

Edinburgh International Book Festival responds to ethical fundraising debate with interactive event that tackles big questions head on this summer



30th July 2024

Can fundraising ever be ethical? In such a challenging financial context for arts organisations, how should they determine who to take money from and when to decline? What matters more: where money has come from or where it is going?

This August, in direct response to the debate of ethical fundraising in the arts, a topic impacting many organisations across the UK and further afield, the Festival will host a brand new event aimed at expanding the conversation from a place of polarisation to one of positivity and possibility. Entitled **Clean Money: Can fundraising ever be ethical?** the event will be fully interactive in nature and groups of participants will be handed questions, based on real or possible situations, to discuss alongside a range of expert facilitators.

Encouraging audiences to step outside their viewpoints, and consider these important topics from another angle, participants of the event will be required to argue from or for a particular point of view, as opposed to their personal perspective, based on a prompt courtesy of the facilitators.

The event will be guided by Alisha Fernandez Miranda, author and Chair of the award-winning social impact advisory firm I.G. Advisors, and will feature nine other industry peers including Harriette Tillott, Advisor at I.G., and Joni O'Sullivan, trustee at Hastings Contemporary Gallery. Further facilitators will be confirmed nearer the time.

Jenny Niven, Director at Edinburgh International Book Festival, said: *"We're excited to be able to curate this vital conversation at the Book Festival. In a climate where it can feel harder than ever to have meaningful discussion, and with a vanishingly small number of platforms that truly allow for the exchange of views or tolerance for viewpoints which don't align with our own, the Book Festival is a unique forum for this type of learning and debate.*

The question of 'clean money' brings in everything: climate, conflict, ethics, politics, the role of government, the state of the arts and charitable sector, societal change, and allows us to wrestle with the really thorny questions underpinning the debates recent months.

The level of public engagement in the topic at the moment is unprecedented and the strength of feeling from many different perspectives has been evident throughout. We hope people with a range of perspectives will join this conversation and help further everyone's understanding of the issues and the contexts at hand, and help us bring this topic offline and into the daylight."

Held in the spirit of open dialogue and constructive debate, each participant will be required to only share a first name – no other identifying information can be shared until after the debate, and then only with explicit permission – and the event will follow Chatham House rules, meaning that while information gathered during the event can be shared, it cannot be linked to any individual participant. Those who do not wish to be quoted, even anonymously are under no obligation and will be invited to sign to this effect.

Future Tense is the first Edinburgh International Book Festival programme from Director Jenny Niven and will unfold for the first time at the Festival's new home at Edinburgh Futures Institute. The full programme can be found [here](#)