

**FOI 202400412099 – Part 2  
Document 1**

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of**  
Minister for Culture, Europe & International Development  
**Sent:** Friday, January 19, 2024 3:55 PM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture  
<CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>;  
Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>;  
Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;  
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<CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsAndCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;  
Minister for Culture, Europe & International Development  
<MinisterforCEID@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: TO CLEAR: News release - SG response to ESSM recommendations

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

Ms McKelvie is content with the news release.

Kind regards,  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
**Office of Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, Christina  
McKelvie MSP**  
Ministerial Private Office  
St Andrews House  
Regent Road  
Edinburgh

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**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Friday, January 19, 2024 2:30 PM  
**To:** Minister for Culture, Europe & International Development  
<MinisterforCEID@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture  
<CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>;  
Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>;  
Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;  
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<CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsAndCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted –

s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** TO CLEAR: News release - SG response to ESSM recommendations

Minister / PO,

Further to attached briefing, please see draft news release below to mark the publication of the Scottish Government's response to the ESSM recommendations on Monday.

Note this includes a supportive quote from MGS and we are awaiting a quote from the steering group, which I will share once provided. Subject to clearance, we will issue the news release at 10:00 on Monday to coincide with the beginning of the reception at the Hunterian.

Grateful if this could be put to the Minister for consideration over the weekend – SpAds and officials are content.

Thanks,  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## **Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums**

Culture Minister responds to independent experts' recommendations.

The recommendations of an independent group set up to advise on how Scotland's museums and galleries can better reflect the country's role in empire, colonialism, and historic slavery have been fully accepted by the Scottish Government.

Established following a motion in the Scottish Parliament and commitment in the 2020 Programme for Government, the Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums (ESSM) Steering Group published six recommendations in 2022, for the recognition of Scotland's colonial and slavery history.

The recommendations include the creation of a dedicated space to address Scotland's role in empire, colonialism and historic slavery, that museums involve the people of Scotland in shaping their work, and that the Scottish Government demonstrates support for restitution and repatriation of looted or unethically acquired items in Scottish collections.

Culture Minister Christina McKelvie said:

"I warmly welcome the steering group's report and recommendations, which we have considered very carefully. Following in-depth discussion with the steering group, I am pleased to confirm the Scottish Government fully accepts all six recommendations, including the creation of a dedicated space to address Scotland's role in empire, colonialism and historic slavery.

“While budgetary pressures mean we are not currently able to commit to the group’s suggestion of £5 million for this work, the Scottish Government has provided funding of £200,000 in 2023/24 to enable the steering group and Museums Galleries Scotland to begin work addressing the recommendations, including scoping out the format of a new organisation to progress the creation of a dedicated space and national guidance around the repatriation of objects from Scottish institutions.

“The Scottish Government wants everyone to feel safe, welcome, and represented in our cultural spaces. Though we cannot change the past, it is within our power to learn from it and use that to improve the experience of all people who live, work in and visit Scotland, whilst celebrating the wide ranging and positive contributions that ethnic minority communities have made and continue to make to our society.”

### **[Steering Group quote]**

Lucy Casot, CEO of Museums Galleries Scotland, said:

“MGS welcomes this significant announcement by the Scottish Government and the recognition of the importance of undertaking the work recommended by the Empire, Slavery & Scotland’s Museums Steering Group.

“Since their publication in 2022, the recommendations have not just shaped MGS’s work, but how we work as an organisation to collectively support the sector to engage with, and tell the stories of, all of Scotland’s people. We are already seeing brilliant work by museums and galleries across the country collaborating with local communities impacted by the legacies of slavery and empire to create more inclusive heritage spaces. I am excited about the future of a museum sector that is truly inclusive, trusted and engaged with by all of Scotland’s people, and the role that MGS can play in supporting this work.”

### Background

Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) is the national development body for Scotland's museum sector.

### Empire, Slavery & Scotland's Museums - Museums Galleries Scotland

The six recommendations of the Empire, Slavery and Scotland’s Museums Steering Group’s report:

1. Scotland should create a dedicated space to address our role in empire, colonialism, and historic slavery. A new organisation should be created to lead this work.
2. Museums should ensure anti-racism is embedded in their workplaces and public spaces.

3. Museums should involve the people of Scotland in shaping their work through co-production, to promote cultural democracy and participation for all.
4. Museums should commit to research, interpret, and share the histories of Scotland's links to empire, colonialism, and historic slavery.
5. Museums should support efforts to promote and embed race equality and anti-racism in the curricula in a meaningful, effective, and sustainable way.
6. Scottish Government should demonstrate their support for restitution and repatriation of looted or unethically acquired items in Scottish collections.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

News | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**Constitution, External Affairs and Culture Communications**

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

Mobile: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | Portfolio Media inquiries: 0300 244 9029

[gov.scot/news](https://gov.scot/news)



## Document 2

<b>What</b>	Scottish Government Debate: Scotland's International Culture Strategy
<b>Where</b>	Scottish Parliament
<b>When</b>	Tuesday 16 April 2024, 14:20-16:30
<b>Key Message(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On 28 March 2024, the Scottish Government published Inspiring Connections: Scotland's International Culture Strategy 2024-30.</li> <li>• This is the first time that the Scottish Government has set out a strategic approach to international cultural activity. While we have supported the sector's international work this new strategy aims to maximise its potential and provide coherence to our approach.</li> <li>• International engagement is vital to the culture and creative sector. International exchange and collaboration support learning, development and cultural innovation, the exchange of ideas and new ways of doing things.</li> <li>• The sector's international activity has been hit hard though in recent years by COVID-19, Brexit and increased costs. Our approach aims to ensure that international engagement is a key element of sectoral recovery from recent challenges and supports its long-term development and resilience.</li> </ul>
<b>Who</b>	Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (open, 11 mins) and (close, 9 mins).
<b>Why</b>	The debate will enable the Scottish Parliament to consider Scotland's International Culture Strategy, published on 28 March 2024, and its vision and aims to support the culture and creative sector's international ambitions and potential. The debate will be an opportunity to recognise the significance of Scotland's culture and creative sector at home and abroad and the impact that has on Scotland's place in the world. The Strategy acknowledges the role the sector can play in addressing and exploring some of the most significant questions we face as a society: for example, our country's role in empire and slavery; and addressing climate change.
<b>Supporting official</b>	Penelope Cooper, Director of Culture and Major Events [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]
<b>Briefing contents</b>	Annex A – Motion Annex B – Opening Speech Annex C – Closing Speech Annex D – International Culture Strategy - Lines to Take Annex E – Mobility Annex F - Funding Annex G – Festivals Annex H – UNESCO Annex I – Intangible Cultural Heritage Annex J – FCDO attempts to restrict SG international activities Annex K – Support for International Activity - Screen

	Annex L – Nation Brand Index and International Strategy Annex M – Climate Change and Culture Annex N – International Network Annex O – Brand Scotland
<b>Media Handling</b>	Comms to be handled by the comms team, with plans for clip of the Cabinet Secretary’s opening speech to be isused on social media.

