

The logo consists of the letters 'U' and 'K' in a stylized, bold font. The 'U' is dark blue with a light blue outline. The 'K' is light blue with a dark blue outline. The letters are positioned above a horizontal line.

UK

The text 'UK MUSIC' is written in a bold, sans-serif font, centered between two horizontal lines. The background of the page features a large, stylized, abstract graphic of a musical instrument, possibly a stringed instrument like a guitar or violin, rendered in shades of grey and white.

UK MUSIC

Response to:

Arts Council England consultation "Achieving great art for everyone"

April 2010



UK Music is the umbrella organisation representing the collective interests of the UK's commercial music industry - from artists, musicians, songwriters and composers, to major and independent record labels, managers, music publishers and collecting societies.

UK Music consists of: PRS for Music representing 60,000 songwriters and composers and music publishers; PPL representing 42,000 performer members and 5,000 record company members; Musicians Union representing 30,000 musicians; Association of Independent Music representing 850 small and medium sized independent music companies, the Music Publishers Association Limited representing 230 major and independent music publishers, BASCA with over 2,000 songwriter members, the BPI representing over 350 record company members and the Music Managers Forum representing managers throughout the music industry.

Summary

1. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the Arts Council's public consultation which we understand will culminate in the publication of a 10 year strategic framework and investment plan later this year.

2. This strategic review, coming at a time of economic downturn, presents an opportunity for the Arts Council to focus its activities on fewer areas, while maximising its impact through new partnerships.

3. We limit our comments to a few specific issues which have most relevance to us. In summary, they are:

- Public subsidy for types of music that fall outside classical and jazz genres should be protected and increased, especially those which appeal primarily to young and to ethnically diverse audiences. A development strategy for supporting popular music (rock, pop, urban etc) is required, which improves access across the country and works in partnership with the commercial music industry.
- The Arts Council should work with the commercial sector to plan support for popular music, and encourage applications from the best creators. One proposal is that a charitable trust located within the commercial music sector could be a more effective channel for managing public support for non-classical genres, and free the Arts Council to focus solely on supporting classical and jazz in terms of music.
- The Arts Council should focus the majority of its limited resources on creativity itself (the creation, performance, and enjoyment of creative work).

Full response

Increase funding to types of music that fall outside of classical music genres

4. By its own reckoning, the Arts Council has historically focused its music investment on orchestral music and opera.
5. We calculate that of the £75 million invested by Arts Council England in music in 2008/09, around 86% was invested in classical music. The remaining £9.5 million was divided up amongst jazz, world and folk, and music development agencies. Across the 3 years of the current funding cycle, the proportions have been similar.
6. Regularly funded organisations received £69 million of the £75 million invested in music. The top 25 regularly funded music organisations received 89% of that £69 million, leaving 94 organisations to share the remaining £9 million.
7. One-off grants totaling just over £5 million were awarded to 304 different organisations. The top five recipients of these one-off grants were classical, and each received over £100,000. The median award was £5,000.
8. In other words, the vast majority of public subsidy for music supports a relatively small number of productions and organisations that fall under the classical music umbrella.
9. We acknowledge and welcome the benefits that some in our community have enjoyed from public support awarded through the Arts Council. But we are anxious that many other musical forms are underfunded, to the detriment of a significant segment of the population.
10. We appreciate that the Arts Councils have the unenviable task of deciding, and defending, decisions about what 'art' is worth supporting, and with how much. Such a question has arguably become even thornier in recent years. Digitisation, the explosion of user generated content and the so-called 'democratisation' of art have pushed the boundaries of what is considered to have artistic merit, and therefore, worthy of public support. We are also growing more diverse as a society in terms of our ethnic make-up and cultural influences. If there ever was unity before about what type of music represents the best in British music talent, there is certainly less agreement now.
11. A defensible and rounded public policy for the arts must do more for other types and genres of music than it is currently doing. Least well supported is music that appeals to young and diverse audiences. For example, popular music (garage, dub step, grime, bashment, dance, bhangra, drum and bass, rock and so on) have received a fraction of public subsidy in comparison with classical music. However, British popular music has generated many new music forms of international cultural and creative significance which could be better supported financially and strategically by our national arts councils, particularly at the development stages.
12. More could be done to improve Arts Council's engagement with the popular music sector. People and organisations with a strong culture of public sector engagement are currently more likely to have the skills and experience needed to present their case for funding well, and know what they need to do to satisfy the requirements of the funding bodies. Working with the members of UK Music, who

have strong relationships with organisations and individuals in popular music, could help strengthen the links between the work of the arts council and the commercial music sector, to provide sustainability to more of the arts councils work.

