

Appendix minutes and notes from Consultation

DIY Arts Network - 18 July 2016 Feedback from group on issues arising in current KAP process:

BCC to publicise the KAP fund more widely - Make better use of Neighbourhood Partnerships and Bristol Post

Stick to your priorities.

In the last application, the budget section was in Word, which was difficult to use

Constructive feedback is key – last time there were issues with the rejection letters. If you want to nurture the arts ecology in the city be transparent around the process from now

Surgeries offered were really helpful, but the advice must be consistent.

Transparency about the assessment process, eg who is on the panel?

The jump to from Creative Seed (£3k) to KAP is big. A middle ground is needed.

KAP - 4 year, rather than the 3 year current set up. The problem with this is if unsuccessful 4 years is a long gap before you can re-apply.

If BCC require strategy documents please provide applicants with templates and a steer for smaller organisations. If documents are not required, ask questions about how an organisation can demonstrate ability.

Clarity of language is needed, especially around priorities.

Break up long narrative questions in the application into smaller chunks

Communicate the strategy so not to raise expectations – make clear what we are trying to achieve

We need a more strategic approach - for capital investment in the city. Cultural Strategy - needs development. The tender for writing this strategy goes out 19 July.

Questions around St Paul's Carnival funding: The funds have been ring fenced for Bristol Carnival events to take place in future years. A small proportion of it was used to develop and consult on the best way to ensure a sustainable Carnival organisation. The remaining amount is being held for when a new strategy is ready to be put in place for this event in order to ensure this event remains part of the city's calendar. ACE have done exactly the same with their Carnival fund as we have worked in partnership on this.

Ideas around how we can make the process easier- for the smaller organisations is there training that would help – less reporting

It is important to make clear that there will be disappointed organisations - the pot isn't going to get bigger

Issues raised around capital fund / support for other organisations - Disparity around the vision – this is a threat to the wider arts ecology

Rachel is going to email around further information

Capital of Culture position - Focus on the cultural strategy –the consultant will run consultation with the city

Post Brexit – can we develop a Bristol “creative Community response” - Puppet Place to circulate invite to open space event. Theatre Bristol run open space events. Can we provide a cultural response - there is a schools report around engagement in the arts and there is a lot of research out there already can use

FUNDING FESTIVALS -Supporting Growth Across Bristol’s Vibrant Festivals Sector Report

Executive Summary

Bristol’s growing and vibrant Festival and Event Sector is gathering international and national recognition. A multi-million pound industry, festivals generate tens of millions for the local economy, and engage huge and diverse audiences from across the city. This report around the KAP funding process identifies the demand for a ‘fairer’ share of the funding for festivals, and favours the creation of a tiered Festivals Fund. Festival organisers feel strongly that there needs to be improved transparency in the funding process, an end to ‘backdoor funding’ and clearer communications around the application process including guidelines and deadlines.

The sector also recommends the top criteria on which funding decisions should be made. Resources and finances are the biggest challenges facing festivals and thus this study identifies tailored Business Consultancy or Mentoring as a useful tool in helping the sector build resilience.

The sector expressed a strong desire for joined up socio-economic research to help understand and communicate impact. In a time of austerity, this report also recommends other key ways in which Bristol City Council and the culture team could support the sector.

Document:

- 1) Overview – A Developing Festivals and Events Sector
- 2) Scope of Consultation
- 3) Consultation Process
- 4) Barriers for festivals and events with the current application & funding process? How fit is the current KAP process for funding festivals and events?
- 5) What should the top 3 criteria for funding festivals and events in Bristol with this process be?
- 6) How do Bristol City Council ensure organisations they fund are adequately skilled or experienced at maintaining public safety at events?
- 7) How Would the Festivals and Events Sector Best Evaluate their Work
- 8) Given the limited funding, how else can Bristol City Council best Support the Sector?