[redacted – out of scope]

## ANNEX N

[redacted – out of scope]

### **EMPIRE, SLAVERY AND SCOTLAND'S MUSEUMS (ESSM)**

#### **Top Lines**

- The Scottish Government is determined that Scotland will play our part in eradicating racism, inequality and injustice – and in building a better, fairer world.
- We are keen to encourage wide-ranging and inclusive dialogue on this subject, particularly concerning how to best manage, present and protect elements of our contested or hidden heritage.
- The Scottish Government published our response accepting the **Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums** recommendations on 22 January 2024.
- We will support the implementation of the recommendations of the ESSM group, including championing the development of bespoke national guidance for repatriating objects acquired unethically.
- Scotland's willingness to reflect on our colonial history and its complex legacies is reflected in the recent decision by National Museums Scotland to **return the House of Ni'isjoohl Memorial Pole to its homeland in the Nisga'a Nation in British Columbia, Canada.**

#### **Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums: Addressing our Colonial Legacy**

- On 10 June 2020 a motion was passed in the Scottish Parliament showing solidarity with anti-racism, with an amendment that Scotland should 'establish a slavery museum to address our historic links to the slave trade.'
- In the Programme for Government in 2020, the Scottish Government committed to partner with Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) and race equality and museum sector stakeholders to identify the ways we can reinterpret aspects of our hidden or contested heritage, to present a more accurate, complete picture of the past.
- The project "**Empire Slavery and Scotland's Museums: Addressing Our Colonial Legacy**" (ESSM) formed an expert group led by Sir Geoff Palmer who delivered recommendations concerning our hidden past and how to take forward work to consider a national museum.
- The Scottish Government allocated £200,000 in the 2023-24 budget to support ongoing work related to Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums recommendations. It will work towards all the recommendations published by the steering group.
- ESSM delivered their six key recommendations to the SG in June 2022, which the Scottish Government fully accepted in January 2024. These are:
  1. *Scotland should create a dedicated space to address our role in empire, colonialism, and historic slavery. A new organisation should be created to lead this work.*

2. *Museums should ensure anti-racism is embedded in their workplaces and public spaces.*
3. *Museums should involve the people of Scotland in shaping their work through co-production, to promote cultural democracy and participation for all.*
4. *Museums should commit to research, interpret, and share the histories of Scotland's links to empire, colonialism, and historic slavery.*
5. *Museums should support efforts to promote and embed race equality and anti-racism in the curricula in a meaningful, effective, and sustainable way.*
6. *Scottish Government should demonstrate their support for restitution and repatriation of looted or unethically acquired items in Scottish collections.*

[redacted – out of scope]



## Document 3

### Supp

**Stuart McMillan** – To ask the Scottish Government if it can agree that Greenock/Inverclyde would be the ideal place to house a Scottish National Museum of Human Rights and Slavery?

### Answer

Following the Scottish Government's acceptance of the Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums recommendations, I am pleased that funding from the Scottish Government has been allocated to begin the scoping work for a new organisation, which will be led by people with lived experience of racism and colonial legacies, and professional expertise.

The format and location of any dedicated space to address the legacy of colonialism and slavery in Scotland will be for that new organisation to determine in due course.

## Document 4

### Culture and Historic Environment - ESSM

#### Top Lines

- Scotland is a modern, inclusive nation which cherishes, protects and respects diverse communities.
- The Scottish Government is determined that Scotland will play our part in eradicating racism, inequality and injustice – and in building a better, fairer world.
- It is important to understand that heritage is diverse and it can be understood and valued in different ways. It comprises physical assets like buildings, landscapes and monuments and intangible aspects like stories, traditions and memories.
- We are keen to encourage wide-ranging and inclusive dialogue on this subject, particularly concerning how to best manage, present and protect elements of our contested or hidden heritage.
- The Scottish Government has had several discussions on this work, including with stakeholders and the Steering Group, to give careful consideration as to how best to respond to the Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums recommendations.
- The Scottish Government published our response accepting the Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums recommendations on 22 January 2024.
- We will support the implementation of the recommendations of the ESSM group, including championing the development of bespoke national guidance for repatriating objects acquired unethically.
- The Scottish Government is not currently in a position to provide the levels of financial support which the recommendations request. We will use the resources we do have available to build an effective, resilient organisation which contains the necessary skills to identify and acquire additional funding streams to allow this crucial work to progress and develop over coming years.
- The Scottish Government allocated £200,000 in the 2023-24 budget to support ongoing work related to Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums recommendations. It will work towards all the recommendations published by the steering group.

#### Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums: Addressing our Colonial Legacy

On 10 June 2020 a motion was passed in the Scottish Parliament showing solidarity with anti-racism, with an amendment that Scotland should 'establish a slavery museum to address our historic links to the slave trade.'

In September 2020 the Scottish Government published their Programme for Government in which we agreed:

'Partnering with Museums Galleries Scotland, in collaboration with race equality and museums sector stakeholders, we will sponsor an independent expert group to make recommendations on how Scotland's existing and future museum collections we can better recognise and represent a more accurate portrayal of Scotland's colonial and slavery history and what further steps

should be taken to ensure people in Scotland are aware of the role Scotland played and how that manifests itself in our society today. This will include how to reflect, interpret and celebrate the wide ranging and positive contributions that ethnic minority communities have made and continue to make to Scotland.'

As a result we are proud that we partnered with Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) and race equality and museum sector stakeholders in a project to identify the ways we can reinterpret aspects of our hidden or contested heritage, to present a more accurate, complete picture of the past.

The project "Empire Slavery and Scotland's Museums: Addressing Our Colonial Legacy" (ESSM) formed an expert group led by Sir Geoff Palmer who delivered recommendations concerning our hidden past and how to take forward work to consider a national museum. The recommendations are published online here - <https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/media/2804/empire-slavery-and-scotlands-museums-recommendations.pdf>

The independent group which made these recommendations was made up of a diverse group of people, from varied backgrounds and disciplines. The group also led a triple-stranded national consultation in collaboration with CRER and Glasgow Life, establishing both public and expert perspectives, ensuring all voices were heard in the formation of the recommendations.

These three strands captured the views from the Museum sector, the communities who have experienced racism and the wider national viewpoint and ran between September – November 2021.

You can find more information on the remit and scope of the project on the MGS website – <https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/projects/empire-slavery-scotlands-museums/>

ESSM delivered their six key recommendations to the SG in June 2022. The SG carefully considered the most appropriate response to the recommendations made.

As an initial step the SG provided £68,000 to MGS, as the museums development body in Scotland, so MGS could begin to support the sector to address the recommendations.

The Scottish Government then published its response to the Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums recommendations on 22 January 2024.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/empire-slavery-scotlands-museums-steering-group-recommendations-scottish-government-response/pages/2/>

This response confirmed that the SG fully accepts the recommendations of the ESSM group.

Given the current budget pressures, the SG cannot offer the financial commitment of £5m requested in the ESSM recommendations. The SG has however provided £200,000 in 2023-24 to continue this important work that aims to deliver real,

meaningful change in our cultural spaces. This funding includes a contribution towards the NLHF-funded Delivering Change programme and promises to develop bespoke national guidance for repatriating objects acquired unethically.

There are clear links with this work across many SG policies and strategies, including the Culture Strategy and the Race Equality Framework for Scotland as well as MGS and National Museum Scotland policies. This demonstrates the increasing levels of awareness and layers of work which the Scottish Government is progressing to challenge racism across policy areas.

