

FLEXIBLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

Applicant name:	Grid Iron	
Application Reference number:	G201001027	
Amount Requested (Year 1/Year 2)	£200,000	£200,000
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: GI's artistic vision is clear and the programme of work will build on GI's success, while developing its practice. GI is an internationally acknowledged expert in producing consistently accessible, high quality site specific work, and going by this and the track record of the creative team the proposed programme will be of equally high quality. The application meets all of the fund criteria and the programme meets the drama department priority of outdoor performance (site specific) extremely well; <i>Decky Does A Bronco</i> meets the drama department priority of work for children and young people.</p> <p>GI is audience focussed in the creation of all of its work, maintaining awareness that regardless of subject matter or artistic vision, the end product must also entertain audiences. The co-production with Lung Ha's (which works with learning disabled practitioners) will enable both companies to develop their practice and to reach new audiences. GI has a demonstrable commitment to ensuring its work is accessible and has a social inclusion policy. GI continues to be committed to developing partnerships (artistic and practical) with organisations to enable delivery of its work and the proposed inclusion of <i>Barfly</i> in the British Council showcase will further develop this relationship, while also offering potential for future international presentation.</p> <p>The nature of GI's work means that it often has a limited audience capacity and geographic reach as it is not always suitable for touring. This is entirely acceptable given the type of work. However <i>Decky Does A Bronco</i> (2010) will be presented in 10+ spaces which will enable access to GI's work by audiences in non-city areas eg Dumfries and Galloway, Aberdeenshire, Moray, Western Isles and the Highlands. Given the past track record of GI, I would consider that all performance and audience targets are achievable.</p> <p>The business plan clearly states the artistic vision, but does not fully articulate all governance and reporting procedures. There are relatively high sums of money to be secured from trusts and foundations. GI has a good track record of successful fundraising for specific projects, but may find it less easy to secure trust support for core costs. Although trusts and foundations have been identified and it is clear who is responsible for fundraising there is no fundraising strategy included. Should GI be successful in its application these would be areas to be developed.</p> <p>Highly recommend support at amount requested (c.33% increase on 07/08 grant.) This will enable GI to deliver 1.5 productions p/a, compared with its usual pattern of 1 production p/a.</p> <p>NB GI could deliver (some of) its programme if a smaller amount was awarded, but, depending on the level of award, this could adversely affect its outputs.</p> <p>NB There are several additional projects to core activity, demonstrating international and national demand for GI's work.</p>		

Officer's overall priority recommendation		HIGH
Lead Officer signature:		Date:30/01/2008 Revised: 20/03/08
Print name:	Jaine Lumsden	

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:

Attendees:

David Taylor, Co-Director of Arts

Specialist Advisors: Stewart Ennis, Tim Licata, David Leddy, Alex Patience, Sandy Maxwell, Stephen Slater, Stephen Stenning and Laura Tyrrell

The Panel identified the following strengths and weaknesses of: Grid Iron

The application is excellent; the articulated artistic vision and overall programme is excellent. The organisation seems excited by the work they produce and perform.

Specialist Advisors overall rating: High

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:

Grid Iron (GI) is a multi-award winning established company (first production 1997) that is acknowledged internationally as an expert in high quality site specific theatre. It is committed to producing exciting new ensemble work in a variety of spaces and locations, with a special commitment to accessibility, entertainment and innovation. It produces new work which uses theatre, music and movement and has a commitment to new writing. It practices an integrated approach to the creation of its work, allowing all of the practitioners involved to directly collaborate. The company has a core group of creative people (including production/technical staff.) Productions usually draw on this group, but not exclusively. It recognises the need for professionalism in business practice, an attitude which is embodied in the practical and artistic collaboration between the creative producer and director. GI has a commitment to providing opportunities for practitioners early in their careers and aims to provide strong roles for women on and off stage.

Fit with FXO criteria:

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

GI is one of the leading organisations in Scotland working in the area of site specific work. They were pioneers in using found space and in working in a cross artform way. The company works with a range of artists and provides a successful vehicle for Director Ben Harrison and Producer Jude Docherty.

1.2 Improving your engagement with the public

The proposals offer a range of opportunities for the public to engage with the work - including spaces that are not traditional theatres. These are likely to attract wider range of audience members.

1.3 Good practice in the governance and management

The business plan does not fully articulate all governance and reporting procedures. However the company has a good track record of managing resources and delivering projects.

1.4 Practical implementation of your equal opportunities policy; widening access

The applicant has an interesting proposal to work in partnership with Lung Ha's on one project.

1.5 Raising other income at least 25%

Met.

2. Fit with Departmental priorities

Extremely good fit with departmental priority for outdoor performance.

3. Fit within Scottish Arts Council aims

They have consistently achieved high levels of artistic output and offer opportunities for Scottish artists' work to be seen internationally (e.g. Norway, New Zealand and Lebanon). While much of their work is site-specific and therefore reaches a limited audience numerically, the application shows a commitment to touring work thus extend the range of people who can participate in the work.

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

The assessing officer and the Specialist Advisors were clearly supportive of this organisation and rated it High. It meets the Drama priority of outdoor performance significantly and is likely to allow artists to achieve their potential.

1.2 Reasons for assessing at this rating

As per officer and specialist advisor comments.

1.3 Strengths of application

Artistic track record and strength of plans; range and interest of proposed work and new partnership with Lung Ha's.

1.4 Weaknesses of applications

There is a lack of detail in the application in relation to Board development and the number of attendances in relation to investment is relatively low: 1700 in year one and 7,000 in year two.

1.5 Specific risks associated with the application

No major risks.

1.6 Development areas identified

Board Development.

1.7 Recommended level of support

£200,000

4. Please comment on the geographic reach of the programme

Comments:

GI plans to work in 11 local authority areas including Dumfries and Galloway and the Highlands, Argyll and Bute and the Western Isles. Given the nature of their work, this represents a good geographic spread.

Head of Department's overall priority recommendation

HIGH

Head of Department's signature:

Date: 15 Feb 2008-04-21

Print name:

David Taylor

Reviewed: 25 March
2008

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: Strong overall fit with FXO criteria. The amount reflects the competitive funding context. Support of £190,000 annually is proposed.		
Collective Heads of Department (Arts Development Managers) priority recommendation		High
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. Support of £190,000 annually is proposed.		
Directors recommendations to Joint Board		High
Acting Chief Executive signature:	Jim Tough	Date: 10 April 2008

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		APPROVE
Date: 24 April 2008	If approved for support, enter sum awarded	£190,000

End of Assessment