

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	David Hughes Dance	
Application Reference number:	G201001036	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£130,000	£130,000
Officer's recommendation		
<p>Summarise the key points of your assessment and draw out the strengths and weaknesses of the application taken together with any comments you have received from source evidence (portfolio of evidence/ internal / external consultation). Highlight any specific risks <i>Note: The amount of information you provide here should be sufficient for the decision maker to reach a decision. As with all previous commentary boxes please do not exceed 250 words</i></p>		
<p>Comments: David Hughes Dance was established in August 2005 by David Hughes, a highly experienced dance artist. Although still a relatively new company, David Hughes Dance has made an impact on the dance sector in Scotland and has been actively pursuing international opportunities.</p> <p>The proposed programme is ambitious in its artistic direction and demonstrates the flexible funding criteria of excellent artistic vision and builds on the success of previous tours. Engagement with the public is demonstrated by the education and marketing programme. There is a clear commitment to Widening access and this would be developed within the new post of manager. David Hughes Dance has toured widely in Scotland previously and anticipates a broad geographical 'reach' for the proposed productions.</p> <p>DHD clearly meets Dance's criteria for development of choreographic practice, production and touring.</p> <p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The business plan identifies the areas of development and sets out a plan to address these with attributed action points, over the 2 year plan period ▪ The director has identified a mentor (Kenneth Tharp, the Place) to support his development from performer to choreographer/director; however there is no commitment of time indicated. ▪ Evidence of partnership working with Dance Base, The Byre Theatre and Shetland Arts, all confirmed. ▪ Innovative programme of work ▪ A small but highly active board of directors with a range of skills. ▪ The director has a strong track record as a dancer and a passion for pushing the boundaries of dance. <p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The management budget is too low at £10,000 per year ▪ Educational work needs development ▪ Equal opportunities would need support to develop ▪ Audience development and targeting of cross art form audience needs clarity (a professional is listed to help in this) ▪ Budget has not met 25% partnership funding requirement ▪ Inaccuracies in the budgeting 		

Risks

- The business plan includes 'Red Room' on touring schedule for 2008; however the recent application for project funding for this was unsuccessful. This may have an impact on how DHD profile develops in 2008.
- The Director has indicated that he wishes to apply to the Clore Leadership programme to develop his skills but no consideration is given on how he would combine this with leading the company.

Summary

The artistic vision is strong and well articulated and with effective management support DHD could become a strong company. My overall rating for DHD is medium because the partnership funding requirement is not met and there are a few areas in need of development to make this company strong organisationally. The company has been operating on a project basis up to now so further investment would enable DHD to develop any weak areas.

Officer's overall priority recommendation		Medium
Lead Officer signature:		Date:22/1/08 Updated: 20/03/08
Print name:	Katy McKeown	

Stage 2: Heads of Departments prioritise applications with advice from Specialist Advisors

1. What were the strengths and weaknesses of the application identified by the Specialist Advisors? Please summarise their comments below. What were their ratings of the importance of the application in being supported?

Comments:

The panel of dance specialist advisors who considered this application included Dawn Hartley, Ian Spink, Lucy Mason and David Williams. The panel commented:

In the work of the **David Hughes Dance** company to date, the director has demonstrated his skills as an artistic director in curating quality artistic programmes for the company. His own skills as a choreographer are less developed. The panel were supportive of the artistic ethos described in the plans, particularly the focus on training and developing younger artists as part of the company's work. The panel considered that more clarity was required on the roles within the company, particularly the associate artist/education co-ordinator. They also commented on the importance of an effective general manager and strengthened board to work with the company to deliver the ambitious plans.

The panel rated highly the artistic leadership of the company, but recognising a small number of development areas rated it overall as medium priority for support.

2. Summarise the role of the organisation within the infrastructure of the sector. Assess to what extent the organisation's vision will contribute to the department's and to Scottish Arts Council's aims: (to fulfil artists' potential, to increase participation, to place creativity at the heart of learning)

Comments:

David Hughes Dance is a dance company led by David Hughes, which has been in receipt of Dance project funding to create and tour work throughout Scotland. I recognise the quality of the work that David Hughes Dance has achieved as a project-funded company with limited management support.

1. Fit with FXO criteria:

1.1 Excellent artistic vision and leadership; role within sector/support to artists

David Hughes Dance strongly meets the FXO criteria of 'artistic excellence' and has developed the artistic vision through commissioning a range of high quality choreographers to create new work for the company. In a relatively short period of time, David Hughes Dance has developed as a strong influence in the dance sector in Scotland.

