

Task and Finish Group on Participation in the Arts in Wales

Inquiry into Participation in the Arts in Wales

Response from Nofit State Circus

1. What organisation do you represent?

Nofit State Circus

2. Which groups of people participate in your organisation's arts activities?

Every year we have circa 24,000 participatory beneficiaries. Although the company works throughout Wales, the majority of participants live in and around Cardiff. Every week 280 – 300 community participants attend workshops and participatory project rehearsals in John Street, Cardiff, covering a wide range of circus skills: flying and static trapeze, tightwire, acrobatics, clowning, juggling, unicycling, aerial hoop, and tumbling. These workshops lead on into a range of performance opportunities throughout the year. We deliver workshops through the medium of both Welsh and English in schools throughout Wales. We regularly stage larger participatory performance projects (for example, Parklife staged in Pontardawe last summer involved several hundred local people working alongside our professional performers and technicians to create a production that was then staged in front of an audience of approximately 3500). We collaborate with other arts and community organisations throughout Wales to deliver community based performance and learning projects We regularly work with the Prison and Probation Services and community based organisations working with young offenders. Over the last 12 months we have worked specifically with: The Roma Traveller Community in Tremorfa ABCD Cymru – a group for young people with disabilities and their families from Black and Minority Ethnic Communities the Chinese Community Centre in Grangetown, the Bute Town Pavillion Muslim Girls Group, Cardiff Homeschool Network, 3 Cardiff Youth Circus Groups in English (one of which is mixed ability), 1 Cardiff Youth Circus Group in Welsh, Juke Box Juniors, Porth and Pontypool Carnivals the RSPCA Cardiff Harbour Festival The National Museum Cardiff Central Library Yr Urdd New Foundations GAVO Pontypridd TC Cardiff University Crossroads Sherman Cymru Menter Caerdydd Wales Millennium Centre Parades in Ferndale and Mountain Ash RCT, Newport CC, Cardiff CC Events Teams Communities First Teams across South Wales

3. Do you think that budget changes have affected participation in the arts, either positively or negatively?

Speaking only in relation to Nofit State – so far we have seen no impact

4. Do you think that certain groups of people have been affected more than others?

Speaking only in relation to Nofit State – not as far as we can see in relation to the people we work with

5. Are there gaps in provision for people to participate in arts activities, either demographically or geographically?

Almost certainly – but I am not qualified to say more

6. Are there enough funding sources available other than the Arts Council for Wales? Are alternative funding sources accessible?

Cuts to Local Authority funding is likely to have the single largest impact. So far we have found that we are able to cover all funding reductions and cuts through securing funding from other sources and focusing on generating earned income in order to provide internal cross subsidies to non financially sustainable activity.

7. What role does the voluntary arts sector play in promoting participation in the arts in Wales and how can this be supported?

Can't comment

8. Is the strategic relationship between the Welsh Government and the bodies that distribute arts funding effective in increasing participation?

Can't comment

9. All public bodies in Wales will have published a strategic equality plan by April 2012. Do you think that these new public sector equality duties will help to increase participation in the arts among under-represented groups in Wales?

Possibly – but with the potential unintended consequence of communities being targeted for strategic reasons rather than the development of true partnerships