

## The Guide to ...

# **Re-imagining Communities**

This booklet provides a comprehensive guide to the “Re-imagining Communities” programme. Please read carefully before deciding to make an application to this programme.

### **Introduction to Re-imagining Communities**

Re-imagining Communities is a funding programme that will help all communities in urban and rural areas to focus on positive ways to express who they are and what culture means to them artistically and creatively. The programme encourages the creation of vibrant and attractive shared public space through the use of the creative arts in the public realm, which will celebrate life, enhance the physical and natural environment and help people feel part of the community in which they live. Re-imagining Communities is rooted in the building of a shared future for Northern Ireland, which is peaceful, inclusive, prosperous, stable and fair, founded on partnership, equality and mutual respect as a basis of good relationships. In order to help achieve such a society, communities and agencies need to work together to free the public realm from threat, displays of sectarian aggression and intimidation while allowing for legitimate expression of cultural celebration. This could be achieved, by working with artists, in a range of ways, from the creation of positive mural art to applied art (such as ceramics, decorative brickwork or mosaic) to three-dimensional sculpture, artistic light installation or the production of crafted street furniture.

Re-imagining Communities is open to *all* communities which seek renewal and the reclamation of public space as well as arterial routes and public thoroughfares which belong to the wider community as a whole. The funding will be used to encourage local communities to work creatively with artists in tackling the issues described above, connecting the arts to areas not usually associated with them and allowing art to enrich communities. All projects should be locally tailored and community driven.

Any group seeking funding through the Re-imagining Communities programme must demonstrate how its proposal fits within the Strategic Themes. In order to help you through this application process Community Development Officers within the Re-imagining Communities Team will be available to answer queries concerning the completion of application forms and will provide assistance in accessing funding under

the programme. They will also be available to provide advice on the appropriateness of any proposed project.

Re-imagining Communities is funded through, and decisions on applications will be made by, the Shared Communities Consortium which is made up of representatives of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Department of Social Development, International fund for Ireland, Housing Executive, Community Relations Council and Office of the First and Deputy First Minister.

## **Strategic Themes**

### **Shared Future**

Working to achieve a normal civic society rooted in mutual recognition and trust.

### **Community Relations**

Working to embody the richness and diversity of our society and improve the quality of relationships within and between communities.

### **Community Cohesion**

Working with communities to provide opportunity for more stable, safer neighbourhoods and develop strong, positive relations between people from different backgrounds.

### **Regeneration through the Arts**

Working with communities wanting to develop more inclusive civic and cultural identities through the production of high quality artwork and design for the public realm.

### **Neighbourhood Renewal**

Working to complement the existing Neighbourhood Renewal programmes and policy.

The Re-imagining Communities Programme will provide support for a range of projects including:

- Support for cultural awareness and development of community based arts projects focussed on the public realm
- Commissioning of public art for shared spaces
- The removal of redundant symbols and emblems
- Support for locally based charters which outline how communities plan to tackle negative perceptions of their areas in an integrated manner
- The removal of aggressive sectarian/racist murals and graffiti

Preference will be given to projects that offer imaginative ideas both within and between communities, and which complement other structural programmes within the following broad areas, listed by way of illustration:

Neighbourhood Renewal Areas  
Anti-Sectarian and Anti-Racist Strategies  
District Council Good Relations Strategies  
Local Arts and Cultural Plans  
Urban/Rural/Village/Housing Estate Programmes  
Community Safety Strategies

### **Who can apply?**

The programme is principally aimed at District Councils to develop and support their Good Relations Strategies and to build on work already undertaken in local communities and which enjoy broad community support. District Councils are invited to put forward applications either for individual projects or for a number of projects within their areas.

The programme is also open to constituted community and voluntary organisations. These organisations can apply directly providing they can demonstrate that the proposal has the support of a public authority, which should ideally be the local District Council. However, we will also accept references\* from other public bodies such as the Housing Executive, Local Strategy Partnership, Health & Social Services Trust or Community Safety Partnership. You will still be required to demonstrate how your project contributes towards the development of a shared future in Northern Ireland.

Individuals are not eligible to apply to this programme.

\*A reference form is included within the application form

### **How much can I apply for?**

Depending on the level of funding you are requesting, you will either complete a Small Grants application form (for projects seeking £500 to £15,000) or a Large Grants application form (projects seeking £15,001 to £50,000). If you are seeking funding for a number of projects you should complete the Multiple Projects form. In this case the maximum grant to each project will not exceed the individual project limits.

Individual projects seeking more than £50,000 may also be exceptionally considered but these must be discussed beforehand at greater length with a member of the Re-imagining Communities team.

