

Joint Funders Strategy Group

Meeting with LVA and LFMC at GLA on 1.12.89

Present: Irene Whitehead - BFI
Felicity Sparrow - GLA
Doug Foot - LVA
Moira Sweeny - LFMC

IW introduced the meeting and referred to the previous joint meeting at which neither she nor MS were present. It was felt that some update was needed as to the possible option for the two groups coming together to share a premises. IW reported on BFI restructuring and the effect this would have on LFMC as a direct client and on LVA as an indirect client via GLA. The Development budget (approx £300,000) would remain with Planning (IW), grant money and effectively all direct clients (other than RAAs) would be split between the Distribution and Production Divisions for administering. LFMC likely to go to Distribution. The production/workshop area could be problematic. FS said it was unlikely that LFMC would be funded by LBGS in future as did not fall within their training remit, neither would LVA however it was likely that GLA would pick up LVA's grant. There was some discussion on LFMC being the national home of the avant-garde - FS felt LFMC would be vulnerable if only funded by the one national source; the split between national (ACGB) funding for marketing and exhibition and regional (GLA) for workshop 'access' and training worked well with LVA but it was unclear whether or how this could work for LFMC. A merger between the two organisations might prove beneficial as both had different strengths - ie LVA's workshop side was structured and managed better than LFMC whereas their marketing/distribution and exhibition was poor, while LFMC's exhibition and marketing were stronger (relatively!). Pooling of these strengths could also better facilitate the national/regional split of funding. GLA would not separately revenue fund LFMC.

MS reported on the various meetings held between LFMC and LVA, including one long intense meeting at which problems had been highlighted. Neither group particularly wanted to merge with the other and LFMC needed to reassess the possibility of sharing premises. LFMC felt they needed an internal review similar to the one undertaken by GLA with Comedia for LVA - ie a consultancy to look into their internal structures and operations. CAG was suggested and MS agreed to approach them and write up a brief. IW stressed the urgency for this, and a deadline of 31 Jan 90 for completion of the review was agreed, funding from BFI to be drawn from the £7000 previously earmarked (along with £7,000 from GLA) for a joint feasibility study.

DF reported that LVA had prepared a long term strategy but needed help with a business plan. Had drawn up a development plan and submitted applications to ACGB Incentive Fund and also to C4 for capital and revenue. [At a subsequent meeting with LVA, FS pointed out weaknesses of their development plan, mainly due to lack of market research, amongst existing and potential users and possibilities of collaboration, rather than competition, with other broadcast/production facilities in the commercial sector. Had agreed to put some funding from the £7000 earmarked towards market assessment and marketing plan for the workshop.]

It was agreed that once the LFCM consultancy with CAG had been completed both groups would prepare a joint feasibility brief to look at bringing the two organisations together in shared premises. The feasibility to be prepared by early Feb to commence by mid February for completion by 31 March 1990. Timescale is very tight both for funders and for both groups, especially LVA who feel they are being held back by LFMC as LVA's lease on Frith Street comes up for renegotiation in June and they need to prepare costings to either stay put or move to larger premises whether shared or not with LFMC.

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