



Subject:	Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024-2025
Date:	7 th August 2024
Reporting Officer:	John Greer, Director of Economic Development
Contact Officer:	Chris McCreery, Culture Development Manager

Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024-2025 and seek approval for the recommended grants
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is requested to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">note the contents of this report and agree the recommendations for artist studio grants, as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.
3.0	Main report
3.1	Members will be aware that at a meeting of City Growth and Regeneration Committee in February 2022, members agreed to open a new funding scheme for artist led organisations

to provide financial and development support for this sector. In May 2024, members agreed to continue this support for the third consecutive year and £100,000 has been allocated to support Artist Studios Organisational Grants in 2024/25.

3.2 **Background and context**

The ten-year cultural strategy for Belfast, *A City Imagining*, committed to a broader investment model that considered the diversity of the city's cultural landscape. In response to detailed consultation with the sector, Committee agreed in February 2022 to bring forward a specific funding programme for studios and artist-led organisations, with the latest audit identifying 17 studios/ artist-led organisations in Belfast directly supporting an estimated 450 artists. This in part is due to the value of artist-led spaces not being effectively captured through traditional metrics such as income generated through ticket sales or audience figures and it was agreed that an alternative form of funding would be developed for artist-led spaces. Belfast City Council's current support programmes do not include any of these organisations as annual or multi-annual clients.

3.3 **Organisational funding**

The "*Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024/25*" programme was opened on 4th June 2024 and closed on 4th July 2024. The purpose of this strand of work is to provide financial and developmental support to organisations similar to the support offered under cultural multi-annual grants (CMAG).

3.4 The Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024/25 scheme was advertised widely. The information and application details were emailed directly to a GDPR compliant mailing list representing over 370 organisations from across the cultural and creative sectors alongside associated social media marketing. An online information session was held in advance of the deadline, as well as organisations availing of one to one support sessions with the Culture Development team.

3.5 Criteria for Decision making

The criteria and guidance for Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024/25 applicants are included in Appendices 1 and 2. Assessments were made, and scoring applied under four key areas of criteria:

- Fit with our investment aims, & themes 3 & 4, of cultural strategy "A City Imagining"
- Need and potential impact
- Value for money

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality organisational development plan <p>Assessments were made only based on information supplied by the applicant within their submission. This included the application form and supporting documentation such as business plans and strategies.</p>
3.6	<p>Organisations or groups operating artist studios were able to apply for up to £10,000 to use towards specified developmental needs within a 12-month period. Grants up to £20,000 were available for organisations that accommodate at least 25 active members, and which meet additional eligibility criteria and supply a suitable business case.</p>
3.7	<p><u>Assessment</u></p> <p>A summary of recommended grants and proposed grant recipients is included at Appendix 1. A summary of award descriptions is included in Appendix 2. The unit received 12 applications for Artist Studios Organisational Grants, requesting a total of £147,976. Percentage of funding allocated is based on scoring percentage. The recommendation is that we fund 11 organisations, with support of £100,000.</p>
3.8	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>An allocation of £100,000 is recommended to “<i>Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024/25</i>”. These activities outlined in this report will be resourced from the 2024/25 budget for the Culture and Tourism section of the Economic Development division of the Place and Economy Departmental budget in line with existing approvals.</p>
3.9	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>The cultural strategy, <i>A City Imagining</i> has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and a Rural Needs Assessment (RNA). Specific initiatives as required will be subject to a further equality screening.</p>
4.0	Appendices
	<p>Appendix 1: <i>Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024/25 - Recommended Awards</i></p> <p>Appendix 2: <i>Artist Studios Organisational Grants 2024/25 - Award Descriptions</i></p>