1) Overview - A Developing Festivals and Events Sector

Bristol is a Festival City. During the Spring and Summer seasons, the streets, parks, venues and fields bristle with culture. In the last 5 years, we’ve seen the sector grow by a third, with the city now hosting over 50 significant festivals and events from a rich and diverse array of communities and cultures¹.

For the people who live and work here, Festivals are a defining feature of Bristol, and there is a growing evidence base for the contribution of Festivals to Bristol's inter/national identity, reputation and USP². Research from the University of Bristol suggests 'cultural life' is the single most important reason for people moving to the city³. Bristol's Festivals and Events took centre stage during Bristol 2015, European Green Capital, and recent research from Destination Bristol reveals that 36% of visitors to Bristol now select 'Festivals & Events' as key words associated with the city (placing higher than 'Sport', 'Theatre & Arts' and 'Science')³.

Festivals and events in Bristol reach live audiences of between 1.5 and 2 million people, and engage over 3,000 volunteers each year⁴. Often taking place outside of venues and in different sites across the city, festivals are uniquely able to reach and engage diverse communities. Our festivals and events ensure all the citizens of Bristol have the opportunity to benefit from cultural experiences, promote community cohesion and understanding, and develop a real sense of pride in place.

In economic terms the sector itself has a turnover in excess of £7 million per year⁴, with the combined impact on the local economy likely to be far in excess of this. In 2015 the Harbour Festival alone contributed a further £9 million in inward investment⁵, >40% of visitors to Love Saves the Day travelled from outside Bristol to attend⁶, and the last In Between Time festival attracted artists and audiences from 36 different countries⁷. Bristol Festivals has identified the need for a much stronger understanding of the overall social and economic impacts of the sector moving forwards.

The sector provides around 100 permanent jobs, creates temporary work for over 1,000 freelance and production staff, and provides paid work to 1,000s of artists, performers, musicians and creatives each year⁴. The sector currently engages effectively with interns, with many festivals engaging paid internships and short-term placements. Bristol Festivals identify that there is enthusiasm for a more cohesive programme of talent development across the city.

A typical festival organisation is resource-light, with low overheads. These organisations are in a position to make investment count, matching funding with entrepreneurial flair, sales and a uniquely high level of in-kind support.

2) Scope of Consultation

Bristol City Council's Culture Team recognise that the Festival Programme is an important part of cultural provision in the city, and are receiving an increasing number of applications from festivals. As part of the Key Arts Provider Review Process, they are keen to ensure that the new KAP funding process is open and appropriate for Arts Organisations and Festivals alike.

In this review of KAP funding, the consultancy process was asked to address:

- What are the barriers for festivals & events with the current application and funding process? How fit is the current KAP process for funding festivals and events?
- What should the top 3 criteria for funding festivals and events in Bristol with this process be?

- How do BCC ensure organisations they fund are adequately skilled or experienced at maintaining public safety at events?
- How would the festivals and events sector best evaluate their work (with reference to audience and box office data, audience surveys etc)?

In addition to this, acknowledging the current funding climate this report also looks at a broader question.

- Given limited funding how else could Bristol City Council best support the sector?

3) Consultation Process

- Discussion of document with members of Bristol Festivals Board
- Meeting Bristol City Council Culture Team
- Networking session Festival Funding – Bristol Festivals & Events Forum
- All festivals invited by email to conduct one-to-one conversations
- Series of 15-30 minute discussions with festival organisers (20 festivals) representing a range of sizes and cultural forms.

One-to-one conversations were selected as the best method for discussion given the confidential, often financial nature of the conversations.

