



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

**CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**AGENDA**

**3rd Meeting, 2018 (Session 5)**

**Thursday 8 February 2018**

The Committee will meet at 9.00 am in the Robert Burns Room (CR1).

1. **Scotland's Screen Sector:** The Committee will take evidence from—

John McCormick, Chair, Screen Sector Leadership Group;

Ken Hay, Scottish Screen Sector Leadership Group;

Dr Belle Doyle, Association of Film and Television Practitioners Scotland;

Kenny Glenaar, Director;

Chris Young, Young Films Foundation, Managing Director and Producer;

Professor Philip Schlesinger, Professor in Cultural Policy, University of Glasgow;

and then from—

Iain Smith, Chair, British Film Commission;

David Smith, National Representative for Scotland, Pact;

Clare Kerr, Producer, Mead Kerr;

Wendy Griffin, Producer, Selkie Productions Ltd;

Tommy Gormley, First Assistant Director;

Fiona Miller, Association for Supporting Artists' Agents in Scotland.

2. **Scotland's Screen Sector (in private):** The Committee will consider the evidence heard earlier in the meeting.

3. **Work programme (in private):** The Committee will consider its work programme.

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The papers for this meeting are as follows—

**Agenda item 1**

Note by the Clerk

CTEERC/S5/18/3/1

PRIVATE PAPER

CTEERC/S5/18/3/2  
(P)

**Agenda item 3**

PRIVATE PAPER

CTEERC/S5/18/3/3  
(P)

**Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee**

**3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, 2018 (Session 5) Thursday 8 February 2018**

**Scotland's Screen Sector inquiry**

In September 2017 the Committee issued a call for evidence on its inquiry into Scotland's Screen Sector. The Following written submissions were received from witnesses on today's panel:

- **Association of Film and Television Practitioners Scotland**
- **Joint written submission from GBM Casting, All Talent Agency and Real People**

## Written submission from the Association of Film and Television Practitioners Scotland

### Introduction

AFTPS is a lobbying group for freelance crew based in Scotland that has campaigned since 2009 for the following:

1. A professional studio complex capable of attracting inward production
2. Increased TV commissioning for Scottish production companies
3. Greater business support for Scottish producers
4. A review of current public-sector funding for film and television
5. A stand-alone Screen Agency for Scotland.

We have 739 members, with an organising Committee of nine industry professionals. Our members have worked on all types of production across the world, in studios and on location. We are happy to meet Committee members to provide further professional expertise and advice for the success of the film and television industry. We are ambitious for our industry and for Scotland.

We are pleased to see that our tenets have been voiced in the recommendations in the Screen Sector Leadership Group report of January 2017. We welcome the opportunity to present evidence to the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee regarding the possible outcomes of these recommendations, and to broaden the Committee Members' understanding of Scotland's place in what is a complex, competitive and global industry.

It is useful to see what opportunities for Scotland have been announced this year since the publication of the report:

- Proposed establishment of the new BBC Scotland channel
- The National Film & Television School setting up at Pacific Quay
- Announcement of a further £10 million investment in the film and television sector from the Scottish Government
- New OFCOM regulations to scrutinise Out-of-London and Regions and Nations production spend by the BBC
- Young Film Foundation set up on Skye by Chris Young
- Launch of FOCUS, a business development programme funding by Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise run by the Scottish Documentary Institute and Film City Futures

We will refer to these announcements in our evidence as we feel some of them will need closer scrutiny.

### Leadership, Strategy and Support

#### ***How can the industry successfully implement the recommendations outlined in the Screen Sector Leadership Group?***

On behalf of our members, who are in the majority freelance film and television practitioners moving from production to production, we welcome all opportunities for production work in safe, clean environments, regular work at union rates, and a

chance to work all year, rather than in the summer months. We would also point out that in the main Scottish crew are working on a variety of production activities ranging from factual and non-scripted television, commercials, corporates photo-shoots, and post-production to television drama and the occasional feature film. Much of the industry output is not supported by Creative Scotland funding, though some of it is for the public service broadcasters, of which the BBC is the largest. For most people working in the industry, the current investment offered by Creative Scotland does not have much influence on their working lives.

Not everyone aspires to work in feature films or in high-end television drama, but these are the two areas of the industry that provide the greatest opportunities for inward investment, career development, upskilling and employment across all departments. So, our views are biased towards scripted drama as the key area in which to maintain crew depth, skills and facilities in Scotland.

The industry is keen to support any and all opportunities to make quality screen product, capable of being sold around the world, and individual freelancers are keen for opportunities to support and develop their careers. In order to assist them, there has to be a radical change in the way the industry is viewed by the Scottish Government, Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise. Part of that must be a recognition that this is a business, and it is one that can reap large economic benefits. Supporting individual projects through the development process CAN be an important component of developing talent and skills. But it is an inefficient way of investing in and supporting an entire industry.

While people in the industry welcome any extra investment, and increased work opportunities, MSPs should be mindful of the fact that public sector funding takes a long time to trickle through the system to create production activity. Investment in a production company, especially for production development, may take years to result in production activity. Investment in content production that might result in *actual* production activity is dependent on many factors, including co-production deals, co-financing, often with overseas partners, market interests, tax breaks, currency fluctuations, availability of talent, commissioning agreements with broadcasters and more. People working in this industry will broadly welcome increased public-sector support and funding, but Committee members should understand that this investment does not result in immediate increased work opportunities for freelance crew, and should not be seen as investment that benefits all members of the industry equally.

Funding individual producers to develop individual projects is probably the slowest and least efficient way of driving production activity. It is far more efficient as an industry driver to use additional funding to:

- Develop an investment fund that has at its heart a commitment to Scottish crew and facilities to maximise local spend;
- Invest in advanced training and upskilling of key personnel;
- Provide funds to assist facilities companies to invest in new equipment, train staff, and extend their range of services;
- Develop and extend existing and newly found production spaces to facilitate more production: this may mean assisting with business rates, leases and grants to upgrading power supplies, phone lines and Wi-Fi.

There is an important creative element involved in this as well: most freelance crew are only too happy to get the chance to work on Scottish films and television content. Talent must be supported and nurtured, and this is an integral part of developing an industry. But there is a finite amount of public funding available, and this would not generate enough money to support all freelance crew and facilities companies currently operating in Scotland. The Committee should be mindful that the nurturing of talent and the creative side of the industry, though this has been carried out successfully by Creative Scotland, does not drive the industry: it does however support particular talents and creativity that Scotland needs to nurture in order to compete.

