

Scottish Government submission of 11 October 2023

PE2030/C: Review cultural funding arrangements to enable Scotland to contribute to the Venice Biennale in 2024

I write in response to your correspondence of 21 September 2023 regarding Scotland + Venice and which also sought an update on the development of an International Culture Strategy.

Scotland + Venice

As the principal funding organisation for the Scotland + Venice project, Creative Scotland are commissioning a review of Scotland's participation in the Venice Biennale, on behalf of the Scotland + Venice partners: British Council; National Galleries of Scotland; Architecture & Design Scotland; V&A Dundee; Scottish Government; and Creative Scotland themselves.

Creative Scotland published an invitation to tender on 20 September, seeking professional services to undertake the review. The review is anticipated to run from November 2023 through to May 2024 and will comprise a mixture of desk research, interviews with key stakeholders, and targeted sectoral engagement sessions.

The scope of the review is anticipated to cover the relevance and impact of the project; the commissioning and delivery model; the partnership and governance model; ethics and sustainability; and finance and budgets.

The work will be overseen by a steering group made up of representatives of the Scotland + Venice partner organisations and other invited stakeholders with interests in Scotland + Venice. The outputs of the review will be shared publicly.

The review will provide key research findings and present and evaluate options for change, underpinned by a clear resourcing/financial strategy. The outputs of the review will be presented to the Scotland + Venice partnership Board for consideration. Recommendations from the review are intended to inform plans from 2026 onwards.

In March 2023 the Scotland + Venice partners announced their decision to pause the project and to carry out this review. As the committee are aware, there are no plans to participate in the 2024 Biennale. Plans to participate in 2025 are under review.

International Culture Strategy

In the Programme for Government published on 5 September this year the Scottish Government's commitment to publish an International Culture Strategy was restated. We are currently aiming to publish the strategy by March 2024.

Earlier this year we undertook a survey to seek stakeholder views and input which will inform the shape of the strategy. We received over 60 responses from a wide range of organisations and individuals across the Scottish culture sector and more widely. Scottish Government analysts are currently considering the responses received and compiling an analytical report on findings that will be published in the coming months. Alongside the report we will publish responses received, where responders have given us permission to do so.

We will ensure that any of these outputs, as well as the final published strategy, are shared with the Committee if they wish.

Directorate for Culture and Major Events