

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS
Ysgrifennydd y Cabinet dros Ddiwylliant a Chyfiawnder
Cymdeithasol
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and Social Justice



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-06-1443
Ein cyf/Our ref LG/05304/24

Jack Sargeant MS
Chair - Petitions committee

Government.Committee.Business@gov.wales

18 June 2024

Dear Jack,

Thank you for your correspondence of 23 May as Chair of the Petitions Committee regarding funding for Trac Cymru.

Under the arm's-length funding principle, the Investment Review is an issue for the Arts Council of Wales (ACW) and the Welsh Government does not interfere in its funding decisions.

As a direct response to the learning gathered and decisions made as a part of the Investment Review process, ACW has committed to undertake strategic interventions across a number of artistic disciplines this year, to assess the provision needed for each discipline. One of the strategic interventions announced was a review of traditional music in Wales, which is at an early stage. ACW has recently advertised for a project manager and commissioner to lead this intervention. The deadline for submissions is 24 June.

ACW took a number of steps throughout the development, application and assessment stages of the Investment Review to ensure the process was equitable and appropriate. ACW undertook an extensive consultation process on the proposed new approach to the Investment Review, the application process and the appeals process. ACW sought to get as broad a range of representations as possible, with consultation sessions held on Zoom and opportunities for the sector to respond via an online survey and email. Throughout this period, ACW actively promoted the consultation through a variety of networks, social media, newsletters and direct mailings, receiving 81 responses.

Whilst, for fairness and transparency, ACW applied the same application and assessment process to all applicants, the approach and proposals were designed in a way to accommodate organisations of all sizes, resources and experience of investment Reviews. ACW published its Investment Review Consultation Response, its Investment Review 2023 Guidance and its Appeals Process ahead of the opening for applications on 9 January 2023.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

ACW also offered support during the application window, with the opportunity to have a guided conversation with an ACW Officer. Whilst these conversations did not provide any further detail than the published Guidance, they were available to assist applicants on specific questions. ACW also maintained FAQs to further assist organisations and ensure that all potential applicants had access to the same information at the same time.

ACW undertook a robust assessment process in line with the published guidance, focused on six principles: Creativity, Widening Engagement, Welsh Language, Climate Justice, Nurturing Talent, and Transformation. ACW also applied five balancing factors to take a wider view. Following the announcement of indicative funding decision in September, an independent appeals process then opened to organisations who were unsuccessful. This concluded in December 2023. Trac Cymru appealed its Investment Review decision but was unsuccessful at the initial Independent Review stage.

ACW arranged for its internal audit service provider to undertake its own scrutiny of its proposals, through a series of internal audits throughout the project. These examined a number of areas, including the Investment Review Guidance, the Appeals process and the assessment process, details of which were also included in the published Guidance. These internal audits were commissioned to provide the Council with an independent opinion and additional assurance on the key stages of the Investment Review. All audits returned a rating of Substantial Assurance.

In line with ACW's published Guidance, ACW offered Transition Support to former Arts Portfolio Wales organisations who were unsuccessful in their application to this Investment Review. Trac Cymru was awarded £30k in transition support by ACW. In addition to financial support, ACW offered additional specific advice and expertise to help the organisations adjust to no longer receiving their core annual funding.

Additionally, organisations who were unsuccessful in their application to the Investment Review 2023 continue to be eligible to apply to ACW through its published National Lottery programmes for funding for specific project activity.

Trac Cymru has recently had funding discussions with officials in Creative Wales and been advised to consider applying for a competitive funding scheme due to open in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in grey ink that reads "Lesley Griffiths". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lesley Griffiths AS/MS

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