



## Q&A on Reinvent Performing Arts funding

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### Speakers:

- John Mulligan, Director of Creative, Confident Communities and A Fairer Future
- Alison Holdom, Funding Manager and Arts & Heritage Lead

**Q&A support:** Luna Dizon, Gillian Goode

### JOHN MULLIGAN:

Good afternoon everyone and a very warm welcome to this question and answer event on our Reinvent Performing Arts fund. Like a number of other initiatives, we have taken in the last year, it hopefully responds directly to the pandemic and the needs that have been created for grantees in the wider sector. We are really pleased that so many of you can join us today. My name is John Mulligan, I am the Director of Creative, Confident Communities and A Fairer Future and I am joined by my colleague Alison Holdom.

### ALISON HOLDOM:

I am Alison the lead Funding Manager for arts, culture and creativity.

### JOHN MULLIGAN:

We are also joined today by our colleagues Gillian and Luna, who are going to be in the background and will be helping with the questions, it was too much multitasking for certainly me. For accessibility we will also give an audio description now of ourselves and where we are. I am a slim or skinny if you prefer, grey-haired man in his mid-50s who has just had his first haircut in six months. I am sitting in my living room and doing my best to keep my seven-year-old out. Over to Alison.

### ALISON HOLDOM:

Thank you John I am a middle-aged white woman with short length brown hair and I am also sitting in my living room, which has a brown sofa and a white wall behind me.

### JOHN MULLIGAN:

Just a few brief details on the practicalities before we start. We have live captioning today which is available by clicking the Closed Captioning or CC button at the bottom of your screen. And as part of that we would like to thank Ai-Media for providing those live captions today. Luna is putting details of the link in the chat function now. In terms of questions you may want to pose, you can post them at any point during the session, which you can find at the bottom of your screen. And in the interest of democracy, we would like to encourage you to vote for questions which have been submitted by other people. If you'd really like that one answered. And again, you can do that by

clicking on the thumbs up icon next to the question. We are recording this webinar and will be sharing a link to it tomorrow. You will probably have seen the dedicated page on our website as well as read what is contained in the letter inviting you to apply to the fund. However, before diving into the question and answer session, we will take the opportunity to give you a quick overview of the background to the fund and what we are trying to do with it. Over to Alison for that overview and then we will get straight into the questions.

**ALISON HOLDOM:**

As part of our ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Reinventing Performing Arts fund aims to support current grantees working in professional performing arts and to provide a boost to their existing plans for re-opening.

We have heard about the many impressive ways our grantees have adapted during the pandemic to reimagine the way they work - what they deliver, how they present it, or how they engage with audiences.

But we also know how challenging the pandemic has been for organisations and especially for freelancers working in the performing arts due to lost ticket income, lost commissions and the additional challenges you now have when reopening venues, such as reassuring audiences and testing models for social distancing.

So given the impact of the pandemic, this fund will specifically support professional work with audiences, which involves freelancers and strengthens diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

The fund, which is in addition to our regular funding, commits an extra £1.5m to help performing arts organisations' plans to re-open and to deepen the long-term impact of the work they are carrying out.

We hope that what we learn - about this way of funding as well as about the work funded – can be widely disseminated to inform future practice and support diversity in the sector.

If you're here today you are one of the 100 organisations able to apply to this fund – that means we are currently or have recently supported your work and you are engaged in professional performing arts – by direct delivery to audiences as producers, programmers or venues.

We have opted to make about 35 - 40 grants from this fund, (average size £37,500 but grants can range from £10,000 to £60,000 and should be spent during the next 18 months).

We have aimed to make the process for applying a light touch one, three questions over two sides of A4 and we encourage you to use extracts from other applications or your strategic or business plans rather than writing an entirely new application.

As you will know the deadline for requests is 17 May. We appreciate this does not give you very long, but we felt that it was important to get the money out as soon as possible.

We will make the decisions as soon as we can - by 30 June at the latest.

There will be no formal reporting required for this fund. As current grantees the work would probably be included in reports on your existing grants anyway.

