

OCTOBER 2011 SEMINAR SUMMARY

Funding Opportunities Between Australia and Europe presented by Geoffrey Brown

Monday 17 October, 2pm-4.30 pm
Australia Council for the Arts, 372 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills

Geoffrey Brown is a freelance consultant specialising in European and international information services. He oversees the Culture.Info website and Connexus membership scheme, which provide a range of pan-national and international services and benefits- a fortnightly newsletter, discounts on events, and free reports, as well as online services including the fundscompare funding database, events calendars, and opportunities for members to network and share knowledge and needs.

He is Director of EUCLID International, was Co-ordinator of the UK Cultural Contact Point (promoting the E's Culture programme) from 1999-2009, and is now an adviser to Visiting Arts, the current UK CCP. EUCLID also organises seminars and conferences on European and International topics, including the CultureEuro seminars. Current or recent consultancy projects include an International Audit for Creative Scotland, research on pre-modern cultures in 31 countries for the Golden Web Foundation and writing the overview for "Culture & Development: 20 years after the fall of Communism in Europe" published after a conference co-sponsored by Council of Europe. Geoffrey is originally from Australia. He is a graduate of the University of New South Wales, was Administrator of Toe Truck Theatre, and Executive Director of the Australian Youth Performing Arts Association, where he launched Lowdown, Australia's longest running arts magazine.

Seminar

Geoffrey Brown presented an engaging and informative seminar on the European Union and European Union funding in the arts. A useful background on the European Union can be found on http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union The European Union was formed in 1951 with five member states and since then has grown to a membership of 27 European countries. It was not until 1992 that the EU addressed the importance of culture to the region and to the mission of the EU. In 2010 the EU outlined its key goals and targets for Europe 2020. This is a ten year strategy aiming at "smart, sustainable, inclusive growth" with greater coordination of national and European policy. A new agency has been established which manages most of the arts/ culture grant programmes. The Education, Audiovisual, and Culture Executive Agency website http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index_en.php contains comprehensive information on their activities.

For a background to the EU's cultural policies see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_policies_of_the_European_Union. The reason for Geoffrey's presentation was to highlight an exciting new opportunity for Australian arts organisations under the EU's funding for Third Country Projects (Strand 1.3.5 Australia/ Canada). Third Country Projects invite participation from outside the EU; however the allocation of funding and approval of projects is governed by strict criteria which Geoffrey expanded on. In 2007 China and India were invited to participate in this programme, Brazil (2008), Mexico (2011) and in 2012 applications from

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South African arts organisations are due in May. Applications from Australia are due in May 2013 hence Geoffrey has conducted seminars across the country to demystify this seemingly complicated process. His advice to arts organisations is to start working on project proposals as soon as possible in order to meet the requirements.

In summary, Third Country Projects allow cultural organisations from the EU to act as Lead Organisers of collaborative projects with Australia. Preference will be given to projects which bring together a number of partners. For example, in 2007 the project "Creating Spaces - Art Bridge between EU and China" was organised as follows:

LEAD PARTNER: The City of Helsinki Cultural Office, Helsinki, Finland with CO-ORGANISERS: Taideteollinen korkeakoulu, Helsinki, Finland; Tallinn Cultural Heritage Department, Tallin, Estonia; City of Stockholm, Stockholm, Sweden. PARTNERS IN CHINA: Beijing Municipal Bureau of Culture, China. CULTURAL AREAS: Cultural Heritage/ Visual Arts/ Performing Arts/ Architecture. GRANT: 76,848.48 Euros PERCENTAGE OF BUDGET: 50%

Proposals will be assessed for "European Cultural Added Value", relevance to the three key objectives outlined below and for excellence of proposed cultural activities. Furthermore, the quality of the partnership will influence the outcome of any application.

Funding for Third Country Projects is based on three main objectives of which at least two of the following must be addressed:

To Promote /encourage:

- Transnational mobility of people working in the cultural sector
- Transnational circulation of works and cultural and artistic products
- Intercultural dialogue: "to strengthen respect for cultural diversity...coexistence of different cultural identities and beliefs..Contribution of different cultures to the EU member states' heritage and way of life.

Eligible project types include:

- performance and exhibitions resulting from European cooperation between cultural operators
- actions encouraging the mobility of artists, designers, operators and other cultural players, particularly where they are aimed at young professionals
- training sessions and sessions for the exchange of know-how, skills and experience, and best practice, particularly where they are aimed at professionals
- cultural and artistic actions promoting intercultural dialogue between the countries participating in the Programme

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- actions initiated by non-audiovisual cultural industries, and in particular small cultural enterprises, where these industries are able to show they are working in a non-profit making activity
- the use of new technologies in the process of artistic creation or to conduct, develop and promote cultural cooperation actions at European level

Such a broad sweep of cultural and artistic production assures a diversity of projects will be eligible to apply for funding. Applicants must demonstrate match funding as the EC will contribute a maximum of fifty per cent. Partnerships should "reflect the commitment of the project to being European" and demonstrate "collective ownership by the partners".

Partner organisations can be sourced from over thirty eligible EU countries and through a range of networks. The EU Cultural Contact Point can be found at <http://www.culturefund.eu/> Connexus membership provides the opportunity to communicate with other Connexus members in European countries. For more information see <http://www.culture.info/sign-in/>.

Geoffrey also spoke about budget planning, execution and reporting. He highlighted the need for accuracy in all aspects of budget development and management as the project cannot make a profit/ surplus. While "contributions in kind" are excluded from the budget, the costs of staff seconded to the project are eligible, providing costs respond to actual salaries. A revised Position Description and timesheets are required for seconded staff whose salary records must reflect the difference between their regular work and that which is required for the project. It is also a requirement that fifty percent of the activity of a partnership take place in Australia.

The information pack which Geoffrey provided to the audience included a Summary Dossier of Interested UK Organisations. Given the diversity of the 129 organisations listed, there is potential for some extraordinary partnerships to be developed.

Seminar Summary: Aviva Finberg

Recommended Websites:

www.cultureinfo

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/>

www.culturefund.eu