

Education and Culture Committee
Scotland's Educational and Cultural Future
Festivals Edinburgh

Dated 5th of March 2014

Background

Festivals Edinburgh is the high-level organisation created in 2007 by the Directors of Edinburgh's 12 major festivals to lead on their joint strategic development and maintain their global competitive edge. Collectively they attract audiences of more than four million and have an economic impact of £261 million. They offer a remarkable and unrivalled international platform and springboard for Scottish artists and companies, represent a major attraction and influence for those choosing to live, work, visit and invest in Edinburgh and Scotland and define Scotland's cultural identity on the global stage.

Focus of Submission

This submission is focussed on addressing issues raised under Theme 3 of the inquiry, namely Broadcasting and Culture, where they are relevant to our joint working leaving each individual Festival to address, should they so decide, issues which they see as relevant to their own individual operation.

Submission

'The benefits that could derive to Scotland if its cultural and creative output were promoted more widely'

- Edinburgh's Festivals are Scotland's world-class cultural brand with an international reputation and appeal unmatched by any other cultural event on the globe. They are distinctively Scottish and yet profoundly international. They draw artists, audiences and media from every continent and over 70 countries each year, are a defining feature of Scotland's tourism offer and are the only Scottish cultural event to attract the very best of the worldwide cultural sector
- Edinburgh's Festivals are a source of astonishing opportunity and inspiration for Scottish artists providing them with the platform to develop, present and promote their work at the only truly grand-scale living showcase of the international performing arts in the world (over 25,000 artists, over 1000 producers)
- Each year thousands of Scottish artists and thinkers bring their work, define their reputations and develop new relationships and partnerships in Edinburgh where the Edinburgh Festivals have the creative flexibility to embrace and promote the best of our cultural heritage, to explore and to showcase the most exciting of our contemporary cultural

invention and to generate ambitious collaboration between our own artists and their international colleagues

- The renowned historian Tom Devine has noted that *“the Edinburgh Festivals have undeniably given the nation and our capital city a priceless brand which has resonance across the globe and especially makes an impact on some of the most influential opinion formers in overseas countries. They are therefore an asset which should be vigorously encouraged and sustained in this era of globalisation; the festivals are indeed a jewel in the Scottish crown which bring a matchless world-wide profile to our country”*
- Wider promotion of the Edinburgh Festivals would allow the Festivals to enhance and develop their profile and positioning, ensuring that international festival directors, programmers, cultural planners and strategists continue to be drawn by the Festivals’ astonishing wealth of culture and their irresistible sense of significance – and thus that our promoters, producers, artists and thinkers continue to have unique opportunities for work to be seen, ideas to be exchanged and business to be done

‘How new powers over the economy and an overseas diplomatic and trade network could encourage the Scottish cultural and creative sectors’

- The Edinburgh Festivals have been defining and promoting Scotland’s identity as a confident, creative, welcoming nation for over 65 years and have become a global cultural brand. The Festivals have a powerful role to play in increasing the creative capacity, economic strength and international reputation of Scotland. They are a powerful influence and a source of inspiration that extends beyond the cultural sector and into the wider creative and corporate ecosystem of Edinburgh and Scotland. The rich creative environment they breed and feed has produced an atmosphere that is deeply attractive to creative thinkers in media, marketing, technology, entrepreneurship and scientific enquiry
- The Edinburgh festivals are the starting point for so many cultural projects that ripple across the world for years to come. Developments which enhance the opportunities for the Festivals to widen their international cultural, diplomatic and trade networks would be welcomed since these in turn enhance the opportunities for Scottish producers and artists to present and sell their work at the unrivalled cultural business platform that are the Edinburgh Festivals

For further information please contact Faith Liddell, Director, Festivals Edinburgh, on 0131 529 7970 or at faith.liddell@festivalsedinburgh.com .