There are three key criteria and will set all applications against these three criteria. The work should be inventive and should build on running from the impact of the pandemic. It should be useful and should offer potential learning for other organisations in the sector and it should be useful for you to have a lasting difference to the way that you work. And it should be more widely beneficial. It should support unemployed freelancers and strengthen your commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion. It should support the audiences and communities that you serve. Those are the three points that we will be looking at carefully and all of the applications and I will hand back to John and we can start answering some questions.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Thank you Alison. Before questions, to possibly reduce anxieties on both sides of the screen, we will be addressing the questions which we don't have time, if there are any, and we don't have time to answer them all today. So if you post a question in the chat function and we do not get to it today, that will appear on the webpage that we dedicate to the webinar tomorrow. In terms of the way we will deal with this, Luna will be monitoring, along with Gillian, the questions posted and we will be addressing them in groups of three to Alison and myself. So, without further ado, and to give everyone as much time as possible to ask the question, is over to Luna for some questions which have come in in advance of the session.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you, hello everyone. We are going to kick off with a few questions around application and eligibility first. I am going to ask three questions and then leave it to the panel to answer those as a group before going to the next questions. Question number one, does the proposal need to address all three criteria in order to be eligible? Question number two, can you apply if you have another application pending for our main fund. And question three, can you apply if you have begun lead conversations if it is for a piece of work that would fit this fund?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Can I go to you first Alison?

ALISON HOLDOM:

I'm so sorry, even after a year I'm still muting myself. Can you repeat the first one?

LUNA DIZON:

Does the proposal need to address all three criteria to be eligible?

ALISON HOLDOM:

It does. Obviously the applications will address the three to different degrees but there have to be some consideration of all three points in every application.

LUNA DIZON:

The second was can you apply if you have another application pending for our regular funding?

ALISON HOLDOM:

You absolutely can, yes. If you're in the process of applying to our main fund, particularly if you're applying for extension funding, it's absolutely fine. This fund is completely additional

LUNA DIZON:

The next question was can you apply if you've begun new conversations?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Again yes, if it's for extension funding, yes absolutely.

LUNA DIZON:

Shall I do them one by one?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think we have bitten off more than we can chew. One by one, let's go back to basics.

LUNA DIZON:

One of the items that you can consider applying to the fund for is underwriting small audiences, how would we go about evidencing that request and how would any submission we make be assessed?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Can you take that one?

ALISON HOLDOM:

There's not a huge amount of words for you to use here so I think what we would really just need to understand is this. Is this a different approach for you with audiences? Is it a different way of engaging with existing audiences? We just need to understand what's different. So a little bit about your existing work and a little bit about what's different. We won't need any more detailed evidence because we haven't given you the space to do that. It's just really understanding the difference would be the key thing there

LUNA DIZON:

Great. Moving on to a few budget related questions, will the funding be treated as restricted or unrestricted?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

We are trying to make sure that we impose as few restrictions on people as possible. We will be treating all grants as unrestricted funds. We will come to a couple of questions on the budget but certainly within the accounts, and in terms of any reporting back to us, we are treating the funds as unrestricted.

LUNA DIZON:

How detailed does the budget need to be and would co-funding be any confirmed income towards the areas of work asking to be supported?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

If it is a separate self-contained project, we would need to know the total amount and the detail of any partnership funding or match funding that you have. If it is a contribution to your core work as part of your plans for reopening, we need the total cost of programming for the year or the season. If you have specific funding to help you reopen your main programme such as the Government recovery fund, we would need to know that as well. The main point is we want the money from this fund to be used as soon as you need it, we won't require you to have the project or programme fully funded, but we need to know our funding will either enable the work to take place or make a contribution towards the impact of work which is already funded or mostly funded.

LUNA DIZON:

Fab. Will we need to see a budget prior to releasing the funding since the application form does not request one?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

No is the answer. We only need a total for the work and details of any other funders who are

involved in supporting the work. We are not asking for details of the expenditure, as I said, we want to make the application process as light touch and ideally, piggyback off applications you have made elsewhere.

LUNA DIZON:

Will you either fund the entire ask or not at all? Are you open to funding part of the proposed ask?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think the answer to the previous question probably helps out with this one, we are definitely open to both suggestions that we fund the entire project or programming costs, up to a maximum of £60,000. But equally, we are very interested and open to applications which has one or more match funders in place.

