

Dafydd Elis-Thomas

Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism

Welsh Government

6 July 2020

Dear Dafydd,

### UK Government additional funding for culture

I would like to join you in welcoming the news from the UK Government that they are investing £1.57 billion in culture. In anticipation of the Welsh Government's decision on how the £59 million coming to Wales will be spent, I would like your assurance that the total sum will be used to support the cultural sector. We know that this sector suffered a catastrophic loss of income from the overnight closure of venues. Given that the public resumption of activity for many could be some months away, every penny will be needed to support the arts, creative industries, museums and galleries.

£59 million is a significant sum of money, but is noticeably less than a population-based share of the total £1.57 billion funding package. Could you please confirm how Wales's share of this total funding was determined, and whether you are content with it?

As part of the Committee's inquiry into the impact of COVID-19 on areas within its remit, we heard from the Arts Council of Wales of the scale of the threat to our venues and artists. Nick Capaldi, Chief Executive of the Arts Council, told the Committee how they had prioritised funding through the Council's stabilisation and resilience funds, but that even so, there was only sufficient funding to support the sector until September. We hope this additional funding will be the lifeline that our cultural venues need to ensure they can weather the storm until



**Senedd Cymru**  
Bae Caerdydd, Caerdydd, CF99 1SN

✉ SeneddDGCh@senedd.cymru  
☎ 0300 200 6565

**Welsh Parliament**  
Cardiff Bay, Cardiff, CF99 1SN

✉ SeneddCWLC@senedd.wales  
☎ 0300 200 6565

audiences can return in full. I would be grateful if you could set out how the additional funding will be used to support arts and cultural venues?

We also heard that there are worrying gaps in the support for those who work in the arts and the creative industries. At our meeting on 12 May you mentioned that the Welsh Government is aware that freelance workers have found it difficult to access support from the UK Government's Self-Employment Income Support (SEIS) scheme. I know you share my concerns that both the SEIS and Job Retention schemes should be continued beyond October this year. If these schemes are wound up according to the current timetable, there is potential for a large number of job losses and substantial economic hardship for those who work in the sector. Can you confirm whether, with the additional funding announced this week, the Welsh Government will be planning some form of income support for those working in the arts and creative industries?

We are fast running out of time if we are to stabilise and sustain our artistic talent and infrastructure. I would be grateful if you could update the Committee setting out how the Welsh Government will prioritise the additional funding to ensure our arts organisations are not forced to close their doors for good or make valued employees redundant.

Finally, your personal commitment to culture and the arts is well known. I hope, therefore, that we can rely on you to ensure that the flow of investment that we will see into England's cultural infrastructure is matched by a similar determination to make the most of the funds that are available here to Wales.

Yours sincerely,



Helen Mary Jones

Chair of the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee





Helen Mary Jones MS  
Chair - Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

03 August 2020

Dear Helen,

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 July with regards to the UK Government's announcement of a £1.57bn package of support for the culture sector. A consequential of £59m has been received by the Welsh Government.

You will be aware by now of the Welsh Government announcement of a £53m fund to help Wales' diverse culture sector deal with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The total funding package is £53m in 2020-21 comprising £50m revenue and £3m capital.

The fund is intended to provide essential support to theatres, galleries, music venues, heritage sites, museums, libraries, galleries, archive services, events and festivals, and independent cinemas who have all seen a dramatic loss of revenue due to the pandemic. Funding will support both organisations and individuals in the sector.

The announcement comes on top of the £18m portfolio package provided in April, which was delivered by the Welsh Government, Arts Council of Wales and Sport Wales.

We have listened and worked with our partners across the cultural and creative sectors to put this second package of support together.

The fund will be delivered jointly with the Arts Council of Wales and has a "cultural contract" at its heart to help the sector emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever. This package will help support many in the sectors in responding to the pressures and challenges coronavirus has placed on them, it also presents a unique opportunity to deliver a step change – we will develop a cultural contract so that the sector can re-emerge stronger. This would ensure successful applicants commit to ensuring public investment is deployed with a positive, targeted social purpose.

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay  
Caerdydd • Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:  
0300 0604400

[Gohebiaeth.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas.Davies@llyw.cymru](mailto:Gohebiaeth.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas.Davies@llyw.cymru)  
[Correspondence.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@gov.wales](mailto:Correspondence.Dafydd.Elis-Thomas@gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

Further details, including guidance for applicants, will be announced later in August.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Y. Elis-Thomas'.

**Yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas AS/MS**

Y Dirprwy Weinidog Diwylliant, Chwaraeon a Thwristiaeth  
Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism