Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee

Scotland's Screen Sector – Inquiry into how the Screen Sector Leadership Group's recommendations can be implemented

Call for written evidence

Background and Remit

The Scottish Parliament's Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee has agreed to conduct an inquiry into how the Screen Sector Leadership Group's report recommendations on strengthening and developing the Scottish screen sector can be implemented.

The Screen Sector Leadership Group was established on the recommendation of the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee in a report it published on the economic impact of the film, TV and video games industries in 2015. The Screen Sector Leadership Group brought together senior representatives of the Scottish Screen industry to recommend actions to strengthen and develop the sector.

In its report published in January 2017, the Screen Sector Leadership Group observed:

> "Over the past 50 years Scotland has produced a wide range of films and television programmes with many international successes, saying something about Scotland to the rest of the world and reaping a rich return on the investment, culturally and economically. At different times during those 50 years it seemed as though we were close to achieving a breakthrough to sustained development and growth of the screen sector as a whole, making a significant contribution to our national life and beyond. Despite the many individual successes, it has not happened. Scotland should be the second most valuable and productive area outside London but, sadly, it has fallen behind other parts of the UK."

The SSLG agreed a series of recommendations under the following priorities for the sector:

- Increased funding for film and television production
- Increased studio facilities and infrastructure for Scotland
- Increased investment in talent development, skills and training
- Increased and appropriate business development support for screen businesses
- Robust research and statistics on the value of the sector and the impact of funding and support mechanisms.

Issues to consider

Organisations and individuals are invited to submit written evidence in relation to the priorities set out by the SSLG above and the areas detailed in the Annexe below. Please note that it is <u>not</u> necessary to respond to every question and you can also provide any other information that you consider relevant.

Annexe

Leadership, Strategy and Support

The Committee understands that the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland are working on the development of a screen unit for Scotland, which will have overarching responsibility for strategic leadership of the sector. The Committee is keen to understand progress made to date and to feed into the development of the unit following its inception in the new financial year. To help support the Committee's understanding in this area, it would be interested in your views, regarding the following areas:

- How can the industry successfully implement the recommendations outlined in the Screen Sector Leadership Group report?
- What is your view of the current leadership of the screen sector through Creative Scotland and other supporting bodies?
- How can we ensure that the Screen Unit has the remit and responsibility for providing the strategic vision and leadership across the sector? What changes to the current arrangements are necessary to achieve this?
- What are your views on the availability of funding and support for all content development?
- Do you consider the support provided by Scottish Enterprise to be adequate? How might they or other bodies work to provide appropriate support for the industry?
- How can we nurture and maintain funding for production companies?
- How can Ofcom work to support the sector in its new role as regulator?
- What are your views on the state of commissioning for Scottish content?
- How might Brexit impact the Scottish screen industry?
- How do you view the role of broadcasters in supporting the sector?
- How might the newly proposed BBC channel help support the industry in Scotland?
- How can Scotland become a key destination for UK and international productions?

- Why have film and TV producers selected Scotland in the past as a location for production?
- What is your view on the current network of regional film offices across the country?
- Are you aware of examples of best practice in Scotland, or elsewhere, which the Committee could draw upon?

Talent Development, Skills and Training

Sustainable growth in the sector will depend, in part, on Scotland's ability to nurture and retain domestic talent, in front and behind the camera. To better understand the challenges facing the sector, the Committee would be interested in your views regarding the following areas:

- How can Scotland nurture and retain domestic talent?
- How might the new Screen Unit work across agencies to ensure a coherent approach to the development of talent?
- Are you aware of examples of best practice in Scotland, or elsewhere, which the Committee could draw upon?
- How can development, skills and training keep pace with the ever changing needs of the industry?
- Are there skills deficiencies or gaps which might impede productions choosing to come to Scotland?
- Does Scotland have the requisite level of domestic talent to accommodate an increase in productions coming to the country?
- What infrastructure, support and investment is required to ensure continuing development of talent in Scotland?
- Are there clear pathways from education through training to the workplace that deliver an industry-ready workforce?
- How do we address the problem of inconsistent work for employees in the Scottish screen sector?
- Do you feel there is a lack of diversity amongst employees in the screen industry? And if so, why might this be and what can be done to promote diversity?
- Do you feel enough investment is present for the purposes of training specialist skills?
- Are there ways in which film and TV productions can be encouraged to utilise Scottish cast and crew where appropriate?

Infrastructure, Intelligence and Maximising Benefit to Scotland

To support growth, the SSLG highlighted the need for a concerted effort to deliver enhanced studio infrastructure in Scotland. The Committee would therefore be interested in views concerning the following:

- What improvements to the current studio infrastructure are needed? How might this be achieved?
- What kinds of facilities are needed and where?
- How might these kind of facilities be funded?
- How might the public and private sector collaborate to ensure a sustainable approach to the development of such facilities?
- How can we ensure the productions leave a positive legacy after filming?

To better understand the socio-economic impact of productions in Scotland, the SSLG also proposed that improvements be made to the way in which we gather data. The Committee would therefore be interested in your views regarding the following:

- The need for more reliable data about the sector and how it might be collected.
- How this information could be used to demonstrate the wider value for Scotland at a national and regional level.
- Examples where data could be used to foster improved relationships between different sectors and organisations.
- How can we ensure that the screen sector is seen as one of Scotland's key economic drivers supporting a wide-range of sustainable creative businesses?

Distribution, Exhibition and Audience Development

As audiences increasingly consume content digitally it is becoming ever more important that consumers have access to content. The Committee is interested in understanding how Scotland can keep pace with digital trends, ensure equitable access to content and develop new audiences. The Committee would therefore welcome views on the following:

- How can Scotland maximise the opportunities associated with proposed roll out of superfast board band nationally?
- How can we ensure/promote the consumption and production of domestic content in the digital age?
- What measures can be taken grow audiences and encourage participation in the sector more generally?

How to submit written evidence

You may wish to respond on some or all of the issues outlined above, or to raise other issues that you consider to be of relevance to the Committee's inquiry. Evidence should be reasonably brief and typewritten (preferably no more than 4-6 sides of A4 in total).

The initial **deadline for receipt of written submissions is 3 November 2017**. Owing to the timescale normally required for the processing and analysis of evidence, late submissions will only be accepted with the advance agreement of the Clerk.

The Committee prefers to receive written submissions electronically and in a form accessible by MS Word. These should be sent to:

CTEER.inquiries@scottish.parliament.uk

You may also send a hard copy of written submissions to:

European and External Relations Committee
Scottish Parliament
Holyrood
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Policy for Handling Written Evidence

Before you submit your written evidence, please ensure that you have read our policy on treatment of written evidence. Written submissions will be handled in accordance with this policy.

We would also be grateful if, when using any tables or graphics in your submission, that you include a short paragraph explaining what the table/graphic shows. This helps readers with visual impairments.

How to submit a video as evidence

We welcome videos as a form of evidence. Please read our guidance before sending a video.

- Guidance on producing a video as evidence (83KB pdf)

Contact

For details about the Committee's work on this inquiry please contact Katy Orr, Clerk to the Committee, tel 0131 348 5234 or mark.johnson@scottish.parliament.uk.