LUNA DIZON:

And how much of the match funding in the proposal needs to be confirmed at application stage?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I do not think we want to penalise people specifically for having match funding in place, but I think in making decisions on that, I think bear in mind the scale of what you have got planned. Obviously if we are a small piece in a much larger jigsaw then there is, the amount of detail and the amount of certainty of that match funding needs to be in place because what we do not want to do is make a grant of £60,000 when the total costs may be £300,000 and very little of that has been secured.

So I think we will be making decisions on a case-by-case basis and taking scale is probably the biggest factor in determining how certain that additional funding is in coming through.

LUNA DIZON:

I'm just going to pick out a budget related question from the Q&A, is it an all or nothing approach to funding? You mentioned that an average of £37,500, but can you apply for up to £60,000?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Yes, there is the potential to apply for £60,000, but I think the way we would prioritise in our assessment would be against those criteria and possibly particularly the relevance of what the model generates in terms of learning and lessons that can be taken on board or replicated elsewhere in the sector.

So, the higher the bid, the more we will probably look for impact in terms of the project.

LUNA DIZON:

So I'm just going to move to the last few questions that we received in advance before we go onto the Q&A questions that are being asked now. Does Esmée want to be the main funder of one single project or are we happy to give a valuable contribution to a set of projects linked to the reopening?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Either way is absolutely fine, if there's one particular project that you really want to do as part of your reopening that you cannot do because you do not have the funding and it is something that can be done for up to £60,000, then we are happy to look into that. However if you know that in amongst the other funding you have there is a piece of funding that you haven't got and there is a piece of the plan you cannot do because of missing £60,000, then we are much happier for you to apply for that. It could be a piece of your whole annual programme or a seasonal programme, providing it meets the criteria and is something that covers a response to the pandemic and issues

around reopening.

As John said, providing the majority of the funding is there for you to do the work that sits around that small piece.

LUNA DIZON:

What relationship would Esmée like to see between the activity this fund covers and the activity Esmée is already funding? Can it be a development of the work if it fits the criteria, or should it be separate?

ALISON HOLDOM:

It can be either. If we are supporting unrestricted costs and this is a particular project, that is absolutely fine. If we are funding, say for example, your participation work and what you want to apply for from this fund is a piece of audience facing work, that is also fine. What we're really interested in is how it helps you as an organisation to thrive in the next 12 to 18 months.

It does not have to be related to what else we are funding you for, it is about the organisation doing well in the next 18 months, regardless of whatever we currently fund you for.

LUNA DIZON:

The last question we got an advance was, what relationship would you like to see between activity delivered over 2020 and this funding? For example if we piloted something that fits the criteria, can this fund be one way to continue and develop it, or would you like to see a new project inspired by this learning?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Either of those is absolutely fine providing the root of it is in what's happened to you in the last 18 months and the impact of it is going to be experienced during the 18 months, it's more a question of just it being really a response to the pandemic.

LUNA DIZON:

Moving on to the questions in the Q&A... Sorry John, did you want to say something?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Just Luna, if anybody wants further clarifications on some of the answers we have already given, just follow-up on some of the answers if we have not given enough detail or if what we've said is ambiguous, please feel free to follow-up in the chat.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you. So, some of the more popular questions, what proportion of each grant award would you want to see going directly out to freelancers?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Alison you want to take that one?

ALISON HOLDOM:

We have not really set a point about the budget, what we would expect is that whatever work we are being asked to support, in some way it would benefit freelancers. So that some element of it would be commissioning or would be employing freelancers in some way. So I we would not, for example, we would not do something that was focused entirely on existing internal staff that did not have any freelance engagement with it at all. But we have not put a percentage on it, we just really want some of this money to reach freelancers basically.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think the point about freelancers and diversity, equity and inclusion, it isn't that the whole plan has to focus around those two things, but I think all of the plans will be monitored and looked at to make sure that proper consideration is given to those things. I think it is in -- it is important that they are very much integral to the plans that you have got.

LUNA DIZON:

And just sticking with freelancers for the moment, can freelancers include technical staff so not just artists?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Absolutely. Yes.

LUNA DIZON:

Great, nice and quick! Another quick question... So will the 12 to 18 months start from 1 July after decisions are made?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Yes, that is true isn't it Alison?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Yes.

