

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	Edinburgh World City of Literature Trust	
Application Reference number:	G21001070	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£90,000	£90,000
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>		
Comments:		
<p>Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature is a unique organisation born of a unique, and permanent designation which has hugely strengthened the standing of Scotland's literature on the world stage, and taken the powerful international dimensions of Scotland's literary culture onto an even higher plane.</p> <p>The application is thorough, detailed and well structured; this reflects the nature and approach of the organisation. EUCL has accomplished a great deal in a comparatively short time. It demonstrates an excellent collaborative approach to project based work. The proposed plans lay out exciting new developments which are clearly aligned with the four key objectives of the organisation: Promotion, Literary Tourism, Participation and Creative Cities. Throughout the programme is a focus on lifelong learning and access to literary excellence.</p> <p>The application has solid plans for evaluation and marketing which include dissemination of information to key partners. The organisation has a progressive approach to equal opportunities, a good support structure for staff which features regular meetings and an excellent, dynamic and diverse Board of Trustees and high-profile Chair. The Board of Trustees has a range of expertise which is beneficial to the organisation when sourcing partners and best practice models for projects.</p> <p>The organisation work in Edinburgh as well as in other areas of Scotland. It also conducts a considerable amount of international work in line with the remit laid down by UNESCO, which requires EUCL to encourage other cities to work towards City of Literature status. The audience / participant figures to date are substantial and the anticipated audience / participant figures continue to be encouraging. There is a robust, joined-up approach to education and outreach activity, and education principles are embedded in all areas of the work carried out by the organisation. EUCL has a good relationship with City of Edinburgh Council, and various departments of the Council have acted as partners on a range of projects to date.</p> <p>EUCL seeks an increase of £20,000 to cover the additional work outlined in the application and business plan (and detailed in section 2 of this assessment). This is a reasonable request and would enable a considerable amount of exciting, cutting-edge activity to take place. The pilot schools project is particularly worthwhile. The organisation will operate at a slight loss of £2,583 this financial year this will be covered using unrestricted resources.</p> <p>The business plan is well structured and demonstrates a clear, creative vision for the organisation and its future programme and role both nationally and internationally. Both the application and business plan are robust and professional.</p>		

EUCL is a pioneering organisation, crucial to the growing, success story of literature in Scotland, which has demonstrated thus far remarkable value for the modest public support it receives.

Officer's overall priority recommendation		HIGH
Lead Officer signature:		Date: 29 th January Revised: 20 March 2008
Print name:	Emma Turnbull	

Stage 2: Heads of Departments prioritise applications with advice from Specialist Advisors	
<p>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?</p>	
<p>The Specialist Advisors panel consisted of Dr Tony Bianchi, former Literature Director, Arts Council of Wales; Clare Malcolm, Director, New Writing North (England); and Alan Riach, Professor of Scottish Literature and Head of Department of Scottish Literature, University of Glasgow.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>The Advisors were strongly impressed by the broad range of partnerships, collaborations, and networking of the programme, and the strong emphasis on provision of information, promotional material, events, and core contribution to education. EUCL was considered to be fulfilling its role as a model for other countries for the promotion of culture through literature nationally and internationally.</p> <p>It was thought that the organisation still required to have clearer focus on whether it should act as a 'delivery' body, or a conduit and focus for enhancing and branding activity which is already taking place. It was agreed that the recently revised staff and governance structure was a positive step which would assist in facilitating this process. The considerable success and very thorough evaluation of the <i>Kidnapped</i> Edinburgh reading campaign were noted as particular strengths of the application, and in general, the small-scale, 'light-touch' nature of the organisation was thought a virtue, as was its considerable value for money.</p> <p>EUCL is rated by the panel as a high priority for support.</p>	
<p>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)</p>	
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature is a unique organisation born of a unique, and permanent, designation which has hugely strengthened the standing of Scotland's literature on the world stage, and taken the powerful international dimensions of Scotland's literary culture onto a higher plane. It has greatly enhanced the already powerful ambassadorial role of Scotland's literature internationally. It is equally an excellent model on the national level for promoting and delivering all of the Department's and SAC's aims in a powerful, coherent, and cross-fertilising fashion.</p> <p>1. Fit with FXO criteria:</p>	

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

Outstanding artistic vision for the profile of literature through a pioneering and flagship project; enhancing and maximising benefits of literature and reading on behalf of the whole sector and Scotland's writers.