We would therefore also suggest:

- Wider opportunities and better training in co-production opportunities for producers to encourage more market-ready, commercially-viable product whether feature films or television. As an example of what can be achieved, here is the website of a production company in the Republic of Ireland. Set up to bring in co-production investment money to the RoI tax incentive, this one company generates more inward investment for Ireland than the whole of Scotland: <http://www.octagonfilms.com/>
- Better understanding within the Screen Unit of IP, television commissioning and pitching projects at an international level to assist producers to raise finance. Co-production agreements and looking at international opportunities are key to bringing investment into the country.
- An accelerator programme, using experienced line producers used to working in an international market, for ambitious producers and key heads of departments keen to work on high end drama series and medium to high budget features.

***What is your view of the current leadership of the screen sector through Creative Scotland and other supporting bodies?***

***How can we ensure that the Screen unit has the remit and responsibility for providing the strategic vision and leadership across the sector? What changes to the current arrangements are necessary to achieve this?***

We have chosen to answer these questions together.

We need to have leadership that has recent experience of the commercial film and television industry. We need people who are happy and comfortable to work at an international level as well as engaging with all parts of the industry here in Scotland. This is critical to delivering a Screen Unit that will help the Scottish film and television industry to compete in a competitive global market.

The failure of the Film Studio Delivery Group (now very quiet after the announcement that investment would be made at Ward Park in Cumbernauld) is indicative of a failure to grasp the urgency of developing a solid and credible infrastructure. If this is to be space for further incoming production, well and good: if it is to house *Outlander*, then the space is not available.

Creative Scotland's ambitions for the industry are admirable but we know that there are practical considerations, quite apart from the issues around film and television finance. Without professional, world-class sound stages to generate a constant turnover of production, it is impossible to raise Scotland's status in this global industry. AFTPS have been and continue to be supportive of the Pentlands Studio development in Midlothian. We support this development because we know that the industry cannot achieve full capacity because there are simple constraints to its growth: a lack of opportunities for investment; an export of talent and skills to other more successful areas of production, both in the UK and abroad; and a resulting lack of crew, facilities and infrastructure.

Here is one example of work done by the FSDG, paid for out of the public purse:

In 2013 there were visits to both Manchester and Belfast, organised by Tiernan Kelly at Film City, to show a number of people from the Scottish public sector to see a successful refurbishment of an old industrial space to a centre for production: they visited the Sharp Project in Manchester <http://www.thesharproject.co.uk/>, a centre for digital content production, and the Titanic Quarter in Belfast [<http://titanic-quarter.com/tq-work/mediacampus>]. The group looked at the existing spaces and talked to the organisations involved.

We first draw the Committee's attention to the new studio facilities in Belfast: construction began in April 2016 on the site, and both Warner Brothers and Disney expressed an interest before construction had finished. This link is from the Belfast Telegraph from April 2017:

<https://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/northern-ireland/film-giant-warner-bros-tipped-for-move-into-new-20m-belfast-studio-35549784.html> By 7 June 2017, it was announced that 'Krypton', a TV series from Warner Horizon Television for the Syfy Channel would be filmed there. It is likely that this studio will now be booked for five years.

Members can look at drone footage and download the specs for the new Belfast studio here: <https://www.belfast-harbour.co.uk/real-estate/developments/belfast-harbour-studios>

In Manchester, construction on the Space Project, the sister project to the Sharp Project, began in 2013 and the facility was open in October 2014. Stage 6, the largest stage, has just been completed, and the specs for the site are here: <http://www.spacestudiosmanchester.co.uk/production-stages/>

The website lists the productions that have since filmed there: <http://www.spacestudiosmanchester.co.uk/about/>

Therefore, since 2013, while the Film Studio Delivery Group in Scotland continue to hold meetings to talk about developing infrastructure, two other parts of the UK managed to build studios and bring in business. Please also bear in mind that these two sites have also become our direct competitors, along with all the other studios and buildspaces across the UK.

This is why the Scottish film and television industry are frustrated and angry. This is a key leadership issue: having taken responsibility for sorting out this fundamental

issue, and one upon which everything else hinges – volume of work, training and skills development of a workforce, retaining skills and key personnel in Scotland, building a dynamic and economically viable industry – this particular group have failed us.

We will again point out that if production activity in Scotland is to grow, whether by supporting indigenous Scottish production companies, more television commissions or more inward investment, there need be spaces to house these productions, and these spaces need to be weatherproof, safe, clean working environments. Jamie McCallum, Construction Supervisor on a number of Scottish productions including **Churchill**, **Keepers**, **Clique**, and **The Etruscan Smile**, now working at Longcross Studios near London on Disney's live-action **Aladdin**, points out:

*“In these productions our workshop areas have ranged from warehouses littered with bird sh\*t and holes in roofs. On **Keepers**, the building was due to be knocked down and we were told to work round it. I have worked in old schools, derelict hospitals, derelict offices and sheds. And when I say sheds, I mean four walls and an asbestos roof. We should be in a dry and secure place with a working electricity supply. And this is probably all down to cost.”*

From the working crews' point of view, the reason why there are no decent buildspaces – and please note they are asking for nothing more than a dry, secure space with electricity, the very basic that one might ask for a workspace – is to do with costs. No visiting production will want to spend more money than necessary, and temporary studios are lost as soon as the production moves out because no company will want to invest in a space any longer than necessary. Money spent on basic temporary refurbishment, such as blackout and sound-proofing, plumbing, telephones and WiFi is lost. This happens time and time again.

We are happy to give the Committee names of crew members who have worked both in Scotland, and in studios all over the world to give them an idea of just how frustrating the situation has become.

***What are your views on the availability of funding and support for all content development?***

In our view it is better to develop products that are viable and have a chance to bringing in additional funding from outside Scotland. There is a limited pot for content development, and not all content could be or even should be funded out of the public purse.

It is our view that content development is not in itself an industry driver, though it supports talent development and creativity. The current emphasis on script development does not support the industry as a means to create work. It is a workable model in terms of a creative agency seeking to develop the creative arts. It does not sit with an agency keen to support production activity and business, unless there is a change of mindset that sees commercial viability at least as important as creativity.

We want to see an emphasis placed on business development and infrastructure development. Creative Scotland is very much an arts funding body that strives for international recognition of critically acclaimed artists and practitioners: it also wants

to bring arts and creativity into everyone's lives. These are important issues, but the Committee should bear in mind that television and radio entail the same kind of working practices and creativity, and these are the artforms that are the most accessible and enjoyed by the majority of the population. Those people working on 'Location, Location, Location' or 'The Beechgrove Garden' are working to the same deadlines, working practices and professional expectations as those working on an arthouse film that may win prizes at international film festivals.