## **Criteria for Decision Making**

We will assess your project against the following criteria:

- Criterion 1:** Shared Future objectives (25 marks)
- Criterion 2:** Community Support/Public Benefit (25 marks)
- Criterion 3:** Quality of arts activities planned (25 marks)
- Criterion 4:** Organisational and Project Viability (25 marks)

**Your project must meet ALL the above criteria.** It is very important that you think carefully about how your project satisfies each of these criteria and use the application form to demonstrate this to us.

Criterion 1 – Shared Future: You should indicate how your project links to the creation of a shared future, working to achieve a normal, civic society rooted in trust and mutual respect for different cultural aspirations and identities.

Criterion 2 – Community Support: Your project should have the widest possible support of your local community and the maximum possible impact. You need to give careful consideration to the way in which your project is organised and is presented so that it provides access to people from all sections of society and builds community relations and community cohesion. You need to show that you are committed to principles of equal opportunity in all aspects of the project.

Criterion 3 - Quality of Arts Activity: You will need to demonstrate that the artists or facilitators involved in your project have the relevant experience and ability to deliver high quality projects.

Criterion 4 - Organisational and Project Viability: You will need to show that you have a clear and comprehensive plan for managing your project so that it can be completed successfully within the timetable and budget you set. You will need to demonstrate that the people from your organisation who will manage this project have the skills to do so.

## **Application process**

Applications are currently available and you can apply at any time, until further notice.

The Shared Communities Consortium meets every 8 weeks and we aim to inform you of the final decision within 8 weeks of receiving your completed application form. **Your project cannot start until after you have received a decision.**

Once we have received your completed application we will acknowledge this in writing and you will be given a unique reference number. Your proposal will be assessed by the Re-imaging Communities team who will then make a recommendation to the Shared Communities Consortium. Depending on the level of funds available, it may not be possible for the Consortium to support all applications which simply meet the relevant criteria. Under such circumstances applications, which, in the opinion of the Shared Communities Consortium, best meet the criteria will be successful.

If successful in receiving a small grant, community/voluntary groups will normally receive 95% of the funds immediately, with the remaining 5% paid on receipt of an end of project report.

If successful in receiving a large grant, you will receive a contract stating the conditions under which the grant has been awarded and setting out the payment process, which will normally be in instalments, with a small balance held back pending receipt of an end of project report.

In either the small, large or multiple project grant programmes District Councils will be paid retrospectively.

If you are unsuccessful you will receive a letter clearly outlining the reasons for the Consortium's decision.

**The decision of the Consortium is final.**

## **Complaints Procedure**

You can make your complaint in whatever form is most convenient to you. You can telephone and speak to the appropriate member of staff. If you do not know who you should talk to, our Receptionist will help. Alternatively you can write to, fax or email the Complaints Administrator at:

Arts Council of Northern Ireland  
MacNeice House  
77 Malone Road  
Belfast BT9 6AQ

Tel: 028-9038 5200

Email: [complaints@artscouncil-ni.gov.uk](mailto:complaints@artscouncil-ni.gov.uk)

Further information is available at <http://www.artscouncil-ni.org/other/complaints.htm>

## **What you can and cannot apply for**

*These are examples only*

### **What you **can** apply for**

- Technical Assistance
- Venue hire for workshops
- Feasibility Studies
- Volunteer expenses of not more than the minimum wage
- Materials / equipment
- Artists' fees up to £35 per hour or a maximum of £150 per day
- Artists' travel expenses of 35p per mile
- Equipment hire
- Publicity and marketing costs
- Community Consultation costs
- Premium payment costs – any additional costs you are likely to incur through the involvement of Section 75 groups, e.g. child care facilities, interpreters

### **What you **cannot** apply for**

- Ongoing costs, e.g. salaries (exceptional circumstances may be considered in a small number of cases.)
- Retrospective events
- Purchase or installation of flagpoles
- Party political activities
- Travel outside Northern Ireland
- Memorials for individuals or organisations
- Fencing or gates - re-imaged community spaces must be open and accessible
- Overhead Costs (exceptional circumstances may be considered in a small number of cases).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **1. Who can apply to this scheme?**

The programme is principally aimed at District Councils to develop and support their Good Relations Strategies and to build on work already undertaken in local communities and which enjoy broad community support. District Councils are invited to put forward applications either for individual projects or for a number of projects within their areas.

The programme is also open to constituted community and voluntary organisations. These organisations can apply directly providing they can demonstrate that the proposal has the support of a public authority, which should ideally be the local District Council. However, we will also accept references\* from other public bodies such as the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, Health & Social Services Trust or Community Safety Partnership. You will still be required to demonstrate how your project contributes towards the development of a Shared Future in Northern Ireland.

Individuals are not eligible to apply to this programme.

\*A reference form is included within the application form

### **2. How much money is available?**

There are two levels of grants. Small grants from £500 to £15,000 for community consultation, ideas generation workshops and small scale projects, and larger grants from £15,001 to £50,000 for projects such as public artworks, street furniture, etc.

