

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

# Covid Recovery Programme for Arts Organisations (CRPAO)

Survey of grant use and impact

November 2022



## Summary of key findings

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- ACNI's Strategic Development and Partnership team sent an online survey to the 39 organisations that received CRPAO funding. The survey was open between 14th October to 28th October 2022. 23 organisations responded (59% response rate).
- 20 organisations reported using the funding for deficit funding; 7 to replenish their reserve; and 2 to replenish other liquidity measures. Only 2 organisations reported receiving support for deficit funding or replenishing reserves from other sources.
- High additionality: 20 organisations strongly agreed or agreed they would not have been able to reduce or remove the financial deficit they faced due the pandemic without this grant.
- For 22 organisations, CRPAO helped them remove financial stress so that they could continue to provide services to their audiences, clients and/or the general community.
- The grant allowed organisations to restart providing services such as reaching new audiences (18 organisations), supporting artists (15), working with communities (14), among other services.

## What is the Covid Recovery Programme for Arts Organisations (CRPAO)?

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- This programme aimed at supporting the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and assisting sectoral renewal to enable organisations to emerge stronger, adaptable and more sustainable.
- CRPAO programme had 2 key objectives:
  - Reduce or remove sectoral organisational financial deficits that arose due to the pandemic
  - Remove financial stress so that they can continue to provide services that benefit the wider society.
- It distributed £1,734,365 amongst 39 organisations in 2021/22. These organisations in total requested £2,591,168 (see next slide). The amounts received per organisation ranged between £3,535 and £273,308.

**Demand exceeded the funding available: Organisations in receipt of CRPAO were granted 80.2% of what they requested.**

	Number of organisations	Total requested (£)	Total granted (£)	% of total requested
<b>Approved</b>	39	2,162,305.39	1,734,365.00	80.2
<b>Not approved</b>	16	428,862.73	-	
<b>Total</b>	55	2,591,168.12	1,734,365.00	66.9

## Survey process

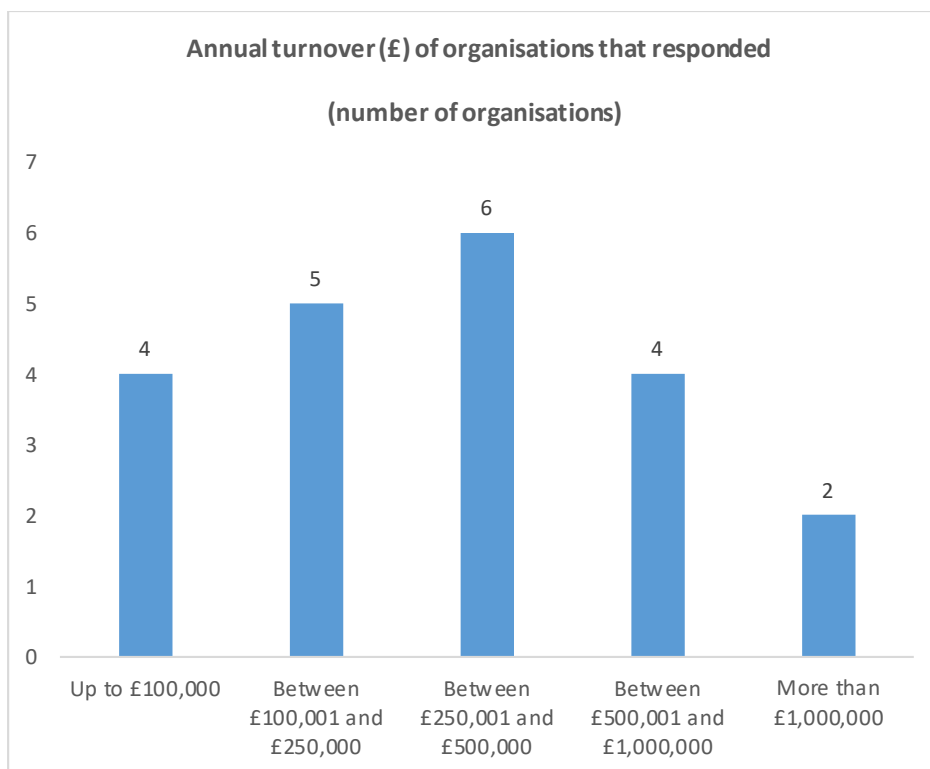
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- ACNI’s Strategic Development and Partnership team sent an online survey to the 39 organisations that received this funding. The survey was open between 14th October to 28th October 2022.
- The survey had 15 questions about the organisations, how they used the funding and perceived impact of the grant.
- 23 organisations completed the survey (59% response rate)

## Who completed the survey?

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- 9 organisations that completed the survey work across the combined arts; 4 in Theatre and Drama; 4 in Music. The other 6 work across the visual arts, literature and other artforms.
- 14 are based in Belfast; 4 in Derry City and Strabane. The other 5 are based in Ards and North Down, Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon, Mid Ulster, and Newry, Mourne and Down.
- 6 organisations reported an annual turnover between £250K and £500K (see figure).



