



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Arts and Heritage
Date:	9 April 2008
Reporting Officer:	Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development, ext. 3470
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Relevant Background Information

The Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts, has been in existence since 2005. Since then the Development (Arts) Sub-Committee and subsequently the Development Committee have been presented with reports on a monthly basis to consider and award grants under the programme.

The purpose of the Rolling Programme is to assist arts or heritage organisations to avail of opportunities which arise during the year, including those that present themselves after the closing date of Annual Funding or Multi-Annual Funding applications. The grants awarded through the Rolling Programme scheme range from £250 - £3,000, and the Programme is open to arts and heritage organisations and heritage projects.

The following areas are prioritised for funding under the Rolling Programme:

- one-off opportunities to bring outstanding cultural product to Belfast.
- one-off opportunities to mark or celebrate, through arts or heritage projects, culturally significant events.
- assisting organisations to develop national and international partnerships, and to profile Belfast's cultural product nationally and internationally.
- bursaries to enable arts and heritage organisations to develop their organisation and / or staff.
- small-scale explorative or feasibility studies to assist in the development of innovative and creative arts or heritage-based projects.

A copy of the guidance notes and applications form for the scheme are included here for information. They provide full details of the eligibility and assessment criteria for the scheme.

Key Issues

On 16 February 2007 the Policy and Resources Committee approved proposed revisions to the Council's Scheme of Delegation. Under Part II of the revised scheme Subsection VI Grants it indicates that: "Where the Committee has established a scheme for the awarding of small grants (i.e. up to a maximum level of £10,000) and has authorised the Chief Officer to administer the scheme, then the Chief Officer has the delegated authority to approve the allocation of the grants in line with the award criteria."

The grants awarded under the Rolling Programme for Arts and Heritage are up to a maximum of £3,000 which is substantially below the small grant threshold. It would be appropriate for this scheme to be considered under the arrangements for delegated authority. There would also be the following advantages:

- The turn around period would be reduced from the 10 weeks currently required
- It may be possible for applicants to present more detail closer to the activity
- It will be possible to respond to applicants a short time after submission
- Reporting to Committee will be substantially reduced
- The scheme can be closed promptly on expenditure of the allocated funds

Members would be notified of decisions at regular intervals on a 6 monthly or yearly basis as considered appropriate. This may enable Members to review the range and nature of grants more effectively.

Resource Implications

Financial

A budget of £28,000 has been included in revenue estimates for the continuation of the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts for projects within the 2008/09 financial year.

Human Resources

This will be absorbed within the planned work of the Culture and Arts Unit.

Recommendations

It is recommended that delegated authority is agreed for the Director of Development to manage the award of grants under the Rolling Programme to support innovation in arts and heritage.

Documents Attached

Appendix A: Rolling Programme Application Form and Guidance Notes

Appendix A