

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

Audit of Inequalities (2017-2022)

March 2023



ACNI Audit of Inequalities 2016/17-2021/22

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1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this Audit of Inequalities report is to provide ACNI with an overview of the information collected for each Section 75 category over the last five years (2017-2022). Analysis of this data will help to identify any gaps in data collection across each of the nine categories.

A number of key data sources were used in helping to compile the evidence contained within this report, including ACNI's Annual Funding Survey (AFS), Support for Individual Artists Programme (SIAP), Artists Emergency Programme (AEP), Creative Individuals Recovery Programme (CIRP) and Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme (IERP).

The data presented throughout this report is based on approved and declined applications to each of ACNI's funding programmes for each Section 75 category.

1.1 Religious Belief

For those respondents that did indicate their religion in the AFS, 52% (762) identified as Catholic and 28% (405) as Protestant in 2021/22, representing a similar proportion to the previous year at 58% (774) and 25% (342) respectively. SIAP data for 2020/21 shows that there were 22% who identified as Catholic and 10% as Protestant.

Although the data reveals that there are fewer applications from Protestants, there is no indication of any inequality in access to the arts due to religion. It should be noted that due to the contentious nature of the subject a high proportion of respondents chose not to specify this information. Therefore it is impossible to determine a more accurate breakdown by religious belief.

ACNI encourage applications from artists across all religious beliefs and have specific targeting measures in place to ensure that there is equal opportunity for all artists to apply to the funding programme of their choice.

1.1 Political Opinion

Between 2016/17 and 2020/21, there were a total of 1,483 applications to SIAP with the largest number (342) taking place in 2019/20. Most artists applying over the five year period (1,483) stated their political opinion to be 'other' (62%) followed by Nationalist at 316 (21%). Only 83 reported that they were Unionist (6%), with 118 (8%) not answering which political opinion they held.

Similar to religious belief, this is a contentious topic and would explain why any arts specific source has a high proportion of 'other' responses. However due to historic circumstances we can correlate religious belief with political opinion and determine that there is no evidence for any inequality in arts provision by political opinion.

1.2 Ethnic Group

The percentage of minority ethnic groups living in NI has risen and accounts for 3.4% (65,604) of the usually resident population, an increase of 1.6% on the 2011 Census. However, NI has a much smaller minority ethnic community when compared to the rest of the UK and this is reflected in the proportion of respondents working in the arts sector. The size of the sample makes it difficult to determine trends, but there is no evidence of any inequality in accessing the arts, or selection for independent artist grants.

In previous years, the Intercultural Arts programme has made efforts to ensure artists from ethnic minority backgrounds were able to participate fully within the arts sector with 7% of all programme activity targeted to minority ethnic groups in 2018/19 (AFS).

More recently, there was the mentoring and residencies programme for minority ethnic artists which was piloted in 2021. This was to help create opportunities for specialised training, research, cultural exchanges, networking and learning for individual artists, creative practitioners and arts administrators from minority ethnic and migrant backgrounds. Based on the success of the pilot, this programme has now been mainstreamed into ACNI's SIAP.

In 2020/21 18.9% and 23.8% of programme activities were targeted at ethnic minority groups in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively.

1.3 Age

Young people have considerably higher attendance and participation in the arts than any other age group, and older people have lower attendance and participation. ACNI recognise both these age groups in their targeted programme recognising the formative influence of the arts on young people and the wellbeing benefits observed with older people.

The ARTiculate Programme was first launched in 2017 targeted at improving the health and wellbeing of young people. Since then has awarded 46 grants to organisations to develop projects across a range of arts activities.

Also, the AFS shows that 42.6% and almost 49.5% of programme activity was targeted at young people aged 5-24 years old in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively.

ACNI's Arts and Older People Programme has been a conduit to increase attendance of the older generation in the arts in order to combat loneliness, increase self-confidence and ensure it contributes towards their wellbeing. This is illustrated by the findings of the ARK (2019) research and the benefits the programme brought to the older generation.

The AFS reveals that 20.6% and almost 23% of programme activity was targeted at older people aged 65+ in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively.

1.4 Marital Status

The largest number of SIAP applications were made in 2019/20 at 342 with the largest proportion coming from unmarried artists at 185 (54%), followed by those who are married at 127 (37%). This has typically been the trend over the last 5 years, the most significant proportion of applicants have been unmarried, who make up on average 52% of approved applications and those who are married which represent an average of 35% of all approved applications over the trend period.

There is no evidence to suggest that there is any inequality in approved and declined applications to ACNI funding over the trend period.

1.5 Sexual Orientation

2021/22 AFS data reveals that those who identified their sexual orientation as heterosexual/straight represented 87% and LGBTQI+ 13% of total respondents.

There is no evidence to suggest that there is any inequality in accessing the arts depending on sexual orientation across all of ACNI's funding programmes. Typically the majority of artists identify as

heterosexual, however it is important to highlight that 21.3% and 22.5% of programme activity was targeted at the LGBTQI+ community in 2020/21 and 2021/22, respectively by AFP clients.

1.6 Gender

AFS data shows that the majority of artists within the sector who responded identified as female (including transgender women) at 2414 (52%) in 2020/21 and 2913 (53%) in 2021/22.

Males working in the sector represent the second largest group at 2193 (47%) in 2020/21 and 2547 (46%) in 2021/22.

The workforce in the arts is typically characterised as having a slightly greater proportion of females to males working in the sector. Interestingly, there were slightly more applications from males than females across the emergency funding programmes.

1.7 Disability

According to the AFS, there is still a significant proportion of the arts workforce by disability that is not known at 3072 (55%) in 2020/21 and 3367 (60%) in 2021/22.

Removing the prefer not to say and not known categories from the analysis, there is significantly more non-disabled artists than disabled at 2084 (92%) and 1976 (89%) in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively. However, it is encouraging that the number of disabled artists rose from 188 (8%) in 2020/21 to 251 (11%) in 2021/22.

Approved applications and declined for non-disabled and disabled artists are balanced across ACNI's funding programmes indicating that there are no evident inequalities between these groups.

ACNI mitigates against the risk of inequality through its ongoing support of the Disability Charter Mark and having a dedicated disability action plan outlining our commitment to addressing any existing inequality.

1.8 Dependents

Across all of ACNI's programmes, most approved and decline applications were from artists with no dependents.

According to the CHS, there is less information to inform the impact of dependents in the arts. In 2019/20, adults with dependants were less likely to have participated in arts activities than those with no dependants (30% and 35% respectively). In 2020/21, a similar proportion of adults with dependants participated in arts activities as those with no dependants (39% and 41% respectively).

2 Introduction

The mission of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) is to place the arts at the heart of the social, economic and creative life of everyone in Northern Ireland. We strive to ensure equal access for all Section 75 categories as defined in the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and seek to understand and tackle the barriers which may prevent people from attending or participating in the arts.

We are required under this Act to consider equality in all aspects of our work, including service design and delivery, employment and procurement. To ensure this, we submit an annual report tracking our progress against actions set out in our Equality Scheme to the Equality Commission.

ACNI recognises the diversity within our society, and how it is expressed and celebrated through arts and culture. Section 75 categories are not mutually exclusive and, as society changes, it is important that we encourage an arts sector that is supportive and inclusive.

We gather information from the arts sector that shows there is lower engagement in the arts by disabled people and those aged over 65. We have also prioritised diversity and inclusion in relation to ethnic minority and migrant artists to ensure full participation at all levels and have prioritised a programme to support those artists. As a result, our priorities are focused on improving access to the arts for these groups and continuing to promote and support engagement in the arts for all Section 75 groups.

The Arts Council also deliver upon obligations set out in the two interrelated duties under Sections 49A and 49B of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which require us to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage their participation in public life. We set out how we plan to achieve this through our Disability Action Plan (DAP)¹ which is included as part of our overall Equality Scheme².

The purpose of this Audit of Inequalities report is to provide ACNI with an overview of the information collected for each Section 75 category over the last five years (2017-2022). Analysis of this data will allow us to identify any gaps in data collection across each of the nine categories (persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally; persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without. In turn, this will inform the development of our Equality Scheme and associated Equality Action Plan and Disability Action Plan to address any inequalities identified.

It should be noted that whilst this report focusses purely on ACNI's Section 75 obligations, we also acknowledge other underrepresented groups e.g. rural/urban, gender identity and cultural identity. We are also planning to define and collect information under a 'social class' category in the future.

2.1 Arts Council's Strategic Framework for the Arts

The Arts Council's five-year strategic framework³ for developing the arts 2019-2024' aims to make art accessible to all. It presents a high level commitment to inclusivity and equality of provision. ACNI seeks to promote social inclusion in a number of ways, recognising and removing barriers to participation in the arts, for example, from older people in its 'Arts and Older People Programme'.

¹ [ACNI-Draft-Disability-Action-Plan-2019-2024.pdf \(artscouncil-ni.org\)](#)

² [ACNI-Draft-Equality-Scheme-Action-Plan-2019-2024.pdf \(artscouncil-ni.org\)](#)

³ www.artscouncil-ni.org/images/uploads/publications-documents/ACNI-Draft-5-year-Strategic-Framework-for-Developing-the-Arts-2019-2024.pdf

Equally, the role of the arts and creativity is vital to the development of children and young people, and ACNI have invested in studying the impact of the arts on the health and wellbeing of the youth. The Creative Schools Partnership Programme (CSPP) initially launched as a pilot scheme in 2017, 1,840 pupils aged 10-14 have benefitted from the Creative Schools programme, which places a focus on improving educational outcomes for children across all subjects by opening up new learning experiences, allowing individual talents to shine.

Promoting access for those who are d/deaf, neurodivergent and disabled is also a key priority area as research shows there is lower attendance at arts events. ACNI provides the ongoing support of interventions such as the disability charter mark and has its own disability action plan in place to help improve access to the arts and venues going forward.

ACNI work closely with University of Atypical (UoA), with whom there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide any additional support required by disabled artists when applying for funding to ACNI. Advice is also sought from UoA when running events to ensure that accessibility requirements are met.

2.2 Diversity and inclusion

The Arts Council has developed a deliberative forum for minority ethnic and underrepresented artists and organisations who support them to inform policy-making and programming. ACNI launched a mentoring and residencies programme for minority ethnic and migrant artists in 2021 and has mainstreamed this programme as part of the support for individual artist (SIAP) awards in 2022/23.

The Young People and Wellbeing Programme (formerly the Articulate programme, and prior to that, the Youth Arts and Wellbeing Arts programme 2014-2017) as a joint project with the Public Health Agency (PHA) to engage with those who are most disadvantaged and hard to reach. The project prioritised a mental health awareness project targeting young people at risk. ACNI launched this programme again in Autumn 2022.

ACNI recognises that there are barriers for certain groups within society to attend and participate in the arts. A Premium Payments pilot programme was launched in 2019/20, as a result of additional Exchequer funds to provide financial support to arts projects where delivery requires the needs of certain Section 75 groups to be met. A £3,000 allowance was provided for individuals to cover personal assistance and costs associated with disabilities. This programme has not run since as it has now been incorporated into a number of our funding programmes, including:

2.3 Annual Funding Programme

An amount of up to £3,000 each year is available within the grant for successful applicants who can clearly demonstrate that additional costs are associated with the delivery of their project for people with particular needs as defined under Section 75 of The Northern Ireland Act 1998. Premium payments are made retrospectively on submission of evidence of demonstrated use of the services.

2.4 Lottery Project Funding

Up to £3,000 each year is available within the grant for successful applicants who can clearly demonstrate that additional costs are associated with the delivery of their project for people with particular needs as defined under Section 75 of The Northern Ireland Act 1998.

