

Appendix 3

Detailed Feedback from Borderlines Film Festival

Mick Ligema
Cultural Services Manager
Herefordshire Council

29 July 2013,

Dear Mike,

Re: Arts Commissioning Grants

Thank you for your letter of 27 June 2013 requesting feedback on the proposed review of funding for Arts Organisations through the Arts Commissioning Grants that will take place shortly.

Borderlines Film Festival has been awarded Arts Commissioning Grants since its inception as a separate organisation in 2006. The grants from Herefordshire Council form a corner stone in the funding package that we bring together annually to stage the Festival and the support from the Council represents 22% of our income from funding agencies, local authorities and trusts. Without the support from the Council we would be in serious financial difficulties and it would be doubtful that we could replace this sum through other avenues which are becoming either increasingly restricted and /or fiercely competitive.

As a Film Festival, Borderlines is not able to apply for Arts Council core funding, and our main funder the British Film Institute only supports the Festival on an annual project by project basis. Local authority support is seen as crucial in applications to the BFI and is also vital in providing a guaranteed match funding element for the application. This year the BFI awarded Borderlines £20k for the Festival in 2014.

The Festival budget for 2014 is £129k consisting of: £56k of box office income; £36k from grants and trusts; £14k from private sources (sponsorship, etc); and £12k from other earned income. Box office income devolves back to the village halls and market towns that we work with (usually around 20-23 in Herefordshire annually) and they also benefit from increased bar takings which do not feature in our budgets. The fact that new villages are constantly seeking to join the Festival demonstrates the cultural, social and economic benefits that village promoters anticipate if they join the Festival roster.

Our main venue The Courtyard benefits enormously from participation in the Festival. Cinema attendances during the 17 day period of the Festival account for 28% of their *annual* attendance. The Festival also makes a big impact on their bar and cafe takings: the first week's takings for the Festival in 2013 were the highest ever weekly takings in The Courtyard's 15 year history.

The Festival clearly keeps people spending within the county supporting local cultural and social spaces and enterprises. Increasingly we are bringing in more out of county day visitors and tourists to the county. In our recent Audience Survey 95% agreed Borderlines contributes positively to the image and reputation of the area. We regularly have national press attention (*The Times*, *The Guardian* and *The Observer*) and regional TV and press coverage. Our audiences rate the Festival highly and we have attendances that range up to 18,000.

The benefits that the Festival brings to the county represents excellent value for money on the one hand at a minimal cost and on the other, the Festival would be hard pressed to replace this figure in the present climate, and indeed its loss might threaten the Festival's existence in the long term.

Yours sincerely,

Naomi Vera-Sanso

Festival Director