



Ten Years of Expo

Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund: mapping a decade of development

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1. Executive Summary

The Scottish Government's Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund was created in 2007 to increase the funding available to Scottish artists and practitioners, encourage creative collaborations and help maintain the Festivals' global competitive edge. The first new works supported by the fund were premiered in 2008, so the 2018 Edinburgh Festivals season marks its 10th anniversary.

This Report examines the impact of the Expo Fund over its ten years and shows that it has:

- resulted in over 550 new commissions, at least 11,000 performances/events, and attracted audiences of over 5 million
- supported on average over 1,000 additional performances/events each year, revealing the substantial role the Expo Fund has played in boosting Scotland's innovative cultural content
- invested 88% of all funding for the benefit of Scotland-based creative professionals and the production/promotion of their work, illustrating how the Expo Fund is an efficient way to increase the funding available to Scottish artists and practitioners alongside international profile
- delivered 20% of activities in schools and communities, highlighting that while the primary objective is talent and career development, there are also significant local participation and audience development benefits
- generated average annual audience of over 500,000 for Expo-Funded work - a substantial achievement when noting that the Festivals' collective annual audience is c4.6 million - illustrating the strength of Edinburgh's Festivals as platforms to connect artists with audiences

Further analysis within the Report identifies 8 primary outcomes delivered by the Expo Fund around developing talent and encouraging collaborative innovation in international contexts:

- Developing and sustaining creative careers in Scotland
- Providing new opportunities for creatives on international platforms
- Fostering innovation and experimentation in production and delivery
- Connecting new audiences with Scottish talent and work
- Increasing national and international exposure for Scottish culture

- Expanding international markets for creatives in Scotland
- Strengthening creative reputations for individuals, organisations & festivals
- Enhancing leadership of festivals in national and international projects

The effect of each outcome is further revealed through a series of case studies:

- *"The EXPO experience was quite life-changing for me, because it kind of gave me a sense of credibility."* Raisah Ahmed
- *"It really is necessary for these EXPO commissions to happen in order to push the sector forward."* Dennis and Debbie Club

While the results of Expo Fund investments are impressive, the report also highlights a number of areas of operation that could be further enhanced:

- longer lead times for allocation of funding would improve the scope of what Expo projects can achieve
- longer term visibility of a forward Expo Fund commitment would allow multi-year opportunities to be developed
- and an evaluation approach that enabled follow up over a longer period would be valuable to capture deeper outcomes

The Report concludes that the success of the Expo Fund in both developing Scottish cultural talent and Edinburgh's world-leading festival platforms is down to the alignment of three crucial factors:

- the efficiency of the Expo fund as a means of investing in Scottish creative practitioners through the major festival platforms
- the powerful brand associations of staging Expo projects in the festivals' core international programmes
- the market access offered to creatives in showcasing Expo projects to an international audience

As the Festivals Expo Fund enters its second decade, eligibility has expanded to build on the model's success by including the international platforms offered by Celtic Connections and Glasgow International. To ensure maximum benefits as the structure of the fund evolves, it would appear to be critical that these three factors are secured, developed and used as guiding principles in order to open up more international opportunities for cultural talent across Scotland.

2. Introduction

The Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund was created by the Scottish Government in 2007, to help maintain the festivals' global competitive edge, increase the funding available to Scottish artists and practitioners, and encourage creative collaborations¹. The first new works and opportunities supported by the fund were premiered in 2008, so the 2018 Edinburgh Festivals season marks its 10th anniversary. Over the past 10 years, a total of £21m has been made available to the members of Festivals Edinburgh - the collective organisation for Edinburgh's major international festivals - for the development of global reputation, promotion of creative professionals in Scotland, and the support of international exposure of Scottish works.

The Expo Fund core criteria have remained the same since its creation in 2007. In order to be successful, applicants need to demonstrate that their proposals:

- promote Scottish artists or companies in new work or contexts
- involve Scottish artists/companies in international collaboration of new works
- demonstrate international touring ambition
- encourage collaboration between festivals and sharing of skills, including within an international context

From 2013-14, it was highlighted that the fund was particular keen to encourage festivals to submit proposals which could tour further across Scotland.

This report explores the outputs and outcomes generated by the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund over that time, based on analysis of reports submitted to Creative Scotland and on interviews with festival directors and creatives who have taken part in the programme. It has been commissioned by Festivals Edinburgh, as a result of a collaborative effort with the University of Edinburgh. Under the Innovation Fellows scheme run by Research Councils UK, the University were able to resource the study through the time of a post-doctoral researcher in organisation studies. Festivals Edinburgh and its members would like to thank the

University and Dr Jakov Jandrić for their commitment to the partnership and producing this ground-breaking report exploring the impact of the Expo Fund in its 10th anniversary year.

This report is structured in three parts:

- a survey of a large-scale sample of Expo projects between 2012 and 2016, detailing the results of inputs and outputs based on analysis of quantitative data self-reported by the beneficiaries;
- a logic model of inputs, outputs and outcomes of the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund; and
- a set of nine case studies illustrating and exemplifying each of the Expo outcomes.

¹ <https://beta.gov.scot/policies/arts-culture-heritage/creative-talent-and-engagement/>

3. Methodology

In the preparation of this report we utilised both quantitative and qualitative data sources and analyses. The logic model of Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund outcomes is based on the analysis of end-of-project (EOP) reports, and conversations with ten festival directors. The illustrative cases presented in part three of the report are based on semi-structured interviews with thirteen creative professionals involved in Expo-funded projects.

3.1 Qualitative data collection and analysis

The conversations with festival directors were kept informal and open-ended to capture a broader perspective of the role the Expo Fund in festivals' creative and organisational contexts. All conversations were conducted in person, with the exception of one phone interview.

The conversations with creative professionals required a different approach. Interviews were conducted by phone. The semi-structured format of the interview guide allowed freedom to explore different topics relevant to the specific project while maintaining focus on the key topics regarding the role of Expo fund in the conceptualisation, delivery, or outcomes of the project. With the participants' consent, all interviews were recorded and transcribed. The final drafts of the case studies were shared with participants for approval before being published.

3.2 Quantitative data analysis

Quantitative data presented in this report was gathered from a large sample of 130 end-of-project (EOP) reports submitted by beneficiaries of the fund in a period from 2012 to 2016. It is important to note that the results presented in the report are intended to be illustrative of the trends in Expo-funded projects, and should not be treated as comprehensive. This is due to several limitations of the data used for the analysis:

- a. The data contained in EOP reports covers five years of the Expo Fund 2012 to 2016 – earlier EOP reports have been disposed of, in line with Creative Scotland's records management policy - and the analysis, therefore, is not representative of the entire ten years of the Expo Fund. A broad estimate of the likely scale of outputs over the full ten years of the fund has however been made, for the purpose of informing policy discussions. This is based on analysing the average outputs achieved by each festival for the grant awarded during the five-year period covered by this study, and using those average figures to estimate the outputs achieved in the remaining five-year period of the Expo Fund based on the grants awarded to each festival during those years.
- b. We were not able to secure a complete record of the EOP reports from the period 2012 to 2016, as a number were either not available or were incomplete. The reports available account for 72% of the grant funding distributed through the Expo Fund over that period. In particular, it was not possible to access a complete set of Made in Scotland project reports, and so this study is based on full analysis of 73 out of 127 EOP reports for Made in Scotland projects over the period studied. In addition, it has been possible to include in the overall figures the number of performances for missing Made in Scotland projects (totalling 531 performances), based on information from the Made in Scotland website: <http://www.madeinscotlandshowcase.com>
- c. The data contained in EOP reports is self-reported by the beneficiaries and the requirements for budget reporting gave the beneficiaries discretion about how they reported the financial data. Diversity of approaches to reporting financial data thus required the researcher to use case-by-case judgements in attributing reported income sources and expenditure figures to different categories. While every effort was made to adequately identify and categorise the reported figures, the resulting analysis remains grounded in the interpretation of the reported data.