Festivals taking part in the one-to-one consultation:

Bristol Balloon Fiesta, Bristol Festival of Ideas, Mayfest, Bristol Pride, Encounters Short Film & Animation Festival, Cary Grant Festival, Bristol City of Film, Doors Open Day, Bristol Biennial, In Between Time Festival, Bristol Festival of Nature, Bristol Harbour Festival, Islamic Cultural Fayre, Redfest, Bristol Jazz & Blues Festival, Simple Things, Upfest, Wildscreen, Africa Eye Festival, Bristol Festival of Puppetry, Love Saves the Day

4) What are the barriers for festivals and events with the current application and funding process? How fit is the current KAP process for funding festivals and events?

i. Festivals and KAP Funding

Currently **21** organisations receive KAP funding, sharing between them **£942,200** pa. Of these, currently only **5** (24%) are festivals, who share **17%** of the funds, **£161,200** pa. It is worth noting, that currently two organisations, Bristol Old Vic and Watershed share 42% of the total KAP funding, and that St Paul's Carnival and Bristol Cultural Development Partnership together hold 68% of festival funding.

In the 2015-18 KAP round, the success rate of festivals applying for KAP was 42%, compared to a 53% success rate for non-festivals, although a higher number of non-festivals applied.

Notably, of the 5 festivals that are funded through KAP, only one is a predominantly outdoors festival, with the other 4 being largely (although not exclusively) venue-based.

ii. Application Process

Findings: The majority of festivals spoken to were aware of KAP funding, although 30% had either, not heard of KAP funding, or did not know that it was available to festival organisers. Several festivals also commented that they were uncertain as to how much funding to apply for. Several festivals expressed that they felt their sector was perceived as inferior to the traditional 'arts sector' or did not feel valued by Bristol City Council. There were balancing negative and positive comments around the facilitated application sessions, and feedback for failed bids. However on the whole, festival organisers appreciated the limited resources of the BCC culture team, and would welcome continued advice sessions around funding applications.

Proposed Action:

- Lack of information around KAP funding and deadlines could be countered using the communication channels of Bristol Festivals in addition to those currently listed.
- The BCC culture team should continue to attend the Bristol Festivals & Events Forum to present a visible link between the sector and the council.
- Clear guidance around the appropriate level of funding to apply for would be helpful.
- Future facilitated application sessions could be co-hosted by Bristol Festivals and held at the Bristol Festivals Hub.

iii. Reporting Process

Findings: The consultation process included conversations with successful recipients of KAP funding (IBT, Mayfest, Bristol Cultural Development Partnership, Encounters Short Film & Animation Festival). All of these organisations appreciated the sensible level of reporting expected from BCC, and the three ACE NPOs, also appreciated the alignment of ACE and BCC reporting and application processes.

The funded applicants stressed the importance of the council investment as a stamp of quality and how valuable the funding was, even if of relatively low value, for attracting further match-funding into Bristol. The funded organisations also highlighted the importance of their relationship with Bristol City Council and the other KAP organisations.

Proposed Action

- Maintain a similar level/style of reporting.

iv. Funding Tiers, Transparency & Creation of a Festivals Fund

Findings: Perhaps the strongest finding of this consultancy was around the current funding format.

- Festival organisers felt strongly that if Bristol is promoting itself as a **Festival City**, there should be **visible internal investment** in festivals. The organisers strongly expressed that the ability of festivals to deliver cultural engagement to all sectors of society, to attract visitors, and to build engagement within and across communities (in a time of social division) were also huge assets to the city. The current KAP funding level of **17%** was felt to be too low across the organisations surveyed.

- The lack of any clear **mid-scale** funding for festivals was brought up independently by 8 organisations. Whilst festivals understand that the Community Festival & Event Fund (up to £2,000) helps catalyse and distribute activity throughout the city, there was a strong sense that the festivals who had grown beyond this, and were contributing the most to the local economy, to audiences and to the profile of the city, were locked out of investment, even when they operated on a not-for-profit or charitable basis.