**Culture and Historic Environment Division**  
**March 2024**

**FOI 202400412099 – Part 3  
Document 1**

**From:** Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 11:46 AM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Duty Box

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**Subject:** RE: SPAD AND POLICY VIEWS - Sun on Sunday - Arts show article

Response from CS:

This project was awarded funding through our Open Fund following application and assessment. It is being developed by a reputable project team, with support from credible partner organisations.

However, what is emerging regarding the project is considerably more sexually explicit than what was intimated in the application (although, it was always clear that this project was radical and would push boundaries).

CS will be reviewing this award, and will be discussing with the artists involved and the partners.

In the interim, we will be putting out the following statement shortly:

*“We support freedom of expression and artists being able to push the boundaries of radical performance.*

*However, the project, Rein, is considerably more explicit in its execution than was indicated in the application received to our Open Fund.*

*As such, we are reviewing this award and will be discussing next steps with the applicant and with the other partners in the project.”*

Lisa

**Lisa Baird** | Deputy Director, Cultural Access and Organisations | Tel: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] –  
*currently working from home*  
email: lisa.baird@gov.scot

**From:** Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 11:42 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Duty Box <CommunicationsDutyBox@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: SPAD AND POLICY VIEWS - Sun on Sunday - Arts show article

All – for info,

Mr Robertson is giving evidence to the Westminster Scottish Affairs Committee tomorrow. I have been in touch with Iain Munro (CS CEO) and will ensure the Cab Sec has lines to take in his pack.

Lisa

**Lisa Baird** | Deputy Director, Cultural Access and Organisations | Tel: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] –  
*currently working from home*  
email: lisa.baird@gov.scot

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 8:58 AM  
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**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Duty Box <CommunicationsDutyBox@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted –

s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: SPAD AND POLICY VIEWS - Sun on Sunday - Arts show article

Adding in Sunday duty colleagues for awareness.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] - **why I share my pronouns**

News | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

Communications Health and Social Care

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

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[www.gov.scot/news](http://www.gov.scot/news)



**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 8:20 AM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>;

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Duty Box <CommunicationsDutyBox@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: SPAD AND POLICY VIEWS - Sun on Sunday - Arts show article

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] and all,

Please see the comment from the Creative Scotland below.

A Creative Scotland spokesperson said:

"We are aware of concerns about this project and are investigating."

Read the article in full - Explicit 'sex cave' show handed £84,000 of public money by Scottish Government agency | The Scottish Sun

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] - **why I share my pronouns**

News | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## Communications Health and Social Care

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

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Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

[www.gov.scot/news](http://www.gov.scot/news)



**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Saturday, March 9, 2024 4:59 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Duty Box

<CommunicationsDutyBox@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture

<CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Re: SPAD AND POLICY VIEWS - Sun on Sunday - Arts show article

Refer them to CS. It is not a matter for SG.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

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**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Saturday, March 9, 2024 4:55:06 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Duty Box

<CommunicationsDutyBox@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture

<CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>

**Subject:** SPAD AND POLICY VIEWS - Sun on Sunday - Arts show article

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] / policy team,



The Sun on Sunday asked for a SG comment on a controversial art show that has been funded by Creative Scotland. The casting call has gone out on the artist's website - asks for three performers who would be doing an "explicit" sex scene with "porn or cam" experience needed. Please see the full query below.

To note - The journalist has already approached CS. SG Comms have been in touch with CS Comms - they are working on their response, I will share it as soon as I have it, thanks.

Comms suggest that we will pass on the query to Creative Scotland, as this is matter for them to comment.

With thanks, grateful for your views, thanks.

Thanks

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## FULL QUERY

It's [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] from The Scottish Sun here.

We plan to run the following article and are looking for comment from the National Lottery, who we understand provided the money distributed by Creative Scotland in this instance.

Basically it's about an arts show promising a "secret sex cave party" and a "feast of fisting, squirting, wet work and mess".

Organisers say it is supported by Creative Scotland.

Rein, by artist Leonie Rae Gasson, has advertised for six performers to take part in the filming of the 45-minute long video installation featuring "daddies lurking in the woods" and "bare-arsed lovers frolicking in long grass" set in a distinctively Scottish landscape.

The casting call asks for three performers who would be doing an "explicit" sex scene with "porn or cam" experience needed.

While the other three would just be expected to "snog" or take part in "vanilla" sex and other more "hardcore acts." - with the support of an "intimacy coordinator" who will support performers to draw on the "long tradition of pornography."

Feminist campaigners have described the art piece as "state-funded porn" after organisers opened a call for applications for a range of performers with "experience in sex work, particular porn contexts."

The day rate for all performers is set at £270 per day with auditions starting next month in Glasgow's South side.

It comes just one month after the Scottish Government announced plans for a national hub to support women safely out of prostitution and challenge the normalisation of men purchasing sex.

A pilot of the hub will begin this summer followed by a phased national rollout.

At the time Siobhian Brown, victims and community safety minister, said: "Prostitution is recognised as a form of violence against women and girls, and is exploitation."

The money was provided as part of the National Lottery's Open Fund, which we understand is administered by Creative Scotland.

## Document 2

**From:** Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 12:10 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: Urgent Briefing Required: Creative Scotland Story

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] – I have spoken to CS now and suggest lines below:

**10 March 24 – article in Sunday press “STATE-FUNDED PORN’ - explicit ‘sex cave’ show handed £84,000 of public money by Scottish Government agency”**

**Issue: Media reporting that Creative Scotland has provided lottery funding of £84k through its open fund to a sexually explicit project.**

### **Background:**

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. It distributes funding from the Scottish Government and The National Lottery.

CS advises that the project, funded with national lottery funds through its open fund, is being developed by a reputable project team, with support from credible partner organisations. Whilst it was expected to be radical and would push boundaries, what is emerging regarding the project is considerably more sexually explicit than what was intimated in the application. Accordingly, CS will be reviewing this award, and will be discussing with the artists involved and the partners. CS is issuing a statement as follows:

“We support freedom of expression and artists being able to push the boundaries of radical performance. However, the project, Rein, is considerably more explicit in its execution than was indicated in the application received to our Open Fund. As such, we are reviewing this award and will be discussing next steps with the applicant and with the other partners in the project.”

### **Lines to Take:**

The Scottish Government does not interfere in Creative Scotland decisions relating to artistic or cultural judgement. This is a matter for Creative Scotland and I understand the funding decision is being reviewed given the manner in which the project is developing.

Lisa

**Lisa Baird** | Deputy Director, Cultural Access and Organisations |  
email: lisa.baird@gov.scot

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 10, 2024 10:43 AM  
**To:** Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Urgent Briefing Required: Creative Scotland Story  
**Importance:** High

Morning Lisa, [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

I'm sure you'll be aware of the story running this morning in the *Sun, Sunday Post* and probably elsewhere.

Mr Robertson is giving evidence tomorrow morning to the Westminster Scottish Affairs Committee. The session is supposed to focus on the state of intergovernmental relations after the first 25 years of devolution, but we expect it to be unfocussed and fairly fractious. It's not unlikely this might come up, especially as it sits in Mr Robertson's portfolio.

