THE PROJECT
AN INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT THE AMBITION, CAPACITY AND PERFORMANCE OF PUBLISHERS IN SCOTLAND, AND THEIR CAREER PROFESSIONALS

CONTEXT

THE PROJECT is a 6-month in-company development support programme created specifically for publishers in Scotland. Through a personalised programme, custom-designed in collaboration with each participating company, the process will help companies to identify, assess, develop and implement a self-initiated business-led project.

THE PROJECT is hosted and managed by Publishing Scotland (formerly the Scottish Publishers Association) the lead body for the publishing sector in Scotland, providing a range of services including training, information provision and book fair representation. It has a cultural role as well as helping to promote and develop a key sector of Scotland’s cultural industries, and its contribution to Scotland’s economic growth.

THE PROJECT is supervised by a Partner Steering Group of publishing industry representatives, higher and further education partners, Skillset Scotland and other network partners.

WHY IS THIS PROGRAMME NEEDED NOW?

In an increasingly competitive global market, Scotland’s publishing industry needs to focus its efforts on strategies to help lay the foundation for future success. This means:

- being thoughtful and innovative about product and market opportunities - at home and internationally - and developing imaginative and competitive responses.
- ensuring that companies have the right mix of capacities and skills required to plan, create and deliver their initiatives.
- strengthening leadership and management and fostering the confidence to survive and operate successfully within an increasingly digital creative environment.

From our own work, and our industry contacts - in Scotland and elsewhere - we understand the nature and scale of the challenge and opportunity faced by publishers. Participation in THE PROJECT gives Scottish publishers an opportunity to review their position, test their ideas, prepare and implement a development plan, with clear business-led and growth ambitions.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TAKING PART?

On the next page we describe the main features of the programme, its 5 stages and what they will cover, and how the programme will be delivered. On the last page of this document we present:

- an indicative timetable covering the application and selection process, and each of the main stages between September 2011 (start-up) and completion in February, 2012.
- A summary of the application process; a separate Application Guide accompanies this document.
- An overview of fees and costs associated with participation in the programme.

The closing date for receipt of applications (by email) is Thursday 30 June, 2011.
THE PROJECT
IN-COMPANY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Participation in the in-company development programme will be focused on helping each company to achieve positive and tangible business growth outcomes. ASPIRE I INNOVATE I INVEST I GROW

MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

- A personalised programme, based on a collaborative assessment of the specific interests and needs of each member company.
- Conducted at a pace, in a direction and with content relevant to each company.
- Driven by companies individual needs and not simply to ‘fit’ into the timescale of THE PROJECT; some projects may be completed within the timescale of THE PROJECT; others may represent a stage in a longer term project.
- All of the companies will come together at 3 workshops during the programme: at the start; midway and at the end of the 6-months period. Each workshop will be built around a theme; these will be finalised once the interests of the final selection of publishing companies who will take part on the programme are known; themes associated with internationalisation and digital are likely to be included in the final mix of topics.
- All companies will agree to their progress being monitored and to a case study being prepared on the process and outcome – but without prejudice to commercial confidentiality. A selection of case study summaries will be presented to the Publishing Scotland conference in February 2012

FIVE MAIN STAGES

The programme is divided into 5 stages. In outline, these will cover the following.

Stage 1
- Review and profiling the current position of the company.
- An assessment of the proposed business initiative (ie the project) for each company and its fit with the company’s business strategy.
- An audit of the company’s knowledge, skills and capacities [including leadership and management] to meet the anticipated demands of the strategy and the aim of the new business initiative. This will include consideration of the potential value of a mentor.
- Support with preparation of a development plan.

Stage 2
- Identifying sources of specialist advice to assist the company – where required – in pursuing the development plan, including areas of identified knowledge and skills development.
- Assistance with initial contact, briefing and brokering agreements for support by specialist advisors [individual and company] and organisations – and, where appropriate – mentors.