*“We provide the images and experiences on which Bristol sells itself as a city, yet we don’t feel valued by the city (council). As a model, we’re growing success from within our communities and providing opportunities, employment and skills to the people who live here, as well as driving visitors and the local economy. Regular, even small investment would help us stabilise, and give us the security to plan ahead and grow ambition. The impact could be huge.” **Festival Director***

- Of the 20 organisations questioned, 18 (90%) supported the idea of a City/KAP Festivals Fund, with one of the currently funded organisations having no view, and one other currently funded organisation disagreeing.
- Multiple festivals admitted to receiving funding from BCC outside of KAP or transparent channels of culture funding. Whilst they were immensely grateful for the support, and would not like to see a reduction in funds, there was a general feeling that **funding should be transparent** and that additional funds should be brought from other sectors of council into the ‘Festival Fund’ ideally at the start, or at least be distributed through a fair and transparent process.

Proposed Actions:

- Partitioning off a set % of funding for festivals as part of KAP (above 17%).
or
- Creation of a separate Festivals Fund for festivals and events in Bristol
- Introduction of tiered funding based on the scale of festival. The current ‘Community Festival & Event Fund’ could become the lowest tier of the fund. The application and reporting process should be scaled appropriately in line with the funding level. Looking at current funding and organisational turnover, appropriate tiers for investment might stand at <£3,000, <£15,000 and <£50,000 per annum. Note that as part of this consultation Bristol Festivals now holds a confidential overview document for festival turnover. This may prove useful in setting appropriate tier guidelines for applicants.
- Culture Team and wider council to discuss pulling cross-departmental funds into the Festivals Fund, and ending the culture of ‘backdoor funding’. This would be a stride forwards with regards to transparent and fair access to funding.

Clauses

- Organisations currently receiving KAP were clear that they would still want to be seen as part of the city's cultural offer, and still be invited to networking opportunities and meetings alongside non-festival KAPs.
- A handful of organisations both deliver festivals and operate as venues or deliver significant non-festival activity (eg the Architecture Centre/Doors Open Day) so may wish to apply for either fund.
- Biannual funding may be more appropriate, particularly for the lower tiers of funding to enable entry to the fund. 4 years is unlikely to be a responsive enough window to enable new entries from the festival sector.
- All festivals felt that council investment should be closely linked to public benefit. Most believed investment should be limited to charitable organisations, companies limited by guarantee or CICs. Some felt that not-for-profit activity with any project surplus being returned to BCC was sufficient.
- Bristol Festivals acknowledge the administrative load placed on Bristol City Council Culture Team and would be happy to support where possible.
- All the festivals acknowledged that Bristol City Council Culture Team, were fighting for cultural investment in a difficult era.

5) What should the top 3 criteria for funding festivals and events in Bristol with this process be?

i. Quality & Variety of Cultural Experience

- *The fund should support a variety of cultural and artistic activity.*
- *Popular views included that the culture presented should be of high quality, and that the showcasing and development of local talent alongside national/international work was critical.*
- *Where the region was considered to have specific international/national reputation as an art form leader this should also be taken into consideration.*

ii. Engagement With a Wide Range of Audiences

- *It was viewed as critical that the fund as a whole should support activity reaching a wide demographic of audiences, including ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic grouping and geography.*
- *Funding level should take into account audience size, the level of engagement and the profile of audiences. This should be balanced across the fund.*
- *Festivals that have grown from communities or cultural sectors were considered to have strong roots, to be responding to evidence of local need and to be building legacy.*
- *Inclusion of volunteers was seen as an important factor in delivering impact and as bringing valuable match for public investment.*
- *Outdoor and indoor activities should be served by the fund.*

- *The potential to attract visitors to the city (local/ national /international) reach should also be considered here.*

iii. Sustainability and Track Record of the Organisation and/or Organisers

Festivals take sector sustainability seriously. As cultural funding has reduced, festivals are aware of their need to build sustainable models that rely on diverse income streams, strong governance, and entrepreneurial operational models. Given that festivals are often high-risk enterprises, those consulted recommended that applicants must have 1 – 3 festivals under their belt.

