

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	Glasgow Grows Audiences	
Application Reference number:	G201001018	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£100,000	£103,000
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>Strengths:</p> <p>GGA delivers services that are key to SAC's Corporate Plan (2007-09) and to the Audience Development Department's most recently published strategy, and the organisation is focused on long term impact. The application shows that GGA aim to operate at a strategic level, and it effectively evidences demand for their services.</p> <p>The application meets the criteria for the flexible fund: 'for the development and presentation of programmes that aim to maximise audience attendance' to a high level.</p> <p>The business plan demonstrates best practice in a number of areas.</p> <p>GGA's staffing structure and track record in financial and administrative management, points to their ability to successfully deliver this programme.</p> <p>GGA plays an important role in promoting and developing Equal Opportunities.</p> <p>GGA has a strong relationship with its member organisations and encourages collaborative working and sharing of resources</p> <p>The budget is viable and realistic and reflects the programme GGA says it can deliver. It shows an uplift of 18% from 2007/08. This requested increase in funding is explained.</p> <p>The programme does not represent a radical departure from GGA's core work (this could also be considered as a weakness) but the programme does develop the organisation's services and the application represents good value for money overall.</p> <p>The organisation has a strong relationship with the local authority in terms of support and funding. The original setting up of GGA was supported by Glasgow City Council who have provided funding year to year since.</p> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <p>The unaccounted for surpluses in the summary 09/11 budgets should be clarified.</p> <p>GGA could have provided more information re widening access to the arts and how they actively promote equalities.</p>		

Officer's overall priority recommendation		HIGH
Lead Officer signature:		Date: 31 January 2008 Revised: 20 March 2008
Print name:	Janice Kelly	

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 panel consisted of Kirsteen Macdonald, Susan Nickalls, Sita Ramamurthy, Louise Butler, Steve Slater, Alan Riach, Wendy Niblock and Sally Wilson.

The panel comments: the panel agreed that this was a strong application. It was a confident application which strongly described GGA's leadership role in the sector and their focused programme of delivery. There was a lack of specific information about the organisation's impact overall, and an assumption of prior knowledge evidenced in some of the terminology used, for example "test drive style". The panel would have liked more information on the outcomes of the Audience Data Exchange project. Rating: medium

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:

1. Fit with FXO criteria:

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

Glasgow Grows Audiences (GGA) is one of two formal audience development agencies in Scotland. Its sister agency is The Audience Business (TAB). These agencies were set up by arts organisations for arts organisations, as a result of consortia bids to local authority partners in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the Scottish Arts Council.

GGA's confidence and high level networking skills are a particular strength, evidenced in their impressive list of stakeholder relationships and the quality and profile of their external events. Specialist Advisors acknowledged that the agency 'hit the ground running' on its inception in 2004 and noted that it is clearly still in great demand by the sector, having achieved 100% retention of members four years on.

GGA encourages collaboration between organisations as a way of improving efficiency and effectiveness in growing audiences for individual organisations, the Greater Glasgow area, and Scotland as a whole. GGA engages with the majority of Glasgow's key visual and performing arts organisations (28 members), but has worked with many more through networking opportunities provided, projects or consultancy. Organisations across the art forms are encouraged to engage with the organisation and its activities which are of a very high standard within a Scottish and UK context.

UK-wide, GGA is also part of Network (the consortium of audience development agencies). There are around fourteen agencies in the UK, many of them long-standing, regularly funded clients of Arts

Council England. Audiences Wales is supported by the Arts Council of Wales and Audiences Northern Ireland by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Network membership ensures benchmarking against UK standards.

1.2 Improving your engagement with the public

GGA's role is to work with other organisations to improve *their* engagement with the public and are at the forefront of good practice in this area. Their purpose is not to directly engage with the public. As a business-to-business organisation, their engagement with their client base and external stakeholders is high and very visible, particularly their work in the field of digital communications. This section of the application has been well addressed by the applicant, acknowledging their particular role and linking the philosophy of public engagement clearly with their aims and objectives.

1.3 Good practice in the governance and management

GGA currently has a strong board of 8 members chaired by the Chief Executive of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra. The agency exercises good practice governance and the board recently undertook governance development training with Arts & Business.

GGA is a small team, led and managed by a strong and very motivated Director. Senior managers within the organisation are pro-active and lead within their areas of work. The majority of the core staff team has been with the organisation since its inception.

By evidently exercising good practice in these areas, GGA has maintained its position as a credible service provider and strategic partner to its member organisations.

1.4 Practical implementation of your equal opportunities policy; widening access

The Officer comments that GGA could have made more of its role in widening access to the arts and how it actively promotes equalities in its work, as she observes that they are playing an effective role.