Do you have, or would you be able to provide, some FMQ-style lines? I'm afraid we'll need this first thing tomorrow to allow time to print off and add to Mr Robertson's pack. Apologies for the very tight turnaround.

If this doesn't sit with you folks, grateful if you can send on.

Thanks very much

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] UK Frameworks | Constitution & UK Relations Division | Constitution Directorate  
Scottish Government | 2W, St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh EH1 3DG

### Document 3

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Director of Culture and Major Events  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 4:17 PM  
**To:** Freedom of Information <foi@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOI- TRIAGE- Creative Scotland decision to fund Rein- 202400406856

Afternoon,

@[redacted – s.38(1)(b)], [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] has asked that you progress this please. Grateful if you can accept the case.

Regards,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] **Director for Culture and Major Events, Penelope Cooper**  
Email: **DirectorofCultureandMajorEvents@gov.scot**  
Tel: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | Mob: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@thetimes.co.uk>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 12:09 PM  
**To:** Central Correspondence Unit <ceu@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FOI request concerning Creative Scotland.

Dear Sir?Madam,

I am interested in Creative Scotland's decision to fund, then withdrawn funding, from Rein, described as an "immersive" show set in a "sex cave" and to gauge government reaction, following public uproar about the proposed production. Rein's proposed content became widely known on March 10.

I would be very grateful if you could supply any ministerial or first ministerial correspondence, or any other official correspondence from government to Creative Scotland on the subject of Rein, in the form of memos, emails, whatsapp or any other written or digital media in the period after March 10.

Also I would be obliged if you supply any internal government correspondence between government ministers, including the first minister, and officials, in which Creative Scotland is discussed in light of its decision to fund Rein. This should also include memos, emails, whatsapp or any other written or digital media in the period after March 10.

Thanks in advance for your help,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] Reporter Scotland

The Times & Sunday Times

## Document 4

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** First Minister  
**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 4:29 PM  
**To:** Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Afternoon Penelope,

Thank you for all your work on this today, I understand contact with CS has been difficult with the public holiday.

The First Minister think it is sensible to review this decision, given that they did qualify for a grant, and that money has been returned in relation to the grant given to Rein.

Given the uncertainty that now exists around this issue, FM would urge the CS Board to review the decision with pace and urgency, while respecting the eventual decision is one for them to take independently.

I'd be grateful if you could keep me updated on any progress.

Many thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] **Private Secretary to the First Minister**  
**Office of the First Minister**  
5<sup>th</sup> Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

## Document 5

### Creative Scotland Communications update and forward look to Scottish Government 02 April 2024

**Media-wise**, our activity this week has included:

- Announcing the February Open Fund recipients.

Responding to multiple ongoing media enquiries in relation to the project *Rein*, changes to Open Fund for Individuals process, Aye Write's unsuccessful OFFO funding bid and Lammermuir's successful funding bid to the Extended Programme Fund.

### Government Relations

Constitution, External Affairs and Culture Committee:

- The Convener has written to Creative Scotland noting public concerns around Creative Scotland's funding award of £85,000 to the project Rein. The correspondence asks CS how it plans to recover the award and details of how funding decisions are undertaken. They also note that CS may be invited to give oral evidence on this subject at a later date. You can read the letter in full here. We will respond to the Committee by the end of Easter Recess – Monday 15 April 2024.

Parliamentary Correspondence:

- We have received a letter from Pauline McNeil MSP expressing concern about the decision to fund Rein

Complaints:

- We have received two formal complaints in relation to our decision to recover the funding allocated to the project Rein

Freedom of Information Requests:

- We have received 20 FOI requests in relation to the project Rein. The first deadline for response is Tuesday 9 April 2024



## Document 6

**From:** Director of Culture and Major Events  
<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Tuesday, April 2, 2024 9:40 AM

**To:** Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs  
<DGSEA@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Aye Write

Morning Joe,

[redacted – s.30(b)]  
[redacted – out of scope]

Kind regards,

*Penelope*

Penelope Cooper | Director of Culture and Major Events | The Scottish Government

## Document 7

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 11, 2024 3:56 PM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Subject:** Communications update  
**Importance:** High

Hi Both,

Weekly Comms update from us.

Worth noting that we will be replying to the Committee's recent letter to Iain regarding the Rein project and will be sending this to them (and publishing on our website) on Tuesday morning.

I'll share with you on Monday.

Otherwise, any questions, let me know.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] Communications and External Relations  
Stiùiriche, Conaltraidhean

## Document 8

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 16, 2024 11:51 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FOR CLEARANCE - Creative Scotland/Rein

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

Thanks – Mr Robertson is content with that if pressed.

Best,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

### Private Secretary

Office of Angus Robertson MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 16, 2024 10:31 AM  
**To:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; ) Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FOR CLEARANCE - Creative Scotland/Rein

Good morning Cabinet Secretary/PO

Creative Scotland are planning to respond to the CEEAC committee today following the committee's writing to CS regarding the REIN funding decision.

CS shared in confidence the final draft of the response with officials yesterday and will share the final version once issued later today.

The response states that CS are not withdrawing all £84,000 funding for REIN as approx. £8,500 had already been subcontracted including to freelancers.

We have previously referred most media queries to CS to respond and will take that approach today.

But below is a line agreed with SpAds and officials if SG is pressed for a response.

Grateful for your views.

Kind Regards

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“Creative Scotland is an arms-length funding body and Ministers have no role in funding decisions around individual projects.

“We welcome Creative Scotland's decision to withdraw its funding in this case.”

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**News |** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**Constitution, External Affairs and Culture Communications**

The Scottish Government, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh

## Document 9

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]>@gov.scot **On Behalf Of** Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 16, 2024 1:04 PM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]>@gov.scot; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]>@gov.scot  
**Cc:** Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: Fw: Creative Scotland REIN Funding Decision, an industry view

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

Just sharing this response we have been copied into from Creative Scotland responding to Leamington Books in Edinburgh just passing on for awareness it mentions the committee response which has issued today.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | Private Secretary,  
**Office of Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development, Kaukab Stewart**

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**From:** Enquiries <enquiries@creativescotland.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 16, 2024 12:36 PM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@leamingtonbooks.com>  
**Cc:** Jeremy Balfour MSP <Jeremy.Balfour.msp@parliament.scot>; Sarah Boyack MSP <sarah.boyack.msp@parliament.scot>; Angus Robertson MSP <Angus.Robertson.msp@parliament.scot>; Miles Briggs MSP <Miles.Briggs.msp@parliament.scot>; Foysol Choudhury MSP <Foysol.Choudhury.MSP@Parliament.scot>; Alison Johnstone MSP <Alison.Johnstone.msp@parliament.scot>; Lorna Slater MSP <Lorna.Slater.msp@parliament.scot>; Sue Webber MSP <Sue.Webber.msp@parliament.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Fw: Creative Scotland REIN Funding Decision, an industry view

Dear [redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

Thanks for your email regarding the project Rein, which was passed across by Iain Munro, Chief Executive.

