



Belfast City Council

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Report to: | Director of Development |
| Subject: | The Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Arts and Heritage |
| Date: | 11 March 2009 |
| Contact Officer: | Marie-Thérèse McGivern, Director of Development (ext 3470) Shirley McCay, Head of Economic Initiatives (ext 3459) |

Relevant Background Information

The Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts has been in existence since 2005 and was established by Council to assist arts and heritage organisations in Belfast to avail of opportunities which arise during the year which benefit their organisation and / or people living in, working in, or visiting Belfast. Included are opportunities that present themselves after the closing date of Belfast City Council's Culture and Arts Annual Funding or Multi-Annual Funding applications. Since then the Development (Arts) Sub-Committee and subsequently the Development Committee have been presented with reports to consider and award grants under the programme.

In April 2008 delegated authority was granted to the Director of Development to award grants under the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Arts and Heritage. Members would be notified of decisions on a 6 monthly or yearly basis as considered appropriate. This would enable Members to review the range and nature of grants more effectively.

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.

Criteria for funding for the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts is attached as Appendix 1.

In the financial year 2008-2009, the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts opened on Monday 1 April 2008.

Key Issues

Since April 2008 Belfast City Council has received 31 applications from 28 organisations. Of these two applications came from heritage organisations, with the rest representing a variety of art, community arts and community organisations. To date, Belfast City Council has supported 13 cultural organisations covering a diverse range of artistic and heritage disciplines, including disability arts performance, community festivals, short films dealing with Section 75 groups and specialist training, with funding of £26,000.

Belfast City Council funding represents approximately 10% of the collective budgets for Rolling Programme projects. This equates to a return for investment of 1:10. It is felt that this underlines the value for money that the Rolling Programme for Innovation in Arts and Heritage represents to the cultural infrastructure of Belfast. It is worth noting that the outputs of the Programme have had a significant increase this year. For example, 2008-09 audiences attending events have increased by 13%, the numbers of participants in funded projects by 300% and the number of professional artists employed through Rolling Programme projects by 200%. This represents a significant increase in people accessing and taking part in artistic activity from the previous year as well as a substantial rise in freelance employment levels within the sector.

A report on the impacts of the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts across Belfast 2008-09 is attached as Appendix 2.

Resource Implications

Financial

Activity within the year 2009-10 would be funded within current budgets.

Human Resources

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

Recommendations

It is recommended the Members note report on the Impact of the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts 2008-09.

Documents Attached

Appendix 1: Criteria for Funding for the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts

Appendix 2: Report on the Impacts of the Rolling Programme to Support Innovation in Culture and Arts across Belfast 2008-09.