

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	Scottish National Jazz Orchestra (SNJO)	
Application Reference number:	G201001049	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£110,000	£135,000
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>		
<p>Comments: The overall application is a very strong one which I and the lead officer believe should be supported. The SNJO's output quality in terms of excellence in performance is clear from assessor's comments and reviews and feedback from the public and the media. The SNJO and its youth wing group the TSJO are the only national jazz orchestras in the UK which makes it a unique resource for Scotland and the UK and a flagship international band to showcase some of the best of Scottish jazz talent.</p> <p>Jazz is a priority development area in the music department and we have the belief in Tommy's Smith's strengths as a manager and a director. However, he himself knows that he cannot continue to work at the level at which he is working and has identified that more personnel are needed so as to allow him to work more on the artistic programming and directing of the SNJOs performances, education work and general development work.</p> <p>The application does not highlight specifically the new personnel's specific tasks and job descriptions which would have been welcomed as an appendix with this application. This is an area for development and the SNJO would need to send the SAC a breakdown of its personnel's job descriptions and areas of responsibilities. It would also be good for the SNJO to have a specific person to do the financial record keeping and to write up a fundraising strategy in conjunction with both their current business plan and marketing strategy. This could possibly be built into one of the posts which they are currently seeking funding for. They are proposing to develop into a team 8 personnel with plans to incorporate a financial director, a marketing and PR member of staff and a fundraiser. There appears to be some over lapping of roles with their current proposal which covers these areas in the interim from 09-11. If SNJO is awarded SAC's FXO's support then I would suggest that the SNJO seeks support from other organisations and from the SAC for a personnel recruitment panel.</p> <p>The Board needs wider representation, with a particular emphasis on placing LA representation with a steer/empathy towards jazz. The Board will also need training. Some more detail on how the current board operates were lacking in the business plan. Board membership could potentially be opened out to include other jazz organisations who are working in Scotland and for UK Jazz in general and also from other sectors particularly within education and contacts from HITS and YMI co-ordinators.</p> <p>The SNJO is an excellent flagship for Scottish Jazz music and has already achieved outstanding success over the years. The organisation deserves National and International recognition on a much wider level and this application seeks SAC's support to do this. The reviews and feedback from newspaper articles and even from the TSJO in Toronto were outstanding. The artistic programming is diverse, exciting and challenging.</p> <p>I believe that this application is very strong and deserving of our support.</p>		

Officer's overall priority recommendation		HIGH
Lead Officer signature:		Date:28 January 2008 Revised: 20 March 2008
Print name:	Petrea Cooney	

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 Murray Buchanan, Paul Bream, Jim Gaitens, Rachel Nelken and Susan Nickalls, with ratings received from Marie Fielding by email.

Comments:

- The panel recognised the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra as arguably one of the best big bands in the UK artistically, comprising a very high quality of musicians.
- The panel noted that no partnerships were outlined in the application, and that the organisation would benefit from looking beyond its current scope of engagement.
- The panel recommended that funding would support the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra as a business, as well as an orchestra.
- The panel also recognised the Tommy Smith Youth Jazz Orchestra as being an extremely important facet to the organisation.

The panel rated the importance of the application in being supported as **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:

SNJO, in a comparatively short time, has grown and matured both creatively and artistically into one of Scotland's most significant performing ensembles on an international stage. They play a key role in our sector forum development priorities for jazz and constantly perform at the very highest levels. Their programme is both enhanced and complimented by the TSYJO, also directed by Tommy Smith which is equally gaining a well-deserved reputation for excellence in education and is one of our YMI programme's key players. The SNJO is seen as an exemplar ensemble for both professional and aspiring professional players to perform and engage with. They stand alongside the Scottish Ensemble within the music department's portfolio as an ensemble as important to Scotland's cultural identity as well as to the international music market place.

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

1.1 Excellent artistic vision and leadership; role within sector/support to artists: The SNJO and TSYJO are both leaders in their respective fields. The SNJO is one of Europe's most significant jazz

ensembles and following their recent appearance at the IJEC in Toronto, the TSYJO are also establishing a world-wide reputation of the highest order.

1.2 Improving your engagement with the public: The SNJO has clearly laid out its expanding programme for the future complimented by TSYJO activities.

1.3 Good practice in the governance and management: Excellent and supportive Board. With the essential expansion of the organisation's portfolio a fully structured FTE administration will follow.

1.4 Practical implementation of your equal opportunities policy; widening access: A sound policy is in place and through both ensembles wider audiences are being sought and demands met in both performance and education/outreach.

1.5 Raising other income at least 25%: Yes.

2. Fit with Departmental priorities: Fully in every respect from developing a significant sector, providing high quality performance and providing a significant and flexible learning agenda.

3. Fit within Scottish Arts Council aims: Fully on all counts.

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:

The SNJO is a key priority for investment for the music department. The time has come for the organisational infrastructure to match the creative and artistic quality that Tommy Smith brings to the SNJO and to the TSYJO as director. To this end the application for £110K and 135K is absolutely realistic and eminently realisable in terms of the essential administrative structure to move SNJO forward into Creative Scotland and beyond.

FTE administrative support is required to allow Tommy Smith to create, devise and compose new repertoire and to fully engage with the education and outreach agenda, already successfully achieved by the TSYJO, which has been predominantly funded, to date by Tommy Smith himself, which further demonstrates his commitment to the development and training of tomorrow's professionals today.

Partnership opportunities will also develop with increased investment and the organisation will need to fully engage with the SAC Audience Development team. The essential staff structure needs to be put in place and that is clear from the application, the comments of the assessing officer (Petrea Cooney) and by the Specialist Advisor's panel. The proposed artistic collaborations in the application are of the highest artistic and creative quality and all participants are well-known and respected internationally.

The jazz sector needs this investment as much as does the SNJO and I have no hesitation in rating this application very highly indeed.

1.1 Application rating: High

A consistently high rating from the assessing officer and specialist advisor's panel, wholly endorsed by me.

<p>1.2 Reasons for assessing at this rating: The highest quality of creativity in performance and learning and an exemplar organisation for the music department..</p> <p>1.3 Strengths of application: The quality of Tommy Smith as a leader, director, creator and educator aligned to Scotland's best professional jazz musicians and the most aspiring and inspirational young talent there is (TSYJO).</p> <p>1.4 Weaknesses of applications: FTE administration required as per the plan and application, but this will provide an inherent strength when in place.</p> <p>1.5 Specific risks associated with the application: None.</p> <p>1.6 Development areas identified: As in 1.4 above.</p> <p>1.7 Recommended level of support: As requested at £110,000 and £135,000.</p>		
<p>4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme</p>		
<p>Comments: Both the SNJO and the TSYJO tour extensively in Scotland and engage with the local authority sector-five such partnerships are currently evidenced. The TSYJO recently performed to critical acclaim at the IJEC (International Jazz Educator's Conference) in Toronto in January. Geographical reach for the SNJO is international.</p> <p>1.1 Where will the activity/programme take place? Throughout Scotland and internationally.</p> <p>1.2 Where will the audience come from? As above.</p>		
<p>Head of Department's overall priority recommendation</p>		<p>HIGH</p>
<p>Head of Department's signature:</p>		<p>Date: 14 February 2008 Revised 25 March 2008</p>
<p>Print name:</p>	<p>Ian Smith</p>	

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)		
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.		
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 agrees with the Stage 4 recommendation.		
Joint Board Final Decision		APPROVE
Date: 24 April 2008	If approved for support, enter sum awarded	£122,500

End of Assessment