



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Multi-Annual and Annual Funding for Culture and the Arts
Date:	11 February 2009
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Relevant Background Information

Annual Funding for the Arts was established by Council to assist arts and heritage organisations by providing financial support on an annual basis. Multi-Annual Funding was established by Council to introduce a degree of longer term sustainability to some of the city's flagship arts organisations.

This report provides the Development Committee with recommendations on applications made to Annual Funding for Culture and the Arts 2008/9 and Multi-Annual funding for Culture and the Arts 2008/2011. The closing date for applications under both schemes was Friday 19 December 2008. Assessments of applications received for Multi-Annual and Annual Funding in the next financial year 2009/10 can be found in **Appendix 4 & 5**.

Multi-Annual Funding for Culture and Arts

At the Development Committee meeting of 14 November 2007, Members agreed the selection of 14 Multi-Annual Funding clients. Multi-Annual Funding incorporates a three year funding term, and an anticipated minimum annual funding level of £30,000. At the Development Committee of 14 May 2008 Members agreed that a maximum of two new clients be admitted to the Multi-Annual Funding scheme.

The two successful clients were then invited to submit an application by the deadline of 12 noon on Friday 19 December 2008. The total now requested by the 16 Multi-Annual Funding clients for the year 2009/10 is £690,360. The amount recommended for existing Multi-Annual Funded clients and Scores and recommendations for the two new Multi-Annual Funding clients can be found in **Appendix 2**.

Annual Funding for Culture and Arts

The 2009/10 deadline for applications was also 12 noon on 19 December 2008. A total of 53 applications were received, compared to 64 (excluding those organisations who are now multi annually funded) in 2008/9.

The applications received requested a total of £733,489. In 2007/8, the total requested by organisations (excluding those organisations who are now multi-annually funded), was £1,124,300.53. Scores and recommendations for Annual Funding can be found in **Appendix 3**.

Criteria for Multi-Annual and Annual Funding for Culture and Arts 2009/10

The Culture and Arts Eligibility Criteria (shown in **Appendix 1**), approved by Members at the Development (Arts) Sub-Committee of 20 September 2004, were devised in order to assist the Council to work in partnership with arts and heritage organisations in achieving its objectives. They reflect the themes of the Development Department and the Integrated Cultural Strategy.

Level of Applications

Requests for grants this year has far outstripped available resources. Taken together, the total request for multi annual and annual grants for the coming year equates to £1,423,849.00. This is the equivalent to 144% of the total projected budget of £989,000.

With few exceptions, the level of applications has been strong and Annual Funding applicants have put considerable effort into demonstrating how they meet the criteria.

As expected and without exception, the multi-annually funded organisations submitted excellent applications each with dynamic plans for the next two years.

Members are requested to note that income and expenditure is presented in this report as a summary of the information submitted. As agreed previously by the Development (Arts) Sub-Committee, officers have not returned to applicants to request any additional details in relation to their applications. This includes clarification of budgets in some cases the budgets presented contain minor discrepancies.

Principles of the Reporting Process

Organisations submit a lengthy application including supporting documentation such as strategic and business plans, annual reports, financial statements, policy documents and procedure. Officers undertake a lengthy assessment of all applications, scoring them against each of the criteria identified for the scheme.

A summary of this information has been compiled by Officers in order to:-

- Highlight the main strengths and weaknesses in the application,
- ensure optimum transparency as to how decisions on their applications have been reached, and
- familiarise Members with the nature and variety of arts and heritage programmes in which the Council invests

The comments in the summary of assessments aim to outline for Members areas where applicants performed particularly well against specific criteria or where there were weaknesses in the application. The comments relate to both the strengths of the proposed programme and the evidence supplied within the application. It should be noted that where there is limited information supplied to address a specific area of the criteria this is highlighted as a weakness.

Members are requested to use these assessments in tandem with the scores provided in **Appendices 2 & 3**.

Grant Histories

For ease of reference full grant histories for Culture and Arts funding programmes for the last 3 years are provided at **Appendix 6**.

Minimum Grant

The minimum Annual Funding grant offered is £2,500.

Rationale for Funding Decisions

The following rationale for awarding funding is based on the following factors, previously agreed by the Development (Arts) Sub-committee:

- Previous levels of funding
- Strength of the proposed programme as assessed against agreed funding criteria
- Impact of the project including anticipated audiences/participants, impact in the Belfast area, range and scope of the proposed programme.
- Level of Council funding when compared to the overall costs of the programme
- Viability of the proposed programme within the funding offered

Key Issues

Multi-Annual Funding

Members will note from the scores tables (attached as **Appendix 2 & 3** to this Introduction) that overall scores against the Culture and Arts Criteria were very high, particularly amongst Multi-Annual Funding clients. This shows extremely strong potential for development of the cultural product and for developing the city-wide regenerative impacts of the arts.

The total level of funding recommended for 16 Multi Annual Funding is £690,360 (69.8% of overall funding).

The recommendations to the new Multi-Annual Funding clients are for the first year of a two year funding scheme.

The organisations who have only recently achieved Multi Annual Funding are recommended to receive £30,000 which reflects an uplift of considerably more than 50% in both cases.

Belfast City Council funding represents 4.6% of the collective turnover for MAF Organisations. This equates to a direct return for investment of 1:22. It is felt that this underlines the value for money that these flagship organisations represent and supports the impact of increased investment in these organisations.

Annual Funding

The total level of funding recommended for Annual Funding is £298,640 (30.1% of overall funding). Details individual awards are provided in **Appendix 5**.

Resource Implications

Financial

This is included in the draft revenue estimates for 2009-2010 of the Culture and Arts Unit.

Human Resources

This will be covered within the work programme of the culture and Arts Unit.

Recommendations

Members are asked to agree recommendations in:

Appendix 2 - Scores and Recommendations for Multi-Annual Funding

Appendix 3 - Scores and recommendations for Annual Funding

Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – Eligibility Criteria Appendix 2 – Scores and Recommendations for Multi Annual Funding Appendix 3 – Scores and Recommendations for Annual Funding Appendix 4 – Multi Annual Funding Assessments Appendix 5 – Annual Funding Assessments Appendix 6 – Grant Histories