£2.6m grants bring first Scottish Creation Centre c



An artists impression of the atrium at the Briggait Creation Centre

Three-quarters of the funds have been secured for Scotland's first Creation Centre – a project that could radically change the cultural landscape.

The last month has brought pledges of £2.6million including a £1.006m grant from HLF, £1m from Creative Scotland and £622,000 from the Scottish government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund. Glasgow City Council had already promised £1m.

The £4.9m Briggait Creation Centre will be an entirely new cultural offering, providing a dedicated base for dance and a home for the rapidly expanding physical performance sector – including circus, street theatre, flying trapeze and other aerial skills.

The project, led by Wasps Artists' Studios, will also complete the regeneration of the historic Briggait, a beautiful Grade A-listed Victorian and Edwardian market complex in the city's medieval Merchant City. The Briggait was built in several stages between 1873 and 1904, and embraces a 17th-century stone tower. It has Scotland's oldest surviving collection of market halls.

Once operational the Briggait Creation Centre will be a hub for 600 professional artists, physical performers and dancers. It will be home to five arts organisations – Dance House Glasgow, Conflux, Indepen-dance, Aerial Edge and YDance. All currently based within the Briggait, each organisation has diverse skills and expertise and an international network of contacts.

Audrey Carlin, Wasps Senior Executive Director for Business Development, said: “To have these three grants confirmed in the last month is tremendous – it takes us a giant stride towards giving Scotland a fabulous new centre for physical performance and dance.

“Scotland has so much potential and the Briggait Creation Centre will let us develop talented young performance artists, nurturing their skills at every level from beginners through to international stars. It could help transform the cultural landscape in Scotland and the rest of the UK.

“Our supporters have been fantastic, there’s a real sense of excitement about the opportunities this project will bring. We now have to identify the remaining 25% of the funds needed to make the centre a reality – hopefully, it’s one last push and we’re there.”

Creation Centres are relatively common in Europe but not the UK. They are spaces for multi-disciplinary art making, often focusing on outdoor performance but mixing visual art, performance, circus and other art forms. The Briggait Creation Centre will offer unprecedented opportunities for participation and training in dance, street arts, physical theatre, circus and visual arts.

Once complete there will be:

- Five dance/physical performance studios
- Scotland’s first dedicated workspace for physical performance
- Scotland’s first space specially equipped for flying trapeze
- A new public dance facility for Glasgow
- Exemplar inclusive studio and changing facilities for disabled users
- A social enterprise café
- Facilities for 12,000 participants to improve their health and wellbeing
- 100,000 visitors per year to the Briggait
- An inclusive dance studio with hoist and tracking systems and a registered ‘Changing Places’ toilet for disabled people.

The Briggait Creation Centre will be very much part of the community and will allow artists to develop work with and for the public as well as creating new arts and performance-based jobs.

There will be many activities for schools and the local community to become involved with at the Centre including opportunities to research the history of performance in the area, compiling an archive photographic exhibition, developing heritage walks and tours and learning traditional construction skills through traineeships.

Lucy Casot, Head of HLF in Scotland, said: “We have already seen what can be done at the Briggait with National Lottery funding so are delighted to continue our support with the transformation of these old market halls.

“The building, with its 350-year old steeple, is a beacon of the Merchant City’s heritage. Our funding will help it thrive in a way that is sustainable and relevant to today and to the community it serves. It will better the lives of thousands, from

those learning new skills as they restore its stonework to those dancing to keep fit or living their dream on the flying trapeze."

Philip Deverell, Director, Strategy at Creative Scotland said: "The Briggait Creation Centre will be a significant addition to our national arts infrastructure and cultural landscape providing a dedicated facility for performance arts and dance, and will be the largest of its kind in Scotland.

"The development will reinvigorate the wider Briggait complex and make it a genuinely public facing building, breathe life into the Clyde Waterfront in the heart of Glasgow, and inspire people of all ages to engage in physical activity and creative performance."

In 2015, the development grant from HLF allowed Wasps to recruit a Heritage and Community Co-ordinator. This post will help visitors to engage with the rich history of the Briggait site – spanning back to 1665. Children from the Gorbals and Calton have already been involved in celebrating the 350th birthday party for the Briggait Steeple.

Part of the Briggait has already been regenerated, giving it a new life as a centre for artists and creative companies and providing Glasgow with a superb exhibition area. It is also the headquarters for Wasps, Scotland's largest creative community, which provides affordable spaces for artists, makers and other creatives at its centres from Shetland to the Borders.

The BCC will incorporate 12,000 sq ft of areas dating from 1889 and 1904 plus a gap site currently used for parking and deliveries. A new entrance will face the Clyde.

Notes to editors

- Wasps stands for Workshop and Artists' Studio Provision Scotland Ltd. Wasps was set up in 1977 to provide good quality, affordable studio space to enable artists and creative bodies to carry out their work. Wasps studios are located all across Scotland - and as far apart as Shetland and Kirkcudbright. In 2014 Wasps was named Scottish Social Enterprise of the Year. It is highly unusual because it is self-financing in its day-to-day operations, normally only seeking loans or grants for capital projects. Find out more on the Wasps website

Creative Scotland is the public body that supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits Scotland. It distributes funding provided by the Scottish Government and the National Lottery. Find out more on the Creative Scotland website, Facebook page and on Twitter.

Further information

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