

**FEDERATION OF SCOTTISH THEATRE
TOURING FORUM**

Thursday 18 October 2018
Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock
2pm-5pm

Attendees:

Mark Alexander (Theatre Royal Dumfries); Susannah Armitage (Vox Motus); David Asher (Capall Dorcha); Viktoria Begg (Dundee Rep); Roz Bell (Eden Court Theatre); Sam Eccles; Catherine Elliott (In Motion Theatre Company); Michael Emans (Rapture Theatre); Luke Holbrook (Assembly Roxy); Vince Hope (Ayr Gaiety); Stephanie Katie Hunter; Christine Martin (Paisley Arts Centre/Renfrewshire Leisure Trust); Seona McClintock; Sheena Miller; Sofia Nakou (Asylon Theatre); Lisa Nicoll (In Motion Theatre Company); Sean Paul O'Hare (Beacon Arts Centre); Michael O'Neill (Tron Theatre); Jon Pope (Glasgow Life); Barry Robertson; Jeremy Wyatt (Ayr Gaiety)

In attendance:

Chair: Simon Hart (Puppet Animation Scotland)

FST: Anna Broomfield, Amanda Liddle

Creative Scotland: Lorna Duguid

1. Welcome/Introductions – Chair

Simon Hart (SH) welcomed attendees and led introductions around the room.

2. FST Update – Amanda Liddle

Training

- [Working Towards Wellbeing](#) | Friday 18 January | Venue TBC
- [Dignity at Work: An Introduction](#)* | Thursday 24 January | Edinburgh
- [Developing Dignity at Work Policies](#)* | Friday 25 January | Edinburgh
- [Leading a Respectful Culture](#)* | Friday 25 January | Edinburgh
- [Unconscious Bias](#) | Friday 8 March 2019 | Glasgow

FST Emporium: Market Day - Thurs 14 March 2019

The tickets are now on sale for the Market Day of Emporium – 14 March 2019. Market Day allows artists and venues to promote and programme existing work available for touring within the next 6-12 months. It includes a range of networking and promotional opportunities including open exchange and scheduled face-to-face sessions with companies, promoters and venues. [Click here](#) for more info and to book your tickets.

3. Creative Scotland update – Lorna Duguid

The reviews of Creative Scotland funding are ongoing. The review of RFO process is being finalised and will be published soon. The organisational review is due to be released by the end of the calendar year.

4. Touring Fund Information Session – Lorna Duguid: Discussion & Group Feedback

The Creative Scotland Touring Fund decisions were [announced](#) the week commencing 17 December 2018. Congratulations to those who were successful.

The fund will open again for a second round of applications on 5 February 2019, with a deadline of 30 April 2019. More information on the fund is available [here](#) and the full guidance is available [here](#).

Creative Scotland are open to changes and improvements on the fund after the first two rounds of funding. There will be two rounds of funding per year.

From now on, Open Project Funding should be used for R&D applications and site-specific projects that won't tour.

CS want to recognise artists and allow them to retain income, help venues become more sustainable and increase programming at venues that otherwise might not be able to accept touring work.

The Touring Fund has a £2m budget for 2019/20. No funds will be released until April 2019.

The fund is for touring in Scotland only – if you're touring outside of Scotland in addition to a Scottish tour, then you can still apply but the dates outwith Scotland need to be self-sustaining.

The highest priorities when assessing applications are artistic quality and ambition. The panel will also strive to fund a balance of genres, geographic spread, new/restaging, scales (especially addressing the gap in mid-scale), range of audiences. LD urges applicants to read [The Review of Touring Theatre and Dance in Scotland](#).

New

- There is no need for letters of support, notes of interest or pencilled dates for the Touring Fund. You should still be building relationships with the venues but you don't need to have pencilled in dates yet. Panel will assess if there's a realistic chance of you delivering what you want to deliver.
- Applications should contain information on the types of venues the work is suitable for.
- There is no need for an audience development plan. Instead, applications should include a description of what audiences will get from the work, but this doesn't need to be a full plan.
- Application budgets should not include box office income. Fees for artists/companies should be included in the application. For all projects there will be an 80/20 split in the venue's favour. Artists/companies keep the 20% to sustain themselves between projects and venues will keep their 80%.

