

AR

annual review

Arts Council of Northern Ireland - 2018-19
www.artscouncil-ni.org



LOTTERY FUNDED





Our Vision

Our vision is to ‘place the arts at the heart of our social, economic and creative life’.


In *Ambitions for the Arts**, our five-year strategic plan for the development of the arts in Northern Ireland, 2013-18, we identify the main themes covering what we believe needs to be done to achieve this vision - championing the arts, promoting access, building a sustainable sector.

In this Annual Review 2018-19 you will see the progress that has been made in these areas, including the introduction of a Creative Schools Partnership, new art lending schemes for organisations and schools, the continuing development of the ARTiculate health and wellbeing arts programme, and the results of the Local Government Challenge Fund.

The Arts Council’s new 5-year Plan for the arts, 2019-24, was developed throughout the year and will succeed ‘Ambitions for the Arts’ in the autumn of 2019.

* available at www.artscouncil-ni.org

Stuart Cairns, objects from ‘This Other Place’, an installation exhibited at Pollen Studios during August Craft Month 2018, Northern Ireland’s annual celebration of craft co-ordinated by CRAFT NI on behalf of the Craft Sector. Photo: Stuart Cairns

 Davy Watson, recipient of an Arts Council Artists Career Enhancement Scheme award, performing with the Ulster Orchestra as part of the their On Your Doorstep series, which aims to grow new audiences by collaborating with artists of various genres. Photo: Brian Morrison

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Welcome

Welcome to the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's Annual Review 2018-2019.

This calendar-style review of our combined Exchequer and National Lottery-funded activities covers many of the artistic highlights of the last (financial) year, expanding in greater detail on several of the most significant events.

A brief summary of our Accounts for the financial year is included at the end of the report. The complete sets of audited accounts for our Exchequer and National Lottery funds are made available on our [website](#).

Bringing great art within the reach of everyone

What we do

The Arts Council is the development agency for the arts in Northern Ireland, providing the main support for artists and arts organisations throughout the region through a range of funding opportunities. We distribute public money and National Lottery funds to organisations and people who develop and deliver arts programmes across all of society.

Our Arts Officers offer specialist guidance on funding and project development to artists and organisations working across the spectrum of arts activities in Northern Ireland.

- Architecture
- Arts and Disability
- Arts and Health
- Arts and Older People
- Circus Arts
- Carnival Arts
- Comedy
- Community Arts
- Crafts
- Creative Industries
- Dance
- Drama
- Intercultural Arts
- International Arts
- Language Arts
- Literature
- Music
- Public Art
- Traditional Arts
- Visual Arts
- Voluntary Arts
- Young People Wellbeing & Arts
- Youth Arts

Distinguishing us from other places



Ian Cumberland, 'a common fiction', installation view. Photo by Simon Mills, courtesy of the artist and the Golden Thread Gallery

Overview: 2018-19

“Healthy creative and cultural exchange is a vital component in the development of the arts. In 2018-19, artists and arts organisations in Northern Ireland enjoyed freedom of movement, opportunities to tour work, access to European cultural funding, access to skills and knowledge and more opportunities than ever before to develop their work in the wider international context.”

International exchange

In a year which has seemed dominated by Brexit and uncertainty surrounding the UK's future relationship with the EU, it is timely to reflect on the benefits that healthy international exchange brings to creative development in Northern Ireland.

Artists and arts organisations from Northern Ireland regularly traverse borders and cross continents to share their work with new audiences and to develop their practise in a wider, pan-European context. This is a critical aspect of artistic and audience development and we, as an Arts Council, have made it a priority to accommodate this exchange by building relationships with our counterparts and colleagues around the world. For more than forty years we have had successful cross-border touring arrangements with the Irish and UK Arts Councils, and we continue to expand opportunities for artists to showcase their work in Europe and further afield.

For eight years, a partnership between the Arts Council and the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels has opened the way for writers, performers and visual artists to showcase their work in the Capital of the European Union to an international audience of officials from the EU institutions and the diplomatic community. This year, the artists promoting the culture and creativity of Northern Ireland included Kabosh

theatre company with their powerful political production, 'Green & Blue'.

Much of the Arts Council's major international development work is achieved in partnership with the British Council. Now in its seventh year, the Artists International Development Fund continued to enable artists and arts organisations to bring their work to international audiences. For a fifth year we provided bursaries to support residencies and showcase opportunities at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris, where, this year, poet Leontia Flynn became Artist in Residence. In recent years, links established between our two councils and cultural institutions in India have strengthened creative interaction between our nations and enabled artists to take up residencies and gain exposure for their work at, for example, Ramgarh Shekhawati and the Sanskriti Cultural Centre in New Delhi. For three years artists from Northern Ireland have been invited to speak at the Jaipur Literature Festival, this year being the turn of authors Jan Carson and Paul McVeigh. As a result of such visits, a partnership has been forged that will see a satellite edition of the Jaipur Literature Festival taking place in Belfast in June 2019.

In recent times, through various partnerships with the British Council, Culture Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland and the PRS Foundation, local musicians, singer-songwriters and music

Overview: 2018-19

promoters have gained unprecedented access to networking and performing opportunities at leading industry events, including WOMEX, the Folk Alliance in Kansas, USA and South by Southwest in Austin, Texas. Singer-songwriters from Northern Ireland to benefit from exposure this year included Joshua Burnside, Jealous of the Birds, Roe and Stevie Scullion. Management for the artists also attended: Lyndon Stephens, Declan Legge and Liam Craig.

Processions

In this 'Decade of Centenaries', it has been gratifying to see the central role afforded to artists in bringing life, colour and creativity to the various commemorations. On June 10th, thousands of women joined marches in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh and London to mark the centenary of the Representation of the People Act, which gave women the right to vote in the UK. The marches were part of 'Processions', a nationwide, mass-participation creative event organised by public art specialists, Artichoke, as part of 14-18 NOW, the UK's official arts programme for the First World War centenary. In Northern Ireland, Prime Cut Productions, The Playhouse and the Centre for Contemporary Art, among others, brought together women and women's groups from across the region to produce centenary banners representing and celebrating the diverse voices of women and girls from different backgrounds. The banner-making workshops focused on text

and textiles, echoing the practices of the women's suffrage campaign, and creating spaces for the participants to consider the power of the vote today and our shared future. The banners became the creative centre point of a living artwork of mass participation by women and for women.

