



Cinema of Women
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Circles
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18 February 1991

Dear Abina and Sarah,

Financial Assistance 1991-92

I note from your recent letter to Irene that work is continuing on the Business Plan which resulted from Sarah's feasibility study. This is welcome news, but I am afraid the timescale is so extended that I can see little hope of a concrete plan being ready for implementation at the beginning of April, however optimistic we may all be about the longer term.

You will recall that I said at our first meetings last year I did not envisage funding two separate organisations, with their individual overheads, in 1991-91. I also said that I believed something close to the 1990-91 combined subsidy might be available to a merged organisation, as the first phase of a three-year (reducing) guaranteed cycle.

These remain my general views as the 1991-92 Direct Grants are being assessed. For obvious reasons I have not been able to invite CoW or Circles to submit in the normal way, but with the deadline to announce most grants less than two weeks away, I now need to reserve some funds in the hope that there will very soon be a workable business and organisational plan that we can back.

Meanwhile, I have been considering recently how to bridge what seems to be an inevitable gap between the outcome of your current study and the end of this financial year. The amounts of time devoted by both organisations to 'campaigning' last year, together with the general recession, I suspect have seriously weakened CoW and Circles. I would now suggest that you need to prepare an emergency plan to cut costs drastically and regroup, at least on an interim basis.

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If you wish to take practical advice on doing this, I could recommend as an independent consultant Tony Kirkhope at Metro Pictures - whose experience as a small independent having had to adjust to many changes of fortune is unrivalled - and I would be prepared to pay for him to spend some (short) time working with you on survival tactics.

If you wish to take up this recommendation or propose any other course of action, please contact me as soon as possible. I look forward to seeing the revised Business Plan at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Ian Christie
Head of Distribution

cc Irene Whitehead