- CS are trying to reduce admin before the work is funded - successful applicants will receive a first payment of 15% to cover the initial costs of bringing the planned tour to fruition.
- Both parties (the artist/company and the venue/promoter) will be required to sign a memorandum of terms – FST is working on developing this with sector. This memorandum aims to provide clarity from the outset over who contributes and pays for what, and improve trust between artists/venues
- The assessment panel will be made up of 4 CS staff and 5 members from the sector.

Q&A/Discussion

- How can unfunded organisations make a tailored approach to audience development? CS expect venues and companies to still work together, but the reason this isn't in the funding application is because CS are trying to cut down unpaid work
- There are no strict guidelines from CS about what venues need to use their 80% share of fees for - companies and venues encouraged to work together to build relationship.
- Venue marketing staff do not necessarily have the capacity to take on extra marketing work. There is worry there will be expectations of staff which they don't have the capacity to meet. Is there some kind of event for marketing staff to bridge this gap?
- Venues that have limited marketing resources will hopefully be able to use the 80/20 split towards marketing
 - **Action** CS will liaise with FST around scheduling a venue focussed session on the touring fund.
- Council venues may have large marketing teams who cover multiple aspects of the local authority's cultural programme (e.g. sport and leisure) – it will be interesting to see the impact of the 80/20 split and if there will be a shift in priorities.
- The 80% deal is not necessarily a good deal for venues – 80% of 150/200 people is still not a lot. This deal will allow venues to programme shows on but isn't guaranteed to bring money in. Venues and artists/companies will need to work together on marketing.
- Concern that people who can't afford to work for free will have to wait until April before they start booking tours, at which point there will be pressure on them to rush out to venues and book dates. Those who can afford to work unpaid before April will have unfair advantage. There needs to be staggering of work that gets funded. LD replied that awards will be in cohorts, which should release some of this pressure.
- Members stated they would like a document which collates programming and marketing deadlines. This information can all go on Tourbook but there needs to be buy-in from the sector to make the resource work.
- CS don't intend for the Touring Fund to be venues' entire programme, but will help small venues who currently programme nothing to programme something, and make already-programming venues a bit more sustainable
- Theatre tax relief should not be part of the budget – this is yours to keep. If you don't already claim it, find out how you can.
 - **FST Action** To schedule additional Theatre Tax Relief training in 2019

- The 15% early payment is really positive – it's very disheartening to put in a lot of effort to book dates etc just for your application to be refused
- Audience development: Provide some evidence that you've thought about it but don't need full plan. Explain what you know about your target audience and why this show would appeal to them.
- More than one night in one venue still equals one location. There is a risk of more one night stands with this fund so that people can hit all 12 venues required in order to avoid tours that are too long. This is an issue for audience development.
- The Northern Rural Touring Fund funded longer runs across 10 venues. Audience development happened across venues – social media stirring meant that people travelled. The projects ran for a long enough run to drum up more interest.
- Venues want to encourage longer runs, but artists feel like they're being actively discouraged from doing that (wider belief that it's harder to fill longer runs)
- Some rural venues genuinely might not have enough audience to fill more than one night – longer runs simply carve up one night's audience into multiple nights. Sometimes venues want to programme a variety of work, so can't book long runs.
- A lot of artists do want to do longer runs but a 12 venue tour with multiple nights at each location means tours can last 6+ weeks. This can become very expensive, and the feeling is that that amount of money is too much to ask for. If people are putting in for 6 week tours, it's going to be more expensive.
- LD commented that spreading the work is the priority. CS are prepared to fund less. Individual budgets are likely to be higher on these apps. The focus is on the work and audiences.
- For councils who look after multiple places – each individual venue counts as a new location.