A full review of the application, assessment, and contractual agreement was undertaken in April and a full statement on the project is available on our website: [Statement from Creative Scotland on Rein](#)

In addition to this, today we have responded to the CEEAC Committee's letter on the project, you can read this here: [Response to the CEEAC Committee - 16 April 2024](#)

Best wishes,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## Document 10

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of**  
First Minister FMQs

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 17, 2024 10:29 AM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>

**Subject:** Culture FMQ - Update Due 4:30pm Today

**Importance:** High

Hello

Thank you for this week's brief for FMQs. Could you please consider the following articles and update the attached brief to reflect this if not already included by 4:30pm today.

[redacted – out of scope]

### 17 Apr

The Scotsman 14 **Creative Scotland defends controversial 'experimental performance art' funding** Creative Scotland pulled the plug days after culture secretary Angus Robertson said there was "no way" that it should have funded Rein after it emerged Ms Gasson was planning to film "non-simulated" sex scenes. Creative Scotland was asked to explain its decision to fund Rein by Holyrood's culture committee. The arts funding body had initially helped promote Ms Gasson's search for performers for what she described as a "pro sex and pro sex work project", saying some of the roles would involve "hardcore" acts.

The Courier (Main Edition) 15 **Arts body will not recover all of grant for sex-row project** Creative Scotland has not recovered all the money paid out to the maker of an explicit sex project, MSPs have been told. The arts funding body withdrew funding for the

The Herald 6 **Creative Scotland claws back £68,000 from hardcore show** CREATIVE Scotland has clawed back nearly £68,000 of taxpayers' cash from a controversial "hardcore" performance piece, MSPs have been told. The funding agency took action against artist Leonie Rae Gasson

The Times (Scotland) 1 **We didn't mislead over sex show, say producers** of the funding was promptly withdrawn by the national arts agency. Critics questioned why Rein had been given such substantial public funding when other more mainstream theatre companies were struggling. Angus Robertson, the culture secretary, said that the project should never have been awarded the money. Following the outcry about public funding for the project and questions from MSPs, Iain

The Scotsman 8 **Campaigners warn access to Scottish culture 'gravely at risk'** Campaigners have warned Scottish arts organisations will "cease to exist" without an urgent injection of public funding. The Scottish Government has been urged to deliver on a promise to "more than double" arts spending amid claims that access to the arts is being put "gravely at risk" due to a lack of investment.

Thanks

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

First Minister's Questions Officer, Scottish Government

4th Floor, St Andrew's House



## Document 11

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 18, 2024 8:39 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>;  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Correspondence re Rein decision

Morning,

Hope all is well.

The Minister has received correspondence from [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] which appears to be saying that the Rein decision is not consistent with other decisions in relation to alleged breaches of terms and conditions. They have copied us into correspondence which both of you have responded to. I was planning to respond to say that we cannot interfere in the artistic decision of CS. Are you content with that? Aware you've got contributions for two oral PQs and these have greater urgency so if I could get a response by the end of next week that would be very helpful.

Thanks

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | Cultural Access & Organisations  
Division | Scottish Government |

**FOI 202400412099 – Part 4  
Document 1**

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 11:12 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: Aye Write - Notification from CS  
**Importance:** High

Hi,

To see (you might already have this), checking emails from yesterday evening, below CS wrote to [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] and I about Aye Write Festival.

Thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]



**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 6:16 PM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** FW: Aye Write  
**Importance:** High

Dear [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
Sharing the below with you for awareness, in [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] absence.  
Best  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2024 6:14 PM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot;  
CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsAndCulture@gov.scot; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Subject:** Aye Write  
**Importance:** High

Good evening

For awareness: Brian Ferguson has been in touch this afternoon to request a response to the news that Aye Write won't be going ahead this year, partly due to an unsuccessful funding application to Creative Scotland's National Lottery Open Fund for Organisations.

Glasgow Life Comms are due to issue stakeholder comms tomorrow (Weds), but Brian has been passed the information by another party today, and he plans to run a story tomorrow morning.

The Glasgow Life comment is:

**A spokesperson for Glasgow Life said:** "Aye Write and Wee Write Book Festivals celebrate the joy of reading, writing, and books, bringing audiences and authors together. The festivals' delivery is dependent on securing external funding and while bids for funding support continue to exceed monies available, especially during the current difficult economic climate, some events will inevitably miss out.

"Aye Write and Wee Write have developed and grown over the years thanks, in part, to support through Creative Scotland. Our 2024 funding application to Creative Scotland was not successful so Aye Write and Wee Write will not be able to take place as festivals this year. We appreciate this will cause considerable disappointment.

"Glasgow Life will organise some pop up Aye Write events during 2024 and will develop an application for multi-year funding starting in 2025, which if successful, means a return for the festivals next year."

The Creative Scotland comment is:

**A Creative Scotland spokesperson said:** "We recognise the significance of Aye Write to audiences and the literature sector and understand that this is disappointing news. The National Lottery Open Fund for Organisations remains available to Aye Write to apply for further funding, and we welcome future applications. As demand for these funds continues to increase, Creative Scotland also continues to advocate for more resources to support culture and creativity across Scotland."

Ends

All best

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] *pronouns:* [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | *riochdairean*

*pearsanta:* [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## Document 2

-----Original Appointment-----

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 3:04 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]; Rachael Mckechnie; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**Subject:** FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

**When:** 28 March 2024 15:30-16:00 (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London.

**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Importance:** High

Anyone free this afternoon to discuss?

Looks like the festival has already been cancelled so not sure if there is much that can be done now...

Aye Write book festival cancelled due to lack of funding - BBC News

### Document 3

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 9:53 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Good morning PO and FMQ team,

Please find attached revised FMQ brief including lines on the Aye Write festival.

For PO, some additional background and context below:

The Culture budget is already oversubscribed, there are a number of high profile projects that we can't fund [redacted – s.30(b)] that have not received funding from Creative Scotland. This is a reflection of the tough decisions that have to be made with the finite resource and growing demand for support.

Many thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] – **Culture Engagement and Participation**  
Access to Culture Unit

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**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]< [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of** First Minister  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 8:46 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]y@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot

**Subject:** FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

**Importance:** High

Good Morning,

The First Minister is concerned that the Aye Write Festival isn't going ahead. While accepting this is a matter for Creative Scotland, he has asked that officials explore what can be done to support the Festival to enable it to go ahead please?

Grateful for confirmation this has been picked up please? Please do circulate as appropriate.

Copied the FMQ team so lines can be updated.

Many thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] **Private Secretary**  
**Office of the First Minister**

## Document 4

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of**  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance

**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 5:18 PM

**To:** Director of Culture and Major Events

<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Penelope and team,

DFM has asked if there is any way Creative Scotland can fund this? Please advise.

Thanks

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**Private Secretary to the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance – Shona Robison MSP**

## Document 5

**From:** Director of Culture and Major Events  
<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 2:27 PM

**To:** First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Dear [redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

I would be grateful if you could update the First Minister that I have managed to find out from the only Creative Scotland staff member available that to the best of his knowledge the Aye Write festival qualified for funding, but that there was insufficient money available to provide a grant. As they had access to other funds via Glasgow City Council that other applicants did not have, they were refused and advised to apply for other grants.