### **3. Can I apply for more than £50,000?**

A limited number of applications for more than £50,000 will be considered, however, these will have to be well thought out projects and clearly meet the aims and objectives of this scheme.

### **4. When will I get a decision on my application?**

We aim to give you a decision within 8 weeks of receiving a completed application. Please note that if you fail to meet our requests for further information this will delay our decision.

### **5. Who can help me with queries concerning completion of the application form?**

Members of the Re-imagining Communities team will be available to answer queries concerning completion of the application form and guidance on contacting artists.

### **6. What is Technical Assistance?**

If you require Technical Assistance for any aspect of your proposal this can be provided by Groundwork Northern Ireland who have been procured by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland to deliver Technical Assistance for this programme (you should contact us in the first instance and we will be able to advise you). The requirements of Technical Assistance will vary from organisation to organisation, for the purpose of these guidelines we are defining Technical Assistance to include but not be limited to:

- Facilitation of community dialogue both within and between communities including hard to reach communities.
- Project planning and management
- Project delivery including artist support
- Guidance and support for communities with weak infrastructure and low capacity
- Consultation with relevant public bodies and agencies i.e. District Councils, DOE, ACNI, DRD, NIHE, etc.
- Assisting with the monitoring and evaluation of projects
- Specialist knowledge in areas of design, implementation and maintenance of artworks

**7. Do artists have to be involved in my project?**

Yes. Artists must be involved in both small and large-scale projects.

**8. Do I have to use artists recommended by the Re-imagining Communities team?**

No, you may already know an artist who you want to work with. However, you will have to demonstrate that the artist/s are suitable for delivering your project. This will mean that you will have to submit details of the artist and their current C.V. We will be able to provide a database of artists who you may wish to work with. If you are commissioning a larger piece of public art you must follow our commissioning guidelines as stated in our Public Art Handbook, a copy of this can be downloaded from the Arts Council website or we can post you a hard copy on request.

**9. Do I have to evaluate my project?**

Yes, all projects receiving funding under this scheme will be part of an independent evaluation process. You will be consulted on this and guidance will be provided. We will also be photographing all existing murals and memorials that are being re-imaged; this will form part of a future archive and may be used in future publications/exhibitions.

**10. Do I have to sign up to a Good Relations statement?**

Yes, this is provided in your application form.

**11. What if I don't have an Equality statement / policy?**

We can supply you with a sample Equal Opportunities Statement but it must be formally adopted by your organisation and you must provide us with evidence of this.

**12. Do I have to sign up to a Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy?**

The Re-imagining Communities team can provide guidance on the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults; we would encourage all applicants to ensure that you have safeguards in place. For further information on this please see [www.volunteering-ni.org](http://www.volunteering-ni.org)

**13. Can I submit my application by e-mail, on disk or by fax?**

No. You can apply on line via the Arts Council's website. However, you will still be required to forward an original signature page and all supporting documents in the normal way, by post or in person, within 5 working days of submitting your application. If the documents are not received within 5 days your application will not be considered.

**14. Why does the Chair or a Committee member of the organisation have to sign the form?**

The Chair or a Committee member has to sign the application so that we have evidence that the application has been properly approved by the management committee.

**15. How should I describe my project?**

On the application form you should describe your project in no less than 50 and no more than 200 words. **For applications to the large grants scheme you must attach a full description which must contain;**

- The project's location
- Who will manage it – committee members/volunteers/steering groups
- Who will lead it – artists, facilitators (if known) or how you will select these
- Who will participate in it – numbers and age ranges
- Details of any preparatory work you have already done, e.g. pilot programme
- Discussions with possible participants and level of community support
- Details of any premium payment services you intend to deliver (for section 75 groups), including a rationale for providing the service, types and costs of services and numbers of people involved
- Detailed budget including a breakdown for any single budget line over £1,000

**16. What evidence do I need of public authority support?**

A reference form is included within the application form. Community and voluntary groups must have this completed by a member of staff of a relevant public body as a referee. This completed reference form **must be returned with your application**. It will be normal practice for the referee to be contacted by a member of the Re-imagining Communities team during assessment of your application.

**17. Why do I need a Public Body reference?**

To ensure that your project is sustainable over the long term because it is linked into complementary plans that public authorities have for your area.

**18. Can I have more than one award at any one time?**

No, unless you apply for a Multiple grant. However, if you wish to apply for a second award under the same programme, you can submit the second application even if you have not finished the project or all the paperwork or completed all the grant conditions.

The Shared Communities Consortium will make a decision on your second application but you will not be given permission to commence the second project and no funds will be distributed until you have completed all the paperwork and met all the grant conditions attached to the first award.