LUNA DIZON:

So just a few questions on the criteria and eligibility. Can you elaborate more on 'it needs to be useful', what are the general areas that we would need to focus on to address this point?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Alison could you take that one please?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Yeah, sure. I think what we mean by that is that it is two parts really, one that it is useful to you as an organisation. It is something that will be useful to your future plans, it is going to be able to provide you as an organisation, the people that you are working with, or the freelancers who you are engaging with, with learning that is going to help them in the future with whatever the new normal is for the next 18 months. On the other hand, what we are really keen to do through these grants is gather the information from the group of organisations who are experiencing this point of reopening and have been recovering from the pandemic.

And we would hope to be able to use that learning to disseminate it to the rest of the sector. That is what we are looking for, if it is going to benefit you, that is fine, it just benefits you then it is great, but it also has learning that the rest of the sector could use or benefit from that we could then disseminate out to them. That would be a good match with the priorities.

LUNA DIZON:

There is a question on, also just clarifying what we mean by existing plans?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think what we're seeing here, and Al, please come in if I'm wrong, we want to avoid people simply responding to the fund without necessarily having some plans in place that they are working to as they look to reopen. I think that much of this also revolves around the learning that has been

acquired as part of the pandemic and the adaptations that people have made as a result. And I suppose carrying those through into what I will describe as the new normal, how do we make the best of the ingenuity, the imagination, the innovation that you have all applied to the task of keeping things on the road.

And actually mainstreaming and making that integral to your work for the future. So I think if you haven't got any plans for reopening then I suggest that this is not the fund for you. But Alison did you want to add anything to that?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Just to say that by existing we do not mean that it has to be something that you are two weeks away from opening and doing, you may be, but some of the things you are doing now, you may be two weeks away from opening. But if it is something that you are thinking post-July, August, maybe when we go into the autumn and we cannot do outdoor events, how do you think about that? If there are plans that you are thinking about what is going to happen if the next year, that you have fairly certain plans about, that is the sort of thing we're looking at. If you have the plans and you're thinking if we had the money, we could do this extra piece. Or going into the autumn, we could shift something by going this way. That is what we mean by existing. Equally, if you have something that you are doing in two weeks time that needs more funding to have more long-lasting impact and to reach other people, to really reach your audience, that is something that we can look at as well.

It is a combination, it is two things. But has to be something that is going to happen in the next 12 to 18 months. As John was saying, what we're trying to say here is, it is not a fund for people to think well I've always wanted to do this, so I'm going to apply for this money. It is about what are you doing and how you are moving now as a result of the pandemic. Not something that you have always wanted to do in the past but have not had the funding to do, it is really about the response to the pandemic in the next 18 months.

LUNA DIZON:

And could you clarify please what you mean by audiences and communities you serve, can those communities be artist communities or does this need to have a public engagement element?

ALISON HOLDOM:

It should be audience facing in some way, obviously if that, if it is communities of artists because they're doing the work, that is fine. And if it is engaging in your communities because they are experiencing your work in a different way, then that is fine. But what it isn't is kind of participative work, it is not really that sort of thing. It is much more about audience facing engagement work.

LUNA DIZON:

And on that point –

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Sorry Luna, it is worth adding that this fund we had originally designed it to encompass all our grantees in portfolio who are working in the arts sector and that we have narrowed that now to organisations in the performing arts - programmers, producers and venues. And I think to depart from any elements of audience facing plans would probably be going back on that redesign and would not be fair on the organisations that we did not actually invite through.

LUNA DIZON:

Will you consider applications for digital work or is there a preference for live work with live audiences?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

We are really agnostic on that one, we are very interested in the way in which the sector can future proof for want of better words, the work that they do. A lot of people have a lot more experience on digital than they did 12 months ago and that is very much the area that we will anticipate applications to be. But we are certainly not kind of focusing exclusively on that, we are looking at ways of, we are looking at practice, we are looking at models, we are looking at platforms, which people have used more for the past 12 months and we would like to sustain and grow.

LUNA DIZON:

OK, just going back to the Q&A. What would the appropriate percentage of core funding included in the budget be and can this be increased if it is directly applicable to the project? Are you playing for artistic staff time as well as paying freelancers?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think it is very much, if it makes sense in the context of the work that is planned, again, there is no hard and fast rules on that. For me, I do not know whether Alison agrees, if it is all core staff work but it meets the outcomes, we are not going to second guess that. And I think, if it makes sense and it is consistent with the plans then we are not going to specify whether it comes from one part or another.

