Dear (insert name),

I would greatly appreciate any support you can give by raising awareness of the issues impacting the cultural sector with the Department for Exiting the European Union.

**What are the issues?**

The cultural sector needs to be able to access European talent; this includes performers to play at festivals, major events and companies; as well as educators to teach at universities and cultural institutions. UK performers, students and educators need to be able to access the EU to access work and promotional opportunities. Connections with the European workforce enable us in the UK to keep an international outlook and to learn and contribute to European programmes. If our cultural sector is outside of the network; many of our micro-enterprises will close; as they will be unable to withstand potentially prohibitive visa, work permit administration and management costs of being considered ‘a third country’ to the EU.

**1 Mobility of Services**

The European Parliament Culture and Education Committee ‘The CULT Committee’ recently published a [study](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/617500/IPOL_STU(2018)617500_EN.pdf) into the mobility of artists and culture professionals: towards a European policy framework. This study outlines vital ‘remedy obstacles to mobility’ for cultural workers:

A. The recognition of the specific working regimes of artists and cultural professionals;

B. Withholding tax and social security rules;

C. The issuance of travel documents (visa).

*Could the new draft EU policy framework include non-EU countries who participate in EU programmes?*

**2. The Cultural Accord**

The [Cultural Accord](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725288/The_future_relationship_between_the_United_Kingdom_and_the_European_Union.pdf) (pages 78 and 79) is the section of the UK Government White paper; which deals with the potential future cultural agreement between the UK and the EU.

*Page 79 point 34 reads ‘The UK also attaches importance to the continued mobility of talented individuals and groups to support cultural, creative and sporting cooperation’.*

There is profound concern within the cultural sector as the UK Government has not made clear within the Cultural Accord their understanding of the importance of points A, B and C as outlined above; from the European Parliament Culture and Education Committee.

It is vital that Brexit negotiations recognise cultural workers as a service sector. We in the cultural sector need to be seamlessly mobile across the EU, in a similar way to lawyers and bankers, we need to be able to access work opportunities in Europe without being curtailed by visa or work permit process. 79% of UK Gross Domestic Product (GDP) came from the service sector in 2013 (in Scotland the figure is 73.9%), this includes arts, entertainment, education and recreation.

If the UK do not agree a reciprocal agreement with the EU for mobility of the cultural workers; for example, ‘a touring passport’. There is concern that EU cultural workers may be organised in-line with the visa system which is currently in place in the UK for ‘third countries’ (‘non-EU, EEA or European Free Trade Association countries’).  Due to immigration agreements such as this normally being reciprocal; UK cultural workers may be treated by Europe; in the same way that the UK currently treats third countries.

The current visa system for third countries is [already damaging cultural relations](https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/aug/08/visas-refused-for-a-dozen-authors-invited-to-book-festival) for the UK internationally; as is evident from recent visa refusals impacting on the Edinburgh International Book Festival and WOMAD ‘The World’s International Arts Festival’.

[A report](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/ldeucom/182/182.pdf) by the House of Lords, Brexit: Movement of people in the cultural sector, outlines the problems with the current visa systems for third countries in the UK. Page 13 (paragraph 32.) of the report shows that the visa systems currently in place for the movement of people from third countries are not fit for purpose for the cultural sector.

**3. Participation in European Programmes**

A recent [report](https://www.creativescotland.com/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/41753/EUFundstoScotlandCS-FINAL.pdf) by Euclid estimates that Scotland has received at least £23million in funding awarded to over 380 arts, media and creative industries projects during 2007-2017 and estimates at least £5.6m has been awarded to the museums and galleries sector during 2001-2017. A [report](https://www.historicenvironment.scot/archives-and-research/publications/publication/?publicationid=4a41c670-4e72-47b6-86e6-a79200c37cd8) by Historic Environment Scotland estimates at least £36.8 million has been awarded to over 280 historic environment projects during 2007-2016.

Scotland’s Cultural Sector has benefited from participation in:

* European Regional Development Fund
* European Social Fund
* European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development
* European Maritime and Fisheries Fund
* Interreg
* Creative Europe
* Education / Training / Youth (Lifelong Learning, Youth in Action and Erasmus +)
* Europe for Citizens (Remembrance projects, Town Twinning)
* Research and Development (FP7 – 7th Framework)
* Horizon 2020 (incl ERC)

 Scotland’s Cultural Sector would like to continue working with European partners and to continue to participate in European projects; the issue is not simply about access to funding, it’s also vitally important that we continue to share ideas and promote freedom of expression with other EU countries.  As outlined above within the European Culture and Education Committee report into the mobility of artists and cultural professionals; it is vital that we preserve the democratic values of the EU and promote cultural diversity though participation in European programmes.

The cultural sector currently has no clarity of our ability to continue to participate in EU programmes beyond 2020.

Yours sincerely,

(insert name)