

Monday, August 20, 2018 4:00pm – 5:30pm at TAPA office boardroom

Chair: Brett Randall (CTDF Chair)

In attendance:

Jim Aldridge (Mirvish/Ticketking), Derrick Chua (independent), Kristopher Dell (Civic Theatres), Clyde Wagner (Civic Theatres), Sue Edworthy (independent), Janet Gates (Elgin & Winter Garden Theatre Centre), Dave McLachlan (Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport), Corey Ross (Starvox), Carrie Sager (FLIP/ CTDF Committee), Matt Slaman (Pirate Life), Kelly Straughan (Workman Arts/ TAPA Board), Shawn Daudlin (Buddies in Bad Times/ CTDF Committee), Scott Dermody (TAPA, minutes), Jacoba Knaapen (TAPA).

Agenda:

- Background
- Current Status
- Concerns
- Ideas

BACKGROUND

- Fund originally funded via ticket surcharges from sales at the EWGTC
- Created to encourage/ stimulate mid-sized commercial production
- Application process: to TAPA, helps complete → to CTDF Committee, assesses viability, determines recommendation → to Ministry of T,C & S for final approval → to ON Heritage Trust for final approval and execution of cheque
- Production budget cap at \$1M CAD
- Max \$75K per production
- Review aim to inject new ideas to increase effectiveness of Fund

CURRENT STATUS

- CTDF current balance less than \$250K
- Zero NEW funds for past 18 years
 - No top-up currently anticipated
 - Historically low ROI
 - Fewer applications than anticipated
- Very few local “commercial” producers; no training institutions teaching skills

CONCERNS/ IDEAS

- Definitions
 - Eligibility: budget figures outdated, must be brought up to modern figures
 - Indie producers eligible to participate as “commercial”, however:
 - Often self-identify as artists, not-for-profit
 - Emerging struggle to break even @ 98% capacity without grants
 - Co-pros of commercial with NFP problematic due to eligibility
 - What “theatre” is & what type can be eligible; “event/attraction” v. “production”
 - “Development” and “Fund” are misleading based on current model
 - Perhaps “investment trust” or some such to be more accurate
- Development
 - Strong need for entry-level development of work
 - Open up to not-for-profit independents that did not receive grants
 - ROI a challenge at this stage
 - Bridging fund from development to production as method to balance ROI
- Replenishment
 - No interest charged on principal now (balance of investment only)
 - Adopt “first in, first out” model arrangement
 - CTDF balance needs increase higher than current level to have viable impact
 - Goal of \$2 – 5M CAD
- Application Process
 - Financial disclosure a challenge when competitors are on CTDF committee
 - Timing too slow for commercial production model
 - Payment structure not in line with commercial practices (CTDF: 3 months avg)
- Committee Structure
 - Conflict of interest for competitors to sit on committee
 - External advisor?
 - Possibly unavoidable due to small pool of those with required knowledge
- Gatekeeper Role
 - Must be paid position to manage, mentor and fine-tune applications
 - A Fund Manager to also seek out potentially profitable project ideas during year
- Mentorship
 - Commercial Theatre Day to feed new people into the market
 - Also to sell concepts to real investors
 - Theatre schools/ programs must teach commercial skills
 - Mandatory mentorship program prior to application?
 - Not all applicants would need this though

- Ministry Involvement
 - Acts too much like a grant currently (TAPA recommend to Committee recommend to Ministry...)
 - Timeline of payment is too long
 - Bring outside of Ministry as Investment Fund with Manager role within TAPA
- Investment Model
 - 50% cap of funding split with \$75K ceiling unrealistic in current market
 - T.O. market needs competition
 - PPP (public-private partnership) as investor with Fund Manager
 - Matching fund? Similar to OCAF
 - Base on NYC model?
 - Need reassessment of risk analysis and payment agreement, more commercial

PRIMARY TAKEAWAYS

- Cash Flow, Limits & Distribution Adjustments
- Targeted Support for Development
- Training for Commercial Model of Producing
- Fund Development with Manager, PPP, “investment trust”