1.2 Improving your engagement with the public

David Hughes Dance has demonstrated a commitment to engaging the public through the company's work and over the past year. David Hughes has also undertaken a residency at the Byre Theatre in St Andrews supported through the pARTners scheme.

1.3 Good practice in the governance and management

David Hughes Dance is a limited company with charitable status. It is a small and developing company currently with no full-time staff. It operates well within this context but if it is successful in achieving flexible funding should aim to strengthen its infrastructure. The company has benefited recently through some informal support from Catalyst Dance Management.

1.4 Practical implementation of your equal opportunities policy; widening access

The application articulates a commitment to Equal Opportunities but the company will require support and training to develop this in practice.

1.5 Raising other income at least 25%

Matched funding at 25% has not been demonstrated.

2. Fit with Departmental priorities

David Hughes Dance strongly meets the Dance department's priority of 'the development of choreographic practice, production and touring'.

3. Fit within Scottish Arts Council aims

David Hughes Dance's vision and proposed plan of work contribute most significantly to Scottish Arts Council's Aims 1 and 2: 'to support artists to fulfil their artistic and business potential' and 'to increase participation in the arts.'

3. Based on the lead officer's assessment and the subsequent meeting with Specialist advisors, please rate the application (High, medium, low) summarise your reasons for assessing the application as you have (drawing out the strengths and weaknesses of the organisation and highlighting any specific risks)

Comments:

1.1 Application rating

I concur with the Assessing Officer and Specialist Advisors panel and rate this application as medium priority for support.

1.2 Reasons for assessing at this rating

This rating recognises the development areas identified and current operational infrastructure of the company.

1.3 Strengths of application

- The application meets the criteria for Flexible funding and the priority established by the dance department
- Strong artistic leadership has been demonstrated through the company's work to date and the future plans demonstrate an innovative approach.

1.4 Weaknesses of applications

- Some budgets low, particularly for management costs/ fees
- Inaccuracies in the budgeting and has not met 25% partnership funding
- Although a commitment to education work is articulated, the company needs to further develop their approach and skills in this area of work.

1.5 Specific risks associated with the application

Recruitment of an experienced and effective general manager will be critical in enabling the company to deliver the ambitious plans outlined.

1.6 Development areas identified

Development areas include planning and organisational development. If supported I would recommend a facilitated mentoring programme for the Director in 2008/09 in preparation for becoming a Flexibly funded organisation and that the budgets are revised to prioritise management support.

1.7 Recommended level of support

Flexible funding would enable David Hughes Dance to consolidate and develop its work. The level of support applied for is appropriate and I would recommend support at the level of £130,000 in 2009/10.

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

1.1 Where will the activity/programme take place?

David Hughes Dance is based in Edinburgh but the impact of its work is throughout Scotland through its touring programme. In the application it is proposed to tour to a further 8 Local authority areas.

1.2 Where will the audience come from?

David Hughes Dance identifies audiences coming from the areas where they tour.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation		Medium
Head of Department's signature:		Date:12 February 2008 Updated: 26 March 2008
Print name:	Anita Clark	

Stage 3: Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) make recommendations to Directors (Acting Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive and Co-Directors of Arts)		
1. Summarise the reasons why the final rating has been made.		
Comments: Good overall fit with FXO criteria. The amount reflects development areas identified, the competitive funding context and assessment recommendation.		
Support of £110,000 annually is proposed.		
Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) priority recommendation		Strong Medium
Chair of Meeting signature:		Date: 2 April 2008
Print name:	Iain Munro	

Stage 4: Directors make recommendations to Joint Board (strategic fit)		
Record the Directors' recommendation and confirm the suggested level of support. If the recommendation differs from Stage 3, please summarise the reasons why.		
Comments: Agree with Stage 3 recommendation.		
Directors recommendations to Joint Board		Strong Medium
Acting Chief Executive signature:		Date:10 April 2008
Print name:	Jim Tough	

Stage 5: Joint Board's decisions		
Record the Joint Board's recommendation. If the recommendation differs from Stage 4, please summarise the reasons why.		
Comments: The Joint Board accepts the Stage 4 recommendation		
Joint Board Final Decision		ACCEPT
Date: 24 April 2008	If approved for support, enter sum awarded	£110,000

End of Assessment