Creative Schools Partnership

At the start of the financial year, the Arts Council in partnership with the Education Authority and Urban Villages Initiative launched a new programme designed to inject more creativity into the classroom, in a bid to improve educational outcomes for students. With an initial investment of £120,000, the Creative Schools Partnership engaged with 10 post-primary schools and communities in Belfast and Derry-Londonderry, in areas where there has been a history of deprivation and community tension. The programme is based on research indicating that access to quality arts experiences in school can benefit all aspects of learning, including better engagement and attendance levels, improving results in other school subjects, increasing confidence and self-motivation, and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. An evaluation of the first year of the programme concluded that it 'exemplified good practice in schools creativity'. The programme successfully engaged 180 children in sustained participation in the arts, which had a transformative effect on some of the students and reached the wider community

through performances, exhibitions and conversations. The success of the pilot year has ensured that the Creative Schools Partnership will secure funding to continue next year.

The Creative Schools Partnership is a welcome addition to the portfolio of special initiatives currently run by the Arts Council with the support of National Lottery funding, including the ARTiculate Young People's Health and Wellbeing Arts programme, the Arts and Older People's Programme and the Local Government Challenge Fund. These pioneering programmes are enabling artists to concentrate efforts on identified areas of social need and further demonstrate the major contribution that the arts are making across civil society.

Resilience Fund

This year the Arts Council, in partnership with Belfast City Council, introduced a new Lottery-funded Resilience funding programme aimed at supporting large-scale Belfast-based arts organisations to adapt, change and identify new opportunities as the city grows. Fourteen arts organisations, including the Crescent Arts Centre, the Ulster Orchestra and Belfast Community Circus, have been selected for 18-month customised development programmes.

Elsewhere, we saw major arts projects come to fruition across eight of Northern Ireland's local authorities, through the Local

Overview: 2018-19

Government Challenge Fund, which was launched in late 2016. The Challenge Fund offered Arts Council match funding of up to £150,000 to each council as an incentive to increase investment in the arts in their area and to embed the arts in the planning and delivery of key areas of civic responsibility.

Development of a new 5-year Arts Plan

A preoccupation of the Arts Council this year has been the development of a new arts strategy to cover the coming five-year period, 2019-2024. In our considerations, we have had to be mindful of the wider context in which such a strategy would sit, during a period of unprecedented uncertainty which is affecting society as a whole, including constraints on public spending, the impact of Brexit, and the lack of a sitting Assembly and Executive. The challenges are significant, and the arts will not be exempt. However, with the certain knowledge that the arts can deliver substantial and unique benefits throughout society, the overriding commitment of the new strategy will be to ensure that artists and arts organisations, working in all art forms, receive the support they need to continue to develop and work with confidence, vision and ambition. To achieve this outcome, the Arts Council recognises that it will need to lead the sector in a strategic direction that will not only add strength and resilience, but will create opportunity and growth. The draft strategy, with its three principal themes of 'Inspire', 'Connect' and 'Lead', has

been developed in consultation with the arts sector and key stakeholders, as well as our partners in local and central government, and with the wider public sector. A period of public consultation followed between December and March. The final five-year framework is now nearing completion and is scheduled for publication early in the autumn of 2019.

Obituaries

We said goodbye this year to a number of significant personages associated with the arts in Northern Ireland, including: Belfast actor, director and a founding member of the Lyric Players Theatre, Sam McCready; founder of the Pushkin Trust, Sacha, Duchess of Abercorn; stage actor and doyen of the Group Players, Margaret D'Arcy; and Belfast poet, Pádraic Fiacc.

Creating shared experiences for everyone to enjoy



The Lyric Theatre's world premiere of the stage musical version of 'Good Vibrations', charting the life of Belfast punk legend Terri Hooley, adapted Colin Carberry and Glenn Patterson

A Year in the Arts 2018-19

A flavour of the year's activities by the hundreds of artists, arts organisations and venues that are supported by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland through our Exchequer and National Lottery funds.

April 2018

- The Arts Council awards Annual Funding worth £13 million to 104 key arts organisations across Northern Ireland.



- 1,000 fragments of poetry are left on luggage labels at random locations across Northern Ireland to mark Poetry Day Ireland as part of Label Lit, an innovative art project created by Belfast-based poet, Maria McManus.



- The Lyric Theatre launches a year of celebrations to mark 50 years on Ridgeway Street in Belfast and 50 years at the heart of the history, heritage and contemporary culture of theatre in Northern Ireland.



- The John Hewitt Society launches a new three-day festival of culture and creativity, the Hillsborough Festival of Literature and Ideas, placing community engagement at the heart of events.



- Ruth McCarthy, Director of Outburst Queer Arts Festival, wins the prestigious Paul Hamlyn Foundation Breakthrough Award, which will support her vision to realise Outburst's potential as a leader in queer arts development.



- 'Trouble Songs', a major new book by local music journalist and broadcaster Stuart Baillie, funded by the British Council and Arts Council, tells the fascinating story of music and conflict in Northern Ireland since 1968.



- The Arts Council's annual Arts & Age Festival offers a month of events throughout Northern Ireland in celebration of the contribution that artists make to the life of older citizens.



May 2018

- The Strand Arts Centre celebrates five years as east Belfast's arts centre, with 60,000 people each year now attending a busy programme of live arts.



- Emerging music writing receives a boost as four new writers get the opportunity to work with a leading music publication and to gain practical experience within the industry, thanks to the Journal of Music's new Northern Ireland Music Writer Mentoring Scheme, supported by the Arts Council.



- Belfast city centre comes alive to the colourful sights and sounds of some of the world's best street theatre, as the annual Festival of Fools brings us acrobatics, circus acts, clowning, scenes of dazzling virtuosity and astounding silliness.



- Irish author Sarah Crossan becomes the 5th Laureate na nÓg, Ireland's laureate for children's literature, an initiative of the Arts Council of Ireland with the support of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Children's Books Ireland, The Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Poetry Ireland.



- The 19th annual Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival returns with 130 shows featuring the best of local and international creative talent packed into 11 days.



- 150 primary and secondary school children come to the Lyric Theatre for the finale of Poetry Ireland's Writers in Schools project, which gives children and young people from schools across Northern Ireland an opportunity to work with professional artists on themes around positive images of place and shared spaces.



Empowering people through the arts



Supported by the Arts Council's International Development Fund, members of Open Arts' Luminous Soul dance programme participate in the international MeetShareDance Festival in Porto

June 2018

- Women and girls from across the UK come together for 'Processions', to create a vast participatory artwork celebrating 100 years of votes for women, taking place for one day in Belfast, Cardiff, Edinburgh and London.



Creative Schools Partnership

The Arts Council in partnership with the Education Authority and Urban Villages Initiative, launched a new programme designed to inject more creativity into the classroom in a bid to improve educational outcomes for students. With an initial investment of £120,000, the Creative Schools Partnership engaged with 10 post-primary schools and communities in Belfast and Derry-Londonderry, in areas where there has been a history of deprivation and community tension. The programme is based on research which indicates that access to quality arts experiences in school can benefit all aspects of learning, including better engagement and attendance levels, improving results in other school subjects, increasing confidence and self-motivation, and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. In its first year, the programme engaged 180 children in sustained participation in the arts, which had a transformative effect on some of the students and reached the wider community through performances, exhibitions and conversations. The success of the pilot year has ensured that the Creative Schools Partnership will continue next year.



June 2018

- The Belfast Photo festival showcases the work of influential music photographer Brian Griffin and includes the inaugural 'Capture Conference' for NI's Creative Industries.



- Theatre Forum and Theatre NI's annual all-island performing arts conference, 'Intersections', welcomes 185 delegates to the Lyric Theatre to take a hard look at borders, real and imagined, and how to move beyond them.



- The annual Belfast Book Festival introduces Belfast's first 'Lit Crawl' where, for one night only, venues across the Queen's Quarter offer festival-goers free pop-up events and quirky literary happenings.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrv-F6qSnZk&utm>

- Stage Beyond, a theatre company for adults with learning difficulties, based in Derry-Londonderry, brings the magical story of Gulliver's Travels to life at the Millennium Forum in Derry-Londonderry.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PkCT38IGDY>

Resilience Fund

The Arts Council and Belfast City Council launched an 18-month professional support and funding programme designed to strengthen Belfast's arts sector by helping 14 key arts organisations, each with a city-wide reach, to adapt and change to meet the growing needs of the city. The organisations undertook customised support programmes, including one-to-one coaching, masterclasses and peer learning. Armed with new skills, knowledge and training, they would then develop change management plans to help identify opportunities for future development. The fourteen organisations are: Beat Carnival, Belfast Community Circus, Black Box Trust, Cahoots NI, Cathedral Quarter Arts Festival, Crescent Arts Centre, Cultúrlann McAdam O'Faich, Lyric Theatre, The MAC, Northern Ireland Opera, Oh Yeah Music Centre, Prime Cut Productions, Ulster Orchestra, Young at Art.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w1XvE5JNw8A>

Pictured launching the initiative in November are David McConnell, Arts Council, Bill Wolsey, Managing Director, Beannchor, and Cllr. Donal Lyons, Belfast City Council.

July 2018

- The Arts Council opens consultation on its new 5-year Plan for Developing the Arts, 2019-2024, scheduled to be published in autumn 2019.



- Several of Northern Ireland's leading disabled artists gather at the University of Atypical for a ceremony celebrating the work of disabled and deaf artists and venues that have worked to improve access and facilities.



- The Arts Council awards almost £1 million of National Lottery funding to local arts organisations, to deliver a series of high-quality arts projects to people across the region.



- World-class musicians gather for the second Belfast Summer School of Traditional Music, bringing together the Ulster-Scots and Irish musical traditions in a shared celebration of both heritages.



- The Playhouse in Derry-Londonderry launches an ambitious £679,000 EU Peace IV funded cross-border 'Theatre Peace Building Academy', using theatre as a tool to explore community relations issues, promoting healing and reconciliation in a liberating, healing and transformative way.



- Local poet Stephen Sexton wins the Eric Gregory Award for his collection, 'The Animals, Moon' at the 2018 Authors' Awards.



July 2018

- The 31st John Hewitt International Summer School in Armagh focuses on 'Facing Change: shifting borders and allegiances', with over 35 events by 60 writers, artists and commentators.



- Sixteen contemporary art exhibitions are curated in Derry and Strabane in 'New Spaces', a project to make contemporary art more accessible in the region, run by Visual Artists Ireland in collaboration with Derry City & Strabane District Council and supported by funding through the Arts Council's National Lottery-funded 'Challenge Fund'.



Curators: Edy Fung, Rebecca Strain, Mirjami Schuppert and Alice Butler

- Dancers Linda Fearon and Mary-Louise McCord represent Northern Ireland at the Meet Share Dance Festival in Portugal, an international network for integrated dance professionals to encourage cultural exchange and artistic development.



Linen Biennale

The production of linen has long historical associations with Northern Ireland and is our oldest textile. This heritage was celebrated between August and October at the inaugural International Linen Biennale, organised by R-Space Gallery in Lisburn. A programme featuring more than 100 events and welcoming 200 delegates to a two-day conference explored the rich and colourful history of linen in Northern Ireland, while demonstrating that artisan linen production remains very much alive and well in Northern Ireland.



Expanding young people's horizons



Cahoots NI and The MAC's 'Under the Hawthorn Tree', based on the best-selling novel by Marita Conlon-McKenna, published by the O'Brien Press, Dublin. Photo: Carrie Davenport

August 2018

- CRAFT NI's August Craft Month showcases the talents of local artists, designers and makers alongside international craftmakers, with a programme of exhibitions, workshops and demonstrations across Northern Ireland.