2.5 Arts & Older People and Young People & Wellbeing Programmes

Any additional costs incurred through the involvement of Section 75 groups, e.g. carers costs, language translation, visual aids (e.g. Braille), sign language and hearing assistance will be covered up to value of £3,000.

3 Setting the Scene – NI population data

This section provides an overview of the NI population in terms of demography, religious belief, ethnicity and long-term illness and disability using information gathered through Census 2021. It also provides a snapshot of trends in participation in arts and culture using NISRA’s 2019/20 Continuous Household Survey (CHS).

3.1 Census 2021

Census 2021⁴ gives a detailed picture of Northern Ireland on census day, 21 March 2021. Table 1.1 shows that the usually resident population was approximately 1,903,100 people, comprising of 967,000 (50.8%) females and 936,200 (49.2%) males. This means that for every 100 women there were 97 men.

Table 1.1: Census 2021 Sex

	Residents (no.)	Residents (%)
Female	967,043	51
Male	936,132	49
All usual residents	1,903,175	100

On census day, there were 365,200 children (aged 0 to 14) or 19% of the population. Those aged 65 and over represented 17% (326,500) of the population. The remaining 64% of the population, or 1,211,400 people, were aged between 15 and 64 years (table 1.2).

Table 1.2: Census 2021 population by age band

Five-year age bands	Residents (no.)	Residents (%)
0-4	113,820	6.0
5-9	124,475	6.5
10-14	126,918	6.7
15-19	113,203	5.9
20-24	111,386	5.9
25-29	116,409	6.1
30-34	126,050	6.6
35-39	127,313	6.7
40-44	122,163	6.4
45-49	121,670	6.4
50-54	130,967	6.9
55-59	129,276	6.8
60-64	113,049	5.9
65-69	93,464	4.9
70-74	83,467	4.4
75-79	66,377	3.5
80-84	43,776	2.3
85-89	25,879	1.4
90+	13,512	0.7
All usual residents	1,903,174	100.0

⁴ [2021 Census | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk)

Table 1.3 shows the religious breakdown of the usually resident population in Northern Ireland. There are 805,151 who identify as Catholic, representing the majority at 42.3%. Interestingly, almost 331,000 identify as having no religion, equating to 17.4% of residents. This is higher than in the previous 2011 Census when it was only 183,160, an 80% increase.

Whilst not wholly accurate, combining Presbyterian Church in Ireland, Church of Ireland and Methodist Church in Ireland gives an indication of the proportion of the population with a Protestant belief at 580,619 (30.5%).

Other Christian (including Christian related) accounts for 6.9% of the resident population, with other religions and religion not stated representing 1.3% and 1.6% respectively.

The Census shows that while the overall population increased by five percent, the number of people aged 65 or more grew by nearly 25 per cent. The NI population estimates are continuing to show an ageing population, highlighting the importance of focussing programmes in this area such as our Arts and Older People Programme.

Table 1.3: Census 2021 Religious Belief

Religion	Residents (no.)	Residents (%)
Catholic	805,151	42.3
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	316,103	16.6
Church of Ireland	219,788	11.5
Methodist Church in Ireland	44,728	2.4
Other Christian (including Christian related)	130,377	6.9
Other religions	25,519	1.3
No religion	330,983	17.4
Religion not stated	30,529	1.6
All usual residents	1,903,178	100.0

While Northern Ireland has a significantly smaller minority ethnic community than the rest of the UK, it has increasingly become a more diverse society since the accession of the A8 countries of Central and Eastern Europe in 2004. For example, the 2011 Census revealed that minority ethnic groups made up 1.8% of the population (32,400 people). This is more than double the population in 2001 (0.8 per cent).

Table 1.4 provides Census 2021 estimates that classify usual residents in Northern Ireland by ethnic group. Note: In the following analysis the label 'minority ethnic group' is used. This relates to all persons who have an ethnicity classification other than the 'White' option.

In 2021 the number of people with a white ethnic group was 1,837,600 (96.6% of the population). Conversely, the total number of people with a minority ethnic group stood at 65,600 people (3.4% of the population and an increase of 1.6% on the 2011 Census). Within this latter classification, the largest groups were Mixed Ethnicities (14,400), Black (11,000), Indian (9,900), Chinese (9,500), and Filipino (4,500). Irish Traveller, Arab, Pakistani and Roma ethnicities also each constituted 1,500 people or more.

Table 1.4: Ethnic group of all usual residents in Northern Ireland, Census 2021

Ethnic group	All usual residents	
	No.	%
White	1,837,575	96.6
Irish traveller	2,609	0.1
Roma	1,529	0.1
Indian	9,881	0.5
Chinese	9,495	0.5
Filipino	4,451	0.2
Pakistani	1,596	0.1
Arab	1,817	0.1
Other Asian	5,244	0.3
Black African	8,069	0.4
Black other	2,963	0.2
Mixed	14,382	0.8
Other ethnicities	3,568	0.2
Total	1,903,179	100.0

Research shows that there are a number of barriers that impede take-up and participation by minority ethnic people in the arts including language, social barriers and perceived irrelevance to own culture (ACNI, 2005). These barriers for minority ethnic artists still exist today, along with the fear that they will not be afforded the same opportunities as white artists. However, there is no definitive evidence to conclude that applications for funding from minority ethnic groups are rejected based on their ethnicity.

ACNI's Minority Ethnic (ME) Deliberative Forum has provided an opportunity for artists and other stakeholders to raise any concerns facing artists with a minority ethnic background. The Forum was established to help provide insights on issues relevant for these communities whilst informing ACNI's strategy and policies within this area.

The Forum was helpful in shaping and championing a dedicated Minority Ethnic Artists' programme. The Minority Ethnic Artists Mentoring Residency Programme was launched in 2020/21 and now has been mainstreamed into one of ACNI's key annual funding programmes for individual artists (SIAP).

Table 1.5 shows that one person in four (24.3% or 463,000 people) had a limiting long-term health problem or disability, 40% of which were aged 65 or more (185,300 people). In total, 1.44 million people (75.7%) indicated they did not have a limiting long-term health problem or disability. The number of people with a limiting long-term health problem or disability increased from the 2011 to 2021 Census. The increase, from 374,600 people in 2011 to 463,000 people in 2021 (an increase of 23.6%), is likely to be driven partly by NI's ageing population.

Table 1.5: Limiting long-term health problem or disability (2011 and 2021 Census)

Limiting long-term health problem or disability	Census 2011	Percentage	Census 2021	Census 2021
Not limited	1,436,200	79.3%	1,440,200	75.7%
Limited	374,600	20.7%	463,000	24.3%
Limited a little	159,400	8.8%	245,100	12.9%
Limited a lot	215,200	11.9%	218,000	11.5%
All people	1,810,900	100.0%	1,903,200	100.0%

3.2 Continuous Household Survey (CHS)

The CHS is a Northern Ireland wide household survey administered by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). The sample for the survey consists of a systematic random sample of addresses selected from the NISRA Address Register (NAR). The NAR is developed within NISRA and is primarily based on the Land and Property Services (LPS) Pointer database.

Data from this survey is used for various purposes including monitoring DfC's Public Service Agreement targets as well as helping to inform policy making, for equality monitoring. Data is collected by conducting interviews face to face, and the interviews are spread equally over the 12 months from April to March.

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, data collection for the 2020/21 survey moved from face-to-face interviewing to telephone mode with a reduction in the number of questions. The results from the CHS 2020/21 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content. The output from the survey, in terms of the range and depth of topics covered, has been reduced from that of previous years, with the subsequent capacity for detailed analysis constrained.

3.3 Participation in arts activities

In 2020/21, two-fifths of adults (40%) participated in an arts activity at least once within the previous year⁵.

A higher proportion of females than males participated in arts activities in 2020/21 (48% and 32% respectively). In addition, relatively more adults from the Protestant community (42%) participated in an arts activity at least once within the previous year than those from the Catholic community (34%). In 2020/21, a similar proportion of adults with dependants participated in arts activities as those with no dependants (39% and 41% respectively).

There were no significant differences in engagement rates between adults living in most deprived and least deprived areas (39% and 42% respectively) nor those living in urban and rural areas (40% and 39% respectively).

Types of arts activities:

⁵ <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/engagement-culture-arts-and-sport-by-adults-northern-ireland-202021>

The four most popular arts activities that adults participated in within the previous year were: ‘Textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting’ (14%), ‘Painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture’ (12%), ‘Took photographs or made films or videos as an artistic activity’ (11%) and ‘Sang or played a musical instrument to an audience or rehearsed for performance (9%)’. When analysed by gender the four most popular were those outlined in table 1.6 below.

Table 1.6: Participation in arts activities by NI population, CHS (2020/21)

Arts activity	Participation (%)
Photography/ videos as an artistic activity	11
Wood crafts such as wood turning, carving or furniture making	8
Painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture	8
Sang or played a musical instrument	8
Textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting	25
Painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture	16
Photography/ videos as an artistic activity	11
Sang or played a musical instrument	10

Note: The results from the CHS 2020/21 are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content

4 ACNI Data Sources

A number of key data sources were used in helping to compile the evidence contained within this report. These include the following:

4.1 ACNI's Annual Funding Survey (AFS)

The Arts Council is the main support for artists and arts organisations in Northern Ireland, distributing Exchequer and National Lottery funding. The Annual Funding Programme (AFP) is the largest single investment made by ACNI each year and is awarded to key arts organisations working across a range of art forms and practices. They play a major role in helping us achieve our ambitions set out in our Five Year Plan *Inspire, Connect, Lead (2019 to 2024)*.

Organisations in receipt of funding from the Annual Funding Programme (AFP) complete an annual survey detailing information on their finances, workforce composition and activity. Data analysed from this survey provides a detailed quantitative picture of output across the publically subsidised arts sector, relating to the work of touring companies, receiving and producing companies, venues, galleries, community arts, disability arts and umbrella organisations. It also helps to identify arts activities delivered by clients that are specifically targeted at Section 75 groups⁶.

Please note, as a result of changes to the AFS survey, it is only the last two years of workforce data that is comparable because the same questions were asked and categories used. Previous years to this are not and this is why only 2020/21 and 2021/22 are presented throughout this report.

It should also be highlighted that the AFS does not collect data for three out of nine of the Section 75 categories including, political opinion, marital status and dependants. The reason for this is proportionality and to ensure that we use the data provided, rather than just collecting for the sake of it. ACNI collect core equality related data (including recent adjustments to the categories) and is up to date and in line with local classifiers.

In terms of the "unknown" categories in the data, these can be explained by the relative weakness of some of the data gathering systems set up by organisations. The proportion these have reduced between the last two surveys, indicating that data collection has improved and moving in the right direction but there is still work to be done in the area. For example, it is often one staff member from each organisation completing the survey on behalf of all staff employed. This does not necessarily mean that staff are reluctant to reveal information about themselves but rather they have not been asked.

4.2 Support for Individual Artists Programme (SIAP)

The aim of the overall Support for Individual Artists Programme (SIAP) is to support artists across all disciplines to create work and develop their practice. Broadly, awards can be for specific projects, specialised research or personal artistic development. There are 3 SIAP schemes, including:

- General Art Awards
- Artists Career Enhancement Scheme (ACES)
- Artists International Development Fund (AIDF)

Artists of all disciplines and in all types of working practice, who have made a contribution to artistic activities in Northern Ireland for a minimum of one year within the last five years, can apply to SIAP.

⁶ <http://artscouncil-ni.org/research-and-development/research-publications>

As part of their application, ACNI captures Section 75 data per individual to help us understand patterns and identify any gaps in who is accessing our funding.

