

SUBMISSION FROM STV

Introduction to STV

STV Group plc (“STV”) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee’s review of the economic impact of the creative industries and consideration of how Scotland can grow a sustainable television and film industry.

STV Group plc is a media enterprise based in Scotland who owns the regional Channel 3 licences for Scotland (branded as “STV”) along with two L-DTPS licences, awarded in 2013, to deliver local television services in Glasgow and Edinburgh. STV has been the commercial public service broadcaster for Scotland since 1957 and a strong Scottish brand for over 50 years. Whilst STV Group plc has its locus in Scotland as the location of its consumer base, the company operates in a sector where consumers have increasing choice from global content providers due to the development of digital media.

STV continues to pursue a successful growth strategy based on the development of a family of consumer services, a strong commitment to the delivery of high quality, relevant public service content across platforms and investment in our content production business, STV Productions; all of which position STV as a leading contributor and employer within the creative industries sector in Scotland and beyond.

STV Productions, which operates in an international environment and in a sector that is undergoing consolidation at a global level, is the largest indigenous television production company in Scotland and has grown over recent years into a multi-genre production business with a portfolio of international customers whilst operating from a base in Scotland.

STV seeks economic and cultural policies that support targeted investment in measures designed to stimulate the growth of a vibrant and prosperous creative economy in Scotland, and in particular to support the growth of the television production sector in the Nations and Regions from its traditional base in the London area.

In support of this outcome, STV has proactively sought the award of Qualifying Independent Production status to STV Productions which would have a net positive impact for the entire production sector in Scotland by increasing levels of activity across the sector providing scale and sustainability.

Summary of evidence :

The two inter-related questions STV believes should be considered are: why has Scotland not grown the television and film industries as fast as we as a nation would have wished? Secondly, how can that situation be addressed going forward?

Scotland had a chance to be the second centre of media outside London. It is now fourth, behind Manchester and Bristol-Cardiff and may slip to fifth place as Northern Ireland Screen ramps up its activities.

There is a lack of clarity at the heart of government policy – especially between Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise. No-one “owns” economic development which is driven by the creative industries, particularly television.

Other areas have prospered through a mix of BBC intervention, private investment and public policy. They have clear economic **and** cultural goals.

It is our opinion that Scotland needs to value not only productions which are culturally Scottish but those which are industrially valuable.

Recommendations:

- 1) Make clear the responsibility for economic development;
- 2) Develop a policy which is both cultural and industrial in nature;
- 3) Use public money to leverage private investment;
- 4) Utilise and extend fiscal policy.

STV
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