***Do you consider the support provided by Scottish Enterprise to be adequate? How might they or other bodies work to provide appropriate support for the industry?***

Scottish Enterprise are very much constrained by their definitions of business development and company development. Most production companies, facilities companies and post-production companies will not fit into their narrow definitions of business growth. The government needs to look at how Scottish Enterprise defines industry growth and allow it to look at different models. This may free Scottish Enterprise to support companies who do not fit their current narrow definitions of business growth. We would welcome more support from Scottish Enterprise, but it is clear that film and television production are not viewed by them as a viable business. To us, attracting a returning television series with a budget of £100 million per year presents a huge economic opportunity. To Scottish Enterprise, this is not seen as a viable business as it would have a limited shelf life of four or five years.

In terms of the SSLG work and report, Scottish Enterprise have remained supportive in that they have sent a member of staff to meetings. They have co-funded a pilot programme, FOCUS, with Creative Scotland to support 20 companies with business development. It is difficult to know what the expected outcomes of this venture are: there is nothing on the website [<https://www.filmcityfutures.com/>]. If one of the outcomes had been to establish better working relationships between Scottish producers and broadcasters, it would be useful to have broadcaster participating in the scheme. But it is difficult to find any clear information about FOCUS.

There is no problem with Scottish Enterprise wishing to work at arm's length with businesses in the screen industries. They are, however, the key business development agency in Scotland, and they do list 'Creative Industries' as one of nine key businesses areas they support. We believe it is up to the Scottish Government to decide how Scottish Enterprise should support our industry. Creative Scotland cannot put pressure on them. We believe Scottish Enterprise can bring funding and specific key skills to the Screen Unit, but again, there has to be a change in mindset in the organisation to realise the benefits of supporting film and television production.

***How can we nurture and maintain funding for production companies?***

An immediate need would be more television commissions for Scottish production companies, and, in general, if we are to maintain our skilled crew here in Scotland, there needs to be more opportunities to gain experience in television drama. People can move from working on television drama to feature films and back again. There is a solid core of documentary making experience and factual TV/non-scripted programme making in Scotland, and many companies do make a living out of this. But please bear in mind the real money is made in drama, and we need to have

more opportunities for people to create drama content here. There have been so few television drama commissions for companies in Scotland that there is a lack of skill in this area – many people have moved away to take advantage of work elsewhere. There is also the problem in Scotland of producers moving from producing short films to making a huge leap to producing a feature film, often without adequate finance or experience. We are not sure how this issue can be addressed without more work opportunities. Please bear in mind that independent production companies and freelance crew are keen to work, and keen to compete in an open market. They are not looking for hand-outs: but it does appear that the odds are stacked against them.

***How can OFCOM work to support the sector in its new role as regulator?***

The Committee should talk to David Smith from PACT who has been working with OFCOM about how to regulate public sector broadcasting (PSB) spend in Scotland. There are a number of loopholes allowing the BBC to credit BBC Scotland as the production centre of TV content, even if the programme is nothing to do with Scotland content, Scottish crew or made in Scotland. ‘Lift and shift’ has been going on for years. It is beyond the remit of Creative Scotland to address the issue of fair and equitable BBC spend across the UK. OFCOM, who are now tasked with regulating BBC output, have called for 8% of hours of UK network programmes to be made in Scotland, and 8% of the expenditure of the BBC on network programmes in the UK is referable to programme production at different production centres in Scotland. The BBC have argued that they have hit these targets. The reality is (from the BBC’s own 2016 accounts), the BBC raised £321.7m in licence fees in Scotland, and spent £233m in Scotland. Therefore the percentage of the licence fee reinvested in Scotland is 72.42%, with over a quarter of the licence fee raised being spent in the rest of the UK. For Wales the percentage is 98%, and in Northern Ireland, it is 97%.

As the BBC have invested a great deal of money in infrastructure in Cardiff: (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/corporate2/cymruwales/contactus/roathlock>) and Salford (<http://www.mediacityuk.co.uk/occupiers/bbc>) as their key areas for TV drama, it is obvious why it is difficult for Scotland to compete.

AFTPS have argued for more TV commissions for Scottish based production companies (and not just those who have a desk in an office in Glasgow to access Nations and Regions Funding). This situation needs careful scrutiny and the Committee should devote some time to it.

***What are your views on the state of commissioning for Scottish content?***

Factual television seems relatively healthy in Scotland, and there have been successes in children’s drama. But you would be hard-pushed to find a recent television drama made by an independent Scottish production company, commissioned by the BBC or Channel 4. We are cheered by the fact that BBC Scotland, STV and Channel 4 have committed to spend more in Scotland, and have confirmed this via the SSLG meetings. Our ultimate goal is to have TV commissions for Scottish production companies to develop networked product for the whole of the UK and beyond. However, we do have to ensure that Scottish crew are employed, potentially at every level on the production, including Heads of Department (HODs).

Simone Pereira Hind (Casting Director): *"I'd like to see the BBC not only making more programmes up here but also employing more crew from Scotland whenever possible rather than importing them from London. Constantly frustrated by this state of affairs."*

Calum Ross (Editor): *"I've now moved south to London because I can't get employed on enough high-quality shows. I was sick of hearing they couldn't find any crew, particularly HODs, in Scotland."*

If a production originates here – the original concept developed by a production company based here, and directly commissioned to deliver the content – then local crew are taken on. In an industry dominated by freelancers, people engage and work with the people they know.

### ***How might Brexit impact the Scottish screen industry?***

Your guess is as good as ours. This will probably be a disaster in the short-term, because there is so much European money currently invested in the screen industries, as well as European co-production opportunities. There may also be issues with the free movement of cast and crew around Europe.

However, in the long-term it may turn out to be a boon for Scotland, especially if the Scottish Government looks at tax incentives to encourage inward investment. At the moment, we are reliant on UK tax breaks and these are seen as very robust and easy to manage by incoming productions. Giving a slightly more generous tax break in Scotland will encourage production here (i.e., another 1% or 2% on top of the UK tax rebate). However, this has to be seen as a long-term goal, and can only work with the proper crew depth, training opportunities to upskill crew and proper facilities.

### ***How do you view the role of broadcasters in supporting the sector?***

Broadcasters are key to support business growth in the industry but there need to be more opportunities for Scottish production companies. We are cautiously optimistic that there may be greater opportunities for Scottish content from the BBC, STV and Channel 4.