Stage 3
- On a monthly basis, contact with each company to monitor progress, discuss new and emerging needs and opportunities, and how these could be met.

Stage 4
- An interim assessment of progress will be undertaken with each company, individually.

Stage 5
- A final assessment of progress and achievement, to date, on each company’s project will be held during the last month of the programme: progress toward outcomes and lessons learned.
- Each company will pursue it’s own project and these will be at different stages of development by the end of the 6-months programme. Some will require a much longer timeline before completion. The ‘final assessment’ will therefore focus on overall progress by the end of the 6-months period.

About the
IN-COMPANY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The complex, fast-moving and changing world of publishing presents challenge and opportunity for Scotland’s publishing industry: consumer purchasing habits; a complex retailing environment including online sales; the role of the supermarkets and discounting; rapidly developing technologies for print and digital applications; a growing market for e-books; the development of products for a widening range of mobile devices.

All of these factors, and more, invite reflection by publishers, and pose questions about their present position, products and markets, and where opportunities lie for future growth: in product, production method and market. How realistic are these future aspirations and initiatives? Against what information and benchmarks have they been tested? How robust is the business strategy? And at a practical level, are the existing skills, knowledge and experience of the business’s leadership and management sufficient to plan, follow-through and deliver it?

Participation as a member company in the in-company development programme will provide each company with assistance at the review stage followed by support in identifying and brokering specialist inputs, monitoring progress and providing further support where required.

Participation in the in-company development programme is focused on achieving tangible business growth outcomes for each company.
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About the TIMETABLE
The in-company development programme is planned to run over a 6-months period, from September 2011 through to February 2012.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION
June to July
The application process is launched in the first week of June. Thursday 30 June is the closing date for receipt of applications - by email.
Final selection of participating companies will be made in the week commencing 25 July.

COMPANY AND PROJECT PROFILES
Late July - August
Using submitted applications as a starting point, we will work with each participating company to prepare a company profile and proposed project description.

THE PROGRAMME
September - February 2012
Following a process to match each company with an expert adviser (engaged by THE PROJECT, through Publishing Scotland) the 5 main stages of the programme will commence in September and run for six months, through to the end of February, 2012.
The programme will start with a workshop in early September, introducing companies to one another, and each to its expert adviser. The subsequent passage and timing of the programme through its 5 main stages will be agreed between each company and its individual adviser.

About APPLYING TO TAKE PART
An application guide accompanies these background notes. We ask you to provide us with information:
• About your business.
• About what you hope to achieve through involvement in the activities of this programme.
• About your company’s capacity to deliver its business initiative.
The closing date for submission of proposals is Thursday 30 June. Final selections will be made in w/c 25 July.

About FEES AND COSTS
THE PROJECT is funded through investment by Publishing Scotland and Creative Scotland, levering private sector sponsorship, and investment by other government agencies.
It is however necessary for fees to be charged meet the balance of costs.
FEES
Each company selected to participate in the programme will be asked to pay a fee of £1,500.
This will be made in 3 installments of £500, the first payable in July, on confirmation of a place in the programme.

The fee represents a contribution towards the costs of Stage 1: the expert adviser, appointed through the programme, who will provide a total of 4 days input.
The fee will also cover attendance at 3 workshops during the course of the programme: at the start, at a point approximately mid-way to two thirds through the programme, and at the end of the programme.

Each company will be responsible for meeting its own travel and any associated accommodation costs to attend these workshops.

COSTS
Selected companies will be responsible for meeting their own costs associated with the programme, and the implementation of actions contained in the development plans produced during Stage 1.
This will include, during Stage 2, their employment of additional experts for further specialist inputs that may be required to support their development plan.

Involvement in THE PROJECT represents a calculated investment decision by companies that decide to take part. This reinforces the business-led approach that will be maintained throughout the programme, and the business-growth outcome that it aims to achieve for each participating company.