisations.⁹

3.4 Arts Council of Wales

Arts Council Wales has an **Arts Portfolio Wales** which supports organisations on an annual basis, and which includes touring organisations and venues.

Support for organisations includes **Small Grants** (£250 - £5,000) and **Large Grants** (£5,000 - £30,000) and **National Touring**. The Small and Large Grants can include funds to tour and need to demonstrate *“a real commitment to developing and sustaining audiences”* and *“robust audience development plan”*¹⁰. There are four deadlines per year (May August October January).

⁶<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/strategic-touring>

⁷Strategic Touring Programme Evaluation 2015, Annabel Jackson, pg 24

⁸Strategic Touring Programme Evaluation 2015, Annabel Jackson, pg 6

⁹<http://artscouncil-ni.org/funding/funding-for-organisations>

National Touring (up to £100,000) is to support larger scale work which must visit the North, South East and South West of Wales. There are two annual deadlines (August, January). It appears to be exclusively about geographic spread.

Programme Support for Venues and Galleries includes funds to programme work “beyond the reach of their core business”¹¹. It has Small Grants (£250 - £5,000) and Large Grants (£5,000 - £30,000) and the 4 deadlines (May, August, October and January).

Audience Development, sometimes can include a touring element. It's similar in scale to Small Grants (£250 - £5,000) and Large Grants (£5,000 - £30,000) and has same deadlines (May, August, October and January). It is for activities additional to the existing requirements that they have robust audience development plans and a commitment to sustaining and developing audiences.

3.5 Conclusions

All four of the UK's arts funding bodies support productions to tour in order to reach audiences and spread opportunities to see work. This support is through both long-term organisational funds and short project funds on a tour by tour basis.

- a) There are no clear strategic priorities in relation to touring work in Creative Scotland - Neither Regularly Funded Organisations nor Open Project Fund guidelines clearly set out strategic priorities relating to touring work beyond the aims in the ten-year plan. There are no specifics regarding reach, distribution, balance of genre, or priorities for 'new' over classic and remounts of work.
- b) Strategic funds operate in other areas of the UK - Arts Council England and Arts Council Wales have ring fenced touring funds that provide clear priorities and objectives for touring work.

Arts Council Wales' touring fund is focused exclusively on getting large-scale work to travel to all areas of Wales.

Arts Council England's Strategic Touring Fund has a range of priorities including geographic reach, access, and relationship building.

- c) Duration of long term support is variable - There is long term support of 3-4 years for touring organisations in England and Scotland. In Northern Ireland and Wales commitments are made on an annual basis.
- d) The Arts Council of Wales is the only body with a distinct Audience Development fund - This supports activity which is additional to the existing requirements within project funding which requires that projects have robust audience development plans and a commitment to sustaining and developing audiences.

How does touring in Scotland compare with other models?

4.1 Networks within Scotland

Summary overview of six of the organisations which support promoter networks in Scotland.

	Charge promoters to join?	Touring scheme - Pay fee to performers?	Take Box office split?	Planning timelines/set deadlines	Creative Scotland support
The Touring Network	Yes	yes, fixed contribution £500	Yes	Rolling, allow 3 mths	RFO
North East Arts Touring (NEAT)	Yes	Yes, variable	Yes, variable depending on number tickets sold	7-8 months, open callout with fixed deadlines	RFO
Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival	Yes, some free to smaller venues	Yes, variable	Yes	Rolling	Open Project Funds
Arts nan Eilean	No	Fixed fee £500 and ferry costs	Yes	Rolling but falls into two blocks, 6 mths ahead	Open Project Funds
Borders Live Touring	No	Yes, variable	Yes	Rolling	Open Project Funds (staff from Arts Development Live Borders)
Glasgow Arts Community Touring	No	Yes variable	Yes	Rolling, with budgets allocated annually in April	None (Glasgow Life support)

4.1.1 The Touring Network

The Touring Network covers over half the geographical area of Scotland, supporting promoters working in communities across Highland, Argyll & Bute, Moray, Orkney, Shetland and Perthshire.

Their aim is to *“enable live performances of the highest level, which will transform people as promoters, performers and audiences and create vibrant places to live, work and visit.”*¹²

¹²<http://www.thetouringnetwork.com/about/>

They do this by:

- Connecting promoters and artists, helping them to network, share knowledge, skills and resources
- Supporting the ecology through help, advice and training for promoters of events in small-scale venues
- Representing the rural touring sector
- Working on behalf of members and alongside partner organisations to strengthen and support the rural touring ecology
- Ensuring that touring and promoting remain accessible and relevant to all.

The Touring Network strategically supports performances in under-represented genres and geographic areas. Current 2016 priorities for their Supported Programme are *“Dance and Physical theatre, New Music, Site Responsive work, and work that tackles equalities, diversity and inclusion issues.”*¹³ The Network aims to underwrite the financial risk for promoters so they can be more diverse in their choices in terms of genre or challenge to audience.

The Supported Programme has a rolling deadline with producing companies advised to allow a three month lead in time before proposed performance dates. Producing companies can ask or are chosen to be part of the programme and, if recommended by the Touring Network staff or ambassadors, are added to the collection. This is a recent change, as Touring Network Ambassadors will replace the ‘go and see’ funds which are currently undersubscribed by promoters.

Producing companies and promoters must work together to have agreed at least a four venue tour before the promoters can apply for a bursary. The bursary will pay £500 to three of those promoters for the purpose of paying performance fees. This encourages the promoters to work together and the producers to be proactive in developing relationships, and encourages *“a two-way conversation between producing artists and promoters, where they work together to make the tour happen”*¹⁴, rather than the Touring Network directly programming work. There is also a bulk of work programmed by promoters that doesn’t come through the Supported Programme.

The Supported Programme is curated by staff, through networks like National Rural Touring Forum and Theatre in Schools Scotland who have their own programmes of work, and by the local promoters who can recommend work or be part of the new ambassador scheme.

Each spring the Touring Network hosts a showcase and promoter’s gathering, allowing promoters and performers to network, develop skills and showcase work. Producers apply to be part of the showcase with tour-ready work. About 75% of showcased productions go on to tour in the Highlands having made those connections and built, or started, relationships. They can also use the online Tourbook system to upload their details and be contacted by promoters.¹⁵

The Touring Network’s main tool for connecting promoters and producers is Tourbook (www.tourbook.org.uk) an online directory of productions available and venue contact information, uploaded by touring companies and promoters.

They are currently supported with Regular Funding by Creative Scotland, and raise additional funds through fundraising and earned income.

¹³<https://thetouringnetwork.typeform.com/to/Rjmc3c> information for performers applying to take part in Showcase at the Spring Gathering 2017.

¹⁴Interview with Jo McLean CEO, The Touring Network

¹⁵Interview with Jo McLean CEO, The Touring Network.

4.1.2 North East Arts Touring

North East Arts Touring (NEAT) support voluntary local promoters in the North East of Scotland – Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus, “*promoting high quality and professionally produced theatre, dance and film productions*”¹⁶so rural communities can have access to performances without having to travel great distances.

¹⁶<http://neatshows.co.uk/>

They offer development and support to the volunteer local promoters through:

- An annual promoter day with a theme e.g. 2016 was ‘creating better disabled access’
- A Go & See fund so that promoters can experience work at other NEAT or non-NEAT venues
- Conference and festival bursaries e.g. Edinburgh Festival Fringe, NRTF, Imagine, etc,
- Training opportunities e.g. First Aid, Food Hygiene, Social Media
- Annual one-to-one meetings
- A Promoter Pack.

Twice a year NEAT curate a Supported Touring Scheme of about 30 productions and offer them to their volunteer promoters who choose what they’d like to programme in local halls and small spaces.

- Productions respond to an open submission system.
- The deadline for producers to propose productions is about 7-8 months before the tour (Feb deadline for Sept-Dec tour).
- NEAT does the deal with the producing companies and books a tour for them based on which venues want to take their show.
- Venues are usually supported to take about 4 performances within the scheme, budgets allowing.
- The performing companies are paid their fee per performance by NEAT who then take a split from the box office takings. This split is variable and becomes more favourable for the promoter the more tickets are sold, thus incentivising ticket sales.
- NEAT support marketing through newsletters, websites and social media, and produce overprint stickers for the producer supplied posters.
- The supported touring scheme is curated by NEAT staff, with an open call to producing companies.