ALISON HOLDOM:

Part of this fund, we're aiming to reach freelancers because you know how much they need it. But if it is not practical for what you want to do and what you need to do is underpin in-house artistic cost or in-house technical costs, and if you can make that case, that is fine and we're hoping that a substantial number of the grant you make will be freelancers but if you can make a case but what you need to do as an organisation is shore up your internal artistic staff then we can look at that providing it meets the other criteria.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

The only rider I would put is if you have worked routinely with freelancers in the past and are looking to in the future, then not to have freelancers within those plans would not be marked down but including them would certainly prioritise the application.

LUNA DIZON:

Can people apply for a performance, restating a performance that got cancelled due to COVID?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Yes, providing you can show I suppose what impact the cancellation has had, if it's something you're happy to do differently or if there's a difference in the audience. That is fine providing we understand what has happened and how it has been affected but it does not have to be new work across the board, it doesn't have to be brand-new work. It just has to be work that has been the delivery of which or the or the way in which you are doing your work has been affected by the pandemic.

LUNA DIZON:

A few more clarifications. Can you clarify on the all or nothing question if the bid was for £60,000 but you did not feel it achieved that level of impact, would you be open to giving a smaller amount or would you reject the bid?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think we would not have any immediate declines, that is the important thing to bear in mind. And a word and how these will be assessed, it will be initially assessed by members of the team and then, two stages of consultation between the people have been involved in the programme. There is

plenty of opportunities to raise the pros and cons of different proposals. Ultimately, like assessment generally, we will assess whether we get value for money and whether the project produces that kind of impact for the size of the grant. There is nothing to stop us from making a smaller offer if we can be sure the work will be carried out to a high standard, with or without much funding in place.

LUNA DIZON:

Can you clarify what you mean by inventive because inventive in Blackpool might mean something very different to inventive in Bristol. How will you decide if it meets your criteria?

ALISON HOLDOM:

I guess it's inventive for you and for the art form. This is what you have learned in the pandemic about what you want to do and change. That is what it's really about, when we say inventive, we mean what have you learned about the way that you work as a result of the pandemic and how you're shifting. Or when you look forward to the reopening process and getting audiences back, how are you being inventive around doing that, what are you doing that's different from your previous way of working in order to get those audiences back and serve them in the way you can best serve them. It is about what is it the pandemic has caused you to do that is different from business as usual? Or how it has been.

LUNA DIZON:

There's a question about whether the learning has to be COVID related. While lots of organisations have been learning as a result of dealing with COVID, there is also a new determination to be an antiracist organisation - can it relate to work that an organisation wants to do that is not COVID related specifically?

ALISON HOLDOM:

We're talking about the pandemic but it's about everything that has been brought to light by the pandemic in the last 18 months so absolutely. That is why we have part of the criteria about commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion as well. So if it's a response, if your work is in response to issues that have been raised in the last year or amplified in the last year than yes.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I'm pleased that question came up because the guidance may well lead people to believe that we are very much looking at the practical steps to improving services. The last year, as Alison says, has been pivotal in making us all think afresh about how we deliver for whom. So attitudes and commitments on DEI, are very much in our thinking in terms of what we fund in this fund.

ALISON HOLDOM:

A lot of the reasons for doing this is because we have seen such amazing work happening and we have some examples of people coming for funding of things they're doing and it is not absolutely in response to COVID or social distancing or in response to reopening venues but it is because people have had to work in a different way and they have realised something about the way they're working or something we want to try they've never done before, which is different audiences or engages with people in different ways. It is not specifically about social distancing for the reopening but the fact that this period has taught people something or has opened an opportunity to work in a different way people want to move on that. That is the sort of thing we're interested in. What has it made you think about and what are you going to be doing differently?

