



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Culture and Arts Flagship Fund
Date:	20 August 2013
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen, Director of Development, ext 3470
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1	Relevant Background Information
	<p><u>Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012–15</u> As Members will be aware, the Cultural Framework for Belfast 2012–15 was agreed at September Development Committee and published in October 2012. Its vision is that:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">By 2020, everyone in Belfast experiences and is inspired by our city's diverse and distinctive culture and arts. Arts and heritage are valued for enriching quality of life and creating wealth, and the city's culture and creativity is renowned throughout the world.</p> <p>The Cultural Framework complements the Investment Programme, which recognises arts and heritage as key drivers of the city's economy. It was developed in consultation with the arts and heritage sectors, and the Council's approach has been cited as best practice. Its aims are arranged under four themes – Distinctly Belfast, Inspiring communities, Attracting audiences and Strengthening the sector – and its targets include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• increasing audiences from Belfast by 10 per cent• growing visiting audiences from 15 to 25 per cent• establishing a strong, skilled, multifaceted arts and heritage infrastructure• generating £8 in income for every £1 invested in the sector <p>The total funding available under the Cultural Framework is £1.8m per year, subject to approval of draft budget estimates. This represents an increase of over 25 per cent on 2012/13 budgets. £1.57m of funding has been awarded to date through three funding streams, and funded activity will benefit a projected audience of over 4 million and over 200,000 participants. It will also help to support 7,400 full-time equivalent staff; 16,000 artist/practitioner contracts; and 93,000 volunteer hours.</p>

	<p><u>The Flagship Fund</u> The Cultural Framework also includes a commitment to introduce a “Flagship Fund”, a new revenue funding scheme for large-scale arts and heritage projects that respond to a specific need or challenge in the city.</p> <p>£150,000 has been ring-fenced towards the Flagship Fund in the 2013/14 budget, with the same level of support projected for 2014/15 and 2015/16 subject to approval of draft budget estimates. The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) has agreed to provide match funding of £150,000 per year for three years, bringing the total available budget for the Flagship Fund to £900,000.</p> <p>In June 2013, Members agreed the outline terms of reference of the Flagship Fund. Officers from the Tourism, Culture and Arts (TCA) Unit subsequently met with ACNI to further develop these terms and draft the funding criteria.</p>
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2	<p>Key Issues</p>
	<p>Members are requested to agree the following terms of reference and draft funding criteria, which is included at appendix 1.</p> <p>Delivery mechanism The Flagship Fund will be administered as a grant scheme by the Central Grants Unit (CGU), which is best practice. The TCA Unit will provide support to CGU and a TCA Officer will be assigned as project manager to each grant.</p> <p>ACNI’s funding will be drawn down from their National Lottery fund. Responsibility for National Lottery funding cannot be delegated to a partner organisation. While CGU will manage the administration including all vouching and verification of grants, ACNI will continue to hold the National Lottery budget and will make payments direct to contractors.</p> <p>ACNI want to be involved in all aspects of the project from agreement of funding criteria to assessment and selection of applications and monitoring and evaluation of projects. CGU and ACNI will draft a protocol paper to agree the process. This will include terms and conditions of the National Lottery funding that need to be passed on to contractors.</p> <p>Following discussions with ACNI, it is also recommended that the Flagship Fund is renamed the Creative and Cultural Belfast fund.</p> <p>Budget The total budget is £900,000. It has been agreed that £9,000 per year is ring fenced for administration to be paid to CGU. It is recommended that a further £1,000 per year is ring fenced for communications.</p> <p>The total budget for grants is therefore £870,000.</p> <p>June Development Committee agreed to allocate the grants in three tranches, awarding three grants of up to £97,000 per tranche, resulting in a total of nine funded projects.</p> <p>However, ACNI would prefer to have a least one larger-scale project. It is therefore recommended that the funding is administered in two tranches as follows:</p>