- Féile An Phobail celebrates 30 years at the heart of the cultural and creative life of west Belfast, creating opportunities for the local communities, promoting a positive and confident image of the area, and bringing people from all backgrounds and circumstances closer together through the arts.



- The Open House Festival in Bangor presents its sixth annual month-long festival with headline acts Public Image Ltd and John Grant.



Visiting Poetry Fellowship at Queen's

Throughout November, award-winning American poet and the inaugural Seamus Heaney International Visiting Poetry Fellow, Mark Doty, presented public readings, workshops and masterclasses for students at Queen's University and participated in outreach activities at the Seamus Heaney Homeplace, the John O'Connor Literary Arts Festival and the Outburst Queer Arts Festival. The fellowship was created as part of Queen's and the Arts Council's joint ten-year Seamus Heaney Legacy project and is offered to a distinguished poet of international repute. Scottish poet Kathleen Jamie has been named as the second Visiting Poetry Fellow.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1kM4rTP9E4&utm>

August 2018

- The Clondeboye Festival presents concerts over two weeks with musicians from US/Chile, Finland, France, England, Scotland and Ireland.



- EastSide Arts Festival returns with a celebration of the creative energy of east Belfast featuring arts activities in places and spaces across the eastside.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5J7j_uedJYw&t=3s

Creative Careers

The Arts Council and the Department for Communities hosted an event at the Lyric Theatre in March to encourage more young people to see the arts as an attractive career option and to seriously consider pursuing a career in the creative industries. The event gave more than 200 school pupils, careers advisors and further education students the opportunity to hear 'first hand' from professionals working in theatre, music, fashion and design, animation and digital technology.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNYD5b9P2II&t=24s>

September 2018

- Ninety-one of Northern Ireland's most talented young musicians perform at concerts in Vienna, Bratislava and Belfast as part of the Ulster Youth Orchestra's 25th anniversary celebrations.



- Belfast Exposed presents the first solo exhibition on the island of Ireland of award-winning international photographer, Dana Lixenberg, documenting the areas of Los Angeles affected by the Rodney King riots.



- One of Europe's fastest-growing choir festivals, The City of Derry International Choir Festival, hosts over 70 schools, national and international choirs and guest artists.



- The Duncairn Culture and Arts Centre celebrates five years at the heart of the creative regeneration of north Belfast.



- Culture Night Belfast shares the love on its 10th birthday with 100,000 visitors, as the city centre is transformed by 250 free family-friendly arts and cultural events.



ARTiculate Arts & Young People Wellbeing Programme

Now in its second year, this three-year partnership programme with the Public Health Agency continues to find creative new ways to give a voice to issues affecting young people, with innovative arts projects such as a film involving more than 80 teenagers from communities across Belfast, developed by west Belfast-based Suicide Awareness and Support Group and arts organisation Kids in Control, to raise awareness among local young people about online bullying and suicide.



Antrim teens working with Fresh Minds Education on a unique music recording project focusing on mental health issues

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ldRvZHxE4Q&t=6s>



Telling our stories

Kabosh Theatre presents 'Green & Blue', starring James Doran and Vincent Higgins, at the Brussels Platform, organised by the Arts Council and the NI Executive Brussels Office to promote the culture and creativity of Northern Ireland

October 2018

- The Imaginarium Arts Centre in Newry, the first dedicated arts venue for children and young people in Northern Ireland, is awarded the JM Barrie Award for Outstanding Contribution to Children's Arts.



- The Belfast International Arts Festival showcases new work from six playwrights as part of the Lyric Theatre's New Playwright's Programme, a six-month writing development programme aimed at emerging playwrights creating new work.



International opportunities

Strengthening international opportunities for artists continues to be a priority for the Arts Council. Highlights this year included musicians Ciara O'Neill and Matt McGinn bringing a flavour of Culture Night Belfast to Brussels; 2016 Arts Council Major Individual Artist awardee Oona Doherty performing her solo dance piece, 'Hard to be Soft' at the Centre Culturel Irlandais in Paris; and authors Jan Carson and Paul McVeigh participating at the Jaipur Literature Festival in India. Through the Arts Council's partnerships with the British Council, Culture Ireland, Invest Northern Ireland and the PRS Foundation, local musicians, singer-songwriters and music promoters are gaining access to networking and performing opportunities at leading industry events, including WOMEX, the Folk Alliance in Kansas, USA and South by Southwest in Austin, Texas. Singer-songwriters from Northern Ireland to benefit from exposure this year included Joshua Burnside, Jealous of the Birds, Roe and Stevie Scullion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heesbBJRmq&t=3s>



Ciara O'Neill and Matt McGinn

November 2018

- Catalyst Arts celebrates 25 years with a programme of events showcasing its impact on contemporary visual arts practice in the UK and Ireland.



- The annual Allianz Arts & Business NI Awards acknowledge the latest successful partnerships between local businesses and the arts community.



- Armagh-based John O'Connor Writing School and Literary Arts Festival enters its third year with a programme featuring international poets and song writers, prose, stage and screen writers, staged drama, lectures, talks and music.



- The annual Outburst Festival in Belfast showcases the work of local and international LGBTQI+ artists and performers.



- Five talented young musicians from Northern Ireland are awarded the Young Musicians' Platform Award by the Arts Council and BBC Northern Ireland: Martha Guiney (traditional flute), Andrew Douglas (flute), Katharine Timoney (singer), William Curran (clarinet) and Brian McAlea (baritone).



- The William Kennedy Piping Festival in Armagh, organised by the Armagh Pipers Club, marks its 25th anniversary with a line-up including many of the most accomplished pipers from across the world.



November 2018

- Echo Echo's sixth International Festival of Dance and Movement welcomes dance artists and musicians from around the world to participate in over fifty dance and theatre performances for all ages in Derry and Belfast.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JUnzsBLKFsY&t=3s>

- The Open Arts Community Choir, which features 35 members from across Northern Ireland with a range of disabilities and health issues, celebrates its 18th anniversary with a special concert at Stormont.