4. Expo Projects in Numbers

This section details the key figures on volume of activity as well as income and expenditure emerging from the large scale sample of end-of-project (EOP) reports available for the five-year period. The reports available account for 72% of the grant funding distributed to projects over the period. As noted in section 3 on Methodology section, the findings are therefore indicative. Due to the unavailability of a complete set of EOP reports for the five years under review, the numbers below will be a conservative estimate compared to the total actual outputs.

4.1 Key outputs

The study shows that in the period between 2012 and 2016 the sample of Expo Fund projects:

- Supported a total of over 5,530 performances and events, including:
 - 4,165 performances and events
 - 75 exhibitions
 - 400 school performances
 - and over 720 school and community workshops
- Attracted audiences of more than 2.6 million - including over 1.7 million at performances, and over 0.7 million visitors to exhibitions
- Resulted in 306 new commissions
- Supported over 2,000 temporary employment opportunities

This reveals the substantial role the Expo fund has played as a means of boosting Scotland's innovative cultural content, supporting on average over 1000 additional performances and events each year, with more than 20% of activities taking place in schools and communities.

The strength of Edinburgh's major festival platforms in connecting artists with audiences can be seen in the generation of average annual audience of over 500,000 for Expo funded work – a substantial achievement when compared to the

² performances and events - 6,133 recorded between 2012-2016, and an estimated 4,869 over the remaining five years; audiences - 2,691,863 recorded between 2012-2016, and an estimated

total annual collective audience of some 4.6 million for the festivals' peak seasons in their entirety.

These findings illustrate the importance of the Expo Fund not only for the individual festivals and the creatives involved, but also for attracting audiences to Scottish works and to Edinburgh as a world-leading festival city, as well as for bringing Scottish works to schools and communities.

The Expo Fund also plays an important role in sustaining the Scottish cultural sector by supporting professional development and practice through an array of temporary employment opportunities. Finally, the Expo Fund significantly contributes to increasing creative output of the Scottish cultural sector by supporting new works to be commissioned from Scottish-based creatives.

The detailed analysis of the five-year sample has also enabled an estimate to be made of total outputs across the 10 years of the Expo fund (2008-18), based on the methodology set out in section two. Over its first ten years, it is estimated that the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund has supported at least 11,000 performances and events for Scottish talent, resulted in 550 new commissions and attracted audiences of over 5 million.²

4.2 Income and expenditure

This section details the key income and expenditure figures aggregated from the EOP reports. Due to significant challenges in identifying and categorising different figures reported by the beneficiaries (see page 5 for details), the results should be treated only as indicative of the patterns of income and expenditure found in the Expo-funded projects.

Income

The sample of projects funded through the Expo Fund from 2012 to 2016 came to a total budget of £14.6m across Expo funding and other sources of project budget. The Expo fund on average contributed just over half of the total budget (54%).

2,389,500 over the remaining five years; commissions – 306 recorded between 2012-2016, and an estimated 248 over the remaining five years.

Additional sources of funding included partnerships (16%), box office income (16%), beneficiaries' own internal resources (13%) and other sources (1%).

These figures suggest that the ambitious nature of projects supported by the Expo fund is attractive to partner organisations and other funders. The projects are able to generate a substantial amount of additional income and resources to benefit the creatives involved. Considering that a number of Expo funded projects are conceptualised as large-scale free events, a fairly high contribution of box office income to the overall averages suggests that there is also a sub-set of Expo-funded projects where the Festivals are able to use their brands to attract strong paying audiences as well.

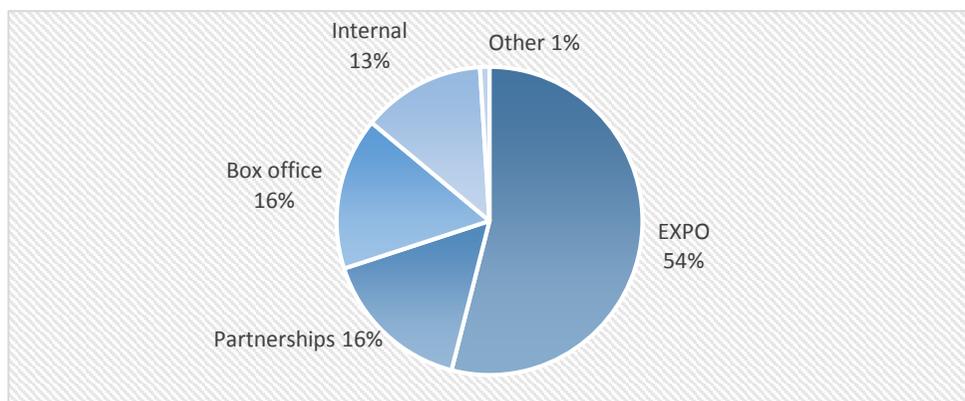


Figure 1: Income sources by type and share in total Expo-funded project budgets (2012-2016)

Expenditure

The expenses reported for the sample of Expo-funded projects in the period between 2012 and 2016 suggest that, on average, highest expenditures related to the production (33%) and creative fees (31%) – see figure 2. Project management costs accounted for 12% of the total expenses, and Marketing & PR account for 9%. 15% of total budgets were allocated for other production expenses which include travel and accommodation, touring, technical costs, venue hire, and legal fees. These figures suggest that a high proportion of Expo budgets (88%) is invested directly in the support of Scottish-based creative professionals involved in the projects, and in the expenses involved in the production and promotion of works.

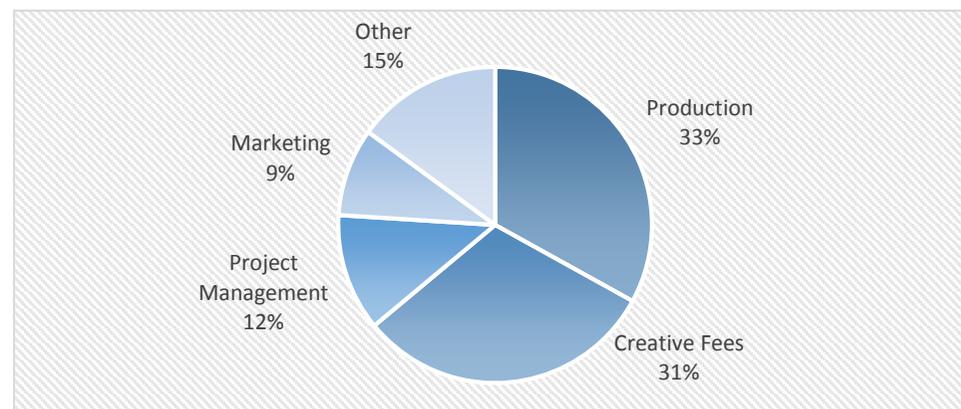


Figure 2: Expenditure by type and share in total Expo-funded project budgets (2012-2016)

The following table provides a breakdown of all the income and expenditure:

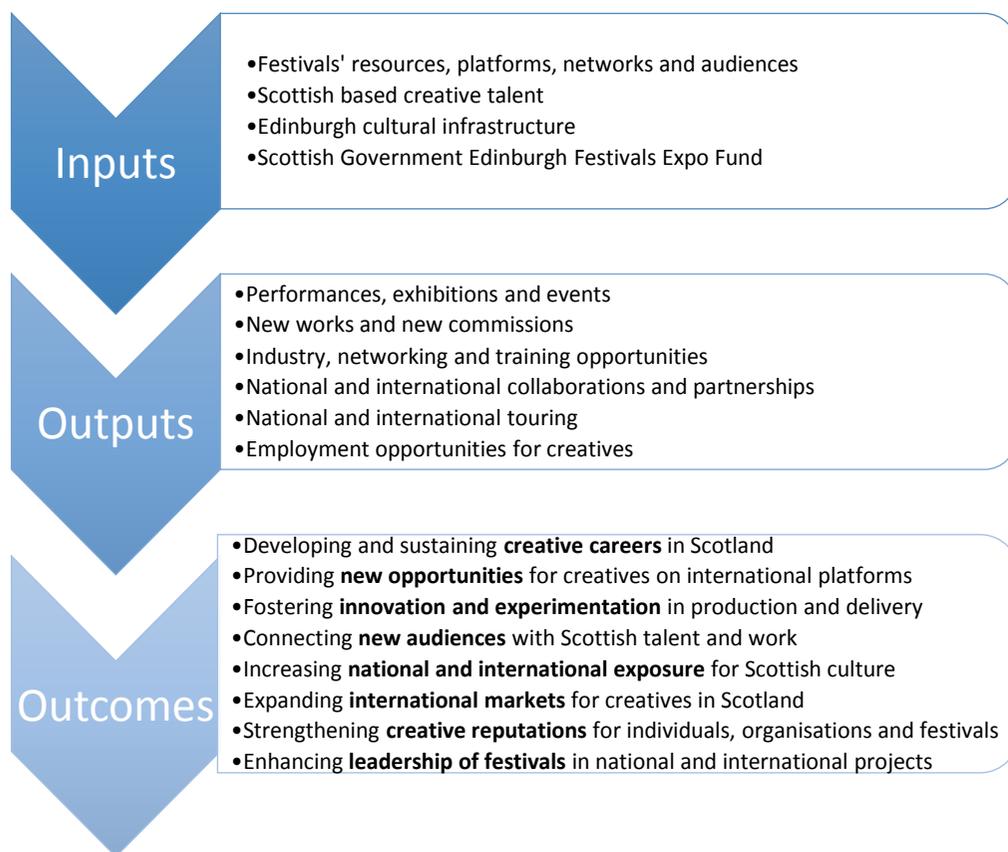
Income	Amount	%
EXPO	£7,909,901.97	54%
Partnerships: Public Funding	£1,155,179.28	8%
Partnerships: Private Funding	£426,720.05	3%
Partnerships: Other	£757,673.08	5%
Internal	£1,854,565.20	13%
Box office	£2,289,059.47	16%
Other	£173,844.92	1%
Total	£14,566,943.97	100%
Expenses	Amount	%
Creative Fees	£4,500,197.72	31%
Project Management	£1,745,739.59	12%
Production	£4,762,791.08	33%
Marketing & PR	£1,376,898.98	9%
Other: Travel, accommodation	£666,791.90	5%
Other: Touring	£59,857.00	0%
Other: Technical costs	£586,685.79	4%
Other: Venue hire	£784,415.74	5%
Other: Legal fees	£118,909.38	1%
Other: Misc	£28,704.50	0%
Total	£14,630,991.68	100%

Table 1: Income and expenditure breakdown of Expo funded project budgets (2012-2016)

5. Expo Fund Outcomes: Logic Model

The focus of this section is on defining the outcomes of the Expo Fund, which are then illustrated in the series of nine case studies highlighted in section 5.

This study examines the importance of the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund for its beneficiaries, namely Edinburgh's Festivals and Scottish-based creative professionals and organisations. The conversations with festival directors and creatives, supported by the analysis of the EOP reports, reveal a range of positive impacts resulting from the projects funded by the Expo Fund. These can be broadly categorised into eight distinctive, but mutually related, outcomes outlined in the Logic Model below:



Outcome 1: Developing and sustaining creative careers in Scotland

Central to the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund is the focus on supporting the career development of Scottish-based creatives. The projects funded through the Fund have supported creatives in all stages of their careers, and have been key to the development of their creative portfolios, as well as to the exploration of new career trajectories.

Case study: *jazz musician Seonaid Aitken boosted her international career and took a new direction as a solo artist thanks to Expo-funded projects by the Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival (see page 11).*

Outcome 2: Providing new opportunities for creatives on international platforms

The Expo Fund has increased the capacity of the Edinburgh Festivals to utilise their international platforms and reputations in support of Scottish-based creatives. Through their engagement with the Expo-funded projects, creative professionals are provided access to a wide international network, enabling them to share their experiences, learn from international peers and explore new opportunities for work in international contexts.

Case study: *Screenwriter and director Raisah Ahmed had the opportunity for professional development and networking with key figures in the global film industry through Edinburgh International Film Festival's Talent Lab (see page 13).*

Outcome 3: Fostering innovation and experimentation in production and delivery

Support from the Expo Fund has enabled creative professionals to innovate and experiment beyond what would otherwise have been possible. Similarly, the Expo Fund has enabled the festivals to explore new ideas and concepts for presenting innovative works.

Case study: *Digital artist duo Dennis and Debbie Club created a commissioned virtual reality artwork showcased in the National Museum of Scotland as part of the Edinburgh International Science Festival (see page 15).*

Outcome 4: Connecting new audiences with Scottish talent and work

The Expo Fund has enabled the Edinburgh Festivals and Scottish-based creatives to reach new audiences in two distinct ways. Firstly, by having their works programmed in the Festivals, creatives benefitted from connecting with national and international audiences who may otherwise be unaware of them. Secondly, by enabling innovation and experimentation in production and delivery, the Expo Fund also contributed to attracting new audiences to Scottish-based creatives' work.

Case study: *The Made in Scotland showcase at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe has offered performance artist and choreographer Caroline Bowditch opportunities to reach new audiences for two shows aimed at very different age groups (see page 17)*

Outcome 5: Increasing national and international exposure for Scottish culture

Building on the international reputations of the Edinburgh Festivals, the creative works featured as part of Expo-funded projects often resulted in increased international recognition of Scottish talent and works among international cultural professionals and policymakers.

Case study: *Edinburgh-based artist Jonathan Owen received international interest in his ambitious new work commissioned as part of the Edinburgh Art Festival's Expo-funded programme, More Lasting Than Bronze (see page 19).*

Outcome 6: Expanding international markets for creatives in Scotland

Apart from enabling access to international networks and audiences, the Expo Fund has also increased the visibility of Scottish creative work with international producers, presenters and promoters. In this way, the Expo Fund has opened up international market opportunities and increased creative exports.

Case study: *Chalk About by Curious Seed was initially developed with support from the Expo Fund for the Edinburgh International Children's Festival, then featured as part of Made in Scotland at the Fringe, and has now toured extensively around the world (see page 21).*

Outcome 7: Developing creative reputations for individuals, organisations and festivals

The networking and showcasing opportunities offered by the Expo fund provide participating individuals and cultural organisations with support to take risks and explore new directions that can enhance their creative reputations. The Expo Fund also plays an instrumental role in positioning the festivals themselves as globally recognised hubs of creative innovation.

Case study: *The James Plays was an ambitious new trilogy of history plays co-produced by the National Theatre of Scotland, the National Theatre and the Edinburgh International Festival, which later went on to tour across the UK as well as to a number of prestigious international festivals (see page 23).*

Case study: *The 2012 Edinburgh World Writers' Conference - organised by the Edinburgh International Book Festival with the British Council - helped participating Scottish authors to gain international recognition, including Keith Gray, a writer for young people (see page 25).*

Outcome 8: Enhancing leadership of festivals in national and international projects

The Expo Fund has played an important role in supporting the festivals with their involvement in large national and international collaborations and projects. Expo resources have enabled festivals to take on a leadership role that would not otherwise be possible, due to the scale or scope of the projects.