There is a good representation in the sample of those organisations that received less than £25,000. Organisations that received between £25,000 and £50,000 are, however, overrepresented in the sample. There is an underrepresentation of organisations that received more than £50,000.

	<b>% organisations that answered survey (n=23)</b>	<b>% of organisations that received funding (n=39)</b>
<b>Less than £25,000</b>	52.2%	51.2%
<b>Between £25,000 and £50,000</b>	34.8%	25.6%
<b>More than £50,000</b>	13.0%	23.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Main results

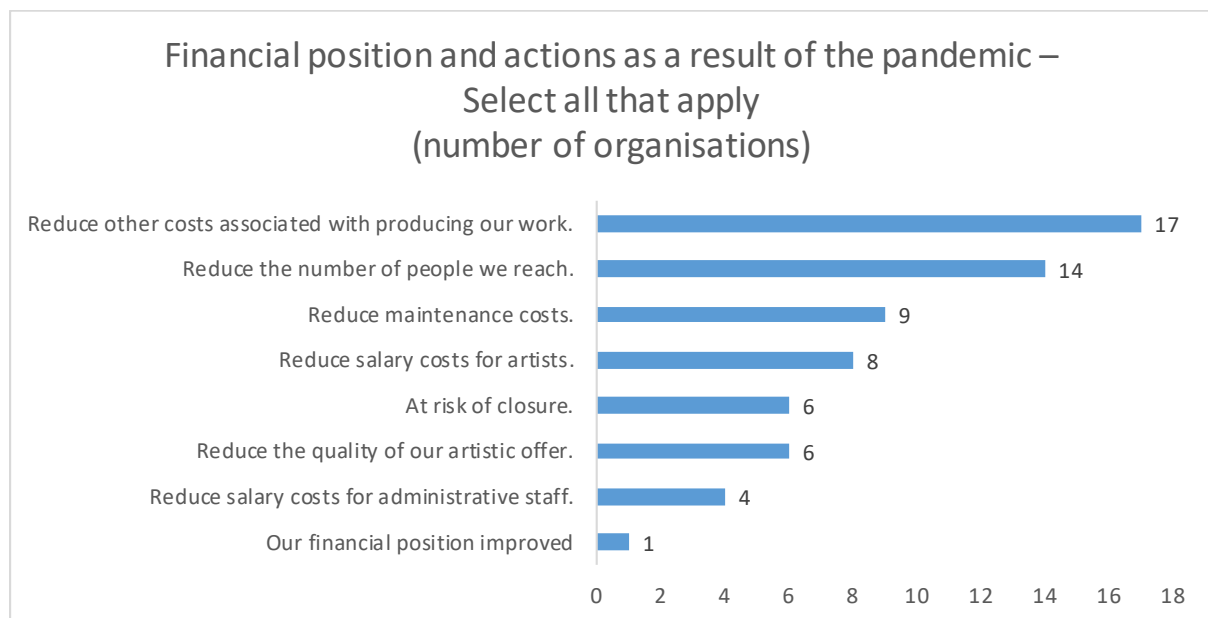
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### The financial impact of the pandemic:

- 9 organisations reported losing more than 50% of their earned income as a result of the lockdown.
- Income from public sources during the pandemic was somewhat stronger. Only one organisation reported losing between 50% and 74% of their expected public funding. 11 organisations reported losing between 1% to 24% of this source of funding.
- 12 organisations reported losing between 1% to 24% of their projected income from private funders. 3 reported losing more than 50%.

### The financial impact of the pandemic: Impact on salaries, costs and quality.

Organisations reported a complex journey of financial stability. One arts organisation reported going from being at risk of closure to eventually improving their financial position.



## Use of funding

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### How was the funding used?

- 20 organisations reported using the funding for deficit funding.
- 7 used it to replenish their reserves.
- 2 used it to replenish other liquidity measures.
- Only 2 organisations reported receiving support for deficit funding or replenishing reserves from other public funders. This could be explained in part as a result of the demand for funding exceeding the available resources, and that the programme covered 80% of the amount requested by those who did receive it.

