

Angus Robertson MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture

St. Andrew's House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh  
EH1 3DG

22/08/24

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

We write in response to the announcement of the closure of Creative Scotland's Open Fund for Individuals alongside cuts, or pauses, to Scottish government initiatives, such as Culture Collective and the Youth Music Initiative, which will have a devastating impact on cultural provision in Scotland's communities.

The culture sector needs visible, open, and ambitious leadership at this critical time. Our artists need both long-term reassurance and immediate action. The culture sector needs a relationship between the Scottish Government and the arms-length body Creative Scotland that is positive, enabling and supports artists and freelancers as pivotal to the nation's culture, reputation, and wellbeing.

Freelance individuals are both the most vulnerable and the most important people in our workforce. We need to be assured that you will resource, support, and work constructively with our arms-length funding body to address the needs of artists and to provide active solutions to the wider crisis. We need the Scottish Government to invest in the cultural sector, and to shoulder, rather than abdicate, its responsibilities to the artists, writers, producers, makers, and musicians who make Scottish culture and the organisations who work in partnership with them by supporting their development and sharing their work with communities across Scotland.

As sector advocates in art forms and creative industries that include dance, performance, music, craft, literature and publishing, and visual arts, together with those with cross-sector expertise in equalities and cultural business, we pledge our support to our freelance workforce, and we call upon the Scottish Government to do the following:

- Deliver the funds you promised to Creative Scotland in budget year 2024-5
- Work with Creative Scotland for positive solutions to the crisis, including the immediate restoration of the Open Fund for Individuals
- Deliver on the Scottish Government's Pledges to increase culture funding across the portfolio

We will not rehearse the arguments for culture, we know you are committed to these. We call upon you to work with the sector, to show positive and present leadership, and to restore confidence. We would be grateful if you could meet with us urgently to address the concerns. Culture needs your support.

Yours sincerely

Moira Jeffrey, Director, Scottish Contemporary Art Network (SCAN)  
Jan-Bert van den Berg, Director, ArtLink Edinburgh and the Lothians  
Steve Byrne, Director, Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland  
David Francis, Director, Traditional Music Forum  
Irene Kernan, Director, Craft Scotland  
Robert Kilpatrick, CEO and Creative Director, Scottish Music Industry Association (SMIA)  
Marc Lambert, CEO Scottish Book Trust  
Marion Sinclair, Chief Executive, Publishing Scotland  
Fiona Sturgeon Shea, Chief Executive, Federation of Scottish Theatre  
David Watt, CEO, Culture and Business Scotland  
Lori Anderson, Director, Culture Counts

Sent on behalf of the above by

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