Art Lending Scheme

The Arts Council has launched a free lending scheme to enable curators, galleries and organisations to loan and exhibit works from its contemporary art collection, thereby increasing public access to, and appreciation of, works by local artists. The collection is constantly refreshed with new acquisitions. Buying works of art is one of the ways the Arts Council supports artists in their careers, as an endorsement which can open the door to new opportunities with other art collectors and galleries. In tandem, a new free lending scheme has been introduced to encourage schools to also borrow works from the collection, with the additional offer of assistance with the curation and mounting of the exhibition and help facilitating artists' talks for the students.



<http://artscouncil-ni.org/the-arts/visual-arts1/art-lending-scheme?utm>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_O5C4laJb7Q&t=10s

Nurturing home-grown talent

Mrs Lovett (Julie Mullins) and Tobias Ragg (Jack Wolfe) in NI Opera and the Lyric Theatre's co-production of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet St*, music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, book by Hugh Wheeler. Photographer: Steffan Hill

December 2018

- Stone sculptor, Sheena Devitt, receives the £15,000 Rosy James Memorial Trust craft award, an annual craft bursary, administered by the Arts Council on behalf of the Rosy James Memorial Trust, to assist craft makers in the development of their professional careers.



- DU Dance (NI) and its Youth Steering Group bring a Day of Dance to Stormont, with dance workshops and an evening performance by youth groups from across Northern Ireland.



Artist Career Enhancement Scheme (ACES)

Each year the Arts Council invests in the Northern Ireland's most talented emerging professional artists with ACES awards to support the artists with £5,000 bursaries and additional professional development opportunities, including partnering with organisations and mentorship from leading artists, at home or abroad. This year two actors, two visual artists, five musicians, five writers, one dancer and two community artists benefitted from ACES awards. ACES forms part of the Arts Council's wider Support for the Individual Artist Programme (SIAP), which in 2018-19 awarded £533,000-worth of funding to 192 individual artists.

<http://artscouncil-ni.org/news/17-creatives-from-northern-ireland-scoop-arts-council-aces-awards>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0TC7a2jPDM&t=3s>

January 2019

- Mervyn Smyth, Community Engagement Manager at Belfast Exposed Photography and Hannah Anderson, circus artist, are awarded £5,000 career development awards by the Arts Council, presented in memory of Anne O'Donoghue, Director of Play Resource Warehouse and Mike Moloney, co-founder of the Belfast Community Circus School.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LMeIt0Frfl&feature=youtu.be&utm>

Promoting health and wellbeing through the arts

- The UK's most prestigious classical music forum, the Association of British Orchestras (ABO) annual conference, is hosted by the Ulster Orchestra at the ICC Belfast.



Man Booker Prize Winner, Anna Burns

Northern Ireland's first Man Booker Prize-winning author, Anna Burns, accepted an invitation from the Arts Council to give a special reading from her novel, 'Milkman' at the Lyric Theatre, at an event jointly hosted by the Arts Council and Faber Members, in association with the Lyric. In conversation with fellow Booker-Prize winner, Anne Enright, Anna Burns provided an insight into her creative inspirations, and her remarkable and much talked about novel, 'Milkman', which draws on the writer's experience of Northern Ireland during the Troubles, is her third full-length novel, winning the author her first major award.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjFA1xZ2p4A>

February 2019

- The Arts Council's annual Funding Survey reveals that, despite a difficult year and continuing decline in income levels, there was rise in activities, notably with festivals and participation-based events.



- Verbal Arts gifts secondary schools across Belfast a copy of the late Padraic Fiacc's Selected Poems Ruined Pages, in memory of the influential poet who died this year, aged 94.



- The Ulster Orchestra announces that Internationally-renowned Italian maestro, Daniele Rustioni will succeed Rafael Payare as its new Chief Conductor.



Local Government Challenge Fund

In 2016 the Arts Council opened the Challenge Fund, offering match funding of up to £150,000 to each local authority as an incentive to increase investment in arts in their area and to embed the arts in the planning and delivery of key areas of civic responsibility. There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the Challenge Fund, with eight out of the possible ten eligible local authorities developing significant new arts programmes and a total of £872,640 of Arts Council National Lottery funds being matched by the local authorities. In 2018-19 we have seen many of the projects come to fruition. From issues-based theatre helping the PSNI to increase drug awareness among younger people in Ards and North Down Borough Council, to social circus helping the South West Age Partnership to improve the health of older people in Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, a decisive picture has emerged through the Challenge Fund of how the arts have greatly enhanced the capacity of local authorities to achieve their community planning ambitions.

Opening Doors Sculpture created by a range of groups who work in the drop in centre of the Methodist Church in Ballymena, Mid and East Antrim Borough Council, created with Sculptor Donnacha Cahill (seated)



Making everyone's lives more colourful, inspiring and meaningful



Belfast International Arts Festival brings Hollywood royalty to Northern Ireland as Italian actress and film-maker Isabella Rossellini performs her new one-woman show, 'Link Link'.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=32&v=RnonRmali8c&utm

March 2019

- Belfast Children’s Festival celebrates its 21st year as one of the largest children’s arts festivals on the island of Ireland and the UK, attracting over 31,000 people last year.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftXXdh2M2G0&utm>

- The Walled City Music Festival in Derry-Londonderry marks its 10th anniversary with return appearances by some of the outstanding performers from the Festival’s first decade.



- Sinead O’Donnell’s latest exhibition, ‘Crossing Permissions’, at Millennium Court Arts Centre, Portadown, reflects the performance artist’s response to time spent living and working among women in diverse locations, including Argentina, Brazil, Japan, Thailand, Uruguay and Indonesia.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TJCxssyASv0>

Major Individual Artist Awards

Each year, the Arts Council recognises the special contribution of significant individual artists to the development of the arts in Northern Ireland, with Major Individual Artist Awards of £15,000 each. The awards enable the artists to produce ambitious and substantial work that will contribute to the development of their careers. This year the awards went to writers Malachi O’Doherty and Rosemary Jenkinson, composer Ed Bennett and playwright Carol Moore.



Malachi O’Doherty, Carol Moore and Rosemary Jenkinson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRbnqsH86m8>

March 2019

- The Arts Council awards £740,000 to local arts organisations to help them renew and replace essential equipment, thanks to funding released by the Department for Communities.



