



...Test Drive the Arts...Ten Easy Pieces...Echo Echo new dance studios...Eastside Arts...14-18 NOW...School Choir of the Year...PICAS...The Temple...Making it...Mela...

Arts Council of Northern Ireland



Ambitions for the Arts

A Five-Year Strategic Plan for the Arts in Northern Ireland, 2013-18

Summary of Achievements



June 2018

...Mike Moloney Award...Belfast International Arts Festival...Theatre of Witness...Beyond Borders...Volume Control...Strand Arts Centre...ArtCart...Cultúrlann...





...Derry International Irish Music Festival....Culture Night...Bounce!...Open House Festival...Titanicdance....Belfast Photo Festival...Small Size Big Festival...Outburst...



Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture 2013

From city of conflict to city of culture

Derry-Londonderry became the first UK City of Culture in 2013, a title designed to promote regeneration and investment in the city's infrastructure with the promise of a significant return in jobs and the local economy through increased tourism and inward investment. There was no shortage of momentous arts and cultural events during the year, including: the Turner Prize, held for the first time outside of England; the Lumiere festival transforming the city's familiar landmarks; the world's biggest celebration of Irish culture with the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann; a major retrospective exhibition of Derry-born artist Willie Doherty; Hofesh Shechter's daring contemporary dance performance, 'Political Mother'; Frank Cottrell Boyce's outdoor spectacular, 'The Return of Colmcille'; and Seamus Heaney and Liam O'Flynn's 'The Poet and the Piper'.



Culture for All

The Arts Council and The Big Lottery Fund joined forces to launch a new small grants scheme, 'Culture for All' to help communities across NI get involved in the UK City of Culture celebrations. The funding enabled a wide range of small-scale but meaningful projects to take place, including: Action Mental Health New Horizons creating and exhibiting 'What's Your Story', an art piece in the form of a two-seater sofa made out of donated books; and pupils with learning difficulties from Foyle View School having the opportunity to work with Replay Theatre Company to put on the performance of a lifetime.

...Void...Nerve Visual Gallery...Studio 2 Community Arts Centre...Seamus Heaney HomePlace...Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival...Northern Ireland Opera...Blinkered...





...Brilliant Corners...Belfast Nashville...Belfast Children's Festival..Terra Nova...Nivelli's War...University of Atypical...Beyond Skin...Red...Scratch My Progress...Féile...



Arts Council and Derry City Council's Derry Legacy Fund, 2014-17

£900,000 fund to continue the momentum of the City of Culture and to draw under-represented groups and communities to the centre of the city's cultural life. Forty-seven projects created major new arts experiences and opportunities to participate in arts and culture, including the City of Derry International Choral Festival, the Verbal Arts Centre's mobile Reading Rooms, Derry International Irish Music Festival, CHORALE music project for people with disabilities, and a year of high-quality international exhibitions at Void Arts Centre.



Creative & Cultural Belfast Fund

The Arts Council and Belfast City Council jointly invested £900,000 in a three-year programme of free events to give everyone across Belfast the opportunity to get involved and be inspired by ambitious, large-scale, cross-community arts and heritage programmes. The seven projects were: Belfast Carnival Village, Belfast's first chamber opera themed around the city's heritage, Terra Nova's reinterpretation of Shakespeare, films inviting us to imagine a city without barriers, the world's first BabyDay, a celebration of the River Farset, and Nine Nights outdoor theatre spectacular.



Metropolitan Arts Centre (The MAC)

Opened in 2012 as the centrepiece of the St. Anne's Square development in the creative heart of Belfast's Cathedral Quarter. The MAC welcomed 300,000 visitors in its first year and continues to offer a world-class programme of events and exhibitions featuring international and local arts and culture. Major art exhibitions by Andy Warhol, LS Lowry, David Hockney and Gilbert & George.

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Youth Arts Strategy 2013-17

The Arts Council developed its new Youth Arts Strategy to provide strategic direction and vision for the youth arts sector for the period 2013 – 2017. The strategy promotes access to high quality, affordable arts activities for all under-24s regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or disability. It also focuses on the development of young people through a Health & Wellbeing Programme, alongside a suite of apprenticeships, internships and mentoring opportunities.



