

## FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

<b>Applicant name:</b>	Glasgow Cultural Enterprises Ltd	
<b>Application Reference number:</b>	G201001079	
<b>Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)</b>	£150,000	£150,000
<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  <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><b>Strengths</b>            The festival is one of the premier global festivals for traditional and roots music and places Scottish traditional music and musicians on a truly international performing stage.</p> <p>It has been very supportive of artists and pays good fees and encourages creativity and new projects between international and Scottish musicians.</p> <p>The festival has developed a great deal since its inception and has admirable revenue income and impressive and growing audience levels.</p> <p>Programming has been first rate under the direction of Colin Hynd and since 2007 Donald Shaw.</p> <p>The festival has been key in stimulating the current success of traditional music, through its commissioning, especially New Voices; by raising the overall performance standard; by encouraging collaboration (formally and informally eg festival club sessions); it also acts as an annual hub for the musicians.</p> <p>The success of the festival has allowed Showcase Scotland – an international showcase event that encourages the internationalisation of Scottish musicians.</p> <p>The festival is achieving high levels of commercial revenue.</p>		
<p><b>Weaknesses</b>            The business plan is focussed more on the enterprise and tourism benefits of the festival rather than on its artistic programme and its creative credentials.</p> <p>Budgets submitted are headline and not broken down in detail.</p> <p>I have rated the application as a strong MEDIUM priority</p>		
<b>Officer's overall priority recommendation</b>		<b>MEDIUM</b>
Lead Officer signature:		Date: 27/1/08
Print name:	Stuart Thomas	Revised: 20/3/08

## 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?

The panel consisted of Ian Smith, Clare Hewitt, Paul Bream, Murray Buchanan, Marie Fielding, Jim Gaitens, Rachel Nelken, Susan Nickalls, James Taylor

### Comments:

- The panel felt that the standard of the application was not equal to that of the business plan, and a discrepancy was demonstrated between the professionalism of the business plan and the actual application.
- The panel would have liked to see the application being focussed more on specific activities in the Celtic Connections programme, but recognised that the more general application submitted was justified by the high impact this festival has, both in Scotland and internationally.
- The panel were encouraged by the organisation's international connections and artistic aspirations.

The panel rated the importance of the application in being supported as **Medium to High**.

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:

The importance of Celtic Connections to Scotland is now undoubtedly significant, both artistically and economically. It sits alongside the EIF and T in the Park as one of the top three events for cultural tourism and music. It is a key event for both the music department and the Scottish Arts Council. It has established itself in 15 years as the largest winter festival in the world and next to the Festival Interceltique in Lorient is the most important festival promoting and celebrating the Celtic Diaspora.

The festival is part of the Glasgow Concert Halls portfolio and also hosts the music department's priority international event; Showcase Scotland where this year over 200 international delegates attended the event with 76 Scottish artists showcasing during the weekend, so again is an absolute priority for the music department's international showcase priority and for the Scottish Arts Council's international exposure for Scottish-based artists.

Celtic Connections also hosted the second TuneUp Conference which immediately preceded the Showcase Scotland weekend and was attended by many of the international delegates alongside the many promoters and producers who now regularly programme TuneUp tours.

The education and outreach programme during Celtic Connections is one of the strengths of the event and that programme engages closely with our YMI strategic objectives and indeed, YMI is a significant partner.

The festival also promotes many community workshops during the three weekends of the event and hosts the Danny Kyle open stage which gives performance opportunities to aspiring young

professionals. Six winners are selected from the performers, who will all be given support slots at the 2009 event, thus demonstrating the best possible practical application of CPD.

The City of Glasgow is the major funding partner with further input from the public and private sector, commercial sponsors and promoters including Scottish Power (until 2009), Scottish Enterprise, EventScotland and the Glasgow Marketing Bureau. BBC Radio Scotland, together with the music department and Hands Up For Trad sponsor and support the BBC Scotland Young Traditional Musician of the Year finals, which are again hosted by Celtic Connections during the Showcase Scotland weekend. Media partners are the Herald/SMG.

Strategically, this event is of the highest priority for the many reasons outlined above.

**1. Fit with FXO criteria:** Fully.

**1.1 Excellent artistic vision and leadership; role within sector/support to artists:** Celtic Connections is now the largest winter festival in the world and at the centre of the event is Showcase Scotland, the music department's key strategic priority for international exposure of Scottish-based artists. Celtic Connections is one of the most significant events in Europe and since the appointment of Donald Shaw as programmer, is growing even higher in stature as one of Scotland's most important cultural tourism events, artistically, creatively and economically.