### ***How might the newly proposed BBC Channel help support the industry in Scotland?***

We have already presented our concerns to the BBC in their consultation exercise. The size of the budget that has been put forward (£30 million) is not enough to support new drama commissions. We welcome new commissioning opportunities for Scottish production companies, but would also expect that these opportunities would be at a professional level to reflect current crew rates, and would be realistic in terms of costs of professional production. This channel should not be seen as a way of producing cheap television under the guise of supporting up-and-coming talent.

The Committee are urged to look at the figures currently being mooted for the new BBC Channel which currently work out at just over £25,000 per hour for content. If this is to be a competitive channel, broadcasting at evenings and weekends against BBC 1, we are not sure how it will compete. These are the BBC's own indicative costs of programme making for Nations and Regions:

- Factual - £5,000 to £200,000
- Entertainment - £20,000 to £220,000
- Drama - £30,000 to £450,000
- Comedy - £50,000 to £500,000.

These costs can be accessed from the BBC's own costings [http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/site/tariff\\_prices\\_for\\_independents.pdf](http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/site/tariff_prices_for_independents.pdf)

It is already clear that the new BBC channel will not be commissioning hi-end drama or indeed any production that would cost more than £25,000 per hour. We remain concerned that this is not realistic.

### ***How can Scotland become a key destination for UK and international productions?***

Looking at those centres of production that have become key destinations in attracting inward investment, the Committee should be aware that this has very little to do with nice scenery or period locations. The main issues are financial incentives, studios, and availability of crew and facilities. Beautiful scenery can be found anywhere, and the Committee should bear in mind that a film can be shot anywhere, as this newstory from the Hollywood Reporter illustrates: <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/star-wars-is-luring-hollywood-shoot-ireland-1049192>

Though the Irish tax incentive does play its part in bringing inward investment to the country, it has a wide variety of studio spaces and Irish-based crew (many of whom are from Scotland, by the way, attracted by the amount of work) <http://matrixni.org/irish-film-industry-spotlight/>

Ardmore and Ashford Studios, both close to Dublin are now well-established, and Troy Studios has recently opened near Limerick, offering a further 70,000 sq feet of professional sound stages: <http://troystudios.ie/>

For another example, please look at the Czech Republic Film Office website: <http://www.filmcommission.cz/en/czech-film-industry-successful-2016/>

Prague is currently booming with production: it is helped by the massive Barrandov Studios: <http://www.barrandov.cz/en/clanek/stages-and-backlot/>. Having inherited the facility that was nearly closed down in 2000, the Czech Government worked closely with industry, especially the television broadcasters, to ensure the studios were kept open, and jobs were saved. They have chosen to support incoming production over indigenous production: however, in 2016, 45 Czech feature films were also made: <http://www.filmcenter.cz/en/news/1240-catalogue-czech-films-2016>

The Czech Republic is an excellent example of how incoming production activity can support jobs and creativity equally.

We realise that the Committee want to support Scottish creativity, and see this as an important consideration. Some Scottish filmmakers would argue against supporting inward investment for large-scale productions or developing infrastructure like studios in Scotland because this is not relevant or helpful to their own filmmaking practices. We would not want to discount the views of these filmmakers or dismiss

their work, but our prime goal is to provide paid work and career progression to industry professionals. We believe there should be space for all types of filmmaking in Scotland, but we are interested in the business and business growth.

***Why have film and TV producers selected Scotland in the past as a location for production?***

They needed to find a specific location or locations. Sometimes they are encouraged by financial incentives that cover the UK. This recent article from the Location Guide shows a good example: <http://www.thelocationguide.com/2017/11/sky-atlantics-melrose-doubles-glasgow-for-1980s-new-york/>

An added bonus is that Anne Mensah, now at Sky, was head of independent drama at the BBC and was based at Pacific Quay – she knows Glasgow well. However, though this is great PR for Glasgow, there would not have been many local crew on this production.

Please bear in mind that all production activity is driven by costs, so a production will look at all the costs of filming on location and look for the cheapest option. It may be cheaper to film in a Scottish castle or on a period street for a few days than build a set. But other countries have castles and period streets, and visual effects can be achieved in post-production. For Scotland, a country with little industry infrastructure, its locations have been successful in attracting productions. This is not a reliable or sustainable way to generate growth, as most productions will only stay for a matter of days or weeks to get their shots. They will also bring their own crew: these are the people who have been engaged by the production where it was based. The production may pick up additional crew when it shoots on location, but the main bulk of its expenditure will be in the studio where it is based. Scotland does not have a permanent studio space for hire where productions can be based.

We want to see a sustainable industry capable of housing productions so that they are based here for the long term (months rather than days). An incoming production that has been based elsewhere is unlikely to use anything like a full complement of Scottish crew and facilities: crew and facilities will have been engaged locally by the production, whether they are based in London or Belfast.

Scotland does succeed with its reputation for film friendliness, and a ‘can do’ attitude. This is mainly because of the quality of its location managers, and freelance crew capable of working in all kinds of difficult environments. Relationships between location managers and location owners – both public and private – have been nurtured over the years. There are specific issues in London – the Congestion Charge, heightened security, the gradual disappearance of unit bases (open areas to park trucks and base the production while shooting on location) – that make cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh attractive. The Committee could look at ways to make filming easier and less stressful throughout Scotland working with supportive organisations like the National Trust for Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, Police Scotland and others.

***What is your view on the current network of regional film offices across the country?***

There are some very hard-working local authority film offices, and these perform a vital link between productions, roads departments, police and other organisations. Offices within the Central Belt are busier than those outside (this has to do with the cost of overnighting crew) and is no reflection on the film offices in more far-flung areas of Scotland. The work of the film offices is supported by local authorities, whose budgets are being squeezed, and for some areas, filming is not a high priority so there is no dedicated film office. Some central funding, and a service level agreement between the Screen Unit and local authorities may help this situation so that having a dedicated service to assist filming in all parts of Scotland is made more seamless. A Film Charter for Scotland, that would set out best practice for productions dealing with local authorities, police and roads, local crew and local companies would help. A national agreement on Temporary Traffic Road Orders (TTROs), agreed police costs, reduced costs or free filming in publicly-owned or publicly-managed buildings or land, reducing business rates on buildings used as temporary production spaces, encouraging a more film-friendly approach in national organisations – the list is endless.

***Are you aware of examples of best practice in Scotland, or elsewhere, which the Committee could draw upon?***

Examples of best practice: there are a number of examples of successful industry models:

We have mentioned a Film Charter: Film London has an excellent Code of Practice that involves partners such as the Royal Parks, the National Trust, Transport for London, and individual iconic locations:  
[http://filmlondon.org.uk/filming\\_in\\_london/code](http://filmlondon.org.uk/filming_in_london/code)

Vancouver has concentrated on developing its infrastructure and crew depth (the number of productions that can be crewed at any one time).