LUNA DIZON:

Multi arts venues and organisations, can a proposal focus on a specific area of work rather than general reopening and how specific are you about the term performing arts? Would multimedia expression fall into this?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Yes and yes is the quickest way to answer that but my guiding principle to everyone is if you have been invited then don't worry about the art form. I think that is the message. Because you as our grantees have already in that respect satisfied that you fit the eligibility criteria. In terms of specifics, yes there is absolutely no problem in identifying a discrete self-contained piece of work which you would like to advance, as long as it satisfies the three criteria, does it for example generate the kinds of lessons that a multi-arts venue somewhere else in the country would say that's quite interesting, let's see if we can adapt some of that? Those are the kinds of questions you need to ask yourselves before putting the application in.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you. And by reopening, do you expect this to be focused on work in public venues for example theatres, or will you consider work in other venues such as hospices, schools, provided there is an audience?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Yes, the schools one is tricky because if it's part of your normal cultural education output, possibly not because that would be the usual thing to do. But if it is something about working in different spaces, for example outdoor work with different venues, we can certainly look at that. Again, it would have to be different to how you have worked before or it would have to be building on the way you have worked before and something you've learnt in the last year.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think sometimes the change in the value might very well be the thing which makes it interesting I suppose. I think we would be open to it but as Alison says, I think the work in schools just as an extension of the work you've traditionally done probably doesn't satisfy at least one or possibly all of the three criteria.

LUNA DIZON:

There are a couple of questions here around what we mean with engaging with audiences and the distinction between participatory work. One is can you define direct delivery for audiences, can this include supporting artists to make or programme work that reaches audiences? Can it include participatory work?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Do you want to first go Alison?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Yes, it is more audience facing. So I think if it's a participatory practice that is really about co-creation without an audience, then it's unlikely. If it's about a participatory project that has an audience focus to it then it's a possibility. If you're commissioning an artist to work towards a participatory project that has a significant performance element to it then yes we could look at that. But if it doesn't, no I don't think so. I think it would have to have something that's got a really distinct performance element - audience element to it. So, it would have to have something which has a distinct audience element to it.

LUNA DIZON:

Great. It can be participatory - but it has to have an audience facing element to it. Thank you.

How should we approach the situation of proposing a project for the fund which currently has another live funding application for the full costs but which we are unlikely to hear back on before

your deadline?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Like any application, it is absolutely fine for you to continue to apply to us but like the other funders involved, we would like to be told if news comes through. If you have it launched with another funder and you are successful in this fund, then we would ask you to notify the other funder that this has happened.

ALISON HOLDOM:

We're trying to make this light touch and quick so if it is our decision, it would be released more quickly after the decision has been made. As John says, we would expect you to tell the other funder you've got it but there is no reason otherwise.

LUNA DIZON:

By freelancers, do you also mean freelance staff?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Existing freelance staff does that mean?

LUNA DIZON:

You have freelance artists and technical staff, technical freelancers and so I do not know if this is more about the running of an organisation. This is someone who is asked anonymously, so if they can come back about the question.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think the permanence of the freelance member of staff and the continuity of their engagement, if not employment with the organisation is probably pivotal because the kinds of people we are interested in here are people who have really suffered through cancellation of multiple contracts and who rely for their living on multiple clients and multiple venues. If people are employed or engaged even on a freelance basis for nine months of the year with one organisation, I suspect that's a different case and I suspect that if that is the freelancer, and that would not be the focus of the work we would support.

Again I stress the point before, I think diversity, equity, inclusion and freelancers, it doesn't have to be absolutely exclusively focused on them but they need to figure. They need to figure in the plans if you have traditionally, certainly if you on the freelance point have traditionally engaged freelancers, they need to be part of this.

LUNA DIZON:

Great, thank you. There's a question which has just disappeared from my list... From Paul. Would you like to see contingency plans and applications if the work planned is not possible due to future changes and social distancing restrictions, i.e. digital capture?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

No, I do not think we need contingency plans. Because of the level of funding involved, because of the speed that we want to get the money out, we really want to work as quickly as possible.

And I suppose if we look at a proposal and there is huge amounts of unacceptable risk that runs through it, then the likelihood is it will be declined. If there is too many risks attached to it. But for a fairly standard proposal which incorporates plans which meet the criteria otherwise, we will certainly not be second guessing the success or feasibility of it.

ALISON HOLDOM:

No, and if all of the people on this call will be current or recent grantees, and you know that the way that we have tried to manage the grant during the last year has been to be very, very flexible. As we appreciate that building contingencies at the moment is really difficult so we would not expect that.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you. How would you hope that this fund complements an organisation's future resilience economically, culturally et cetera?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Well I suppose really, the point is up to you really. We would just be interested to know how you think it is going to move you forward? It can be economically or artistically or community engagement, or to be in terms of the art form.

