

SUBMISSION FROM TRC MEDIA

TRC Media is a not-for-profit charity based in Glasgow. It is one of the top training and development providers in the UK's creative industries with an international reputation for producing industry-led projects that deliver impact and results.

From our inception in 1998 we have delivered an extensive slate of successful training initiatives designed to tackle industry needs. We have rich experience of working with creative leaders, entrepreneurs, television and digital media creatives across the entire industry supply chain.

TRC has a particular awareness and understanding of the skills and business challenges in the Scottish creative media sector, having specialised in this area for 15 years. Our international credentials are also strong having regularly delivered bespoke business-building trips to New York, Washington, LA, San Francisco/Silicon Valley, Toronto, Copenhagen, Stockholm and Sydney.

TRC Media is hosted by Channel 4 in Glasgow and also has a presence in Salford's Media City hosted by the BBC. We have a close working partnership with both network broadcasters, however our closest relationship is with the companies and practitioners in the TV and digital industry in Scotland that we serve.

TRC has worked in partnership with Scottish Enterprise and Creative Scotland for a number of years, most recently in our 3-year Creative Edge programme of support to the Scottish TV and digital sector.

We would offer the following observations in relation to five of the key issues identified by the committee in fulfilling its remit:

The role of public sector agencies and the effectiveness of the support they provide.

Overall, the support infrastructure seems over-complicated and fragmented. Apart from the main agencies, there is a plethora of smaller or associated support bodies and committees. This makes it hard for companies in the sector to navigate, slows decision-making and limits the strategic impact of the public agencies.

The absence of a single leadership role in public support for the sector means there is no overarching strategy. Individual agencies have their own priorities and objectives, but these do not form an overall cohesive strategy for Scotland in the development of the television and digital media sector.

Effectiveness would be greatly improved if public sector support could be simplified and concentrated within fewer agencies, with a clear leadership role assigned. A single ambitious strategy for Scotland would see effort and expertise focused on our role in the global multimedia market.

How the issues that hinder the growth of creative industries can be overcome and how to capitalize on opportunities.

At a macro level, the strong demand for UK television programmes abroad continues unabated with high production values, English language and creativity seen as major assets of the UK's content production industry. For example, the UK is the world's No 1 exporter of TV formats generating global revenues in excess of £2billion annually. Scottish TV production companies however have yet to capitalise fully on this global appetite and access significant export opportunities by opening up major new international markets for their content.

Export performance would benefit from greater emphasis on specialist support in international media markets. Particularly beneficial would be a deep understanding of international TV buyers' needs; "insider" intelligence, targeted contacts and access, and regular bespoke trips to meet prospective buyers on their home turf.

There are also continuing opportunities in the domestic market with the upscaling of production from Scotland by the BBC to achieve its commitment to secure at least 8.4% of its programme output from the Scottish production sector by 2016. In addition there is a current opportunity to inform the BBC's thinking in relation to the Scottish TV and digital sector as it prepares for renewal of its Royal Charter in 2016.

In the digital sphere Scotland has world class creative and technical capability in its digital companies. However the unrelenting pace of innovation combined with the ability to commercialise products and services and retain intellectual property rights presents an ongoing challenge. Access to global markets, identification of new business models and significant upgrading of business skills are pressing issues that need to be addressed to capitalise on the substantial opportunities in the global marketplace.

Cross-sector collaboration is key. Some degree of convergence and partnership between the sub-sectors of TV and digital is essential if Scotland is not to be outpaced by its competitors. And it is important not to view the creative digital landscape as consisting only of video games companies – there is global potential to be unlocked through collaboration with virtual reality, mobile, software, animation, design and digital publishing innovators.

How to retain in Scotland those with the necessary creative skills.

The issues the committee is addressing are clearly interlinked. The best talent in the digital sector will always be attracted to companies doing innovative and ground-breaking work. Top TV talent tends to gravitate towards projects with UK network prestige and international resonance. If we build ambitious and successful companies, Scotland will retain the talent.