Music Strategy 2013-17

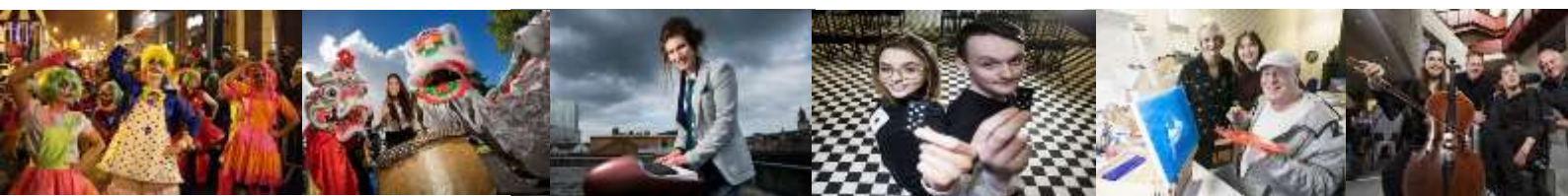
The Arts Council launched its new five-year Music Strategy, which addresses challenges such as funding restrictions, economic pressures and globalization, also highlighting the positive opportunities available to improve and build upon recent and historical success from within the sector. In response to the music strategy, a **£150,000 new music touring funding programme** was opened to provide support for a more ambitious, dynamic and cohesive approach to our music heritage and in particular, to genres such as jazz, world music, chamber music and contemporary music.



Disability Action Plan 2015-18

The Arts Council published its Disability Action Plan, providing a clear statement of commitment to promoting positive attitudes towards people with disabilities and encouraging participation in all aspects of the arts. The plan builds on measures already taken by the Arts Council to promote inclusion and access, including funding the core costs of several Arts and Disability organisations, supporting artists through the Individual Disabled/Deaf Artists grants programme and ensuring quality of access to the arts through the Arts & Disability Equality Charter.

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Traditional Music Audit

This audit was a key objective of the Arts Council's Music Strategy 2013-2018. It set out to establish the quantity and quality of all Traditional Music Services and to assess the level of accessibility to the Traditional Music Sector and instruments. The audit confirmed the important and valuable role that the non-statutory sector plays in maintaining and developing the traditional arts in Northern Ireland. Based on the audit, the Arts Council agreed a 3-year Action Plan for the development of the sector.



One City One Book

Annual community reading programme promoted reading and contemporary writing in Northern Ireland, with featured local novels: Glenn Patterson's *The Mill for Grinding Old People Young*; Lucy Caldwell's *All the Beggars Riding*; David Parks's, *The Poet's Wives*. Extensive month-long programme of readings and events in Belfast public libraries supported the initiative each year.



Belfast's first Poet Laureate

The Lord Mayor of Belfast at the time, Máirtín Ó Muilleoir, in partnership with the Arts Council, Moviehouse Cinemas and Arts and Business, established the role of Belfast Poet Laureate, to undertake a series of artistic duties and activities over the duration of the Lord Mayor's tenure of office. Sinéad Morrissey engaged the people of Belfast in poetry, through a series of events, community outreach to art groups, language organisations and minority groups. She was also commissioned to produce a series of poems about Belfast.

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Belfast's first Music Laureate

Multi-award-winning composer, conductor and producer, Brian Irvine, became Belfast's first Music Laureate, a role established by the Arts Council and Belfast City Council to engage the people of Belfast in music. In his role as Music Laureate, Brian Irvine engaged the people of Belfast in music through several large-scale, community-orientated, performance projects, working alongside Dumbworld.



Intercultural Arts Programme

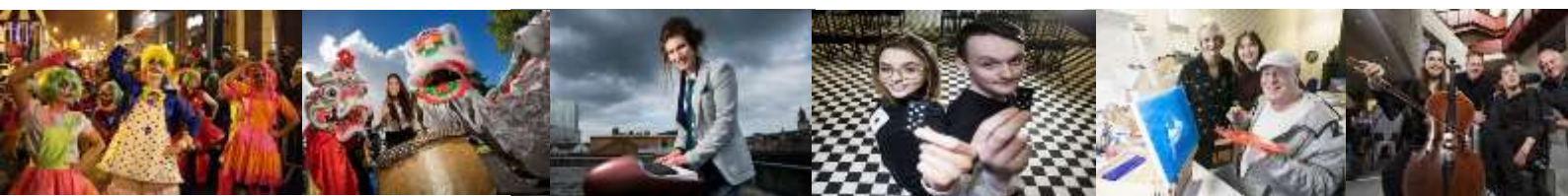
Three-year, £300,000 funding programme promoted cultural diversity through the arts and helped to deliver on Government priorities around inclusivity. The programme helped community and voluntary groups increase access to the arts and strengthened opportunities for ethnic minority artists to develop their professional practice and to engage in collaborative work within and across communities. Helping communities to find their voice through the arts and creating opportunities to engage in a positive and open way represents a significant step forward in addressing the barriers facing minority ethnic groups in Northern Ireland. The Community Arts Partnership supported the programme through its PICAS programme (Programme for Intercultural Arts Support).



Creative Industries Innovation Fund II

CIIF 2, led by DCAL and administered by the Arts Council, more than achieved its Programme for Government target to support 200 projects in Northern Ireland, with an investment of £1.95 million. The key purpose of CIIF 2 was to provide support for the innovative development of commercially viable content, products, services and experiences that were capable of competing in global markets. It built on the success of CIIF 1 (2008-11), which supported 133 creative business project and 23 sectoral development projects with a £3.7 million investment.

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Building Peace through the Arts – Re-imagining Communities Programme

Broadening the scope of the pilot programme and extending the commitment to arts-led social inclusion and community regeneration, the Arts Council and partners invested a further £3.1 million in a second phase of the programme, this time focusing on rural communities and border counties. The second phase reached its conclusion in 2015 with the completion of 20 pieces of large-scale public art and 32 pieces of high-quality public art. Between 2006 and 2015 the initiative enabled 20,000 people, nearly all new to the arts, to embrace change and through the arts realise new possibilities and potential for their communities.



Arts & Older People Programme

The Arts & Older People Programme was established to create opportunities for older people to participate in arts activities that contribute to their health and wellbeing. It has targeted poverty, isolation and loneliness, introduced opportunities for social interaction and helped to build confidence, resilience and a stronger sense of purpose in life. Following a successful pilot in 2010, the programme was relaunched in 2013 with funding from the Arts Council in partnership with The Baring Foundation and the Public Health Agency. £1.8 million has been invested, with 120+ projects involving 21,500 older citizens in arts activities, from crafts to circus skills.



ARTiculate Young People & Wellbeing Arts Programme

The Arts Council in partnership with the Public Health Agency launched a new, three year, £600,000 funding programme in 2016, designed to improve the health and wellbeing of young people through the arts. 'ARTiculate' has a target to deliver approximately 35 projects, working with community organisations to deliver custom-made arts projects to groups of young people that will encourage self-expression and the development of self-confidence and self-motivation. Projects have involved, amongst others, Youth Action Northern Ireland, the North and West Belfast Suicide Awareness and Support Group, Lighthouse, Magnet, Extern and Dove House Community Trust.

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Creative Schools Partnership

The Arts Council, Education Authority and the Urban Villages Initiative launched a new programme in 2018 to inject more creativity into the classroom, in a bid to improve educational outcomes for students. With an initial investment of £120,000, the Creative Schools Partnership is being tested as a pilot scheme, beginning by working with 10 post-primary schools and communities where there has previously been a history of deprivation and community tension. The programme is based on research that indicates that access to quality arts experiences in school can benefit all aspects of learning.



Duncairn Centre for Culture and Arts

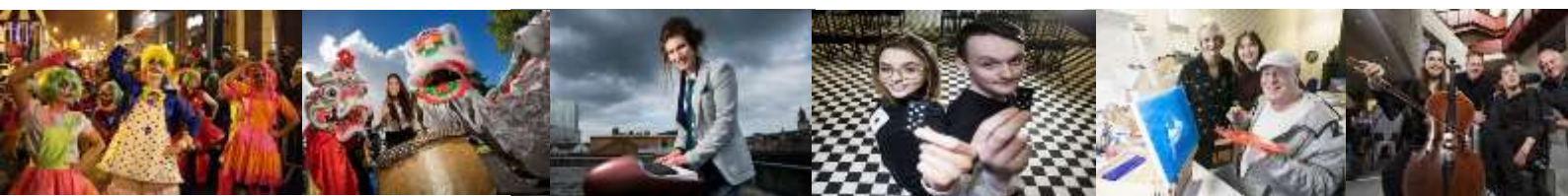
Thirteen years in the making, the new £3.5 million purpose built arts and culture centre opened in north Belfast, providing a shared space for people to come together to enjoy the range of art classes, workshops, theatre and music performances. It has welcomed more than 120,000 visitors and participants and has established itself as one of the city's major live music venues.



National Lottery turned twenty

The National Lottery reached its 20th anniversary and celebrated £1 billion of investment in communities across Northern Ireland since 1994, including 20,000 projects that have received Lottery funding through the Arts Council and the other Lottery distributors in Northern Ireland. One of the major success stories of Lottery funding has been Culture Night Belfast. Since the first CNB in 2009, when 15,000 people attended, the annual event has grown to become one of the major opportunities for people to access the arts, now offering 300+ free family events, attracting over 100,000 visitors, and contributing to an estimated associated spend in the city of £2.5 million.

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Creative Europe Desk UK-Northern Ireland

A Creative Europe Desk, based at the Arts Council, offered free advice to support the cultural and creative sectors in accessing Creative Europe's funding pot of €1.46 billion, running from 2014-2020. The funding builds on the success of the previous Culture and MEDIA programmes, which ran from 2007-2013. Each country that takes part in the programme provides an information desk.



Laureate na nÓg

Laureate na nÓg is an initiative of An Chomhairle Ealaíon with the support of Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Children's Books Ireland and Poetry Ireland. The position was established to engage young people with high-quality children's literature and to underline the importance of children's literature in our cultural and imaginative lives. The laureates, each holding the post for a period of two years, are: Siobhán Parkinson, Niamh Sharkey, Eoin Colfer, PJ Lynch and Sarah Crossan.



Troubles Art Archive

Arts Council launched an online archive of hundreds of examples of important artistic works produced during the Troubles, underlining the importance of arts and culture to our understanding of the impact of the conflict and to the development of the more inclusive and tolerant society that we recognise today. www.troublesarchive.com offers a vivid and compelling picture of artists' responses to this defining chapter in Northern Ireland's recent history.



Rosy James Memorial Trust Award

The craft bursary administered by the Arts Council on behalf of the Trust, came about thanks to the generosity of Rosemary James, a colourful patron of the arts who bequeathed £500,000 to help craft makers in Northern Ireland to pursue their careers. Worth £15,000 per year, it has been awarded to silversmith Stuart Cairns, glass artist Scott Benefield, silversmith Cara Murphy, furniture designer Brian McKee and ceramicist Anne Butler.

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Creative Employment Programme

Managed by Creative & Cultural Skills and supported by Arts Council National Lottery funding, the Northern Ireland Creative Employment Programme supported 89 new entry level jobs in the creative industries for young people aged 16–24. The programme encouraged employers to create paid jobs for young people through apprenticeships and internships and promote responsible and sustainable recruitment practices. The programme’s funding closed in June 2017, having committed £275,000 towards the wage costs of 89 jobs. Participating employers committed a further investment of £500,000 to wages.



Local Government Challenge Fund

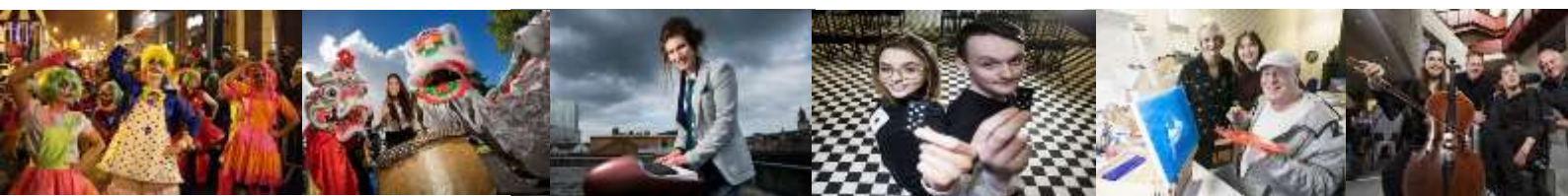
In response to the reconfiguration of the local authorities, the Arts Council introduced the Local Government Challenge Fund, offering match funding up-to £150,000 to each of the new local authorities, in an effort to anchor investment in the arts at a local level and embed arts policy in their Community Plans, so that the arts become lead delivery partners. Take-up is very positive, with Mid Ulster being the first to benefit with the opening in 2016 of the Seamus Heaney HomePlace in Bellaghy.



Honouring the legacy of Seamus Heaney

A new, two-year Children’s Writing Fellow has been established by the Arts Council and the Seamus Heaney Centre for Poetry at QUB. Children’s author Myra Zepf will encourage creativity and engagement with books with children of all ages. Also as part of the joint ten-year Heaney legacy project, the position of International Visiting Poetry Fellow has been established, with multi-award-winning American poet Mark Doty due to take up the post in Autumn 2018.

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INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



Brussels Platform

The Arts Council's partnership with the NI Executive Office in Brussels has provided opportunities for artists representing all art forms to showcase work and promote Northern Ireland's creativity at high-profile monthly events at the capital of the European Union. Participants have included Ian McElhinney, Brassneck Theatre, Hannah McPhillimy and Jan Carson, Ursula Burns, Stonewall Folk Group, Green Shoots Productions and comedian Peter E Davidson (pictured left).



Origin First Irish Festival of Theatre

The Arts Council maintained a title sponsorship for three years of this festival, considered to be a gateway to North America for contemporary Irish and Northern Irish playwrights. The Lyric Theatre's revival of their production of 'Brendan at the Chelsea', directed by and starring Adrian Dunbar, ran for five weeks off-Broadway and was hailed 'a must' by the New York Times.



Professional Arts Abroad

With funding support through the Professional Arts Abroad scheme, designed to enhance the international profile and reputation of the arts of Northern Ireland, Field Day theatre company had the opportunity to take their production of 'A Particle of Dread (Oedipus Variations)' for a six-week run at the Signature Theatre on 42nd Street, New York. Stephen Rea reprised his role as Oedipus alongside other members of the original cast in the play written specifically for them by Sam Shepard for the Derry-Londonderry UK City of Culture.

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Corners – connecting the arts across Europe

The transnational Corners Programme, funded by EU/Creative Europe and local partners, including the Arts Council, enabled artists working on the fringes of Europe to collaborate on multidisciplinary arts projects. It brought together areas of Europe that are outside of the political, cultural and economic mainstream, making connections through research and artistic works. The artists' projects give voice to more marginalised groups in society – children, homeless people, prisoners – also connecting people across cultures.



Artists' International Development Fund

Established in partnership with the British Council, the Artists' International Development Fund has facilitated artists' placements and residencies as far afield as Nashville, Arimatsu (Japan), Brazil and Moscow, and artists and arts organisations have had opportunities to bring their work to international audiences. Over the last three-year period, 49 awards have been made to artists and arts organisations across theatre, dance, literature, visual arts, music and traditional arts, with funding support of £150,000.



Centre Culturel Irlandais a Paris

In partnership with the British Council, residency, study and showcase opportunities are now available for artists via bursaries to attend the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris.

Residencies in India

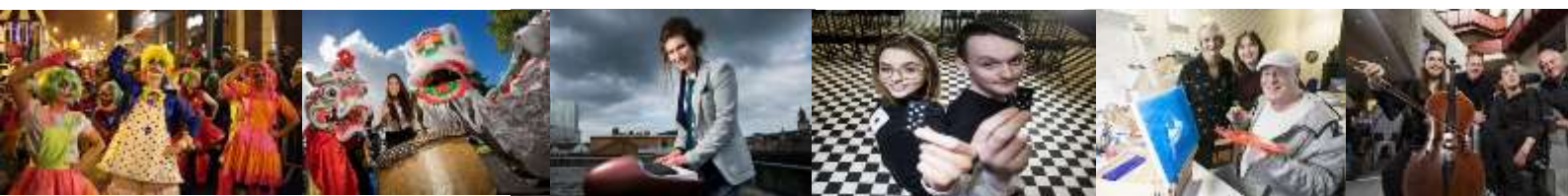
The Arts Council and British Council forged new links with cultural foundations in India, opening up residency opportunities for artists at the Shruti Foundation, Sanskriti, the Jaipur Literature Festival, the Sanskriti Kendra cultural retreat in New Delhi, the Arts Ichol artists' commune and the Vedaaranya artists' residency at the Ramgarh Shekhawati Rajasthan.



WOMEX

The Arts Council now offers bursaries for musicians to attend the WOMEX global music industry event, which attracts delegates from across the world, including concert and festival bookers.

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Touring and Dissemination of Work Scheme

This joint Arts Council and An Chomhairle Ealaíon funding scheme encourages cross-border touring across a range of art forms and arts practices.

Folk Alliance International Conference, USA

Bursaries are now available for singer-songwriters to attend the largest annual gathering of the Folk music industry and community.

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR ARTISTS



Major Individual Artist Scheme

Each year the Arts Council annually presents Major Awards of £15,000 to a number of Northern Ireland's leading artists, in acknowledgement of their contribution to the arts and to enable them to produce substantial and ambitious projects that will make a significant contribution to the development of their professional careers. The scheme has provided awards to 18 leading artists in the last five years, across the art forms.



Artist Career Enhancement Scheme (ACES)

Annual funding awards for professional artists working in music, visual arts, literature and participatory arts, addressing training and skills development in the sector. In addition to bursaries of £5,000, each artist has been partnered with a professional organisation to provide them with support to take their careers to the next level. 92 ACES artists have been supported in the last five years.

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Young Musicians' Platform Awards

The Arts Council and BBC NI's Young Musicians' Platform Award is a biennial scheme which showcases and supports the development of exceptional young Northern Ireland musicians. Financial awards of £5,000 have enabled recipients to spend a sizeable amount of time learning from a master musician, mentor, teacher or composer either in Northern Ireland or abroad. In addition to training opportunities, recipients receive professional radio broadcast engagements.



Programme for Government

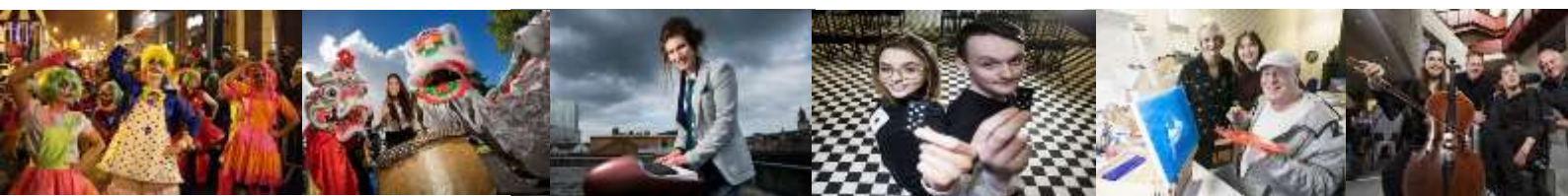
The Arts Council and many arts organisations responded to the Northern Ireland Executive's draft Programme for Government (PfG), 2016-2021. We welcomed its emphases on outcome-based accountability, placing wellbeing at its heart and embracing the principles of partnership working and co-design. However, the Arts Council and many in the sector argued robustly that the draft PfG seriously underestimated the societal contribution of the arts, failing to appreciate the significant impact on at least 10 of the total 14 strategic outcomes specified by the PfG, as opposed to the five outcomes that are acknowledged in the report.



The Big Arts Debate at Stormont

More than 23 MLAs, representing all the main political parties in Northern Ireland, joined the arts sector, business leaders and public sector representatives in January 2018 for the 'Big Arts Debate' at Stormont. It created the opportunity for the arts sector to highlight the disparity between funding levels in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK and Republic of Ireland, and to strengthen awareness amongst MLAs and decision makers of the high level of contribution that the arts make to the economy, to society and to the health and wellbeing of citizens in Northern Ireland.

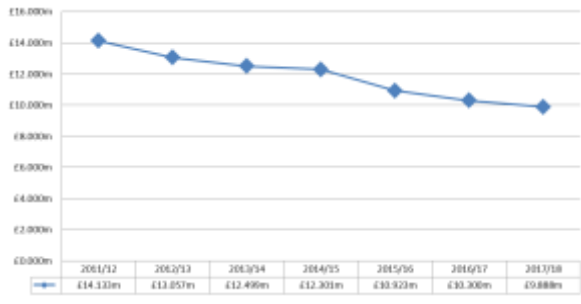
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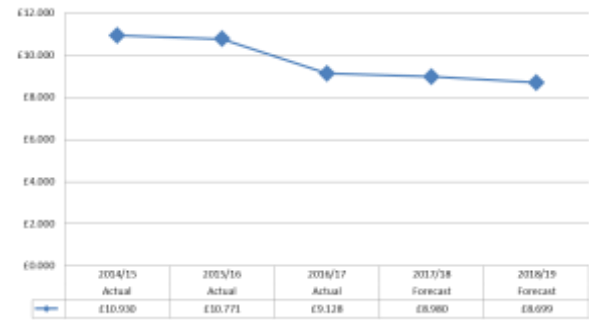


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**Exchequer Funding, 2011/12 – 2017/18
(cash only, not inflation proofed)**



**Lottery Funding, 2014/15 – 2018/19 (forecast)
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