

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

### **Creative Scotland – Regular Funding 2018-21**

#### **Written submission from Edinburgh International Festival Society**

We would like to make the following observations on our own experience, and our observations of how the process has worked more broadly. In the interests of brevity and clarity, we are submitting short bullet points, but will be happy to respond to any requests for clarity or further information.

- All of the most effective examples of state funding of culture that we are aware of use arm's length bodies to distribute cultural funding, and dismantling this in Scotland would be to go against all of that experience
- There should be a national strategic approach that's clear and which acknowledges the interconnected roles of different funders (in particular local authorities)
- The application process needs to be more iterative, with meaningful support and feedback at various points throughout
- Creative Scotland needs earlier clarity on funding available, and this needs to be for multiple years
- There should be clear guidelines on whether and how organisations can ask for additional funding, and what the maximum might be.
- There should be clarity that decisions will be made based on both an individual assessment of an organisation against fixed criteria, along with a holistic look at how individual decisions deliver a balanced portfolio of organisations supporting overall strategy
- There's a need for expertise in assessing organisations and making informed decisions, Creative Scotland needs to have the resources to access this internally and externally, and these people and their professional judgements need to be respected and valued by government and the sector
- There does need to be turnover within the RFO portfolio, but a significant change should not come as a surprise – people should be warned when they are performing poorly, and prepared for possible bad news