I think the thing that will make a difference to us will be what you think the difference is going to be in terms of how this will move you forward, what that movement will be and how it will have a long-term impact on your organisation? Does it put in place a way of testing something that could become central to the way that you work in the future? Or does it put in place a foundation and is something that you can build on as things become more, we will become more resilient and there is more reliability about planning.

It can be whatever you feel is the right thing that is going to make the difference to you.

LUNA DIZON:

Another question asking for clarification about audiences and learning, participation work. Are you therefore only looking to fund performance work for paying audiences and not interested for example, performances for schools?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Does not have to be paying, if it is free work that is absolutely fine. We are not looking necessarily just for the economic, to underwrite an economic cost. So it could be free work that you are doing, the schools work we would be unlikely to do, I have to say. Because that is really for us considered under our cultural education section and we have invited people into -- haven't invited people into this fund who are exclusively cultural school funds. So it wouldn't be fair to do that when we have not invited people who are exclusively education funding.

LUNA DIZON:

If their aim is to reach out to audiences through schools, directly bypassing partners, but isn't average work with schools, essentially will the very mention of schools be grounds for exclusion?

ALISON HOLDOM:

No.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

It is a tricky one, I suppose my feeling, this exposes the flaws in some of our speed in terms of getting this fund in place because some of these issues are quite tricky to come down one side of the fence or another.

My feeling is that the mention of schools will not lead to an automatic decline, but I think that if we were to fund something which had as a focal point the interaction with schools or children in

schools, we would have to, the bar would be raised in terms of the learning and impact it would generate. And I think if you had or were looking at a platform or a method of performance in relation to schools work, which could be replicated across your other work then that is the kind of thing that would lead to us being interested. But straightforward delivery in schools, you know, it is probably not for this fund.

Even if it is the first time for you.

ALISON HOLDOM:

We do appreciate that obviously everybody is having to think very carefully about how they work in schools at the moment, but I just think this is not quite the right fund for work that is exclusively in schools.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you. If reshaping your café is part of your overall future plans, would reworking the space and programme within it be eligible or just the programme?

ALISON HOLDOM:

In the café? Well, it does not fund capital costs so it would not be anything to do with reshaping it, I suppose. It would probably be mostly, in all honesty, we would be looking at the programming within it if you were going to do something like that. If you had to buy some piece of equipment in order to do that, we could look at some of those smaller costs, if you had to employ staff in order to do it we could look at those sorts of costs, so it is potentially wider, but it would all be focused on if you're programming work there. As opposed to what you are selling in it as a café situation.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Can I just jump in and remind that we have about six or seven minutes left, so if you have got a question and you have not had an answer to it yet, we just want to make sure that your posting it in the Q&A function.

LUNA DIZON:

Any questions we do not answer we will get answers to you when we send the recording. A few more that we can squeeze in... Just to clarify about the timeline, can you contribute to an overall project taking place over that 12 to 18 months where some work will have begun before 1 July?

ALISON HOLDOM:

Absolutely.

LUNA DIZON:

OK. And on audiences, can the project target recovery for freelancers but with no immediate audience facing work, implicit logic therefore being that freelancers support would lead to work for the public but that is not immediate here?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think if the ultimate destination is audience facing work then I think that is fine but I suppose, I suppose using that 12 to 18 month timeline, I do not think we are looking at this making a difference to audience facing work on a five year timeline horizon. What we're looking for is evidence of the results of this work coming and benefiting audiences within the next 18 months and so it is a medium-term horizon not a long-term one.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you. You do not ask for specific budgets, would this help to strengthen the application to see

the context the project fits in and given our ask would not be core, it would be towards a project. So asking to see that as part of a budget table? Does that make sense?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Yes.

ALISON HOLDOM:

You can, we had anticipated people attaching budgets because we were trying to make it as light-touch as possible, if you feel that adding some more budget information would be really helpful then you can put it into the box but I do not think we really want to make anybody attach a separate budget just because that is more work for you and I do not think everybody would be in the same position with that so some people who apply for core costs, it would be a much more complicated thing for them to try to do. So if you wanted to put some more money in, that is why we have asked some questions about other funders and we know people have got some from emergency funders so we've asked for some information rather than attaching a whole budget.