The Section 75 template for gathering applicant information was updated for SIAP 2022/23 with key principles such as 'not recorded above please add here' to offer applicants the opportunity to self-describe and some new categories within fields e.g. cohabiting. This will be used for SIAP and individual grants moving forward and is being considered for our Annual Funding Programme and organisational applicants from 2023/24 (see appendix 1).

4.3 Covid Emergency Programmes

4.3.1 Artists Emergency Programme (AEP)

The Arts Council designed this programme in response to the COVID pandemic to support individual artists, creative practitioners and performers.

The two primary objectives of the programme included:

- supporting proposals for the research, design and future presentation of specific showcases, performance(s) and/or other forms of public presentation aimed at groups and communities otherwise facing barriers to the arts on a range of platforms; and
- engaging the arts sector in employment by providing individual artists, creative practitioners and performers with financial support to create work and make a vital contribution to the well-being of communities.

The programme prioritised applications that:

- Engaged with groups, participants and audiences otherwise without easy access to or participation in the arts
- Benefitted individual artists, creative practitioners and performers who were in difficulties due to work restrictions imposed by COVID-19 protocols
- Proposed new or newly-imagined projects as interventions of high artistic quality
- Planned to reach significant audiences through 'live', 'as live' or recorded digital performance, publication, broadcast, reading, recording, and/or other audience channels
- Provided an extended life and/or extended public reach and impact for the work or project created.

4.3.2 Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme (IERP)

The Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme was designed for those working in the creative economy including freelancers, musicians, actors, artists and craft workers.

The overriding objective of this programme was to retain a vital workforce within the creative sector which is at risk of being lost as a result of Covid-19. Many freelance workers and creatives lost all earned income during the pandemic and without support the sector was at risk of losing that skillset.

The programme was designed to help support individual musicians, artists, actors, craftspeople and freelancers and other creative practitioners working in the creative industries to sustain and build their creative, professional and technical skills during consequent lockdowns.

4.3.3 Creative Individuals Recovery Programme (CIRP)

CIRP was co-designed by the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland.

The overriding objective of the programme was to help individuals reconnect or maintain their trade, profession or vocation within the creative sector as it emerged from the COVID pandemic restrictions.

The scheme helped to meet one-off costs and supported actions to reverse the erosion of creative /practice and loss of skills/experience to the creative sectors.

4.4 COVID Impact

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic information collected for this audit will be different from the last because of the limitations in collecting data between the first and subsequent lockdowns in NI. However the data provided for the trend period 2016/17-2021/22 is comprehensive and reflective of the period under scrutiny.

As well as providing the stats for the last 5 years from 2017 to 2022 for each Section 75 category, particular attention has been given to the last financial year for certain categories.

NISRA suspended all face-to-face household interviews in March 2020 due to the pandemic. As a result data collection for the 2020/21 CHS survey moved from face-to-face interviewing to telephone based with a reduction in the number of questions. The results are not directly comparable to previous years due to the significant changes to the survey in terms of methodology and content. The output from the survey, in terms of the range and depth of topics covered, has been reduced from that of previous years, with the subsequent capacity for detailed analysis constrained. See [NISRA Report](#) for details.

Findings from ACNI's AFS (2020/21) highlighted the stark pressures placed on the Arts sector as a direct result of the pandemic. The enforced lockdown in March 2020 and subsequent restrictions had a huge impact on the operation and management of all core funded clients, with many organisations having to develop new business models to reflect changes to their operating environments. Employment levels and income generation experienced substantial shifts and major changes were reported on how audiences accessed the arts as more activities moved online.

The pandemic has led to significant job losses across the arts and cultural sectors, with artists leaving the sector completely as they cannot make a living. The AFS 2020/21 revealed that in comparison to its Survey results for 2019/20, the Arts workforce in NI has contracted by 25%; and freelance and contract work in the sector has similarly contracted by 27% since the pandemic began. Furthermore, permanent staff within the Arts workforce has contracted by 9% in the last year.

The contagion of Covid on the sector has continued in 2021/22 with most recent AFS showing that the arts continue to operate within a challenging environment. Workforce levels remain suppressed with a decline of 33% from pre-pandemic levels. Earned income has fallen by £6million compared to pre-pandemic levels and core costs have increased by over £5.5million. Audience levels are only 45% of what they were pre-pandemic.

5 Section 75 Categories in detail

The data presented in the following sections are based on approved and declined applications to each of ACNI’s funding programmes. It is important to note that although an application was approved, this does not necessarily mean that a grant was awarded to the individual artist or organisation. For the purposes of the audit, approved and declined applications were used to illustrate the diversity of ACNI’s funding portfolio and to identify any gaps, not showcase the number of artists who received funding.

5.1 Religious Belief

5.1.1 Annual Funding Survey (AFS)

The AFS collects religious belief information for all staff (full time and part time permanent and contract) working within organisations receiving funding ACNI’s Annual Funding Programme (AFP).

Table A.1 reveals the religious belief for all staff working in ACNI’s annual funding portfolio, which includes full-time and part-time staff working in permanent, contractual roles. It is clear that there was a high degree of reticence among staff to reveal their religion. This is reflected in the high numbers in the ‘prefer not to say’ and ‘not known’ categories for ‘All Staff’, where the percentage of those in both categories combined is 76% in 2020/21 and almost 74% in 2021/22.

For those respondents that did indicate their religion, 52% (762) identified as Catholic and 28% (405) as Protestant in 2021/22, representing a similar proportion to the previous year at 58% (774) and 25% (342) respectively. Those of ‘Other Religious Faith’ represent 2% in both years with ‘No Religious Faith’ representing 15% and 17% of respondents respectively in 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Table A.1: Religious Faith of all staff, AFS (2020-2022)

Religious faith, all staff (permanent and contract)	2020/21 (n=97)	2021/22 (n=97)	2020/21 (%)	2021/22 (%)
Catholic	774	762	58	52
Protestant and Other Christian	342	405	25	28
Other Religious Faith	29	31	2	2
No Religious Faith	201	254	15	17
Prefer not to say	208	304		
Not known	4,081	3,741		
Total	5,635	5,497	100	100

Note: The percentages presented in this table exclude ‘prefer not to say’ and ‘not known’ categories in order to provide a more accurate representation of the remaining categories

5.1.2 Support for Individual Artists Programme (SIAP)

Table A.2 provides the religious profile of approved applicants to SIAP. The information for 2021/22 is not included as there was no SIAP during this period apart from 2 awards which cannot be reported due to data protection.

A significant proportion of applicants (45%) in the last 5 years have indicated that they have no religion i.e. replied ‘None’, with 26% and 16% indicating they are from Catholic and Protestant backgrounds respectively. Also notable is the number of respondents who replied with ‘Other’ at 110 (8%) or ‘Not answered’ at 76 (5%). This level of non-response and/or indicating no religion, is not dissimilar to the Annual Funding Survey results (which collects employment information across arts organisations in NI), as outlined above.

Specifically for the last year 2020/21, data shows the following breakdown for ‘Religion’ for artists. Again, the same trend is revealed whereby a large proportion of artists i.e. 37%, stipulated ‘None’ in their response and 12% did not answer this question; as opposed to 22% who identified as Catholic and 10% as Protestant.

It is worth highlighting that in 2016/17 Catholics represented 25% of all applicants who indicated their religion and protestants represented 16%, compared to 2020/21 where Catholics represented 22% of all applicants (slight change) and protestants 10% (a 6% decline). Also, the proportion of “not answered” has increased and of those that responded, the “other” category decreased.

Table A.2: Approved SIAP applications by religious profile, 2016-2021

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total (n)	Total (%)
Catholic	77	71	65	96	65	374	26
Protestant	48	43	44	52	30	217	16
Islam	-	-	-	-	1	1	0
Buddhist	4	4	4	3	4	19	1
Jewish	2	-	1	1	21	6	0
None	143	124	128	148	108	651	45
Not answered	11	11	7	12	35	76	5
Hindu	-	-	-	1	-	1	0
Other	23	25	16	29	17	110	8
Total	308	278	265	342	290	1455	100

Table A.3 presents the religious breakdown of declined applicants to SIAP in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Previous years have been excluded from the analysis due to no declined or a very small number of declined applications.

There is a similar trend to that of approved applications with the highest proportion of declined applications coming from those indicating they have no religious belief at 146 (42%) and 231 (39%) in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. Other religious groups remained relatively small with the most significant proportion of declined applications coming from those identifying as Catholic at 98 (28%) and 143 (24%) in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. Protestants represented 57 (16%) and 50 (8%) in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. This trend is closely mirrored in other ACNI datasets.

Table A.3: Religious profile of declined SIAP applications, 2019-2021

	2019/20 (n)	2020/21 (n)	2019/20 (%)	2020/21 (%)
Catholic	98	143	28	24
Protestant	57	50	16	8
Islam	-	1	-	-
Buddhist	5	5	1	1
Jewish	-	-	-	-
None	146	231	42	39
Not answered	5	78	1	13
Hindu	-	-	-	-
Other	39	26	11	4
Prefer not to say	-	63	-	11
Total	350	597	100	100

5.1.3 Artists Emergency Programme (AEP)

In total there were 324 applications to ACNI's Artists Emergency Programme (AEP), with 239 approved and 85 declined (please see note at Table A.4).

The approved applications reveal similar findings to that of SIAP with the majority of artists identifying as having no religious belief (39% of SIAP and 46% of AEP applicants in 2020/21).

The highest percentage of artists who indicated their religious background, confirmed they had no religious belief at 46%, followed by those who identified with being Catholic at 29%. Protestant and other religious beliefs were reported at similar levels at 11% and 10% respectively.

Table A.4: Religious profile of approved and declined AEP applications, 2020/21

Religion	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Catholic	68	29	25	30
Protestant	25	11	13	16
Buddhist	3	1	0	0
Other religious belief	24	10	10	12
No religious belief	110	46	32	39
Not answered	9	4	3	4
Total	239	100	83*	100

**Note: The number of applications declined from Hindu and Jewish religious beliefs are not included as the number was too small to report*

Comparing the results of successful applications and decline application in Table A.3, religion has no bearing on whether an applicant is awarded a grant or not as the proportions within each religious category are very similar. This demonstrates that access to funding for artists is based on equality of opportunity not religious affiliation.

5.1.4 Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme (IERP)

There were 3,175 artists who applied for funding to ACNI's Individuals Emergency Resilience Programme in 2020/21 of which 2,654 were successful (84%).

Table A.5 provides the religious breakdown of the applications approved for funding by religion. Over 36% who revealed their religious background, identified as having no religious belief, accounting for the largest category followed by Catholic at just over 25%. Approximately a 22% of applicants did not answer or preferred not to answer.

Table A.5: Approved and declined IERP applications, 2020/21

	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Catholic	679	26	132	25
Protestant	251	10	62	12
Hindu	3	0	1	0
Islam/Muslim	3	0	1	0
Jewish	2	0	1	0
Other	144	5	28	5
Buddhist	18	1	7	1
None	960	36	150	29
Not answered	594	22	139	27
Total	2654	100	521	100

Only 521 applications out of 3,175 were declined in IERP, accounting for 16%. The largest category identify as having no religious belief (29%) closely followed by those who did not answer or preferred not to say. Just over a quarter of applicants were Catholic and almost 12% were Protestant (table A.5).

5.1.5 Creative Individuals Recovery Programme (CIRP)

There were 1,835 artists who applied for funding to ACNI's Creative Individuals Recovery Programme in 2021/22 of which 1,434 were successful (78%).

Table A.6 provides the religious breakdown of the applications approved for funding by religion. Of those who identified their religion, 36% identified as having no religious belief, accounting for the largest category followed by Catholic at 25%. Around a fifth of applicants did not answer or preferred not to answer.