5. Audience Data Workshop Session

Following the Regular Funding announcement in January, Culture Republic took the decision to close earlier this year. Creative Scotland is in the process of looking at the data needs of the sector, to inform future provision. FST asked members to respond to the following questions:

Why are we collecting data and should we collect data?

- Audience development: to understand who they are and why they come
- To engage with audience and find out what *they* want
- A desire to share information on audiences to companies, in order to help them target their intended demographic better, but what can we give them?
- When data is shared retrospectively it is harder to gather (lack of resource, opportunity)
- Comments on work coupled with facts (A/S/L) is extremely helpful to understand the psyche of a certain demographic
- Postcodes telling us where to poster
- Using demographic info to market our existing audiences in more bespoke ways
- Using data to foster long term engagement plans with visiting companies,

- Business covering this data collection need just not subsidised

Do we want an audience data service? Why?

- Yes - it will help understand our box office data
- Yes - as a lobbying tool
- Yes - IF data is rich and beyond postcodes
- Yes - IF it gives us strong info about our potential audiences
- No - people don't want to give data
- No – it's difficult to manage and interpret data
- No – there are better ways to understand our audience
- No - we can't deal with more than box office data

What challenges do you face in collecting and analysing data?

- Lack of common understanding /definition of key terms (eg audience development)
- Balance of audience development for one-off events and whole programmes
- Diverse/different/conflicting approaches among visiting companies
- Funder requirements to know EDI stats vs data that influences audience development activity
- For touring companies: getting data
- For venues: making good use of available data
- Ability to share data (GDPR?) and willingness to share data
- Linking marketing dept/person with programme

What support do you need/want from a central data service?

- More than useful of data marketing
- examples of good practice that links like with like eg rural to rural rather than Glasgow and Greenock
- stats to lobby with advocacy at local level
- trends info rather than audience data
- A better understanding of the effectiveness and usefulness of audience finder
- common data collection across funders
- how to use ready available tools
- a service that is not central belt focused
- a service that takes a wider view on engagement
- marketing beyond demographics/data
- ability to market to audiences in a way that responds to local trends/patterns
- Something that helps us understand how to have better/different conversations with POTENTIAL audiences
- how to sell to people who are not our current audiences
- shared openness and ability to share knowledge across companies
- a service that provides tools/advice relevant to our own geographies translation of data
- people with high quality, sophisticated skills in data analysis skilling up?
- Sector champions?
- with specific knowledge/training

- accessible for everyone
- more knowledge of what we can do with data/the benefits of good data analysis
- holistic approach between venues/companies - facilitating sharing of data and box office forums for arts marketing specifically
- Audience development is a whole other need outwith data collections
- use AV/Google analytics

Ideas

- Purple Seven/Spektrix generated info from public sales
- Are there third parties we can employ to work within sector to contact audiences and mine data
- how useful are postcodes when trying to bring back old/existing audiences?
- surveys - in person and online
- using the data for reporting back to funders about audiences, not for any other purpose using data to target old audiences for similar practices.
- Repeat mailers Some are still working on how GDPR impacts marketing plans between venues and visiting companies

6. AOB

FST thanked Simon Hart for all his work as Chair of the Touring Forum during 2018.

We are now seeking new volunteer chairs for each Forum in 2019/20, to help us ensure that these meetings stay true to their original remit of being user-led.

Chair Role:

- Chair two FST Forum meetings (either Dance, Touring or Producers) during 2019/20, supported by FST staff
- Liaise with FST staff prior to meetings to agree agenda and format
- Ensure meetings are kept to time and on topic
- Ensure FST Forums operate under [Chatham House Rules](#) and that all attendees uphold this rule

FST will coordinate all other related administration of these meetings. Reasonable travel expenses for all chairs will be provided and a fee to cover time for independent members not supported by an organisation. If you are interested in taking a more active role in the FST Forum programme and are able to commit to chairing two meetings up to March 2020 then please contact Amanda on amanda.liddle@scottishtheatre.org to note your interest by 7th January 2019.

FST Actions

- CS will liaise with FST around scheduling a venue focussed information session on the touring fund.
- Theatre Tax Relief Training in 2019