Vancouver: <https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/arts/film/the-business-is-booming-in-bc/article30503176/?ref=http://www.theglobeandmail.com&>

British Columbia: list of what is shooting: <https://www.creativebc.com/crbc-services/motion-picture-services/in-production>

[There are very strict rules in North America about using local crew, to the extent that there is a practice known as 'ghosting'. If you have received a state or regional incentive, you must employ local crew even if you don't use them.](#)

Georgia, US: now the most financially successful production centre in the world: The state of Georgia has concentrated on incentives, and worked closely with Pinewood Atlanta to retrain people from other industries to work in the film industry.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/15fa262dee84135c>

Pinewood Atlanta: <http://www.pinewoodgroup.com/our-studios/usa/pinewood-atlanta-studios>

Republic of Ireland: The Irish Film & Television Network (currently home to a lot of Scottish crew) shows the current productions filming in the Republic: <http://www.iftn.ie/production/>

In 2016 production spend in the RoI reached 250 million euros: [http://www.iftn.ie/production/production\\_news/?act1=record&aid=73&rid=4290137&sr=1&only=1&hl=production+spend+figures&tpl=archnews](http://www.iftn.ie/production/production_news/?act1=record&aid=73&rid=4290137&sr=1&only=1&hl=production+spend+figures&tpl=archnews)

Hungary: currently a very competitive hub in Eastern Europe: <http://www.origofilmgroup.com/studios-facilities/> There is a good relationship between the creative indigenous filmmaking talent, the industry, sales and international marketing, and production support for incoming productions. Budapest is booming.

We would suggest the following for the new Screen Unit:

- Recruitment from the industry of skilled practitioners with recent production experience
- Fixed term contracts for key managerial staff to encourage a wider knowledge base, and movement to and from the industry
- A commitment from the Screen Unit to working with and for the industry at all levels
- A Film Charter for Scotland, similar to the Code of Practice for Edinburgh ([https://www.filmedinburgh.org/dyn/1438096868135/Code\\_of\\_practice\\_Apr2014.pdf](https://www.filmedinburgh.org/dyn/1438096868135/Code_of_practice_Apr2014.pdf)) that stipulates safe working conditions, health and safety, working with police and roads, and filming on location. As part of an investment fund stipulation, this could also include the need for trainee placement, using local crew and facilities and reporting of figures. Used nationally, additional incentives could be reduced costs for filming in public buildings, cheaper Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders, and much more. Incentives do not need to be financial, and any savings on costs will also attract productions.

## **Talent Development, Skills and Training**

### ***How can Scotland nurture and retain domestic talent?***

We argue that it will come by providing work opportunities, and work of a sufficient calibre and scope that talent will want to work here. This cannot be done without professional sound stages and professional infrastructure to attract productions of a sufficient size. Indigenous Scottish film production is too small and unreliable to be regarded as a key employer: we would also point out that current lack of opportunities with broadcasters also adds to the problem, but we are hopeful that this issue will be addressed by the broadcasters.

### ***Are you aware of examples of best practice in Scotland, or elsewhere, which the Committee could draw upon?***

Vancouver Island: this island is less than half the size of Scotland. It is 23 kilometres from Vancouver (a very busy centre of production) and has been very successful in attracting large scale productions (most recently, War for the Planet of the Apes). While the island is used for its rugged and unspoilt scenery, it also has a range of very high-quality accommodation to suit high end talent as well as visiting crew. This

important factor has encouraged large-scale production from Hollywood and from Vancouver. Travel is easy, both to the island and around it. There are two small studios being developed. As an example, this recent course at North Island College (NIC), Vancouver Island, BC is being run to encourage people in allied trades to learn about specific skills currently needed on Vancouver Island: <https://www.infilm.ca/news/single/tv-and-film-crew-training-for-trades-professionals-offered-at-nic> Interestingly, NIC has a link with Robert Gordon College in Scotland. Vancouver Island has two screen commissions: North: <https://www.infilm.ca/about> and South: <https://www.filmvictoria.com/> both website will give details of past productions. For a small and sparsely populated place separated from a large centre of production, Vancouver Island is doing very well, and is currently building on its success as a filming location to develop opportunities for local people to find work.

As is the entire state: in British Columbia: this website clearly shows the opportunities available for people looking for work, whether they are new entrants, skilled crew from abroad, or local crew: <https://www.creativebc.com/>

New Zealand: this country is a fantastic example of the benefits that can come from supporting home-grown talent. As a director, Peter Jackson not only brought the Lord of the Rings trilogy to New Zealand, but also developed post-production facilities and studios there. The Film NZ website shows how a country can promote not only its locations and infrastructure, but also local skilled crew and cast: <http://www.filmnz.com/people-and-infrastructure#line-production>

The situation in Scotland would be improved by having a centrally managed website that is a one-stop shop, dedicated to training and career development. At the moment, there are a number of courses, training schemes and workshops being run across the country, without reference to each other. It would help to have current job opportunities posted centrally: Scotland has a production directory ([www.filmbang.com](http://www.filmbang.com)) and we would encourage the new Screen Unit to work with FilmBang to look at crewing levels and facilities gaps.

There are several individuals who have a vast experience of training in Scotland. We would advise the Committee to talk to Linda Fraser from Hit the Ground Running (<https://www.hit-the-ground-running.co.uk/>), Alison Goring from BECTU Vision, and Kay Sheridan (NETS, Screen Academy, RSC) for advice on running industry-focused training.

***How can development, skills and training keep pace with the ever- changing needs of the industry?***

We would stress the fact that the new Screen Unit must foster and retain good links with all parts of the industry so that it is aware of best practice. This involves knowing current practices in the industry and being aware of new innovations and working practices. We welcome the trainee programme for ‘Outlander’, and would wish to see this programme introduced into other productions, especially those receiving inward investment funding. Indeed, it should be an integral part of their funding.

We realise that running industry-entry courses is expensive and requires dedicated staff. However, Scotland used to run a New Entrants Training Scheme (NETS)

which was seen throughout the UK as the gold standard for industry training. We would advise that training and skills should be a key component of the Screen Unit.

***Are there skills deficiencies or gaps which might impede productions choosing to come to Scotland?***

There are many skills gaps, and an aging population of skilled crew. The National Film & Television School is committed to addressing some of these skills gaps, and we welcome this.

***Does Scotland have the requisite level of domestic talent to accommodate an increase in productions coming to the country?***

No, it does not. We are not sure what the current crew depth (the number of major productions that can be crewed at any one time) in Scotland could be, but it is possibly hovering around 2.5. In other words, there is enough crew for Outlander and one other large-scale drama production at any one time, but finding local crew is tricky if three productions are crewing at the same time.