Table A.6: Approved and declined CIRP applications, 2021/22

	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Catholic	354	25	118	29
Protestant	140	10	39	10
Hindu	3	0	0	0
Islam/Muslim	2	0	2	1
Jewish	2	0	0	0
Other	111	8	22	6
Buddhist	12	0	6	2
None	512	36	114	28
Not answered/preferred not to say	298	21	100	25
Total	1434	100	401	100

There is a similar breakdown for that of declined applicants (table A.6), although the largest category of those identifying their religious belief, identify as Catholic at 29%, closely followed by applicants who have no affiliation with religion at 28%. Almost a quarter of applicants that were declined did not answer or said they preferred not to answer.

5.2 Political Opinion

There has been an historical tendency for voting preferences in Northern Ireland to closely reflect the religious affiliations of the population. This implies that those issues and differentials identified in people of different religion may also impact on people of different political opinion.

Also, there is a lack of data on political opinions within the workforce of arts organisations, as well as and those who engage with the arts.

The information is not collected through ACNI's AFS but is collected through SIAP and emergency funding programmes. This information is presented in the following section

5.3 SIAP

The SIAP monitoring information provides an indication of trends in political opinion across applications. Table B.1 below provides the number of applications to SIAP over a five year period from 2016/17 to 2020/21 by political opinion.

Between 2016/17 and 2020/21, there were a total of 1,483 applications with the largest number (342) taking place in 2019/20. Most artists applying over the five year period (1,483) stated their political opinion to be 'other' (62%) followed by Nationalist at 316 (21%). Only 83 reported that they were Unionist (6%), with 118 (8%) not answering which political opinion they held.

Table B.1: SIAP approved applications by political opinion, 2016-2021

Year	Nationalist	Not Answered	Other	Unionist	Prefer not to say	Total	Total (%)
2016-2017	61	13	216	18	-	308	21
2017-2018	62	16	189	11	-	278	19
2018-2019	49	8	186	22	-	265	18
2019-2020	91	12	219	20	-	342	23
2020-2021	53	69	110	12	46	290	20
Total	316	118	921	83	46	1483	
Total %	21	8	62	6	3	100	100

Table B.2 below provides the percentage of approved applications to SIAP by political opinion between 2016/17 and 2020/21. The largest proportion of applicants identify with 'other' political opinion in each of the five years to date with the exception of 2020/21. This is perhaps as a result of the addition of a new category of 'prefer not to say'.

Looking at 2020/21 specifically, the data shows that a small majority of artists at 110 (38%) answered 'other' to which political party they supported; and 69 (24%) answered did not answer. Only 53 (18%) and 12 (4%) of artists supported a Nationalist and Unionist parties respectively.

Similar to the trend in religious background, in 2016/17 Unionists represented 6% of all approved applications which has fallen by 2% to 4% in 2020/21; and Nationalists at 20% in 2016/17 to 18% in 2020/21, representing a small change.

Table B.2: SIAP approved applications by political opinion, 2016-2021

Year	Nationalist (%)	Not Answered (%)	Other (%)	Unionist (%)	Prefer not to say (%)	Total (%)
2016-2017	20	4	70	6	-	100
2017-2018	22	6	68	4	-	100
2018-2019	18	3	70	8	-	100
2019-2020	27	4	64	6	-	100
2020-2021	18	24	38	4	16	100

Table B.3 presents the breakdown of declined applications to SIAP by political opinion in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Previous years have been excluded from the analysis due to no declined or a very small number of declined applications.

Those selecting 'other' political opinion represent the largest proportion of declined applicants at 237 (68%) and 192 (32%) in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. The next largest group were those with Nationalist political affiliations at 85 (24%) and 120 (20%) in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. The proportion identifying as having a Unionist background has remained fairly similar in 2019/20 and 2021/22 at 6% and 4% respectively.

Those choosing not to answer rose significantly from 2019/20 at 2% to 24% in 2020/21. This is a similar proportion to those who preferred not to say at 19% in 2020/21.

Table B.3: SIAP declined applications by political opinion, 2016-2021

	2019/20 (n)	2020/21 (n)	2019/20 (%)	2020/21 (%)
Nationalist	85	120	24	20
Not answered	6	146	2	24
Other	237	192	68	32
Unionist	22	23	6	4
Prefer not to say	-	116	-	19
Total	350	597	100	100

To date, there has been no indication that political grouping causes any adverse impact in accessing arts' funding in Northern Ireland. There is no evidence from any monitoring returns of a discernible impact with regards to political opinion.

5.3.1 AEP

The majority of artists applying to AEP chose 'other' as their political preference at 149, representing just over 62% of approved applications. The next largest group chose 'Nationalist Generally' at 67 applications (28%), followed by those choosing not to answer at 12 and 'Unionist Generally' at 11 (table B.4).

Table B.4: Approved and declined AEP applications by political opinion, 2020/21

Political Opinion	Approved applications	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications	Declined applications (%)
Nationalist Generally	67	28	27	32
Unionist Generally	11	5	6	7
Other	149	62	45	53
Not answered	12	5	7	8
Total	239	100	85	100

Similarly, declined applications followed the same trend with the largest group choosing 'other' as their political preference at 45, representing almost 53% of total declined applications. Almost 32% indicated that they had a 'Nationalist Generally' political opinion, with remaining applications choosing not to answer (8%) or 'Unionist Generally' at just over 7% (table B.4).

5.3.2 IERP

There were 2,654 approved applications to IERP in 2020/21, with the majority of applicants stating their political preference as 'other' at 933, representing just over 35% of approved applications. This is closely followed by those who 'prefer not to say' at 822 (31%) and Nationalist generally at 548 (21%). The smallest groups of approved applications included those identifying as Unionist generally at 100 (4%) or applicants who selected 'not answered' at 251 (10%).

Declined applications to the programme broadly follow a similar trend to approved, although the largest category of applications preferred not to say their political opinion at 161 (31%). This was closely followed by applicants stating 'other' at 141 (27%) and 'not answered' at 118 (23%). Nationalist and Unionist generally represented the smallest proportions of declined applications at 81 (16%) and 20 (3.8%) respectively (table B.5).

Table B.5: Approved and declined IERP applications by political opinion, 2020/21

POLITICAL OPINION	Approved applications	% approved	Declined applications	% declined
Nationalist generally	548	21	81	16
Unionist generally	100	4	20	4
Other	933	35	141	27
Not answered	251	10	118	23
Prefer not to say	822	31	161	31
Total	2654	100	521	100

5.3.3 CIRP

There were 1,434 approved applications to CIRP in 2020/21, of those who indicated their political preference, the majority stated 'other' at 501, representing almost 35% of approved applications. The next largest group chose 'prefer not to say' with regards to their political opinion at 489 (34%), followed by 'Nationalist Generally' at 330 (23%). The smallest groups were from those who did not answer at 73 (5%) and Unionist Generally at 41 (3%). Declined applications to the programme followed a similar trend with the exception that the largest proportion chose 'prefer not to say' as their political

preference at 158 (39%), followed by ‘other’ at 105, representing just over 26% of declined applications (Table B.6).

Table B.6: Approved and declined CIRP applications by political opinion, 2020/21

Political Opinion	Approved applications	% approved	Declined applications	% declined
Nationalist generally	330	23	77	19
Unionist generally	41	2	16	4
Other	501	34	105	26
Not answered	73	5	45	11
Prefer not to say	489	34	158	39
Total	1434	100	401	100

5.4 Racial Group

5.4.1 AFS

Table C.1 presents the ethnic background of full-time and part-time, permanent and contract staff working in the arts sector. There is a significant proportion of the information returned that are ‘unspecified or uncollected’ or ‘not known’ therefore the percentages in Table C.1 exclude these categories to provide a more accurate breakdown of ethnicity.

The majority of staff working in ACNI’s annually funded organisations are white. Out of those who indicated ethnicity, 95% are white at 3,355 in 2020/21 and 3,553 in 2021/22.

The minority ethnic community in NI is proportionally much smaller than the rest of the UK. There were a total of 169 members of staff from a minority ethnic background in 2021/22. Excluding those where the information was unspecified, uncollected or not known, this accounts for 5% of all staff. This is a similar proportion to that of the most recent NI Census in 2021.

The ‘not known’ category was introduced in 2021/22 as a new response option. As a result, responses were split in 2021/22 between the two options of not known and unspecified or uncollected. In this year, there were 2,041 members of staff who were unspecified, uncollected or not known. This is a similar number to that of the year previous at 2,103. This reflects either a reluctance among the workforce in the arts to reveal their ethnicity or it is as a result of how the AFS is completed by each organisation (explained in section ACNI Data Sources, under Annual Funding Survey).

The most significant change between 2020/21 and 2021/22 was with staff from an ‘other Asian’ background, increasing by 160% from 5 to 13. There was a fall of almost 39% in staff from ‘other ethnic groups’.

Only one member of staff within the annual portfolio of arts organisations indicated they were from an Irish Traveller background in 2021/22.

Table C.1 Ethnicity of All Staff (AFS), 2020-2022

Ethnicity, all staff (permanent and contract)	2020/21 (n=97)	2021/22 (n=97)	2020/21 (%)	2021/22 (%)
White	3,355	3,553	95	95
Irish Traveller	0	1	0	0
Chinese	9	21	0	1
Indian	23	21	1	1
Pakistani	3	5	0	0
Bangladeshi	1	2	0	0
Other Asian	5	13	0	0
Black Caribbean	10	11	0	0
Black African	19	13	1	0
Black Other	7	11	0	0
Mixed Ethnic Group	38	44	1	1
Other Ethnic Group	44	27	1	1
Unspecified or Uncollected	2,103	855	-	-
Not known	0	1,186	-	-
Total	5,617	5,763	100	100

Note: The percentages presented in this table exclude 'prefer not to say' and 'not known' categories in order to provide a more accurate representation of the remaining categories

5.4.2 SIAP

There has been representation in approved SIAP applications across all ethnicities over 5 years, albeit very small in some cases. The majority of applications to the programme have been from a white ethnic background between 2016/17 to 2020/21, accounting for around 90% on average (table C.2).

Table C.2: Number of approved SIAP applications by ethnic group, 2016-2021

Ethnic Group	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total	Total (%)
White	285	242	241	310	256	1334	90
Black African		1				1	0
Black Caribbean		1		1		2	0
Chinese			1	2		3	0
Indian			1			1	0
Mixed ethnic	3	5	4	6	7	25	2
Other Asian	1		2		1	4	0
Other		6	4	2	3	15	1
Not answered	19	23	12	21	19	94	6
Prefer not to say					4	4	0
Total	308	278	265	342	290	1482	100

In 2020/21, 1% of approved applications had a mixed ethnic or other background; and 7% of applicants did not reveal their ethnicity and 1% preferred not to say (table C.3).

Table C.3: Approved SIAP applications by ethnic group, 2016-2021

Ethnic Group	2016/17 (%)	2017/18 (%)	2018/19 (%)	2019/20 (%)	2020/21 (%)
White	93	87	91	91	88
Black African					
Black Caribbean					1
Chinese					
Indian					
Mixed ethnic	1	2	2	2	1
Other Asian			1		
Other		2	2	1	1
Not answered	6	8	5	6	7
Prefer not to say				1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table C.4 presents the declined SIAP applications by ethnic background which share a similar trend to approved applications with the majority of artists from a white ethnic background at 318 (91%) and 527 (88%) in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. Also with the proportion of those who chose not to answer at 17 (5%) and 39 (7%) and those from a mixed ethnic background at 9 (3%) and 5 (1%) in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively.

Previous years were not presented as the numbers were too small for reporting purposes.