	<p>Tranche 1: 1 x £300,000 grants; 3 x £95,000 Tranche 2: 3 x £95,000</p> <p>Timescales Committee agreed that the first round of funding would open in September 2013 and projects would commence in January 2013. However, ACNI recommended a longer opening period to allow for more extensive project development and consultation, particularly to support the £300,000 grant.</p> <p>The £300,000 project can run for up to three years to maximise impact. The £95,000 projects can run for up to 18 months, and they can apply for tranche 2 funding to extend their projects for a further 18 months.</p> <p>ACNI's funding is not tied to specific financial years and therefore there is no issue with accruing funding. Permission to accrue the Council's funding over different financial years has been agreed in principle subject to a detailed spend profile once contractors' payment schedules have been agreed.</p> <p>It is anticipated that tranche 2 funding will open in April 2015. The fund will be reviewed and revised based on lessons learned from tranche 1 and local government reforms under the Review of Public Administration</p> <p>Communications Members stressed that the fund should benefit a range of organisations of different sizes, expertise and track record in order to develop capacity and spread the benefit of funding. The TCA Unit will work with Members, Community Services, ACNI, the Community Arts Partnership and other stakeholders to put together a communications plan to ensure that the opportunity is spread widely across the city.</p> <p>Equality ACNI's funding is provided via the National Lottery, which some faith-based groups are opposed to, and this prevents them from accessing funding. ACNI reports that after initial resistance, there are now very few objections to Lottery funding. It is proposed that such groups can be paid from the Council's budget. However, all projects will have to carry the Council, ACNI and National Lottery logos.</p> <p>Next steps The Flagship Fund will open to applications on 3 September and close on 29 November. Recommendations for funding will be presented to Committee in February 2013.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	<u>Financial</u> Funding is included in the TCA Unit's budget estimates for 2013/14.
3.2	<u>Human Resources</u> This will be covered within the work programme of the TCA Unit with additional administrative support from CGU.
3.3	<u>Assets and Other Implications</u> None

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	A full equality impact assessment of the Cultural Framework was carried out.

5	Recommendations
5.1	It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report and agree the terms of reference and draft funding criteria.

6	Decision Tracking
Carolyn Mathers, Assistant Tourism, Culture and Arts Development Manager: August 2013	

7	Key to Abbreviations
ACNI: Arts Council of Northern Ireland CGU: Central Grants Unit TCA: Tourism, Culture and Arts	

8	Documents Attached
Appendix 1 – Objectives of the Fund	

Appendix 1

Objectives of the fund

Belfast is a dynamic, diverse and unique city and having a dynamic, diverse and unique culture is vital for its success. It improves our quality of life by creating a shared, welcoming and proud city. It inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and others.

However, we know that some people and communities are less likely to take part in culture and arts than others due to lack of economic opportunity, education achievement or other barriers.

The aim of the Creative and Cultural Belfast fund is to challenge social exclusion by providing everyone in Belfast with the opportunity to experience high-quality culture, arts and heritage.

We are looking for bold, ambitious, high-quality arts and heritage projects that have not been experienced in Belfast before.

Applicants must demonstrate how projects will support the Cultural Framework's Distinctly Belfast and Inspiring communities themes and be:

- cross-community – by which we mean, brings together people from different cultural and religious backgrounds
- cross-city – by which we mean brings together people from different parts of the city
- delivered in partnership between cultural and community organisations
- benefit hard-to-reach areas and communities, by which we mean people who are less likely to participate in culture and arts due to social, economic or other barriers

Organisations in receipt of core multi-annual funding must demonstrate that the project is clearly additional to their currently funded programme.

Who can apply?

Applications are open to consortia of cultural and community organisations.

By a cultural organisation, we mean an arts- or heritage-focused organisation with a constitution or memorandum and articles of association that states that arts and heritage is a primary objective of the organisation.