Case study: *The Seeing Stories project, funded by the European Union and the Expo Fund, enabled the Scottish International Storytelling Festival to lead on an international project linking Scottish creatives to festivals and storytellers across Europe (see page 27).*

6. Operation of the Expo Fund

The outcomes associated with the Expo Fund are impressive but discussions with the Festivals and creative professionals identified a number of challenges in the input/output categories that if addressed could enhance the overall operation:

- **Timing of the Expo Fund:** one of the more common issues identified during the study concerned the timing of the Expo Fund, which is constrained by the current annual Scottish Government budgeting timetable. Specifically, with Expo fund results confirmed in February in recent years, the summer festivals have only a few months to commission and organise the Expo-funded projects and this affects the the scope of what is possible to achieve.
- **Continuity of the Expo funded projects:** In many cases, the festivals expressed interest in organising Expo-funded projects that would provide opportunity for creatives over more than one year. Currently, the Expo Fund currently operates only on a year-to-year basis. While the Festivals may apply to deliver different phases of the same project in different years, the lack of long term visibility of the forward Expo Fund commitment makes it difficult to efficiently plan and deliver such projects.
- **A short period for reporting on the outcomes:** for many projects funded through the Expo Fund, some of the outcomes become apparent only after a longer period of time and an evaluation approach that enabled longer term follow up would be valuable. This is particularly the case in the context of touring, awards, and extended lives of the commissioned works, as well as in the context of artist development.

7. Expo Fund Outcomes: Case Studies

Outcome 1: Developing and Sustaining Creative Careers

Seonaid Aitken: A Night With Ella

The Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival marked Ella Fitzgerald's centenary year with a tribute concert celebrating some of Ella's greatest songs. Musician Seonaid Aitken was invited to take a lead creative role in the project.

Origins

The Ella Fitzgerald centenary celebration concert³ was not the first Expo-funded project Seonaid was involved with. Previously, Seonaid collaborated with the Tokyo Django Collective on an Expo Fund-supported concert featuring music by prominent gipsy jazz guitarist and composer Django Reinhardt. After performing in Edinburgh, the group was invited to perform at the Tokyo Jazz Festival.

"Scotland brought the Japanese musicians over, and then Japan brought me over. That was fantastic! And Tokyo Django Collective maintain that they would never get a gig at the Tokyo Jazz Festival as a trio. It only became possible with me as a guest to get a performance at such a recognised Jazz Festival."

For Seonaid, whose work until then largely revolved around her band, the collaboration with Tokyo Jazz Festival has been an important part of her solo career, and was fundamental for the next important step in her career, the Expo-funded Ella Fitzgerald centenary concert.

Delivery

The performance in Edinburgh saw Seonaid performing alongside the 17-piece Groove Merchant Orchestra, a 10-piece string section, and guest vocalist Sam West.

³ http://www.edinburghjazzfestival.com/programme/artists/artist-information.html?artist_id=+A+Night+With+Ella+-+Seonaid+Aitken

"I believed that the involvement of Groove Merchant Jazz Orchestra would give us a sort of fresh look, a fresh approach to this older music. So I thought let's get them involved because they are the next generation of jazz musicians coming from Scotland."

Taking a lead on a project of this size and complexity was an important learning experience for Seonaid, both as a performer and as a creative lead, and she benefitted from strong support from the Edinburgh Jazz & Blues Festival.

"For them to have that trust in me, that really humbled me. That they believed that I was capable of organising this big project myself and taking on a lead role in this show. That has also given me a big boost in confidence."

The project also provided Seonaid with the opportunity to arrange material. The experience of learning about the instrumentation, the sound, and the capabilities of the Big Band has made Seonaid more confident in her writing and her arrangements.

"It was a really massive project, a massive undertaking. I spent a long time, a couple of months, on building the show and deciding what materials to use. I loved absolutely every minute of it. I immersed myself in all the music and stories about Ella. It was a fantastic learning experience for me."

Outcomes

Seonaid continues to perform the Ella Fitzgerald tribute show, with a recent concert held in March 2018 as a part of the Aberdeen Jazz Festival. Future plans involve a Scottish tour and a show in Glasgow.

"Future shows very much depend on the funding opportunities because it is such a large scale performance. I mean, there is 19 people involved, not including

singers and the engineers. We did develop a smaller, stripped down version, a four, maybe five piece band and two singers.”

Seonaid’s involvement and work on the Expo-funded projects have had a significant impact on her career and artistic development. While she initially considered herself first and foremost as a violinist, these experiences have given her confidence to explore the opportunities as a vocalist and a solo artist.

“This project really helped me realise that actually I can hold a full concert as a singer. It opened my mind to various projects that I can be a part of. The Ella Fitzgerald show obviously has the Ella element, which draws audience to the concerts. However, I also think that my performance helped raise my status in the Scottish Jazz scene. People now want to come and hear my interpretations of this music as well.”

Seonaid is currently involved in a number of projects both as a solo artist and as a member of established jazz band Rose Room. Following her work on the Ella Fitzgerald show, Seonaid won the Scottish Jazz Award for best vocalist. She also began writing, arranging and recording film music, and is currently preparing a full album. She maintains that, without the Expo-funded projects, her career development would be very different.

“I think the projects have given me the impetus to really go for it and put myself out there as a soloist. The Tokyo Django Project was a nice stepping stone of still playing in a band, but reinforcing that I am an artist in my own right. Without that, I probably wouldn’t have agreed to do the Ella Fitzgerald show and the album I am planning. I used to think of myself only as a gigging musician with my own band, but this EXPO experience has definitely given me the impetus and the confidence to realise that I can do this as well as my band projects.”



Credit: David P. Scott

Outcome 2: Providing new opportunities for creatives on international platforms

Raisah Ahmed: Talent Lab

For the past seven years, the Edinburgh International Film Festival's Talent Lab⁴ has provided emerging filmmakers with the opportunity for professional development and networking with key figures in the global film industry. In 2014, Glasgow-based screenwriter and director Raisah Ahmed was one of the participants.

Origins

Raisah Ahmed saw Edinburgh International Film Festival's Talent Lab as an interesting opportunity in the early stage of her career. By the time she applied, she had already worked on several short films, including one that featured at the Glasgow Short Film Festival, and she had written her first feature which had been shortlisted for the Sundance Writers Lab.

"At the time, I didn't have a lot of concrete stuff. It was more a sense of, I guess, having a lot of potential. I applied to the Talent Lab because I liked Edinburgh as a festival, and the Talent Lab just sounded amazing. So I put the application in, not knowing if I would be on the right sort of level for the Lab."

Delivery

The Lab participants were provided with the opportunity to engage in both the International Film Festival's events, and the events organised specifically for the participants. Raisah recalls the Talent Lab as a valuable opportunity not only for professional development, but also for networking with other Scottish and international participants.

"At the Talent Lab, you're in a group of filmmakers what are going through the same journey you are. What was really great was that quite a few of them were

Scottish filmmakers, people that I still see regularly. There is that sense of a group of people you have an affiliation with."

While the participants were required to apply for the Talent Lab with a specific project, Raisah maintains that the purpose of the Talent Lab was not to help with developing individual projects, but to facilitate the participants' development as filmmakers.

"The participation in the Talent Lab is more about the development of you as a filmmaker. Both in the sense of your craft, but also in terms of networking. I think both go well hand-in-hand, and I think that the Lab does that really well. It gives you kind of the knowledge that you need to then be able to find a way to further yourself. But it also gives you a safe environment in which to network and get better at that side of it as well."

Outcomes

The participation in the Talent Lab has been an important part of Raisah's career development. Apart from building her expertise as a filmmaker, Raisah was given the opportunity to network with key people in the sector. She established a relationship with the Scottish Film Talent Network (SFTN), and developed a commission for the SFTN's New Talent Short in 2015. Raisah's work with SFTN is still ongoing with the current development of the treatment for a feature film based on the project she applied with to the Talent Lab in 2014.

"It's all kind of nicely connected. That project I brought them four years ago, they are now much more hands on with it, which is really nice. Maybe we'll premier at Edinburgh one of these years!"

For Raisah, the participation in the Talent Lab was a significant step in the right direction for her career. It provided her with a sense of self-confidence required to push her career further.