- *Given the long and fixed funding term this report recommends that organisers must have successfully delivered at **least 2 festivals** to be eligible for council funding. Festivals would also be expected to demonstrate stable boards and some continuity of experienced staff. Evidence of building reserves or a strong risk-planning document should also be required.*

Other Comments of Note

- iv. Festivals noted that city investment could be critical in accessing further funding and sponsorship opportunities for the sector. Small investment from BCC was identified as a key factor in building match and bringing further income into the city.
- v. Several organisations stated that they would be happy to respond to a long-term cultural strategy for the city, but that this cultural vision was not clear to them currently. Similarly the changing priorities, structures and leadership at council level made it difficult to plan long-term.
- vi. Festivals questioned whether focus on delivering a programme of year round activity was appropriate for Festival Funding. Instead, evidence of building engagement, impact and legacy were widely considered to be more appropriate criteria for festivals.
- vii. Several festivals noted that they felt it important that festivals pay artists fairly, and that this should be a condition of funding.
- viii. Several organisations mentioned that they were national/international sector leaders thus giving Bristol additional profile within professional sectors (eg wildlife, nature, street art, balloons, electronic music & jazz, contemporary performance).

6) How do Bristol City Council ensure organisations they fund are adequately skilled or experienced at maintaining public safety at events?

i. Public Safety

- **Proposed Actions:** In terms of public safety, it is recommended that all funded organisations be given time with an experienced events company and/or relevant representatives of Bristol City Council to run through safety plans, and that this should

be a condition of funding. REM advised that this would be a service they might be able to provide.

- Several festivals voiced that they would like the sector to have a better relationship between council departments and services involved in the **Safety Advisory Group for Events (SAGE)** and would support any efforts to provide allocated planning time with these teams.

ii. Training and Skills

Reviewing the previous KAP round, the Bristol City Council Culture Team identified several weaknesses in applications from Festivals. Following discussion with the current Head of Culture and Arts and Events Manager, a range of training opportunities were discussed to upskill the sector.

Festivals were asked if they were interested in the following training: Business Consultancy, Bid Writing/Fundraising, or Event Safety.

Findings: Organisations generally responded that they would prefer direct investment via funding to investment via training. However there was widespread interest in training, and particularly in **Business Consultancy** if delivered via mentoring or in an **intensive one-to-one format**, rather than as seminars.

Fig 1 : Demand for Training across Bristol’s Festivals

19 Festivals were asked if they were interested in training in the areas below. Each response Bristol Harbour Festival as a council-contracted event was not included in this question.

Training Area	Very Interested	Interested	Not Interested
Business Consultancy	47%	26%	26%
Bid Writing	32%	42%	36%
Event Safety	32%	32%	36%

Bid-writing/f

undraising training was also of interest to 74% organisations asked. Event safety was of interest to 64% of organisations asked, particularly among smaller outdoor events but proved least popular.

Festivals widely reported that finance and the resourcing of adequate team capacity was the biggest challenge facing festivals. Thus it is not surprising to find festivals in favour of training in areas of income development.

Proposed Actions: Business Consultancy, Bid Writing & Event Safety training to be discussed with Bristol City Council. Resourcing Business Consultancy support for Festivals should be progressed as a priority with Bristol Festivals, particularly in an era of austerity.

7) How Would the Festivals and Events Sector Best Evaluate their Work?

Data represents a challenge to many festivals, particularly for free and outdoors events. The more established festivals were generally better at collecting and using data. All festivals expressed a desire to collect better data, particularly when assessing the impact and socio economic value of their work.

When dealing with large-scale events and the management of a large delivery team, all festivals spoke of the difficulty of resourcing data collection. One festival even admitted they'd printed out survey cards, but had to deploy volunteers elsewhere on the day. Others said they weren't sure of what to ask visitors to get meaningful data, and would appreciate guidance.

