



Report to Policy Committee

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Report of: Diana Buckley (Director of Economic Development, Skills and Culture)

Report to: Finance Sub-Committee

Date of Decision: 07/11/22

Subject: One Year extension to DocFest Grant Funding

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? Reference number awaited				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i>				

Purpose of Report:

A grant agreement has been in place for the last 3 editions of the Sheffield International Documentary Festival (DocFest). This expires following the delivery of the event in 2022.

This report proposes extending the current grant agreement with DocFest for a further year (22/23) to support the delivery of the 2023 event which will be the 30th anniversary. This would give us the opportunity to explore a longer-term arrangement between SCC and DocFest for the 2024 event and beyond whilst ensuring DocFest is able to continue for 2023. This work is in line with the work of the Strategic Events Group regarding SCC's future support of major events.

Recommendations:

Finance Sub-Committee is recommended to:

Approve a one-year extension to the existing Grant Agreement SCC has with DocFest in the sum of £100K drawn from the Strategic Major Events Fund to support the delivery of DocFest in June 2023.

Background Papers:

[2022 Sheffield DocFest Festival Report by Sheffield DocFest - Issuu](#)

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Kerry Dallow
		Legal: Henry Watmough-Cownie
		Equalities & Consultation: <i>Louise Nunn</i>
		Climate: <i>Jessica Rick</i>
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>	
2	SLB member who approved submission:	<i>Kate Martin</i>
3	Committee Chair consulted:	<i>Bryan Lodge</i>
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: <i>Diana Buckley</i>	Job Title: Director of Economic Development, Skills and Culture
	Date: Draft 14/10/22	

1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The current grant agreement for the Council to provide grant funding to Sheffield DocFest for 3 years between 2020 – 2022 has expired following the June 2022 event. It is proposed that we extend the current grant agreement (by way of a legal letter) with DocFest for a further year (22/23) to support the delivery of the 2023 event which will be the 30th anniversary. This is to allow changes at senior level to take place within DocFest and for SCC to consider the detail of a longer-term arrangement to support DocFest.
- 1.2 Sheffield Doc/Fest is a world leading and the UK's premier documentary festival and conference, celebrating the art and business of documentary and all non-fiction storytelling. In 2023, it will be the 30th DocFest. Doc/Fest's analysis and our monitoring of hotel bookings demonstrate that it has recovered well from the pandemic and in 2022 it attracted 2188 industry delegates from 69 countries to Sheffield for a 10-day period. It is estimated to deliver an economic impact of £1.4 million to Sheffield. Spread over a proposed 20 venues, the festival provides a valuable contribution to Sheffield's cultural offer and achieves more than 30,000 public admissions (61% of which were from Sheffield) In 2022 there were 117 films premiered in Sheffield (38 of which were world premieres) The festival includes a marketplace (the Meet Market) where typically over £7,000,000 of deals are done, and Sheffield Doc/Fest also has a year-round programme of training, workshops, mentoring and networking as well as internships and volunteering opportunities for young people giving Sheffield a year round profile on the national and international stage.
- 1.3 Sponsorship of the event is legally discretionary. Funding will support Sheffield Doc/Fest to maintain a programme of international significance, in an environment of reduced funding from national bodies such as UK Film Council etc and uncertainty in the context of events post pandemic. It will support Sheffield Doc/Fest to unlock further funding from outside the UK to directly benefit local filmmakers and audiences, as well as providing the resources to secure commercial funding.
- 1.4 The £100K grant funding is budgeted for with the Strategic Major Events fund 22/23 and already includes a reduction (from £150K to £100K recognising current budget pressures)

2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 Sponsoring Doc/Fest ensures that the festival, which brings in almost £1,400,000 delegate spend per year to the city, takes place. This supports all work around strong economy and external reputation.
- 2.2 In addition to the delegate spend, the Council's sponsorship contributes to Sheffield Doc/Fest's ability to develop its programme so that the festival continues to maintain and develop its international standing.