### Organisations provided their views and perceptions about the added value of the funding:

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*“Our reserves weren't really replenished but without it we would have been thousands of pounds in the red after doing everything we could to survive and support our sector. It was vitally desperately needed and still is”.*

*“Our organisation does not carry large reserves so the Covid Recovery funding enabled us to ride out the storm and emerge the other side ready to resume our activities that benefit those most marginalised and disadvantaged in our community”.*

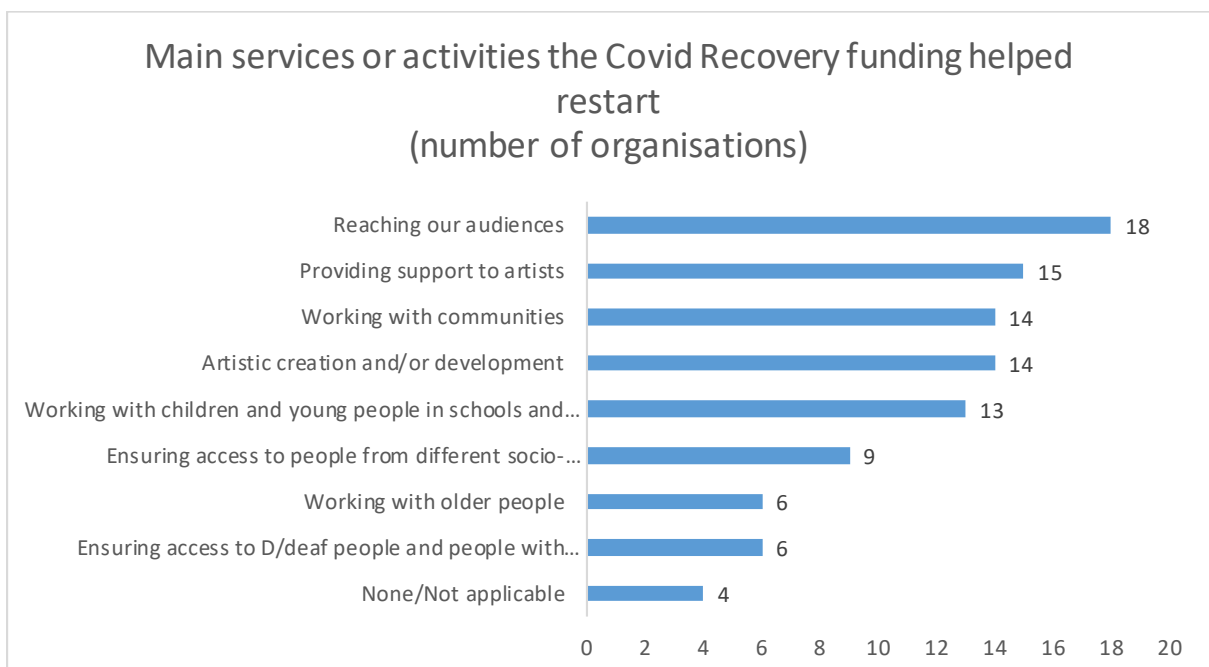
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## Impact of the funding

### Perceptions of the impact of the grant on the financial position of organisations (Number of organisations n=23)

Perception	Strongly agree/agree	Neither	Strongly disagree/disagree	Not answered
Your organisation would not have been able to reduce or remove the financial deficit it faced due the pandemic without the Covid Recovery grant.	20	1	1	1
The Covid Recovery Programme for Arts Organisations helped you remove financial stress so that your organisation could continue to provide services to your audiences, clients and/or the general community	22	1	0	0
The Covid Recovery funding received enabled you to emerge stronger, more sustainable, and on a more secure financial footing for 2022-23.	19	2	2	0

## Main services helped by CRPAO



## Impact of the grant

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“Instead of losing two staff members in 2021/22 we would have lost three and the remaining staff would very seriously consider the future of the organisation as well as their future employment opportunities with the organisation, the pressure of all this versus jobs/remuneration/security comparatively, elsewhere”.

“If we had not received this grant we would have to scale back our services and geographical reach, reduce programme activity and curtail our growth plans, limiting creative writing engagement for young people across the region”.

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## Is this programme still needed?

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### **Cost of living concerns are affecting the financial position of arts organisations:**

“We lost some freelance facilitators who have gone on to other more secure employment. This has affected our output slightly. While prices are going up on everything we haven't raised our costs as we want still to be accessible to lower income families. We have some people taking part in activities that can't pay at the minute, but did previously with no bother, and will again I'm sure. But in the meantime we will suffer that loss. I feel we will see more of this going forward. Not necessarily now because of Covid but because of cost of living increase”.

“We are far from out of the woods, yet - as well as the general economic outlook ahead in trying to successfully navigate back from such a position”.

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