

Funding for the Fringe

The Scottish Government announced a funding package for The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, the charity which underpins the biggest Fringe Festival in the world.

As part of a commitment to support cultural, social and economic recovery, the Fringe Society is to be given a £1 million interest-free loan from The Scottish Government.

It will also receive a £149,000 Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund grant and a £100,000 grant from The City of Edinburgh Council.

The government hopes that the money will mitigate the significant losses incurred as a result of this year's festival not going ahead as planned due to coronavirus (Covid-19). It will also support the thousands of Fringe artists, companies and venues whose livelihoods have been affected.

The Fringe is estimated to be worth around £200 million to the wider Scottish and UK economy. Thousands of artists and cultural entrepreneurs across the UK rely on the Fringe annually as a key milestone for employment.



Scottish Parliament Holyrood. Fiona Hyslop MSP Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs today arriving for “Topical Questions” at the Covid-19 social distancing Scottish Parliament Poolphoto/Fraser Bremner/Scottish Daily Mail Tuesday 26 May 2020. Picture FRASER BREMNER

Culture Secretary Fiona Hyslop said: “This has been an extremely worrying time for people whose livelihoods, careers and wellbeing have been affected by COVID-19 and the cancellation of festivals such as the Fringe.

“I am one of many thousands of people who will miss the Fringe this year. It is one of Scotland’s greatest cultural exports and this funding package will help ensure the world-renowned festival can bounce back in 2021. Many performers, cultural organisations and businesses rely on the festival and I hope it can build on its previous major successes to safely return to the international stage.”

Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society Chief Executive Shona McCarthy said: “This funding is a life raft to the Fringe

Society, enabling us to properly support the extensive ecosystem of artists, venues and businesses who rely on the Fringe. This festival is about much more than three weeks in August. It's an embodiment of how culture and creativity unites us, and in this incredibly difficult time, we're grateful to be working so closely with our partners at Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise and City of Edinburgh Council on this common goal."

Council Leader Adam McVey said: "We're incredibly proud to be known as the world's Festival City and are well aware of the positive cultural, social and economic life of the city contribution our festivals make to our residents and visitors. We worked quickly to help our Fringe festival get through the enormous challenge of COVID-19, working with Government to put resources in place to ensure the festival's survival.

"I look forward to welcoming back the Fringe, and all our summer festivals."

