

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

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| Applicant name: | Scottish Community Drama Association | |
| Application Reference number: | G201001076 | |
| Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2) | £75,000 | £75,000 |
| Officer's recommendation | | |
| <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 <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> | | |
| <p>While the majority of the programme for 09-11 represents the standard provision by SCDA over the years, it is the lead officer's view (from knowledge and information within the application/business plan) that the approach is more strategic, relevantly targeted and focused on prioritising quality standards.</p> <p>The new development SCDA proposes represents a further stage of work already achieved. This new strand has a strong focus on raising the artistic opportunities for members through working with a range of experienced professionals on contemporary (as well as traditional) approaches to theatre making. This provides scope for SCDA to achieve their strategy for inclusion.</p> <p>SCDA will be prioritising the development of key sector partnerships to enhance opportunities for their members. The lead officer believes this has scope to improve the profile of SCDA (and its work) within the wider theatre sector. This enhanced position could have the potential to support SCDA in achieving longer term artistic and inclusive goals.</p> <p>SCDA has shown a strong sense of leadership of the amateur/community sector through its aims and strategy for developing participation. The business plan, which is in depth and informed by sector research, can provide SCDA with an appropriate guide and reference point as they move forward.</p> <p>The application demonstrates good business/financial practice and experience in delivering the aims and objectives outlined.</p> <p>The 09-11 programme fits the flexible funding criteria for maximising audience attendance to a high degree. It fits the criteria for work that is artistically driven to a lesser degree however the SCDA aims include raising the standard and range of work available to members.</p> <p>The programme includes youth theatre work which fits with the drama department's stated priority for work for children and teenagers. However, it should be noted that over the last few years SAC Drama Department's strategic interest in supporting SCDA has been mainly focussed on provision of theatre opportunities for older/elderly people (as this appears to be the main route of wide-spread theatre participation for that age group in Scotland).</p> <p>The lead officer has rated this application a HIGH priority for support given that the plans reflect a viable investment in fitting the priorities of flexible funding in the immediate and longer term (in her view). The key question is how it sits in terms of the Drama Department's stated priorities for Children/Young People and Site Specific work.</p> | | |

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| Officer's overall priority recommendation | | HIGH |
| Lead Officer signature: | | Date: 31 January 2008 Revised 20 March 2008 |
| Print name: | Angela Hogg | |

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:

Attendees:

David Taylor, Co-Director of Arts

Specialist Advisors: Stewart Ennis, Tim Licata, David Leddy, Alex Patience, Sandy Maxwell, Stephen Slater, Stephen Stenning and Laura Tyrrell

The Panel identified the following strengths and weaknesses of: SCDA

The SCDA serves a large community of participants. SAC investment has helped to improve artistic standards within the community drama sector. Bridges with the professional theatre world had been developed.

The application made a good case for the role of SCDA in developing skills within the community drama sector.

The application highlighted what they did well. The plan to work with 1 BME company and 1 disabled drama company was welcome. This showed an openness to experiment. The application sets out clearly how the organisation has been 'modernised' over recent years and improving the efficiency of the organisation.

SAs were impressed by the large network of people involved in the artistic activity.

The organisation appeared to be taking steps beyond the range of past activities.

Specialist Advisors overall rating: Medium

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:

SCDA is an umbrella organisation that provides services to the community drama sector including a newsletter, organising national festivals and providing training and other means of support. It therefore contributes to raising standards within the participatory sector and in recent years it has helped the sector engage more with young people and people from underrepresented groups. It also acts as a lobby voice and a link to the professional sector- for example by attending meetings of the Theatre Forum for Scotland.

1. *Fit with FXO criteria:*

1.1 *Excellent artistic vision and leadership; role within sector/support to artists*

SCDA clearly has a significant leadership role in the non-professional sector. In addition it provides

practical support to non professional performers and other participants through providing services and training.

1.2 Improving your engagement with the public

The organisation plans to engage with a wider range of people, including providing services to Gaelic and Scots speakers as well as engaging with BME groups.

1.3 Good practice in the governance and management

The organisation has developed its infrastructure and has an appropriate and effective governance and management structure.

1.4 Practical implementation of your equal opportunities policy; widening access

Plans for 09-11 include prioritising resources available to people who use Gaelic and the Scots Language. In addition the company has been active in extending engagement with disabled people. This includes the Arts Development Manager taking deaf awareness training.

1.5 Raising other income at least 25%

Met.

2. Fit with Departmental priorities

No particular fit with Drama priorities.

Fit within Scottish Arts Council aims

Meets the aim relating to participation extremely well.

Artistic leadership and support to artists is met.

Education aim-partially met.

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

1.1 Application rating

The assessing officer has rated this application as high priority based on the recent developments within the organisation and its increased engagement with issues and people beyond the traditional milieu of amateur drama clubs. SAs also recognised the progress that has been in relation to skills development and making the sector more relevant to a wider group of people. (Rating: medium).

1.2 Reasons for assessing at this rating

I rate the application as high given its considerable impact on increasing engagement. In view of the national impact and the progress in organisational terms and in increasing relevance to contemporary society and theatre practice I would rate this as a high priority for support.

1.3 Strengths of application

The application is very strong on increasing participation - indeed the applicant is one of the key means of engagement for many people in drama in Scotland. There is also a clear commitment to increasing the inclusive nature of the activity.

1.4 Weaknesses of applications

There are no major weaknesses in the application.

1.5 Specific risks associated with the application

No specific risks.

1.6 Development areas identified

Opportunities to profile the amateur sector within the wider theatre sector.

1.7 Recommended level of support

£53,000 per annum.

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

The SCDA members are represented in every local authority area, although the applicant acknowledges that in a few the activity is not as strong as in others. Nevertheless it is clear that the applicant can claim to have influence and impact nationally.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation

HIGH

Head of Department's signature:

Print name:

David Taylor

Date: 15 Feb 2008
25 March 2008

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| Stage 3: Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) make recommendations to Directors (Acting Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive and Co-Directors of Arts) | | |
| 1. Summarise the reasons why the final rating has been made. | | |
| Comments: Strong overall fit with FXO criteria. The amount reflects the competitive funding context. Support of £53,000 annually is proposed. | | |
| Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) priority recommendation | | High |
| Chair of Meeting signature: | | Date: 2 April 2008 |
| Print name: | Iain Munro | |

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| Stage 4: Directors make recommendations to Joint Board (strategic fit) | | |
| Record the Directors' recommendation and confirm the suggested level of support. If the recommendation differs from Stage 3, please summarise the reasons why. | | |
| Comments: Agree with Stage 3 recommendation. Support of £53,000 annually is proposed. | | |
| Directors recommendations to Joint Board | | High |
| Acting Chief Executive signature: | Jim Tough | Date: 10 April 2008 |

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| Stage 5: Joint Board's decisions | | |
| Record the Joint Board's recommendation. If the recommendation differs from Stage 4, please summarise the reasons why. | | |
| Comments: The Joint Board accepts the Stage 4 recommendation. | | |
| Joint Board Final Decision | | APPROVE |
| Date: 24 April 2008 | If approved for support, enter sum awarded | £53,000 |

End of Assessment