**1.2 Improving your engagement with the public:** The community and education programme running throughout Celtic Connections and the rest of the year is exemplary and partners our YMI programme effectively. The increasingly wide range of music on show during the event now assures an international audience with a significant percentage from Glasgow and the surrounding area.

**1.3 Good practice in the governance and management:** A strong board for the host organisation (Glasgow Concert Halls) and FTE administration for Celtic Connections.

**1.4 Practical implementation of your equal opportunities policy; widening access:** A comprehensive equal opportunities portfolio and open access policy.

**1.5 Raising other income at least 25%:** Yes.

**2. Fit with Departmental priorities:** Celtic Connections and Showcase Scotland fully meet all departmental priorities.

**3. Fit within Scottish Arts Council aims:** In every regard.

**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:**

As stated above, Celtic Connections is such a key event for this department, not just as a stand-alone event, but also because of the education and outreach programme, its relationship with YMI, the Showcase Scotland weekend, the TuneUp conference, the Danny Kyle open stage and the Young Traditional Musician of the Year Awards-any one of which would individually qualify for our support. Add to that the high media interest (BBC Radio Scotland broadcast live from the event and have their own dedicated community radio station) one can begin to understand why this event stands comparison with the music content of the EIF and T in the Park.

The artistic direction of a guest programmer has worked brilliantly and is directly reflected in ticket

sales, which for 2008 are now confirmed (gross) at £1,045,203 which again is an outstanding result. Donald Shaw is now also confirmed as the programme director for 2009 and negotiations are currently proceeding regarding his involvement for 2010/11 which will directly impact on the business plan, which did not cover 2010/11 but we have received an updated copy which had been held back pending the appointment of an artistic/programme director and was not seen as an issue by the Specialist Advisor's panel in those circumstances.

Both the TuneUp conference and Showcase Scotland were oversubscribed this year, which is very encouraging. The delegates to Showcase Scotland were instructed to book at least two Scottish artists each for their respective festival rosters and touring programmes and this has consistently been the case. The selection of a guest country and/or region has also been very successful, with the western province of Sweden; Västra Götaland providing five professional ensembles for the showcase roster and two young Swedish bands for the Danny Kyle stage. In 2009, Quebec have confirmed that they will be the guest country/region. Norway, Ireland, Iceland and France have all intimated interest for 2010 which demonstrates how important this event is in the international market place for acoustic music.

In terms of creativity and in addition to the education, outreach and workshop input, there are dedicated programmes of new music featuring Scottish artists/composers/performers. The "New Voices" strand of programming allows innovative and often explorative material to be scheduled as part of the core programme. There is also an increasing amount of album launches hosted by the event because of the significant media coverage that attends.

The request for funding may appear high, especially when taking into account the unsurprising success of this festival commercially, in terms of ticket sales, but nonetheless I feel the event merits continuing support, possibly at an amount slightly less than the £150K requested for both years. We would also wish to see Celtic Connections clearly outline where that support would be spent, rather than see the subsidy disappear into a larger budget. The music department is in no doubt that this event is a priority for us and for the Scottish Arts Council and is a high priority for support, albeit at a possibly lower level than that requested. However, to consolidate funding for Showcase Scotland and the TuneUp conference support should be considered at a higher level to maintain these critically important events.

**1.1 Application rating: High**

I have taken into account the assessing officer's comments and those of the Specialist Advisors and rate the application High.

**1.2 Reasons for assessing at this rating:** The strategic importance of this event to the Scottish Arts Council and music department is so significant, especially when aligned to Showcase Scotland. It could only be rated High, in my view.

**1.3 Strengths of application:** See comments above and my commentary.

**1.4 Weaknesses of applications:** The application v the business plan.

**1.5 Specific risks associated with the application:** Maintaining such a high quality programme within budget and continuing to grow the event.

**1.6 Development areas identified:** Try to secure the same high quality of programming for the future..

**1.7 Recommended level of support:** £130,000 both years,

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

**Comments:**

This event has a truly world-wide audience, both in terms of the performers and the audience. The high profile media coverage and the Showcase Scotland weekend also guarantee further coverage and exposure of the highest quality.

**1.1 Where will the activity/programme take place?** Glasgow.

**1.2 Where will the audience come from?** World-wide plus many children and young people will successfully engage in the many education and outreach projects available.

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

**HIGH**

**Head of Department's signature:**

**Date: 15 February 2008**

**Print name:**

**Ian Smith**

**Revised 23 March 2008**

<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. The amount reflects the competitive funding context and assessment recommendation. Support of £120,000 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> Agree with Stage 3 recommendation. Support of £120,000 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	£120,000

**End of Assessment**