

16 January 2025

Your request for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (“the Act”)

Thank you for your request for information which was received by VisitScotland on 13 December 2024, requesting information regarding the Events Industry Advisory Group (EIAG) and the EventScotland National Events Funding Programme:

- a) *How are EIAG members selected and recruited? Is this process open to everyone with a legitimate interest?*
- b) *Is the EIAG intended to be representative of the broader event industry in Scotland?. If so, please provide details of current members;*
 - (i) *representing the South of Scotland (based or working in the region)*
 - (ii) *representing small-mid scale event organisers in Scotland*
 - (iii) *representing small-mid scale venues in Scotland.*
- c) *The Event Scotland National Events Funding Programme is only open to applicants attracting over 1000 in-person attendees. Please provide information on;*
 - (i) *when was this criteria decided upon, and by whom?*
 - (ii) *What are the reasons for this 1000-person criteria, and why has this been set at this level?*
 - (iii) *What is the annual economic impact to Scotland from events below this 1000-person threshold?. How does this compare to the annual economic impacts from events over the 1000-person threshold?*
 - (iv) *what assessment was carried out on the negative impacts of events smaller than this being excluded from the funding programme. What were the results of this assessment?*

VisitScotland's response

Please find the response to your request using your numbering:-

- a) The EIAG is an appointed Industry Advisory Group. It was established by VisitScotland at the request of Government and industry. Any interested party may submit a name through the EIAG inbox, or through any of the members of the Group. The selection and recruitment of members is set out within the Terms of Reference for the EIAG, a copy of which we have attached with our response. Individuals will be invited to join the EIAG by VisitScotland in collaboration with the Chair. Members are invited to participate on the basis of their individual skills and experience in events, and not necessarily as a representative of their organisation. The Group will comprise up to 15 recognised senior industry professionals from across the event sector, including sport, business, and cultural events, supply chain businesses, venue operators, and relevant national/regional agencies.
- b) The purpose of the EIAG is to champion Scotland's national events strategy, *Scotland The Perfect Stage (2024 – 2035)*, and to represent the sector as a whole, ensuring coordinated and balanced input from all aspects of the industry. While membership is reviewed annually to ensure balanced representation across the sector, members do not officially

represent specific geographic areas or sectors. A list of the current membership is available on the VisitScotland website at the following link: [Event Industry Advisory Group - Updates & Guidance | VisitScotland.org](#)

c)

- i) The national programme has had guidance on events in place for over 15 years. This guidance would have been agreed by the senior team in EventScotland at the time of creation. In January 2022, following learnings from running funding programme around Covid-19 this information was incorporated formally into the published programme criteria.
- ii) The 1,000 in-person attendees criteria supports the programmes objectives so that supported events are showcasing Scotland's key event and tourism assets and are at a scale to create a positive impact for the host region and Scotland as a whole. Events are assessed in terms of their viability and event management experience as well as their ability to demonstrate alignment with key impact areas; Economic – Tourism and Business; Brand, Identity and Reputation; Media and Profile; Social and Cultural and Environmental Sustainability.
- iii) EventScotland only records data for the events it supports and cannot provide information on the impact of non-supported events regardless of scale taking place in Scotland, and therefore we do not hold this information in terms of Section 17 of the Act. While we do not hold information on the annual economic impact on all events below and above the threshold, we can confirm that during 2023-24 39 National programme events were supported and generated £8.67m Net Economic Impact for Scotland.
- iv) No specific assessment was carried out and therefore we do not hold this information in terms of Section 17 of the Act.

Your right to request a review

If you wish to request a review of your application under either the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 or the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, your request should be submitted to us in writing, or another permanent format (for example e-mail or voice recording) to:

Ms Vicki Miller
Chief Executive
VisitScotland
Waverley Court
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

Telephone: 0131 473 3603
E-mail: vicki.miller@visitscotland.com

The request for a review should be received by us within 40 days of the date of this letter. Any request for a review should also set out, in as much detail as possible, the reasons why you are

not satisfied with our response or the manner in which we have dealt with your application

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, then you have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner.

You can contact the Scottish Information Commissioner at:

Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews
Fife
KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610

Fax: 01334 464611

Email: enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info

You also have the right to appeal to the Court of Session in Scotland on a point of law concerning our response.