Table C.4: Declined SIAP applications by ethnic background, 2019-2021

	2019/20 (n)	2020/21 (n)	2019/20 (%)	2020/21 (%)
White	318	527	91	88
Black African		5		1
Black Caribbean	1		0	
Chinese				
Indian				
Mixed ethnic	9	5	3	1
Other Asian	2	1	0	0
Other	3	4	1	1
Not answered	17	39	5	7
Prefer not to say		16		3
Total	350	597	100	100

5.4.3 AEP

Similarly, analysis of those approved grants through AEP in 2020/21, showed a high percentage of applications from white artists at 91% with almost 5% choosing not to answer. Applications overall from all other ethnic groups were very low (table C.5).

Table C.5: Approved and declined AEP applications by ethnic group, 2020/21

Ethnic Group	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
White	218	91	75	88
Black African			1	1
Mixed Ethnic Group	4	2	1	1
Chinese				
Indian	1	0		
Other	5	2	2	2
Black Caribbean			1	1
Other Asian Background				
Other Black Background				
Irish Traveller				
Not answered	11	5	5	6
Total	239	100	85	100

There were 85 applications to AEP that were declined, 75 of which were from white artists, representing just over 88% of applications declined and 5 did not answer, accounting for almost 6 percent of applications declined.

5.4.4 IERP

Approved and declined applications for IERP follow a similar trend to that of the other programmes and representative of the resident population in Northern Ireland.

The most significant proportion of applications, both awarded and declined were from white artists at 2376 (89.5%) and 420 (80.6%) respectively. Just over 7% (188) of awarded applications were not answered or preferred not to say and 14.6% (76) for declined applications.

Approved applications from mixed ethnic artists at 44, represent 2% of total awards made. Other ethnic groups that were awarded funds through the programme were very small, a similar trend for those applications that were declined (table C.6)

Table C.6: Approved and declined IERP applications by ethnic group, 2021/22

Ethnic Group	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
White	2376	90	420	81
Black African	14	1	8	2
Black Caribbean	6	0	2	0
Indian	2	0	1	0
Irish Traveller	3	0		
Mixed Ethnic	44	2	7	1
Other Asian (incl. Chinese)	7	0	2	0
Other Black	4	0		
Other	10	0	5	1
Pakistani				
Not answered/prefer not to say	188	7	76	15
Total	2654	100	521	100

5.4.5 CIRP

Table C.7 shows that there were 1434 approved applications to CIRP, of which 1310 were from white artists (91%), 60 did not answer or preferred not to say (4%), 33 indicated they were from a mixed ethnic background (2%) and 13 selected other (1%). These were the only groups in double-digit figures, the rest of the awards across ethnic groups were very small, which follows the overall trend in ethnic minority groups in Northern Ireland.

Table C.7: Approved and declined CIRP applications by ethnic group, 2021/22

Ethnic Group	Approved (n)	Approved (%)	Declined (n)	Declined (%)
White	1310	91	348	87
Black African	4	0	4	1
Black Caribbean	3	0	3	1
Indian	1	0	1	0
Irish Traveller	2	0		
Mixed Ethnic	33	2	9	2
Other Asian (incl. Chinese)	5	0	2	0
Other Black	2	0		
Other	13	1	1	0
Pakistani	1	0		
Not answered or prefer not to say	60	4	33	8
Total	1434	100	401	100

It is a similar picture for those applications that were declined to CIRP. The majority of artists were white at 348, representing 87% of declined applications. There were 33 who did not answer or

preferred not to say (8%) and 9 who selected mixed ethnic group, accounting for 2% of declined applications.

6 Age

The Arts and Older People's Programme (AOPP) is recognised within the Equality Scheme and the 5 year strategic plan [ACNI's Equality Scheme Action Plan 2019-24]. This programme is one of the Arts Council's core programme areas and has engaged with over 29,000 participants through over 170 artist led projects since inception as a pilot in 2009. In 2013, based on the findings of the pilot programme a new three programme was launched. It is supported financially by the ACNI and the Public Health Agency (PHA) and has received over £2 million in lottery support since inception.

The programme aims to increase opportunities for older people to engage in the arts and by so doing, address some of the core issues facing people in Northern Ireland today: mental health, poverty, isolation and loneliness. Recently, the programme has focused support on activity within care homes settings, carers and people living with dementia.

From 2016 to date funding has been secured on an annual, rolling basis, with support from ACNI lottery (£100k per year), PHA (circa £75k - £80k per year) and Baring Foundation (£50k per year). Responding to evaluation evidence from previous round, greater focus during this phase was placed on engaging older men and carers of older people)

In 2019, whilst the emphasis on the health risks associated with old age relating to poverty, isolation and loneliness remained the same, the target group shifted towards older people with dementia. In this year he ACNI commissioned ARK, Northern Ireland's social policy hub, to produce an evaluation report on qualitative evidence gathered since 2013 through frameworks.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, funded organisations have had to radically adapt their engagement strategies to guarantee the safety of participants, care workers and artists whilst still ensuring the delivery of engaging and stimulating range of activities. Although most restrictions have been lifted due to the pandemic for the general public, specific protocols and restrictions remain in care homes to safeguard the vulnerable and elderly.

6.1 AFS

It is important to note that approximately 30% of staff members' ages are not known and have been excluded from the percentage analysis in Table D.1.

The AFS shows that the majority of staff working in the arts sector (who provided details of their age) in 2020/21 and 2021/22 were aged 35-44 at 1,066 and 1,063 respectively, comprising of approximately 28% and 26% respectively of the total workforce (table D.1). Those aged 25-34 are the next largest category accounting for approximately 24% in 2020/21 and 25% in 2021/22 of all staff.

Table D.1: All staff age profile (AFS) 2020-2022

Age, all staff (permanent and contract)	2020/21 (n=97)	2021/22 (n=97)	2020/21 (%)	2021/22 (%)
0-15	9	8	0	0
16-24	316	430	8	11
25-34	933	1,022	24	25
35-44	1,066	1,063	28	26
45-54	801	774	21	19
55-64	550	552	14	14
65+	187	212	5	5
Prefer Not To Say	34	38	-	-
Not known	1,722	1,637	-	-
Total	5,618	5,736	100	100

Note: The percentages presented in this table exclude 'prefer not to say' and 'not known' categories in order to provide a more accurate representation of the remaining categories

Anecdotal evidence has indicated that there have been decreases in the amount of people entering the arts workforce in 2020/21, in comparison with previous years which is predominantly as a result of the pandemic.

6.2 SIAP

The applications across all age categories in the last 5 years has been steady. The largest proportion of applications have been from those within the 26-49 age category, representing approximately 62% on average.

Applications from those aged 50-65 years in 2020/21 returned to 2016/17 levels after peaking in 2019/20 at 68 to 49 in 2020/21. This decrease in applications is most likely as a result of the pandemic. Depending on the type of artistic practice, lockdowns and self-isolation may not have permitted any potential projects to go ahead.

In comparison to the previous Audit produced in 2017 (where there was a steady decline), there has been a steady increase in artists in the '16-24' age group that have applied to SIAP from 7% of awards in 2016/17 to 13% of awards in 2020/21. This indicates that young people have been choosing the arts as a career choice in the last 5 years. Notably, the highest percentage of applicants have applied in 2020/21, in the middle of a pandemic. This could partly be due to previous applicants gaining more experience within their respective field in the arts and it is of a standard that is eligible for arts funding. They may also have received more support in applying for funding of this nature.

Older artists account for a low proportion of the total applicants, with the 5 year trend average of 3%. Given that this is over the age of retirement it may be expected that there would be a lower amount of activity on a professional basis. However the latter does not necessarily reflect their experience and quality of their artwork.

Table D.2: Approved SIAP applications by age band, 2016-2021

Year	<16	16 -< 25	26 -< 49	50 -< 65	65+	Not Answered /prefer not to say	Total
2016/17		22	213	48	11	14	308
2017/18		23	170	60	9	16	278
2018/19		26	169	54	9	7	265
2019/20		33	222	68	7	12	342
2020/21	2	37	181	49	10	11	290
Total	2	141	955	279	46	60	1483
Total %	0	10	64	19	3	4	100

Declined applications follow a similar pattern to approved although there were either none or very few that were declined funding between 2016/17 and 2018/19 (see table D.3).

Table D.3: Declined SIAP applications by age band, 2016-2021

Year	<16	16 -< 25	26 -< 49	50 -< 65	65+	Not Answered /prefer not to say	Total
2016/17			1				
2017/18							
2018/19			1				
2019/20		57	206	64	18	5	350
2020/21	1	64	381	102	13	36	597
Total	1	121	589	166	31	41	947
Total %	0	13	62	18	3	4	100

6.3 AEP

Those awarded the Artists Emergency Programme grants in 2020/21 in the 26-<49 age group, represent the most significant proportion of applicants at 168 (70%). Applicants aged 50-<65 and 16-<25 represent smaller proportions at 41 (17%) and 13 (5%) respectively. Similarly, those aged 65+ made up only 2.5% of applicants awarded grants. Declined applications to AEP have followed a similar trend to those awarded (table D.4).

Table D.4: Awarded and declined applications by age band, 2020/21

Age Group	Awarded (no.)	Awarded (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
<16	0	0	0	0
16-<25	13	5	10	12
26-<49	168	70	53	62
50-<65	41	17	15	18
65+	6	3	1	1
Prefer not to say/not answered	11	5	6	7
Total	239	100	85	100

6.4 IERP

The largest proportion of approved applications to IERP were for those aged 26-<49 at 1834 (69%) with the second largest aged 50-<65 at 410 (15%), followed by those aged 16-<25 at 282 (11%).

Approved applications from those aged 65+ and <16 represented the smallest proportions at 46 (2%) and 5 (0%). There were 77 that did not answer or preferred not to say.

Declined applications by age group followed the same pattern as approved applications (table D.5 below).

Table D.5: Approved and declined applications to IERP by age band, 2020/21

Age band	Awarded (no.)	Awarded (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
<16	5	0	3	1
16 -< 25	282	11	87	17
26 -< 49	1834	69	316	61
50 -< 65	410	15	79	15
65+	46	2	4	1
Not Answered/prefer not to say	77	3	32	6
Total	2654	100	521	100

6.5 CIRP

Those aged 16-<25 represent the most significant proportion of applicants at 970 (68%). Applicants aged 50-<65 were the next age bracket with a significant number of awards at 236 (16%). The 16-<25 age bracket represented the third largest cohort of approved applications at 160 (11%) with smaller

proportions aged 65+ at 30 (2%) and 3 (0%) respectively. A total of 35 (2%) approved applications did not answer their age or preferred not to say.

Declined applications to CIRP have followed a similar trend to those awarded (table D.6).

Table D.6: Approved and declined applications to CIRP by age band, 2021/22

Age band	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
<16	3	0	1	0
16 -< 25	160	11	80	20
26 -< 49	970	68	252	63
50 -< 65	236	16	47	12
65+g	30	2	7	2
Not Answered/prefer not to say	35	2	14	3
Total	1434	100	401	100

7 Marital Status

7.1 AFS

The AFS does not currently collect information from the arts sector on marital status.

7.2 SIAP

The largest number of applications were made in 2019/20 at 342 with the largest proportion coming from unmarried artists at 185 (54%), followed by those who are married at 127 (37%). This has typically been the trend over the last 5 years, the most significant proportion of applicants have been unmarried, who make up on average 52% of approved applications and those who are married which represent an average of 35% of all approved applications over the trend period.

Remaining approved applications came from artists who did not answer or preferred not to say their marital status, divorced and widowed. These groups represented the smallest proportion of total approved applications, accounting for 6%, 3% and 1% on average respectively.

Interestingly, there was a significant rise in approved applications from those who did not answer or preferred not to say in 2020/21 at 40, representing 14% of total approved applications (table E.1 below).

