

## FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

<b>Applicant name:</b>	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	
<b>Application Reference number:</b>	G201001074	
<b>Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)</b>	£95,962	£110,337
<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>		
<p><b>Comments:</b>                  Inverleith House has established and seeks to sustain an excellent programme of nationally and internationally significant work from a range of artists. It is a world-class exhibition space and is acclaimed as such by artists, critics and public. It is an important part of the visual arts infrastructure in Edinburgh and Scotland and attracts new audiences through its positioning within RBGE.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internationally acclaimed venue and programme</li> <li>• Important support for Scottish artists</li> <li>• Strength of RBGE as national institution supporting the work and profile of Inverleith House</li> <li>• Commitment to equalities agenda although no developed approach on how this agenda might be taken forward across all activity.</li> <li>• Fulfils SAC and Visual Art priorities well particularly in regard to work of national and international significance.</li> <li>• Ability to attract 'botanic garden' audience</li> <li>• Strong partnerships with a wide range of institutions and organisations nationally and internationally</li> <li>• Restructuring of staff supports the programme to develop and allows specialist knowledge within the team</li> <li>• Audience data provides strong evidence to build on although no clear plan as yet on how this might be developed</li> <li>• Redevelopment of RBGE visitor experience overall through the planned Gateway project</li> <li>• Strong curator/director with excellent contacts</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small staff team, although committed, makes expansion difficult and funding for Education Co-ordinator runs out in March 2009</li> <li>• Business Plan clear but not detailed</li> </ul>		
<b>Officer's overall priority recommendation</b>		<b>HIGH</b>
Lead Officer signature:		Date:31.01.08 Revised 20.3.08
Print name:	STEPHEN PALMER	

## 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.  
Meets Scottish Arts Council, flexible funding and department aims well.

Artistic vision and leadership – High; Advisors recognised the programme and its presentation as being of excellent quality.

Public engagement – Medium; Advisors acknowledged that there is a strong commitment to audience development but identified the need for greater clarity in taking forward plans for mainstreaming socially inclusive programme.

Overall rating – High; Inverleith House presents a high quality programme that is nationally and internationally significant. Advisors welcomed the excellent partnership with the Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh, and would hope that additional funds to staff and infrastructure costs can be met through that institution. This would ensure that Scottish Arts Council funds are directed towards maintaining quality and ambition in the programme.

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*

Located within the Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh, Inverleith House presents an internationally significant programme of exhibitions to an exceptionally high standard. The programme includes major solo shows by nationally and internationally recognised artists and focus shows with artists who are at an emergent/ developmental stage in their career. Through a range of partnerships the gallery has been in a position to show major figures from the established canon and its plans demonstrate further ambition to maintain its position as a leading venue in Scotland and the UK.

The partnership between the Scottish Arts Council and the Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh enables a high quality programme of contemporary art to be originated within a unique context. It is important to maintain partnerships of this nature where a non-arts partner is the majority funder providing solid support to the gallery's infrastructure. This ensures that Scottish Arts Council achieves value for money in directing funds to support ambition and excellence in the programme.

##### *Engagement with the public/support for increasing participation/learning*

The gallery achieves high attendances and good critical coverage. This is achieved by careful selection of exhibitions and by supporting activity such as gallery information sheets, talks and publications.

In addition a more focussed approach to education and outreach is being developed in gallery 3 where themes of inclusion are being explored through an exhibitions and events programme.

The new RBGE Gateway project affords a significant opportunity to profile the work of the gallery more prominently in the Gardens' overall marketing and audience development activity and this could have very positive impacts into the future.

*Good practice in governance and management*

The Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh is accountable to Scottish Government and has robust management and governance structures. Inverleith House is directly accountable to the Board of Trustees and reporting structures are clear. The gallery team operates with a degree of autonomy while benefiting from the support and guidance of colleagues in RBGE specialist departments.

*Equal Opportunities/widening access*

Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh has a well considered and active policy to ensure inclusion and the widening of access for all. Inverleith House has an identified and important role to play in supporting RBGE's high level aims to widen the range of people visiting and engaging with its work. The social inclusion programme developed in Gallery 3 is an example of the work that is being undertaken in this regard and it will be important to see this developed into the future.

*Other income of at least 25%*

Budgets indicate this has been addressed.

*Fit with Departmental priorities*

Inverleith House is a significant venue for established and more emerging artists, that consistently presents work of quality and imagination to an exceptionally high standard. The proposed programme and track record of the organisation meet the Department's aims: to develop opportunities that support artists and 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)

*Application Rating:* High, this application meets the FXO criteria very well. This rating reflects the assessment of the Officer and the comments received from the Advisors.

*Strengths of application:* strong and evidenced track record; imaginative and ambitious future programme; excellent partnership with the Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh that enables Scottish Arts Council funds to be directed towards programme development; the strong and evidenced commitment to audience development and significant future potential, including the mainstreaming of social inclusion objectives.

*Weaknesses of application:* the plan presented lacks detail in some areas due to the fact that the gallery operates within the context of RBGE's high level aims and objectives.

*Potential risks and suggested development areas:*

There is a risk that Royal Botanic Gardens of Edinburgh cannot continue to support the necessary infrastructure and staffing costs of the gallery in order that Scottish Arts Council funds can be directed effectively to support ambition and quality in the programme. However, the partnership with RBGE is very good and it is hoped that sustained Scottish Arts Council support will continue to lever in the required RBGE resources.

For the future, Inverleith House is encouraged to develop the submitted plan so that it more clearly identifies and addresses the gallery's priorities and development needs.

**Recommended level of support:** £80,000 to support ambitions and secure partnership with RBGE

**4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme**

**Comments:**

Inverleith House is based in Edinburgh where the exhibitions and education activity take place. The exhibition programme promotes artists from Scotland, the rest of the UK and elsewhere.

Audiences come from Edinburgh, the rest of Scotland and the UK and there is a large number of international visitors particularly during the summer months.

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

**HIGH**

Head of Department's signature:

Date: 15/2/08

Revised: 26/3/08

Print name:

Amanda Catto

<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 £75,000 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 £75,000 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	£75,000

**End of Assessment**