

CONVENOR'S REPORT 2019

The 'Creative Sounds Society Incorporated (CSSI) year', from Annual General Meeting (AGM) to annual general meeting, spans across parts of two financial years. The 2018/19 CSSI year includes the majority of the 2018/19 financial year and part of the 2019/20 financial year. Please take this into consideration when reading the below. For easy of reading the CSSI year will be henceforth referred to as 'the year' and any specific mention of any other type of year will be clarified.

As in any given year, funding was a major priority for the Management Committee this year. The 2018/19 financial year was the last of our three year Fee for Service Agreement with the Palmerston North City Council (PNCC). The PNCC reviewed multiyear funding scheme – Strategic Priority Grants (SPG) saw changes to funding across the arts community. We were successful in our application to for SPG funding for the 2019-2021 period. The \$107,250 per annum of operational funding is our major source of operational funding. SPG has also seen the implementation of Results Based Accountability (RBA) for reporting to the PNCC. This was introduced with much enthusiasm but the application of this as a reporting system for the communities (especially arts community) will be an interesting thing to monitor over the funding cycle.

We again applied to the Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) Lottery Grants Board for multiyear funding this year. Although our multiyear funding application was unsuccessful, we did receive a \$15,000 operational grant. While we have been changing our approach to this fund for multiyear funding this is something that appears we do not align with, however securing a multiyear funding grant from this organisation is something that must continue to be a priority for the Management Committee.

In the way of major capital grants we received \$47,000 from Central Energy Trust to upgrade the live room equipment – including the purchase of a digital mixing desk. CSSI did not previous own a suitable console prior to this purchase. This console allows for recording of live shows.

Over the last two years, since the Constitution changes that allowed for financial membership, we have been in the process of setting up a process to easily receive funding from our membership, allies and community. While considerable work has been done around this (including dealing with some of the challenges mentioned above), we have an account to receive such donations. The Management Committee and our staff have done further work around this fund and it will be used as a 'nimble fund' for our community to apply to for funding small projects.

A significant challenge for the Management Committee this year, namely the office holders and also our staff has been banking. While it is not an easy task in any given year dealing with the bank and its processes, this year was especially difficult and took up much of our volunteer and staff's time. To this end the management committee has decided to undertake the move to a new bank. This decision was not made lightly as we understand that every bank will have challenges given that we are an incorporated society but we feel confident this move (once complete) will be the best decision for our staff and future office holders. This move will take place after the AGM and office positions confirmed.

Our building lease expired at the end of June this year. We are as of yet to sign an agreement with the PNCC that is acceptable to both parties. Our concerns around the lease agreement are that a standard commercial agreement does not appreciate our long standing relationship with the Council and our previous contributions to the building and therefore as part owners of the building. Work has been done by both parties to ensure that our relationship and prior understandings are incorporated into any future agreements. Having a secure lease agreement is vital the longevity of The Stomach.

The building itself has also faced some challenges over the past year, mostly in heavy rain. We have continued to have leaking from the internal guttering inside the facilities. This has resulted in at least one 'emergency' session of volunteers moving precious audio equipment out of potential harm's way and to allow for drying equipment to be brought in. This guttering issue has now mostly been resolved but not without a large amount of staff time coordinating with PNCC staff.

We again made small pricing increases across all of our services. Given that these followed the price increase in January 2018, the decision to do so and how much was considered at length by the Management Committee and our staff. The robust discussion lead to the introduction of an hourly youth rate for rehearsal rooms which is not something CSSI has ever had but is in keeping with our ethos. The price increases, while of concern to the Management Committee and staff, were well received by our community. The recording studio and rehearsal rooms both have posted record incomes, indicating that our facilities and service have been in high demand even after adjusting for the new pricing. The rehearsal rooms were used for 2415 hours of practise time over the last year. Which is up from last year's 2200 hours. The recording studio had 769 hours of use, with 103 unique users from July 2018 to January 2019 and 176 from January this year to July. Over the financial year the studio saw 229 first time users. Over the year 30 hours were given to one on one mentoring.

The Stomach has been directly involved in delivering 32 live music performances over the last year. Further to the shows, The Stomach has, in partnership with Radio Control 99.4FM, produced 10 Live to Airs. This mutually beneficial collaboration allows for diverse content for both parties.

Following on from last year's successful New Zealand Music Commission Pilot Internship Programme, we were able to host an intern for nearly four months again this year. Our relationship with the NZ Music Commission and our ability to support their Internship Programme allows us to engage not only at a local level but helps cement our standing as a contributor to New Zealand music at a national level as well.

A major focus for the 2018/19 Management Committee was to actualise the long held goal of hiring a third staff member. We have committed to employing the Team Member/Administrator on a .5 FTE, one year fixed term contract and are progressing to finalising this employment shortly.

This year has again been a year of steadiness for the CSSI, allowing the Management Committee and our staff to focus on our goals and the future of The Stomach. Given this, this year has therefore one of many achievements. I would like to thank both our sound engineer Nigel Mauchline and manager Harry Lilley for the passion and hard work which

they bring to The Stomach and the wider music community - CSSI and the Management Committee would not be able execute its objectives and aims without the staff of The Stomach.

Moreover I would like to acknowledge the volunteers for the donation of their time over the last year from the volunteers and support from the music and wider communities. I would also like to acknowledge the 2018/19 CSSI Management Committee for their significant contribution to The Stomach and the Society. It has been a pleasure to work with you all over the last year.