

# **CASE FOR SUPPORT – an urgent appeal**

## **Securing the Future of Stroud International Textiles**

### **Our Aims**

We would like to present our organisation to you and ask a few moments of your time.

Stroud International Textiles (SIT) is a leading national organisation that presents textiles, contemporary through to traditional, and connects to related art forms.

SIT aims to raise awareness; increase knowledge and the enjoyment of contemporary textiles and the applied arts and broaden out to related art forms including interdisciplinary practice. We aim to broaden and challenge the conventional approach to textiles and contemporary crafts, increasing active participation in the arts for a diverse range of people. Offering critical debate and an academic element for a broad range of established and emerging artists, we encourage and provide opportunities to develop creative practices and innovation alongside the established international names.

SIT actively supports artist-led activities and runs extensive outreach programmes in education and skills training for schools and colleges.

Our focus is on quality and excellence; uniquely profiling and championing textile art and craft experiences locally and nationally through the dynamic annual festival that has grown from strength to strength during its 5-year existence. The work of Stroud International Textiles over the 5 years has created a lively atmosphere in the district where textile artists and other arts organisations are encouraged to cluster and thrive

The annual festival encourages debate within contemporary textiles and craft through events, workshops, conferences, master classes and exhibitions which act as a catalyst for experimentation, collaboration and innovation. The festival attracted over 13,000 visitors in 2010, notably 65% travel from beyond SIT's Gloucestershire locality emphasising its economic and cultural impact; national and international significance and wider appeal to the general public. There are increasing links to Europe and beyond which are being nurtured. Our year round attracting 15,000 (2010)

SIT is developing alongside 2 other cultural organisations within the Five Valleys Foyer complex; and is fast becoming a cultural and creative hub in Stroud where theatre, performance, music, poetry and exhibitions are offered, further attracting audiences to the area.

It is this important impact on the local economy and the support given to businesses that gives added value year on year.

SIT's organisational structure has been functional for 5 years; all with strong links to the contemporary craft sector which allow SIT to continue progression and strategic direction through an imbedded evaluation practice and collaborate with new partners and profile raise nationally and internationally. SIT is a not for profit organisation.

In addition to our visitors and partners SIT has kindly been supported through grants from Local authority, National Lottery, trusts that include the Polly Devlin Trust, Arts Council England, and Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Increasingly our development relies heavily on the generosity of donations, gifts, and sponsorships

Sadly the future of Stroud International Textiles is not secure and the arts are experiencing severe cuts to our income. It is our therefore our intention to raise income through an enhanced and participative Friends scheme; approaching identified trusts and foundations, through earned income from the festival and events and through individual giving.

## **Our Present**

We now turn to our visitors, supporters, partners and funders to help us reach **our initial fundraising target of £35,000.**

If 13,000 individuals were to donate £10 we would not have only secured the 2011 festival but we will have begun to ensure ongoing success for 2012 and beyond. If only half of those visitors could support us we still would have secured sufficient money to pay for the 2011 festival.

Those who can afford more will be offered a website presence and opportunities during the festival to entertain and meet participating artists, lecturers, writers. Our most generous supporters will be thanked publicly by listings in the catalogue and having exhibitions named in their honour.

If only 1000 give we still can do an enormous amount with that additional £10,000. The future of SIT is not secure.

To lose such an important festival in the UK's cultural calendar would be a great loss. It would not only impact on the local economy but nationally by reducing the profiling of high quality innovative arts.

The political and financial climate is a concern for all arts organisations and there is the potential for reduced funding or funding being withdrawn from key funders and therefore it is imperative that we become more self-sufficient with income from various sources and not solely from project funding. Sustainability is our key focus going forward; our ambition and those that benefit from our organisation has outstripped out financial income capacity

## **Our Future and Vision: what we wish to develop**

Future projects and partnerships include:

- Profiling graduate work in a Student Showcase working with partners Bristol UWE – Drawing & Applied Arts Department; Stroud FE College and Somerset University of the Arts – Textiles & Fashion Departments
- A graduate award
- Further links and expansion to schools
- Links to the Shetlands and Scottish Highlands with artist exchanges; exhibitions; opportunities to develop creative practices through virtual interaction. Supporting tourism and cultural exchange
- Touring theatre production with SIT creating the costumes
- Development of artist residencies
- Further opportunities for designer makers to develop their creative business practices

In the past SIT has been pivotal in:

- Supporting new and existing organisations and artist groups such as Studio Seven Textile artists
- Bringing the work of internationally acclaimed artists to a rural area
- Supporting innovation and new commissions
- Bringing opportunities for skills training
- Raising the profile of textiles and their global impact locally and nationally
- Actively supporting tourism and the local economy through increased footfall and visitor spend. This is as a direct result of the exciting and high quality programming.

## Our Proposal

Our future vision depends on your support in addition to other income strands.

We have reviewed our expenditure to ensure our supporters receive a high quality programme that is great value for money for the organisation.

We will continue to approach philanthropic foundations for organisational grants. A plan to approach a series of carefully selected trusts and foundations is underway to fund specific projects with a minimum target of £10,000 in place.

We have a target of 40% of income to be raised through individual donations, sponsorship and trusts.

In addition you can also support SIT through our Friends scheme. We will be improving our membership scheme and increasing the benefits. Individual membership for non makers will be £25 and £30 for makers; benefits will include:

- Discounts at local businesses during the festival
- Invitations to private views and launches
- Designer Makers gallery and online presence on SIT website
- Lectures and programming tailored to our friends and makers
- Social events
- Newsletters and mailings
- Discount on events
- Opportunities to volunteer with SIT

*'There has never been a more pressing time for the arts. A surge of support is crucial for SIT's survival, it will send out an important message to future funders and local councils. The arts touch people giving succour and stimulating our imaginations, providing food for thought and joys of expression and opportunities for all ages and abilities to reach out and learn new skills. The arts give pleasure, fun and, occasional controversy'* Lizzi Walton Director

## How to give

Go to the donation page and click on the amount you wish to give

Please fill in the form that is on the donations page, print off and send a cheque to insert SIT address.

All donators will be personally thanked and updated regularly on our progress.  
Thank you for your time.



Directors and Management Stroud International Textiles