- Three musicians from Northern Ireland, Joshua Burnside, Jealous of The Birds and Roe, along with management for the artists, take part in this year's South by Southwest (SXSW) showcase in Texas, the world's largest gathering of the music, media and film industry.



- The Imagine Belfast Festival of Ideas & Politics hosts its biggest ever programme of 156 events to encourage people to discuss and debate the big issues of our times.



Rita Duffy's 'The Souvenir Shop'

- The Linen Hall Library in Belfast launches 'Staging Sexuality', a series of performances and events based around the Library's LGBTQ+ archive and featuring theatre groups c21, Soda Bread Theatre Company and Kabosh, performing plays with LGBTQ+ themes.



- Two of the region's top emerging artists, Stevie Scullion of Malojian and singer-songwriter Brigid O'Neill, participate in this year's Folk Alliance International, the world's largest gathering of the folk music industry and community.



Giving a voice to vulnerable people and marginalised communities



Promoting our distinctive cultures

Rajasthan Heritage Brass Band lead out opening procession at ArtsElkta's Belfast Mela 2018 at Botanic Gardens.
© Carrie Davenport Photography.

The Board of the Arts Council

The Board of the Arts Council provides leadership for the executive body, in particular in defining and developing its strategic direction. It monitors performance in order to ensure that the Arts Council fully meets its aims, objectives and performance targets, and acts in a way that promotes the highest standards of public finance.

The Council is made up of the Chairperson plus members, providing a broad cross-section of expertise and including representatives from the arts and culture sector.

Biographies of board members are available at www.artscouncil-ni.org

**All arts organisations
funded by the Arts
Council are fully engaged
in Outreach programmes**



Mr John Edmund
Chairperson



Dr Katy Radford MBE
Vice Chair



David Alderdice



Anna Carragher



Roisin Erskine



Dr Siún Hanrahan



Noelle McAlinden



Dr Leon Litvack



Katherine McCloskey



Paul Mullan



Cian Smyth

Board Members of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland 2018-19

The Executive of the Arts Council

Chief Executive



Roisín McDonough

The Chief Executive sets the direction and oversees the operations of the Arts Council. She is responsible for the development and implementation of the strategic plans and policies established by the Board.

Strategic Development



Nick Livingston,
Director of Strategic
Development

Strategic Development is responsible for developing the Arts Council's strategic, corporate and business plans. It is in charge of research, policy and advocacy; for ensuring the Arts Council's compliance with statutory requirements such as Equality and Freedom of Information; and for inter-agency co-operation with other government departments and local authorities.

Arts Development



Noírn McKinney,
Director of Arts
Development



Lorraine McDowell,
Director of Operations
(Retired December 2018)

Arts Development is the largest department in the Arts Council. It provides funding support to artists and arts organisations through its Exchequer and National Lottery funds. Funding is available through dedicated funding programmes which are linked to the Arts Council's policies and strategies for the development of the arts in Northern Ireland. The Arts Council's art form officers provide specialist expertise and advice.

This department is also responsible for corporate communications, including press and media relations.

Finance and Corporate Services



Geoffrey Troughton,
Director of Finance &
Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides the core administration for the Arts Council. Its main areas of responsibility are finance, personnel and training, IT support, Reception, Registry and general office services.

Full staff list is available on www.artscouncil-ni.org

Enriching our lives

Musician Mary Louise McCord from Drake Music NI performing at the SoundForm conference in Hamburg

Financial Summary 2018-19

The Arts Council provides the main support for artists and arts organisations working in Northern Ireland, offering a broad range of funding opportunities through our Exchequer and National Lottery funds. Our funding programmes reflect the aims and objectives of our five-year strategic plan, Ambitions for the Arts, as well as our series of art form funding policies.

The complete sets of audited accounts for our Exchequer and National Lottery funds are made available on the Arts Council's website, www.artscouncil-ni.org

The Arts Council invested £18.1m to support the full range of creative activities across Northern Ireland in 2018-19*

*Based on the Exchequer and National Lottery Accounts for 2018-19

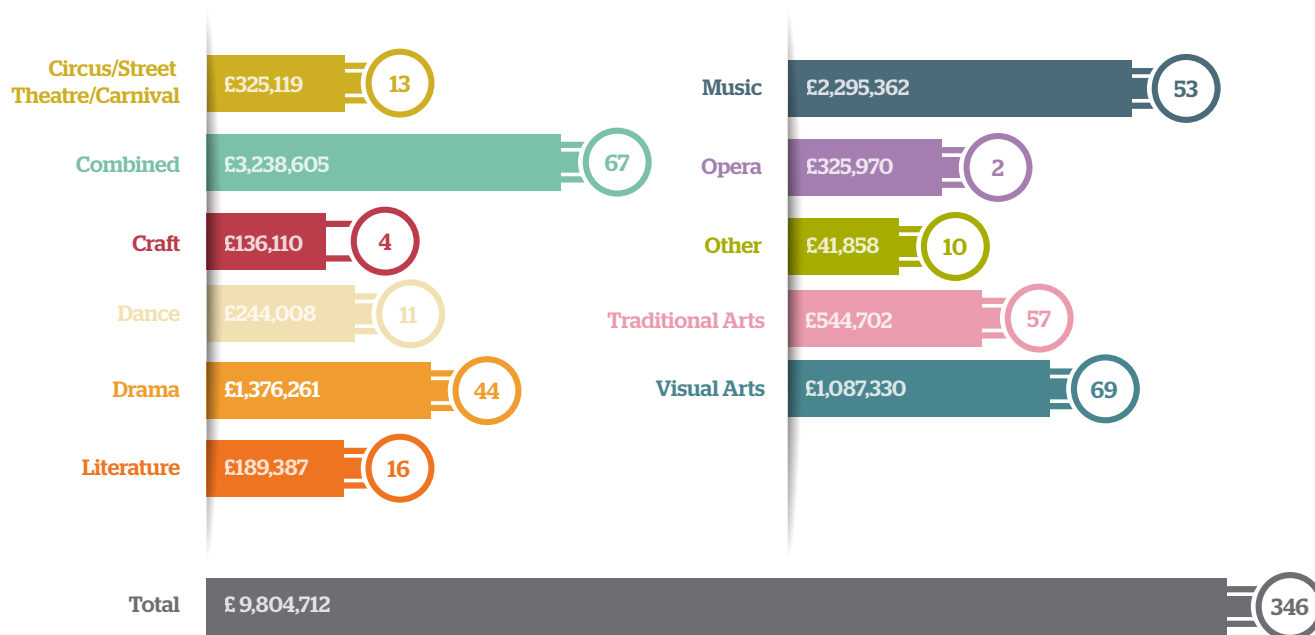
Arts Council Exchequer funding 2018-19[†]

The Arts Council awarded funding of £9.8 million through its Exchequer fund.

