

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	Edinburgh Printmakers	
Application Reference number:	G201001024	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£180,050	£182,041
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: EP is an organisation with an important role in the Scottish arts infrastructure. It offers specialist provision and has an excellent track record in supporting artists in the development and production of print. It has grown its audience and participants significantly in recent years and has put structures in place for this to continue.</p> <p>EP fits the FXO priorities well and demonstrates expertise in printmaking, good support to national and international artists and an established programme of professional development for artists and staff. A few select strategic partnerships enable effective sharing of vision, resources, projects and information.</p> <p>At the core of EP is ongoing education within the area of print and the organisation has significantly increased participation in recent years. The programme, aimed at a wide range of visitors, includes practical printmaking, artist talks, gallery discussions, exhibition tours and film screenings.</p> <p>Overall good governance and management is in place and during the course of 06/07 EP underwent a major management and financial review process</p> <p>The Business Plan is thorough and considered with the main issues being the uncertain future relationship with City of Edinburgh Council and the long term future of EP in its current premises. EP is requesting an uplift in funding from SAC (50% and 2%). The main reasons for the rise include increased rent from CEC, participation in national/international art fairs, increase in staffing/staff development and exhibition marketing and curatorial support. EP has recovered from financial deficit in the past but there is a concern that projections for increased income generation/ funding in the plan are overly ambitious.</p>		
Officer's overall priority recommendation		MEDIUM
Lead Officer signature:		Date: 31.01.08
Print name:	Marianne Greated	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, Kirstie Skinner and Maureen Finn.

The panel commented:

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

Advisors commented on the lack of focus in the business plan, and noted the potential to over-reach capacity. It was felt the case for additional funding was not well made, and did not appear to be strategic. Concerns were also expressed about unrealistic projections. Advisors recognised that Edinburgh Printmakers is part of a network of medium specific facilities that could operate as centres of excellence.

Artistic leadership and vision – Medium; In reviewing the plans the Advisors suggested that the organisation needed to focus more on its core purpose and vision, ensuring planned activity builds on EP’s track record in developing excellence and quality in printmaking (particularly at a professional level).

Public engagement – Medium; Advisors recognised the strong commitment to developing methods of public engagement but felt there was a risk of over reaching core capacity. Plans should demonstrate how the organisation can work effectively within available resources.

Overall rating – Medium; with the following development needs:

- A revised business plan to prioritise activity more clearly. Advisors had a sense that the plan has been driven by a need to generate income but that targets were not necessarily realistic/achievable. It may be that additional expertise is required to support a review of the business plan. The plan needs to ensure that the organisation operates as a centre of excellence, with a commitment to innovation and quality evident across programmes and operation..
- Development needs of the Director and other staff should be identified and could be supported by a mentoring programme/ professional exchange. The Board might need to be strengthened and a skills audit would help to identify development needs.

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 Printmakers workshop (EP) supports the development, production, sales and exhibition of printmaking. It is an important resource within the visual arts infrastructure providing access to specialist equipment and expertise to professional artists and to the wider public. The organisation has worked with artists of national/international significance and has plans to develop this area.

Engagement with the public/support for increasing participation/learning

Edinburgh Printmakers 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. However, 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 print to a wider public.

Good practice in governance and management

The organisation has clear management and reporting structures and the Board's time is aligned to support key aspects of the organisation's work. Given the lack of focus in the plan it may be that the Board needs to review the skills and expertise of the membership and develop these through training or by inviting new members to join.

Equal Opportunities/widening access

Edinburgh Printmakers has a strong and evidenced commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity across programmes and operation.

Other income of at least 25%

Budgets indicate this has been addressed.

Fit with Departmental priorities

Edinburgh Printmakers 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.

Through its print programme the organisation has worked with a range of established and emergent artists based in Scotland and elsewhere. The commitment to excellence established and delivered through the print programme has been strong. In addition the exhibitions programme is devised to develop critical engagement with a range of nationally and internationally significant work. While the ambitions of these programmes have been limited by lack of resources the organisation is 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 the Department's priorities although there are areas that could be reconsidered and/or developed further.

Strengths of application: important provision for artists at all stages in their career; strong and evidenced commitment to increasing participation; track record of successfully engaging with nationally and internationally recognised artists;

Weaknesses of application: plan appears to lack focus and there is danger of the organisation attempting to do too much; plans for sales development may not be realistic given resources eg attendance at International Art Fairs is resource heavy and returns may not be that significant; skills of staff and Board will need to be developed to ensure plans are well designed and effectively implemented.

Potential risks and suggested development areas:

The risks attached to the plan are as follows:

Edinburgh Printmakers is anticipating a deficit as a result of increased rent being applied by the City of Edinburgh Council. While an increase in grant from CEC has been offered to offset this increase it is not at a level that fully addresses the resultant funding gap.

Edinburgh Printmakers is in a City of Edinburgh Council owned building and is vulnerable to moves from the City to rationalise its estate. A long term solution to accommodation is identified as a priority within the plan.

Edinburgh Printmakers financial forecasts/ targets for income generation appear unrealistic and the organisation is asking for a 50% increase in funding from Scottish Arts Council which is unlikely in the context of a competitive funding round.

Recommended level of support: £140,000

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

Edinburgh Printmakers supports the work of artists in the City and others based in Scotland and the rest of the UK. It attracts audiences from Edinburgh, the rest of Scotland and the UK as well as key professionals from elsewhere.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation

MEDIUM

Head of Department's signature:

Date: 15/2/08

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:		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