⁴ For more information, visit: <https://www.edfilmfest.org.uk/eiff-talent-lab-open-applications>

“Even having the Lab on my CV, I think, is a massive thing. I think people see it and they kind of go, “ok, this person is legitimate because they've done this Lab”.

The EXPO experience was quite life-changing for me, because it kind of gave me a sense of credibility.”

Currently, Raisah is working on two features films, one with the Scottish Film Talent Network and the other with Film4. She is also developing an art installation with the support of B3 Media in London. She recently got her first TV directing credit for directing an episode of an online series “The Break”, as well as the first writing credit on TV for her work on CBeebies’ “Feeling Better” show.

“If I hadn’t attended the Talent Lab in 2014, I wouldn’t have formed the relationship with the Scottish Film Talent Network. Also, I think that I wouldn’t have had the confidence the Lab gave me. It probably would have taken me a little bit longer to feel like there are certain things I should do, and opportunities that I could apply for. I think my career would be probably a couple of years behind at least, if I haven’t done the Lab.”



Outcome 3: Fostering innovation and experimentation in production and delivery

Dennis and Debbie Club: Pause Reality

Digital artist duo Dennis and Debbie Club created work for the Edinburgh International Science Festival's 2017 Expo-funded exhibition titled Play On¹, which explored discovery and learning through play. The exhibition took place in the National Museum of Scotland's Grand Gallery and featured four commissioned artworks, including Pause Reality.

Origins

Pause Reality⁵ is a virtual reality (VR) experience commissioned for the Play On programme. Dennis and Debbie Club have over the past four years been involved in creating virtual reality and moving image art. The artists became interested in exploring the artistic opportunities provided by the rapid development of digital technologies, and specifically VR.

"Being physical artists just didn't work for us anymore. The only chance we had was to try and make something else happen. At that time, VR seemed to provide the best mixture of still doing something sculptural and artistic, but at the same time digital."

After receiving financial support from the Creative Scotland Innovation Fund to develop a VR installation for the Glasgow Short Film Festival, this commission by the Edinburgh International Science Festival presented not only a natural progression for their artistic development, but also a new creative challenge.

"Our themes are normally quite dystopian, and that was something that we could not do for the Edinburgh International Science Festival as we were aware that the audience is mostly younger. So, there were a couple of themes that we put in that could be understood by adults, but also wouldn't be too heavy for children."

⁵ <http://dennisanddebbie.club/Pause-Reality-2017>

Delivery

Pause Reality is a 10-minute 3D animation for VR headsets. The concept was based on the notion of reality as a construct, and it explored the blurred line between simulated and perceived realities. Using the medium of virtual reality creates continuous challenges for Dennis and Debbie Club, as the delivery of their innovative productions to wider audiences is limited by the current stage of technological development.

"The uptake in VR is just not there yet for home use. This also means that there are no publishers and you still need a physical location and technology to present digital work."

With the support from the Expo Fund and the Edinburgh International Science Festival, Dennis and Debbie Club were able to overcome these challenges. Their work was exhibited in the Grand Gallery of the National Museum of Scotland on seven VR headsets powered by Samsung S7 mobile phones.

"The project was specifically made for the Edinburgh International Science Festival because the costs of the headsets and development time would have been impossible through self-funding. The commission provided us with time to work on it, and the EXPO fund helped to actually display it to the public."

Outcomes

The project had a significant impact on the artistic and skills development of the Dennis and Debbie Club, as well as on their success in subsequent projects.

"While we still use the same software and the same coding skills, we increase our skills with every new project we work on. We are now getting quite good at optimising the software in ways that we want it to be optimised."

Currently, Dennis and Debbie Club are working on several new projects, including a collaboration with BBC Scotland, and work with Glasgow University's Department of Computing Science, which is currently in the final selection for the Sundance New Frontier Lab.

"It's quite hard to say whether that this specific project had an influence on these upcoming things, but it is an important part of the portfolio of our work. And this impresses people. And tells them that we know what we are doing. Which is absolutely the case!"

The Expo Fund has played an important role in supporting the portfolio of works by Dennis and Debbie Club, as it supported not only the development of the application, but also gave them the opportunity to showcase their work to a large audience.

"For us as two independent producers it is very hard or nearly impossible to self-fund these projects whilst also working on the content. So it's quite important for organizations like the Science Festival to be able to give us commissions in order to build a portfolio and to get experience in what makes a good virtual reality experience. Or a bad one. So we can learn and move on to bigger projects. It really is necessary for these EXPO commissions to happen in order to push the sector forward. "



Outcome 4: Connecting new audiences with Scottish talent and work

Caroline Bowditch: Falling in Love with Frida

The Expo-funded Made in Scotland showcase promotes ambitious high quality theatre, music and dance currently being produced in Scotland to international promoters and audiences at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Caroline Bowditch⁶ has a long-lasting connection with the Made in Scotland showcase, initially as an associated artist to Scottish Dance Theatre and, more recently, as an independent artist.

Origins

Caroline's 2014 work *Falling in Love with Frida*⁷ was the first piece she presented as an independent artist at the Made in Scotland showcase. The initial idea for the piece came during Caroline's residency with Dance4 in Nottingham, when her interest in skeletons and bones brought her to thinking about Frida Kahlo.

"I realised that Frida was actually a disabled artist, and had been for most of her life. I became fascinated with how successful she was, how much of a household name she has become. And that the disability has not necessarily been a disadvantage for her in terms of her career or recognition, especially once she died."

Further research into the topic of Frida Kahlo uncovered that, while Frida's story has been told from a number of perspectives, from artistic to LGBT, it had never been told from a disability perspective. The focus on Frida Kahlo's story also enabled Caroline to attract an audience that would not necessarily see her work.

"I really wanted to tell Frida's story from a disability perspective. And the more I learnt about her and the potential crossovers between her life and mine. Making an EXPO piece about Frida Kahlo brought a lot of people to me that may never have come to see my work. But, because it was about Frida, people came."

⁶ <http://www.carolinebowditch.com/about-caroline.html>

Delivery

Working with the Made in Scotland showcase was a continually positive experience for Caroline. She recognises the programming panel's confidence in her ability to develop and deliver a world-class performance to the Showcase. She also praises their willingness to take risks about the pieces they put in the showcase, making it an important platform for starting new conversations.

"I always feel incredibly humble by the massive confidence and trust that the assessors have in me and my work. That I'm going to deliver something which is worthy of being part of the showcase."

The showcase also represents an important part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe experience. With so many options available, knowing where to begin can pose a challenge to the visitors.

"I think a lot of people coming to Edinburgh for the first time find Made in Scotland programme as such a lovely and concise place to start. And having been selected to be a part of that programme so many times makes me feel incredibly privileged."

Falling in Love with Frida was awarded a Herald Angel Award in 2014. The piece has since then been performed nearly a hundred times, and has been seen by around 9,500 people. It has toured in Scotland, the rest of the UK, Ireland, Australia and most recently in Poland.

Outcomes

Falling in Love with Frida still continues to spark interest. Its recent performance in Poland represents a prime example of connecting with new audiences.

"When the show was initially performed in 2014, a Polish producer told me she did not think Frida could be programmed in Poland. When she heard last year that we

⁷ <http://www.carolinebowditch.com/falling-in-love-with-frida.html>

were performing in Poznan, she was quite surprised! She was quite interested in the fact that somebody else has seen it, obviously from a different part of Poland, and seen it as an opportunity. The experience of performing in Poland was amazing. After the show we always have a post-show discussion that normally lasts about 20 minutes. In Poland, however, the post-show discussion took almost as long as the show itself - around 55 minutes. Because there were so many questions and people have never seen anything like this before."

After the success of *Falling in Love with Frida*, Caroline developed and showcased a new piece for children under 12 months, entitled *Snigel and Friends*. While the two pieces seemingly have little in common, Caroline argues quite the opposite.