Event Industry Advisory Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE 2024

Introduction

These Terms of Reference define the purpose, membership, responsibility and scope of Scotland's Event Industry Advisory Group (EIAG).

Scotland's updated national event strategy was launched in May 2024 and covers the period to the end of 2035: *Scotland The Perfect Stage (2024 – 2035)*. The "Vision" is for Scotland to be the perfect stage for events. The "Mission" is to sustain and develop, through a Team Scotland approach, a dynamic, resilient, and responsible events sector that is recognised as a global leader and valued for its contribution to Scotland's wellbeing economy.

The updated strategy highlights the need for a strong sector voice and recognises Scotland's Event Industry Advisory Group (EIAG) in that role. The strategy also confirms EIAG as having a lead role in ensuring focus and accountability in respect of the strategy's delivery through the development and implementation of an underpinning action plan. The action plan is to be based on the 'next steps' outlined in the strategy. A focussed EIAG Strategy Sub-group will be assembled to lead this work.

Background

The EIAG was established in June 2020 to provide a clear and coordinated sector voice that would inform and help shape the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In November 2022 the EIAG had its Terms of Reference updated and Membership refreshed. The Group focus shifted from pandemic response to greater alignment with the national events strategy and identifying and addressing key industry challenges to a sustainable sector recovery and Scotland's global status as the perfect stage for events.

Since its inception the EIAG has provided an important and effective forum for industry consultation and discussion. Engagement and input from members, Scottish Government officials and Ministers has been excellent throughout. The Group includes representatives from across the event sector, including sport, business, and cultural events, supply chain businesses, venues, national and regional agencies.

Purpose

- Champion Scotland's national events strategy, *Scotland The Perfect Stage (2024 – 2035)*, and advocate for the power of the event sector to drive change and generate significant positive social, cultural, and economic benefits for Scotland.
- Monitor and report on the implementation and impact of Scotland's national events strategy via a dedicated sub-group.
- Represent the sector as a whole, ensuring coordinated and balanced input from all aspects of the industry.
- Identify and communicate the views of the sector to the Scottish Government and its agencies in relation to the key industry challenges and opportunities, supporting the development of any responding actions.
- Share information, research and best practice to help the sector develop and grow.

Membership

- The Events Industry Advisory Group will be led by an independent Chair appointed by VisitScotland, the national tourism and events agency.
- Individuals will be invited to join the EIAG by VisitScotland in collaboration with the Chair.
- Members are invited to participate on the basis of their individual skills and experience in events, and not necessarily as a representative of their organisation. On that basis Deputies will generally not be accepted unless agreed with the Chair.
- The Group will comprise up to 15 recognised senior industry professionals from across the event sector, including sport, business, and cultural events, supply chain businesses, venue operators, and relevant national/regional agencies.
- Non-members may be invited to attend meetings where necessary.
- VisitScotland will provide coordination and secretariat for the Group.
- Membership will be reviewed annually to ensure balanced representation across the sector, plus an opportunity for existing members to step down and new members to join.
- It is expected that members would serve a minimum term of 2 years.

Role of Members

- Members are required to regularly attend and contribute to meetings.
- Members should provide input based on their industry experience, and where relevant, seek to communicate the views of the wider industry segment in which they operate.
- Members will proactively engage in the setting of meeting agendas and play an active part in taking forward agreed actions in line with the stated purpose of the group.
- Members will participate in, and bring their expertise as relevant to, short-life sub groups or the National Events Strategy Oversight Group*
- Members will identify additional voices, insights and information that should be shared with the group and can contribute to achievement of its purpose.
- Members will support communication of the work of the EIAG with the wider sector, though their own networks, communication channels and other relevant opportunities.

Regularity of Meetings

- Regularity of meetings will be agreed by the group in response to requirements. It is expected that a minimum of 3 meetings will take place annually (June, October, February, tbc)
- Members are expected to participate in a minimum of 2 meetings per annum.

Wider Industry Engagement

- Aligned with the Advisory Group, VisitScotland will engage the wider events sector through communications, forums and relevant short-life working groups or sub-groups.