Adding value to the night out

NEAT are working with Woodend Barn on 'Curious', a system of programming intended to bulk out shorter performance lengths. They create nights out worth travelling for, that include elements such as food and artist conversations around pieces of contemporary theatre, music or dance. *"Break bread with like-minded individuals, see something new and join in conversation with the artists."*¹⁷

Young Promoters Scheme

They also run a Young Promoters Scheme in partnership with Aberdeen International Youth Festival. It's aimed at young people between the ages of 14-25 years interested in programming and promoting events across the North East of Scotland.

NEAT currently receives Regular Funding from Creative Scotland, and some from Aberdeenshire Council, as well as activity specific support.¹⁸

4.1.3 Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival

Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival brings the performing arts to the region, engaging with artists and venue managers to create and stage performances which are *"vibrant, surprising and far-reaching"*¹⁹.

In 2016 they started coordinating tours across the region throughout the year, curated by Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival staff, outside of the main Festival activity. Their main aim is to bring *"high quality professional productions into the area"*.²⁰ They use their own networks and Federation of Scottish Theatre (FST) Emporium opportunities to select work, although they are considering open call-outs in future. Once work has been identified, they contact suitable venues and offer to create a short tour. They contract the producing company, pay the performance fees and then take a split of box office. This allows venues to take financial risk and to programme more challenging work.

They also run a second scheme, guaranteeing against venue loss. Promoters or venues can apply via an open application form to put on work that is beyond their normal activity, and brings quality professional performances to the region or develops local artists. They support wider genres of work this way, beyond theatre and dance, for instance spoken word and music.

Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival is supported by Creative Scotland through Open Project Funds, and in part by Local Authority and box office income.

¹⁷<http://neatshows.co.uk/curious/>

¹⁸<http://neatshows.co.uk/production-companies/> Interview with Emyr Bell, Executive Director, NEAT

¹⁹<http://www.dgartsfestival.org.uk/about-us/>

²⁰<http://www.dgartsfestival.org.uk/about/2016-touring-opportunities/> Interview with Peter Renwick, Programme Director, Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival

4.1.4 Arts nan Eilean

Arts nan Eilean is a network of local volunteer promoters who are based with rural venues across the Outer Hebrides, to programme professional touring theatre and arts events for their own local audiences.

Selection is made from a wide range of professional performance companies and individual artists who are presenting and touring in Scotland and throughout the UK. Arts nan Eilean tends to focus on theatre, dance, comedy and storytelling. The programme is curated by Arts Nan Eilean staff.

For the producers visiting the Islands, a tour of three or four performances can be achieved among the different venues thus making their Island tour more cost effective. Arts nan Eilean also covers the cost of the artists' ferry journeys, in order to place touring in the Hebrides on a par with touring in the Highlands of Scotland.

The Arts nan Eilean promoters aim to offer *"consistently high quality performances in their venues"*²¹. They select the shows from a menu prepared from data submitted up to 12 months in advance by prospective touring companies. Work is sourced via calls through other National organisations like FST, Dance Base, Conflux, Creu Cymru and National Rural Touring Forum (NRTF).

Participation in the project for promoters is free and they receive 50% of the box office income or a hall hire fee. Arts nan Eilean pay the performers a fee of £500 and take a box office split.

The scheme is project funded through Creative Scotland's Open Project Funding. It did not run in 2016, as Rural Nations were delivering other projects.²²

4.1.4 Borders Live Touring

Borders Live Touring emerged from the collective needs identified by a handful of independent volunteer promoters working with Scottish Borders based community halls and venues. They wanted to bring *"affordable local and national professional companies, producing high quality, inspiring, accessible and creative live theatre and dance to the area."*²³ They could see a gap across the borders when tours were represented on a map. Today, over 35 venues are represented.

The scheme offers:

- Subsidies to reduce financial risk
- Marketing support to market live performances
- Training and networking opportunities both locally and nationally
- A 'go and see' fund for promoters to sample showcasing of productions.

Similar to other schemes, they pay the performance fees to companies and take a split of box office returns. They put together a programme curated by Borders Live Touring staff, to offer promoters based on producing companies approaching them directly or based on work they've seen or found through networks like FST or NRTF.

They are supported to programme work by Creative Scotland Open Funds and match that for staff and other costs through the Arts Development Budget from Live Borders (Cultural Trust).²⁴

²¹<http://www.ruralnations.com/arts-nan-eilean>

²²Email and conversation with Muriel Ann Macleod, Rural Nations, January 2017

²³Interview with Lisa Denham, Arts Development Business Manager, Live Borders, January 2017

²⁴<http://www.liveborders.org.uk/borderslivetouring>

4.1.5 Glasgow Arts Community Touring

In order to meet their priority to provide arts activity for all citizens of Glasgow, Glasgow Life, the Cultural trust for the Glasgow city area, supports a community touring scheme to bring affordable theatre to communities.

They have three Area Art Producers (North East, North West and South Glasgow) who take work and programme it for a number of communities around the city. They pay the performers a set fee, and marketing and promote the shows locally.

They currently have no application process or deadlines. The area arts producers build relationships with artists and seek out work. They also accept unsolicited requests for touring support. When their annual budgets are set, they plan to tour shows that are suitably light on their feet, without heavy tech requirements, which have flex to fit into different spaces and are accessible to new audiences.

They often focus on specific target groups defined within Glasgow Life outcomes, where they feel there is a gap or room for development e.g. children's work, those experiencing mental health issues. The communities visited are usually high on Scotland's Index of Multiple Deprivation, where a lack of opportunity can lead to social, economic and mental health issues.²⁵

They are not supported by Creative Scotland.

4.1.6 On Fife

In 2014/15 On Fife programmed a wide variety of work in their own venues, supported through internal budgets from Fife Cultural Trust and also Creative Scotland funds from the Touring Festivals and Arts Programming Fund. They supported small-scale tours, particularly of children's work, to play multiple dates across Fife. Now they no longer support small-scale work, and only take mid-scale drama and dance into single venues if they think it is suitable for their typical audiences. They no longer programme what they call 'development work', performances which would develop their audiences for particular genres – such as children's performances. This is because they have reduced internal budgets, and have not prioritised Open Fund applications to support the programming of work. The organisation is focused on other priorities, although they do have plans to revisit strategic touring interventions in the future.²⁶

4.1.7 Other showcase and touring opportunities

The Federation of Scottish Theatre hosts a successful annual Emporium across two days. This includes an early dialogue day for productions in the initial stages of development, and a marketplace day for productions ready to tour. Programmers and producers come together to network, buy and sell work, and explore topics relevant to the sector.

Imagine run Theatre in Schools Scotland²⁷ which supports and develops the provision of theatre in Scotland's schools, with the ultimate aim of ensuring that every child in Scotland receives - at their nursery or school - a minimum of one performing arts production per year, as a core part of their education. The first year of the pilot saw two productions tour to primary schools, and year two sees three go out.

Festivals offer an opportunity to present and showcase work. *"They often hold strategic delegate programmes and subvention funding to offer support for work to reach domestic and international markets, examples are: Edinburgh Festival Fringe / Momentum and Made In Scotland programmes, Imagine, Puppet Animation Scotland / Manipulate, and British Dance Edition."*²⁸

²⁵Interview with Mari Binnie, Arts Producer North East, Glasgow Life/Glasgow Arts, December 2016

²⁶Interview with Evan Henderson, programme Manager, ON with Fife Cultural Trust, January 2017

²⁷<http://www.imagine.org.uk/artists/projects/theatre-in-schools-scotland>

²⁸Laura Cameron Lewis, Head of Dance, Creative Scotland, email February 2017

4.2 Conclusions

a) There are established networks in some areas while others have no formal arrangements

A number of touring networks exist outside the Central Belt of Scotland and aim to support local promoters in taking work and coordinating touring across geographical areas; bringing work to audiences which wouldn't otherwise have access and which support producing companies to tour widely.

These are spread across the country: Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival in the South West, Borders Live Touring in the South East, Rural Nations in the Outer Hebrides, North East Arts Touring (NEAT) in the North East, and the Touring Network across the Highlands and Islands. Across the Central Belt (beyond Glasgow Arts Community touring) and in Fife there is no formal support provision.

b) Similarities in the networks

The networks are all quite similar, particularly in their aims to bring work to their locality, and to support local promoters to book more adventurous and diverse programming, by paying some of the artists' fees through supported touring programmes.