There needs to be a major assessment of current skills gaps and training. Skills Development Scotland are working on a skills audit at the present time, but we would like this to be done annually, by one organisation, in Scotland, and those figures presented to other (UK) organisations as required. At the moment, there are numerous surveys, questionnaires and consultations and the same people are targeted each time. This is time-consuming and wasteful, so we ask that the work is carried out officially once a year with opportunities for everyone to feed in. This would present a complete picture of the Scottish industry, and could also give Scottish crew working abroad who are still based in Scotland officially (i.e., as freelancers, they would pay their taxes in Scotland) to also feed into the system.

***What infrastructure, support and investment are required to ensure continuing development of talent in Scotland?***

Dedicated studio space is key to developing crew: you can see this in Outlander.

***Are there clear pathways from education through training to the workplace that deliver an industry-ready workforce?***

Schemes such as the Outlander training scheme do produce an industry-ready workforce. However, there needs to be a national strategy for developing skills and talent in the industry, with agreed outcomes and targets. Then there has to be the production capacity to retain the trained crew. We would argue for clear information and guidance on training, work opportunities, and work placement, that is co-ordinated centrally, based on advice from experienced people in the field. Trainers currently spend a lot of time applying for funding and setting up courses, often based on training needs assessed in London, and there are no nationally agreed outcomes for Scotland or specific assessments of the needs of the Scottish industry. This needs to be centralised – not controlled – but there is little point in spending more money on training until a full skills audit is done and targets are agreed.

One outcome would be that money for training in Scotland, coming from Creative Skillset who have the remit for training in the UK industry, would be tailored to fit the particular needs of the Scottish industry. At present, this does not happen.

***How do we address the problem of inconsistent work for employees in the Scottish screen sector?***

Studios and production spaces are an integral part of the infrastructure to encourage productions to work all year around. Currently, winter is traditionally a very quiet time for freelancers as filming on location becomes less viable: it is too cold, there is a chance of very poor weather, transport is difficult, and daylight is shorter. When you can only film on location, these are important priorities.

***Do you feel there is a lack of diversity amongst employees in the screen industry? And if so, why might this be and what can be done to promote diversity?***

There has to be diversity at all levels, and there has to be recognition of the talent and skills that a diversity of employees can bring. However, we need to have workspaces that can be made accessible; warm, safe working environments, and working hours that can fit around the caring responsibilities of employees. This can only come when production is based in a professional working environment, and there is regular work. This is an industry where people work very long hours often in uncomfortable conditions, and will face a long drive home. Fitting in childcare or caring for partners/family members becomes very difficult. At the moment, freelance crew have to be available to work in different locations at short notice. This obviously makes it difficult for women with childcare responsibilities.

It is also still the case that competition to enter the industry is keen, and those people able to work for a very low rate, or take unpaid internships in order to gain experience are those who are financially privileged. You are less likely to find working class young people on a film set for this reason. Young people will also have to move from rural Scotland to the Central Belt to pursue work opportunities, and this is more difficult for those contemplating a freelance career where there is no job certainty. Paid traineeships and specific entry points that point to career progression will help this.

Ultimately, we are really not sure how issues of diversity can be addressed within the current system.

***Do you feel enough investment is present for the purposes of training specialist skills?***

There has been UK funding for training from Creative Skillset (<https://creativeskillset.org/>). Creative Skillset collect a training levy from all productions over a certain budget that film in the UK. In the past there was a commitment to provide bursaries for Scottish freelancers looking for training, necessary because most specialised training was held in London. The Scottish office has now closed, and we do not know whether there is any funding in a particular 'Scottish' pot or whether the money is completely centralised. Possibly this is something the new Screen Unit could check.

As we have said before, there needs to be a national strategy on skills with specific targets in mind. Funding should not be competitive: trainers with the best and most appropriate skills should be selected to help hit the targets, and production companies could be given financial assistance to help with training.

***Are there ways in which film and TV productions can be encouraged to utilise Scottish cast and crew where appropriate?***

We have already mentioned that industry training placements on incoming productions could be an integral key of inward investment. Not every production can employ Scottish crew; however, developing relationships early with line producers and heads of department, and monitoring budgets and potential spend, will help the situation. There needs to be more work done in this area, but it has to be a key component of any investment funding. Other major centres of production have managed to set up strict schemes to protect their local labour force (a good example is New Mexico, a state that had practically no local crew before 2004, but runs an investment scheme for incoming productions that gives a tax return based on the number of hours worked by local crew: [http://www.nmfilm.com/Training\\_Overview.aspx](http://www.nmfilm.com/Training_Overview.aspx))

Obviously Scotland's investment fund is relatively small in comparison and this idea would really only be applicable for those productions that would be based in Scotland rather than those coming in briefly for second unit shooting on location. We would also need to ensure that we have the skilled, experienced and professional crew and facilities to match what was needed. Usually, locations, props and art departments are used by incoming productions, while other departments may bring everyone with them. The Committee should be also aware that for every person coming into Scotland to work on a production, there is probably a Scottish-based freelancer working somewhere else in the world.

Lack of skilled professional crew is a UK-wide problem, especially when there is a demand for certain skills. Freelancers in the UK can now pick and choose their work: <https://www.screendaily.com/news/warning-fired-over-uk-drama-crew-shortages/5124405.article>

So we should not be unduly alarmed that productions may bring in their own crew to Scotland: few people here will have worked on productions of the size and scale of **Avengers: Infinity War**. There is an argument, however, that any funding from Creative Scotland should ensure that at least local runners are taken on rather than having them brought in. Additional funding could ensure that more local labour is used, and perhaps this will be made easier by the arrival of the new Scottish tax code to provide evidence of this. There also needs to be an agreement on Scottish spend for incoming production that receives funding, and this needs as far as possible to be open and transparent. Spend can also include accommodation, building materials, transport, catering – it doesn't necessarily have to include the payment of local crew.

## Infrastructure, Intelligence and Maximising Benefit to Scotland

### *What improvements to the current studio infrastructure are needed? How might this be achieved?*

We have supported the Pentlands Studio Group in their plans for a world class professional studio complex, and will continue to do so. In our view, this facility is crucial for the future of the Scottish film and television industry.

We feel that the situation has deteriorated since the Film Studio Delivery Group was announced on 24 May 2014 [<https://www.wired-gov.net/wg/wg-news-1.nsf/0/DA0473237998DC8980257B75004863AE?OpenDocument>]

We have been assured on many occasions that this group have been meeting regularly and working hard to achieve a solution to the current buildspace crisis. But we are still stuck in the same situation that we were five, ten, even 20 years ago.