- 2.3 Hosting the festival adds to the city's reputation as a cultural and creative destination, enhancing its appeal both to visitors, businesses and those who may wish to move to Sheffield to work. This is in line with our Economic aims and aims to make Sheffield a 'magnet city'.
- 2.4 Doc/Fest is one of Sheffield's largest and most high profile events and is used as a showcase to encourage other conferences to come to Sheffield. Additional work is taking place with Doc/Fest to maximise the marketing opportunities and promotion of Sheffield through linking in with Sheffield branding. Increased PR activity is also proposed to bring relevant press into Sheffield.
- 2.5 As well as contributing to the city's economic well-being, the sponsorship of the festival provides direct benefits to Sheffield residents. Public audience figures for Doc/Fest held in 2020 were in excess of 30,000 (61% of which were from Sheffield) and the proposed grant funding will support Sheffield Doc/Fest to reach out and increase their audiences.
- 2.6 Providing a one year extension whilst a longer term agreement is reached ensures stability and viability for Sheffield DocFest whilst they continue to recover from the pandemic (and international travel recovers globally) It ensures that the festival organisers are in a position to plan ahead and develop the festival whilst DocFest recruit and develop their senior team for the years ahead. The Council will also be able to review its position in 2023 and decide how best to continue any further sponsorship to Doc/Fest.

3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 All internal SCC consultation has taken place. There are no requirements to consult on sponsorship decisions and there has been no external consultation. Doc/Fest continue to research audience preferences to enable them to continue to increase inclusion.

4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

4.1 Equality Implications

- 4.1.1 An EIA has been completed. As this is not an SCC event this has been assessed as having minor impact.

4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 4.2.1 The recommended option for a one year extension to the existing grant arrangement, at a reduced cost, will be met from the 22/23 major events budget. Any budgetary changes arising from a longer-term arrangement from 23/24 would need to be managed through the Councils' annual Business Planning process.

4.2.2 The grant is exempt from Contracts Standing Orders if it does not result in the provision of services on behalf of the Council, which is the case for this grant.

4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 Encouraging the continuance of Doc/Fest accords with the provisions of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy (the Sheffield City Strategy) prepared pursuant to Section 4 of the Local Government Act 2000. One of the key ambitions of the City Strategy is that Sheffield should be a "vibrant" city, "celebrating the diversity, creativity, energy and innovation in Sheffield and ensuring that the City continues to be an international destination of choice, offering the highest quality cultural, shipping and sporting activities."

4.3.2 The Council may award the grant by virtue of Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (the so called "the General Power of Competence") that allows the Council "to do anything that individuals generally may do".

4.3.3 The grant will be made under the terms of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 which comes into force on 4th January 2023. We are working to undertake a satisfactory assessment prior to payment of the grant to ensure that the payment fits with the seven Subsidy Control principles.

4.4 Climate Implications

4.4.1 In consultation with Jessica Rick it is deemed not appropriate to have a CIA for a 1 year extension to current arrangements (also as Docfest are a separate entity) However we have identified that DocFest has some policies in this area already and in a year's time when we embark on a new joint working agreement we will work with them as much as we can to look at things like using sustainable venues and travel plans for delegates (referring to the industry guidance around sustainability for events available via Visit Britain)

4.5 Other Implications

4.5.1 There is a risk that Sheffield Doc/Fest fails to meet its aims and objectives or the anticipated key performance indicators. Marketing Sheffield will mitigate this risk by monitoring Sheffield Doc/Fest closely.

4.5.2 The grant agreement requires Sheffield Doc/Fest to take out appropriate insurance to protect against itself and the Council.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

5.1 Providing no sponsorship for Doc/Fest would be likely to result in the permanent withdrawal of Doc/Fest from Sheffield or, at best, a significant

reduction in the quality and breadth of the event, risking its international reputation and/or future relocation to an alternative city. This would be likely to mean the approximate £1,400,000 (minimum) delegate spend per year would be lost to the city, and would also have the effect of reducing the city's profile and reputation within the creative community inside and outside of Sheffield. As the conference is the city's largest conference, maintaining presence and scale is important for PR purposes.

- 5.2 It is worth noting again here that we have reduced the suggested contribution from £150K to 100K

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Providing a one-year extension whilst a longer-term agreement is reached ensures stability and viability for Sheffield DocFest whilst they continue to recover from the pandemic (and whilst international travel recovers globally) It ensures that the festival organisers are in a position to plan ahead and develop the festival whilst DocFest recruit and develop their senior team for the years ahead. It ensures Sheffield continues to benefit from the economic impact the festival delivers to our various organisations and businesses (including struggling sectors such as hospitality) The Council will also be able to review its position in 2023 and decide how best to continue any further sponsorship to Doc/Fest.