Table E.1: Approved SIAP applications by marital status, 2016-2021

	Divorced	Married	Not Answered/prefer not to say	Separated	Unmarried	Widowed	Total
2016/17	9	105	13	12	166	3	308
2017/18	8	99	12	12	144	3	278
2018/19	9	95	10	6	141	4	265
2019/20	10	127	13	6	185	1	342
2020/21	9	94	40	11	134	2	290
Total	45	520	88	47	770	13	1483
Total %	3	35	6	3	52	1	100

There were only a very small number of declined applications in 2016/17 to 2018/19 to SIAP. Similarly to approved applications, the majority of those declined came from the unmarried and married categories in 2019/20 and 2020/21 (table E.2 below).

Table E.2: Declined SIAP applications by marital status, 2016-2021

	Divorced	Married	Not Answered/prefer not to say	Separated	Unmarried	Widowed	Total
2016/17					1		
2017/18							
2018/19					1		
2019/20	19	117	6	12	192	4	350
2020/21	17	194	94	11	277	4	597
Total	36	311	100	23	471	8	947
Total %	4	33	11	2	50	1	100

7.3 AEP

The analysis of those awarded an emergency grant for individuals in 2020/21, revealed a similar outcome for marital status among the age categories (table E.3 below). Almost half at 113 (47%) of applicants revealed they were unmarried and 94 (39%) revealed they were married. Only 12 (5%) of applicants did not answer or preferred not to state their marital status.

Declined applications by marital status followed the same trend as those approved with exception of slightly more married applications being declined compared to unmarried (table E.3 below).

Table E.3: Approved and declined AEP applications by marital status, 2020/21

Marital Status	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
Unmarried	113	47	36	42
Married	94	39	40	47
Separated	7	3	1	1
Divorced	12	5	3	6
Widowed	1	0		
Not answered/prefer not to say	12	5	5	6
Total	239	100	85	100

7.4 IERP

Approved applications were highest for those unmarried at 1318 (50%) and married artists at 842 (32%). There were 323 (12%) that did not answer or preferred not to answer about their marital status. Applications from artists who were divorced at 96 and separated at 62, represent 4% and 2% of total approved applications respectively (table E.4).

Unmarried and married were the largest categories within the declined applications portfolio at 244 (47%) and 131 (25%) respectively. These were closely followed by those who chose not to answer or preferred not to answer at 108 (21%). The smallest number of applications for both approved and declined are artists that are widowed at 13 and 3 respectively.

Table E.4: Approved and declined IERP applications by marital status, 2020/21

Marital Status	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
Married	842	32	131	25
Divorced	96	4	15	3
Separated	62	2	20	4
Unmarried	1318	50	244	47
Widowed	13	1	3	1
Not answered/prefer not to say	323	9	108	21
Total	2654	100	521	100

7.5 CIRP

The largest proportion of applications come from unmarried and married artists. The number of unmarried artists at 743 represent 52% of total approved applications and 225 (56%) of declined applications. Married artists at 469, represent 33% of total approved applications and 99 (25%) of total declined applications.

There were 122 and 58 of artists who did not answer or preferred not to say their marital status within the approved and declined application portfolios respectively.

Applications for those divorced (at 47 and 9) and separated (45 and 8) for both approved and declined categories are at very similar levels (table E.5 below).

Table E.5: Approved and declined CIRP applications by marital status, 2021/22

Marital Status	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
Married	469	33	99	25
Divorced	47	3	9	2
Separated	45	3	8	2
Unmarried	743	52	225	56
Widowed	8	1	2	0
Not answered/prefer not to say	122	9	58	14
Total	1434	100	401	100

8 Sexual Orientation

8.1 AFS

Until recently the AFS **did not collect information on the sexual orientation** of staff members, so 2020/21 is the first year this data has been collected for this Section 75 category.

According to 2020/21 AFS data, almost 25% (1386) of the workforce within arts organisations described their sexual orientation as heterosexual or straight and 3.6% (201) as LGBTQI+. However, it should be noted that the total by which this is a proportion of, includes ‘unknown’ and ‘prefer not to say’. Calculating this proportion of the workforce with the exclusion of ‘not known’ and ‘prefer not to say’, heterosexual/straight artists would represent 87% of the artists employed by ACNI annually funded organisations and 12% of LGBTQI+ artists (table F.1).

Similar to the year previous, 2021/22 AFS data reveals that 1827 (32%) of the workforce identified as heterosexual/straight and 280 (5%) as LGBTQI+. Excluding the ‘prefer not to say’ or ‘not known’ categories from the analysis, heterosexual/straight represents 87% and LGBTQI+ 13% (table F.1).

ACNI’s annually funded organisations are involved or in collaboration with LGBTQI+ organisations, representing 14% of all arts activities, suggesting a high degree of inclusivity and involvement within the arts.

Table F.1: Arts sector staff by sexual orientation (AFS), 2020-2022

Sexual orientation all staff (permanent and contract)	2020/21 (n=97)	2021/22 (n=97)	2020/21 (%)	2021/22 (%)
Bisexual	28	32	2	2
Gay Man	64	98	4	5
Gay Woman / Lesbian	55	63	3	3
Heterosexual / Straight	1,386	1,827	87	87
Queer	51	83	3	4
Pansexual	3	4	0	0
Prefer not to say*	257	211		
Not known**	3,779	3,445		
Total	5,623	5,763	100	100

Categories are consistent with practice guidance used by the Northern Ireland charity Outburst Queer Arts Festival.

*Respondent has chosen to not disclose their sexual orientation

**Respondent has not had the opportunity to disclose their sexual orientation

Note: The percentages presented in this table exclude ‘prefer not to say’ and ‘not known’ categories in order to provide a more accurate representation of the remaining categories

8.2 SIAP

Applications to SIAP show that the majority of approved SIAP applications were from those who identified as heterosexual at 81%. The LGBTQI+ represented 11% and 7% were from those who did not answer or preferred not to say.

There was a slight decrease in applicants to the 2020/21 programme across the categories, in comparison with previous years. It is the first year that new sexual orientation categories were collected to include other, pansexual, prefer not to say, prefer not to self-describe and queer.

SIAP data for 2020/21 revealed that a majority of approved applicants identified as heterosexual at 204 (70%), whilst 35 (12%) preferred not to reveal their sexual orientation by not answering the question. The LGBTQI+ community represented 38 (13%) of total approved applications (table F.2).

Table F.2: SIAP approved applications by sexual orientation

Year	Bisexual	Gay	Heterosexual	Lesbian	Not Answered	Other	Pansexual	Prefer not to say	Prefer to self-describe	Queer	Total
2016/17	10	12	268	3	15						308
2017/18	15	7	239	3	14						278
2018/19	18	14	217	5	11						265
2019/20	30	16	273	3	20						342
2020/21	17	9	204	4	35	1	4	12	1	3	290
Total	90	58	1201	18	95	1	4	12	1	3	1483
Total %	6	4	81	1	6	0	0	1	0	0	100

Declined applications followed the same trend as approved with the majority identifying as heterosexual/straight at 718 (76%) and LGBTQI+ at 123 (13%). Those who did not answer or preferred not to say represented 11% (table F.3 below).

Table F.3: SIAP declined applications by sexual orientation

Year	Bisexual	Gay	Heterosexual	Lesbian	Not Answered	Other	Pansexual	Prefer not to say	Prefer to self describe	Queer	Total
2016/17			1								
2017/18											
2018/19			1								
2019/20	22	16	295	6	11						350
2020/21	22	25	421	11	60	1	5	37	7	8	597
Total	44	41	718	17	71	1	5	37	7	8	947
Total %	5	4	76	2	7	0	1	4	1	1	100

8.2.1 AEP

For those applicants awarded the artist emergency grant in 2020/21 (see table below), 193 (81%) of applicants identified as heterosexual. A low percentage of applicants at 15 (6%) preferred not to reveal their sexual orientation or did not answer. In other categories, 11 (5%) identified as gay, and 17 (7%) as bisexual.

Similar proportions are represented across the sexual orientation categories for declined applications (table F.4 below).

Table F.4: Approved and declined AEP applications by sexual orientation, 2020/21

Sexual Orientation	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
Heterosexual / Straight	193	81	72	85

Bisexual	17	7	7	8
Gay man	11	5	2	2
Gay Woman / Lesbian	3	1		
Prefer not to say/not answered	15	6	4	5
Total	239	100	85	100

8.2.2 IERP

As with all of the other programmes applications for funding come mainly from heterosexual artists. There were 2,654 approved and 521 declined.

There is still a significant proportion that prefer not to say at 238 (9%) or that are not answered/missing 147 (6%) in approved applications.

Artists identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, other, pansexual or queer at 329 represent 12% of total approved applications. A similar proportion of these artists at 65 (12%) are represented within the declined applications (table F.5 below).

Table F.5: Approved and declined IERP applications by sexual orientation, 2020/21

Sexual Orientation	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
Heterosexual	1940	73	353	68
Gay	82	3	13	2
Lesbian	44	2	6	1
Bisexual	104	4	29	6
Not Answered/Missing	147	6	73	14
Other	32	1	7	1
Pansexual	34	1	7	1
Prefer not to say	238	9	30	6
Queer	33	1	3	1
Total	2654	100	521	100

8.2.3 CIRP

Heterosexual artists are the largest proportion of approved applications to CIRP at 1054 (74%) with 177 (12%) choosing not to answer (or missing) and prefer not to say; and those identifying as gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual and queer at 189 (13%).

These proportions apply to the declined applications across the sexual orientation categories (table F.6 below).

Table F.6: Approved and declined CIRP applications by sexual orientation, 2021/22

Sexual Orientation	Approved (no.)	Approved (%)	Declined (no.)	Declined (%)
Heterosexual	1054	74	287	72
Gay	44	3	19	5
Lesbian	19	1	4	1
Bisexual	76	5	17	4
Not Answered/Missing	26	2	25	6
Other	14	1	7	2
Pansexual	21	1	3	1
Prefer not to say	151	11	34	8
Queer	29	2	5	1
Total	1434	100	401	100

9 Gender

9.1 AFS

For the last two years, the AFS has been collecting gender identity information from ACNI’s regularly funded organisations using new categories including female (inclusive of transgender women), male (inclusive of transgender men), non-binary, prefer not to say and unknown.

The data is presented in table G.1 below and shows that the majority of artists within the sector who responded identified as female (including transgender women) at 2414 (52%) in 2020/21 and 2913 (53%) in 2021/22.

Males working in the sector represent the second largest group at 2193 (47%) in 2020/21 and 2547 (46%) in 2021/22.

In 2020/21, a significant proportion of artists’ gender identity was unknown at 974 (17%) which fell to 94 (2%) in 2021/22. This is perhaps due to the increase in those who preferred not to say which rose from 17 in 2020/21 to 264 in 2021/22.

Table G.1: All staff by gender identity (AFS), 2020-2022

Gender identity, all staff (permanent and contract)	2020/21 (n=97)	2021/22 (n=97)	2020/21 (%)	2021/22 (%)
Female (including trans women)	2,414	2,913	52	53
Male (including trans men)	2,193	2,547	47	46
Non-Binary (e.g. androgyne)	30	40	1	1
Prefer not to say	17	264		
Not known	974	94		
Total	5,628	5,858	100	100

Note: The percentages presented in this table exclude ‘prefer not to say’ and ‘not known’ categories in order to provide a more accurate representation of the remaining categories

9.2 SIAP

Similar to the AFS, gender identity has been extended for SIAP data collection in 2020/21 to include new categories including agender, female (cisgender & transgender), male (cisgender & transgender), non-binary and prefer not to say. There are now 8 categories in total compared to 3 in previous years.

SIAP data shows a fairly equal spread of applications across gender identity over the last five years. However, there is a trend of more female (including transgender women) applying than males (including transgender males). This is typically characteristic of the sector.