These funds were awarded through a set of programmes developed to support the full range of activities of artists and arts organisations across Northern Ireland, including:

- Annual Funding Programme (Core funding)
- Support for the Individual Artist Programme (SIAP)
- Musical Equipment for Bands
- Creative Employment Programme
- Travel Awards
- Equipment
- Arts Development Fund

Exchequer Awards



Local Authority Area	Number of Awards	Value of Awards
Antrim and Newtownabbey	8	£25,810
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	18	£143,722
Belfast	201	£7,626,043
Causeway Coast and Glens	5	£94,952
Derry and Strabane	45	£1,239,923
Fermanagh and Omagh	8	£64,904
Lisburn and Castlereagh	9	£49,702
Mid and East Antrim	4	£9,640
Mid Ulster	11	£68,899
Newry, Mourne and Down	15	£169,254
North Down and Ards	12	£167,573
Other	10	£144,290
GRAND TOTAL	346	£9,804,712

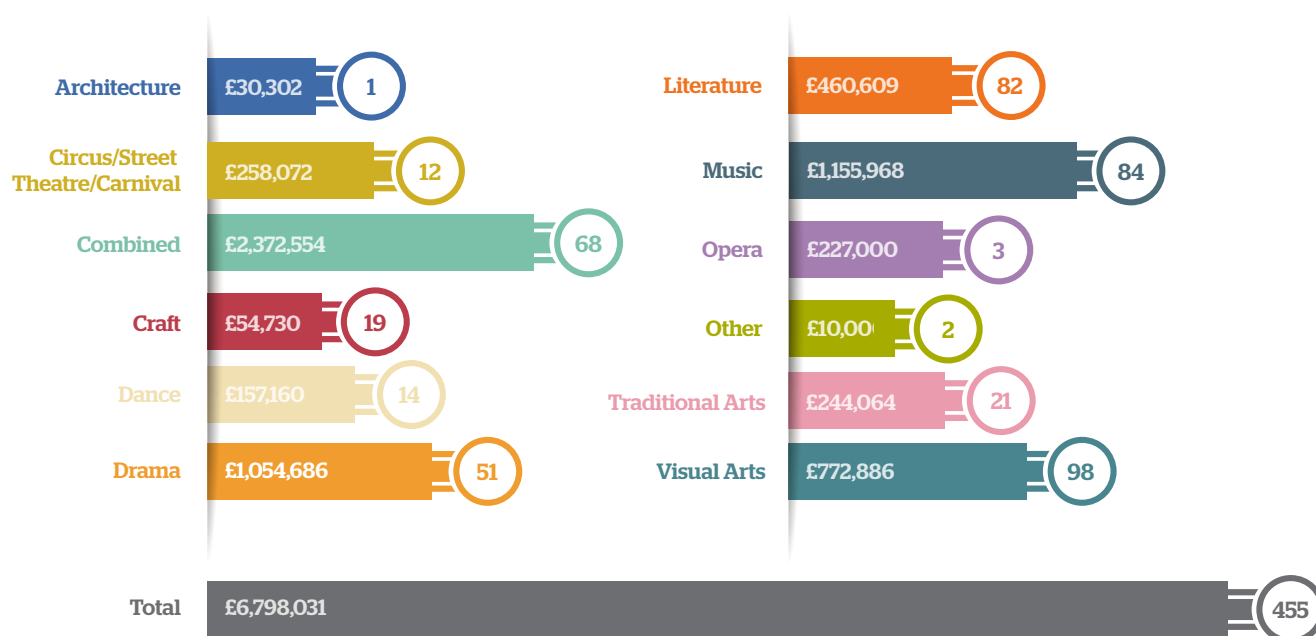
[†]The figures on pages 39 & 40 represent grants awarded directly to artists and arts organisations. The complete investment picture is available in the Exchequer and National Lottery Accounts, published to the website www.artscouncil-ni.org

Arts Council Lottery funding 2018-19[†]

The Arts Council awarded funding of £6.79 million through its National Lottery fund. Lottery funds supported arts projects throughout Northern Ireland. Funding programmes included:

- Annual Funding Programme (programme funding)
- Project Funding
- Support for the Individual Artist (SIAP)
- Arts & Older People Programme
- Young People & Wellbeing Arts Programme
- Creative Schools Partnership
- Small Grants

Lottery Awards



Local Authority Area	Number of Awards	Value of Awards
Antrim and Newtownabbey	12	£70,036
Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	25	£158,172
Belfast	232	£4,651,292
Causeway Coast and Glens	10	£99,666
Derry and Strabane	52	£830,020
Fermanagh and Omagh	13	£103,463
Lisburn and Castlereagh	11	£95,116
Mid and East Antrim	8	£33,564
Mid Ulster	12	£98,129
Newry, Mourne and Down	28	£191,751
North Down and Ards	24	£175,495
Other	28	£291,327
GRAND TOTAL	455	£6,798,031

Note on funding patterns:

Funding patterns in Belfast and Derry/Strabane reflect the high concentrations of artists and arts organisations living and working in these areas, as well as the location of several major 'umbrella' arts organisations whose services extend to Northern Ireland as a whole.

Building new audiences for the arts



Frequently Asked Questions

How do I apply for funding?