By community organisation we mean a group that carries out its aims with regard to the requirements of those it is designed to serve and the community within which it operates. Beneficiaries or users will have some involvement in the formulation of policies or services. The aims of the organisation must reflect a commitment to the following:

- a. provides a voice for local concerns
- b. is inclusive and non-party political
- c. adheres to democratic principles
- d. encourages people to become active in their community
- e. is meeting local needs and providing local services
- f. is working in partnership with others

The community partners should be representative of the communities or audiences your project is targeting.

A cultural organisation must be the lead partner, by which we mean, the organisation that applies for the funding; signs the contract; is responsible for project management; holds the budget; and completes all paperwork and administration.

The partner organisations must have input in to the design and proposed delivery of the project, and you will need to provide evidence of this as part of your application form. For example: letters of support; a partnership agreement; minutes of meetings or feedback from consultation; partner roles and responsibilities detailed in the project plan.

The consortium can be made up of any number of organisations provided they are a mixture of cultural and community and all have had input in to the design and proposed delivery.

The following list is the basic eligibility criteria that consortium organisations must meet to be able to apply for Flagship funding. If your consortium does not meet the eligibility criteria, your application will not be considered for funding.

We do not fund the following.

- Organisations that are:
 - Not based in Belfast. It must have an office in and operational focus in the Belfast City Council local government district. (The Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service has maps of Belfast with a postcode search function. See www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk.)
 - not formally constituted, in other words, they do not have a constitution or memorandum and articles of association;
 - not operating on a not-for-profit basis (taken from the constitution or memorandum and articles of association) as we cannot support commercial projects or projects that could be carried out commercially. If, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, the Organisation applying for funding is a de facto commercial Organisation, whatever the legal make-up of the Organisation, then the Council shall not fund that Organisation. The decision of the Council shall be final in this regard.; or
 - able to share out profits (taken from the constitution or memorandum and articles of association).
 - that are in poor financial health or that cannot prove that it has effective financial controls.
 - that do not have a It must have a child protection policy and equal opportunities policy and do not agree to keep to relevant laws including the Race Relations (NI) Order 1997, the Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976, Fair Employment and Treatment (NI) Order 1998, and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- Local authorities
- Public sector organisations (however, public sector organisations may be project partners)
- Individuals
- Projects that:
 - are outside of and/or have no significant benefit to the Belfast City Council area;

- provide no potential benefit to the public, either in the short or long term;
- could be carried out on a commercial basis;
- have already taken place or are due to commence before 1 April 2014;
- duplicate what already exists;
- are charity or fundraising events;
- are of a party political nature;
- promote a particular religion; or
- are against Belfast City Council policy, for example, we do not allow balloon or Chinese lantern releases as they are against our environmental policy.

Applications that are not complete and/or do not provide a detailed financial budget in the tables provided in section [xxx] of the application form will also be deemed ineligible.

We will not accept applications we receive after the closing date and time.

Assessment process

There will be a three-stage assessment process.

Stage-one assessment: eligibility check

We will first make sure the application meets the eligibility criteria listed under “Who can apply?” on page [xxx] of the guidance notes.

Stage-two assessment: risk assessment

If the application is eligible, we will carry out a risk assessment to look at how realistic and achievable the project is. We will complete this assessment by scoring the application against four criteria: quality; engagement; finance; and management.

High risk means that a particular issue gives us concern that the project is not likely to be managed successfully, and it will not be recommended for funding.

Medium risk means that although a particular issue represents some risk to the successful delivery of the project, we have decided that this can be addressed. If the project is awarded funding, we may ask for additional information before we will release the first payment.

Low risk means that although we have noted a particular issue, we do not think it represents a significant risk to the successful delivery of the activity, and we will take no action.

Stage-three assessment: fit with objectives of the fund

If the application is eligible and passes the risk assessment, the application will be scored against the following criteria:

1. Fit with the objectives of the fund (60 per cent)
2. Effective project management (30 per cent)
3. Value for money (10 per cent)

After all the applications have been assessed, recommendations for funding will be presented to and ratified by the council. Applicants will be notified of the council’s decision in March 2013.