This reduces the financial risk to local promoters who are often involved in the selection processes, or are offered a 'menu' of productions to choose from.

c) Variations exist in fee structures and programme models

- **Variable fee structures**

The different touring schemes offer variable fees to the performing companies. Arts nan Eilean offers a fixed fee of £500 plus ferry cost. Touring Network have a fixed contribution of £500 per performance, although the promoter may pay the performers more if they have the resources or box office income. The other schemes are open to negotiation with the performance companies.

Where there is fixed income, it gives the touring companies clear parameters and known income lines to budget with and to build a tour around.

- **Box office sliding scale**

All of the networks recoup some income from the venue box office receipts. NEAT has an interesting sliding scale model, with a more favourable split for the promoter the more tickets that they sell. **This incentivises them to sell more tickets.**

- **Guarantee against loss**

Dumfries and Galloway Art Festival has a unique guarantee against loss for venues scheme. They will underwrite the box office income for a production or event that is outside the venue's normal programme and is particularly risky.

- **Differing timescales**

The timelines to participate in the touring schemes are variable. Touring Network needs a minimum of 3 months, NEAT needs 7/8 months, Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival along with Borders Live Touring accepts ongoing approaches and Arts nan Eilean will take submissions up to 12 months in advance, but generally have a 6-8 month cycle that creates roughly 2 seasons per year.

This balance of long and short lead-in times makes tour booking difficult for producers.

- **Membership fees**

Volunteer promoters pay membership fees to join the Touring Network (annual fee of between £75 and £125), and NEAT (annual membership fee of £60). Dumfries and Galloway charge only the larger venues a £40 fee to join. This gives the bigger venues first call access to book the tours; but there is also a second callout to smaller venues, village halls and volunteer promoters which is free for them to join. Arts nan Eilean and Borders Live Touring are free for local promoters to participate in.

d) Precarity of existing networks

North East Arts Touring and The Touring Network are the most established schemes and deliver opportunities for promoters to develop, and youth promoter schemes alongside the main programme. They are both Regularly Funded Organisations.

The other schemes are funded by Creative Scotland through Open Project Funds and in some cases by local authority support. Some project supported schemes are at risk of discontinuing, not necessarily because of lack of funding opportunities, but where the organisations supporting the local promoters do not prioritise the network activity. They may have other priorities in terms of activity they are delivering.

4.2 Has the touring environment changed?

4.2.1 There is a lack in clarity of priorities and objectives for grant applicants

The Scottish Arts Council Theatre Touring Strategy 2006 - 2011 was a clear working document supporting successful touring in Scotland through priorities and specific objectives.

The overall aims were to improve communication between all areas of the sector; to support producers; to support promoters and venues; and to encourage a larger number and broader range of people to attend and participate in touring theatre. It set out clear strategic aims, objectives and actions in order to support touring and outlined plans for touring talent development (promoters and producers), networks, market days, pilot resource sharing projects. It also planned a specific drama open fund for development, production and touring, and a separate one for arts programming.

It included clear set targets for the drama department to fund a range of styles including a minimum of 20 new works and two classics per year via Open Funds and RFOs. One of its stated purposes was to *“clarify Scottish Arts Council thinking and priorities about touring to the sector”* and to *“act as a communication tool between the Scottish Arts Council and the sector”*.

Following the move to Creative Scotland, touring work was supported through both a Touring Festivals and Arts Programming Fund and the Quality Production Fund. Both were multi art form funds which ran from 2011-2015.

Touring Festivals and Arts Programming supported the touring of existing work encapsulating performances and exhibitions, and encouraged work to tour into areas with more limited cultural provision. Creative Scotland were keen to see applications from producers and promoters working in partnership and prioritised work that toured to an appropriate number of venues across the widest geographical area.

The fund looked for:

- Strong artistic quality and high production values
- Strong evidence of positive reviews and good audience feedback
- Evidence of demand from presenting venues and effective partnership working in terms of financial commitment and support
- A commitment to reaching new audiences
- Evidence of previous successful project management
- Value for money and cost effective budgeting.

In 2015, Creative Scotland replaced these funds with an Open Project Fund which supports all artforms and types of work. This fund does not have specific priorities for touring.

It could be the case that the sector does not want fixed priorities and strategies. In late 2013 /early 2014 there was an opportunity for the sector to use the winding down of Strategic Commissioning Funds to support a strategic touring fund for theatre and dance. This was offered to a group of around 14 of the main touring venues, with requests that they formulate plans that would best suit their needs. There was a very low response rate of suggestions from the sector and Creative Scotland did not proceed.³¹

4.2.2 Work is unavailable outside of seasonal bottlenecks

Among the conclusions of the Review of the Theatre Sector in Scotland for Creative Scotland, by Christine Hamilton Consulting 2012, are many issues are still prevalent.

At the time, *“audiences [were] not getting access to good quality theatre because it [was] not available for booking”* and there was a *“Feast or Famine”* in terms of availability of good quality drama³² – therefore it was difficult to build audiences.

4.2.3 Lack of mainstream work

The lack of mainstream work to tour is an ongoing issue. Alongside Hamilton, John Stalker’s Commercial Theatre Report of 2012 also noted a *“lack of Scottish work at mid scale”, and a “lack of Scottish work at large scale”*³³. The story is similar south of the border, with BOP Consulting and Graham Devlin Associates noting in 2016 a *“perceived dearth of touring work that is of high quality and has the popular appeal to attract audiences in sufficient numbers.”*³⁴

4.2.4 Balance of financial risk on producers

The cost of touring and negotiations around fees and box office splits remain a constant concern – Hamilton reports that *“Guarantees have all but disappeared ... box office split is the norm”* and that *“Touring just is expensive”*³⁵, which are all still issues for the touring sector.

In Creative Scotland’s Dance Sector Review 2012, this issue is found particularly pressing for dance:

*“Programmers in Scotland are tremendously aware that dance can enthral audiences, communicate beyond language barriers and cross age barriers. The review process also recognised that the appetite to programme dance is somewhat constrained by several challenges. Programmers raised concerns that dance can be expensive, can feel risky for their audiences, and that there is little work coming through which can tour easily to small-scale and rural venues. Conversely, for the companies, venues can seem risk adverse and inconsistent in programming dance.”*³⁶

³¹Email conversation with Lorna Duguid, January 2017

³²Review of the Theatre Sector in Scotland for Creative Scotland, Christine Hamilton Consulting, 2012, 51, 54

³³Commercial Theatre Report, John Stalker, 2012, pg22, 26,

³⁴Arts Council England Analysis of Theatre in England, BOP Consulting and Graham Devlin Associates, 2016, pg 33

³⁵Review of the Theatre Sector in Scotland for Creative Scotland, Christine Hamilton Consulting, 2012, 57

4.2.5 Development of touring networks

Since 2012 there has been some progress in the development of touring networks. At the time Hamilton pointed out good practice in NEAT and PAN (since replaced by the Touring Network), where both had good knowledge of their promoters, venues and audiences³⁷, there was a recommendation that similar schemes be established in Dumfries and Galloway and in the Borders.

In 2017, there are now schemes run by Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and Borders Live Touring, as well as Arts nan Eilean in the Outer Hebrides, which was established in 2012. All work along similar lines to underwrite risk and support local promoters to bring performance to the area. All are project funded bar the Touring Network and NEAT who have RFO status³⁸. While Creative Scotland supports touring networks and promoter schemes across the country, those networks are at risk where they rely on voluntary promoters or coordinators to regularly apply for funds to continue.

4.2.6 Reductions in support from Local Authorities

Despite some individual authorities' committed support, between 2010/11 and 2014, overall spending by Local Authorities on "other cultural and heritage services" (which includes Archives, Arts Development and Support, Heritage and Theatres and Public Entertainment) had a 20% reduction.³⁹

This leaves the cultural trusts tasked with delivering provision with reduced budgets which affects their ability to programme work.

³⁶Review of Dance in Scotland for Creative Scotland, Anita Clark, 2012, pg 45

³⁷Review of the Theatre Sector in Scotland for Creative Scotland, Christine Hamilton Consulting, 2012, 58.

³⁸<http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/latest-information/funded-organisations/regularly-funded-organisations-2015-18/the-portfolio>

³⁹EKOS, Culture and Leisure Services in Scottish Local Authorities, February 2014, page 6

4.2.7 Conclusions

While there have been some significant changes to the touring sector, many of the issues in the literature available are still pressing.

a) Funding

There have been significant changes in the landscape in recent years in Scotland. These include the move away from artform specific funding, and the subsequent move away from touring specific support. This removed specific guidelines regarding funding priorities and objectives for touring work for grant applicants to refer to.

