

APP Jazz Appreciation Group



HOUSE OF COMMONS, LONDON, SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP
Secretary of State
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
100 Parliament Street
London
SW1A 2BQ

11th August 2020

Dear Mr Dowden

On behalf of the All Party Parliamentary Jazz Appreciation Group we congratulate you on securing £1.57 billion of emergence funding for the arts, culture and heritage industries. However after examining the proposed operation of the funds we have a number of concerns that we trust that you will examine and ameliorate the operations of the emergency funding to reflect them. Our concerns are listed below and they are supported by a paper - *Jazz musicians and volunteer promoters - falling between the cracks* which we have attached.

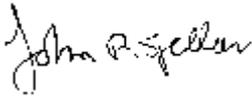
It would be immensely helpful if the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport could reflect the overall community of the arts and creative industries in its emergency planning and funding. Small scale venues and volunteer promoters provide the seed bed and maturing circuits of tomorrow's "stars" and are equally as important as organisations of "*international or national cultural significance*". Bands and musicians do not suddenly arrive at the O2 Arena there is an infrastructure that assiduously works to get them there and if that infrastructure is left to flounder through a lack of investment the UK will lose its competitive edge in terms of music development, music exports and "soft power".

- I. The Task Force and the funding for the industries are most welcome. The Officers and members of the Jazz Appreciation appg have considered the damaging effects to society and the economy from Covid-19 and how your Task Force by working with the arts and cultural industries can hope to mitigate the impact.
- II. We would therefore put to you the following observations and recommendations to ensure together we can achieve the best outcome from this initiative, and protect and preserve all we can.
- III. Ensure that the emergency fund is for (a) all organisations, large and small, and not just for organisations of "*international or national cultural significance*" and (b) that funds are available for self-employed musicians who are currently falling between the cracks.
- IV. In terms of transparency provide a safeguard that possible conflicts of interest between the Arts Council and clients from their National Portfolio Organisation and non Arts Council funded organisations are mitigated.
- V. It would appropriate if the membership of the Culture Recovery Board is broadened with the addition of Independent Board Members with concrete experience of the "volunteer" constituency in the arts such as a volunteer promoter, musician or similar.
- VI. A "snap" audit of those individuals and organisations who have received funds plus the title of the emergency funding scheme that provided the funds would be helpful. This audit is crucial in order to identify those people and organisations that are falling between the cracks.
- VII. Find a mechanism to ensure the ministerial task forces are joined up.
- VIII. With regard to the Government's 'levelling up' agenda and preventing the reversal of decades of progress in cultural provision, diversity and inclusion, it would be sensible if this agenda was reflected in the Entertainments and Events Working Group so that (a) there is a better balance of organisations between London and the regions and (b) the Group is more representative of diverse communities.

- IX. As part of the Governments "levelling up agenda" there is a reformation of arts funding in England with an organisation that can deliver a rolling, realistic and coherent national plan for the arts, entertainment and culture where under-represented musics and art forms finally get a place in the sun.
- X. The reduction of VAT to 5% for the performing arts and entertainment is to be welcomed. A retention of this rate in the long term would be of enormous benefit to the arts and entertainment sector.

We look forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely



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John Spellar MP (Co Chair) Lord Mann (Co Chair)

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