'When you're managing a huge temporary team, when you have stages to get up, traders to get in, bars and box offices to staff, collecting audience data, although we'd love to have it, is often the thing that just doesn't get resourced'. Festival Organiser

All the festivals questioned, expressed a desire to work together to collect data across the sector. All festivals felt that the sector had wider benefits to the local economy and to communities, and that these needed to be researched. Joined up research, would equip festivals to champion the impact of their sector to the public and to argue for investment from funders and potential sponsors.

Proposed Actions: Research to be commissioned between Bristol Festivals, Destination Bristol and BCC. Key questions to be drawn up for festivals to use, and given the issue around capacity, resourcing provided for teams on the ground to carry out research across multiple festivals. Audience Agency , Cultural Tourist, Creative Cities Institute and local universities muted as options for research partners.

8) Given the limited funding, how else can Bristol City Council best Support the Sector?

Festivals understand that the Culture Team budget is tight, in light of this, Festivals were asked what they felt Bristol City Council could do to work with the sector.

i. Championing a Culture of Private Investment (Sponsorship & Philanthropy)

- Annual Sponsorship Gala for Festivals hosted by Bristol City Council.

Other options discussed:

- Potential of Establishing a Philanthropy Culture Fund with Quartet?
- Culture Tax/Donation added to hotel rooms?
- Developers Section 106 funds to be brought into Culture Budget?

ii. Advocacy and the championing of Festivals & Culture across the Council

Note that the much-needed socio-economic research is seen as a key tool in helping the culture team and sector 'make the case'.

iii. Creative Apprenticeship Scheme

iv. Improvements to Bristol Festivals Office to make it fit for purpose.

v. **Reducing Site Fees.** Several festivals expressed concerns about the resource and time wasted by applying for small pots of funding that were then effectively handed back to the city in site fees.

vi. **Access to Space**

vii. **Making council services like marketing & distribution channels more accessible**

Across the board, there was a wish to collaborate with the culture team in championing the sector and delivering culture to the people of Bristol.

Interviewees

Bristol Balloon Fiesta, Bristol Festival of Ideas, Mayfest, Bristol Pride, Encounters Short Film & Animation Festival, Cary Grant Festival, Bristol City of Film, Doors Open Day, Bristol Biennial, In Between Time Festival, Bristol Festival of Nature, Bristol Harbour Festival, Islamic Cultural Fayre, Redfest, Bristol Jazz & Blues Festival, Simple Things, Upfest, Wildscreen, Africa Eye Festival, Bristol Festival of Puppetry, Love Saves the Day

About the Author

Dr Anna Rutherford worked as a research scientist at the University of Bristol, before leaving medical sciences for a career in culture. She established the Pride Festival in Bristol in 2010, directing two festivals before joining the Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, In Between Time in 2011. As Executive Director, Anna drove a period of rapid and sustained growth for IBT, increasing the ambition, audiences, profile and turnover of the organisation from 2011 – 2016. Anna is co-chair of Bristol Festivals an umbrella organisation established to develop the festivals sector in Bristol.

Sources

1. Bristol Festivals: Festival Databases, 2011 – 2016.
2. The Yellow Railroad Report: 'Bristol: A Place Making and Marketing Strategy. Competing for Talent, Tourism and Trade', 2009
3. Destination Bristol, Visitor Survey 2015
4. Bristol Festivals, Sector Survey, July 2016
5. Bristol Harbour Festival Report & Tender Documents July 2016
6. Data provided by Team Love, collected from Love Saves the Day 2016
7. In Between Time Annual Report, 2015

Also used during the research phase:

Raising Bristol's Cultural Ambition: a report by Kate Davenport, Service Director, Economic & Cultural Development as part of Bristol City Council Quality of Life Scrutiny Commission.

Minutes from Scrutiny Meeting to discussion Cultural Strategy- [Minutes details on public web site](#)

Link to basecamp for development of Event policy-