When compared to Scottish Art's Council's touring strategy, the current information guidelines available from Creative Scotland are minimal and not specific to touring.

There was an offer of a strategic touring fund in early 2013, suggested by Creative Scotland, but it was not progressed by the sector.

b) Local Authorities

There has been a 20% reduction in Local Authority support for Cultural and Heritage Services between 2011 and 2014. This reduction in support has had a huge impact on local authority venues and their ability to programme touring productions.

c) Cycles of work remain difficult for programmers

There appears to have been little progress in the way touring happens and many of the issues facing dance and theatre touring raised in the Review of the Theatre Sector in 2012 remain constant. These include the seasonal bottlenecks of work and the feast or famine cycle of availability.

d) Balance of risk is still a concern

Based on the literature there is little evidence of change in the balance of risk between producer and promoter. Both the Dance and Theatre Sector reviews commissioned by Creative Scotland in 2012 highlighted the issue, typified in a perceived decrease in guaranteed fees for productions and more box office split arrangements.

e) New networks of support are available

There have been new organisations welcomed to the network of supporting agencies with the addition of Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival, Glasgow Arts Community Touring and Borders Live Touring to the touring networks. These are expanding the provision of help for local promoters who want to bring shows to their area, and also support touring companies keen to get their work out to audiences.

4.3 Are there opportunities in new models of working?**4.3.1 Opportunities for subsidised and commercial theatre to work together**

John Stalker's Commercial Theatre Report 2012 laments the money spent by venues and audiences going to producers outside of Scotland, rather than to product that could successfully be made here. He suggests ways in which commercial and subsidised theatres could work together to raise capital and find investment. His recommendations include:

- A range of capacity building programmes to develop skills, training opportunities and relationships between Scottish Theatre practitioners and commercial theatre
- That Scotland engage with Stage One and the Theatre Development Trust to host interns from the subsidised sector in commercial organisations
- That the Made in Scotland programme have opportunities to develop commercially added to it;
- That an investors' club is created
- That an investment fund be created, linked to capacity building schemes, to test commercial theatre operations in Scotland.⁴⁰

BOP and Devlin and Dix refer to some perceived growth of commercial and subsidised theatre organisations working together in England, with some companies enjoying lucrative runs in the West End, Broadway and elsewhere.⁴¹ It's a model that has seen some success, but there is no published evidence of these models being tested in touring in Scotland, outside of anecdotal accounts from The National Theatre of Scotland.

4.3.2 Opportunities for other financial models

Graham Devlin and Alan Dix's 'Theatre Touring in the 21st Century – An Exploration of New Financial Models, 2015' looked at financial models for supporting touring and made suggestions that are all possibilities in Scotland, such as:

- Loans to support cash flow
- An agency investing for profit and reinvestment
- Borrowing from endowments or reserves where repayment is guaranteed
- The use of Theatre Tax Relief, which at the time was untested.⁴²

Theatre Tax Relief was introduced in September 2014, with £25m paid back into the theatre sector in 2015-16⁴³. Touring theatre productions can claim back 25% of qualifying production costs.

Stalker examines investment models of funding theatre touring in Scotland, recommending an Investment Club to deliver a ladder of opportunity to encourage investors. It also advocates the creation of an EIS (Enterprise Investment Scheme) investment fund, based in Scotland. These models are more common across other creative industries and are also being tested in other sectors.⁴⁴

4.3.3 Consortium working

Devlin and Dix recommended the consortia model as a possible course of action. These were seen to *“offer considerable benefits to their members through cost sharing, amplifying marketing opportunities and critically creating potentially significant finance for commissioning or investment. Audience development is built into many consortium models and there is considerable capacity building potential for new or up-scaled entrants to the production process. Risk is shared amongst the consortium members allowing for investment in more adventurous or imaginative productions.”*⁴⁵

Devlin and Dix noted the practical difficulty for Arts Council England in funding a body (touring consortium) with no office or employees to generate monitoring reports and documentation necessary for NPO status. The Dance Consortium now has an Executive Director, who can answer to some of these concerns.

This framework of support may be necessary to maintain consortia. Stalker refers to a Scottish Theatre Consortium, which was a collaboration between large scale venues in Scotland to co-produce and programme work. Despite some encouragement from the Scottish Arts Council, it never had a formal framework and has dissolved.

Battersea Arts Centre's Collaborative Touring Network, Farnham Maltings house and others are explored in the next section as examples of good touring practice with consortia working.

4.3.4 Charitable trusts are funding touring consortia

There are opportunities to look outside public funding for financial support for strategic touring initiatives.

Looking across the UK at how tours are supported, there are opportunities to source additional external funds to address lack of provision or access to arts activity. Where there is a lack of local provision, a case can be made to charitable trusts to address this deprivation. The Farnham Maltings Greenhouse Programme and Battersea Arts Centre's Collaborative Touring Network both receive substantial support from trusts.

⁴⁰Commercial Theatre Report, John Stalker, 2012, pgs 8, 36-38

⁴¹Arts Council England Analysis of Theatre in England, BOP Consulting and Graham Devlin Associates, 2016, pg 33, pg 37

⁴²Theatre Touring in the 21st Century – An Exploration of New Financial Models, Graham Devlin and Alan Dix, 2015, pg 16-18

⁴³Snow, Georgia, The Stage, January 2016, <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2016/theatre-tax-relief-pays-back-25m-in-first-year/>

⁴⁴Commercial Theatre Report, John Stalker, 2012, pgs 38-39

⁴⁵Theatre Touring in the 21st Century – An Exploration of New Financial Models, Graham Devlin and Alan Dix 2015, pg 18

4.3.5 Conclusions

There appears to be scope for new models of working that move away from a reliance public funding.

- a) There are opportunities for subsidised and commercial theatre to work together, with models based on return on investment, and further exploitation of successful work. It may be possible to get commercial producers to take on the second life touring of work where a production has shown box office success; or to invest up front in the original production of work with a view to lucrative West End or large-scale touring transfers.
- b) There could be opportunities to explore new financial models such as loans and borrowing. There may be scope to release funds through loans to support cash flow, where the income can be guaranteed to follow. Loans are used in other creative industries in Scotland.
- c) Consortium working models are a positive way of working collectively. Consortia allow organisations to come together to pool their resources and share the risk of touring. They can build around a shared scale of operation, or around a shared interest in the genre they are working in. They can attract international or interesting work through a critical mass of dates or through a geographical cluster of dates.

They also can work together to mutually benefit marketing, technical and outreach departments with shared collateral and resources.

- d) Support from charitable trusts should be explored. In the UK, Charitable Trusts are supporting touring consortia and networks in order to address issues of social inequality and strategically reach audiences who have a lack of provision in their local area.

Examples of good practice

5.1 Touring consortia

5.1.1 Widening access and better engagement through residencies

Collaborative Touring Network – England ⁴⁶This is a partnership between Battersea Arts Centre and eight national partners with producing teams based in in Hull, Darlington, Gloucester, Thanet, Torbay, Wigan, Peterborough and Medway. They create two festivals each year in each place, taking shows into unusual venues - parks, community centres, boxing gyms and nightclubs.

It was set up to address low levels of cultural engagement and to ensure *“everyone has inspiring art and culture on their doorstep”*⁴⁷.

Battersea Arts Centre creates a longlist of producing companies, and the partners choose three to be part of the programme. Those chosen companies tour to the festivals between September and November, spend a week in residence in each community, engage local audiences and deliver workshops before performing. This makes up about 30% of the festival. The partners also get funding from the Network to programme other work and to develop local artists to create the rest of the festival.

*“It works because it develops art in new places, it is driven by the local area producers, often they are in places without any Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations (NPO) present.”*⁴⁸

The Network offers opportunities for artists to tour, but “it’s really about addressing the lack of arts provision in the places”⁴⁹. Success is measured in the growing level of independence in the local areas. Four of the eight partners are making NPO applications, some are getting local council support or setting up culture boards where previously there was none which demonstrates a shift in thinking at local level.

The scheme is not as self-sustaining as originally hoped, as the income from ticket sales is less than anticipated. It requires significant subsidy in order to be maintained. It is currently supported by Arts Council England Strategic Touring Fund, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and Garfield Weston Foundation.⁵⁰

5.1.2 Working together to build audiences, underwriting financial risk for venues

House – South East and East England

House supports venues by *“improving the range, quality and scale of theatre presented across South East and Eastern England, and exists to build the audience for contemporary theatre across the region.”*⁵¹ It addresses the need to build audiences in the South East of England, particularly outside of London.