I have spoken to the Chair of CS who is aware of the situation. He has informed me that CS will urgently review their initial decision in the light of the changed circumstances following the return of the Rein grant. This is independent of any Ministerial interest.

Once they have informed us of their decision we will be able to provide further advice.

I trust the FM will find this helpful, and if there is any more he needs me to do I stand ready to assist.

Kind regards,

Penelope

Penelope Cooper | Director of Culture and Major Events | The Scottish Government Mob: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

(she/her)

***I am working a hybrid working pattern – please email, contact me on MS Teams or phone my mobile.***



**From:** Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 10:09 AM  
**To:** Director of Culture and Major Events  
<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; First Minister  
<FirstMinister@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>;  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture  
<CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International  
Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs  
<DGSEA@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>;  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
<[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;  
Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
<[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Thanks Penelope. Just to say I've seen FM's request that I speak directly to the CE or the Chair. As Penelope has so quickly already put calls out to both, I am content for her to speak to them in the first instance. If we don't get what we need, I will follow up asap. Please can we use this DL from here on in so I am directly copied in to subsequent traffic. Thanks Joe

**From:** Director of Culture and Major Events  
<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 9:43 AM  
**To:** First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs  
<DGSEA@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance  
<DFMCSF@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture  
<CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International  
Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs  
<DGSEA@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>;  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
<[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;  
Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
<[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –  
s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Re: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Good morning

I can confirm I have picked this up, and that I will call the Chief Executive or Chair today, depending who picks up my call.

I will get further advice to the FM as requested later today.

Kind regards  
Penelope Cooper  
Director of Culture and Major Events

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> on behalf of First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 9:36:14 AM  
**To:** Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Permanent Secretary <PermanentSecretary@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Good morning,

The First Minister has commented that Ministers including the FM are well aware that Creative Scotland operates independently, but not for the first time in the last couple of weeks, their funding decisions are causing a level of public concern. The First Minister cannot understand why no one was available to speak to Scottish Government officials.

While the First Minister appreciates today is a public holiday, FM would like the DG for Strategy and External Affairs to phone the Chief Executive of Creative Scotland today to get the detail we require, the First Minister would not like this to wait until Tuesday for rapid advice that FM has requested.

While respecting CS's independence the First Minister would like advice on why the festival was refused funding, and what other avenues of funding can rapidly be explored for the festival so it can go ahead.

[redacted – s.30(b)]

I would be grateful for confirmation the advice requested above has been picked up and contact can be made with CS today.

Many thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] **Private Secretary to the First Minister**

## Office of the First Minister

5<sup>th</sup> Floor | St Andrews House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

M: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

The First Minister's box closes at 2pm, Monday to Friday. Further details, including preferences, can be found [here](#).



Office of the First Minister of Scotland  
**FirstMinister.gov.scot**  
Prìomh Mhinistear na h-Alba

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**From:** Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 6:35 PM

**To:** First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Dear FMPO & DFMPPO colleagues,

The First Minister and Deputy First Minister have both requested rapid advice on this matter. I would be grateful if you could draw their attention to the following.

Officials have tried to contact Creative Scotland for more information on this decision, but unfortunately it has not been possible to find anyone who was able to comment today. We will pursue this further when their office re-opens on Tuesday.

As Ministers are aware, Creative Scotland is an arms-length funding body and Ministers have no role in funding decisions around individual projects. This independence is important, as recent funding decisions by CS have demonstrated. Any decisions by Ministers at this stage will need to respect this independence and ensure it is not compromised.

When considering what support SG might offer to Aye Write, we would advise Ministers that avoid directly replacing funding that has been refused by CS would carry the risk that many other unsuccessful organisations would cite this precedent and appeal to Ministers to reverse future CS decisions not to fund. This would set a

very difficult precedent, particularly when there are some important financial decisions that Creative Scotland will make later in the year as they award the multi-year funding grants with some organisations inevitably being unsuccessful. The amounts requested if this were to happen could be considerable.

In addition, a balanced budget has been prepared for the Culture portfolio, and there is no scope to provide any additional funding without revisiting this and reducing funding elsewhere.

If Ministers are content, officials will work rapidly with Creative Scotland early next week to understand the reason why the grant was refused, and to work creatively to identify what alternative support could be offered. This might be in the way of applying for different grants, or seeking other funding.

Recognising the urgency of this situation, further advice will be provided as soon as these avenues have been explored.

I am available over the bank holiday weekend should further advice be required.

Kind regards,

Penelope

Penelope Cooper | Director of Culture and Major Events | The Scottish Government Mob: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

(she/her)

***I am working a hybrid working pattern – please email, contact me on MS Teams or phone my mobile.***

## Document 6

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 7:42 PM  
**To:** First Minister <firstminister@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Arts funding

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@icloud.com>  
**Date:** 29 March 2024 at 19:33:59 GMT  
**To:** Humza.Yousaf.msp@parliament.scot  
**Subject:** Arts funding

Dear Humza Yousaf,

I heard today of your intention to seek funds for the Glasgow Aye Write festival to go ahead.

Whilst I applaud this, and any arts funding, I would specifically ask that you also consider projects in the underfunded areas of Scotland, those outwith the central belt.

It should be noted that Edinburgh has a popular and busy Book Festival, this is a short journey from Glasgow.

Arts funding is so important to areas not in or near Edinburgh or Glasgow.

Cultural events and venues will contribute to the regeneration of cities in Scotland, socially and economically.

I live and work in Aberdeen. [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] is to raise funds to enable Aberdeen's only independent cinema, The Belmont, to reopen.

Its closure two years ago hit local residents hard. There is currently no cultural venue on the city that allows people to engage with screen culture and film education.

Cinemas are the most widely accessed and enjoyed venues for the public to experience culture and entertainment. For many in the north east The Belmont was the cultural organisation closest to home.

Through specific relaxed screenings and cautioned screenings The Belmont served communities that otherwise cannot access cinema culture. This now has been lost.

The significance of the cinema to Aberdeen is far greater to residents than arts events and venues in the central belt, where a vibrant cultural scene offers locals many opportunities to engage.

May I ask that in considering funding the Aye Write Festival that consideration is given to funding all arts venues, festivals and programmes.

Including the significant much loved Belmont Cinema.

Kind regards.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## Document 7

Dear [redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

Thank you for your email of 29 March to the First Minister regarding funding for the Aye Write! Festival and efforts to reopen the Belmont Cinema in Aberdeen. I have been asked to reply.

Firstly, the Scottish Government values the significant contribution festivals like Aye Write! make to the educational, social, and economic life in communities across Scotland and welcomes the announcement of the generous donation from the Colin Weir Foundation. This means the Aye Right! and Wee Write! festivals will be able to continue in 2024/25.

We also recognise the value of cultural cinema programming and the importance of cinemas like the Belmont in providing an important space for Scotland's communities to experience a range of cinema programming that reflects both their lives and the lives of others.

The Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture is due to meet with Belmont Cinema on 21 May to hear more about the ongoing efforts to reopen the cinema and how Scottish Government can best support cultural cinema programming across the nation.

The Scottish Government will continue its commitment to keep working with the culture sector as we progress towards our shared goals for its future.