Focus will be placed on 2020/21 to include analysis of new gender identity categories in table G.2 below. There were 131 approved applications from female (including transgender women) and 16 female (cisgender and transgender), representing 45% and 6% of applications respectively. There were slightly less approved applications from male (including transgender men) and male (cisgender and transgender) at 92 (32%) and 28 (10%) respectively.

Applications from artists identifying as agender and non-binary remain very small across approved and declined awards (table G.2 and G.3 below)

Table G.2: Approved SIAP applications by gender identity, 2016-2021

Year	Agender	Female (cisgender & transgender)	Female (incl. transgender women)	Male (cisgender & transgender)	Male (incl. transgender men)	Non-binary	Not answered	Prefer not to say	Total
2016/17			171		126		11		308
2017/18			157		111		10		278
2018/19			140		118		7		265
2019/20			184		147		11		342
2020/21	1	16	131	28	92	2	18	2	290
Total	1	16	783	28	594	2	57	2	1483
Total %	0	1	53	2	40	0	4	0	100

Declined applications between female (including transgender women) and male (transgender men) were on a similar level in 2020/21 at 211 (35%) and 200 (34%) respectively. There were 53 (9%) applicants who did not answer regarding their gender identity and only 11 (2%) who preferred not to say.

Table G.3: Declined SIAP applications by gender identity, 2016-2021

Year	Agender	Female (cisgender & transgender)	Female (incl. transgender women)	Male (cisgender & transgender)	Male (incl. transgender men)	Non-binary	Not answered	Prefer not to say	Total
2016/17					1				1
2017/18									
2018/19					1				1
2019/20			164		184		2		350
2020/21	2	23	211	92	200	5	53	11	597
Total	2	23	375	92	386	5	55	11	949
Total %	0	2	40	10	41	1	6	1	100

9.2.1 AEP

Applicants to the AEP responded well in providing their gender identity information with only 9 of the approved awards not answering (table G.4 below). Of the approved applications, 111 (46%) identified as female (including transgender women and 119 (50%) and as male (including transgender men).

Table G.4: Approved AEP applications by gender identity, 2020/21

Gender identity	Total	%
Female (incl. transgender women)	111	46
Male (incl. transgender men)	119	50
Not Answered	9	4
Transgendered		
Total	239	100

Similarly to approved applications, those that were declined also received a low number of not answered responses at 4 (5%). There were only a small number who identified as transgendered with the majority identifying as female (including transgender women and 31 (36%) and as male (including transgender men) at 48 (56%).

It is interesting that there were slightly more male (including transgender men) artists than female (including transgender women) applying to AEP (table G.4 and G.5).

Table G.5: Declined AEP applications by gender identity, 2020/21

Gender identity	Total	%
Female (incl. transgender women)	31	36
Male (incl. transgender men)	48	56
Not Answered	4	5
Transgendered	2	2
Total	85	100

9.2.2 IERP

Data collected for IERP reveal similar levels of approved applications by gender identity as those from the other emergency programmes with the majority of awards for male (cisgender and transgender) at 1427 (54%) followed by female (cisgender and transgender) at 913 (34%). There were 185 and 83 who did not answer or preferred not to say their gender identity, representing 7% and 3% respectively. Identities such as non-binary, agender and gender fluid remain the smallest at 25, 12 and 9 respectively.

Table G.6: Approved IERP applications by gender identity, 2020/21

Gender	Total	%
Agender	12	0
Female (cisgender and transgender)	913	34
Gender fluid	9	0
Male (cisgender and transgender)	1427	54
Non-binary	25	1
Not Answered	185	7
Prefer not to say	83	3
Total	2654	100

Of the 521 applications that were declined, 258 (50%) identified as male (cisgender and transgender) and 146 (28%) as female (cisgender and transgender). Approximately 17% (90) and 2.9% (15) did not answer or preferred not to say their gender identity. The remaining applications were represented by those who identified as agender at 8 and non-binary at 4.

Table G.7: Declined IERP applications by gender identity, 2020/21

Gender	Total	%
Agender	8	2
Female (cisgender and transgender)	146	28
Gender fluid		
Male (cisgender and transgender)	258	50
Non-binary	4	1
Not Answered	90	17
Prefer not to say	15	3
Total	521	100

9.2.3 CIRP

The CIRP has experienced a similar trend to that of AEP, whereby more males (including cisgender and transgender) applied at 766 (53%) compared to 540 (38%) of females (including cisgender and transgender). Almost an equal number of applications were not answered (45) or the artists preferred not to say (47). Other categories include those identifying as non-binary at 17 (1%), gender fluid at 14 (1%) and agender at 5 (0%).

Table G.8: Approved AEP applications by gender identity, 2020/21

Gender	Total	%
Agender	5	0
Female (cisgender and transgender)	540	38
Gender fluid	14	1
Male (cisgender and transgender)	766	53
Non-binary	17	1
Not Answered	45	3
Prefer not to say	47	3
Total	1434	100

Like approved applications, the trend has been the same for those that were declined with a higher number of males (including cisgender and transgender) at 231 (58%) than females (including cisgender and transgender) at 106 (26%). There were 32 and 18 declined applications from those artists who did not answer or preferred not to say, respectively. A small number of applications from artists identifying as non-binary, agender and gender fluid were declined at 7, 6 and 1, respectively.

Table G.9: Declined AEP applications by gender identity, 2020/21

Gender	Total	%
Agender	6	1
Female (cisgender and transgender)	106	26
Gender fluid	1	0
Male (cisgender and transgender)	231	58

Non-binary	7	2
Not Answered	32	8
Prefer not to say	18	4
Total	401	100

10 Disability

10.1 AFS

Data collected through the AFS over the last two years reveals that there is a significant proportion of the arts workforce by disability that is not known at 3072 (55%) in 2020/21 and 3367 (60%) in 2021/22.

Table H.1 below has removed the prefer not to say and not known categories from the analysis. There is significantly more non-disabled artists than disabled at 2084 (92%) and 1976 (89%) in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively. However, it is encouraging that the number of disabled artists rose from 188 (8%) in 2020/21 to 251 (11%) in 2021/22. This is perhaps not an actual increase in the number of disabled artists joining the workforce in 2021/22 but instead reflecting a willingness to share the information with ACNI about their disability for the first time.

Table H.1: Arts staff by disability (AFS) 2020-2022

Disability, all staff (full-time and part-time)	2020/21 (n=97)	2021/22 (n=97)	2020/21 (%)	2021/22 (%)
Disabled	188	251	8	11
Non-Disabled	2,084	1,976	92	89
Prefer not to say	266	57		
Not known	3,072	3,367		
Total	5,610	5,651	100	100

Note: The percentages presented in this table exclude 'prefer not to say' and 'not known' categories in order to provide a more accurate representation of the remaining categories

10.2 SIAP

The proportion of disabled artists applying for individual support has shown a broadly upward trend over the last 5 years (table H.2). Over this period, approved applications represented 10% disabled, 85% non-disabled and 5% not answered.

The level of applications by this group is encouraging and may in part be due to the targeting of disabled artists by art-form officers. Also, a series of workshops were facilitated by sector representative bodies, including University of Atypical (formerly ADF) to promote the programme during this time.

Focussing on the last two years, the majority of artists are non-disabled at 300 (88%) in 2019/20 and 232 (80%) in 2020/21. Only 22 and 7 artists did not answer or preferred not to say about disability, respectively.

Table H.2: Approved SIAP applications by disability, 2016-2021

Disability	Yes	No	Not answered	Prefer not to say	Total	Total (%)
2016/17	29	266	13		308	21
2017/18	32	233	13		278	19
2018/19	23	233	9		265	18
2019/20	29	300	13		342	23
2020/21	29	232	22	7	290	19
Total	142	1264	70	7	1483	
Total %	10	85	5	0	100	100

Declined applications follow a similar pattern to those that were approved with disabled artists at 11%, non-disabled at 83%, not answered at 5% and prefer not to say at 2%.

Most declined applications were from non-disabled artists at 307 (88%) in 2019/20 and 478 (80%) in 2020/21. Only 39 (11%) in 2019/20 and 61 (10%) in 2020/21 were from disabled artists and a small proportion of artists either did not answer or preferred not to say.

Table H.3: Declined SIAP applications by disability, 2016-2021

Disability	Yes	No	Not answered	Prefer not to say	Total	Total (%)
2016/17		1				
2017/18						
2018/19		1				
2019/20	39	307	4		350	37
2020/21	61	478	47	11	597	63
Total	100	787	51	11	947	
Total %	11	83	5	2	100	100

10.2.1 AEP

Analysis of those awarded an emergency grant for individuals in 2020/21 revealed that a high percentage of applicants i.e. 90%, were not disabled, with 7% confirming they are. The remaining applicants, 4%, preferred not to reveal whether they were disabled or not.

Table H.4: Approved AEP applications by disability, 2020/21

Disability	Total	%
Yes	16	7
No	214	90
Not answered	9	4
Total	239	100

The majority of declined applications at 69 (81%) identified themselves as non-disabled and 13 (15%) identified as having a disability. Only a very small proportion did not answer at 4%.

Table H.5: Declined AEP applications by disability, 2020/21

Disability	Total	%
Yes	13	15
No	69	81
Not answered	3	4
Total	85	100

10.2.2 IERP

As with the other emergency programmes previously analysed, the IERP follows a similar trend in approved and declined applications by disability where the majority are from artists who confirm that they are not disabled at 2234 (84%) and 388 (74%) respectively.

There were 186 (7%) approved applications from artists that confirmed that they were disabled and 41 (8%) from those that were declined. Equal proportions between the approved and declined applications implies no bias in decision making and equal opportunity for all applicants.

Table H.6: Approved and declined IERP applications by disability, 2020/21

Disability	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Yes	186	7	41	8
No	2234	84	388	74
Not Answered	147	6	72	14
Prefer not to say	87	3	20	4
Total	2654	100	521	100

10.2.3 CIRP

Table H.7 outlines the approved and declined applications for CIRP by disability. It shows that the majority of these applications came from artists who do not have a disability at 1216 (85%) and 324 (81%) respectively. Those with a disability represent 126 (9%) of approved and 37 (9%) of declined applications. This indicates that there is a fairly equal proportion of artists who are disabled between approved and declined applications.

There were 44 and 48 approved applications that did not answer or preferred not to say about disability when asked both representing 3%.

Table H.7: Approved and declined CIRP applications by disability, 2020/21

Disability	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Yes	126	9	37	9
No	1216	85	324	81
Not Answered	44	3	26	6
Prefer not to say	48	3	14	4
Total	1434	100	401	100

11 Dependents

11.1 AFS

The AFS does not currently collect information from the arts sector on dependents.

11.2 SIAP

Table I.1 shows that the number of SIAP applicants with dependents has remained consistent over the 5 year period. The majority of artists do not have dependants, representing approximately 65% on average between 2016/17 and 2020/21, compared to 30% on average for those with dependants. Only a small proportion of applicants did not answer, accounting for 5% on average over the trend period.

Table I.1: Approved SIAP applications by dependants, 2016-2021

Dependants	Yes	No	Not answered	Total	Total %
2016/17	91	206	11	308	21
2017/18	84	183	11	278	19
2018/19	80	175	10	265	18
2019/20	110	217	15	342	24
2020/21	82	187	21	290	20
Total	447	968	68	1483	
Total %	30	65	5	100	100

Declined applications represent 37% and 63% of total applications in 2019/20 and 2020/21 respectively. Over the two year period presented in table I.2 below, the split between declined applications of disabled and non-disabled was broader at 29% and 65% respectively.

On the whole, declined applications share a similar trend to approved with most artists not having any dependants at 242 (69%) in 2019/20 and 371 (62%) in 2020/21. Those with dependants represent 29% (101) and 28.3% (169) in 2019/20 and 2020/21, respectively.