1.5 Raising other income at least 25%

The organisation is planning to raise 32% of its own revenue in 2009/10 (medium risk). The balance of Scottish Arts Council and local authority funding is something that will need to be monitored in future.

2. Fit with Departmental priorities

In brief, the audience development agencies are strategic partners; policy delivery bodies and service providers for the Scottish Arts Council.

GGA falls under the aim of the Scottish Arts Council's audience development strategy, to support a Scotland-wide network of regional audience development workers and initiatives, in partnership with local authorities and others. Implementation of most of the other aims of the strategy is highly dependent on them. Consultation is currently ongoing to develop solutions for the North East and East of Scotland. GGA is already pivotal in the development of this network. As stated in their application it is anticipated that they would support any emergent solutions, including possible expansion of remit to ensure broad, sustainable audience development support is available throughout Scotland.

3. Fit within Scottish Arts Council aims

Ultimately, GGA contributes to the Scottish Arts Council's overall aim of increasing participation in the

arts. They do this by supporting arts organisations to achieve their audience development objectives. They specifically focus on audience research, the provision of geographically-specific market intelligence, and on all aspects of organisational and marketing planning, and its implementation. They also support artists and arts organisations in Scotland to fulfil their creative and business potential.

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

1.1 Application rating

a. comparison with Officer and Specialist advisor comments and recommendations

The officer's assessment is very positive and rates the application HIGH, as an arts organisation which has a strategic role in the development of a key policy area (audience development).

The Specialist Advisors raised issues around how effectively GGA was proving its value in terms of impact, despite the retention rate and testimonials provided. The lack of sufficient evidence in this area was seen as a development area and, therefore, specialist Advisors rated the application as MEDIUM.

I would strongly support the officer's recommendation that GGA receives Flexible Funding but as a MEDIUM rating, in recognition of the development areas identified. Because of the strong leadership role they play, as recognised by the Officer and Specialist Advisors, I would recommend a small uplift in funding.

1.2 Reasons for assessing at this rating

The Officer's rating is primarily in relation to GGA's contribution to increasing participation in the arts, through strengthening the capability of arts organisations to build audiences but also the 3-pronged role it plays with and for the Scottish Arts Council. To reiterate, this is as a strategic partner; policy delivery body, and service provider.

A clear case for the uplift in funding from the current project-funded level is not as evident as it could be within the application. Although funding will stabilise some aspects of GGA's operations, the applicant clearly states that this funding is more about sustainability than significant growth.

There is a development area for GGA in evidencing its overall impact (see below).

1.3 Strengths of application

GGA has retained its customer base by 100% since its inception in 2004, and positive testimonials from members are included within the application. This funding would lead directly to improvements in the services to the sector, especially the mainstreaming of the Audience Data Exchange project, a data mining project that gives organisations unprecedented access to audience information for planning, marketing and benchmarking.

I observe clear improvements in evidence-based planning, evaluation and marketing practice in arts organisations as a direct result of GGA's interventions. Projects submitted to the Audience Development fund are improved by input from GGA in terms of visioning and shaping proposals, as well as delivery. GGA has also recently worked at leadership level within key organisations,

influencing Chief Executives towards adopting audience-focused strategies within their long-term planning.

1.4 Weaknesses of application

There are very few weaknesses within the application, other than that a more persuasive case could have been made for an uplift in funding from current Lottery-funded levels, and that more rigorous evaluation of impact will need to be undertaken in future.

1.5 Specific risks associated with the application

No specific, significant risks.

1.6 Development areas identified

Providing evidence of overall impact; balancing local authority investment.

1.7 Recommended level of support

£70,000 per year.

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

1.1 Where will the activity/programme take place?

1.2 Where will the audience come from?

GGA was specifically set up to serve arts organisations in the Greater Glasgow area, as it is established best practice that audience development agencies are specific and local to the 'contexts, organisational needs and priorities within each geographical catchment area' (Network Audience Development Agency Stocktake, August 2006). Organisations outwith the Greater Glasgow area are able to and do access services on a consultancy basis.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation

MEDIUM

Head of Department's signature:

Print name:

FIONA STURGEON

Date: 15 February 2008
Revised: 26 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:
 Good overall fit with FXO criteria. The amount reflects development areas identified, the competitive funding context and assessment recommendation.
 Suggested level of support: £70,000 annually.

Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) priority recommendation	Strong medium
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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.
 Suggested level of support: £70,000 annually.

Directors recommendations to Joint Board	Strong medium
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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
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Date: 24 April 2008	If approved for support, enter sum awarded	£70,000 annually
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End of Assessment