21 April 2023

**Submission from the Dunedin Symphony Orchestra (DSO) on the 2023 – 2024 update of the Dunedin City Council’s Ten-Year**

1. The DSO welcomes the opportunity to consider and make a submission on the 2023-2024 2023 -2024 update of its Ten-Year Plan.

**DCC’s Ara Toi Ōtepoti Arts and Culture Strategy and Ten-Year Plan Community Outcomes**

1. The DSO thanks the DCC for its on-going support of the orchestra. This was especially the case during the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. We commend the Dunedin City Council (DCC) for its Ara Toi Ōtepoti Arts and Culture Strategy.
3. We further note the Community Outcomes in the current Ten-Year Plan are:

* *A creative city with a rich and diverse arts and culture scene*.
* *A successful city with a diverse, innovative and productive economy*
* *A supportive city with caring communities and a great quality of life*
* *A compact city with a vibrant CBD and thriving suburban and rural centres*

1. The DSO is proud of its significant and substantial contributions to these Community Outcomes.

**Introduction**

1. The DSO provides diverse orchestral experiences by and for the Dunedin community contributing to Dunedin’s thriving cultural scene and events, to the benefit of the city’s economy and citizens’ social well-being.
2. This is through:

* DSO concerts: providing employment for up to 80 of Dunedin’s finest musicians.
* Music from Beethoven to the Beatles, Matariki concerts featuring taonga puoro, commissions for Dunedin’s composers, music for the Ukraine benefit concert.
* Growing digital audiences around NZ and the world for our digital performances (which started during the Covid lockdown).
* A wide range of community educational outreach projects and collaborations, especially with the University, around Dunedin, Central Otago and Southland.
* Record enrolments for DSO’s junior orchestra DSO Academy.
* Collaborations with other major Dunedin musical organisations: Dunedin Arts Festival, City Choir Dunedin’s ‘Messiah’, Opera Otago.
* Performances in Hanover Hall by a very wide range of arts and community groups: Dunedin Youth Orchestra, Dunedin Jazz Club.
* Performances around Otago.

1. Because of the high quality of the orchestra, it attracts top-quality conductors and soloists from around New Zealand and the world.
2. Each year the DSO
   * Performs to 12,000 – 16,000 people
   * This includes 5,000 school children
   * Injects c. $1 million into the Dunedin economy, including $360,000 of central government funding.

**Section 1: DSO’s Civic Service Grant and Town Hall Hire**

**DSO’s Civic Service Grants**

* Since 2013 when DVML assumed management of the Town Hall and comparing it to the DSO’s Civic Service Grant:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2013 | 2023 | Annual impact on DSO’s budget | *Adjusting 2013 figures for inflation to 2023* |
| Town Hall annual hire cost | $13,400 | $70,000 | ($56,600) | *$17,044* |
| Percentage increase |  | 322% |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| DCC’s Civic Service Grants | $98,000 | $95,000 | ($3,000) | *$124,600* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Impact on DSO’s annual budget |  |  | ($58,600) |  |

1. The above table clearly illustrates the financial impact for the DSO, with inflation only increasing this impact.
2. The DSO understands the considerable pressures on the funding available to the DCC’s Grants Sub-Committee.
3. As the DSO can be considered essential to the musical vitality of the city, the DSO submits that the DCC could justify a separate funding pool for the DSO. If this is not possible, then an increase to the relevant funding pool is proposed.

**Town Hall Hire**

1. The table above illustrates the challenge the DSO faces regarding affordability of the Town Hall.
2. It should be noted that the Town Hall is the only acoustically appropriate venue in Dunedin for the DSO’s larger concerts (such as the recent Beatles music one), so the DSO has no choice of venue.
3. Because the Community Access Grant is not guaranteed, and to be prudent and realistic, the DSO budgets on $70,000 annually for the hire of the Town Hall.
4. The DSO understands that DVML has been charged with maximising income. However, as shown above, it is at considerable cost to the very community organisations the DCC wishes to support. It should be noted that many community organisations are no longer able to afford the Dunedin Centre venues.

**Summary re Civic Grant and Town Hall Hire**

1. The DSO strongly urges the DCC to consider amendments to:
   1. The funding and the funding mechanisms for major civic cultural institutions such as the DSO.
   2. The booking process and cost structure for community organisations for the Dunedin Centre so that rates are affordable and guaranteed.

**Section 2: Performing Arts Venue**

1. The DSO shares the concern of many that there is no medium-sized performance venue in the city for acoustic (non-amplified) music organisations and musicians.
2. The DSO therefore welcomed the Charcoal Blue study. As an arts organisation essential for the musical cultural vitality of the city, the DSO would be very happy to be involved in further consultations so as to ensure the very many acoustic (non-amplified) music organisations and musicians in Dunedin have an appropriate venue for their performances. This would ultimately benefit Dunedin’s vibrant and diverse arts and culture scene.

We again thank the DCC for its support of the DSO, and for the opportunity to make this submission.

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