However instead of cutting and pasting the same comments that AFTPS have made since 2009 on this subject, we feel it more helpful to make some points that are positive and helpful, and might spark some discussion for the Committee members.

- If Scottish Opera, the National Theatre for Scotland and Scottish Ballet can have spaces built for them out of public funds, what is stopping the building of a National Film Studio, governed by a charitable board and where any funds realised could be channelled back into supporting indigenous film production, training schemes or invested in better facilities and services? Surely the State Aid argument (successfully negotiated by Northern Ireland Screen, it appears) can be side-stepped if there is no commercial interest. Can the Committee check this situation?
- Can we offer our expertise to the Film Studio Delivery Group? We have offered this on other occasions. There are line producers and location managers searching every day for suitable buildspaces for production, and experienced crew who can assess and advise on potential modifications such as sound-proofing.
- We have looked very closely at the Buildspaces PDF offered by Creative Scotland Locations and request that it be radically updated or removed. Some of these spaces no longer available; others are completely unsuitable. [available as a download from <http://www.creativescotlandlocations.com/>]. We are happy to advise on the current situation of all the spaces.
- There should be more work done to find short-term spaces that will house productions, and working with the owners to ensure that booking the spaces is easily negotiated. Most developers and their agents are looking for companies who can sign a 20-year lease. A six-month lease for a production has to be negotiated each time for every space, and regardless of the money spent in setting up facilities within it, these are lost when the production company vacates. We hesitate to think about the amount of money that has been spent in this way in Scotland that should have gone into actual production.

***What kinds of facilities are needed and where?***

There needs to be a wide variety of spaces from world-class professional sound stages capable of housing high-end returning drama series, to smaller spaces for smaller budget films and television, commercials and single set builds. There need to be additional facilities attached, not least production office space, workshop space and carparking. We have given this information before to numerous consultants, and we would be happy to show the Committee, by way of a set visit to a production, to show them the amount of space that is needed. We know that there is a need to find more suitable available space in and around Glasgow.

Variety of spaces are key: the website of the Space Studio in Manchester gives an idea of a smaller complex that is flexible enough for TV productions, commercial and smaller feature film sets: <http://www.spacestudiosmanchester.co.uk/>

Currently, Outlaw King are using offices and facilities at Parkhouse Business Park, Glasgow, G22 6NU. This space has been used by three productions this year – **Country Music**, **Boyz in the Wood**, and now **Outlaw King**. Can the Committee think of a way of reserving this space for future productions, and investigating some of the larger industrial units nearby?

***How might these kinds of facilities be funded?******How might the public and private sector collaborate to ensure a sustainable approach to the development of such facilities?***

We will answer these questions together.

If the Committee will look at the range of facilities in other places and countries, they will see a pattern. All studios encourage tenants (these could be production companies, facilities, or public sector/Public service broadcasters) to pay rent, they can use the spaces for a variety of events, rehearsal areas, storage, set building, additional workshop spaces, or they can run secondary services that generate income (Barrondov Studios store costumes for hire). Studios do not solely rely on production activity to generate income. As an example, here is a list of the tenant companies at Pinewood London: <http://www.pinewoodgroup.com/our-studios/uk/media-park/whos-here>

Fox Studios in Sydney have been so successful in setting up secondary businesses that they only need one feature film a year to recoup their costs: <http://www.foxstudiosaustralia.com/partner-businesses>

Ardmore Studios in Dublin has had a interesting history in terms of ownership (both public and private) and hit a crisis in 2011-13 when it was not profitable. However, this was due to poor management rather than lack of tenants or inward investment, and since 2013 it has made an impressive profit: <https://thecity.ie/2017/02/04/lights-camera-the-politics-and-economics-of-ardmore-studios/>

<http://www.ardmore.ie/>

AFTPS members who have worked in studios all over the world would be happy to talk to Committee members about their experiences.

***How can we ensure the productions leave a positive legacy after filming?***

A good work experience for everyone, money rolling into the economy, good press and PR on the back of the filming, and then around the release/broadcast and the additional benefit of possible tourism generated. All these are positive. Additionality can be built into the filming incentive – the US State of Georgia will give another 10% on top of their incentive if film companies will display their state logo in the film's credits. There could be a built-in acknowledgement for Scotland, or an upfront agreement with VisitScotland/EventScotland to assist with premieres, press visits and promotions on the back of the filming. This won't be appropriate for every film, but opens the door for further promotion.

***Comments on data collection:***

Data collection such as production spend and number of crew working in Scotland is important. We know there are difficulties in collecting such figures, but this too has to be an important component of the new Screen Unit. Establishing a baseline figure for current working crew – the production directory FilmBang would be a good starting point – is necessary to draw up a national training and skills strategy. We have offered to help Skills Development Scotland with figures, but we have to point out that data collection involves close collaboration with the industry, and would need at least one full-time member of staff, if not more, to maintain an on-going relationship with productions, both incoming and indigenous. Engaging consultants on a short-term basis to phone production companies does not present a full picture of what is going on. This has to be a long-term relationship, and one in which both sides can see the benefits.

Most line producers would be happy to hand over spend figures, but it needs to be built into their budgets as an additional budget line: after they have finished a job, it is difficult to extrapolate figures. Everyone is willing to help, but there needs to be a system set up that helps freelance line producers and production accountants at the beginning: the public sector may need figures, but it is not acceptable to ask for this figures at the end of a production when people have finished their contracts and may be on another job. This is something that can be worked through with the BBC, PACT, the Production Guild and the unions: it is not difficult but requires working closely with the industry, specifically line producers and production accounts, to set up a system where giving figures on local spend is part of the work.

**Distribution, Exhibition and Audience Development*****What measures can be taken to grow audiences and encourage participation in the sector more generally?***

This is not an area in which our members have much expertise, but we have a suggestion from a unit publicist that better relationships should be forged with distributors. We have excellent film festivals in Scotland, but we do not take advantage of the potential of hosting more film premieres in Scotland. Scottish cinema audiences are second only to London West End audiences in their loyalty and attendance rates. Given the current security issues in Central London, and relative ease that these events can be organised in Scotland, there should be more efforts made to bring premieres to Edinburgh, in particular. With that comes

increased interest from the world's press, and proof that Scotland is a film-friendly country.