The Arts Council offers a range of grant programmes that you can apply to for funding. Some programmes are specifically for organisations and others are for individual artists. For full information on all the programmes that we offer, the criteria for each programme, application deadlines and how to apply, visit the Funding pages of our website, www.artscouncil-ni.org

When can I apply?

Most grant programmes take place in funding rounds with specific dates when we will accept applications. Some programmes are open all year round. For information on funding deadlines, visit the Funding pages of our website.

How long will it take to reach a decision?

This may vary with each programme, although we would generally aim to make a decision on applications from individuals and organisations within three months.

Where can I get help with my application?

The guidance notes for each programme provide information on the assessment criteria, eligibility and application process. Our Arts Development Officers can also offer advice and assistance before you submit an application. Contact details are available in the **About Us** section of our website, or you can contact the switchboard and you will be directed to the most appropriate person.

How do I complain to the Arts Council?

The Arts Council has a **Service Charter** which outlines the standard of service our clients should expect from us. We operate a **Service Complaints Procedure** to handle general complaints about our service. In addition, we operate a **Funding Review Procedure** for those who want to appeal a decision about a grant application. These documents are available on the website.

Useful Contacts at the Arts Council:

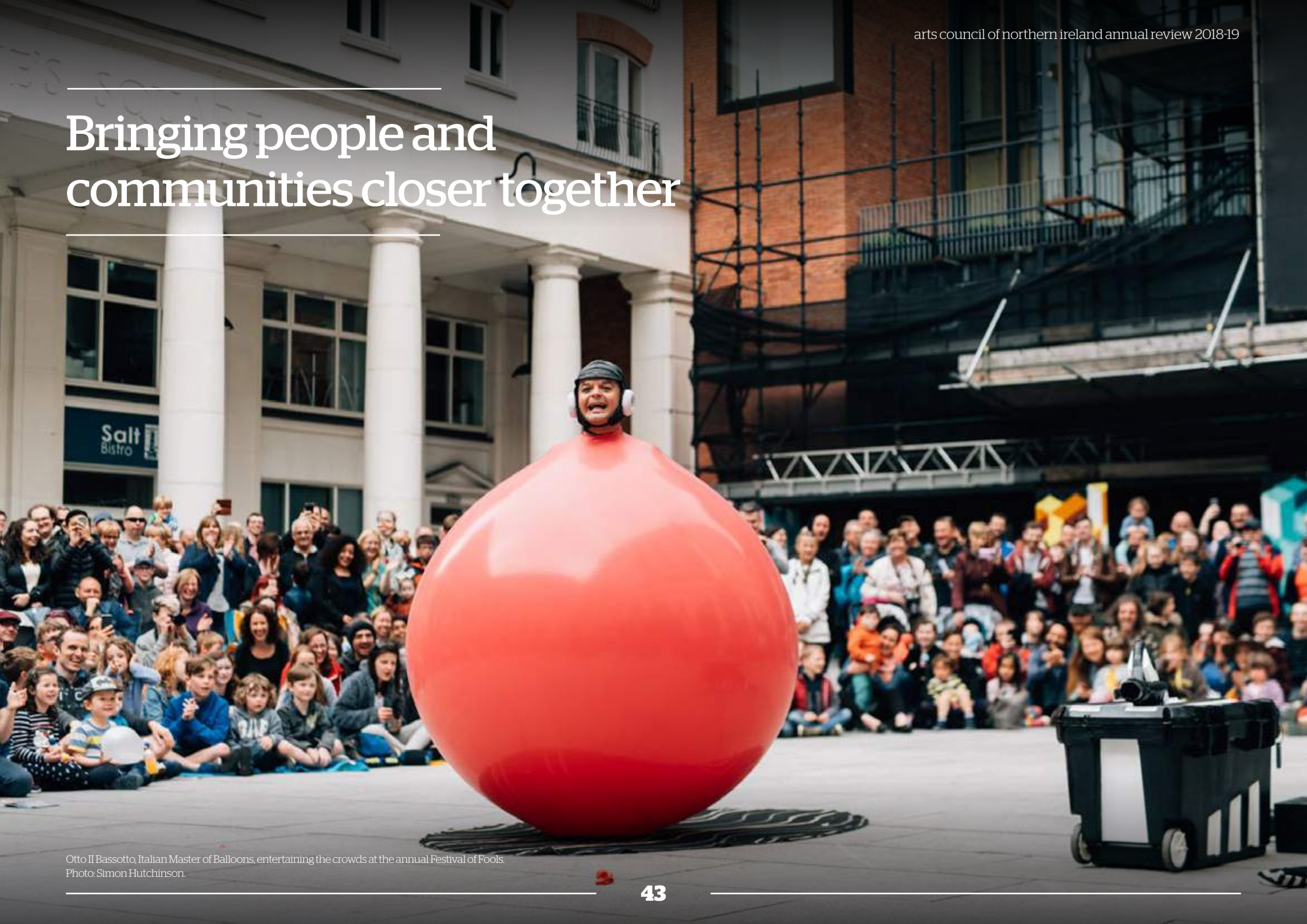
Arts Development Officers:

- Damian Smyth, Drama and Literature
- Suzanne Lyle, Visual Arts
- Ciaran Scullion, Music & Opera
- Gilly Campbell, Participatory Arts
- Grainne McCann, Communications
- Lizzie Devlin, Community Arts
- Patricia Lavery, Visual Arts
- Joanna Johnston, Visual Arts
- Gavin O'Connor, Youth Arts
- Maria McAlister, Music, Traditional Arts
- Joanne Wright, Music, Traditional Arts
- Lorraine Calderwood, Arts & Older People/ Young People & Wellbeing
- Sonya Whitefield, Development
- Angela Warren, Press Officer

Arts Council

E: info@artscouncil-ni.org

Bringing people and communities closer together



Otto II Bassotto, Italian Master of Balloons, entertaining the crowds at the annual Festival of Fools.
Photo: Simon Hutchinson.



For further information please contact:

Arts Council of Northern Ireland

E: info@artscouncil-ni.org

W: www.artscouncil-ni.org

 **@ArtsCouncilNI**

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Alternative formats of this publication may be available on request.

For further information,
Email: mhendry@artscouncil-ni.org