"I think that the idea of commonalities between two shows sound bizarre. Because Frida is about drinking tequila and talking about sex, and now we've made this tiny show for babies, or a show for tiny babies. However, I think there is a connection. I realised that Frida for me was all about bringing the audience in. It was about making them feel comfortable, and for us to be able to have a real connection and the real conversation about things that might not be comfortable. In the case of Snigel and Friends, it's absolutely all about creating a space where everybody feels comfortable, where babies can be what they need to be."

The continuity of performing at the Made in Scotland showcase resulted with an increased interest in Caroline's new work, as well as in her personally.

"Producers that have seen Frida in 2014 came back to see my new show because they saw my name. They came to see a completely different show, a show for tiny babies. And they were quite surprised! They were like: "Wow! Ok, this is really different.". What the involvement in the Fringe also did was that it also got a lot of people interested in me as a person."



Outcome 5: Increasing national and international exposure for Scottish culture

Jonathan Owen: More lasting Than Bronze

In 2016, Edinburgh Art Festival featured a programme titled “More Lasting than Bronze”. This commissioned programme, funded by the Edinburgh Festivals Expo Fund, included a selection of invited artists from all stages in their careers, whose works were exhibited in the public spaces in Edinburgh. Among them was Jonathan Owen¹.

Origins

In his work, Jonathan is interested in the systematic transformation of objects and images through their reduction. Initially, his work included interventions in photographs, and the creation of new image narratives through removal of the parts of the original images. More recently, Jonathan began similar interventions in sculptures, in which he re-carves the existing marble statues into new, disjointed versions of the original form.

Delivery

Jonathan was approached by the Edinburgh Art Festival, and was invited to make a commission for the Festival’s 2016 programme. Apart from being his largest sculptural work to date, and his first intervention into a life-size figure, this commission was also his first publicly sited work. Faced with a creative and logistical challenge of creating such a piece, Jonathan benefitted from continuous support from the Edinburgh Art Festival and the Expo fund.

“One of the strengths of the Edinburgh Art Festival is that they are able to access the sites and buildings that are normally not used for contemporary art. Also, they had quite a clear budget and timeline, so I was able to plan what is possible with

some of the logistical things in mind as well. Moreover, I didn’t have the feeling they tried to shape the work or put me toward any decisions. I felt very respected and supported. They got it just right.”

The resulting artwork is an untitled sculpture featuring his intervention into a 19th century life-size marble figure of a nymph. His intervention is described as “re-carving of her idealised form into an interlinking set of marble chains, her newly bowed head and buckled form suggesting a body crumpled by two hundred years of the male gaze”. The sculpture was sited at the Burns Monument, a neo-classical space built in 1831 to house a statue of Robert Burns by John Flaxman. The site itself was central to Jonathan’s concept.

“I had this wonderful opportunity to use an existing monument to exhibit my work. I chose the object I worked with the venue in mind, its size and historical purpose.”

Outcomes

The commission by the Edinburgh Art Festival has had a significant impact on Jonathan Owen’s career and artistic development, as well as on the international recognition of his work. After the exhibition, the statue was auctioned and sold to the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia. It is currently on display as a part of their NGV Triennial⁸.

“This is an unexpected part of the story, a real second life for the piece. It is currently in the permanent collection at the National Gallery of Victoria, and is placed within its 19th Century collection.”

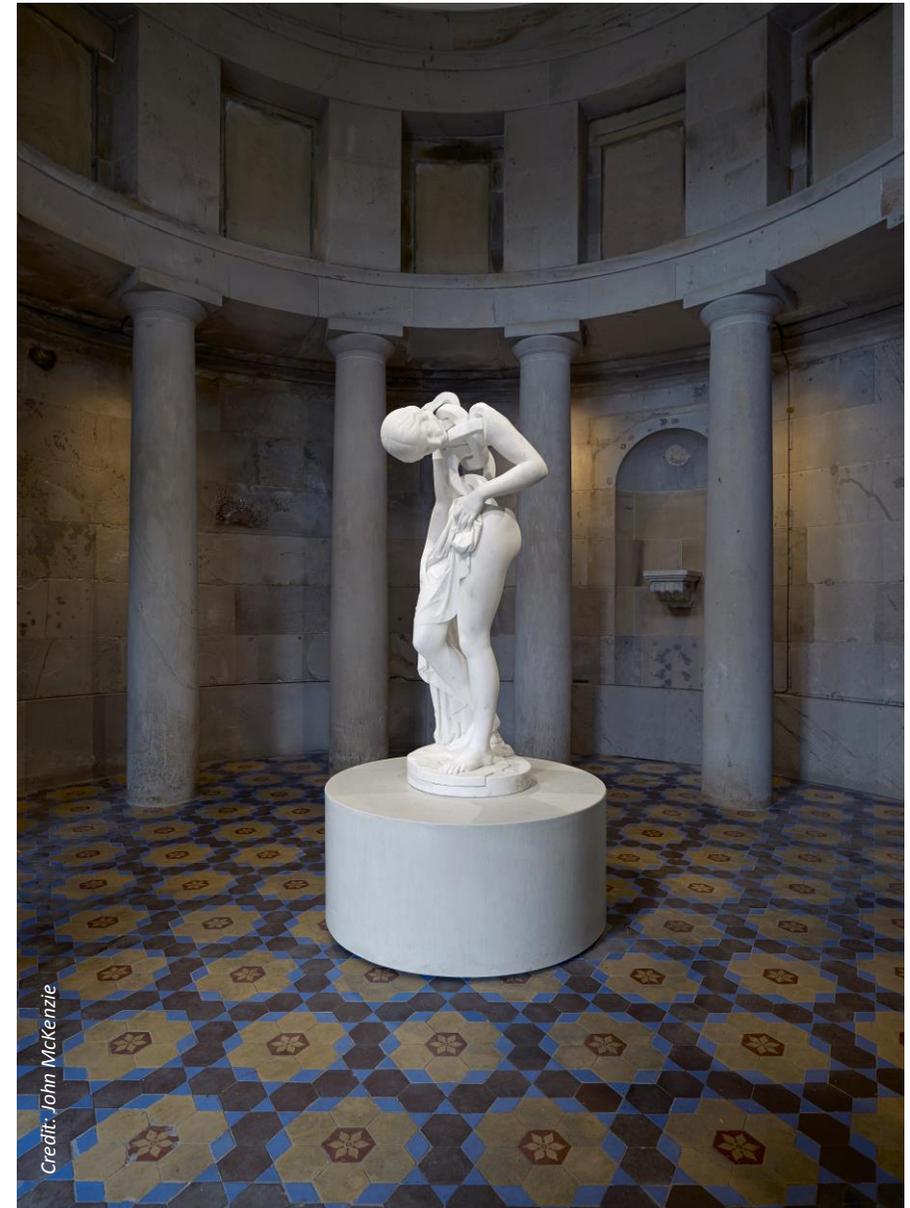
⁸ NGV Triennial review: <https://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/ngv-triennial-review-artists-toy-with-social-fabric-20180126-h0olf5.html>

Jonathan's work also led to new possibilities to present his works internationally. He was one of fifty international artists selected to exhibit at the 2016 Kochi-Muziris Biennale in India. Jonathan suggests that his selection was largely due to his work being commissioned and presented at the Edinburgh Art Festival. This additional international exposure also resulted in new opportunities.

"I have had an offer from a private collector to commission a piece of work on a similar scale based purely on that EXPO piece I made for the Edinburgh Art Festival. That offer of commission would not have come to me without the project."

Jonathan sees the commission by the Edinburgh Art Festival as a "really significant piece of work" for him and his creative development. It provided him with the opportunity to expand his work beyond what he thought was possible.

"It raised the bar for what is possible with my work. There is no way I could have made that work without the commission from the Edinburgh Art Festival. I just wouldn't have been able to. And I probably would not have had the confidence to try it without their encouragement. This piece would not exist without the commission, that's for sure."