Table I.2: Declined SIAP applications by dependants, 2016-2021

Dependants	Yes	No	Not answered	Total	Total %
2016/17		1			0
2017/18					
2018/19		1			0
2019/20	101	242	7	350	37
2020/21	169	371	57	597	63
Total	270	615	64	947	
Total %	29	65	7	100	100

11.2.1 AEP

Applications to AEP follow the same trend as in SIAP with both approved and declined applications showing that the majority of artists do not have dependants at 144 and 48 respectively. There were 86 and 33 approved and declined applications, respectively for artists with dependants.

Table I.3: Approved and declined AEP applications by dependants, 2020/21

Dependents	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Yes	86	36	33	39
No	144	60	48	56
Not answered	9	4	4	5
Total	239	100	85	100

11.2.2 IERP

As with the other programmes, most approved and decline applications to IERP were from artists with no dependent at 1563 and 282 respectively.

Those with dependents represented 902 (34%) approved and 144 (28%) declined applications. Only 189 (7%) that were approved and 95 (18%) that were declined did not answer.

Table I.4: Approved and declined IERP applications by dependants, 2020/21

Dependents	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Yes	902	34	144	28
No	1563	59	282	54
Not Answered	189	7	95	18
Total	2654	100	521	100

11.2.3 CIRP

Of the 1434 approved applications and 401 declined applications, there were 895 (62%) and 241 (60%) with no dependants, respectively and 485 (34%) and 117 (29%) with dependants.

Table I.5: Approved and declined CIRP applications by dependants, 2020/21

Dependents	Approved applications (n)	Approved applications (%)	Declined applications (n)	Declined applications (%)
Yes	485	34	117	29
No	895	62	241	60
Not Answered	54	4	43	11
Total	1434	100	401	100

12 Composition of the ACNI Workforce

Given the size of the organisation, many numbers within each Section 75 category are too small to permit publication. As such, we cannot disclose the entirety of the data collected. However, we can reveal the composition of religious belief. The most recent submission to the Equality Commission was in January 2023, reporting that ACNI staff comprised 13 Protestant, 32 Roman Catholic and 3 Non-Denomination. There are 50 staff within ACNI, therefore 3 staff members did not disclose their religious belief.

13 Conclusions

RELIGIOUS BELIEF: For those respondents that did indicate their religion in the AFS, 52% (762) identified as Catholic and 28% (405) as Protestant in 2021/22, representing a similar proportion to the previous year at 58% (774) and 25% (342) respectively. SIAP data for 2020/21 shows that there were 22% who identified as Catholic and 10% as Protestant.

Although the data reveals that there are fewer applications from Protestants, there is no indication of any inequality in access to the arts due to religion. It should be noted that due to the contentious nature of the subject a high proportion of respondents chose not to specify this information. Therefore it is impossible to determine a more accurate breakdown by religious belief.

ACNI encourage applications from artists across all religious beliefs and have specific targeting measures in place to ensure that there is equal opportunity for all artists to apply to the funding programme of their choice.

POLITICAL OPINION: Similar to religious belief, this is a contentious topic and would explain why any arts specific source has a high proportion of 'other' responses. However due to historic circumstances we can correlate religious belief with political opinion and determine that there is no evidence for any inequality in arts provision by political opinion.

ETHNIC GROUP: The percentage of minority ethnic groups living in NI has risen and accounts for 3.4% (65,604) of the usually resident population, an increase of 1.6% on the 2011 Census. However, NI has a much smaller minority ethnic community when compared to the rest of the UK and this is reflected in the proportion of respondents working in the arts sector. The size of the sample makes it difficult to determine trends, but there is no evidence of any inequality in accessing the arts, or selection for independent artist grants.

In previous years, the Intercultural Arts programme has made efforts to ensure artists from ethnic minority backgrounds were able to participate fully within the arts sector with 7% of all programme activity targeted to minority ethnic groups in 2018/19 (AFS).

More recently, there was the mentoring and residencies programme for minority ethnic artists which was piloted in 2021. This was to help create opportunities for specialised training, research, cultural exchanges, networking and learning for individual artists, creative practitioners and arts administrators from minority ethnic and migrant backgrounds. Based on the success of the pilot, this programme has now been mainstreamed into ACNI's SIAP.

In 2020/21 18.9% and 23.8% of programme activities were targeted at ethnic minority groups in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively.

AGE: Young people have considerably higher attendance and participation in the arts than any other age group, and older people have lower attendance and participation. ACNI recognise both these age groups in their targeted programme recognising the formative influence of the arts on young people and the wellbeing benefits observed with older people.

The ARTiculate Programme was first launched in 2017 targeted at improving the health and wellbeing of young people. Since then has awarded 46 grants to organisations to develop projects across a range of arts activities.

Also, the AFS shows that 42.6% and almost 49.5% of programme activity was targeted at young people aged 5-24 years old in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively.

ACNI's Arts and Older People Programme has been a conduit to increase attendance of the older generation in the arts in order to combat loneliness, increase self-confidence and ensure it contributes towards their wellbeing. This is illustrated by the findings of the ARK (2019) research and the benefits the programme brought to the older generation.

The AFS reveals that 20.6% and almost 23% of programme activity was targeted at older people aged 65+ in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively.

MARITAL STATUS: The largest number of SIAP applications were made in 2019/20 at 342 with the largest proportion coming from unmarried artists at 185 (54%), followed by those who are married at 127 (37%). This has typically been the trend over the last 5 years, the most significant proportion of applicants have been unmarried, who make up on average 52% of approved applications and those who are married which represent an average of 35% of all approved applications over the trend period.

There is no evidence to suggest that there is any inequality in approved and declined applications to ACNI funding over the trend period.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION: There is no evidence to suggest that there is any inequality in accessing the arts depending on sexual orientation across all of ACNI's funding programmes. Typically the majority of artists identify as heterosexual, however it is important to highlight that 21.3% and 22.5% of programme activity was targeted at the LGBTQ community in 2020/21 and 2021/22, respectively by AFP clients.

GENDER: There are no particular inequalities apparent from the data. The workforce in the arts is typically characterised as having a slightly greater proportion of females to males working in the sector. Interestingly, there were slightly more applications from males than females across the emergency funding programmes.

DISABILITY: According to the AFS, there is still a significant proportion of the arts workforce by disability that is not known at 3072 (55%) in 2020/21 and 3367 (60%) in 2021/22.

Removing the prefer not to say and not known categories from the analysis, there is significantly more non-disabled artists than disabled at 2084 (92%) and 1976 (89%) in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively. However, it is encouraging that the number of disabled artists rose from 188 (8%) in 2020/21 to 251 (11%) in 2021/22.

Approved applications and declined for non-disabled and disabled artists are balanced across ACNI's funding programmes indicating that there are no evident inequalities between these groups.

ACNI mitigates against the risk of inequality through its ongoing support of the Disability Charter Mark and having a dedicated disability action plan outlining our commitment to addressing any existing inequality.

DEPENDENTS: Across all of ACNI's programmes, most approved and decline applications were from artists with no dependents.

According to the CHS, there is less information to inform the impact of dependents in the arts. In 2019/20, adults with dependants were less likely to have participated in arts activities than those with no dependants (30% and 35% respectively). In 2020/21, a similar proportion of adults with dependants participated in arts activities as those with no dependants (39% and 41% respectively).

Appendix 1

SIAP Monitoring Questionnaire

Please complete this form with regard each of the categories provided in the dropdown menus below. **If you do not complete and return this form by the due date, it may impact the eligibility of your application.**

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland has a duty under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- Persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
- women and men generally
- persons with a disability and persons without; and
- persons with dependents and persons without

The information provided in this form will not form part of any assessment process, but will be used by the Arts Council solely for statistical gathering purposes.

For each of the categories below, please choose one option that is best suited to you. If your option is not listed, please specify in the box/boxes at the end of the form, where applicable.

1. Sex

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. Intersex
- d. Prefer to describe myself in another way _____
- e. Prefer not to say

2. Gender

- a. Man (including cis and trans men)
- b. Woman (including cis and trans women)
- c. Agender
- d. Gender fluid
- e. Non-binary (including androgyne)
- f. Prefer to describe myself in another way _____
- g. Prefer not to say

3. Age

- a. 0-15
- b. 16-24
- c. 25-34
- d. 35-44
- e. 45-54
- f. 55-64
- g. 65+
- h. Prefer not to say

4. Sexual Orientation

- a. Heterosexual / Straight
- b. Bisexual
- c. Gay man

- d. Gay woman / Lesbian
- e. Queer
- f. Pansexual
- g. Prefer to describe myself in another way _____
- h. Prefer not to say

5. Marital status

- a. Married
- b. Divorced
- c. Separated
- d. Single / unmarried
- e. Co habiting/living with partner
- f. Civil partnership
- g. Widowed
- h. Prefer not to say

6. Ethnicity

- a. White
- b. Irish Traveller
- c. Chinese
- d. Indian
- e. Pakistani
- f. Bangladeshi
- g. Asian not listed please specify here _____
- h. Black Caribbean
- i. Black African
- j. Black not listed please specify here _____
- k. Arab
- l. Roma
- m. Filipino
- n. Mixed ethnic group
- o. Ethnic group not listed please specify here _____
- p. Prefer not to say

7. Nationality/National identity

- a. Please describe here _____

8. Country of birth

- a. Please describe here _____

9. Political opinion

- a. Mostly unionist
- b. Mostly nationalist
- c. Apolitical
- d. Political opinion not listed please specify _____

10. Religious belief

- a. Buddhist
- b. Catholic
- c. Hindu
- d. Islam/Muslim
- e. Jewish
- f. Protestant
- g. Sikh

- h. Religious faith not listed specify here _____
- i. No religious faith
- j. Prefer not to say

11. Dependents

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

12. Disability

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Prefer not to say

13. Social class

14. Other thoughts – income? Education? Main language?

Please note all specify boxes for SKYE data will be asked at the bottom of the form:

ETHNICITY

If your Ethnic Group was not listed above, please specify here:

GENDER

If your gender was not listed above, please specify here:

POLITICAL OPINION

If your political opinion was not listed above, please specify here:

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

If your religious beliefs were not listed above, please specify here:

SEX

If your sex was not listed above, please specify here:

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

If your sexual orientation was not listed above, please specify here:

AGE GROUP

0 – 15

16 – 24

25 – 34

35 – 44

45 – 54

55 – 64

65+

DEPENDANTS

No

Prefer not to say

Yes

DISABILITY

No

Yes

Prefer not to say

ETHNICITY

Arab

Asian (not listed)

Bangladeshi

Black African

Black Caribbean

Black (not listed)

Chinese

Ethnic group not listed

Filipino

Indian

Irish Traveller

Mixed Ethnic Group

Pakistani

Prefer not to say

Roma

White

GENDER

Woman (including cis and trans women)

Man (including cis and trans women)

Non-Binary (including androgyne)

Agender

Gender fluid

Prefer to describe myself in another way

Prefer not to say

MARITAL STATUS

Civil Partnership

Co-habiting / living with partner

Divorced

Married

Prefer not to say

Separated

Single / unmarried

Widowed

PERCEIVED RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

Buddhist

Catholic

Protestant

Hindu

Islam/Muslim

Jewish

Sikh

No Religious Faith

Not listed

Prefer not to say

POLITICAL OPINION

Apolitical

Nationalist generally

Not listed

Unionist generally

Prefer no to say

SEX

Female

Male

Not listed

Prefer not to say

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Bisexual

Gay Man

Gay Woman / Lesbian

Not listed

Heterosexual / Straight

Queer

Pansexual

Prefer not to say

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