

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	ARTIST'S COLLECTIVE GALLERY	
Application Reference number:	G201001047	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£195,000	£200,000
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>Comments: Collective is a key part of the visual arts infrastructure of Scotland and particularly Edinburgh. It is an ambitious and dynamic organisation that supports emerging artists and socially engaged practice. Its focus on professional development for artists and nationally and internationally focused exhibition programme is particularly strong</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent reputation nationally and internationally • Excellent support and exhibiting opportunities for emerging artists through New Work Scotland • Important to the infrastructure of the visual arts sector in Scotland and Edinburgh • Focus on emerging work and practice across disciplines allows it to develop partnerships with wide range of organisations and to be at the forefront of artistic developments • Fulfils SAC priorities and criteria to increase participation in the arts; to support artists in Scotland to fulfil their creative and business potential and to place the arts, culture and creativity at the heart of learning very well. • Firmly placed with Visual Art departments priorities of work of national and International significance and support for curatorial and artistic development • Strong Business Plan with clear targets and methodology along with Audience Development Plan. However, financial implications could put organisation at risk. • Strong professional development for artists • Social engaged work is model of good practice • Strong evidenced commitment to Equalities agenda and model of good practice • Dynamic organisation that makes best use of resources • Interest and success in cross-artform working • Small but committed staff • Strong Board with a wide range of knowledge and contacts which should manage the change in Artistic Director well <p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans to increase staff capacity in order to deliver the Business Plan are dependent on additional funding being achieved. Without new investment it is unlikely the ambitions of the Collective can be fully realised. 		
Officer's overall priority recommendation		HIGH
Lead Officer signature:		Date:31.01.08
Print name:	STEPHEN PALMER	Revised 20 March 2008

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 and Maureen Finn.

The panel commented:

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

Artistic vision and leadership – High; Strong and distinctive voice / curatorial position evident throughout the plan supported by imaginative programme proposals and a commitment to innovation.

Public engagement – High; and viewed as an example of good practice.

Business plan extremely clear with evident ownership from the Board.

Overall rating – High; with potential for some aspects of work to be viewed as an example of best practice

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

The Collective provides important support to artists in Scotland, particularly those at an emerging or developmental point in their practice. It provides valuable opportunities for risk taking and experimentation within a professional framework of support. Support to artists extends beyond the gallery programme through talks and other performance and discussion events. The Collective successfully positions its work within a national /international context.

The plan articulates a clear and confident vision that will support a dynamic approach to programming. There is a strong response to practice and a commitment to innovation. Within the context of other gallery programmes in Edinburgh, and elsewhere in Scotland, the Collective is asserting a distinctive curatorial voice.

Engagement with the public/support for increasing participation/learning

There is a strong and evidenced commitment to engaging with a wide range of people across the programme. There is a strong commitment to quality, both in the process/experience of participation and in the presentation of the final works. The appeal of the Collective's plan and past projects is the degree of imagination and innovation that it brings to this aspect of its work.

Good practice in governance and management

The Board is informed and effective in supporting the staff team. Ownership of the plan rests with the Board at a time when a new Director will be brought in to the organisation. The Board is wholly committed to the strategy and approach that is laid out. The Collective achieves a great deal with a small staff. However, there is a concern that if additional resources cannot be found the team will be stretched beyond capacity.

Equal Opportunities/widening access

The Collective has an active and evidenced commitment to addressing equalities and widening inclusion/ access to its programme and in some aspects its work could be seen as an example of best practice in this area.

Other income of at least 25%

Budgets indicate this has been addressed.

Fit with Departmental priorities

The proposed programme and track record of the organisation meets the Department's aims: to develop opportunities that support curators/artists 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: clear and dynamic plan; organisation has a track record of providing effective and timely support to artists, particularly in the early stages of their career; strong and evidenced commitment to increasing participation and widening inclusion; distinctive curatorial position within Edinburgh and Scotland.

Weaknesses of application: the one weakness identified is that Collective need to build staff capacity in order to deliver the ambitions outlined in the plan and this will require additional Scottish Arts Council funding as the organisation is not in a strong position to diversify its funding base.

Potential risks and suggested development areas: without additional resources there is a risk that Collective will over reach capacity and this could affect the ambition and quality of the planned programme.

The Collective is currently recruiting for a new Director to lead the organisation and this person will

need the full support of the Board to become fully inducted and established in post. There is a risk that without adequate support the Collective will lose some of the momentum it has built up around the new plan.

Recommended level of support: £150,000 to support ambition and development of staff

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

The Collective is based in Edinburgh and audiences are predominantly from Edinburgh and the other Scottish cities (Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen) although the organisation attracts UK and international visitors/ interest.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation

HIGH

Head of Department's signature:

Date: 15/03/08

Print name:

Amanda Catto

Revised: 26/3/08

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 £140,000 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	

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 £140,000 annually is proposed.		
Directors recommendations to Joint Board		High
Acting Chief Executive signature:	Jim Tough	Date: 10 April 2008

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	£140,000

End of Assessment