Credit: John McKenzie

Outcome 6: Expanding international markets for creatives in Scotland

Curious Seed: Chalk About

Chalk About¹ is a highly successful production by Curious Seed, the Edinburgh-based performance company. Initially developed with support from the Expo Fund for the Edinburgh International Children's Festival in 2013, Chalk About was later selected for the Expo-funded Made in Scotland Showcase in the Fringe in 2014. Since then, Chalk About has toured extensively around the world.

Origins

Christine Devaney, founder and artistic director of Curious Seed, devised the initial concept for Chalk About during her involvement with Fresh Tracks Europe, a group of partner organisations supporting the development of choreographers in creating works specifically for young people. The initial development of Chalk About was the fruit of a collaborative effort of an international team of creatives led by Christine Devaney and Leandro Kees from Germany.

Delivery

The initial financial support to the project came from the Edinburgh International Children's Festival (then called Imagine). A portion of Expo funding in 2013 was invested in the development of new works, including Chalk About, towards their performance at the Festival in 2013.

"The development of Chalk About has been very organic. The development of the show was very much reliant on an initial creative idea and then having support from Imagine to develop it further."

The performance at the 2013 Festival immediately sparked national and international interest in Chalk About. In 2014, Curious Seed successfully applied for the Expo-funded Made in Scotland Showcase at the Fringe, resulting in 21 performances at Edinburgh's Summerhall. These shows further enhanced the

company's international recognition and increased national and international interest in the piece.

To date, Chalk About has toured extensively in 12 countries worldwide, and continues to be performed in 2018, with nine dates confirmed in May and June in Scotland and England.

"We've been very lucky that Chalk About was featured at Imagine festival, the Fringe, and then around the world. It's been quite an interesting journey."

Outcomes

Chalk About was developed at a time when Christine and her team were concentrating on development of Curious Seed as a production company. The project was timely for the company's development as it attracted international interest in the company and its work.

"I am sure that the success of Chalk About really had an impact on company being known outside Scotland, internationally. It was an important aspect and the impact of the EXPO Fund."

Moreover, the collaborative ties created during the development of Chalk About enabled Curious Seed to continue their international collaborations on new projects such as Teenage Trilogy, that benefitted both from the support by Imagine, and from creative residencies in Belgium and Denmark.

The support from the Expo Fund is seen by the company as invaluable for the development of Chalk About, with alternative sources of funding being limited.

"Without the support from the EXPO Fund I just don't think it would have had the same outcome. We wouldn't be able to run with it quite as much as we were able to. We wouldn't be able to respond so quickly to all the interest. It was really so valuable, actually."

In 2015, following the show's success at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the company was awarded Made in Scotland Onward Touring from Creative Scotland, which enabled the show to tour in New Zealand for the New Zealand International Festival and secure additional regional touring dates in February and March 2016.

For Curious Seed, Chalk About represents an important step in its creative development and international recognition it has today.

"It's all so connected, you know? From the beginning of Chalk About right to Teenage Trilogy, it's all so connected. And if we hadn't had the EXPO fund to make the work in a way we want to do Chalk About, then... it's a bit like unknitting a jumper, it's really hard to imagine us today without it."



Credit: Eoin Carey

Outcome 7: Developing creative reputations for individuals, organisations and festivals

Roy Luxford: The James Plays

Thanks to the Expo Fund, the Edinburgh International Festival was able to co-produce The James Plays¹ in 2014 – an ambitious new trilogy of history plays by the National Theatre of Scotland, which also saw the first time NTS had co-produced with the National Theatre in London.

Origins

The James Plays were initiated by National Theatre of Scotland Artistic Director Laurie Sansom and playwright Rona Munro. The trilogy was conceived as a complex and compelling interlinked narrative about the Stewart dynasty, Scottish culture and nationhood – and premiered in the momentous year of the Scottish independence referendum. The ability of the International Festival to make an early commitment as co-producers was important to bringing together a very ambitious and risky project, as explained by Roy Luxford, the Festival’s Programme Director.

“Given the scale of the work - it was essentially three full-length new plays with a large ensemble cast - it was clearly a significant production to put together. Much more so than liking a script of a new play, and committing to being part of a co-production. There was clearly much more involved in this undertaking, together with the early ambition to give it an extended performance run at the International Festival.”

Delivery

The James Plays involved the production of three new full-length plays with an ensemble of 20 actors and a complex theatre in the round staging. The scale and resources required to put three pieces together in an opening production is what made the project different and made the International Festival a natural partner given their access to the support of the Expo Fund.

Roy outlines the reasons the International Festival was excited to be a founding partner in the project, as it represented a landmark new collaboration and resonated strongly with the aims of the Expo Fund.

“The James Plays - and the creative team behind them - were a compelling artistic choice for the Festival programme. The idea of three national companies working together - National Theatre Scotland and National Theatre GB, and EIF - added another layer. However the scale of it, more akin to an opera production, necessitated a more complex model to underpin it.

The investment possible via the EXPO Fund enabled us to create a framework to produce and deliver the plays within the International Festival. The project seemed a very natural fit with the ambitions of the EXPO Fund. It was probably one of the most successful new Scottish pieces to open at the Festival in recent years.”

Outcomes

The successful presentation of The James Plays at the International Festival in 2014 was in part attributed to the careful and lengthy development process that the partners were able to support.

The piece had an extended rehearsal period, and significant technical and preview period before the Festival.

The James Plays received an excellent critical and audience reception in Edinburgh and London. The creative reputations of both the National Theatre of Scotland and the International Festival were enhanced by the programming of a work hailed as both timeless and topical ‘event theatre’.

After the initial seasons in both Edinburgh and London, the National Theatre of Scotland were able to put together a revival of the plays 18 months later. They had a major Scottish, UK and international tour with three Scottish locations plus eight more UK-wide, and dates at prestigious international festivals in Adelaide, Auckland and Toronto. Roy highlights the role of Expo in developing the touring opportunities.

“Because of the sheer scale and ambition of the piece, none of those presenters would have been interested sight unseen. It’s one of those pieces of work that just carries too much risk, until it’s actually produced. So the fact that we were able to give it such a grounded opening period, and that it further developed whilst it was in London, gave it a very strong calling card for a revival tour.”

Roy believes the project also demonstrated the importance of the Expo Fund to support the ability to take risk in developing major new Scottish works.

“It is particularly vital to our ecology to have an opportunity to collaborate at that scale. Even if the plays hadn’t been such a big success, it is still important to have an investment avenue like EXPO to enable that risk.

I think The James Plays is a particularly good example of an EXPO project. Not least because it was very strong artistically and successful, but in the way it enabled a new, large-scale commission to come together as a collaboration between three national partners. This project delivered on a national and international stage, which brought considerable benefits to all of those involved.”



Outcome 7: Developing creative reputations for individuals, organisations and festivals

Keith Gray: Edinburgh World Writers' Conference

In 2012, the Edinburgh International Book Festival, in cooperation with British Council and with support from the Festivals Edinburgh Expo Fund, organised the Edinburgh World Writers' Conference⁹.

Origins

During the 5-day event, 50 renowned authors revisited five discussion topics featured at the landmark International Writers' Conference that took place in Edinburgh during August 1962 as part of the Edinburgh International Festival. The aim was to commemorate its 50th anniversary and discuss the current state of the world of literature.

Keith Gray¹⁰, an award-winning fiction writer for children and young adults, was one of the authors featured in Edinburgh. The Expo funded Conference provided him and his peers the opportunity to discuss being a writer in this day and age, and to tackle issues facing contemporary literature internationally.

Delivery

Following Edinburgh, the conference continued in 14 cities worldwide, featuring 281 authors from 61 countries. Keith was invited to take part in the subsequent events hosted by the Bookworm Literature Festival (Beijing) and the Open Book Literary Festival (Cape Town). This experience enabled discussion of the future of literature with authors from different countries, writing genres and audiences.