This is a very fast-moving and dynamic sector, and the creative skills required to succeed are subject to constant change. Training and

development needs to be embedded in the single overarching strategy for Scotland's creative industries.

How to support those in the TV and film and video games industries to develop business skills.

TRC would offer three examples of successful support from its own portfolio of training and development programmes.

Example 1 – Impact Management Programme

Leadership and management skills are arguably the most pressing need facing Scottish creative media businesses. TRC's IMP scheme combines 21st century management thinking with the practical skills and tools required for successful leadership. Top trainers and coaches lead a series of practical workshops constructed specifically to meet the needs of participating TV and digital businesses. These "needs" have tended to fall into the following categories:

- Leadership.
- Innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Negotiation and selling.
- Professional presentation and pitching.
- Psychology of influence and persuasion.
- Managing people and performance.
- Culture and shared values.
- High performing teams.
- Strategy and implementation.

A key feature of the scheme is the use of participants' own business challenges which form case studies that are tackled throughout the programme; this ensures that delegates can really apply what they've learned to their own companies.

Our programme seems to hit the mark. It sees strong results including a 90% improvement in management capabilities; an 80% improvement in business deals negotiated; and a reframing of business strategy and performance.

Example 2 - International TV Formats Scheme

During the last decade, the UK has emerged as the world's no.1 exporter of TV formats with global annual revenues exceeding £2 billion. Our international export scheme is geared towards helping Scottish production companies exploit their TV formats and secure a slice of the global

entertainment market. It targets senior TV executives and focuses on understanding international markets including global distribution, international IP rights, co-production and territory versioning. Negotiation and deal-making feature strongly as does access to international distributors such as BBC Worldwide, Sony International, Warner Bros, Zodiak Rights, NBC Universal and Fremantle. US Agents are also represented by Creative Artists (CAA), and International Creative Management (ICM). The scheme incorporates a bespoke trip to New York and Washington DC to meet top broadcasters and potential buyers specifically matched to the content genres of participating companies.

TRC works with the BBC and Channel 4 within this strand to deliver the broadcasters' commitment to secure more network TV formats from Scotland.

Example 3 – Cross Creative Programme

This is our pioneering initiative for top creatives working in games, mobile, software, animation, virtual reality, digital design and e.publishing. It takes an entrepreneurial approach to the global possibilities of transmedia and focuses on creative innovation, commercialisation and bleeding edge technology. The programme also features a trip to Silicon Valley with exceptional access to some of the world's top innovators including Pixar, Facebook, Ideo, Google, You Tube amongst others, combined with meetings with highly disruptive technology start-ups. Issues tackled have included:

- Commercialisation and new revenue models.
- Cross sector/cross industry collaboration.
- Innovation and entrepreneurship.
- Creative culture and lean processes.
- Brand engagement.
- Community management.
- Big data and smart analytics.
- Gamification.
- Social media marketing.
- Messaging, pitching, networking.

Participating companies report a transformational impact on their businesses; a 70% increase in creativity, an 80% increase in ambition and a 75% increase in confidence about their future business prospects.

Examples of successful international strategies for growing these sectors.

TRC has extensive contacts with leading companies in Silicon Valley, the world's clearest example of successful growth in this sector. We have made bi-annual trips to the San Francisco area for almost 10 years, giving Scottish digital businesses access and exposure to the people and technology that are shaping the future.

Among the key things we have learned is that.....

- Scotland has the technical “smarts” to compete with its Silicon Valley counterparts. However to unlock our economic potential we need a determined effort focused on:
- building confidence and ambition;
- thinking global;
- accessing capital;
- retaining intellectual property;
- encouraging and facilitating risk;
- innovating and iterating quickly;
- supporting R & D;
- developing sophisticated business skills;
- investing in targeted training; and
- killing bureaucracy - moving fast, deciding quickly, adding value.