

Monday, 7 September 2009

Dear Colleague

Arts Council of Wales Investment Review

I hope that you've had a good Summer. And to those of you who managed to get away, I hope that you return having had a relaxing and enjoyable break.

Over the Summer we've been busy reviewing the responses that we received to our three consultative documents: the Terms of Reference; *Strive to Excel*; and Planning Guidance. This has been an enormously helpful exercise for us. You've provided us with a large number of insightful and useful comments, and these will help shape how the Investment Review progresses.

Later this month we'll be publishing the results of the consultation alongside the full package of documentation that you'll need for the next stages of the Investment Review. However, I wanted to take this opportunity to let you have advance notice of our response to five 'hot topics' that have emerged through the consultation process:

- **the deadline for submissions** – the current deadline for Investment Review submissions is Monday 2 November 2009. We've received a very large number of persuasive representations asking us to extend this deadline. We've therefore decided that we'll work to a revised deadline of noon on Monday 14 December 2009. It's important that this is an absolute deadline – by all means let us have your submission earlier, but it must be with us (at any of our three offices) by that date.

This does mean that we'll need to put back our decision date (originally planned for March 2010). When I write again later in the month I'll let you have full details of the updated timetable

- **the submission documents** – in the Planning Guidance document we asked whether you'd like to make your submission in the form of an application, or a Business Plan. There was very strong support for the Business Plan.

Some of you did suggest that there might be some merit in having a very brief 'cover sheet' that captured some key information in a standard format. We're looking at this at the moment. However, for the purposes of your planning, I can confirm that the key submission document that we'll be looking for will be a Business Plan.

- **the format of the Business Plan** – some of you have asked what we'll be looking for in a Business Plan. Many of you have already taken advantage of the training sessions that we've been running. There's also business planning guidance and sample documentation on our website. This will, I hope, provide you with an illustrative example to look at.
- **the Arts Council's 'vision' statement** – a number of you have asked about the vision statement and in particular whether it replaces other existing strategy documents. The answer to that question is 'no'. Our Corporate and Regional Plans, and existing arts strategies remain very much at the heart of this process. They provide the detailed information that should help you better understand our current priorities.

Our 'vision' statement draws on this existing documentation, but it's not about detail. As you'd expect, it looks at a longer term horizon and talks about the things we most want to see happening with the arts in Wales over a ten year period. Again, this will be available later this month.

- **funding for 2010/11** – we're currently in detailed discussion with the Welsh Assembly Government about next year's funding. We hope to have news on this later in the Autumn. Once we know, we'll make every effort to let you know as soon as possible. At that point, we hope also to be in a position to say something about the future of Beacon funding.

So what happens now?

My Council meets on 17/18 September to 'sign off' all of the documentation that you'll need for the next stage of the Investment Review process. In the week following the Council meeting I'll write to you again to make sure that you have copies of all the relevant information.

Best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick" with a small dot at the end. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Nick Capaldi
Chief Executive