House is delivered by Farnham Maltings, supported by Arts Council England, and steered by a group of regional programmers and producers comprising eight venues.

They curate and underwrite a varied tour programme of around 20 contemporary theatre productions each year for the network of over 140 venues. This programming is informed by the steering group, venue network and their audiences, and is supported with marketing and publicity strategies that sit alongside their audience development strands. Venues across the network have a commitment to developing the audiences that these strands highlight: All the Family, Something Different (contemporary/challenging work), A Night Out (Classic texts) and Young Imaginations (0-6yrs).

The House tour:

- Books out a period of time from the touring company and books the tour for them
- Pays the producer's show fees
- Takes a box office split
- Underwrites financial risk
- Allows venues to take programming risks to find new audiences. One venue which had not programmed work for children, now has a young audiences strand
- Supports the touring companies with marketing expertise
- Allows for marketing experiments. They can try out new approaches and share across their network, the successful and not so successful practice with honesty and reflection.

They also host regular training and networking opportunities and broker conversations between companies and venues. The overarching aim is that those companies and venues develop relationships of their own, audiences develop confidence in the venues and ultimately the touring systems become sustainable enough to no longer need house to continue.⁵²

Farnham Maltings also run www.tour-finder.org a digital resource for the professional theatre sector and a platform where producers can list their available productions for promoters and venues to browse and book dates across England. It's a free service where tours post their information and promoters can browse work available based on genre, location or dates.

5.1.3 Dance – embedding practice throughout member organisations

Dance Consortium is a group of 17 large theatres located across the UK, formed in 2000, it is an example of large theatres working together to amplify their buying power.

The theatres work together to find international dance companies and productions to bring to the UK that will “excite, challenge, entertain and inspire” their audiences. They look for work that has “artistic, audience development, learning and diversity” opportunities.⁵³

Members are based all over the British Isles, including the Grand Opera House Belfast, Birmingham Hippodrome, Brighton Dome, Wales Millennium Centre Cardiff, Bord Gáis Energy Theatre, Dublin, Curve Theatre Leicester and Sadler's Wells London.

In Scotland, Festival Theatre Edinburgh are members and Eden Court Theatre, Inverness have been guest members sporadically since 2004. This enables Eden Court to take occasional pieces of work which they otherwise couldn't access or attract to Inverness, with subsidised fees. Technical staff benefit from shared technical information and visits to see the work earlier in the tour. Marketing staff also benefit from seeing the work early, sharing resources and good practice across the consortium, and access to the whole tour's sales figures each week so they can compare to other venues to see what marketing activity is having an impact.⁵⁴

The Dance Consortium meets regularly to select and discuss work, and sends directors to see potential productions for inclusion in the programme.

Additionally, they build capacity skills and expertise in their own organisations. The marketing departments get together to share briefings each season. Their Technical Directors gather once a year to discuss the work, and the Education departments also gather with other touring networks to discuss practice.⁵⁵

The Dance Consortium is supported by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation, and by the members' fees.

⁴⁶www.bac.org.uk/content/42851/create_with_us/collaborative_touring_network/collaborative_touring_network

⁴⁷Interview with Rosie Scudder, Producer (Touring), Battersea Arts Centre

⁴⁸Interview with Rosie Scudder, Producer (Touring), Battersea Arts Centre

⁴⁹Interview with Rosie Scudder, Producer (Touring), Battersea Arts Centre

⁵⁰Interview with Rosie Scudder, Producer (Touring), Battersea Arts Centre

⁵¹<http://housetheatre.org.uk/about/>

⁵²<http://housetheatre.org.uk/about/> Interview with Katie Williams, General Manager, House, January 2017

⁵³Interview with Ross Robyn, Executive Director, Dance Consortium, January 2017

⁵⁴ Interview with Colin Marr, Chief Executive, Eden Court, February 2017

⁵⁵Interview with Ross Robyn, Executive Director, Dance Consortium, January 2017

5.2 Strategically funded touring initiatives

5.2.1 Consortia working for theatre for young audiences with strategic support

Theatre Hullabaloo, North East England

Theatre Hullabaloo make, tour and promote theatre for young audiences, and produce the successful Take Off Festival.

They have just completed a three-year programme to lead a consortium of venues in North East England in their programming of theatre for young audiences. This work was supported by Arts Council England's strategic touring funds to raise the quality and profile of theatre for children and young people in the region. Hullabaloo realised a need to:

- Cultivate joined up audience development in the region
- Extend tours for shows that were just playing one venue in the region
- Address a lack of coherency in the offer to families, where a venue might only programme something for them once a year.

They brought together a group of seven venues, who were not regularly booking work for young audiences. Venues were of mixed sizes, one was a National Portfolio Organisation and the rest were Local Authority venues.

The Consortium met every quarter to discuss programmes of work, were given marketing and audience development support to identify audiences new to each venue. They worked with a marketing specialist to identify simple ways to improve the audience and visitor experience, and re-examine the language in brochures and publicity.

For tours, they joined up the offer for touring companies and made it more attractive and cost effective, with multiple dates in NE England. They also had training to develop programming skills, by sending 2 staff members from each venue to see work together and to discuss quality, and by attending festivals and showcases like Imagine in Scotland.

Theatre Hullabaloo hosted training days for whole staff teams to think about the audience journey for families, so the focus wasn't just on the programme and included the whole visit to their venue. They also encouraged the network to offer complimentary tickets to colleagues in other venues to see work and sent public e-newsletters to the consortium network.

Over the course of the project the make-up of the venues changed, Local Authority cuts meant that two of the original group closed down, and had to be replaced. In some venues, programming became the responsibility of one person without internal support, making the network of peers among which to bounce ideas even more invaluable.

Hullabaloo sought out work that suited the target audiences of the venues and presented a menu at quarterly meetings. The venues each had a programming budget to spend, which covered performance fees. A 70% split of the box office takings went back into the consortium, with each venue having a target to hit which required selling 50% of their capacity.

By year 2, Some of the larger venues were making a profit at a 70% split which further supported the consortium.

Additionally, venues could access small amounts of capital investment to improve their audience experience. This was invested in everything from new changing mats and family friendly signage, to evaluation washing lines where children could offer feedback on shows. They worked with a specialist to identify simple ways to improve the visitor experiences.

Outcomes

The venues have a strong network and continue to meet and programme work together. Local Authority venues where typically one individual is required to programme across artforms, now have a support structure in place to bounce ideas and discuss the range of their programme as well as work for young audiences.

A vibrant family offer now exists, although they have found that the ambition and strategic thinking has dropped so there is less volume programmed than at the height of the consortium.⁵⁶

⁵⁶<http://www.theatrehullabaloo.org.uk/takeoff-consortium/> Interview with Miranda Thain, Creative Producer, Theatre Hullabaloo, February 2017

5.2.2 Securing funds to develop dance

Wales Dance Consortium is a development initiative to increase the quality of dance production and presentation in theatres and arts centres across Wales, with over 45 member theatres. They are currently engaged in an extensive, three-year period of development funded by the Arts Council of Wales, focusing on four strategic elements:

- **Dance Buddy**
A programme that places artist-development hand-in-hand with audience-development, this scheme pairs up independent dance artists with a theatre or arts centre in co-mentoring partnership – the ultimate aim being an increase in the quantity and quality of Welsh work available for audiences.
- **Children & families**
Investing in co-productions of Welsh work for children and families, as well as sourcing productions from across the border and beyond.
- **International**
Researching and presenting excellent productions at small and mid-scale from outside Wales and overseas.
- **Marketing & audience development**
Working with Creu Cymru (Development Agency for theatre and arts venues in Wales) members to raise the bar in reaching and engaging with audiences for dance in Wales.⁵⁷

Alongside these four distinct strands, Wales Dance Consortium is also closely connected to the Dance Shorts initiative (<http://www.danceshorts.co.uk/>), which places accessible Wales-made dance in public spaces, and works to connect up with other sector initiatives, such as Coreo Cymru, the Creative Producer for dance in Wales (<https://coreocymru.com/>).

5.2.3 National Rural Touring Forum – strategic Funds to support dance

The National Rural Touring Forum represents a number of mainly rural touring schemes and rural arts development agencies across the whole of the UK. Those schemes aim to help local people promote high quality arts events and experiences in rural and other community venues.

They support promoters and schemes through:

- Online resources and discussion forums
- Networking events
- An annual gathering for showcase/networking (every other year),
- Go and see bursaries
- A small fund for schemes to try things together, programme special interest work like live literature.

