

Tern Television is an independent production company based in Aberdeen, Glasgow since 2000, Belfast since 2004 and London since 2007. It is the largest indigenously owned independent in Scotland. It's work is seen on BBC ONE, BBC TWO, BBC Scotland, BBC NI, ITV, Channel 4, UKTV and Discovery.

We seek to play a significant role in the delivery of targets for a proportionate amount of production from the Nations, and thus redress the current imbalance in UK representation on UK screens. The company is growing by about 20% per annum, because of its steady increase in commissioning from networks. Between 2004 and 2008 our income from Scottish commissions has fallen from 89% to 39%, and our income from non Scottish commissioning from 8% to 51%. Other income, including secondary sales from outside Scotland, has risen from 1% to 8%.

While a small part of this reflects the growth of our new Belfast base, there is no doubt that the company's growth and sustainability at a higher level has resulted from the growth of commissioning from UK networks and their increasing awareness that they need to source from suppliers outside London-.

At the time of writing the signs are that the BBC's Network Supply Review's implementation is creating opportunities for us that have never been available before.

Channel 4 has also been a significant part of our growth. Its commissions of several education TV series, and more recently the innovative educational digital project Slabovia.com, have formed a substantial part of our turnover and allowed us to grow the new digital division of the company.

Provided it delivers at least as much as it has promised in terms of increased commissioning from the nations, and the newly pledged development fund to support nations series development, Channel 4's public service role in intervening in a market which currently is culturally imbalanced will be crucial to our contribution to the growth of a sustainable production base in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Tern would therefore urge Ofcom to support the Channel's public service aspirations, and to resist at all costs privatisation, which would undoubtedly result in a much poorer representation on screen of the rich diversity of the UK's cultures.