13. Some funding schemes also seem to show a bias towards classical music. For example, some types of urban music rely heavily on the digital manipulation of music where the essential 'instrument' is a computer. A teenager inspired by making music in this way should have an equal chance of getting help through schemes such as Take It Away as a teenager inspired by playing a cello. A blanket exclusion on subsidising the purchase of a computer is surely too blunt an instrument to apply in such circumstances. We would imagine it possible to prevent abuses of the scheme without ruling out computers altogether.

14. There are good public policy reasons for giving more support to a wider range of musical genres:

- public funding reaches more people
- public funding reaches a more diverse range of people
- public funding reaches 'hard-to-reach' people
- the known benefits of music extend beyond the purely personal and can improve academic performance, increase community cohesion, and help channel young people's time and energy away from less acceptable activities into positive pursuits

15. There are also good economic reasons for a better balanced arts policy. The UK is uniquely privileged to be able to boast of its musical talent. The UK is second only to the United States as a source of music repertoire. It is the third largest market in the world for consumption of music. It is only one of three countries that can claim to be a net exporter of music. Music has driven the demand for digital technology and the uptake of broadband amongst the consumer population. The music industry is also the most advanced creative industry sector in trying to realise the potential of the digital marketplace.

16. The UK is well-placed to build on its spectacular indigenous talent but to take full advantage of its potential, arts leadership is needed to put in place a strategy to cultivate this talent wherever it is emerging, by those best able to do so. We note that there has been support for Music Development organisations in some regions and genres, but would like this to be more comprehensive, and in partnership with commercial music. As well as supporting great art 'for arts sake', and encouraging creativity, the Arts Councils could work in a way that is more cognisant of and partners with the commercial music sector, providing a pathway from the grassroots and cutting edge to the commercial sector.

Outsource responsibility for supporting non-classical music genres to a charitable trust administered by the commercial music sector

17. In order to have world class operas and orchestras, significant levels of public support are required. The Arts Council is best placed to manage this support given its long history, close relationship and extensive reach into this part of the music world.

18. The Arts Council may not, however, be the best organisation to manage the distribution of funds to support genres of music that fall outside of the classical sphere. Artists and entrepreneurs in non-classical genres often do not have such a

strong history or culture of interfacing with public agencies. Instead, they are often connected into a network of producers and promoters, managers, small record labels and publishers, clubs and other music venues.

19. The commercial music industry also inhabits this space and may be better placed to reach those artists who could benefit from public subsidy but who are not at a stage where they can command commercial or private sector investment.

20. In reality, a successful artist will rely on the support of a range of sources as his or her career progresses – both commercial and non-commercial, at different stages – taking up opportunities offered by schools, youth groups, community organisations, local or regional arts institutions, pubs and clubs, small or specialist record labels and/or publishers and a whole host of individuals who help them on their way.

21. The relationships between the public, voluntary and commercial sectors should become more collaborative to better reflect the career ‘pathway’ of the artist. One way this could be achieved is for the commercial sector to work with the public sector, and to take some direct role in nurturing talent at the pre-commercial phase, in those areas where it is best placed to do so.

22. We suggest that the Arts Council consider transferring responsibility for supporting non-classical music to a music industry trust. The trust will have responsibility for developing a strategic plan for the non-classical music sector, setting funding criteria, deciding on the application process and making the awards.

23. The Arts Council and the music industry trust could sign a memorandum of understanding setting out responsibilities necessary to ensure appropriate accountability.

Focus public subsidy solely on the creation and performance and enjoyment of art.

24. In a global economic downturn, public funding for the arts is becoming an even scarcer resource. Funding decisions will become even more difficult as resources become tighter.

25. The Arts Council champions the arts not only as a funder but as an advocate.

26. As a funder, we urge the Arts Council to focus its precious resources directly on the creation of art, its performance and enjoyment by audiences.

27. As an advocate, we urge the Arts Council to use its influence, not finances, to advise and encourage other bodies to take leadership and responsibility for other types of support for the arts.

28. UK Music strongly supports the principle of public subsidy and arms-length funding for the arts. Our proposals in this submission are prompted by our admiration and support for the work of the Arts Council, and our desire to support and complement its work and overall ambitions.

Ends

For more information contact UK Music on 0207 306 4446