They have secured Strategic Touring Funds from Arts Council England to run a Rural Touring Dance Initiative⁵⁸. This addresses the lack of dance programmed by their members by showcasing work, offering bursaries to pay performance fees and offering marketing and audience development support.

5.3 Longer runs and residencies to make touring work

Across the UK and abroad, producers are making work by embedding their practice in local venues through residency programmes. One of the findings of the Review of Dance in Scotland in 2012 was a desire to find new collaborative approaches for venues, producers, dance companies and choreographers to develop audiences for dance, including residencies. *“Interest was also expressed, both from venues and companies, in ‘companies in residence’ and opportunities to build longer-term relationships between dance makers and audiences.”*⁵⁹

5.3.1 New ways of making work to tour with embedded residencies reaching audiences

Greenhouse, Farnham, England

Greenhouse is an initiative to encourage new relationships between theatre makers, audiences and venues in the house network. It’s run by Farnham Maltings and supported with matched funds by Esmée Fairbairn.

They *“support partnerships between theatre makers of different genres and experience and venues of different scales and locations to engage a spectrum of audiences across the region.”*⁶⁰ They have invested seed funds in new ideas, further supported some of those into production, worked with partners to address specific gaps and offered bursaries to independent producers to work with venues.

The scheme is about enabling venues to develop deeper relationships with artists, who go to venues as artists-in-residence, where their work is made locally and then toured more widely. There is a strong emphasis on the venue and the audiences with whom this process enables a dialogue. Greenhouse offer £3000-£8000 to support theatre makers and house network venues to explore new ways of creating theatre together, and to work with potential audiences. Projects are usually selected from open calls. Greenhouse has seeded specific shows, partnered with venues to deliver a series of commissions, and supported 2 producer fellowships.⁶¹

⁵⁷<http://www.creucymru.com/consortia/dance/>

⁵⁸ <http://www.ruraltouring.org/work/rural-touring-dance>

⁵⁹Review of Dance in Scotland for Creative Scotland, 2012, Anita Clark

⁶⁰<http://housetheatre.org.uk/greenhouse/about-greenhouse/>

⁶¹<http://housetheatre.org.uk/greenhouse/about-greenhouse/> Interview with Richard Kingdom, Greenhouse Project Manager

⁶²Fevered Sleep, Future Play Report, pg 8

5.3.2 Exploring new, more sustainable touring models for children’s work, with longer runs

Fevered Sleep – Future Play, England

In 2010 London-based organisation Fevered Sleep undertook research to look at the sustainability of touring high quality productions for young audiences. They wanted to *“test a new touring model for presenting work to children”* and *“advocate for an improved landscape and raised ambition for making and presenting work to children”*⁶².

They toured three productions over four years and worked closely with partner venues to experiment with programming, audience development and marketing, pricing and scheduling and evaluation.

They successfully programmed week long runs, rather than their more usual weekends; working closely with venues to identify potential audiences and have local ambassadors; they had resource packs and offered workshops, in some cases as a stand-alone activity without

participants attending a performance. They also experimented with pricing structures, which had mixed success across different venues.

The programme proved that:

- *“the audience is out there”* for a week long run of shows outside the school holidays with average audience capacity at 81% across all sales *“Its not all in the name”*, that work that isn’t adaptation can be celebrated for its difference working in partnership with venues is key, in both programming ambitiously and audience development. 238% more people saw productions because of week long programming in venues.⁶³

They used the audience data available as *“knowledge is the key to warming up cold spots”*⁶⁴. In terms of pricing, they learned that audiences are often willing to pay a bit more – *“some venues tried a new pricing structure that, when tested, appeared to suggest little price resistance”*⁶⁵ although even with that, the sums may never add up, *“even if we charge a little bit more for children’s shows, the sums will ultimately not add up for small scale touring”*⁶⁶.

When their evaluator tried to carry out some longitudinal research, many important individuals had moved on, and the progressive thinking was held *“individually, not organisationally”*⁶⁷. This movement of people is common across theatre and dance and leaves the sector vulnerable to having to re-invent and re-learn ways of working as individuals move position.

⁶³Fevered Sleep, Future Play Report, pg 31

⁶⁴Fevered Sleep, Future Play Report, pg 38

⁶⁵Fevered Sleep, Future Play Report Pg 61

⁶⁶ Fevered Sleep, Future Play Report, pg 63

⁶⁷Fevered Sleep, Future Play Report, Pg 88

5.4 Methods venues use to approach programming

There is little published about the ways in which programmers in Scotland balance their seasons in terms of genre, style, scale, audience reach and accessibility. All venues and promoters will have systems for balancing their programme to take into consideration the patterns of audience attendance, while trying to develop and retain audiences.

Case study: Macrobert Arts Centre

One practical example that emerged through the Review’s qualitative research was at the Macrobert Arts Centre, where performances are colour coded to represent the mix and balance of art forms and diversity of audiences. This allows an at a glance breakdown of the genres covered, and audiences served, across the season.

Macrobert has a planning matrix that includes external festivals and key calendar events, such as SMHAFF (Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival), Luminare, International Women’s Day; University of Stirling key themes, national events e.g. Year of Homecoming; and key dates for the local authority. They position the programme to these events wherever possible to create thematic hooks that audience can respond to.

Every two weeks they have a programming meeting, which includes wider departments such as creative learning. They examine the spread of work, and within the challenges of performance availability, they can identify gaps and fill them to balance the programme.

These meetings include discussions on their 'Conversation Starter' programming for each season. Conversation Starters are a deliberate programme of mixed work around a central theme, which aim to make performance occupy a more meaningful place in people's lives. They take a central performance and add a cluster of connected events, e.g. live performances, film, creative learning activities, which build a critical mass of happenings and attract audiences. At the programming meetings they identify potential partner organisations that could contribute to and enhance the particular 'conversation' in question.

When looking at new deals with companies, and discussing likely sales and financial outcomes, they can refer to information collected on a retention sheet for each production. This tracks the net gain from each booking, detailing the deal through to tickets sold.

Once the deal has been made by the programming team, marketing colleagues independently set sales targets which the executive director then checks and approves. Box office reports are used to track sales on a daily basis which influences marketing activity especially social media.

In this way the Macrobert Arts Centre can build points of relevance and resonance across its programming with audiences. It can hook them into a thematic proposition that crosses artforms and expands the opportunity to attract new, previously unengaged audiences. It can meet its priorities, find ways of fitting into the lives of people who might buy tickets, and keep the audience in the habit of coming.⁶⁸

5.5 Automated sharing of audience analysis

Audience Agency, England

In 2016 The Audience Agency, a consultancy organisation working to build audiences, launched Show Stats, a new digital service promising to supply touring companies with audience demographic reports from the venues they tour to.

It promises:

- *An easy way for touring companies to request and access analysis of their audiences*
- *An easy way for receiving venues to grant access to audience analytics (and add notes).*⁶⁹

It works for companies who need to collect audience demographic data in order to generate end of project monitoring reports for funders, particularly Arts Council England. Even at the basic non-charged level, Show Stats can generate a free audience report for the touring companies which includes:

- Total tickets issued
- Average Ticket Yield per booker
- Top 10 Postal Districts
- Advanced Booking Times
- % of First Time Attendees to that venue
- Group Size
- Audience Spectrum Breakdown.⁷⁰

All of which supplies audience data to support marketing, identify audience development opportunities, and develop a shared language which will allow clearer marketing conversations between touring companies and venues.

⁶⁸Interview, Julie Ellen, Artistic Director, Macrobert Arts Centre

⁶⁹<http://www.showstats.org/About>

5.6 Conclusion

Across the UK there are examples of successful touring supported by public funding and trusts, pooled resources, deep audience engagement programmes and networked systems of data sharing.

a) Touring consortia

There exist several examples of consortia or networks pooling resources to tour work across specific regions or to targeted audiences.

