

Developing Scotland's Young Audiences Sector



We are seeking a consultant to collaborate with a Young Audiences Group in order to map the Scottish Young Audiences sector, better understand our needs and priorities, and begin to shape a vision for the future.

BACKGROUND

Theatre and Dance for Young Audiences

Scotland has a strong tradition of creating incredible theatre and dance productions for children and young people, with work touring successfully across Scotland and around the world. Over the last 20 years, this area of Scotland's cultural landscape has become a hothouse for artistic innovation, where artists and companies have produced shows full of wonder, joy and inspiration.

At the same time, the sector faces ongoing challenges including the perception and value of the work and a lack of stable financial investment. The Covid-19 pandemic has magnified these challenges and highlighted others such as the lack of diversity within the sector. Collectively, a group of organisations and individuals are striving to effect positive change and this project forms part of this work.

The Young Audiences Group

The Young Audiences group is a collection of freelance artists, producers and organisations from the young audiences sector who are committed to making exceptional theatre and dance performances for audiences of children and young people in Scotland. The group was originally brought together by Imagine following the RFO funding decision in 2018. Whilst the group has met informally since then, we have run sector wide open invitation sessions, and during COVID-19 have had regular online meetings in order to support each other and discuss the current/future development of our sector.

The current group consists of the following freelancers and RFO/non RFO organisations:

Action Boat	Independent Arts Projects
Barrowland Ballet	Lyra
Catherine Wheels & Shona Reppe	Red Bridge Arts
Curious Seed	Sarah Gray/Scottish Theatre Producers
Heather Fulton/Frozen Charlotte	Starcatchers
Imagine	Visible Fictions

Since April 2020 we have:

- Written a joint call for Children in Scotland to put the arts at the heart of children's lives - <https://childreninScotland.org.uk/25-and-up-for-post-covid-renewal-we-need-to-be-radical-and-that-includes-with-the-arts/>
- Submitted an idea for inclusion in Culture Counts Cultural Manifesto based on the above call
- Made a joint submission to the Scottish Government Social Renewal Advisory Board with the Arts in Education Recovery Group
- Initiated a consultation process to address the lack of ethnic diversity within the Young Audiences sector in Scotland, the findings of which will feed into future plans
- Established an advocacy working group to develop collaborative advocacy activity for the sector, and developed a collective message for the UN Day of the Child on 20th November

Sector Development

Through discussions we have identified that there is a need to for the group to evolve, to establish clear ways of collaborative working and establish an understanding of a strategic vision for future of our sector in Scotland. There is a need to open up our discussions to those not currently involved so we can begin to:

- Offer a space where the voices of artists, companies and others who have not been part of current discussions about the sector can be heard and included
- Understand the needs and priorities of the young audiences sector as a whole
- Engage with other parts of Scotland's cultural sector more strategically
- Engage with other sectors including education, health and the Third sector and raise the profile and impact of work for young audiences in these contexts
- Demonstrate to the international community the strength of the sector in Scotland
- Increase opportunities for collaborative working and sharing new ways of working in light of the impact of the pandemic and Brexit

Intended Outcomes

- Identification of who consider themselves part of the whole ecosystem around the creation of work for young audiences, and what the key needs and priorities are for the young audiences sector in Scotland, understanding what we have and how we might enhance it
- Recommendations for an appropriate route for progressing the vision, mission and strategy for the sector
- Increased understanding across the wider arts sector about the role and contribution of work for young audiences to the cultural landscape

The Consultation Brief

The Young Audiences Group have secured some funding from Creative Scotland to help us to move this work forward. We are seeking to engage a Consultant with knowledge of the arts sector in Scotland to collaborate with us on the delivery of this work, with a particular focus on:

- Consultation with freelance artists and practitioners, ensuring representation from BIPOC and disabled artists, and with organisations and stakeholders to understand the needs and priorities of the sector
- Identifying our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
- Provide recommendations that will support the development of a vision, mission and strategy for the sector

Activities & Timescale

We envisage that this work will hang on key activities including:

- Initial mapping exercise to gather baseline data about the sector
- Online focus group consultation with broad representation including: freelance artists/practitioners including artists of colour, organisations, venues and local authorities, wider Youth Arts Sector to inform the creation of a more detailed survey
- An online open event to share our process and inform final recommendations
- A final report with recommendations

We will work with the consultant to create a timetable for activity; our aim is for final reporting to be delivered by the end of summer 2021.

Project Management

The project funding will be held by Catherine Wheels and they will oversee the project budget.

The consultant will be supported by the Advocacy Working Group, who will oversee milestone achievements and offer a space for discussion and assistance with the consultation work.

Project administration and logistics will be delivered by representatives of the Young Audiences Group and channelled through the Advocacy Working Group.

Budget

There is a budget of up to £5,000 for this piece of work.

A further budget of up to £3,000 will be available to cover access costs for freelance artists and practitioners to be able to participate in focus group sessions and to cover the costs of closed captioning or any other access costs as needed.

Tender Process:

Please submit a short tender proposal outlining your approach to the delivery of this work, along with a CV/biography. Please email your submission to louise@catherinewheels.co.uk

Deadline for submission: **Thursday 22nd April at 5pm**

Virtual interviews with short-listed applicants will be held in the week of **26th April 2021**

For an informal discussion about this project, please contact

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