LUNA DIZON:

If we are already funding some of the organisation's core costs, can they apply for further core funding through this grant.

ALISON HOLDOM:

Yes, absolutely.

LUNA DIZON:

Is this part of our extension funding that has been referenced previously or additional. If it is additional could we begin a conversation about extension funding now as well as making an application to this funding.

ALISON HOLDOM:

Yes, this is entirely additional and separately you can talk to your funding manager about extension if you are within the last nine months of your current grant, that is absolutely the same process we will carry on.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you. On your answer with freelancers, can we apply for funds that won't directly pay freelancers but will support a wider piece of work happening which ultimately supports or provides work to freelancers.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think that is fine.

ALISON HOLDOM:

Just as long as you put that in the application, we want the funding to do a certain thing that will eventually benefit freelancers.

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I think the only other thing is be specific about those benefits. If it is not tangible in the form of money, then it needs to be fairly tangible in terms of skills development and care, whatever that happens to be.

LUNA DIZON:

Thank you. On your answer with the all or nothing approach, could you clarify whether you might

award less than requested by the applicant? There was a question about combination of types of audiences for live performing arts, so standard audiences also engage in community groups and I think the answer was yes as well for that.

ALISON HOLDOM:

Just the one on that, you can apply for anything between £10,000 and £60,000 because unfortunately we are not going to be able to fund everybody there may be a case where you put forward an application for £60,000 and you only get £40k or £30k or whatever. Until we see how many applications we get, we do not really know because it is a finite fund of £1.5 million but there is a possibility that you might put in for a certain amount and we have to reduce it in our offer. We will take into consideration if we have to do that and how much the project you would be able to achieve with that money and, or if it is a contribution to core costs, what impact that would have, but that is a possibility.

LUNA DIZON:

If the project radically challenges the old norms in terms of paying freelance artists and addresses diversity and inclusion and leadership that takes longer to reach audiences because it is proposing new ways of working that take longer or more time to shift the ingrained ways of working, is that OK?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Yes.

ALISON HOLDOM:

Absolutely.

LUNA DIZON:

Should we have just one more question?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

Maybe squeeze one more in.

LUNA DIZON:

Can supporting freelancers involve placing them on salaries? So offering work to new freelancers but in ways that mean they are no longer actually freelance?

JOHN MULLIGAN:

I suppose yes to that principle. I suppose as long as it meets the other three criteria, is it inventive, that is the immediate question that probably begs. Just by paying people who used to be freelancers, is that enough for a venue in Aberdeen to say, that is interesting, we must look at that.

ALISON HOLDOM:

And does that have any learning for the rest of the sector or help you as an organisation develop? If it does, then fine. But you would have to answer those questions or ask yourself those questions.

LUNA DIZON:

And I would just quickly answer these ones, because they are practical. Someone has asked where they could find the application form. If you were invited to apply, you should have your own link included in the invitation. So each organisation will have their own unique link to submit their request for funding.

And the last question is yes we will be sharing a recording of the session so I am hoping that we can get this out to everybody tomorrow and I will just add it to the website page so that the information

can be on there as well. Is there anything else that you want to add John or Alison?

**JOHN MULLIGAN:**

We had this event in the hope that we would kind of comprehensively deal with everybody's questions and hopefully we have at least made a start with that. And just to say that given how busy everybody is, we would welcome the fact that no further questions on the eligibility come through, is that, I think we would appreciate that.

It just remains for me to say and you will have noticed through the session I was fighting a losing battle with the sun, in terms of the angle of my screen, give me a nice sepia tint to it. And as you have also seen, I simply passed on any questions I could not answer to the person without whom this would have been a lot less comprehensive than it was. Thank you again to Al, thank you to Luna and Gillian and dealing sufficiently with the questions and also to Alison without whose expertise I would be lost. And thank you to you for taking the time out of your schedules to ask good questions of universal application. No question, the answer to which, would not have been useful to lots of people on the call and viewing the webinar so thank you for keeping all of the questions very general and not specific to your own organisations. With that, have a pleasant end of the day and good luck with your applications if you're thinking of submitting. Goodbye.

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