Mr Murdo Fraser MSP
Convener
Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood

7 January 2015

Dear Mr Fraser MSP

Inquiry into the growth of the Creative Industries

The Musicians’ Union welcomes this Inquiry into the growth of the Creative Industries in Scotland. We note that the remit of the of the Inquiry is to look specifically at the Scottish TV and film industry and the video games sector and we will restrict our comments to these sectors but believe there is a need for a broader inquiry into the wider creative industries including music.

The Musicians’ Union has over 2,300 members living and working in Scotland, a number of whom get paid work within these areas, primarily writing and recording music.

For our members the critical issues relate to the availability and accessibility of paid work. There are talented and experienced musicians living and working in Scotland, however, many production companies both based in Scotland or coming to Scotland on location, would not necessarily consider commissioning or using local talent. We do not believe that only talent based in Scotland should be used on “Scottish” productions, but we do believe that there needs to be more done to promote the talent available in all sectors of the industries that are relevant to the specific sectors being looked at by this inquiry, for example, music, performers, production and post production services.

Our members work primarily as sole traders or very small businesses and report that there is valuable and effective business support available to them through in particular, the Cultural Enterprise Office and Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

One of the issues particular to music is that whilst musicians working and living in Scotland will be paying taxes here and contributing to the economy, income from the use of their Intellectual Property - their music - may not be contributing to the Scottish economy and the growth of the music industry. Musicians are highly likely to have
publishing and recording deals with publishers and record labels based outside of Scotland, and therefore the income from owning the rights to the intellectual property is also made elsewhere. All the major publishers and record labels are outside Scotland and only a tiny number of small production music libraries are based here.

In order to secure the future of the industries in Scotland, and to sustain income for the creators, it is essential that significant effort is made, and structures put in place, to ensure that more of the ownership of, and rights in, the Intellectual Property remains in Scotland.

Yours sincerely

Sheena Macdonald

Regional Organiser