



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL

Ms Fiona Hyslop MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs  
St Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

30 June 2015

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

**PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT, SCOTLAND'S ECONOMIC STRATEGY & STRATEGIC GUIDANCE FOR CREATIVE SCOTLAND 2015-16**

Thank you for your letter dated 23 June giving us guidance for the year 2015-16. I too am pleased with the direction the organisation is taking and look forward to seeing Creative Scotland deliver the next phase of our 10 year plan; Unlocking Potential, Embracing Ambition over the course of the coming years under the leadership of our Chief Executive, Janet Archer.

The Board of Creative Scotland welcomes your continued recognition of the value of culture and the continued prioritisation of the Scottish Government's support for arts and culture. We thank you for maintaining the culture and heritage budgets in the current year and look forward to working with you to continue to make the case for ongoing public and private sector support at a local, national and international level. You will be aware of the growing financial pressures we are facing across our portfolio.

We understand the need to have a clear set of performance measures that account for the cultural, economic, social and educational benefits of all of the work we support across the arts, screen and creative industries. We have developed a new performance framework set against our new 10-year plan. This framework was published as part of our 14-15 Annual Plan and the first report against it will be made later this year.

In the meantime we know that in 2013/14 the organisations that we funded regularly, generated 5.8m attendances and 2m people actively participated in cultural activity through workshops, discussions and other participatory events. Overall they also employed 3,786 members of staff and worked with 4,764 volunteers; undertook youth employment initiatives which supported 265 work placements, 76 apprenticeships or traineeships and 108 internships.

Regularly funded organisations also worked closely with artists and creative practitioners, providing 8,705 employment opportunities and broader support to 7,474 individuals. In total they issued 972 commissions to produce new work and 679 residencies for artists. They also organised 8,397 events supporting artists, artistic and creative development and training, attracting 38,727 participants.

Our 2014-15 Public and Stakeholder Survey has evidenced that 89% of people in Scotland believe that Scotland is a creative nation and 88% believe that public funding for the arts is a good thing. I have noted with interest that this is a significantly higher figure than some other nations.

There are still some challenges to overcome as you have highlighted in your letter. We are working hard with other public sector colleagues to find a way forward for a film studio for Scotland and increase available film funding to support its viability, as well as pave the way for all scales of creative industries to develop and flourish to contribute to domestic and inclusive growth as well as our global reputation.

Overall my first impressions as Creative Scotland's incoming Chair is that cultural life in Scotland is buoyant and lively. The impact and power of the work carried out by individuals and organisations in communities over the whole of Scotland is clear to see across all of the different disciplines we support, the arts, screen and creative industries, many of which are respected and recognised internationally. I have no doubt that collectively this work is making a profound contribution to the Programme for Government and has the potential to contribute even further in many different ways if we can continue to resource it well and protect and strengthen its delivery.

I, the Board, our Senior Team and staff at Creative Scotland look forward to continuing to unlock opportunities for culture to contribute to civic and economic life in Scotland across the rich spectrum of possibilities that exist in our extraordinary nation,

Yours,



Richard Findlay