

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop	
Application Reference number:	G201001037	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£160,000	£160,000
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</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>		
<p>Comments:</p> <p>ESW plays a key role in supporting artists through quality studio provision, equipped sculpture workshops, ongoing professional development for artists, exhibition programme involving partners/external curators and a residency programme. It promotes sculpture and contemporary artistic practice by encouraging excellence, innovation, experimentation and debate and has an excellent audience engagement and educational programme. ESW utilises selected artistic advisors and members' input to guide their aim of supporting artists' creative and business development thus creating a dynamic and artist led ethos. It has proven itself to be a well structured facility and its track record demonstrates an ability to deliver the proposed programme.</p> <p>ESW is currently undertaking a period of significant development and a long term strategy to build a programme of increasing national and international significance has been developed. This includes an ambitious and well planned new building, which will be the first purpose built sculpture facility in the UK (finished by 2009). An application for Capital development funding is currently being assessed by SAC and will significantly affect the future of ESW. The outcome of this is of critical importance to the assessment of this application as the programme outlined is based on the building developments going ahead.</p> <p>An uplift in funding of 33% has been requested which is necessary to deliver the programme suggested and support the transition into the proposed new building. If this rise in funding is not achieved ESW will be extremely overstretched if the building plans go ahead. If the Capital funding is not granted a rethink of the business plan and proposed programme will be necessary.</p>		
Officer's overall priority recommendation		HIGH
Lead Officer signature:		Date:31.01.08
Print name:	Marianne Greated	Revised: 20March 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, Kirstie Skinner and Maureen Finn.

The panel commented:

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

Advisors commented that the business plan could be more focussed and the case for additional funding more clearly made. There is potential to reconsider the model and ways of working for the workshop as it considers and explores the place of sculpture in the 21st century. Advisors commented that the plan suggested that Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop feels under pressure to extend its core programme but it is not wholly clear to what ends.

Artistic leadership and vision – Medium; Advisors noted that there is good organisational leadership but felt the plan lacked strong creative vision and identity. There was a concern that the organisation may not have the skills and capacity to successfully deliver the proposed curated programmes and projects. While the expertise of the Artistic Programming Committee was recognised the Advisors felt there was a need for more rigorous, critical engagement that might be developed within the workshop membership in different ways eg not necessarily through an exhibitions programme.

Public engagement – Medium; Advisors recognised a strong commitment to building participation but expressed further concern about the ability to engage the public through the exhibitions/ events programme. Engaging the membership in critical debate would enable a more rigorous consideration of the opportunities for promotion and dissemination that should be pursued.

Overall rating – Medium; based on the concerns raised about the need to establish a clearer focus/ sense of priority.

In agreeing a medium rating the Advisors identified the following development areas: A more rigorous examination of the art form should be evident and driving the development of quality across the plan. Need to focus on the core purpose and vision and to strengthen the commitment to pursuit of excellence and quality through workshop activity. There is an opportunity to explore alternative models of working established elsewhere. Identification of professional development needs of staff and Board and a plan established to address these.

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

Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop (ESW) has an important role in supporting artists, offering studio provision, access to facilities /expertise and opportunities for professional development. ESW is currently developing its residency and exchange programmes to provide opportunities and create

links nationally and internationally. The organisation aims to support artists at different stages of their career by encouraging excellence, innovation, experimentation and debate.

Engagement with the public/support for increasing participation/learning

Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop is primarily concerned with supporting participation and production by artists that are pursuing a professional practice. It offers a range of opportunities in this regard. The organisation also has an evidenced commitment to encouraging participation from a wider public and has been successful in delivering classes and courses as well as one off projects/ events. Exhibition making is also designed to introduce sculpture to a wider public although the organisation may have to review its capacity/ expertise in order to more effectively fulfil its ambitions in this area.

Good practice in governance and management

The organisation demonstrates strong governance, clear reporting structures and effective management. Given the recent focus on the plans for Capital development there may be professional development needs of staff and Board that should be identified and addressed.

Equal Opportunities/widening access

Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop has a strong and evidenced commitment to ensuring full access and participation in its programme.

Other income of at least 25%

Budgets indicate this has been addressed.

Fit with Departmental priorities

Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop exists primarily as a resource for artists to research and develop new work and therefore meets the Department's aim to: develop opportunities that support artists.

The organisation operates mainly within the City of Edinburgh and in recent years has been focussed on its regional and national role while developing some international projects and partnerships. The organisation is therefore judged to be partially meeting the Department's aim: 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: Medium, this application meets the FXO criteria and one of the Department's priorities. Development needs have been identified.

Strengths of application: plans identify effective strategies to support artists' creative and professional development; track record and future plans demonstrate commitment to increasing public participation; effective Board and management structures.

Weaknesses of application: the plans would benefit from a more rigorous examination of the place of sculptural practice today; plans for exhibition making may require further consideration.

Potential risks and suggested development areas: the organisation plans to embark on a major Capital development which presents risks and challenges; development areas are focussed on the organisation's ability to maintain rigour and quality across its public programming activity.

Recommended level of support: £150,000

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop is a facility based in Edinburgh and its programmes are predominantly focussed within the city.

The organisation has established some strong national and international links.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation

MEDIUM

Head of Department's signature:

Date: 15/02/08

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: Good overall fit with FXO criteria. The amount reflects development areas identified, the competitive funding context and assessment recommendation. Support of £140,000 annually is proposed.		
Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) priority recommendation		Strong Medium
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		Strong Medium
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