“Writers for young people are often marginalised in the world of literature. We're seen as not equal to, or not as important as, adult writers. The World Writers Conference broke that down in many ways, by treating us as equals.”

⁹ <http://www.edinburghworldwritersconference.org/about-edinburgh-world-writers-conference/>

At the Cape Town Open Book Literary Festival, Keith delivered a keynote speech on censorship in young fiction and as a result, was published in the Guardian and featured by international media. This opportunity provided Keith with a unique international platform to take a stance publicly on censorship in children's books, a highly political topic.

Outcomes

Keith's involvement in the World Writers' Conference has resulted in increased visibility of his works internationally. Following the Conference, he was invited to festivals in Sao Paulo, Hong Kong and Melbourne. His work gained further recognition when one of his books was adapted into a play and performed in the UK, India and Korea which led to the original book currently being translated into Korean.

“[Without the World Writers' Conference] I certainly would not have been invited to the book festivals around the world.....if I hadn't had the platform the EXPO-funded Conference gave me to begin with.”

The World Writers' Conference also provided Keith with the opportunity to discuss the position of young fiction writers in contemporary literature, and to advocate its importance for the future of the novel and its role in shaping the next generations of readers and writers.

“While some people still perhaps don't like my books, I think that they liked that I was willing to stand up and talk about fiction for young people in general. It did open a couple of doors for me, definitely.”

¹⁰ <https://literature.britishcouncil.org/writer/keith-gray>

His involvement in the World Writers' Conference has also given him the opportunity to meet both renowned writers and readers from other nations, and develop his work in new directions.

"I've only ever written books based in the UK, pretty much based in my home town. And when I was invited to Cape Town festival, I got to meet young readers and writers from another nation. This experience gave me more confidence in my own writing, so I tried to write historical fiction and fiction set in a different country rather than just my own native country. In other words, I gained confidence as a writer. It may not have been all a wonderful financial pot-of-gold-at-the-end-of-the-rainbow kind of development for me, but it has definitely helped with my writing, and has hopefully helped with my books and my fiction."



Outcome 8: Enhancing leadership of festivals in national and international projects

Annalisa Salis: Seeing Stories

The Seeing Stories project¹¹, funded by the European Union and the Expo Fund, provided the opportunity for the Scottish International Storytelling Festival (SISF) to lead on an international project, connecting Scottish storytellers to gain and share experiences with festivals and other storytellers on an international platform.

Origins

The idea behind the Seeing Stories project was to research and recover stories from urban and rural landscapes with an aim to explore, share and promote European landscape narratives. The project was a collaborative effort between the Scottish International Storytelling Festival as a lead partner, and organisations from Italy, Germany and Portugal. The application was submitted for the funding through the European Union Culture Programme 2007-2013.

Delivery

In the project, the festival engaged with three urban areas in Edinburgh – Calton Hill, Netherbow and the Canongate – and the rural area of the Tweed Valley in the Scottish Borders. Project activities included the development of new creative modes of storytelling, and a series of events programmed in the festival in 2013 and 2014.

The scale and scope of the Seeing Stories project demonstrates the ambition of the festival to position itself as an international storytelling hub. As the European Union funds only 50% of the costs, SISF Programme Manager Annalisa Salis explained that

the project would not have been possible without support from the Expo fund, due to the lack of other potential sources of funding.

“We do have some funding from Edinburgh Council, and sometimes we get funding from foreign consulates for specific projects. But it’s always smaller than what we get from the EXPO, and not enough for the EU project.”

Project activities also included international collaborations between storytellers from partner countries. Renowned Scottish storyteller Andy Hunter participated in the project titled La Terra, il Colore. Storie Fiesolane (The earth, the colour. Tales of Fiesole), a bilingual storytelling event produced by Seeing Stories’ Italian partner Chille della Balanza (Florence). Andy’s widow, Anne Hunter, explains.

“The idea was to have a bilingual telling of stories of these two people who lived in Fiesole, who were perceived as outsiders. That was Paolo Tellini and Silvana Boni. An Italian storyteller Monica Fabbri told Silvana’s story, and Andy told the story of Paolo. The idea was to tell the story of the life of this man, but also to interweave the stories of the area, and the traditional stories within it.”

This opportunity was very exciting for Andy as he had never been involved in an international project on this scale before. While he was a full-time professional storyteller since 2009, Andy’s work prior to Seeing Stories was predominantly Scottish-based.

Outcomes

Seeing Stories had a series of significant impacts on the Festival and the creative professionals involved. It provided an opportunity for visiting and collaborating with other similar festivals in Europe, as Annalisa explains.

“You manage to see exactly how different other festivals can be from the one you run, and how some things can be further developed. Another benefit was

¹¹ For more information, visit: <http://seeingstories.eu/> and <http://www.tracscotland.org/seeing-stories>

obviously feeding into the storytelling festival in Edinburgh in terms that we could invite storytellers from Italy, Germany and Portugal."

Seeing Stories also provided a chance to open up an ongoing conversation about intangible cultural heritage. These conversations have recently led to new researches into the stories of the landscape, and have also sparked Global Gathering, the 3-day storytelling conference held during the Scottish International Storytelling Festival 2017. Building on their EU connections, Annalisa outlines how the festival plans to use the experiences from Seeing Stories to tap into the Erasmus+ programme.

"We have a big professional development strand which is getting bigger and bigger each year. And European storytellers, in order to fund their attendance, they could apply for Erasmus+ funding as long as they have an organisational affiliation, like a library or a festival."

The connections and the experiences gathered during the project have also resulted in plans for future cross-border collaborations. The scope and scale of the EXPO-created network has therefore been able to create a true legacy of resilient international links despite the sudden loss of Andy in 2015, as his widow explains.

"I think the impact of Seeing Stories did not cease with Andy's premature death. That's really important for me. Because sometimes it's really years before you see what the impact was. He was so happy with it, and I am so glad he had this experience."



Credit: Scottish International Storytelling Festival

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

For the last ten years the Scottish Government has invested in Edinburgh's Festivals, Scotland's world-leading cultural brands. The Expo Fund has recognised the Festivals as unrivalled international platforms and springboards for Scottish artists and companies.

Celebrating the diversity of the Festivals and harnessing their combined power to enhance Scotland's reputation as a creative nation, this support has generated remarkable new opportunities for Scotland's artists and companies. For the Festivals themselves this has been transformative, helping to significantly extend their own creative possibilities, deepen their innovative capacity and enhance their international reputations.

The Expo Fund was originally set up with the express intent of increasing the funding available to Scottish creative practitioners and this report provides solid evidence that the vast majority of Expo budgets are indeed invested directly in Scottish-based creative professionals and the production/promotion of their work.

Such investment has supported creatives in all stages of their careers but it is clear from this report that the meaningful outcomes identified would not have been achieved without the added crucial factor of the platforms/showcases provided by the Edinburgh Festivals.

It is this aspect that allows creative practitioners to fully exploit the opportunities of what would otherwise be a normal commissioning process but in these circumstances becomes an innovative 'festivals accelerator' to international networks and markets.

The Report concludes that the success of the Expo Fund is down to the alignment of three crucial factors:

- the efficiency of Expo funding in investing in Scottish creative practitioners through the major festival platforms
- the positive brand associations of staging Expo projects in the festivals' core international programmes
- the market access offered to creatives in showcasing Expo projects to an international audience

In this context it could be said that the Festivals framework acts as a fulcrum balancing and linking Scotland's internal creative practice with the external market economy thus increasing opportunities for Scottish cultural practitioners to make a living out of their work.

As the Festivals Expo Fund enters its second decade, eligibility has expanded to build on the model's success by including the international platforms offered by Celtic Connections and Glasgow International. To ensure maximum benefits as the structure of the fund evolves, it would appear to be critical that the three factors above are secured, developed and used as guiding principles in order to open up more international opportunities for cultural talent across Scotland.