Press Release

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Hi-tech challenge helps music groups tune into new audiences

Four leading music organisations are seeking the support of tech-savvy entrepreneurs who can help them reach new audiences.

Funding of up to £80,000 is being made available to businesses that can provide the innovative, data-driven solutions the groups are looking for. Each project can receive up to £20,000.

Scottish Opera, the Scottish Ensemble orchestra, music venue Pianodrome and charity Drake Music Scotland all hope to benefit from the University of Edinburgh-led initiative.

Scottish Opera wants to develop technology that will help the organisation better evaluate its interactions with pupils on their annual Primary Schools Tour.

Scottish Ensemble hopes to create an interactive installation using audio and visual materials from Anno – their collaboration with acclaimed composer Anna Meredith.

Pianodrome's challenge is to connect two pianos at different locations in real time so that each player can engage in a musical dialogue with the other,

Drake Music Scotland would like to develop what it describes as the world's first – and most comprehensive – inclusive music hub.

Funding to help four entrepreneurs – who must be based in and around Edinburgh – meet the music-based challenges comes from the £7.6 million Creative Informatics initiative.

The University-led programme supports individuals and organisations in the creative industries to develop projects that do inspiring things with data.

Applications for the music-based challenges must be submitted by 16 April. Successful applicants will retain part, or all, of the Intellectual Property for any solutions developed.

Creative Informatics Director, Professor Chris Speed, said it is vital during these exceptionally challenging times that the creative industries find new ways to be innovative.

Jane Davidson, Director of Outreach and Education at Scottish Opera, said the right tech solution would enable Scottish Opera to improve learning outcomes for thousands of pupils each year and extend the reach of their tour of primary schools.

Scott Crawford Morrison, Development and Projects Manage for Scottish Ensemble, hopes a new creative partner can help the orchestra showcase its music in places where people might not normally encounter classical music.

Tim Vincent-Smith, Artistic Director of Pianodrome, said being chosen for the project is a wonderful opportunity to find a collaborator with the skills and expertise Pianodrome needs to bring its vision to fruition.

Thursa Sanderson, Drake Music Scotland's Chief Executive, hopes the collaboration can help the charity develop a thriving hub that puts music well within reach of every learner – whatever their needs might be.

Creative Informatics is a partnership between the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh Napier University, technology incubator Codebase and social enterprise Creative Edinburgh.

It helps creative talent in Edinburgh and South East Scotland to develop new products, services and businesses using data and data-driven technologies.

The programme has so far invested £1.6m in the region's creative industries through five key funding strands and a regular programme of events.

Creative Informatics is one of nine initiatives across the UK that make up the Creative Industries Clusters Programme, which is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Creative Informatics is also part of the Data Driven Innovation initiative within the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and is also supported by the Scottish Funding Council.

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