## **Conclusion**

AFTPS – either members of the working group, or any other freelance crew – would be happy to meet the Committee and talk further on any of the points outlined in the above written submission. We can suggest names, or find specific people to talk further on the above topics. The committee can probably sense our frustration with the current state of affairs in the Scottish film and television industry. We remain optimistic and hopeful that the situation will improve but we do also stress that in an industry where the focus is on delivery of a product at a certain time and within a certain budget, our members are impatient with the extended timescales afforded to the public sector.

This report was written by Dr Belle Doyle (Researcher), with Willy Wands (Line Producer), Fiona Gavin (Art Director), Davie Burt (Location Manager), Mandy Sykes (Director), Clea Tammes (Unit Publicist), David Taylor (Location Manager) Linda Fraser (Trainer), Clare Kerr (Line Producer), Jamie McCallum (Construction Supervisor), Neil Cairns (Production Accountant) and others.

## **Joint written submission from GBM Casting, All Talent Agency and Real People**

### **Key Points**

- **Scotland's screen sector has significant potential for growth but due to a number of structural barriers and lack of a strategic promotion approach growth is stalling**
- **Growth in the sector can only be sustained with a pool of talented experienced Supporting Artists.**
- **Scottish Casting Agencies require a level playing field across the UK if we are to be able to compete fairly for future film production work**

### **Background**

Scotland's Casting Agencies play an important role in the ecosystem of Scotland's screen sector, finding and placing Supporting Artists to the TV, film and advertising industries.

It's essential to the future success of the wider film industry in Scotland to have a strong current stable of companies that supply talented experienced Supporting Artists.

We agree with the sentiments of the Screen Sector Leadership Group's Report to the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee in January 2017, which stated:

*“A lively, thriving screen sector makes an important contribution to our national life and brings significant cultural and economic benefits.”<sup>1</sup>*

Despite the overall growth of Scotland’s screen industry over the past decade, our organisations continue to face many of the same challenges as others in this sector. The Leadership Group’s report was also clear that:

*“Many production teams come to Scotland, make their film and depart leaving no legacy in terms of contribution to the long-term sustainability of the industry.”*

This is the essence of the key challenge that Casting Agencies, based in Scotland currently face, and which must be addressed if the sector is able to continue to support the wider industry, benefit from future expansion and contribute to the economic health of Scotland’s talented and willing performing arts community through equal access to opportunity.

## **The Challenge**

Casting Agencies based in Scotland have not been able to benefit from recent inward investment from productions such as “Outlaw King” a Sigma Films production and “Mary Queen of Scots” a Working Title production, which have used London-based casting agents to find Supporting Artists for filming that has taken place in Scotland.

This approach has a number of structural disadvantages for the sector in Scotland:

- Short-term loss of business impacts on the overall capacity of Scottish-based Casting Agents
- By recruiting new talent from scratch (as outside agencies must do) the service provided to major film productions from Scottish talent will be compromised, damaging the product and hampering the reputation and future development of the sector.
- Agencies are less well equipped to deal with the peaks and troughs of feature films business through loss of talent to other parts of the UK

## **The Solution**

A strong, sustainable Scottish Screen sector needs a competitive range of Casting Agencies in place who are able to meet the demands of a profitable, growing, market.

The UK film industry is a key economic driver of economic growth hence why Scotland’s three largest Casting Agencies support the view of Creative Scotland, when they wrote in their 2014 report “Review of the film sector in Scotland”<sup>2</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup>[www.parliament.scot/S5\\_European/General%20Documents/CTEER\\_2017.02.13\\_SSLG\\_Final\\_Report\\_January2017.pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/S5_European/General%20Documents/CTEER_2017.02.13_SSLG_Final_Report_January2017.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>[www.creativescotland.com/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/25245/Review\\_of\\_the\\_Film\\_Sector\\_in\\_Scotland\\_-\\_Jan\\_2014.pdf](http://www.creativescotland.com/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/25245/Review_of_the_Film_Sector_in_Scotland_-_Jan_2014.pdf)

*“For those involved in production the simple truth is that there is not enough production in Scotland to ensure they can make a living each year.”*

*“Whilst recognising that EU state aid regulations make the awarding of incentive funding to encourage inward production difficult, it seems evident that without incentives it will be hard for Scotland to compete with other areas of the UK and internationally. This intertwines with the debate about studio development and the need to incentivise business for those putative facilities. **Linking spend-based incentives to engagement of crew, as in Northern Ireland, adds benefits for talent retention. Further investigation of this area is essential for the industry.**”*

While these sentiments are welcome we have not seen any evidence of the positive advancement of these proposals since the publication of this report 3 years ago.

Best practice from other parts of the UK, and in particular from Wales and Northern Ireland, suggests that the distribution of public funding tied to the appropriate use of Community Benefit Clauses can strike the balance between generating additional inward investment while supporting home based businesses.

For example, Film Wales has taken a proactive approach in ensuring that Welsh talent, crew and companies benefit from productions which receive funding from their

Development Fund. In order to achieve this, Film Wales set out clear conditions in their development funding guidelines and ask for specific examples of how Welsh

organisations will benefit in any funding applications.

This proactive approach has seen recent victories for the film sector in Wales, including the use of Welsh talent, crew and companies in the filming of the Netflix production “Apostle” in early 2017.

Similarly, Northern Ireland Screen have demonstrated their commitment to building a strong local sector by ensuring that recipients of the Northern Ireland Screen Fund are committed to investing in the local sector:

*The production fund is open to all legally incorporated companies who can fulfil the British Cultural Criteria and the Project Criteria. Incoming productions will be required to spend a proportion of the total production budget in Northern Ireland, typically a 5:1 spend ratio would be expected.<sup>3</sup>*

This commitment has direct benefits for Casting Agencies based in Northern Ireland.

**We believe that Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise should demonstrate a similar commitment to the Scottish screen sector, and Casting Agencies in particular, and take concrete action to ensure that productions which receive public or lottery funding are required to support local talent and businesses.**

**Furthermore, public bodies should follow the best practice set out by Film Wales and Northern Ireland Screen and publish a plan through which they will**

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<sup>3</sup> [www.screenproducersireland.com/northern-ireland-screen](http://www.screenproducersireland.com/northern-ireland-screen)

**proactively promote Scottish-based crew infrastructure facilities and agencies that supply Supporting Artists.**

### **Our proposal**

We share the view of the Screen Sector Leadership Group's Report to the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee in January 2017 that the screen sector in Scotland remains under-developed and retains significant potential for growth.

**In order to facilitate this expansion, we believe that Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise should work together to ensure that appropriate conditions are in place for those productions which receive public funding to ensure that Scottish-based organisations receives a fair share of the production work.**

Such a development would be warmly welcomed by Scotland's casting Agencies, and would be a significant and positive step in the right direction for the sector.