

drama

funding policy



Ransom Productions, 'Hurricane'. Photo Christopher Hill
 Front cover - Tinderbox Theatre Company, 'The Chairs'. Photo Phil Smyth

Further Information

Full details of all Council funding are available from:

arts council of northern ireland macneice house 77 malone road belfast bt9 6aq t:028 9038 5200 f:028 9066 1715 www.artscouncil-ni.org



Strategic Priorities

The Arts Council will give a priority to artists, arts organisations, arts initiatives and partnerships which:

- A increase opportunities for creative participation in the arts;
- B develop new audiences for the arts and build on existing ones;
- C extend opportunities for artists to develop their work and practice;
- D strengthen the capacity of arts organisations to deliver quality experiences of the arts.

Strategic Objectives

The Arts Council is committed to:

- 1 increase opportunities for artists working to the highest standards and in innovative ways;
- 2 strengthen the arts infrastructure;
- 3 engage with community arts to increase opportunities for creative participation, to develop new audiences and to expand the range of contexts in which artists work;
- 4 engage with voluntary arts to increase opportunities for creative participation, to develop new audiences and expand the range of contexts in which artists work;
- 5 increase the quality of access for disabled people to the arts;
- 6 enhance children and young people's access to creative expression through the arts, in contexts of their own choosing, and increase opportunities for participation as they grow and develop;
- 7 increase audiences for the arts.

The arts: inspiring the imagination, building the future

Drama Funding Policy

Introduction

The Drama and Theatre sector comprises venues, venue-based companies, independent production companies, as well as individual theatre practitioners – actors, technicians, directors, designers, producers and playwrights.

The findings of the 'Study of the Economic and Social Impact of Subsidised Theatre in Northern Ireland' (2003) highlighted the need for a strategic approach to audience development and the design and advancement of a more co-ordinated approach to product development. This has formed part of the background to the establishment of an On-line Box Office System being developed by the Council to attract new audiences and participants to theatre and to promote effective marketing.

The 'Needs Analysis of Independent Theatre Companies' (2002) identified the income, outputs and outcomes over two years of all independent theatre companies funded through the Annual Support for Organisations Programme. It also documented the needs of the sector individually and corporately, which formed the basis for a series of recommendations for the development and support of the theatre sector.

As a result of the 'Touring Theatre Review' (1998) and aware of the need for touring drama throughout Ireland, the Arts Council and the British Council jointly established the North/South Theatre Touring Scheme. This offers grants to cover the marginal costs of cross-border touring and is open to theatre companies based in Northern Ireland who are currently in receipt of annual funding from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. All UK Arts Councils jointly support cross-border touring within the UK.

The Arts Council and An Chomhairle Ealaíon commissioned 'Irish Language Theatre in Ireland' (2002). Its objectives were to provide information permitting the development of a

strategy for Irish-language theatre throughout Ireland and to provide a plan to direct public subsidy for Irish-language theatre at an all-Ireland level.

Definitions

The Council supports the full range of theatrical experiences – amateur and community drama, professional theatre, youth drama and theatre in education. The aim is to make theatre and drama accessible to different audiences and participants in different contexts. How theatre is produced, presented and consumed is itself changing, with conventional and unconventional notions of quality and excellence constantly being re-interpreted.

Funding

Drama and Theatre are funded under a number of programmes:

- Annual Support for Organisations (for organisations with year-round programmes)
- Support for the Individual Artist (to assist artists in the development of their practice)
- New Work (if it is the creation of innovative original work)
- Access to the Arts (aimed at addressing the needs of communities in areas of social and economic deprivation or supporting the involvement of children and young people)
- Audience Development (bringing new people to the arts and taking the arts to new people)
- Awards for All (for projects under £5,000. Applicants should consult www.awardsforall.com. Tel. 0845 600204)
- Annually-funded organisations can apply to the North/South Funding Scheme for assistance with marginal costs associated with touring in the Republic of Ireland
- Independent theatre companies can use up to 15% of their annual funding to tour within the UK.

Funding Objectives

A concerted focus of attention on Drama and Theatre enables the Council to realise its four Priorities and meet its seven Strategic Objectives.

Funding objectives are to:

- ensure a spread of drama productions throughout Northern Ireland (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
- support new writing (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7)
- support companies and venues to provide a wide spectrum of drama and theatre (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
- increase employment opportunities in drama through such means as commissions and residencies (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)
- provide more 'platforms' to showcase artists' work through touring at home and abroad (1, 2)
- promote models of sectoral good practice to practitioners through the Theatre Producers' Group (3)
- establish measured baselines to track trends and monitor progress in theatre/drama audiences (7)
- implement innovative programmes of support designed to develop new audiences (7)