Kind regards,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## Document 8

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot> **On Behalf Of**  
Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance

**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2024 6:36 PM

**To:** Director of Culture and Major Events

<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; First Minister

<FirstMinister@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance

<DFMCSF@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture

<CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International

Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs

<DGSEA@gov.scot>; First Minister FMQs <FirstMinisterFMQs@gov.scot>;

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

<[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –

s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>;

Rachael Mckechnie <Rachael.Mckechnie@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

<[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted –

s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Good evening,

DFM has noted. [redacted – s.30(b)]

[redacted – s.30(b)]

Recognising the urgency of this situation, further advice will be provided as soon as these avenues have been explored.”

Many thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**Private Secretary to the Minister for Local Government Empowerment and  
Planning – Joe FitzPatrick MSP**

**The Scottish Government**



## Document 9

**From:** Joe Griffin <Joe.Griffin@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Friday, April 5, 2024 9:06 AM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <v@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <v@gov.scot>; ) ) Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Thanks [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]. I wouldn't mind meeting Glasgow Life while Ministers are out of the country/on leave. Late notice, but would someone be available to join a culture funding roundtable on Monday or Tuesday next week, and then have some time with me in the margins? Failing that, we could schedule something else. [redacted – s.30(b)]. Thanks joe

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 4, 2024 3:53 PM

**To:** Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance <DFMCSF@gov.scot>; First Minister <FirstMinister@gov.scot>

**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture <CabSecforCEAC@gov.scot>; Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development <MinisterCEID@gov.scot>; DG Strategy and External Affairs <DGSEA@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: FM Commission - Aye Write Festival

Good Afternoon,

As requested please find below an update on the position re the Aye Write Festival following discussions this week with Glasgow Life and also further information being provided by Creative Scotland.

Creative Scotland have said that the Aye Write application for the 2024 festivals was received on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2023. The target turn around period for a decision is 12 working weeks so taking into account Christmas the outcome should have been made known by 7 March. The project was considered at an Open Fund for Organisations (OFFO) panel on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb. They were informed of their decision the next day. Aye Write understand the position with limited funds, and accepted their

failure to be awarded funding. They have not engaged with the press on this at any point.

Glasgow Life have recently submitted four Creative Scotland Open Fund applications. Three have been rejected and one is still outstanding.

Aye Write will not be going ahead in its current form in 2024 as the event was scheduled to take place in May. Glasgow Life are planning to run a few self-funding pop up events over the course of the year to keep momentum around the brand event until 2025.

Glasgow Life has been approached by an individual philanthropist to talk about how they could provide support for Aye Write to go ahead in some form in 2024. The donor has not previously been involved in Glasgow Life. If the philanthropist does step in to provide additional funding then this would be used specifically to run more pop up events and in particular an event for children (Wee Write) to link into Children's Book Week in November.

Glasgow Life are focusing the attentions of their very small team working on Aye Write on the stage two process for Creative Scotland Multi Year Funding as this is critical to their survival. The deadline for stage 2 applications is 24 April with final decisions being made by the end of October 2024. If Glasgow Life are unsuccessful in their Multi Year Funding application then the Aye Write Festival for 2025 will not go ahead.

The Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs & Culture was due to meet Glasgow Life last week but due to the Cabinet Secretary being unwell this meeting was postponed. Glasgow Life are keen for the meeting to be rescheduled and also the Minister for Culture, Europe & International Development to be included in the meeting.

We are seeking further clarification from Creative Scotland about the process for making decisions on their open fund and will provide a further update once we receive this.

Kind Regards

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | Cultural Access & Organisations Division

## Document 10

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 11:07 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: MEDIA: Aye Write - Sunday Post

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

Looks fine to me. [redacted – s.30(b)]

Thanks

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] | Cultural Access & Organisations  
Division | Scottish Government | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 11:05 AM  
**To:** Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: MEDIA: Aye Write - Sunday Post

Morning all,

Holyrood magazine has phoned in this morning to ask for an update on any discussions that have taken place around Aye Write.

Can I just check line below is still current? Will suggest to SpAds we re-issue, if so.

Thanks,  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“Creative Scotland is an arms-length funding body and Ministers have no role in funding decisions around individual projects. The First Minister has given an undertaking that he will examine the issue and keep members updated on what support the Scottish Government can provide. ~~Creative Scotland is currently reviewing its funding award process and the Culture Secretary will share the conclusions of this with Parliament once that review has been completed.~~

“High inflationary pressures as a result of Brexit and the war in Ukraine, combined with an Autumn Statement that prioritised a tax cut over providing the investment Scotland needs in services and infrastructure, have made this the most challenging Budget to be delivered under devolution. Despite this, Scottish Ministers have increased culture sector funding by £15.8m to £196.6m for the next financial year, as the first step to achieving the First Minister’s commitment to invest at least £100m more annually in culture and the arts by 2028/29.”

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 4:24 PM

**To:** Director of Culture and Major Events

<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture

<CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: MEDIA: Aye Write - Sunday Post

Thanks Penelope – just wanted to check as well if there’s anything further to say on this point?

- What is the government currently investigating as regards Creative Scotland.

If not I’ll send comment to SpAds for views.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**From:** Director of Culture and Major Events  
<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 4:21 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: MEDIA: Aye Write - Sunday Post

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

Given FM's response I don't think we can communicate anything different here.

Kind regards,

*Penelope*

Penelope Cooper | Director of Culture and Major Events | The Scottish Government Mob: [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

(she/her)

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 4:06 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>

**Subject:** MEDIA: Aye Write - Sunday Post

**Importance:** High

Hi all,

In tandem with GMS bid that's just come in for Mr Robertson, see request from the Sunday Post below.

Grateful for your views on proposed response.

Thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## QUERY

there has been widespread dismay at the decision by Creative Scotland not to fund the two iconic book festivals, Aye Write and Wee Write.

There has been particular concern that the Wee Write festival in particular was something which encouraged children to embrace literacy, and experts say if the event does not take place it will have a knock-on detrimental effect at a time when the Scottish government are deeply concerned about children reading.

- Will the Scottish Gov look to fund the festivals.
- Has the gov made any representation to Creative Scotland over the issue.
- What is the government currently investigating as regards Creative Scotland.

## LINE TO TAKE

A Scottish Government spokesperson said:

“Creative Scotland is an arms-length funding body and Ministers have no role in funding decisions around individual projects. The First Minister has given an undertaking that he will examine the issue and keep members updated on what support the Scottish Government can provide. Creative Scotland is currently reviewing its funding award process and the Culture Secretary will share the conclusions of this with Parliament once that review has been completed.

“High inflationary pressures as a result of Brexit and the war in Ukraine, combined with an Autumn Statement that prioritised a tax cut over providing the investment Scotland needs in services and infrastructure, have made this the most challenging Budget to be delivered under devolution. Despite this, Scottish Ministers have increased culture sector funding by £15.8m to £196.6m for the next financial year, as the first step to achieving the First Minister’s commitment to invest at least £100m more annually in culture and the arts by 2028/29.”