These include large theatres working together to amplify their buying power; consortia of shared interest such as Theatre Hullabaloo's development of audiences for work for young people. Additionally, these consortia build capacity, skills and expertise in their own organisations. Often the marketing departments get together to share briefings each season. In the case of the UK Theatre Consortium, and NRTF, their technical managers and directors gather periodically to discuss the work; the Education departments gather with other touring networks to discuss practice.

b) Charitable trusts

In the UK, large trusts such as Esmée Fairbairn are supporting touring networks such as Greenhouse and the Collaborative Touring Network to tackle mutual strategic priorities around disadvantage, social justice and lack of access. This benefits touring work by affording opportunities to makers to work closely with communities; and benefits communities by affording them artistic experiences in their locality which they would not otherwise access. These programmes enjoy a clear alignment of values and purpose which is socially impactful, audience focussed, and has a strong socially engaged agenda.

c) Strategic touring funds

The support of strategic funds for touring allows networks, venues and the wider sector to examine gaps in provision and to address these. In England and Wales, there are examples of funds addressing geographical and genre based gaps in provision and access. The dance sector in particular is employing planned strategies to reach audiences.

d) Using longer runs and residencies

To make work to tour creates more meaningful encounters. Developing deeper engagement with locals and longer stays in communities allows companies to create work with specific local context, which has deep relevance, resonates with and attracts new audiences.

e) Very little is shared about the methods venues use to approach programming

There is very little written or shared about the process of putting a season together for venues, leading to a lack of understanding which can disadvantage everyone involved in tour booking conversations.

f) Sharing audience analysis

The Audience Agency's Show Stats system in England is working to address the reporting needs of touring organisations, allowing them to access demographic information about their audiences, and to develop a shared language with the venues. This will contribute to more meaningful conversations about markets and audience development for tours.

International models of working

6.1 Australian calls for slow touring

In Australia there have been calls to change the way work tours to something “longer, slower, deeper” and a real desire to not just visit the places toured to, but to engage with local communities.

“Many artists expressed a strong desire to slow down the pace of touring, to find out more about the place they are visiting and the people who live there, and to share skills and collaborate on creative projects with locals, whether the general public, specific communities or local artists. Similarly, many presenters are beginning to see the staging of finished works as just one part of their program, and attending to it as just one of a number of ways their community can engage with touring art and artists.”⁷¹

This connection between the artist and the local audiences and community has tangible positive results in terms of depth and resonance of the work for the creators and consumers of the touring product. There are also examples of a residency-based model in the UK by Battersea Arts Centre’s Collaborative Touring Model, and Creu Cmyru’s Dance Buddy programme.

6.2 Building an audience for dance through pre-performance community engagement - Australia

Danielle Micich’s 2012 Western Australian tour of the dance work Shiver is one successful example of pre-performance activity. It was a contemporary dance piece toured and produced by Performing Lines WA, and part of an audience engagement strategy devised by Ausdance WA. They used audience engagement as a marketing tool to deliver larger, more interested audiences who had a deep connection with the work. The project was supported by the lead artist’s desire to connect with the local towns and to explore the universal theme of loss.

Annette Carmichael, Region Facilitator at Ausdance WA describes how community engagement aims to:

“empower audiences by essentially saying, your life experiences, you the audience, your story is meaningful to you and it is of great value. It is as valuable as the story or experience being presented on stage and that the two are interdependent because they will meet when you, with your life story, watches a performance that is the fruits of other people’s life stories. The two connect and that connection is personal and unique. And being conscious of that connection can help provide a bridge between you the audience, and a performance that is abstract or contemporary or leaves space for you to construct meaning or experience emotion. We’re talking about contemporary dance”⁷²

The project visited the seven towns and developed networks with existing artists in the communities and employed them to lead activity.

Many venues only take professional touring dance every couple of years. By employing and developing local artists, the project encouraged more regular contemporary performance by inspiring and showcasing local work.

The engagement was not exclusively dance – they could use any artform that linked to the theme of loss. Each community created unique lost notices which were posters on clipboards. People were invited to make representations of their loss – write, draw, collage, sew, anything that fitted on the clipboards. These were displayed online via a Facebook page and in venue foyers and performance entrances.

The communities made films in three towns, which were used as an opener to the show. Curtain-raiser performances elsewhere included a local performance poet and local performer taking their lost notices as a starting point. Participants in curtain raisers had deeper connection to the company through a sense of what happens when you make a show.

Outcomes

The outcomes included:

- Meaningful engagements with the community, who had a deeper experience
- Many audience members stayed on to meet the cast and share stories after each performance
- Venues are now operating similar audience development methods using local artists
- Connections across the region through using social media to share the community artworks and films and to tie that to the tour
- Encouraging the programming of future contemporary dance and performance
- Increased capacity for the 22 regional artists who engaged and developed their local working relationships
- They didn't reach the low venue sales targets set, despite the other successes of the programme and the depth of experience for participants. There hadn't been any contemporary dance programmed for a number of years, which could be seen as a mitigating factor.

6.3 A variety of ways for companies to pitch work

Circuit West's WA Showcase, Western Australia

CircuitWest exists to *“provide an effective and inclusive network that connects members and stakeholders involved in the business of performing arts presenting. We work collaboratively to share information and provide opportunities and services that enable the best possible outcomes from the connection between presenters and artists for the benefit of audiences.”*⁷⁴

CircuitWest connects presenters and performers, to enable discussions and develop work. Hosting a technician's conference and the WA (Western Australia) Showcase.

WA Showcase is an annual event to connect presenters, producers and industry over three days to encourage work to tour around the state of Western Australia and further afield. There are a variety of professional development sessions and pitch opportunities for companies to present their show to delegates:

Hello

A 5-minute slot with no tech that is an update or an introduction to an artist, venue or organisation.

Call me

A 10-minute “pitch” session for experienced companies. This work must be tour ready.

Get together

15-minute slot of moderated conversation about works that are in development, or inexperienced companies who have tour ready work.

More than words

15-minute slot for the performance of an excerpt from a production only.⁷⁵

It's funded by the Department of Culture and the Arts, and Western Australia's Royalties for Regions.

The WA Showcase complements wider, Australia-wide and international showcasing opportunities such as the bi-annual Australian Performing Arts Market⁷⁶, which has strong attendance from overseas presenters; and APACA's (Australian Performing Arts Centres Association) Arts Exchange⁷⁷, which showcases 50 productions from across Australia to an Australia wide network.

⁷¹National Touring Framework – Are We There Yet? Rick Heath and Harley Stumm for the Australia Council for the Arts, 2012 Pg 51

⁷²Annette Carmichael, Regional Facilitator, Ausdance WA, speaking in Shiver—a community engagement case study presented at the 2013 Marketing Summit <http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/slow-touring-longer-slower-deeper>

⁷³Fiona de Garis, Producer, Performing Lines WA, speaking in Shiver—a community engagement case study presented at the 2013 Marketing Summit <http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/slow-touring-longer-slower-deeper>

⁷⁴<http://www.circuitwest.com.au/>

⁷⁵<http://www.showcasewa.com.au/faq/>

⁷⁶<http://www.performingartsmarket.com.au/>

⁷⁷<http://www.apaca.com.au/performing-arts-exchange/>

⁷⁸<http://www.dansnatsverige.se/en/dansnat-sverige/>

6.4 Dancenet Sweden – building audiences for dance by taking it out of the cities

Dancenet Sweden is a national touring and producing organisation consisting of venues and culture administrations in local or regional governance. Their joint mission is to present professional dance performance by emerging, renowned, national and international choreographers and companies, to inspire and engage audiences, and to offer dance outside of big cities. They were set up in 2003 to spread dance beyond the cities, and now have a network of venues, municipalities, counties and regions with 14 partners and 30 venues.

Dancenet show “good dance” and “spread knowledge about dance”⁷⁸. Alongside touring the productions they host public talks, workshops, seminars and other activities, where audiences can talk with and learn from the dancers and choreographers. They host sessions for technical and communications staff and enable partners and venues to continuously learn from each other.

Applications are received either online direct from companies. Companies are nominated by members of the network. There are two seasons per year, with approx. 1 year's lead in time (there is an August 2017 deadline for Autumn 2018 tour). From approx. 100 applications, they will choose 5-7.

These are fully supported tours that encourage full cost recovery for travel etc. included in requested fees. This full cost recovery nature of the fees allows touring productions to plan self-sustaining tours.

The programme is funded by the Swedish Arts Council, with the venue partners supported for those tour costs – fees, travel accommodation etc.

6.5 Touring Network, Denmark – supporting small scale work to rural areas and paying full cost recovery fees

The Touring Network in Denmark takes work out of the cities to rural towns and small venues across Denmark. It concentrates on new and experimental work, as touring of classical and mainstream work is supported separately by the Danish Arts Council.

The network consists of venues and partners across Denmark. You must take two productions to be part of the network, or produce work to put into the system. The Danish Arts Council support 16,000DKR (approx. £1,800) per performance which underwrites the risk for venues' box office returns, particularly smaller venues', where professional guests can be too expensive to buy in.