1.2 Improving your engagement with the public:

Tailors resources and projects to audience needs, prioritises effective use of new technologies, and targets new audiences imaginatively and coherently (reading campaigns include graphic novel formats, Scots, Gaelic, and other non-book storytelling formats: theatre, film, literary tours).

1.3 Good practice in the governance and management:

Outstanding and high-profile Board of Trustees and Chairman; highly professional and committed staff.

1.4 Practical implementation of your equal opportunities policy; widening access:

The business plan demonstrates a strong developmental and innovative approach to equal opportunities by promoting literature as an activity for all in diverse ways. The organisation aims to make further progress in terms of access, inclusion and integration within the arts.

1.5 Raising other income at least 25%:

Matched funding requirement met.

2. Fit with Departmental priorities:

Strongly meets both priorities:

- *enhanced opportunities for writers, publishers, and readership development in national and international contexts*
- *development of innovative practice to increase access to and promotion of the Scots language*

3. Fit within Scottish Arts Council aims:

Strongly meets all three aims.

4. 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

This is a pioneering organisation and project, crucial to the growing success story of literature in Scotland, which has demonstrated thus far remarkable value for the modest public support it receives, and evidence of ample success in a short space of time. As a logical consequence of its revised staff and governance structure, it is recommended that EUCL clarify the relationship between its function as a delivery body and as a focus for co-ordinating and enhancing the existing activity of its partner agencies.

1.1 Application rating:

I concur with the lead officer and Specialist Advisors and rate this application as a high priority for support.

1.2 Reasons for assessing at this rating:

A pioneering and flagship initiative driven by strong artistic vision and innovation, with public engagement at its core, placing Scottish literature in an international spotlight; wealth of achievement

in short time confirms remarkable value for money.

1.3 Strengths of application:

- Evidence of strong artistic vision and public engagement
- Makes Scotland a world leader
- Flair and commitment of staff and Board
- Willingness to innovate
- Broad range of partnerships and projects
- Strength of alignment with key strategic policy areas
- 'Light-touch' organisational structure

1.4 Weaknesses of applications:

Limited human resources.

1.5 Specific risks associated with the application:

Possible long-term risk in fact that UNESCO designation is permanent

1.6 Development areas identified:

Clarify relationship between 'delivery' remit and strengthening sectoral partnership dynamic.

1.7 Recommended level of support:

To the level requested: £90,000 (Years 1 and 2).

5. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

Although of course 'city-specific', EUCL has had from the outset a powerful role as a 'gateway' for literature in Scotland nationally, and internationally. There is potential for EUCL to enhance its national role by improved sharing of 'good practice' with the rest of the country, and exploring ways of reflecting the past of Scotland's literature in a holistic fashion.

1.1 Where will the activity/programme take place?:

Principally Edinburgh; expansion to other Scottish cities and regions planned.

1.2 Where will the audience come from?:

Principally Edinburgh, but also visitors from the rest of Scotland and the UK, and tourists from abroad.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation

HIGH

Head of Department's signature:

Print name:

Dr Gavin Wallace

Date: 15 Feb 2008

Revised: 25 March 2008

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. Fund at the level requested (averaged over 2 years). Support of £90,000 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 £90,000 annually is proposed.		
Directors recommendations to Joint Board		High
Acting Chief Executive signature:		Date: 10 April 2008
Print name:	Jim Tough	

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	£90,000 annually

End of Assessment