Background

First Minister’s response to Annie Wells MSP

*Aye Write is a fantastic festival. Anybody who has had the pleasure of attending its events knows the value that it brings, not just to the city but, I suggest, to the country as a whole.*

*Annie Wells will be aware that those decisions are for Creative Scotland to make, independently of Scottish Government ministers. Nonetheless, having been alerted to the news, I will look at what support the Scottish Government could provide, because Annie Wells is right—Aye Write is a fantastic festival, and I would say that it is something of a cultural icon and an institution within our festival and cultural landscape. I will examine the issue and I will be happy to keep the member updated.*

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@sundaypost.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, March 28, 2024 3:47 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]/ sunday post

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] there has been widespread dismay at the decision by Creative Scotland not to fund the two iconic book festivals, Aye Write and Wee Write.

There has been particular concern that the Wee Write festival in particular was something which encouraged children to embrace literacy, and experts say if the event does not take place it will have a knock-on detrimental effect at a time when the Scottish government are deeply concerned about children reading.

Will the Scottish Gov look to fund the festivals.

Has the gov made any representation to Creative Scotland over the issue.

What is the government currently investigating as regards Creative Scotland.

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)], Sunday Post

Sent from Outlook for iOS

## Document 11

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Sent:** Monday, April 8, 2024 12:35 PM

**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Spads Admin <Spads\_Admin@gov.scot>

**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Director of Culture and Major Events <Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <v@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Lisa Baird <Lisa.Baird@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; Communications Constitution, External Affairs and Culture <CommunicationsConstitutionExternalAffairsandCulture@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>

**Subject:** RE: SPAD VIEW: Aye Write - Holyrood

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

Reporter has come back with the following:

*Thanks [redacted – s.38(1)(b)], does that mean discussions between the Scottish Government and Aye Write/Glasgow Life, and between the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland, have not taken place on this matter?*

I understand from [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] that SG officials recently discussed Aye Write with Glasgow Life and meetings with Glasgow Life and Creative Scotland are ongoing (see attached).

I'd suggest we simply confirm the following on background in response, if you are content with that approach?

No - SG officials are in regular contact with Glasgow Life and Creative Scotland and discussion around Aye Write is ongoing.

Thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]





**Does that mean discussions between the Scottish Government and Aye Write/Glasgow Life, and between the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland, have not taken place on this matter?**

**No – SG officials are in regular contact with Glasgow Life and Creative Scotland and discussion around Aye Write is ongoing.**

--

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

News | [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]



“High inflationary pressures as a result of Brexit and the war in Ukraine, combined with an Autumn Statement that prioritised a tax cut over providing the investment Scotland needs in services and infrastructure, have made this the most challenging Budget to be delivered under devolution. Despite this, Scottish Ministers have increased culture sector funding by £15.8m to £196.6m this financial year, as the first step to achieving the First Minister’s commitment to invest at least £100m more annually in culture and the arts by 2028/29.”

### **QUERY**

As mentioned I'm working on a story for this Sunday's Observer newspaper about arts funding in Scotland, following the closure of three projects (Aye Write, MAP magazine and Short Circuit) within days of each other earlier this month.

Many of those I've spoken to have pointed to Creative Scotland cuts by the Scottish Government last year and called on the government to fund arts "properly". One author ( [Heather Parry](#)) said "at this point the Scottish Government knows it is underfunding the arts and simply doesn't care".

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**News |** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## Document 14

**From:** enquiry@sufifestival.org.uk <enquiry@sufifestival.org.uk>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 13, 2024 10:16 PM  
**To:** Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development  
<MinisterCEID@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** RE: Letter from the Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development  
**Importance:** High

Good Evening [redacted – s.38(1)(b)],

Thank you for the email, I did not receive any email before.

Please convey my thanks to the Minister for replying to my query, my approach to the Minister was very much time sensitive as the decision To cancel the festival hadn't been taken, however due to the lack of support sadly that is what we had to do. Whilst I appreciate the comments Made by the Minister regarding the funding from Creative Scotland, it must be noted that if a potential intervention by a Government Minister Had been made perhaps we could have still held the event.

No doubt the Minister is well aware that what appears to be a Ministerial intervention or at least publicly championing by both the current and former First Minister, the 'Aye Write' festival who like ourselves had been refused by Creative Scotland, managed to have their fortunes turned and have secured the funding needed to deliver their festival. Whilst we are very happy for 'Aye Write' as a deserving festival, we are disappointed with the inequity of the situation, especially as our work is very much about engaging and supporting marginalised communities that are often underrepresented, misrepresented and face inequality on many different fronts.

We have obtained feedback from Creative Scotland and have been invited to apply once again, but it is sad that we have lost the potential to deliver Anything this year, leaving a massive deficit in arts for the Muslim and minority communities of Glasgow and Scotland.

It would be helpful to receive a reply to the comments which I have made in this email.

Kind regards,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

## Document 15

**From:** Director of Culture and Major Events  
<Directorofcultureandmajorevents@gov.scot>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 8:43 AM  
**To:** DIRECTORATE FOR CULTURE AND MAJOR EVENTS  
<DLEEGCTME@gov.scot>  
**Subject:** UNESCO World Book and Copyright day

Good morning everyone,  
Today is the UNESCO World Book and Copyright day. Obviously the Aye Write festival isn't going ahead, does anyone know of any other activity in this regard please?

Kind regards,

*Penelope*

## Document 16

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 24, 2024 10:55 AM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@festivalsedinburgh.com>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>  
**Cc:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <v@creativescotland.com>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Expo Fund - question re award levels and topslice

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

This is a question for our Senior Leadership team – [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] our director of Finance is on holiday this week, but I will pass on to him for comment.

I would however not underestimate the effort involved in delivering the EXPO fund each year. This takes significant staff time across several functions and is a lot more involved than merely processing 14 Grant awards.

The 53K per year for the PACE awards reflected also that only one round of funding application, assessment and panel was required, while Expo is a completely new funding round for different projects each year , along with developing new systems for each of the new festivals that has been added.

Best

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]  
[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

**From:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@festivalsedinburgh.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 23, 2024 6:06 PM  
**To:** [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@gov.scot>; [redacted – s.38(1)(b)] <[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]@creativescotland.com>  
**Subject:** Expo Fund - question re award levels and topslice

Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)], Hi [redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

From a couple of emails I've had today, it sounds like festivals may have had their Expo fund awards now – that's great news, if it's now feasible it would be really useful to see a list of the project descriptors and grant award figures for the Festivals Edinburgh members. Incidentally we've had Brian Ferguson on the phone this week asking about all sorts of festivals funding figures including Expo, in the context of the Aye Write situation, so no doubt he will do the maths about how the same cash awards are now spread across 14 rather than 11 festivals.

I've also been asked by the FE Board to get in touch about the topslice for the first time of £100,000 for CS management fees. It would be good to know how the budget level of £100,000 is to be validated and whether there is scope for any budget that is not required to be fed back into festival awards?

I think I recall from the decisions about the first three years of Expo that c £52k per year was set aside for CS management and evaluation of that scheme, which was much more intensive and bespoke than processing 14 Expo grants. So while we understand that CS has been asked to make organisational savings and needs to cover its costs, we do question whether the whole £100,000 will actually be required.

If this was something agreed at another stage of consideration by your SMTs and I should address this question to them, please do let me know.

Many thanks,

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

[redacted – s.38(1)(b)]

Festivals Edinburgh