

## FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

<b>Applicant name:</b>	Photography Workshop (Edinburgh) Limited	
<b>Application Reference number:</b>	G20100103	
<b>Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)</b>	£83,000	£85,075
<b>Officer's recommendation</b>		
<p>Summarise the key points of your assessment and draw out the strengths and weaknesses of the application taken together with any comments you have received from source evidence (portfolio of evidence/ internal / external consultation). Highlight any specific risks</p> <p><i>Note: The amount of information you provide here should be sufficient for the decision maker to reach a decision. As with all previous commentary boxes please do not exceed 250 words</i></p>		
<b>Comments:</b>		
<p>Portfolio is a magazine of excellent quality that is highly regarded nationally and internationally. The relationship with Jerwood keeps the magazine abreast of emerging artists and practice and maintains the magazine's profile with an emerging readership. Portfolio has a well developed understanding of markets and priorities and has built strong relationships with galleries, curators and educational establishments.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respected high quality publication</li> <li>• National and international profile</li> <li>• Strong platform for critical debate and writing around photography</li> <li>• Excellent partnership with Jerwood which helps to establish Portfolio with emerging graduates</li> <li>• Touring Jerwood exhibition helps to build profile further</li> <li>• Recent audience and distribution development that has seen sales rise by 60% in recent years</li> <li>• Strong educational and institutional support and connexions that ensures Portfolio's position as essential reading for those interested in the debates around photography.</li> <li>• Strong artistic director with good reputation for quality and knowledge.</li> <li>• The support for artists/writers and public engagement through publication are of a high quality and address the priorities for Scottish Arts Council well. It is also firmly placed with Visual Art department's priorities of work of national and International significance and support for curatorial and artistic development particularly through the ongoing support for writers and artists.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income from sales and subscriptions is important and there is a continuing need to invest in marketing to generate earned income. The withdrawal of Arts Council England funding leaves the organisation vulnerable as it requires adequate staffing to maintain the quality of the publication and to sustain an effective sales /distribution strategy.</li> </ul>		
<b>Officer's overall priority recommendation</b>		<b>HIGH</b>
Lead Officer signature:		Date:31.01.08 Revised: 20.03.08
Print name:	STEPHEN PALMER	

## Stage 2: Heads of Departments prioritise applications with advice from Specialist Advisors

1. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the application identified by the Specialist Advisors? Please summarise their comments below. What were their ratings of the importance of the application in being supported?

### Comments:

The Specialist Advisors panel that considered this application included Alastair Snow, Helen Monaghan, Stephen Beddoe, Kirstie Skinner and Maureen Finn.

Meets Scottish Arts Council, flexible funding and department aims well.

Artistic vision and leadership – High; Advisors recognised the strong commitment to supporting quality and excellence in the plan and noted the track record of the publication in achieving this.

Public engagement – High; Advisors commented on the strong understanding of readership and good achievements in growing sales and subscriptions.

Overall rating – High; Advisors welcomed the clarity of the vision and recognised that the expertise was in place to deliver the proposed plans.

2. Summarise the role of the organisation within the infrastructure of the sector. Assess to what extent the organisation's vision will contribute to the department's and to Scottish Arts Council's aims: (to fulfil artists' potential, to increase participation, to place creativity at the heart of learning)

### Comments:

*Fit with FXO criteria*

*Vision and leadership/role within sector/support to artists*

Portfolio is the only photography journal being produced in Scotland and one of a very few quality publications of its type internationally. The plan demonstrates clarity of vision and purpose and a continuing commitment to excellence.

The magazine is consistently produced to a high standard with strong and informed writing, a knowledgeable selection of artists, and excellent reproduction and design values. For the artists whose work is represented in Portfolio the magazine is an excellent platform for the promotion of their work. The magazine is also an effective tool for curatorial research, and supports tutors and students of photography.

*Engagement with the public/support for increasing participation/learning*

Portfolio has a good readership across the UK and internationally. The plan has established clear goals for maintaining and widening the subscriptions base and retail/ advertising sales. A key concern is to reach institutions that can support the widest possible readership – such as public, University and college libraries. The website is a valuable resource that could be developed further.

*Good practice in governance and management*

The Board has the skills and expertise to support the magazine's development and the small staff team operates effectively to meet agreed targets.

*Equal Opportunities/widening access*

Portfolio has a clear policy that is implemented across all aspects of the magazine from distribution through to content development/editorial selections.

*Other income of at least 25%*  
Budgets indicate this has been addressed.

*Fit with Departmental priorities*

Through its strong editorial vision and commitment to high production values Portfolio is an important resource that meets the Department's aims: to develop opportunities that support artistic/curatorial development and to encourage the promotion of nationally and internationally significant work.

*Fit with Scottish Arts Council's Aims*

As described above the organisation meets the aims of SAC in supporting artists, increasing participation and furthering opportunities in the arts through education.

3. Based on the lead officer's assessment and the subsequent meeting with Specialist advisors, please rate the application (High, medium, low) summarise your reasons for assessing the application as you have (drawing out the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation and highlighting any specific risks)

**Comments**

*Application Rating:* High, this application meets the FXO criteria very well. This rating reflects the assessment of the Officer and the comments received from the Advisors.

*Strengths of application:* clarity of plan and purpose; evidenced track record in supporting artists at all stages in their career; effective promotion of work that is nationally and internationally significant; sound and effective strategies for sales and distribution.

*Weaknesses of application:* there is a small staff team that is working at capacity to maintain quality and to ensure wide distribution. Without continued investment of staff time in the sales/ subscriptions strategy there is a risk that circulation and readership will be adversely affected.

*Potential risks and suggested development areas:* with the withdrawal of Arts Council England funding there is a risk that quality of the magazine could be compromised.

**Recommended level of support:** £83,000 to maintain quality of production and effective marketing

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

**Comments:**

Portfolio is published in Edinburgh although the magazine's readership and circulation extends across the UK, Europe and North America.

The editorial policy is to promote artists from Scotland, the rest of the UK and elsewhere.

**Head of Department's overall priority recommendation**

**HIGH**

Head of Department's signature:

Date: 15/2/08

Print name:

Amanda Catto

Revised: 26/3/08

<b>Stage 3: Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) make recommendations to Directors (Acting Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive and Co-Directors of Arts)</b>		
1. Summarise the reasons why the final rating has been made.		
<b>Comments:</b> Strong overall fit with FXO criteria. Fund at the level requested. Support of £83,000 annually is proposed.		
<b>Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) priority recommendation</b>		High
Chair of Meeting signature:		Date: 2 April 2008
Print name:	Iain Munro	

<b>Stage 4: Directors make recommendations to Joint Board (strategic fit)</b>		
Record the Directors' recommendation and confirm the suggested level of support. If the recommendation differs from Stage 3, please summarise the reasons why.		
<b>Comments:</b> Agreed with Stage 3 recommendation. Portfolio should work towards self-sustaining viability at the end of FXO funding in 10/11. Award recommended on that basis. Support of £83,000 annually is proposed.		
<b>Directors recommendations to Joint Board</b>		High
Acting Chief Executive signature:	Jim Tough	Date: 10 April 2008

<b>Stage 5: Joint Board's decisions</b>		
Record the Joint Board's recommendation. If the recommendation differs from Stage 4, please summarise the reasons why.		
<b>Comments:</b> The Joint Board accepts the Stage 4 recommendation.		
<b>Joint Board Final Decision</b>		<b>APPROVE</b>
Date: 24 April 2008	If approved for support, enter sum awarded	£83,000

**End of Assessment**