For producing companies, once picked up by the network, they have a viable tour, where they are requested to ask for fees that cover full cost recovery. This allows the tours to be self-sustaining. Alex Bird from Tortoise in a Nutshell described their 2014-15 tour of Feral as the "most secure tour we'd ever done"⁷⁹.

To get into the network, producers must be nominated by an existing member of the network. They then upload their performance details online to a central website. Their information needs to collect 8 or 9 'likes' from other members. It then goes forward to a market or selling round where the company adds dates of availability, tech information, bits of text and video, and include the fees.

The season runs July to July with one intake of approx. 20 shows, decided in November. Companies need to be ready with materials and have collected their 'likes' in October to get through.

Once producing companies have been selected, they become a member of the network. This lasts for the duration of the performance tour. Only the venues are full members.

One advantage of this co-programming is the ownership the venues feel towards the work they have championed. Alex described "*the strong links between the companies and venues as they became advocates for each other*". Everywhere they went they felt embedded into the venues. It was the case that "*they knew what [Tortoise in a Nutshell] were about.*"⁸⁰

The whole system runs via the internet website, with two or three physical meets each year. There is still a concurrent system of other tours booked through meetings and showcases, but they find that smaller, interesting performers are the ones who get accepted into the network.

It is supported by the Arts Council of Denmark and the level of funding dictates how many performances become available to the network to book.⁸¹

6.6 Conclusion

There are interesting international models of developing relationships with audience, selling shows, getting work out of the cities across a country and supporting work to tour in an economically viable way.

International models

a) Slow touring with local engagement

Australia's call for slow touring and deeper engagement with local communities has led to some successful experiments in audience development. Spending time in a town and working with groups to explore the themes of the performance beforehand really engaged the audience for *Shiver*. While the tour was contemporary dance, the workshops were not exclusively so, focussing on the theme of the work – loss – to create authentic points of resonance between audience and art irrespective of form.

b) Varieties of showcasing and pitching possibilities

There are exciting variations available in the way performances are pitched to venues and promoters, and the stages they are at when those conversations take place. There seems to be a healthy variety and range of opportunities to start those conversations in Western Australia.

c) Joined up dance touring with full recovery fees

Over 10 years, Sweden's Dancenet has successfully taken touring dance out of the cities and spread it right across the regions and towns of Sweden. They promote meetings across all levels of their organisations, including technical staff and marketers to discuss the programmes. They pay full cost recovery fees to the touring companies, which supports economically viable tours.

d) Economically viable touring

Denmark's Touring Network offers a full cost recovery approach to paying producers fees. Once accepted into the curated programme, producers ask for fees that cover all costs, enabling them to tour with confidence that they can afford it.

⁷⁹Interview with Alex Bird, Co-Director, *Tortoise in a Nutshell*, January 2017

⁸⁰Interview with Alex Bird, Co-Director, *Tortoise in a Nutshell*, January 2017

⁸¹Interview, Torben Dahl, Theatre Manager, *Teater Katapult*, January 2017

Bibliography

Arts Council England Analysis of Theatre in England, BOP Consulting and Graham Devlin Associates, 2016

Bell, Emyr, Executive Director NEAT, Notes from conversation 2017, with C Dow January 2017

Binnie, Mari, Arts Producer North East, Glasgow Life/Glasgow Arts, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January

Bird, Alex Co-Director, Tortoise in a Nutshell, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January 2017

Carmichael, Annette, Regional Facilitator, Ausdance WA, speaking in Shiver—a community engagement case study presented at the 2013 Marketing Summit <http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/slow-touring-longer-slower-deeper>

Clark, Anita, Review of Dance in Scotland for Creative Scotland, 2012

Creative Scotland, Arts Strategy 2016-17 <http://www.creativescotland.com/resources/our-publications/plans-and-strategy-documents/arts-strategy-2016-17>

Creative Scotland, Ten Year Plan <http://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/ambitions-and-priorities/ambition-2>

Creative Scotland, Help With Your Application Up To 15K, 2015-16 <http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/open-project-funding>

Dahl, Torben, Theatre Manager, Teater Katapult, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January de Garis, Fiona, Producer, Performing Lines WA, speaking in Shiver—a community engagement case study presented at the 2013 Marketing Summit <http://ausdance.org.au/articles/details/slow-touring-longer-slower-deeper>

Denham, Lisa, Arts Development Business Manager, Live Borders, 2017 notes from conversation with C Dow, January

Devlin, Graham and Dix, Alan, 2015, Theatre Touring in the 21st Century – An Exploration of New Financial Models

Duguid, Lorna, Email conversation, January 2017

EKOS, Culture and Leisure Services in Scottish Local Authorities, February 2014, page 6

Ellen, Julie, Artistic Director, Macrobert Arts Centre, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January 2017

Fevered Sleep, Future Play Report

Guidelines for the Touring, Festivals and Arts Programming Fund, by email via Lorna Duguid, February 2017

Hamilton, Christine, 2012, eview of the Theatre Sector in Scotland for Creative Scotland

Heath, Rick and Stumm, Harley, 2012, National Touring Framework – Are We There Yet? for the Australia Council for the Arts

Henderson, Evan, Programme Manager, ON with Fife Cultural Trust, 2017 Notes from conversation with C Dow, January

<http://artscouncil-ni.org/funding/funding-for-organisations>

<http://housetheatre.org.uk/about/>

<http://housetheatre.org.uk/greenhouse/about-greenhouse/>

<http://neatshows.co.uk/curious/>

<http://neatshows.co.uk/production-companies/>

<http://www.apaca.com.au/performing-arts-exchange/>

<http://www.arts.wales/what-we-do/funding/apply/organisations/organisations-strands/production-organisations>

<http://www.arts.wales/what-we-do/funding/apply/organisations/organisations-strands/programme-support-organisations>

<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/strategic-touring>

<http://www.circuitwest.com.au/>

<http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/open-project-funding>

<http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/latest-information/funded-organisations/regularly-funded-organisations-2015-18/the-portfolio>

<http://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/ambitions-and-priorities>

<http://www.creucymru.com/consortia/dance/>

<http://www.dansnatsverige.se/en/dansnat-sverige/>

<http://www.dgartsfestival.org.uk/about-us/>

<http://www.dgartsfestival.org.uk/about/2016-touring-opportunities/>

<http://www.imagine.org.uk/artists/projects/theatre-in-schools-scotland>

<http://www.performingartsmarket.com.au/>

<http://www.ruralnations.com/arts-nan-eilean>

<http://www.ruraltouring.org/work/rural-touring-dance>

<http://www.showcasewa.com.au/about-1/>

<http://www.showstats.org/About>

<http://www.theatrehullabaloo.org.uk/takeoff-consortium/>

<http://www.thetouringnetwork.com/about/>

<https://thetouringnetwork.typeform.com/to/Rjmc3c> information for performers applying to take part in Showcase at the Spring Gathering 2017.

https://www.bac.org.uk/content/42851/create_with_us/collaborative_touring_network/collaborative_touring_network Battersea Arts Centre

Jackson, Annabel, 2015, Strategic Touring Programme Evaluation

Kingdom, Richard, Greenhouse Project Manager, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January 2017

Laura Cameron-Lewis, Head of Dance, Creative Scotland, email February 2017

Macleod, Muriel Ann, 2017, email and conversation with Claire Dow, January 2017

Made in Scotland Onward International Touring Guidelines - <http://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes/targeted-funding/made-in-scotland>

Marr, Colin, Chief Executive, Eden Court Theatre, 2017, notes from a conversation with Claire Dow February 2017

McLean, Jo, CEO, The Touring Network, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January 2017

Renwick, Peter, Programme Director, Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival, 2017 notes from conversation with C Dow, January 2017

Scudder, Rosie, Producer (Touring), Battersea Arts Centre, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January 2017

Snow, Georgia, The Stage, January 2016, <https://www.thestage.co.uk/news/2016/theatre-tax-relief-pays-back-25m-in-first-year/>

Stalker, John, 2012, Commercial Theatre Report

Thain, Miranda, Creative Producer, Theatre Hullabaloo, notes from conversation with C Dow, February 2017

The Scottish Arts Council Theatre Touring Strategy 2006-11 <http://www.scottisharts.org.uk/resources/publications/Drama/pdf/Theatre%20Touring%20Strategy.pdf>

Touring Forum minutes 21 April 2016 <http://www.scottishtheatre.org/research-resources>

Williams, Katie, General Manager, House, 2017, notes from conversation with C Dow, January 2017